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**Communicating Foreign Cultures: The Workings of the Culture Peg
in International Reporting and Communication**

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**Communicating Foreign Cultures: The Workings of the Culture Peg in
International Reporting and Communication**

by

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Abstract

Communicating Foreign Cultures: The Workings of the Culture Peg in International Reporting and Communication

by

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Serving as a key concept throughout, “the culture peg,” stereotype-themed content in international news articles in major national newspapers was investigated empirically and theoretically employing quantitative and qualitative methodologies. As operationalized in a content analysis project, this study identified significant amount of such content in three leading news media from three different countries, the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan. The volume of it increased significantly in approximately three decades between 1985 and 2014. Theoretical inquiry in this dissertation identified strong connections between such empirical findings and existing theories in social psychology, cultural studies and communication. The way culture pegs are employed in the news, it was found, is highly consistent with the social identity theory from social psychology, the ritual view of communication from communication studies, use of *myth* in reporting facts and events and certain conceptualizations of culture from cultural studies. This dissertation concludes that national cultural stereotypes essentially behave like culture does generally – as explicated by cultural scholars – and that stereotypes in the media are effective in attracting audience attention because they resonate through the discursive framework commonly shared by the producers of news and the audiences, both of who possess similar cultural frames.

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Introduction

For the most part we do not first see and then define, we define first and then see. In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture.

—Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*

As the First World War was drawing to a close, Walter Lippmann made a stinging observation in *Public Opinion* about perception and reality, culture and stereotype, which were to reverberate for a century in the sciences of international communication, mass media, social psychology, and linguistics. He argued that reality – especially international reality – will often be shaped more by the perception of it and will be largely driven by pre-defined sets of ideas, understandings and referents imbedded in the observer's home culture.

To identify the use of pre-existing cultural referents, or stereotypes, in the news - which generations of scholars have argued tended to plague journalism (Hafez, 2007; Shaw, 2012) - Tanikawa (2015a) identified quantitatively describable content categories, the 'culture peg' and 'culture link.' They are widely used writing techniques in international news reporting intended to create cultural resonance (culture peg) and

relevance (culture link) for the home audience. The culture peg was a construct, equivalent to a stereotype but was conceived of as communicative technique used to relate foreign news subjects to readers, who are generally unfamiliar with that culture, such as relating news to a bullfight to make Spanish news relevant to readers in the United States or other countries where that stereotype exists. This dissertation is designed to explore these concepts further, theoretically and empirically, as being widely employed in a broad array of international/intercultural contexts, in different countries and across media formats in which the purpose of the message is to communicate foreign cultures effectively to an audience.

For nearly a century, stereotypes have been problematized, researched and analyzed in social psychology, linguistics, cultural studies, and anthropology, following Lippmann's influential commentaries in the 1920s, as well as in anthropological work about how many peoples categorize and stereotype kinds of people, animals, etc. The present study conceptualizes and investigates stereotypes as components in a message - like a news story with a culture peg - used to enhance its communicative power. This inquiry as an investigation in communication science hence distinguishes itself from past stereotype research in dimension, scope and purpose.

In the aforementioned study, a quantitative content analysis involving a constructed week sampling methodology found that over 70 percent of articles in *the New York Times*' international news section, employed a culture peg or culture link in the text or the photographs. An instance of the use of a culture peg would be an article in *the New York Times* about the structural challenges confronting Italy's economy as the nation reeled from an evolving financial crisis in Europe (Segal, 2010). The story resorts to a

salient example of a family-owned designer clothes manufacturer “steeped in tradition,” facing hard times and hard choices. Its challenge was to ditch or scale back the time-honored method of improving the clothes’ fabric which proved too costly and inefficient now that the revenues are considerably down due to economic slowdown. The proprietor exclaims, “This tradition is finita!” in the lead section of the article.

Offered as an example of “What ails the Italian economy,” the article goes on to outline the overall economic difficulties and the looming debt crisis for the Italian nation, posing a threat to the larger European economy - the core of the news for this article. Given its subject matter and the structure of the story - it was possible to hinge the news on a different type of a business such as a machine parts manufacturer to illustrate Italy’s economic plight. But a designer brand store better conjures up the image of Italy in the minds of American readers as does the notion of a stodgy family-owned enterprise run by a generation of Italian men. The designer brand clothes, as do other Italian symbols in the story, serve as the “culture peg”. It plays off readers’ pre-existing perception of Italy and plugs them into the main news subject regarding Italy – the economic challenges - much more easily and smoothly than if the illustration was a machine parts maker.

At a more micro level, words that are evocative of Italy, such as “finita,” “Versace,” “Made in Italy” label, and “truffa,” are sprinkled throughout the text, to add to the imagination of the American audience, that they are being exposed to aspects of Italy that they are familiar with. Both the micro and macro elements of the culture peg are woven into the article to boost resonance for the audience. (Individual words and expressions are micro and the stereotypic themes are macro elements.) One of the ways

the culture peg works is through resonance. Resonance occurs when the audience possesses a set of cultural orientations that permit the peg or reference to create an image that is resonant with them. (A fuller definition is offered later in the lit review). Both the micro and macro culture pegs are illustrative components that are replaceable considering the basic story structure – that the Italian economy is suffering following the European economic crisis.

The culture peg allows the communicator to condense, resonate and narrate the subject matter for an audience's easy consumption. Resorting to symbols, myths and easily recognizable cultural images significantly reduces the cognitive costs (Lippmann, 1922; Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994) of the listeners/readers who otherwise could not easily digest foreign news because they lack contextual understanding. Stereotypes, including use of the cultural peg, are thus seen as playing a performative function in the cognition of the readership (Bennett & Edelman, 1985), assisting in the conveyance of a message from the source to the audience. In the process, it relies on shared cultural resources – symbolism of a foreign culture as understood by American readers and the journalists/producers of news, who employ the discursive strategies to conjure up symbolic images. In this sense, the cultural devices known to be employed as discursive strategies such as myths, archetypes and narratives (van Gorp, 2007; Lule, 2001), serve as points of reference and comparison for the culture peg.

The same type of communication technique appears to be a stock-in-trade for producers in a wide range of international/intercultural contexts in which the purpose is to communicate foreign cultures to an audience. It is found in news photos, movies, television shows, advertising, business communication and in more banal, daily person

to person conversation (Berg, 2002; Burgess, Dill, Stermer, Burgess & Brown, 2011; Desmarais & Bruce, 2008, 2010). For instance, in a Hollywood movie, in which the scene rolls from the largely US-based depictions to foreign locations such as Russia, Spain, Middle East and India, in an attempt to highlight the foreign locale, the surrounding scenery will likely include the most widely familiar symbolic images of the countries in question: perhaps Red Square in the background for Moscow, the Gaudi architecture for Barcelona, a sand storm enveloping soaring skyscrapers in the city of Qatar and classical female dancers for India. These images performing the “culture peg” function help the audience capture the image of the country/location in question and allow them to efficiently digest the film’s story line.

To illustrate the depth and scope of this communicative method, studies in this dissertation will include exploring and comparing the technique’s use within journalism through content analysis methods in three newspapers from three different regions: The United States, Europe and Asia. Specifically, it will content analyze *the New York Times* of the United States (extending investigations from the previous, aforementioned inquiry), *the Guardian* of the United Kingdom and *Asahi Shimbun* of Japan to see if such content has increased over the past few decades. Statistical analyses will be conducted such as two samples proportion tests, as a method to establish if the increase (decrease) was statistically significant. While utilizing the quantitative framework for the identification of content through the random sampling method, this dissertation will also employ textual analysis of articles with macro level culture pegs, to enrich the inquiry and investigate for further connections with theory. Thus, it complements the

quantitative methodology with a qualitative approach to analyzing the stereotypic content in the news.

The inquiry seems particularly pertinent as globalization is often seen as a set of unifying and homogenizing forces (Ibelema, 2014; Sparks, 2007), bringing cultures and peoples around the world closer together. The preliminary findings from a case study of a US newspaper (*The New York Times*) pointed to a related trend: Reliance on cultural stereotypes is on the rise, especially in the last decade, as will be later shown.

Potentially, as globalization brought more cultures to many peoples around the world to be seen, heard and experienced, such routine exposures via mediated or unmediated communication may have led to even greater needs for simplified, ready-made methods of description, especially of those cultures very different from one's own. As some social psychologists have found, when people have predetermined conceptualization of a particular object, more information does not lead to better understanding, but lead to greater reliance on pre-existing, stereotypical understanding of the objects (Darley & Gross, 1983).

Studying news media in different continents (Europe and Asia) and in languages other than English might uncover further insights on the workings of the culture peg and its relations to power. If an Asian news medium such as Japan's press was resorting to the culture peg and in the same manner as those in the United States and the United Kingdom, it may mean that its use is not exclusive to those nations with political and cultural hegemonic influences.

Conceptually, the most plain and crucial task would be to explicate the concepts of “stereotype,” and “culture” and to describe how the former finds communicative performance amidst the workings of the latter, and thus lay out the function and workings of the culture peg in the society as one of the symbolic forms commonly resorted to in mediated communication. For theory and background, this study will be significantly informed by works from cultural studies, anthropology, semiotics, linguistics, literature and other humanities as the source for understanding of culture, society and “how culture works.” This includes comparison with the existing cultural devices commonly employed in text-based communication such as myths and narratives. The methodology, therefore, creatively combines the quantitative approaches of content analysis with analytical insights from the cultural studies and the interpretive paradigm.

In journalism scholarship, it has become nearly axiomatic that news is an act of constructing reality rather than the picture of reality (Tuchman, 1978), and often there is only a tenuous link between mediated reality and its underlying reality (Boorstin, 1962). As mediated, international reality might be even more of a departure than domestic reality is from true reality because for domestic affairs, a potential corrective that exists within the society to rectify wrong information (Louw, 2009) –that the audience can check against their own lived experiences for domestic events—does not exist for international affairs. The news media’s focus on culturally salient events and the method of weaving cultural clichés into the text of the article could explain one source of distortion and bias. The resulting picture in the audiences’ head about overseas cultures might be highly inconsistent with the true realities of the world. The techniques

of and the workings of the culture peg could illustrate how and why stereotypes are perpetually employed in the news, which does not appear to have been adequately explained in previous endeavors in the studies of communication or in stereotype research in general, nor have they presented an empirically based methodology to identify stereotype as a quantifiable phenomenon in the news.

It has been nearly 100 years since Lippmann developed his thesis about the influence and the workings of the mass media in the international society. “Communication” as a phenomenon has exponentially grown since his times, with a massive spurt in film, magazines and newspapers in the 1930s-40s, television in the 1960s-70s, and the IT revolution of the 1990s – 2000s. The importance and the centrality of media and communication to the social reality is immeasurably different from the post- World War 1 world Lippmann observed. Today, communication has become the social and cultural nexus where interpersonal relations and technological innovations, political economic incentives and global influence interact and influence each other (Lull, 2000).

As the world becomes increasingly hyper-connected across cultures, it is perhaps fitting to observe if the divide between mass mediated reality and true reality has changed, or if the relationship between the two have changed in connection to cultures and stereotype. As suggested, the instances of stereotypic portrayal of the world by the leading news media may have increased.

At least, the apparent widespread use of culture pegs calls for a critical examination of how the audience’s image of international reality is affected by the media’s highly symbolic and reductionist method of communicating foreign cultures. Like stereotypes generally, the culture peg simplifies, homogenizes and eschews complexity while

enhancing its resonance and communicability – the latter two may be more necessary today because of the ever increasing market pressure for instantaneous gratification of the users (Bagdikian, 2014; Patterson, 2000). The world’s audiences may remain significantly uninformed - and misinformed - about overseas societies they come to see much closer and more frequently due to significantly improved communication, devices and network technology.

Dissertation Structure

Chapter 1 will review literature encompassing stereotypes, culture and previous investigations of stereotype use in the media. Chapter 2 will describe the methodology of research which involves both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Chapter 3 will present the findings of the quantitative investigation as well as the topics and summary of the content of the articles with macro-level culture pegs. Chapter 4 will conduct full analyses of the findings in connection with theory. Chapter 5 will conclude this dissertation with a summary of the findings, review of theories, and will highlight the contribution of this dissertation.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

For a comprehensive background, the review of literature will include the topics of “stereotype” and “culture,” with the latter being regarded as a crucial part of the literature since stereotypes of “other cultures (out-groups),” is considered a constitutive element of the internal (in-group) culture (van Gorp, 2010; Zald, 1996). It will then circle back to review the use of deliberate stereotypes (culture pegs) as a communicative technique, the central concept to be investigated in this dissertation. The review of the main concepts - stereotypes and culture - will each involve the perspectives from a range of disciplines.

Stereotype research in social psychology, cultural studies, linguistics and communication

The social psychological approach

Social psychology has been the primary domain of stereotype research in the social sciences where the psychological, cognitive phenomenon has been investigated with a full range of experimental methodology and field research. It is the basic assumption in the field that stereotyping as a process of categorizing objects is a reflection of the cognitive function of our brain to tame the complex social world so that they become more manageable and understandable (Allport, 1979; Stangor & Schaller, 1996). To that extent, stereotyping is indistinguishable from the act of generalizing from a cognitive standpoint and is an inevitable human reaction to the complex social environment people live in (Schneider, 2005).

Common, well known definitions state that: “A stereotype is an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category” (Allport, 1954, p.187); A stereotype refers to those folk beliefs about the attributes characterizing a social category on which there is substantial agreement (Mackie, 1973, p.435); A collection of associations that link a target group to a set of descriptive characteristics (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986, p.81); stereotypes represent the traits that we view as characteristic of social groups, or of individual members of those groups, and particularly those that differentiate groups from each other. In short, they are the traits that come to mind quickly when we think about the groups (Stangor, 2015, p.15). As will be elaborated later, the stereotype definition varies depending on the definer’s notion of the role of stereotypes in human cognition and their accuracy in relations to perceived reality.

The scientific investigation into stereotypes by social psychologists began following Walter Lippmann’s observation about stereotypes and mediated communication, and such research was indeed inspired by Lippmann’s *Public Opinion*, which is widely credited with the term’s coinage (Stroebe & Insko, 1989; Stangor & Schaller, 1996; Schneider, 2005).

Public Opinion was appealing because it identified the basic contours of stereotyping which formed the basis of subsequent understanding of the cognitive phenomenon (Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994). Lippmann (1922) described stereotypes and prejudice as guiding people’s perception of the real world. He explored how preconceptions and prejudices affect incoming messages from the outside world as people use their biases to interpret and filter out these messages. The observer of the

outside world is selective and creative, he argued, bringing stereotypes and expectations to scenes such that his account of an event “is really a transfiguration of it” (p. 54). The stereotypes and self-interest guide the formation of public opinion, he argued.

Unsurprisingly, Lippmann disapproved of stereotyping. He argued that if one wants to see the world as it really is “there is no shortcut through, and no substitute for, an individualized understanding”(p. 59).

Over the following century, the field of psychology took it upon itself to research the topic scientifically. One of the first significant pieces of social psychological research into stereotypes was conducted by Katz and Braly (1933), a decade after the publication of *Public Opinion*. The scholars administered a checklist to students at Princeton University in which participants were asked to assign five traits from a list of 84 to various racial groups. The findings exhibited a high degree of agreement in subjects’ stereotypic images. For example, 75 percent of the students characterized the Blacks (“negroes” in the original study) as lazy. The scholars argued that stereotypes are public fictions that arise from prejudicial influences with scarcely any factual basis. As a consequence of this influential work, the study of stereotypes became strongly associated with attempts to understand prejudice (Schneider, 2005, p.9).

The question of error and bias persisted through this work but some researchers became aware that the nature of apparent error in perception was more nuanced than had been originally presumed. Mace (1943) saw stereotypes as ‘quasi pathological’ but at the same time, argued that in them an “interplay of cognitive and emotional factors serves, as in a caricature, both to reveal and distort essential truths” (p. 29). This emerging ‘kernel of truth’ hypothesis gained traction in a number of studies (Schneider,

2005, p.4) and became a persistent theme for decades, spurring researchers to try to determine if the observed stereotype had any grounds in social reality.

The inquiry to determine the validity of stereotypic beliefs took many forms, methodology and contexts but the results proved illusive for the most part (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994, p.19), although even scholars do not always agree how inconclusive (or conclusive) the findings have been. Researchers found, for example, that affixing bogus last names – and thus misleading participants into conceiving of a different ethnicity – to photographs of women, significantly affected ratings of women’s character (Razran, 1950). LaPiere (1936) investigated the stereotypes of Armenian immigrants held by Californians and found that the widely held notion that Armenians are “lawless” did not hold up: The group accounted for just 1.5 percent of the criminal court cases brought by the police. The Armenian population represented six percent of the general population in the state.

That stereotypes misrepresent reality became clearer when commonly perceived stereotypes go through a transformation reflecting wider societal changes. Shrieke (1936) observed that while the Chinese were popularly represented as “thrifty,” “sober” and “law-abiding” in the post-Civil War period, the ensuing depression (1873-1879, the “Long Depression”) transformed their image into “clannish,” “dangerous,” “criminal” and “servile.”

More “refined studies” using sophisticated measures conducted in the 1950s and the 1960s were similarly indeterminate in their findings – how perceived stereotypes conformed to reality - although some reported that certain aspects of the stereotypes

might have shown to have some validity (Stanger & Schaller, 1996). There appears to be no clear consensus on – whether or not research findings have conclusively shown that stereotype encapsulates some features of group reality. Still, while it is not hard to show that many beliefs about groups are erroneous, there is little direct, general empirical support for this general assumption (Judd & Park, 1993; McCauley, Jussim & Lee, 1995; Schneider, 2005).

According to Schneider (2005), the kernel of truth question was never really settled, partly because what constituted “accuracy” in determining the veracity of stereotypic ideas was not consistent nor could it be clearly defined (p.18). Eventually, this line of research endeavor gave way to focusing on the cognitive processes that lead to stereotypic beliefs, which became a major trend in the field, especially in North America in the second half of the century. This new research current was closely linked to the notion that stereotypes arise in the consciousness of the individuals, as will be discussed below.

Individual versus cultural-social approaches

Since the early works such as by Katz and Braly’s (1933) - which was concerned with stereotype content - approaches to understanding stereotypes and stereotype formation have generally clustered around two poles. Those are the “individualist” perspective and the social/cultural perspective (Stroebe & Insko, 1989). The dominant approach to researching stereotypes oscillated between the two historically, depending on the emphasis given to content, processes and the cognitive dimension of

stereotyping. These two perspectives, however, were complimentary rather than contradictory and the debate is still ongoing.

From the individualist perspective, stereotypes are represented within the mind of the individual person and are accounted for in terms of individual motives, traits and experiences (Stangor & Schaller, 1996; Stroebe & Insko, 1989). Stereotypes develop as the individual perceives his or her environment. The perceived information about a social group is interpreted, encoded in memory, and subsequently retrieved for use in guiding responses (Stangor & Schaller, 1996). The individual approach to stereotyping has primarily been associated with the dominant social cognitive tradition within North America (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Markus & Zajonc, 1985). They are often related to the researchers' interest in investigating the psychological/ cognitive processes involved in stereotyping and stereotypic behavior.

A concern with the individual level beliefs and interpersonal interaction has led researchers to focus upon the "bottom up" determinants of stereotypes. It has been assumed within this approach that stereotypes are learned and potentially changed, primarily through the information and understanding that individuals acquire through observation and experience with members of the other social groups (Kashima, Fiedler & Freytag, 2008; Tajfel, 1981).

From the standpoint of culturally oriented approach, on the other hand, stereotypes are represented as part of the social fabric of a society, shared by the people within that culture (Semin, 2008; Stangor & Schaller, 1996). The cultural model regards society itself to be the basis of stored knowledge and stereotypes and as the source of public information about social groups. That knowledge is considered shared among the

individuals within the culture. Stereotypes are thus the result of socially situated interactions between individuals, rather than a product that resides within the head of an individual (Semin, 2008). For these reasons, researchers in this tradition often focus on the evolution of stereotypes within a given cultural system and at the modes of transmission (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994) including language use (Semin, 2008). Consensual stereotypes embedded in language and forms of communication are one aspect of the entire collective knowledge of a society and culture. This knowledge includes the society's customs, myths, ideas, religions, and sciences (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990; Farr & Moscovici, 1984). Under this paradigm, culture is seen as a major source of stereotype, yet it is difficult to document it for evidence and empirical verification (Schneider, 2005).

The two approaches' differ on the process of formation and transmission of stereotypes. The individual approach has focused on how stereotypes are learned through direct interaction with members of other social groups, while the cultural approach is usually concerned with the role played by indirect sources –information gained from parents, peers, teachers, political and religious leaders and the mass media (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994; Lyons, Clark, Kashima, & Kurz, 2008). For this reason, the cultural-social approach tends to focus explicitly on language as a representation of social groups (Semin, 2008; Stangor & Schaller, 1996).

Methodologically, the cultural school often has a research focus on stereotype content - as represented by specific words - with such traditions dating back to Katz and Braly (1933). Because stereotypes are defined as mental associations between category labels (i.e Italians) and trait terms (i.e romantic) or stereotype content, it is believed

stereotypes can be measured by the extent to which these traits are activated, upon exposure to category labels (Stangor & Schaller, 1996).

As noted, the cultural-social school tends to highlight the shared nature of stereotypes—in many instances insist on the consensus of the definition of the stereotype. For the individual approach, scholars do not insist on the consensual nature of stereotype as a necessary ingredient. Stereotypes, they believe, can be held individually (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994). Ashmore and Del Boca (1981) pointed out that the term “stereotypes” should be reserved for the set of beliefs held by an individual regarding a social group and the term “cultural stereotype” should be used to describe a shared or community-wide patterns of belief.

The role of the media in stereotype formation and transmission

The field generally recognizes the influential role that the mass media plays in distributing stereotypes (Kashima, Fiedler & Freytag, 2008; Stangor, 2015). “In modern society, the form by which most stereotypes are transmitted is through the mass media – literature, television, movies, newspapers, e-mail, leaflets and bumper stickers,” argued Stangor and Schaller (1996, p.12). Consumer mass media thus comprise an “information highway” for the transmission of stereotypes and are an important “collective repository” (p.12) for group stereotypes, which is recognized explicitly by individuals who attend to them and by researchers who codify these representations. Representation is a process that connects meaning and language, including signs, to culture (Hall, 1997).

Between the individual and the social-cultural approaches to stereotyping research, the cultural school places greater emphasis on the role of the mass media more than the individualist approach. The latter considers direct contact as one major source of the stereotype, while the former emphasizes the social dimension in which stereotypes are generated, circulated and learned (Stangor & Schaller, 1996, p.6; Lyons, Clark, Kashima, & Kurz, 2008). Presumably, stereotypes either derive from the direct observation of the differences among various groups within a society or are a consequence of exposure to media or other channels of information (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994).

The question of desirability of stereotypes

One recurring question in social psychology is whether stereotypes are essentially bad and therefore, harmful to the stereotyped group and to the society in general. In studies of the media, the exaggerated portrayals of minority groups are found to be prejudicial to that group and its relationship with the majority group (Berg, 1990, 2002).

There appears to be a wide agreement that given the way human brain functions, stereotyping, as a process of thinking and making sense of the world - and doing so efficiently - is inevitable, even necessary for humans to live, function and interact in the social environment (Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind & Rosselli, 1996). The ability to generalize is a central, primitive, hard-wired cognitive activity (Allport, 1979; Schneider, 1992) and ordinary generalization is hardly distinguishable from stereotyping from a cognitive point of view (Schneider, 2005). Yet, the negativity associated with stereotype content is undeniable and many social psychologists include

the erroneous nature of the stereotype in the basic definition of it (Schneider, 2005). Most psychologists have considered the stereotype as nasty categorical judgement disguising similarities and overstating the differences between groups. Others, meanwhile, have advanced the argument that at its core, stereotypes contain some level of truth and cannot be entirely be dismissed (Jussim, Cain, Crawford, Harber & Cohen, 2009).

Social identity theory of stereotypes

One crucial theory formulated as a rationale for stereotyping revolves around the notion of social identity, a sense of who people are as derived from their group affiliations. Social psychologist Henri Tajfel argued that the group membership fixed people with pride, self-esteem and the basis of belonging to the social world. This leads to the division of the world into in-group, “we” and outgroup, “them” (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This “we and them” dichotomy becomes the source of motivation to seek to find negative aspects of the out-group to enhance their self-image. This motivational inclination is interwoven into the process of creating stereotypes about the out-group. The social identity theory thus provides another explanation as to why people categorize, cluster and in the process, stereotype social groups, other than for the reasons of simplification and cognitive efficiency (Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind & Rosselli, 1996).

An important aspect of stereotyping the outgroup is accentuating the differences between members of the outgroup from those of the ingroup and accentuating the similarities among members of the outgroup (Diehl & Jonas, 1991). The accentuation of

differences and similarities occur over those traits that become the target of stereotyping and not over all character traits (Diehl & Jonas, 1991). By extension, the ingroup is viewed by its constituent members as being diverse and difficult to be characterized with simple trait labels, an opposite of stereotyping.

Such cognitive grouping involving “judgmental accentuation” (Diehl & Jonas, 1991) in both directions leads to the increased salience of the distinguishing features between categories, and to accentuating negative qualities of the outgroup and exaggerating the positive qualities of one’s own group (Islam, 2014) in a process known as outgroup derogation and ingroup favoritism (Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, & Hodge, 1996; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971) Examining the process of stereotyping leading to social identify formation, Tajfel and Turner (1979)’s model premises that social categorization leads to social identification which then leads to social comparison (Mcleod, 2008).

In-groups and out-groups can involve gender, religion, social class, and different geographic regions but for the present purpose, the distinction falls on national cultures: the culture of the United States, versus those of Spain, Italy, Japan, China and so on. National cultures clearly create a sense of belonging, and could be among the most powerful sources of ‘we and them’ distinction (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008; O’Donnell, 1994) that could serve as a source for extreme types of conflicts such as a war (Anderson, 1991).

Cultural studies' approach to stereotyping

Scholars in the cultural studies tradition have tackled the question of stereotypes as part of their critical analysis of the social and cultural phenomena of which stereotypes are seen as part (Derrida, 1972; Dyer, 1977; Hall, 1997). The persistence of stereotypes in culture is closely linked to the question of social power and representation (Hall, 1997), and to the dominance of the majority group(s) over the minorities through (mis)representation and stereotypes. Those in power are usually positioned as the stereotypers and the vulnerable minority groups as the stereotyped. Adding critical analysis to such issues of stereotyping is a hallmark of the cultural scholars.

Just like the social psychologists, there is a functional justification for human efforts to generalize and to organize matters into categories: to make sense of the complex world. Film studies scholar Richard Dyer (1977) makes an important distinction between typing and stereotyping. The former - typing - is essential to the production of meaning because people always get a grasp of things in terms of wider categories which is accomplished, for example, by giving people a role: he or she is a parent, a child, a worker, a lover, a boss and so on. People assign others into different groups according to gender, age, nationality, race etc. a typical case of categorizing or "typing."

Stereotyping, on the other hand, is a practice of assigning broadly generalized traits to persons, he argues: "It gets hold of a few simple vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized characteristics about a person, reduces everything about the person to those traits, exaggerates and simplifies them and fixes them without change or development to eternity. Stereotyping reduces, essentializes and naturalizes and fixes, the difference" (Dyer, 1977, p. 258).

He states further that stereotyping deploys a strategy of 'splitting.' It divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. It then excludes or expels everything it does not fit. For this reason stereotypes are more rigid than social types. Boundaries must be clearly delineated, so stereotypes are one of the mechanisms of boundary maintenance, and are characteristically fixed, clear cut, and unalterable (p.29).

Jacque Derrida, a French philosopher, contends that a stereotype produces binary oppositions like Us/Them. 'We are not dealing with... peaceful coexistence... but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs... the other has the upper hand,' (1972, p.41).

Stuart Hall (1997) weighs in on this matter of power and representation and contends that stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power - where power is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group. One aspect of this power is ethno-centrism, the application of the norms of one's own culture to that of others, using those norms to change or control their behavior. Whatever is marginal and 'out of place' is considered polluted, dangerous, taboo and negative feelings cluster around it. It must be symbolically excluded if the purity of the culture is to be restored (Douglas, 1996).

The extensive debate on stereotypes leads Hall (1997) to ponder the theoretical arguments about stereotyping relative to classic critical theorists, suggesting the concept's critical importance in relations to power and hegemony: "In short stereotyping is what Foucault called a 'power/knowledge' sort of game. It classified people according to a norm and constructs the excluded as the 'other'. Interestingly, it is

also what Gramsci would have called, according to Hall, an aspect of the struggle for hegemony,” (p.257).

As Dyer observes, ‘The establishment of normalcy’ through social and stereotypes is one aspect of the habit of ruling groups.... to attempt to fashion the whole of society according to their own world view, value system, sensibility and ideology. So right is this worldview for the ruling groups that they make it appear as “‘natural’ and ‘inevitable’ and for everyone” (Dyer, 1972, p.30).

Cultural and critical studies authors consider stereotyping as a representational practice, with all the hallmarks of the power relations and a potential for abuse. People often think of power in terms of direct physical coercion or constraint. However, “power in representation” is of a crucial significance; power to mark, assign, and classify, based in symbolic power (Gramsci, 1973; Hall, 1997). Power has to be understood not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way. Hall (1997) suggests that stereotyping is a key element in this exercise of symbolic violence.

Hall observes that semiotics seems to confine the process of representation to language, and to treat it as a closed, rather static, system. Subsequent development became more concerned with representation in a variety of ways as a source for the production of social knowledge - a more open system, connected in more intimate ways with social practices and questions of power (p.42).

In *Mythologies*, French linguist and semiologist Roland Barthes envisioned the use of stereotype as one step in a process of signification and meaning-making and saw it as

being connected to “myth” where myth is a meta-language, a second order language (Barthes, 1977, p.41). Citing the Panzani advertisement teeming with symbolic images of Italy, Barthes suggested that we can read the ad as a ‘myth’ that links its completed message (a picture of some packets of pasta, a tin, a sachet, some tomatoes, onions, peppers, a mushroom, all emerging from a half-open string bag) with the cultural theme or concept of ‘Italianicity’ or ‘Italian-ness’. Then at the level of the myth or meta-language, the Panzani ad becomes a message about the essential meaning of Italian-ness as a national culture.

While Barthes links the cultural association only to the ads, such technique is extensively used in mass media as we will see later - use of an easily associatable image of a foreign culture for the benefit of the audience’s easy consumption. This dissertation identifies specific use of nationality association as “the culture peg,” which is a method to enhance the communicability of the subject matter.

Stereotype research in communication studies

Deploying national, racial and ethnic stereotypes and cultural clichés is a known as routine in news and the communication media (Camaj, 2010; Fowler, 2001; Hafez, 2007; Lasorsa & Dai, 2007; Shaw, 2012). In international news and communication, the known practice by the western media to represent developing countries almost solely in terms of wars, famine and hunger, was at the heart of the debate of New World Information and Communication Order sponsored by UNESCO in the 1970s in what was often referred to as “coups and earthquakes syndrome” (Haque, 1983; Miller, 1995; Sparks, 2007).

Stereotypic media reporting has been a widely researched theme in the field of mass communication. Generally, however, the topic of stereotype is often researched with social issues of generally significant nature in mind such as racism and sexism. Thus stereotype research within the field tends to be connected to those research agendas that are considered highly important to the society. For instance, studying the psychological effects of stereotypic media content on Caucasian-Americans' attitude toward African-Americans, especially in the context of crime, has been highly common (Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007).

Such studies are not primarily concerned with the methods and techniques of stereotypes used in media texts and as such, have not addressed as a general matter why and how stereotypes are employed and the reasons they are a preferred content in the news media. Rather they are primarily meant to promote the resolution of the important social problem of racial and gender biases in society by making a contribution from a communication standpoint. Issues of race and ethnicity have been a meeting ground for various social scientists, observes social psychologist Schneider (2005), partly because the United States is so permeated by a history of racism and that one could not understand relations of race solely on the basis of one academic discipline.

In this light, Charles Ramirez Berg (1990, 2002) explicated the pervasive stereotypical description of Hispanic figures in Hollywood cinema from the critical lens of the power relations between the dominant majority group and the minorities. The ruling group in so doing can and does assign selective characteristics to other people – social, cultural, political, sexual, racial, class and ethnic *Others* – as an ethnocentric

means of underscoring differences and perpetuating power structures in which the majority group is socio-economically dominant.

Explicating the term, stereotyping, Ramirez-Berg says, is a generalization used by one group (the in-group) about members of another group (the out-group). What differentiates it from a general category-making process is, among other things, ethnocentric prejudice: the fact that the in-group transforms the out-group into simplistic symbols by selecting a few traits that pointedly accentuate the differences. This forms the basis for making the Other inferior and excluding them from the in-group (Berg, 1990, 2002).

As the subject of the “Other,” the portrayal of Muslims by western media has sprung as a crucial topic in communication studies in the past decade (Naji & Iwar, 2013; Shaw, 2012). In this regard, the phenomenon of “othering” has been one common angle through which communication scholars have framed the issue of stereotyping. Other targets for exclusion in western media include “migrants” (Kyriakidou, 2009), typically those outside of the west migrating into the west, Africans who receive the “tribal fixation” in western media (Ibelema, 2014) and the long-standing “orientalism” lens employed in the Western press, literature and scholarship towards Middle and Near East (Said, 2003).

Mediated communication including news and advertising plays a critical role in generating and reinforcing cultural stereotypes about people and places when there is little direct human contact (Armstrong, Neuendorf & Brentar, 1992; Fujioka, 1999, 2005). Through routine and habitual exposures across genres and media formats,

stereotypes generated by the media become part of symbolic dominant ideologies (Gerbner, 1998; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli & Shanahan, 2002).

One significant contribution by communication scholars is their insights into *priming* and *spreading activation* that stereotyping triggers in the audiences through mediated experiences. Repeated exposures to stereotypical information makes stereotypes more readily accessible in their minds (Banaji, Hardin & Rothman, 1993; Bargh, 1999). Among the crucial understandings to emerge is that once a particular social schema has been primed, it is more likely than some other schemata to be used to encode and interpret the next incoming stimulus an individual encounters (Hansen & Hansen, 1988; Hansen & Kyrgowski, 1994).

Media priming occurs when there is an existing associative network of related concepts in the cognitive structure (Jo & Berkowitz, 1994). With such a network in place, a presentation stimulus can trigger a chain of related thoughts and feelings through the process of spreading activation (more on spreading activation in the following segment).

Communication studies on stereotypes investigate a variety of media including television (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008, 2010; Fujioka, 1999; O'Donnell, 1994), film (Berg, 1990; McArthur, 1982), newspapers (Hafez, 2007; Lasorsa & Dai, 2007; Tanikawa, 2015a), online media, and video games (Burgess, Dill, Stermer, Burgess & Brown, 2011).

Language and stereotyping

An interesting intersection of stereotype research is found in studies with a linguistic bent, conducted by scholars in social psychology, linguistics, anthropology,

communication and cultural studies. Coming from the social psychological background but with a focus on the language dimension of stereotype, Maass and Arcuri (1996) have delved into the linguistic workings of stereotypes, arguing that language is the dominant means by which stereotypes in verbal and nonverbal forms are defined, communicated, and perpetuated. In an earlier study, for instance, Maass, Salvi, Arcuri and Semin (1989) found through experimentation that language use by subjects from different social groups became slanted by employing abstract and descriptive terminology towards out-groups in describing negative behaviors, reflecting the inter-group biases.

Scholars interested in this research angle note that a linguistic focus has never received sufficient attention in research on stereotypes and prejudice (Kashima, Fiedler & Freytag, 2008; Maass & Arcuri, 1996). Initially, however, language was of strong interest to stereotype researchers as a way of identifying the content of ethnic, racial and national stereotypes as was the case with Katz and Braly's 1933 study and ensuing research along similar lines.

Interest in stereotype content ebbed and flowed in social psychology, thereafter, but Allport (1979) contended that linguistic terms may not only define content but also serve as organizing principles, thus interest in the function of specific words and vocabulary remained within the scholarship, thereafter.

The most obvious function of language is the transmission of culturally shared stereotypes (Kashima, Fiedler & Freytag, 2008; Maass & Arcuri, 1996) from person to person and from generation to generation. Racial and gender slurs, for instance, powerfully evoke images and associations. Wide variations exist in different societies

and cultures and embedded in the lexicon of any language are rigidly held beliefs about social groups that are automatically “absorbed” during language acquisition by individuals (Maass & Arcuri, 1996, p.94).

When it is used, therefore, language is not a neutral tool for communication but is “a refracting, structuring medium,” (Fowler, 2001, p.10) in which users’ biases and prejudices creep in, derived from inter-group dynamics relating to culture, ethnic origin, gender and social class. Cognitively, language is powerful in a sense that when one hears a word that contains a stereotypic slant, the meaning is often immediately understood by the hearer as it works itself into the mind to trigger related concepts and ideas. More broadly, stereotypes are viewed as “linguistic and discursive constructs that are narratively enacted, reproduced, and consumed and that can operate independently of, or in contradiction to, visual stimuli,” (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008, p.339).

For many researchers, study of language and the study of culture are inseparable, as noted. With respect to stereotypes, the consensuality of it within the ingroup indicates a strong cultural basis (Lyons, Clark, Kashima, & Kurz, 2008; Stangor & Schaller, 1996). During the “cultural turn” revolution of the social sciences in the late 20th century, culture came to be viewed as a symbolic, linguistic and representational system (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996). And for Stuart Hall (1997), among the main participants in the movement, representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language, for language is a system of representation involved in the overall process of constructing meaning, (Hall, p.18). Thus stereotypical expressions are likely to play a significant role in constructing meaning in the minds of the audience.

Anthropologists are similarly focused on language and linguistic usage for reasons of

culture (Apt, 2000). “It is axiomatic that language is an essential and significant part of culture and that it enables human beings to form stable social-structural aggregates.” (p. 2002).

Scholarship that links questions and the use of language to stereotype, culture and communication is deemed closely relevant as one important dimension of the culture peg is the widespread use of vocabulary in what is termed “word-level culture pegs,” such as “finita,” “Versace,” “Made in Italy,” words evocative of Italy in an Italy-themed article as illustrated earlier (Each word-level peg is deemed to represent a trait term in relation to a category label – in this case, Italy, as is explained later in this section. The distinction between word-level and story-level culture pegs are explicated fully in the method section.) Since the culture peg, comes in the concrete form of specific words and phrases as well as a thematic thread in a story – a family-owned Italian designer brand struggling to survive, in the above case - it is expected that the word-level culture peg provides – and may require - a different level of analysis.

One significant concept that emerged from studies with the linguistic insights is the link between category labels and the activation of the label that spreads through the entire network, boosting the accessibility of the information that is associated with the category. Communication scholars have further elaborated on spreading activation using concepts such as frames, schema and scripts (D’Angelo & Kuypers, 2010; Entman, 2003, 2004). Spreading activation is a mechanism by which arousal of one aspect of the mental system – more specifically arousal of a particular meaning or concept arising from a word or an expression - can spread throughout the network of interconnected units of ideas and knowledge, leading to the activation of related

constructs and a strengthening of the ties among these mental units (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). The model for spreading activation was originally proposed by cognitive psychologist John R. Anderson (1983). The spreading activation concept is as significant as and intersects with the paired concept of "category label and trait terms," as they both seem to relate to the workings of word-level culture pegs.

The subject matter of language and stereotype and other representational/cultural issues indeed is a point of convergence among social psychologists, cultural studies and communication scholars.

Study of Culture

Culture is a notoriously difficult term to define (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). And this definitional challenge has persisted over the past century in which scholars of various academic strands have attempted to reveal culture's essential features. The terrain is diverse with a coterie of scholars from anthropology, social psychology, linguistics, cultural studies, literature and other humanities contributing their understanding of culture. This section of the literature review "on culture," will source literature from a broad range of academic disciplines with two broad purposes in mind.

In stereotype research, culture is seen as the "source" for stereotypes and thus a review of literature is in order to elicit the background and theory on the study of culture. Secondly, because culture is viewed as a primary base to constitute knowledge, meaning and comprehension of the world outside (Hall, 1997), a shared repertoire of frames and convention in culture is thought to provide a linkage between media text

production and text consumption (van Gorp, 2007). The connection will later be strenuously sought between ideas, frames, conventions and devices available in culture that can be tapped to enhance the performance of the text (communication), and the construct, culture peg - a method to enhance the appeal and resonance of communication. Here, the oft-repeated notion that culture concerns the production of 'meaning' and that it holds values as symbols and representation (Hall, 1997; Storey, 2012; Thompson, 1990) serve as key auxiliary notions.

Perhaps the broadest of definitions have been proffered by anthropologists who make certain authoritative claims about the field of culture (Hannerz, 1996). A well-known 19th century British anthropologist Edward Tyler discussed culture as follows: 'Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society,' (Tyler, 1870, as cited by Avruch, 1998, p.6).

While still bound by the 19th century conception of cultures being arrayed from primitive to civilized, Tyler crucially understood that all societies have culture, that culture arises from being a member of the group, and that culture is an all-embracing, systematic whole. His 'complex whole' formulation later became a mark of an anthropological understanding of culture that became widely accepted (Hannerz, 1996; Spencer-Oatey, 2012).

Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952)'s definition is equally comprehensive in their formulation. "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture

consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; cultural systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other, as conditional elements of future action” (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952, p.181).

A scholar of a slightly different stripe, Geert Hofstede, a renowned Dutch social psychologist and business consultant, offers a succinct one: ‘[Culture] is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another,’ (Hofstede, 1994). Sociologist Mayer Zald says culture refers to an organized set of beliefs, codes, myths, stereotypes, values, norms, frames, and so forth that are shared in the collective memory of a group or society, that is mediated by and constituted by symbol and language (Zald, 1996).

Aside from what culture is able to ‘achieve’ for its members, the above sampling of definitions indicates that culture has a set social group in mind as its holder and is common to all of them. The “norms,” “values,” “laws,” “codes” “morals,” “traditions” and “art” that constitute culture together become a distinguishing quality of a group. They identify a group and distinguish it from others. In addition, “stereotype” is an element of a culture of the in-group (van Gorp, 2010; Zald, 1996).

‘Culture’ according to the cultural movements of the 20th century

A significant development in the social sciences in the 20th century is the “linguistic or cultural turn” which gave birth to cultural studies and semiotics around the middle of the century (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996; Chaney, 1994). Scholars from sociology, history and anthropology turned to cultural meanings and interpretation of the social and the

symbolic phenomenon, and away from the structured method of social categorization, until then pervasive among the positivist scholars. The new paradigm was spearheaded by such authors as anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) and historian Hayden White (1975), leading to a convergence of scholars from an array of disciplines - sociology, linguistics, literature and philosophy. Important contributions from scholars such as Roland Barthes (1977), Jack Derrida (1972), Pierre Bourdieu (1986), and Levi Strauss (1968) and Raymond Williams (1983) deepened the plane of the study of culture and led to reconfiguration of the theory and methodology. Symbols, rituals, events, historical artifacts, and belief systems were conceived as “texts” to be interrogated for their semiotic structure, that is, their internal consistency as a system of meanings (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996).

Culture as a signifying practice that produces “meaning”

Coming from the ‘study of culture’ perspective, Raymond Williams (1983)’s three broad definitions of culture encapsulated the 19th to the 20th century evolution of the notions of culture. He argued that culture can be used to refer to ‘a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development’ – great philosophers, great artists and great poets in western European history, for instance. A second type of use of the word culture might be to suggest “a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group.” In this formation, he suggested, one would have in mind the development of holidays, sports, religious festivals, cultural events and youth subculture in what would be referred to “lived experience” or practice. Finally, Williams suggested that culture can be used to refer to the works, practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity.

Culture here means the texts and practices whose principal function is to signify, to produce or to be the occasion for the production of meaning. Culture in this third definition is synonymous with what structuralists and post-structuralists call ‘signifying practices’ (Storey, 2012). These include novels, news, TV productions, pop music and are usually referred to as texts.

Hall (1997) similarly situates culture in its classic as well as the contemporary sense referring to the first as the “high culture” and the latter as the mass or popular culture, which in his words are the ‘classic way of framing’ the debate about the culture. Then comes the third, more recent “social science” context in which culture is used to refer to whatever is distinctive about the ‘way of life’ of a people, community, nation or social group – an anthropological definition that describes the “shared values’ of a group or of society.

In conceiving culture, modern scholars began to see culture as not so much a set of things, novels or paintings and TV program but as a process or a set of practices. Hall (1997, p.2); “Primarily, culture is concerned with production and exchange of meanings.” He further adds that culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is happening around them and “making sense” of the world in broadly similar ways (p.2).

British sociologist John. B. Thompson (1990) strengthens this line of thinking:

“Culture is a pattern of meanings embedded in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals

communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions, and beliefs.”

Since culture is closely linked to representation and communication, conceptions of culture are referentially similar to those of the communication scholars. In *Media, Communication, Culture*, James Lull argued: “Thinking about culture as communicative activity nicely blends the enduring aspects with the more dynamic, mediated elements. The meanings of ancestry, religion, tradition, language, marriage, family work, leisure, neighborhood, social institutions, and so on are perpetually reproduced and modified through symbolic interaction,” (2000, p.133). And so is the way such elements are talked about and valued, he argued. Culture is not just objects, values and ways of being, “But how such things, values and ways of being are interpreted and brought to conscious awareness through routine communication and social practice” (p.133). In the final analysis, “culture crucially involves the way we mentally represent and think about the world,” (Zegarac, 2008, p.4)

Lull then circles back to the purpose of culture, a more anthropological question: “The first and foremost is cognitive and social stability. Culture is a proven and powerful way we organize ourselves as individuals and as members of a group to create meaning, order and safety.” Sociologist David Chaney makes a similar point: Culture “works on a number of levels and through a number of forms to give a structure of predictability and continuity to the practice of community life.” (Chaney, 1994, p.139). Here, in reference to cultural stability, Lull brings up an argument eerily familiar to critical, cultural scholars with respect to stereotype: “Culture organizes the way we

distinguish between the known and the unknown, between friends and enemies, between the boring and the exciting,” (Lull, 2000, p.134).

Banks and McGee-Banks (1989) sums up the current (later 20th century) of the study of culture and observes that most contemporary social scientists view culture as “consisting primarily of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies.” The essence of a culture is not its artifacts, tools, or other tangible objects but how the members of the group interpret, use, and perceive them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies; it is not material objects and other tangible aspects of human societies. People within a culture usually interpret the meaning of symbols, artifacts, and behaviors in the same or in similar ways.

Anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (1996), in a well-cited formulation of culture, views culture as having three main emphases, which have tended to co-exist. The first is that culture is learned and acquired in social life. Second, is that culture is highly integrated and is to be grasped as a whole. The third is that characteristics of culture are seen as packages of meanings and meaningful forms, distinctive to collectivities and territories (p.8).

And some say that such an instance – viewing culture as a collection of meanings - is *increasing*. What is increasingly being produced in contemporary economies “are not material objects, but *signs*,” (Lash & Urry, 1994, p.4). John B. Thompson echoes this view and says that culture has become more and more symbolic and interpretive in the era of mass communication (Thompson, 1990).

Common to most theorists is that their formulation of culture is not just the expressive communicative dimension but its implied link to “text,” discourse and the forms of meaning. Culture is above all else discursive; Culture has thus become a general term for the sea of discourses and regimes of signification through which we constitute lived experience (Chaney, 1994, p.191).

Culture, therefore, functions as a resource because it provides “available meanings” (p.32) that greatly influence what can be expressed by cultural members in order to fashion distinctive habits, skills, styles, and social strategies. The “culture as meaning” argument widely shared among scholars of different disciplinary stripes then has a more specific formulation: culture and cultural symbols as device or tools to enhance efficacy of communication (Schudson, 1989): Meaning is evoked powerfully when discursive strategies are cleverly employed. On the receiving end, our capacity to form representations – and meta-representation - and the tendency to seek novel information that appears worth knowing, buttresses this orientation (Zegarac, 2008).

Efficacy of cultural symbols

In *How culture works*, sociologist and media scholar Michael Schudson (1989) describes how ‘culture’ is made to work (i.e in symbolic forms), and identifies five dimensions of the potency of a cultural object: retrievability, rhetorical force, resonance, institutional retention, and resolution. The first three are closely relevant to this study of the use of culture in journalism as they relate to discursive strategies and media textual performance.

Retrievability

For culture to have an influence, it must reach the person. More specifically, it must be “available” to the person cognitively. The information must be stored in the person’s mental heuristic so he or she can retrieve it when needed. Thus from the perspective of someone who seeks to manipulate cultural objects to his or her advantage, the strategic question would be how to make some key elements of culture more perceptively available to the audience. There are a number of ways cultural objects can be brought to the conscious presence of the person. If a cultural object is connected to a culturally salient event institutionalized on the cultural calendar, for instance, it will be more available to people’s mind and more easily remembered over time (Schudson, 1989).

Rhetorical force

Efficacy of a cultural object would be enhanced by its memorability. The rhetorical dimension of the object, which lifts its evocativeness, includes vividness of the description, attention grabbing writing techniques and resort to anecdotal and storytelling methodology. People attend more to interesting as opposed to un-interesting matters and thus strategists (i.e journalists, authors and advertising planners) strive to devise a way to hook the audience and keep them engaged. Such methods of engagement is an important aspect of culture’s communicative dimensions (Schudson, 1989). This aspect seems particularly relevant to the cultural peg.

Resonance

Another facet of the cultural force relates to resonance. A rhetorically effective object must be relevant and resonant to the life of an audience. Citing George Mosse's study of power of political ideology, Schudson makes the point that rulers cannot successfully impose culture on people unless the political symbolism they choose connects to the underlying native traditions. This reveals culture's critical dynamics in which ordinary people participate in forming – the consumers take part in the formation of culture, as without them, cultural objects be it advertising or movies, fail to captivate. Yet, Schudson argues, the uses to which an audience puts a cultural object are not necessarily personal or idiosyncratic as the needs or interests of the audience are socially and culturally constituted. "What is resonant is not a question how culture connects to individual interests but a matter of how culture connects to interests that are themselves constituted in a cultural frame,"(p.169).

Culture as tool-kit or ideology

In the same article on culture, Schudson (1989) raises a crucial point about the relationship between culture and ideology. On the one hand, culture and related symbols can be thought of as "tools" available for anyone who wishes to use them to promote or express certain ideas (Swidler, 1986). Culture here is seen as "tool kit" or "equipment for living" that individuals choose to employ and select the meaning they need for particular purposes (p.155). In this view, culture is a resource for social action (Swidler, 1986, 2013). This tool kit concept is also particularly relevant for analyzing the action of journalists using cultural pegs.

Meanwhile, ideals, symbols and propaganda, in a Marxist formulation (Marx, 1977; Williams, 1983), is viewed as a means for ideological manipulation, and therefore a potent agent of a ruling group. From this perspective, culture is a structure to limit social action in which individuals are ideologically constrained, an extension of what Marx portrayed as “superstructure” (Gramsci, 1973, 1978). This view of culture as a social mold, emphasizes that meanings can be made by individuals only from symbols available to them and the objects selected are merely a way to clothe a pre-existing intention.

“Communication as culture” perspective

The preceding viewpoints of the cultural scholars with respect to culture’s communicative dimensions and their meaning making capacity (Banks & McGee-Banks, 1989; Chaney, 1994; Hall, 1997; Thompson, 1990), can be characterized as “culture as communication” perspective. In a line of argument that ultimately shares similar thinking, there is another cluster of study that can be described as “communication as culture” outlook.

James Carey has argued in his book “Communication as Culture” that there exist two broad viewpoints regarding communication. The first and perhaps the more intuitive one conceptualizes communication as transmission of information. Under this viewpoint, communication is a linear act of conveying information from a sender to the receiver, consistent with the modern, empirical model of communication, notably those of Shannon and Weaver (1949) and Lasswell (1948) who see communication as a linear, physical process of information deliverance.

The second and by far a much older approach to thinking about communication is the “ritual view”. In the ritual definition, communication is connected to notions such as sharing, participation and fellowship. It exploits the ancient identity and common roots of the terms, commonness, communion, community and communication. Communication is directed not towards the passing of messages in physical space but towards the maintenance of society and shared values in time (Carey, 1992, p.18).

Meaning is not simply sent from one autonomous sphere – say production – and received in another autonomous sphere – consumption. Meaning-making functions less in terms of a “transmission” flow model, and more like the model of dialogue and an ongoing process. It rarely ends at “a preordained place” (du Gay, 1997, p.10).

Such perception of communication has a much older predecessor, as Carey (1992) acknowledges. John Dewey, early 20th century educator, philosopher and communication scholar, pointed out a lexical tie between words “community” and “communication.” “Men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common, and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common,” (Dewey, 1916, pp.5-6). What they must have in common for the community are aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge, and like-mindedness. Consensus demands communication, he noted. Carey (1992) then stated that if the archetypal case of communication under the transmission view is the extension of messages across geography for the purpose of the control, the archetypal case under a ritual view is the sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and community. This position views the original or highest expression of communication not in the delivery of intelligent information but “in the construction and maintenance of an ordered,

meaningful cultural world that can serve as a control and container for human action,” (pp.18-19).

From this base theoretical position, one can extend such notion to a more common, worldly examples such as greeting one another with “Merry Christmas” “Happy Thanksgiving” and “Happy Birthday” – a form of communication that can take place through greeting cards, emails and telephones. Their purpose is to conserve tradition, relationships, shared values, culture, emotional stability, and the community (of friends and family). Senders transmit no new information nor do recipients acquire new knowledge – unlike the linear, transmission-based communication model meant to impart knowledge. The post-positivists media-effects tradition is perhaps the taken-for-granted position in the mass communication studies while the latter model recasts communication as ritual, that is, as a cultural form, positing the process of communication as synergistic, nonlinear, dynamic process set in culture (Curtin & Gaither, 2005).

The ritual view of communication is highly suggestive considering that stereotypic references in the news are by their very nature repetitive and recurrent (Hannerz, 2007; Shaw, 2012) and per se provides no new knowledge to the audience, which is often the basis for criticism of the news media (Hafez, 2007). The assertion by some social psychologists that stereotype production serves to cement the stereotyping group’s identity (Tajfel, 1981) is consistent both with the recurrent structure of stereotype used in the media and to the ritual view of communication.

Connection between culture and news

Connecting the practice of news to culture, some scholars of journalism have found close linkage between the two. News and culture are linked by narrative and other textual forms embraced by writers, as such writing styles and conventions derive directly from culture (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996; Lule, 2001). “Narrative provides a link between culture as system and culture as practice,” said sociologists Bonnell and Hunt (1996, p.17) - news here is a form of practice of culture.

Narrative is an arena in which meaning takes form in which individuals connect to the public and the social world. As Snow and Benford (1988) have noted, some “frames resonate with cultural narrations, that is, with the stories, myths, and folk tales that are part and parcel of one’s cultural heritage.” From a literary point of view, texts, like rituals, art, games, and other symbolic configurations, are cultural “models” that encode values and guides for behavior (Colby, 1975).

In this light, the news genre is considered a particular kind of symbolic system (Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Corrigan, 1984) that is repeatedly used as a frame in the news even as facts, numbers and other details in the news change with each and every instance of news. As a symbolic system, myth and news act both as a model for a culture (Geertz, 1973). Bird and Dardenne (1997) put it the other way around and argue that news is a particular kind of mythological narrative “with its own symbolic codes that are recognized by its audience” (p.337).

Myth and its role in the news

According to journalism and cultural studies scholars, news accounts are by definition culturally constructed narratives (Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Lull, 2000). It is little mystery that some news items directly take the form of “myth,” which is considered a common literary device and a discursive strategy employed by authors to accomplish narrative acts in the text (Collins, 2015; Kitch, 2007). Myth in this context is not viewed as fiction but as a narrative device. It is understood as a societal story that expresses prevailing ideas, ideologies, values and enduring aspect of human existence, dealing with “the deep truth of human experience” (Silverblatt, Ferry, & Finan, 1999, p.144).

In *Daily News, Eternal Stories*, Jack Lule argued that the purpose of the myth, and the writing technique that applies the mythological method, is to make the world explicable, to magically solve its problems and contradictions. “In the face of chaos, order is established. In the face of death, life is affirmed. In the face of tragedy, news becomes myth,” (Lule, 2001, p.12).

Scholars of culture, literature and history share this notion of myth and its role in literature: the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction (Levi-Strauss, 1968). Historical myths are “a set of propositions, often stated in narrative form, that is accepted uncritically by a culture or speech-community that serves to found or affirm its self-conception,” (Heehs, 1994, p.3). Myths are stories we tell ourselves as a culture in order to banish contradictions and make the world understandable and therefore habitable: they put us at peace with ourselves and our existence (Lule, 2001). Through telling and retelling of stories, myths acquire their significance, allowing the values and beliefs central to society to persist.

For a definitional purpose, however, myth is difficult to isolate in the news because of its very nature. It is designed to work best when it blends in the story in such a way that *it goes without saying*, according to mythology scholar Roland Barthes. Myth does not deny anything. Rather it gives the story natural and eternal justification (Barthes, 1977).

Culture Peg - Use of stereotypic content as a method to enhance communicative power of a message

Culture peg is a conceptual invention designed to identify and quantify specific content categories – stereotypic content - in the news texts and accompanying visuals employed by journalists (Tanikawa, 2011, 2015a). This conceptual specificity facilitated the operationalization for content analysis procedure suitable for quantitative research methodology. It captures what researchers, including critical scholars, have been pointing out about the ubiquity of stereotypes in the news, more specifically, national cultural stereotypes, clichés of a national cultural group by another national cultural group (i.e. the stereotype by Americans of “Italy,” “Mexico” and “China”). While this research does not claim that all possible uses of national stereotypes in the news can be encapsulated in the culture peg concept,¹ it is claimed that the culture peg, operationally, significantly captures the discursive dimension of stereotypes in the news both at a macro text level (story level) and at the micro text level (word level). Thus this

¹ For instance, the culture peg was not specifically operationalized as a “portrayal of a person or persons as possessing a characteristic associated with a group to which the person belongs” as was the case in Lasorsa & Dai (2007, p.297). However, such implication is often strong when the culture peg is used especially at the story level, as defined in this study.

research makes the claim that it is as yet the most useful quantitative measure of the use of national cultural stereotype in the news and other media texts. (Hereafter, it is understood unless otherwise noted, stereotype refers to “national cultural stereotype.”)

As a construct, it was simultaneously conceived of as a communicative technique meant to attract audience interest in the subject, as that is its assumed utility in the text. (“peg” derives from the common newsroom jargon of “news peg” which refers to a particular news event –from a previous news cycle – on which a given article is hooked (Itule & Anderson, 2007; Yopp & McAdams, 2007.)

In concrete terms, a culture peg is a topical or content choice in a foreign story that furnishes the readers with a theme or fragments they can easily identify as arising from that foreign culture. The aforementioned article in *the New York Times* (Segal, 2010) on the economic malaise in Italy pivots on the story line of a family owned clothing design company, stodgy and tradition-bound, struggling in the ailing Italian economy. These images provide a point of cultural connection between American readers, who may have little knowledge of or interest in the country, and Italy, an overseas location from which the journalist is reporting. Since the culture peg provides readers with elements they can instantly grasp as something stemming from that foreign culture, it is a form of stereotype.

In the language of social psychology, Italy is the “category label.” The designer labels and the stodgy business styles are “the trait terms” or “trait concepts” (Stangor & Schaller, 1996). The trait term such as “Armani” and “Versace immediately and semi-

automatically calls up the image of Italy in the minds of readers. Such immediate activation of an already learned set of images is characteristic of stereotypic knowledge.

Social psychology literature asserts that stereotyping is an automatic mental process (Bargh 1999; Bargh, Chen & Burrows, 1996; Gawronski, Deutsch, Mbirkou, Seibt, & Strack, 2008). This automaticity involves the spontaneous activation of some well-learned set of associations or responses a person has developed through repeated activation in memory. And stereotyping is automatic to the extent that people use short cuts to arrive at their perceptions and categorizations of others (Cooke-Jackson & Hansen, 2008). In the case of foreign cultural stereotypes such as a designer brand for Italy, bullfighting for Spain, kangaroos for Australia, mosques for the Middle East, and turbans for India, such images become etched into people's minds through repeated associations between the cultural object or trait terms and the culture/country, the category labels. Such repeated activation in people's memories further consolidates the association between a limited number of objects and their culture of origin, making it highly likely that people will make the connection when either the label or the trait construct are presented to them.

Media language scholar Fowler (2001) observes that a stereotype is "a socially-constructed mental pigeon-hole into which events and individuals can be sorted, thereby making such events and individuals comprehensible," (p.17). As used by the news media, stereotypes in the news thus make unfamiliar culture easily comprehensible to the audience. Therefore, media presentation of stereotypes, or understanding thereof by the audience, provides automatic, clear shortcuts that are easily comprehensible to the audience. The preceding example, designer label for Italy is an easy, comprehensible

object that provides a shortcut between what readers know already and the foreign country/culture being reported on.

This process—engaging people’s pre-existing shreds of knowledge and thereby pulling readers into the subject matter—can be thought of as invoking a schema, a cognitive framework that helps people organize and interpret information (Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, & Bem, 1993; Baddeley, 2013). Journalists search for cues in readers’ stored knowledge that can be invoked and be connected to the foreign culture/country in question.

The culture peg breaks down into different levels and components. In the text, they can be divided into “story” level and “word” level. The Italian clothing manufacturer, being the center topic of the story, is a story- level peg. Specific culturally resonant terms that appear in the text such as “Armani,” “Versace” and “truffa,” are word-level pegs, which also serve as “trait terms” in relation to category labels as already explained

In the case of a *New York Times* article (Rudoren, 2014) portraying the growing numbers of young Israelis leaving for Berlin, Germany to live and work, the headline stated, “In Exodus From Israel to Germany, a Young Nation's Fissures Show.” “Exodus” is a word-level culture peg as were “holocaust,” “hummus” and “anti-Zionist,” found in the early paragraphs of the article.

The culture peg can also be employed visually, such as in photos and illustrations that specifically evoke images of foreign countries/cultures in question. They can occupy a center image in the photo (e.g. a bull fighter in the Spanish story) or be

captured in the margins of the photo such as women wearing hijab or a dessert in the background in a Middle Eastern news story (Tanikawa, 2015a).

As shreds of cultural referents get woven into the article, they perhaps spawn and spur “myth” in the readers’ mind (Barthes, 1977). Barthes referred to a picture of “some packets of pasta, a tin, a sachet, some tomatoes, onions, peppers, a mushroom,” all emerging from a half-open string bag in the Panzani advertisement. The bits and pieces of words and images add up to a larger cultural picture in the audiences’ mind. Myths thus created work to solve the complexities of the world (Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Lule, 2001) and render the subject comprehensible to the audience; in their raw state, problems in foreign countries are too complicated and too unwieldy to comprehend for casual newspaper readers. Culture pegs, viewed in this way, are cultural meaning-making processes that help readers make sense of the world, by constructing a world view that is easily digestible and consistent with the worldviews of the readers.

While never clearly identified as such, the concept of culture peg is implicit in some of the classic works in international media and communication. Known among the earliest commentators/scholars of international communication, Walter Lippmann (2004, p.7) aptly remarked: “The only feeling that anyone can have about an event he does not experience is the feeling aroused by his mental image of that event.” The culture peg arouses the reader’s imagination of foreign countries of which they do not have direct experience or precise understanding by conjuring up images that readers generally have about that culture, a stereotypic understanding and perceptions that the population generally shares about that country/ culture, which is perhaps a result of exposure to mediated information.

In their widely cited classic study on international communication, Galtung and Ruge (1965) have gone much further than Lippmann in conceptualizing the notion of familiar references in foreign stories using such concepts as “resonance” “ethnocentrism,” “consonance,” “cultural proximity,” “expects” and “meaningful” all with apparent connection to the culture peg concept this dissertation addresses.

In listing factors in the news that register among readers as worthy such as “magnitude,” “frequency” and “unambiguity,” the authors identified as the fourth factor as follows: ‘Meaningful’ has some major interpretations. One of them is ‘interpretable within the cultural framework of the listener or reader’ and all the thesis says is that actually some measure of ethnocentrism will be operative: there has to be cultural proximity (Straubhaar 1991).

This apt statement raises a question: What specific content can one find in foreign news articles that are “within the cultural framework of the readers” and would display a measure of ethnocentrism? A very likely candidate would be stereotypic content regarding foreign countries, the culture peg. Stereotypes about other, foreign cultures – product of ethnocentrism - is an element familiar to the audience’s culture. As we shall examine later, they are culturally proximate as they actually are *part* of the audience’s culture.

As the “fifth” factor they offer the following:

The fifth hypothesis links what is selected to the mental pre-image, where the word ‘expects’ can and should be given both its cognitive interpretation as ‘predicts’ and its normative interpretation as ‘wants’. A person predicts that

something will happen and this creates a mental matrix for easy reception and registration of the event if it does finally take place. Or he wants it to happen and the matrix is even more prepared, so much so that he may distort perceptions he receives and provide himself with images consonant with what he has wanted. In the sense mentioned here 'news' are actually 'olds', because they correspond to what one expects to happen - and if they are too far away from the expectation they will not be registered, according to this hypothesis of consonance.

Stereotypical understanding of foreign culture “confirms” the reader expectation of that culture. Such content, as Galtung and Ruge argue, is designed (on purpose) to meet the expectation of the readers. “Expects” as pointed out earlier, help the reader schema absorb the information.

Taken together, what Galtung and Ruge were referring to were highly likely to have been the “cultural stereotype” more specifically what is described in this study as culture pegs. The observation that the pair has provided are perhaps yet the closest known previous investigation that approximate the concept under study in this dissertation. It is notable that they were looking at news somewhat critically, explaining why it plays to existing stereotypes. Some of the 1970s era critiques links to that to examine why Western news of foreign cultures is stereotypical.

Resonance as a construct

Schudson's (1989) preceding discussion on cultural forces contend that a rhetorically effective object must be relevant and resonant to the life of an audience. It will fail to captivate if the political symbolism they choose don't connect to the underlying native traditions that ordinary people participate in forming. Resonance is thus connected to "culturally constituted norms" of the people (p.169).

Foreign news inherently lacks resonance as it stands outside the cultural purview of the audience, unless the news employs the "culture link" (Tanikawa, 2015a) a matter of direct concern to the national readers such as news (meant for Americans) about American troops in Iraq or Afghanistan (Chang & Lee, 1992; Gans, 1979; Shoemaker, Danielian & Brendlinger, 1991), – a factor more appropriately called "relevance". News about a Spanish economic crisis may not have direct relevance to most American readers. But if the item contains culturally familiar elements (cultural pegs), it may have resonance. (As already alluded to, stereotypes can be seen as an element constitutive of the in-group culture thus can form part of the cultural norms of the people.)

In cultivation theory, resonance is a concept understood to increase the presumed effects of cultivation. It underlines the "double dose" of cultivation effects. The fear of crime, for instance, is strongest among those who live in high crime urban areas and therefore such news amplifies cultivation effects (Gerbner, 1998). Double dose works more on women (as opposed to men) as fear of crime is higher among women (Kwak, Zinkhan & Dominick, 2002). Resonance therefore occurs on the basis of whether or not the members of the audience possess certain demographic characteristics or have defined cultural orientations. The culture peg, when it works, is understood to have resonance on the audience because the audience shares the same cultural frame.

Discursiveness of culture

Resonance of the culture peg can be further analyzed by considering conceptual frameworks advanced by theorists from several different disciplines, who all seem to argue similarly about how cultural/social discourses work by describing a structure that integrates media producers on the one hand and the audience on the other. This is because both share in the discursive framework albeit being on the other side of the discourse and serving as a basis for similar cultural understanding by both. Clear areas of overlap exist among frameworks suggested by discourse analysts/ linguists (O'Donnell, 1994; van Dijk, 2007, 2013), framing scholars (Entman, 2004; van Gorp, 2007; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989), communication and cultural studies scholars (Hall, 1997; Halone, 2008; Schudson, 1989; Zegarac, 2008), sociologists (Bourdieu, 2001; Giddens, 1984) and researchers who work in the intersection of disciplines such as sociology, marketing, discourse, communication and sports promotion (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008, 2010).

Discourse analysts conceive of a discursive framework that publicly connects journalists and the audience (O'Donnell, 1994). Van Dijk specifically advocates the "socio-cognitive" perspective (van Dijk, 1990, 2007), which links the minds of the individuals to discourse created by social actors such as journalists and to broader social structures, which are in turn sustained by ideologies. Although the purpose of his models is to demonstrate the interface between social representations, including ideologies, on the one hand, and social practices and discourse on the other hand, they

are premised on seeing a connection between the cognition of the audience and that of the social actors such as journalists. The audience and the journalists share “world knowledge” which serves as the basis for understanding, for instance, of who is “They” and “We” (the ingroup and the outgroup) in the news texts (Garrett & Bell, p.7).

Framing researchers refer to similar concepts. Gamson & Modigliani (1989) argue that media discourse and public opinion are treated as “two parallel systems of constructing meaning,” (p.1). Under such a regime, the media are not viewed as influencing the public in a one-way street but as one of the two edges of the cliffs upon which the bridge (act of communication) rests – the other edge being the receiving public. The relative importance of media discourse depends on how readily available meaning generating experiences are in people’s everyday lives (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Framing, on the one hand, refers to the typical manner in which journalists shape news content within a familiar frame of reference and according to some latent structure of meaning and, on the other hand, to the audience who adopts these frames and sees the world in a similar way as the journalists do (McQuail, 2005; Tuchman, 1978). Van Gorp argues that framing serves as a bridging concept between cognition – of both the journalists and readers - and culture. Culture bridges between the journalist and audience as frames are tied in with shared cultural phenomena, and because of cultural resonances and narrative fidelity (Benford & Snow, 2000), it can be expected that media content evokes a schema tied to culture that is in line with the frame (van Gorp, 2007).

Culture thus mediates between news media and their discursive practice on the one hand and the readers and the audience. Van Gorp (2010) elaborates on culture and journalistic devices further: Journalists along with their sources and audience, draw upon the stock of frames that culture provides to them. Culture originates through communication and it is articulated in the mass media and in discourse (pp.88-89). Organizational routines of journalistic practice encourage the use of culturally embedded frames to tell stories about many topic and issues (van Gorp, 2010; Gamson et al., 1992).

Employing television broadcasters as an illustration, linguists Bach and Harnish (1979) contended that the success of media commentary depends on the acceptance of what they called “mutual context beliefs.” For the message to be effectively communicated between commentators and viewers, there must be a high degree of convergence between what “commentators, related to ‘language’ say and what the majority of viewers are likely to believe,” (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008, p.341). Halone (2008) shared in this line of thinking employing broadcast sports commentators who generate racialized sports accounts as an illustration. Relying on Giddens (1984)’s theory of structuration and the centrality of communication in the micro-level constitution and macro-level regulation of social life, Halone (2008) argued that sports spectators and sports commentators are inter-dependent: The sport commentator is interactively dependent on the sport spectator as he or she discursively enacts mediated accounts of athletic conduct. The sport spectator is interactively dependent on the sport commentator as they symbolically consume mediated accounts of athletic conduct. For

processes of racialized sports accounts to transpire —“both agencies must be in symbolic coexistence with each other,” (p.28).

Cultural scholars with a “culture as communication” viewpoint appear to take the position that communicative strengths derive from the audiences’ cultural make up (Schudson, 1989). This is because: “Culture cannot exist without some cultural representations being in the brains/minds of individuals” (Zegarac, 2007, p.3). Cultural groups are nearly defined by such shared cultural representations being held by a significant portion of the group. Culture is defined by shared meanings or shared conceptual maps (du Gay, 1997; Hall et al., 1997).

Research Questions

Research questions were formulated based on the preceding understanding from previous research on stereotype and culture. In order to survey the prevalence of the culture peg technique, this dissertation will analyze newspapers from three different countries from the developed regions of the world; the United States (North America), United Kingdom (Europe) and Japan (Asia). The first set of research questions raised are the following;

RQ1a: In major newspapers of the world (major American, British and Japanese newspapers), how prevalent is the use of cultural stereotypes (culture pegs) in quantity and frequency?

RQ1b: Has the quantity and frequency of use of culture pegs increased over the last 30 years (to 2014) ?

To investigate the quantitative and qualitative differences in how the culture peg is used between regions and countries, the following research questions are explored.

RQ2a: Does the use of culture pegs differ in different countries with different languages, quantitatively and qualitatively?

RQ2b: How is the use of culture peg technique different between the United States and Britain (same language and similar cultures but different country and region)?

RQ2c: How is the use of culture peg different between the US and UK on the one hand, and Japan where the language and culture are more different, on the other?

To investigate the culture peg in relations to other existing cultural strategies as elaborated in the literature review, the following research questions are postulated.

RQ3 : Is the culture peg a cultural device, employed as a discursive strategy in communication similar to the narrative, myths, archetypes, scripts, values and other items listed by cultural and literary scholars?

RQ4 : If the answer to RQ3 is in the affirmative (the culture peg is a cultural device), how does the culture peg work compare with mythology and other literary devices/frame packages known to journalism and literary scholars?

Chapter 2: Method

Methodological challenges

Among the most important characteristics of cultural studies is that scholars rely on a range of explanatory paradigms and deal fundamentally with issues of domination, that is, contestations of power (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996; Hall, 1997; Storey, 2012). To examine the cultural technique under question here (culture peg) that appears tied intimately with issues of cultural and symbolic nature as is evident in the preceding review of literature, this study resorts partially to the quantitative methodology of a content analysis. Are the cultural phenomena under study conducive to the quantitatively oriented methods?

Cultural scholars argue for the importance of “practice” in culture. William Sewell, Jr, a social historian, contends that culture is most fruitfully conceptualized as a dialectic between system and practice (Sewell, 2005). Culture is a system of symbols and meanings with a certain coherence and definition but is also a set of practices; the symbols and meanings can and do change over time.

Cultural studies scholars make similar arguments. In linking culture to the production of meaning, authors in the preceding section connect meaning to actions, utterances, texts and performances (Chaney, 1994; Thompson, 1990; Williams, 1983). Thompson (1990) has said: “Culture is a pattern of meanings embedded in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue

of which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions, and beliefs.”

James Lull (2000) argued that culture exists abstractly as a group’s customs, mores, traditions and values but it also takes form and materializes in social interaction. “The meaning of culture emerges in the dynamic nexus between abstraction and practice, between the pervasive and enduring mental structures of deep culture and the less entrenched surfaces of everyday life,” (p.130). While culture is not limited to the physical and the objectified, it does “emerge” in concrete forms, thus can be captured and examined physically. The research precision rests on the investigative quality with which such physically and the quantitatively studied objects are then linked back to theory and the explanatory nature of the study of culture.

Additionally, as has been documented in Tanikawa (2015a), culture pegs are deliberately encoded or placed in media texts to attract readers and thus are clearly observable in the media texts as a media routine (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013; Tuchman, 1978). There is, therefore, a certain consistency one can expect in how culture pegs are employed and embedded in the news text.

Content analysis

To gauge how and to what extent culture pegs are embedded in foreign news reporting, a content analysis is undertaken using the *New York Times*’ front section (section A), the *Guardian Weekly*’s and *Asahi Shimbun*’s foreign news sections. This quantitative methodology is expected to demonstrate the culture peg as a prevalent news writing

technique across regions and cultures - representing parts of Europe, Asia and North America. Samples were extended to different time periods to survey changes over time.

The three newspapers were chosen to represent some of the most widely read and elite news media with extensive international coverage in the United States, United Kingdom and Japan. *The New York Times* is widely recognized as the newspaper of record in the United States and commands influence over other American news media (Kiouisis, 2004; McCombs, 2014), especially in the foreign news arena (Golan, 2006). *The Guardian* occupies a similar place within British journalism (Sparks, 2000) as does *Asahi Shimbun* for Japan (Ishii, 1996; Shineha, Hibino & Kato, 2008).

While copies of the physical newspapers for *the New York Times* and *Asahi Shimbun* were available either in microfilm or reprinted formats, the same was not the case for *the Guardian*. However, a weekly digest version, *the Guardian Weekly* was available in a private library in Japan going back several decades and was thus used for sampling and coding. Instead of random sampling days of issues, however, the first seven issues of the *Guardian Weekly* from the beginning of September to the end of October of a given year were used. (The first of the seven issues is to be an issue covering the entire week in September. An issue that spanned from the end of August such as an issue of August 29th to September 4, was not chosen as the first of the seven issues. Instead the weekly issue of September 5 to September 12, was chosen as the first of the seven, for example.)

In a previous project, a constructed one-week sampling harvested from the two-month period of September and October, 2014, from *the New York Times*, yielded a total of 94 articles (Tanikawa, 2015a). In another study, the content analysis was

extended to the years 1985 and 2000 for the same newspaper using the same methodology (Tanikawa, unpublished). For the Guardian Weekly and Asahi Shimbun, which have yet to be content analyzed, the same periods, 1985, 2000 and 2014 were sampled with the same sampling methods.

The time points for comparison that go back to the 1980s was chosen as past literature suggests that the end of the Cold War caused the news media to explore new ways to cover international news that are more relevant to their audiences in the absence of severe international security threat (Cassara, 1993; Seaton, 1999). Also, over the last two to three decades, editors at major American news media have shown a greater perceived necessity to seek cultural relevance for their audience in conducting international news coverage (Chang, Southwell, Lee & Hong, 2012). For the most recent period, the year 2015 was avoided because the Syrian refugee crisis which resulted in a large influx of refugee arrivals in Europe triggered incessant news coverage, mainly in September and October of 2015, during which time nearly daily coverage resulted in two to three articles on the subject on some days. Articles in major world newspapers were awash in culturally oriented content and images emanating from a single news topic. The year 2014 was chosen as the most recent time period for content analysis instead. (As of early 2016 when this investigation was initiated, the 2016 content was not available)

Content analysis: Culture Pegs

As explained, a culture peg attempts to make the foreign story culturally pertinent to readers by inserting elements that are already familiar to home readers. To allow for precise operationalization, the concept was divided into word level and story level constructs, and were coded separately.

Culture pegs at the “word” level and the “story” level

Instances of culture pegs are to be identified at the word level, and at the story level. Culture pegs at the word level refers to individual words and phrases that invoke the image of a foreign culture in the minds of the reader. Words “kiwi” and “sheep” are evocative of New Zealand and its culture, as are “temple” and “panda” for China. Therefore, these words are considered word-level culture peg and will be coded as such. Meanwhile, a *New York Times* article from New Zealand revolving around the kiwi fruit industry devastated by an insect attack (November 14, 2010) would be identified as having a “story-level” culture peg as the kiwi fruit was the dominant theme for the entire article.

Coding Scheme

Foreign news articles are defined as those with a foreign dateline and those placed inside newspaper pages that are specifically marked as “foreign news section.” Small articles that constitute a “news roundup” type of section were excluded.

A constructed week sample (Riffe, Aust & Lacy, 1993) was gathered from the months of September and October in 1985 and 2000 and 2014 respectively. Instances of word-

level culture peg will be searched and coded in the headlines and subheads, and the first five paragraphs of the text. For story level culture peg, coders were instructed to read beyond the first five paragraphs until the overall theme of the article became clear. They were then judged if the topic of the article contained a culture peg.

Inter-coder reliability was assessed for identifying and determining word level and story level culture pegs for each newspaper, NYT, the Guardian and Asahi. All content was coded by the author and approximately 15 percent of NYT and 10 percent of the Guardian and Asahi were double coded for inter-coder reliability assessments. For this purpose, a native speaker of English and a near native speaker of English (who was educated in the United States) were engaged for the double coding of NYT. A British coder was employed for the double coding of the Guardian. A Japanese native speaker was employed for double coding of Asahi. A native speaker for each medium was employed to ensure that no nuance was missed regarding what constituted stereotypes as perceived by the newspaper's home audience. A British coder was deemed necessary to code the Guardian because there may be stereotypes of other cultures that an American coder may not share, for example. These assessments resulted in the inter-coder reliability rates based on simple agreement of .852 for NYT, .893 for the Guardian and .774 for Asahi.

Data analysis

Numbers and data, once obtained, will be subjected to two samples proportion tests with the aim of examining if the growth (or decline) of the culture peg was statistically significant between different periods.

Structured textual analysis

From the findings of the content analysis, a further analysis will be conducted to identify and assess articles found to have displayed a story-level culture peg as a possible site where extended cultural dimensions such as myths, archetypes and values (Lule, 2001; van Gorp, 2007) in the news are displayed. While word level culture pegs are found in isolation - in some instances only one word peg was found in a given article (Tanikawa, 2015a), articles that revolve around a cultural theme (story level peg) are expected to offer a rich vein of cultural texture along the lines cultural and literary scholars have argued in their literature. This is because a story that revolves around a peg are more likely to contain a packaged narrative that makes use of a symbolic imagery.

This segment of the analysis conducts a qualitative textual and narrative analysis within a quantitative framework - what texts to analyze were randomly determined by the quantitative content analysis method as described already. Textual analysis of the news texts was predicated on the journalism scholarship's "search for the common thematic and structural choices reporters and editors make consistently over time and across types of news media," (Kitch, 2007, p.118; Also see Bird & Dardenne, 1997 and Darnton, 1975).

The body of articles to be analyzed – the corpus - was structurally determined as those articles with story level pegs found within the sample of the content analysis in all years; 1985, 2000 and 2014 (September and October). The inquiry will be expanded by drawing on another type of newspaper articles outside of these primary cases. Such secondary cases are sought in recent articles in the sampled newspapers, NYT, Guardian and Asahi, as they relate to the leading cases in theme, structure and other literary and cultural elements pertinent to the analyses (further discussion in the Discussion section).

Chapter 3: Results/Findings

Overview

This section will provide findings of the content analysis of the *New York Times* (NYT), *Guardian Weekly* (Guardian) and *Asahi Shimbun* (Asahi) for the three periods of examination - 1985, 2000 and 2014. Results of the NYT content analysis for the year 2014 were originally published in Tanikawa (2015a). The 1985 and 2000 findings from NYT were researched for Tanikawa (unpublished) and was not the original part this dissertation research although the findings were used for a different theoretical purpose in that research, which was to refute the concept of global journalism (Berglez, 2008).

Overall, use of culture pegs was identified extensively in all three newspapers in all three periods. The volume of word-level culture pegs has increased over the last three decades in all three newspapers with the growth being statistically significant between 1985 and 2014 for all papers based on the statistical methods described below. However, variation in the volume of foreign news for each newspaper in different years call for individual analyses and qualifying explanations. (Table 1)

The growth was most pronounced for NYT. The number of word-level pegs substantially grew from 43 found in 139 articles (0.3 per one article) in 1985 to 113 found in 94 articles (1.2 per one article) in 2014, a fourth-fold increase on per article basis. Two samples proportions tests (one tailed) were conducted to test if the increase in the 29-year period and in between periods were statistically significant. Before implementing this test, each article was counted on the number of words basis - per the

first five paragraphs, which were the number of paragraphs examined in the content analysis.² The increase in word-level culture peg was statistically significant at alpha level of $p < .01$ ($z = -2.7756$, one tailed) from 1985 to 2000 and then from 2000 to 2014 ($z = -5.5877$). (The test was one tailed as the analysis was to examine growth in only one direction – from past to the future - indicated by negative z scores.)

Culture peg use grew similarly over the years in the Guardian, although in a less pronounced manner given that the number of foreign news articles in the British paper grew simultaneously. World-level culture pegs rose from 62 found in 99 articles (0.63 per article) in 1985 to 121 in 97 articles (1.24 per article) in 2000 and to 171 found in 131 articles (1.30 per article) in 2014. Two samples proportions tests show the increase was statistically significant at alpha level of $p < .01$ ($z = -4.5015$, one tailed) from 1985 to 2000. The same was not the case between 2000 and 2014 ($z = -0.2825$, one tailed) where the test did not pass the threshold of significance ($p > .05$) However, the growth between 1985 to 2014 was statistically significant at alpha level of $p < .01$ where the z score (negative) was greater than between 1985 and 2000 ($z = -4.9761$).

Growth in word-level culture pegs was even less dynamic for Asahi, rising from 112 instances in 143 articles (0.78 per one article) in 1985 to 95 in 73 articles (1.3 per

² Word count for “Five paragraphs” was calculated by the average number of words found in the first five paragraphs of the articles examined. This was executed by randomly sampling approximately 5% of all examined articles to determine the average number of words per first five paragraphs. In the NYT, the average number was 1250 words and in the Guardian, 1125 words. Japanese language text is not countable in word terms as some words are not physically separable from one another. Thus the text was counted in number of letter terms as is commonly done in Japanese language. Average number of letters per five paragraphs was 553 letters. (Japanese letters as characters contain much meaning by themselves thus the number appears low compared to the number of words in English language texts.)

article) in 2014. Increase over the 15-year period between 1985 to 2000 did not pass the threshold of statistical significance ($z = -0.6542$). But the rise of word level culture pegs from 2000 to 2014 was statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = -3.5821$) and so was between 1985 to 2014 ($z = -3.5821$). Culture pegs at the word-level was most abundant in the Japanese newspaper overall

Story-level pegs similarly grew over time for all three newspapers to reach the highest numbers in 2014 (For Asahi, numbers were tied for 2000 and 2014). The instances of them were too few to subject to meaningful statistical tests, however. (Articles with story-level pegs, would be utilized for the textual analysis described below) Eight story level pegs were recorded in 1985, five in 2000 and eleven in 2014 for NYT. The Guardian posted five in 1985, 13 in 2000, and 21 in 2014. Asahi yielded nine in 1985, ten in 2000 and ten in 2014.

Overall, in 2014, the most recent period, culture pegs were found in 39 percent of the articles in NYT (37 out of 94 articles contained some form of the culture peg), 38 percent in the Guardian (56 out of 131 articles), and 48 percent in Asahi (36 out of 74 articles). The culture peg is a pervasive phenomenon in internationally influential news media.

On the face of it, these findings allow answering RQ 1 and RQ 2 rather simply: culture pegs have existed in all three newspapers representing different corners of the advanced world and have shown a steady increase over the last three decades. A closer examination of their use, however, becomes necessary for each news medium for a more precise understanding of this content phenomenon.

Use of culture pegs: a micro examination

Here, specific examples are provided to reveal more texture and contours of the culture peg phenomena in the different papers. Yet, one clearly observable finding overall is that the creation of the culture peg and pattern of insertion was similar in different years and different papers. Most commonly, the word-level peg – representing a trait term – appear to be inserted intentionally to create a connection with the category label - the country/ culture that is the article’s main subject.

In NYT, growth in the word level peg was most rapid from 2000 to 2014, and it was thus in 2014 that word-level pegs became a pervasive textual and stylistic phenomenon. A story on Kenya’s economic growth and inpouring of western investments and goods (Oct. 17, 2014), included expressions such as “mzungu” (a Swahili term meaning westerner or a “white person”) and “safari-goers.” Other examples in 2014 include “H&M” and “Ikea” as among the symbolic names inserted in an economic story from Sweden – how Swedes grew tired of privatization - (Sept. 9, 2014) as was “Social Democrats.” A highly common word-level culture peg found in Russia related articles is “Soviet.” An October 12, 2014 article on the airplane manufacturing industry in Ukraine being in the doldrums noted that the aerospace industry once “symbolized Soviet might,” even though the article did not discuss the history of Soviet Union or anything related to the empire that collapsed in 1991.

Guardian’s prolific use of culture pegs was evident throughout 2000 and 2014. They appeared much less often in the earlier year of 1985, although it was not clear why

the jump occurred in 2000 for the Guardian and not for NYT. An October 10-16, 2014 article on military equipment failure in Germany referred to “Nazi-Germany” in a passage only remotely related to the main topic, showing the writer’s intent to infuse elements of cultural resonance in the text, as in most other examples. Similarly, the October 3-9, 2014 issue on Obama’s visit to the United Nations for the general assembly mentioned “George W Bush’s war on terror” in passing, reflecting on a notable past US behavior – in the view of the British. Other instances of word-level pegs in the Guardian include “Franco” in a Spanish story (Sept. 19-25, 2014), “Rugby” in an article from New Zealand (Sept 26 - Oct 2, 2014). An October 5-11, 2000 article from Copenhagen referred to “nej sayers” for Danes saying “no” to joining the single currency arrangement with the European Union.

The Japanese newspaper Asahi also displayed extensive use of culture pegs. In an article about the Chinese president visiting India, references were made to the birthplace of “Gandhi” and the Indian “IT industry” (Sept 18, 2014). Similarly, an article from Italy about American actor George Clooney holding his wedding with his Lebanese bridegroom Amal Aramdinn (Sept 29, 2014) referred to the “city of water,” a Japanese cliché for Venice. In that occasion, the article noted, there was no shortage of “paparazzi” chasing the celebrity couple.

Japanese news is wrought with clichés, stock phrases and platitudes. Other examples include “in-pa,” referring to India and Pakistan - in news when the two South Asian states are engaged in a military conflict (Oct 12, 2014). “In-pa” is almost never used in contexts not involving a military confrontation between India and Pakistan as a matter of language use. “Nanboku”-chosen or “South-North” Korea is another example

of a set phrase arising from news contexts involving an ever-continuing military or political conflict – in this case those between the two Koreas (Sept 18, 2014; Oct 12, 2014).

In all uses and contexts, the culture peg at the word level seems to be an arbitrary insertion, consistent with the idea that it is designed to promote an association between the readers (their knowledge of particular aspects of the culture or traits) and the subject matter (or category label).

Resort to a culture peg was manifest also in the topical choice itself (story level peg) in all three newspapers. The use of this topic-setting technique was most abundant in the recent period (2014) in all three papers as already mentioned. Content analysis of the Guardian uncovered the largest number (21) in 2014 of all three papers. A feature from India, for instance, described the government drive to improve sanitation in public areas (Sept 5-11, 2014) – on the presumption that India faces public sanitation issues. An October, 3-9, 2014 (Guardian) feature, “Sand and graft threaten end to Timbuktu,” preported on the ancient city of Timbuktu, Mali, which seems to be one of the few places on the African continent that powerfully stirs the imagination of western readers. Timbuktu, which appears in many a writings in English novels, is in fact a common word image, or a short hand, for “a far-way place” (Oxford Dictionary, 2008).

The article in fact is only vaguely pegged to a recent development concerning the continued erosion of culture and heritage of the city. The article could have been written at any earlier point and is simply a regurgitation of the destination reporting that is a favorite for the western press, traceable to the structure and dictates of the “traveler’s

tale” (Ibelema, 2014). It is the traveler’s tales of exotic customs, cultures and peoples, which function as a form of entertainment for the news audience (Pearce & Kang, 1988).

In NYT, eleven story-level pegs were found in 2014 but much fewer in earlier periods, although the manner in which the technique is applied appear well established in the earlier period. (More examples of story level pegs from the NYT appear in the Discussion section). A NYT story (Sep.11, 2000) described musicians in Nigeria who defied government dictators by telling the story in “Afro-beat” sounds, a variety of music that people often associate with Africa and/or African American artists. The musician, who was deceased - his cause of death was AIDS - but succeeded by his sons, challenged the authority and the ruthless dictators who ignored democratic governance. AIDS and senseless despots appear to be common referents in African stories. Another NYT story on September 1, 2000, reported on an exhibition that displayed Poland's past: the Polish struggle with its brand of communism and domination by the Soviet Union in the 1960s-80s, a well known point of history about Poland and other Eastern European countries which experienced similar fate such as Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia. An October 14, 2014 feature article in Asahi from Brazil took up the ‘slums’ in Rio and the popular tours for holiday-makers in anticipation of the 2016 Olympics in Rio. It described the crushing poverty rates and poor sanitation that often leads to outbreaks of Denge fever.

The three news outlets exhibited similar trends - in how culture peg use grew in tandem over the course of the three decades (RQ2 a,b,c) and in their patterns and structure of culture peg uses as explained above. But some details were notable.

Among the three periods, increase between 2000 and 2014 was greatest for NYT but not for the Guardian. In the British newspaper, use of the culture peg increased most markedly between 1985 and 2000. Similarly confounding was the voluminous use of culture pegs in the Japanese press since the earlier period. Absent a solid previous research in the cultural and linguistic orientations of the Japanese press, it is rather difficult to determine and identify its precise cause. One conjecture is that Japanese people and social groups within the country tend to hold a strong sense of “we” (ingroup) versus “they” (outgroup), concerning the school they attend and the companies they work for as well as a people versus other nations/cultures, according to prominent sociologist Chie Nakane (1967) who conducted comparative (international) field studies. Thus when Japanese journalists report on the outside world, one might speculate that they are likely to employ stereotypes for the sake of comprehension and self-enhancement perhaps more than other national news media. (How the we - they dichotomy leads to an adoption of stereotype is elaborated in the Discussion section)

Lacking broad Japanese journalism scholarship on the matter regarding mass media and adoption of stereotypes, it would be beyond the scope of this research to precisely investigate the background to the prevalent use of the culture peg in Asahi. However, predominant use of the culture peg in the Japanese newspaper and in patterns similar to their American and English counterparts suggest that stereotyping of foreign cultures in the news is a practice not limited to the English language/ western press but might be widespread in other regions and in other languages and cultures. It is a content phenomenon that deserves investigating in depth in other socio-economically developed countries and cultures similar to the US, UK and Japan.

Photographic use

While photographs were not content analyzed in this project - except for NYT for 2014 published in Tanikawa (2015a) - newspapers have generally beefed up their graphics use (Franklin, 2008) and thus symbolic imageries reflecting the thematic content were powerfully displayed in all newspapers analyzed for this dissertation for 2014. Liberal use of photos and illustrations in 2014 for NYT and Guardian stood in clear contrast to previous years of 2000 and 1985. When India was featured for its premier visit to the United States or China, images of Indian decoration were on prominent display (NYT) and when coverage concerned the Middle East, most notably relating to conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, people wearing head dresses and the hijab were highly salient in NYT and Guardian. Photographic use was much less prominent in Asahi. Generally speaking, Japanese newspapers use much fewer graphics in their news pages.

Textual analysis of story-level pegs: a macro examination

This segment will analyze articles found to have exhibited story-level culture pegs from the content analysis of NYT, Guardian and Asahi employing a combined quantitative and qualitative frameworks for selection and analysis. The method was based on the quantitative approach in how the sampling frame was randomly chosen and the determination of the story-level articles drew on standard quantitative content analysis methodology with inter-coder reliability tests. Once the articles with story level culture

pegs were identified, however, the inductive method of identifying and assigning codes was employed – in accordance with the qualitative methodological approach - to analyze and categorize all the articles in the sample, to be subject to textual analyses.

Articles with story-level pegs were considered a site where extended cultural dimensions such as the discursive and mythical aspects of news might be exhibited (Kitch, 2007; Lule, 2001) and are likely to offer rich textual materials for literary and historical analysis. (Further discussion that draws on this type of literature will be carried out in the Discussion section). The body of articles to be analyzed was defined as those articles with story level pegs found within the sample of the content analysis in 1985, 2000 and 2014 in the three newspapers. Consisting of 25 story-level pegs in NYT, 39 in Guardian and 29 in Asahi (a total of $N=93$ articles) these articles will serve as primary cases for textual analysis.

It will then expand the inquiry by drawing on another type of newspaper articles outside of these primary cases for analysis in the Discussion section. Such secondary cases are sought in recent articles in sampled newspapers, NYT, Guardian and Asahi, as they relate to the leading cases in theme, structure and other literary and cultural themes pertinent to the analyses. The goal is to present sufficiently dense textual materials as well as to be non-arbitrary in selecting the articles by remaining within randomly sampled materials - with the exception of a few secondary cases as a method of supplementing the analysis.

As indicated in the method section, the textual analysis was predicated on the journalism scholarship's "search for the common thematic and structural choices

reporters and editors make consistently over time and across types of news media,”(Kitch, 2007, p.118). The three different time periods, 1985, 2000 and 2014, and the three different news media from different regions of the world generated relevant conditions for analysis.

The primary guiding principle in identifying the codes and patterns came from the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1997), which calls for identifying broader patterns and systematic codes from among the research data in an inductive, ground up fashion. As researchers review the data collected, repeated ideas, concepts or elements become apparent, and are tagged with codes, which have been extracted from the data. As more data are collected, are reviewed, codes can be grouped into concepts, and then into categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The process was conceived as iterative, not simply grounded, alternating between emergent readings of the data and the etic use of existing models, explanations, and theories (Tracy, 2013; van Gorp, 2010).

Thus, in examining the content structures of the articles, the intersection of defining characteristics of myths and stereotypes were considered. Myth is understood as a societal story that expresses prevailing ideas, ideologies, values and beliefs, and is “an essential social narrative, a rich and enduring aspect of human existence,” (Lule, 2002, p.277). Myth is characterized by its timelessness and roots in culture. For an article to possess enduring aspects, the story must have been told and retold many times over an extended period of time. Stereotype as already discussed is also rooted in culture and is commonly shared within the in-group (Mackie, 1973; Stangor & Schallor, 1996). The spreading and sharing of cultural knowledge could not have taken place without an

accumulation in perception and understanding, perhaps aided by the influence of the news media as social psychologists in the cultural school have asserted (Kashima, Fiedler & Freytag, 2008; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994; Stangor, 2015). Viewing these primary characteristics, timelessness /historicity of the story's content structure, as derived from repeated media mentions or a point of knowledge from antiquity within a culture, emerged as consistent patterns/features and also relatively objective and potentially reliable measure to classify articles. The mythical equality of news drives from resonance (Bird & Dardenne, 1997), the feeling that we have written or read the same stories over and over again. As this researcher analyzed all story level articles, timelessness/historicity emerged as the overriding thread among most of them. (More discussion and analysis on the historicity of myth is found in the Discussion section).

Yet, there appeared to be two dimensions of timelessness, one set in an event from ancient times, and another, more recent happenings that are based on many decades of built-up images and understanding, spawned by media reporting. Finally, there were topical threads that did not seem to belong fully to either of these temporal dimension of coverage, but still strongly displayed stereotypic content characteristic. Those were based on the "lived experiences" of the audience. However, as could be well imagined, common lived experiences of a foreign culture such as a foreign cuisine (i.e ethnic cuisines), foreign products (i.e. Volkswagen, Samsung TV), and foreign celebrities (i.e. members of British royal family) would be rather limited in scope and number.

The process of analysis thus identified three content categories into which all articles were placed.

The news article in question:

1. highlighted some well-known, time-honored histories of that country/culture that go back centuries. (Type 1)
2. used images spawned by decades of built-up media reporting about that country. (Type 2)
3. drew on aspects of a culture that form part of the lived experiences of the reading audiences. (Type 3)

The first type (Type 1) of articles pegs the story to ancient and long enduring images of the country/culture such as the article describing Chinese president Xi Jinping's propensity to invoke and cite ancient Chinese sages - such as Mencius and Confucius - for wisdom in governing (Oct 12, 2014) or a story about a German mayor crusading to preserve an ancient ruin known as the birthplace for "Catherine the Great" who famously ruled the Russian Empire in the 18th century, or an article that reports on Jerusalem mayor's proposal on the territorial control of the city in Asahi (Sept 1, 2014). Topics concerning ancient Jewish ceremonies and tradition fall into this domain, as would Catholic history and conventions. (See the Table 2-4) Such articles are topically pinned on a well-known point of knowledge of antiquity going back centuries.

The second type (Type 2) of article revolves around a familiar theme or a historical event where the image was built over decades by the media to create a set understanding by the audience relating to the country in question. This could be the lingering issue of racial segregation and legacy of apartheid in South Africa (Guardian, Sept 19-25, 2014), elephant poaching in the African continent, a Palestinian uprising

against Israel (NYT, Sept 18, 2014), or Japan's historical issue with China over war-time (WWII) atrocities committed by the former (NYT, Oct 17, 2014). For the purpose of classification, those issues that go back up to a century was considered to be Type 2. Those that date back further such as the US history/legacy of the "Confederacy" (Guardian, Oct 11, 2000) were considered Type 1.

Both Type 1 and 2 are rooted in ancient history or an accumulated period of time (in which certain images were created) leading up to today. Some culture pegs are not rooted in such timeless events or recent history. "Lived experiences" (type 3) are invoked in articles that thematically contain products, services, concepts and ideas originating in other countries that touch upon the lives of the reader in the current time. In the September 29, 2014 front page feature in NYT, Thai officials deplored the uneven quality of Thai cuisine served around the world and began initiating efforts to impose a standard by introducing a taste testing machine. "Thai food" would be a strong case of culture peg or a stereotype concerning Thailand. Because of its ubiquity in the United States and in many western countries, Thai food (in restaurants) is arguably part of the lived experiences of much of the audience, especially of the middle class and upper middle class that constitute the NYT and Guardian readership.

Chapter 4: Discussion

The content analysis of three newspapers in the preceding sections has demonstrated that the cultural techniques - culture peg at the word and story levels - permeate news articles across time (1985-2014) and across space/geography (US, UK, and Japan). How can its widespread use and increase over time be explained theoretically from existing cultural, linguistic, social psychological and critical perspectives? And what does its extensive usage and proliferation in the past decades indicate about the way the media go about telling their audience about the world?

This section begins with the analysis of how the extant cultural (and communication) theories support, explain and interact with the logic of culture pegs in news texts including if the culture peg can be perceived as a “cultural device” - those discursive tools employed in mass mediated communication such as the narrative, myths, archetypes, scripts, values and other items listed by cultural and literary scholars (RQ3, 4). It will in turn be followed by similar analyses from the perspectives of other disciplines: linguistics/anthropology, social psychology and critical studies based on the theoretical underpinnings described in the literature review. Examples of articles cited in this segment come from the “primary cases,” those articles found in the sample frame of the content analysis from the years 1985, 2000 and 2014, unless otherwise noted. (When they are noted, they come from the “secondary cases” as described in the Method section)

Cultural Studies: Narrative, myth, values and other cultural devices

Culture peg as a “cultural tool”

From the body of materials examined for the word-level and story-level culture pegs in the previous section emanate textual features that match those identified by cultural theorists in their discursive studies of culture. From the “culture as communication” viewpoint, Chaney (1994) has said that culture is above all else discursive and has thus become “a general term for the sea of discourses and regimes of signification through which we constitute lived experience” (Chaney, 1994, p.191). Culture, therefore, functions as a resource because it provides “available meanings” (p.32) that greatly influence what can be expressed by the members of culture in order to fashion distinctive habits, skills, styles, and social strategies. The available meanings in turn become devices for understanding and how to take and interpret media messages by audience members. Culture pegs in their various formations (word-level, story-level and different types) provide journalists with tools to conceive and build stories which - by combining with factual information and current events (i.e. Spanish economic crisis) - strike at readers’ knowledge/understanding of other cultures.

Schudson (1989) has highlighted the features of culture that enhance the communicative strengths of the text: retrievability, rhetorical force and resonance. For culture pegs to work, the audience must possess the cultural knowledge that the pegs in the text are aiming to tap into. Such knowledge must be cognitively available

(retrievable) to the person. Articles that play off readers' stereotypic knowledge about other cultures, such as those that tie the movement of the Buddhist monks to South Asia (NYT, Sept 29, 2014), the dam project in the Nile to Northeast Africa (NYT, Oct 12, 2014), illegal poaching to Africa (Guardian, Oct 9, 2014), and the slums and poverty in the city to Rio in Brazil (Asahi, Oct 17, 2014) presume that such understanding is pre-present in most of the readers' consciousness. Such must be perceptually and cognitively available to the audience to elicit reaction.

Stories that are rooted in ancient history and geography (Buddhism in Asia and the Nile River in Africa) may help make the material appear "meaningful" because it connects contemporary happenings to knowledge of basic history or geography, perhaps widely taught in secondary education, etc. Such knowledge might be more available and known to the audience - than contemporary political and social information about other countries (e.g. names of heads of state, results of recent general elections, etc.). Certain understandings that underlie culture pegs which are less historic but reflect decades of media-induced understanding of other countries such as slums and poverty in Brazil and the policy of apartheid in South Africa in the 20th century (Type 2, defined in the method section) may have a higher chance of being registered in readers' knowledge networks than contemporary political and social events. Schools and media are social organizations that "institutionalize" such knowledge - Schudson's fourth element - that ensure its availability and retrievability to readers.

Efficacy of cultural objects would be enhanced by their memorability (Schudson, 1989). "The rhetorical dimension of the object, which lifts its evocativeness, includes vividness of the description, attention-grabbing writing techniques and resort to

anecdotal and storytelling methodology,” (pp.164-167). The rhetorical dimension of the text is an important part of the strategy for communication (Schudson, 1989), as it offers a method to hook the audience and keep them engaged. Such methods of engagement are a crucial aspect of culture’s communicative dimensions (Schudson, 1989). Since the culture peg aspect of the article is a salient feature and a focal point of the newsworthiness of the story (Tanikawa, 2015a) and is made to stand out when it is present, a distinct rhetorical style of writing often emerges with it.

A September 16, 2014 Guardian article on Timbuktu (Mali), where the city itself is the culture peg as noted, opened as follows:

The 45-year-old slaughterer wears a blood-splattered blue T-shirt. Everyone says he got his nickname because he dances like a Rolling Stone. His blade has been refashioned from sharpening. Its handle is impregnated with blood.

Someone calls “Jagger!”, and the crowd forms a human passageway to the kill. The camel’s hooves are tied together. The animal is silent; everyone is. Jagger ambles up, mumbles “Allahu Akbar” and delivers two strokes of the knife to its neck.

Blood pours from the twitching animal, settling like a crimson lake on the pale sand. Now Jagger has something to say. “We are not proud of killing a camel and this one was young. But there are not enough cattle at this time of year, because of the [lack of] rain. There used to be grazing all year round. Until the 1973 drought, there were even trees here,” he says indicating the bald dunes encroaching on the northern city limits.

The lead segment then concludes by noting that Timbuktu, the city of gold, is “slowly turning to dust,” due to human neglect, war and greed, not only because of natural forces.

Standing in clear contrasts to the inverted pyramid style of straight news writing with the factual 5W1H (Who, what, when, where, why and how) included in the lead - which itself is diminishing (Tanikawa, 2014) – this article is embellished with rhetorical flourishes, embracing many a similes and metaphors such as “Its handle is impregnated with blood” and “the twitching animal, settling like a crimson lake on the pale sand.” Such literary phrases in the news texts are calculated to render the text memorable to the readers (Scanlan, 2000). Writerly and novelistic styles are increasingly common in news and feature writing in leading American news media (Abrahamson, 2006), especially in the headlines and lead segments of articles (Tanikawa, 2015b) which are a rich site for rhetorical and novelistic expressions. This is especially the case for non-breaking news but its use is sometimes found in breaking news as well (Tanikawa, 2015b).

Similar impact in memorability (rhetorical force) is sought in word forms (word-level culture peg), although they may be more sporadic and more micro in strategy. In the Guardian article (Oct 19-25, 2014) about Italians protesting against the onslaught of the McDonald’s chain in cities across Italy, protesters in Rome, Naples, Palermo and Turin were reportedly chanting, “Better a day of tortellini than 100 days of hamburgers” (“tortellini” was the word-level culture peg). Another Guardian article from the Oct 19-25, 2000 issue on the flare-up between the Arabs and the Jews in West Bank stated in

its subhead: “Atrocities multiply in a biblical thirst for vengeance as two communities put their trust in extremists.”

A similar case could be made of Japanese rhetorical expressions. The city of Venice in the article about George Clooney’s wedding (Asahi, Sept. 29, 2014) was referred to as the “city of water,” a Japanese cliché for Venice. The prominence of this expression’s usage can be noted in the headline: “George Clooney Weds in the City of Water.” (No mention of Venice in the headline.) “City” here in Japanese language is not the common “toshi” or “machi” but the novelistic “miyako,” the word often reserved for cities of antiquity such as Xi’an of China (formerly, Chang'an) and Kyoto of Japan. Thus miyako cannot be used without producing a highly rhetorical connotation. It is evocative of the history, elegance and the grandeur of Venice.

Schudson sees a broader element of the efficacy of culture in *resonance*, shared cultural beliefs that must be present in the readership for the cultural strategies to work. The notion of resonance could be explained from a range of perspectives but here, widely accepted and stereotypical information about foreign countries/cultures is the select knowledge meant to resonate in the target audience: it resonates because it is a stereotype for people of the country/culture. There is a shared understanding by cultural members of what constitutes that (foreign) culture (Semin, 2008; Stangor & Schaller, 1996) about which one is reading, because, as cultural scholars have noted, stereotypes of the outgroup is a constituent element of the culture of the in-group (Zald, 1996). When journalists employ the culture peg, it resounds within the cultural frame (schema) of the audience members because the media content is culturally and thus discursively aligned with the audience’s cultural frame (Desmarais & Bruce, 2010; van Gorp, 2007).

Culture peg *is* a cultural device and a discursive one at that - available to journalists and other media makers for use in the media texts. They take advantage of available meanings in culture - a resource for journalists - and knowledge that are retrievable from readers' cognitions and memories. They are based on particular types of knowledge (history and lived experience) - they gain force and impact when used in conjunction with rhetoric and style to make them "meaningful." Culture pegs exist in specific formations, words and themes for the article, and embedded in the text – reflecting stereotypical notions of other cultures to which previous writers and scholars Lippmann (1922) and Galtung and Ruge (1965) were only referring in abstract terms.

If the culture peg is a cultural device, an ironic implication emanates from this proposition. It follows that stereotypic content in the news media, structured as it is and, functioning like a cultural device, renders the texts resonant, meaningful and memorable. This is consistent with the notion that stereotype is part of (the ingroup) culture, as culture provides and is a resource that makes communication meaningful (Hall, 1997; Storey, 2012; Thompson, 1990). (Further discussion on this point will be offered later in the discussion.) If stereotype per se does not make a text meaningful and memorable, it functions and is used as an organizing mechanism for the text (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008) - suggesting that a story-level culture peg does organize a story.

To the extent that the culture peg is a tool for culture, it is consistent with the tool-kit view of culture, serving as a readily available device for people wanting to employ it to promote certain messages (Swidler, 1986). Making sense of the world requires an effort, argued Gamson and Modiaglini (1989): "those tools that are

developed, spotlighted, and made readily accessible have a higher probability of being used.”(p.10) Yet, Schudson (1989) argues, the uses to which an audience puts a cultural object are not necessarily personal or idiosyncratic as the needs or interests of the audience are socially and culturally constituted. “What is resonant is not a question how culture connects to individual interests but a matter of how culture connects to interests that are themselves constituted in a cultural frame,”(p.169). Political and social power must be accounted for to gain the full understanding of how culture works.

News, culture and myth

The literature has established that news is connected to culture through textual forms such as narratives (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996; Lule, 2001). The news genre is considered a particular kind of symbolic system (Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Corrigan, 1984) which forms part of the audiences’ cultural frame. Of the narrative forms, myth appears to play a significant role in culture and in the news as journalism scholars have amply demonstrated (Alwood, 2010; Kitch 2007; Lule, 2002) because of its role to cover for that which cannot be explained in plain language such as untold human suffering.

Roland Barthes has said (1977) that myth in the news is difficult to define because it is designed to work best when it blends in the story in such a way that *it goes without saying*. Myth does not refute anything. Rather it gives the story natural and eternal justification (Barthes, 1977).

Yet, there appears to be an important intersection between culture pegs at the story level and myth: an image of a foreign country built up on bits and pieces of “culture

pegs” revolving around a stereotypic theme, and composed of words, phrases as well as sometimes visual images (Tanikawa, 2015a), often constitute a myth. Barthes’s example of the Panzani advertisement teeming with symbolic images of Italy with a picture of packets of pasta, a tin, a sachet, some tomatoes, onions, peppers, a mushroom, all emerging from a half-open string bag indicating the cultural theme or concept of ‘Italianicity’ or ‘Italian-ness’ is for all intents and purpose, a culture peg. Then at the level of the myth or meta-language, he said, the Panzani ad becomes a message about the essential meaning of Italian-ness as a national culture. By virtue of his definition, and in so far as story-level culture pegs thematically radiate a particular national cultural motif, it is also helping constitute a myth.

Story-level culture pegs work to resolve the mystique of foreign cultures which cannot easily be explained and be understood by the audience because of their vast contextual complexities: contemporary issues of social, political and cultural nature of a foreign society by definition require much unpacking, decontextualization and explanation. For example, “the leader” of a country does not mean the same thing for the United States and China. (i.e. President of the United States compared to that of China.) The culture peg – as a form a stereotype – adds fodder for myth creation.

Specific examples of a mythical image commonly applied to in the international news include the aforementioned Chinese classics (NYT, Oct 12, 2014), Jewish women conducting Bat Mitzvah ceremonies in Israel (NYT, Oct 25, 2014), musicians defying dictators in Nigeria (Sep.11, 2000), illegal logging in the Amazon forest (Guardian, Oct 17-23, 2014), Romania dealing with its communist past (Guardian, Oct 3-9, 2014), American Indians forced to relocate from the reserves (Asahi, Sept. 9, 1985) and

ongoing ethnic strife between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Burundi, Congo and Angola (Asahi, Sept 21, 2000).

A public policy orientation of the Chinese government which is not popularly elected in a plural, competitive electoral system of the kind known in the United States must be vastly complicated to come to a sufficient understanding for the US public. Layers of current social and economic systems and practices— with a powerful capitalist program directed by the state - built over previous layers of political history add to the difficulty of understanding events and development in China. Yet a story that ties the rationale of the Chinese president’s policy actions to ancient Chinese classics eschewed the complexity and the need to understand the convoluted societal, political and historical structure. The simple narrative – that traces the rationale of Chinese president’s policy to a source of wisdom in the ancient past, because China is an age-old civilization – makes the issue interpretable and easily digestible to the audience without any prior, learned knowledge of the Chinese governance system: one only needs a vague perception that Chinese history is full of sages who dished out wisdom to generations of governors and politicians. In the Bat Mitzvah story (NYT, Oct 25, 2014), courageous women defying the male hierarchy and the established religious order were valiantly depicted. Yet the dominant social order was one of tradition, history, religion and the age old male patriarchy. Women’s revolt which was accomplished by “guile and subterfuge,” and was an exception to the predominant social and religious order - an exceptional circumstance was required to write a story in the newspaper as a matter of newsworthiness. Taken as a whole, the story was shrouded in mythology – portraying a society steeped in tradition and strict social order which in turn explained

to readers why and how the society is the way it is. The case of Nigerian musicians taking on the political dictators in Afro-beat music (NYT, Sep.11, 2000) was structurally similar: a couple of defiant artists making waves— which made news – was an exception to the otherwise undemocratic, oppressive political ruling structure, as often willfully depicted by American newspapers. (Undemocratic governance was among the stereotypes used in the story.)

Illegal harvesting of timber in the Amazon (Guardian, Oct 17-23, 2014) was covered with a mystique shroud; the acts of illegal lumbering was linked to the region (Peru) being rampant with corruption, bribery, government neglect, bureaucratic incompetence and social/cultural primitiveness. By relying on the common but vague preconception of what one might expect from a developing Latin American country, the story managed to unfold without getting to the bottom of the issue.

An Oct 3-9, 2014 Guardian article featured the prosecution of a former communist prison guard in Romania who is allegedly responsible for the torture and death of scores of political prisoners prior to the fall of the communist government in Bucharest in 1989. In this story, the culture peg is “the communist past,” more specifically, the dictatorship led by communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu, which is one of the few points of knowledge that people outside of Eastern Europe have about Romania. The Guardian on the whole rarely produces articles from this part of the world and neither do NYT and Asahi. Yet the topic of its past communist legacy connects this obscure Balkan state with the majority of the readership. The in-depth article - filling up an entire page of the Guardian newspaper- investigating the society’s struggle to come to grips with past

wounds and policy mistakes suddenly become comprehensible for the readers because of the choice of topic and the structure of the story.

True to the coups and quakes syndrome (Miller, 1995; Sparks, 2007), the Japanese press has no shortage of its share in creating the myth of never ending conflict, killings and tragedies in Africa. A lengthy feature – with the headline “Hatred grows following new election” describes the massacre, hunger and repetition of political and military conflicts among different African tribes which “have origins in the long colonial dominations by the West,” (Asahi, Sept, 21, 2000, p.8), a line of reference that allows journalists to harp on the same, expected stereotypic knowledge and understanding of Africa and its relations with the West.

Drawing on secondary cases for analysis, one could find the journalist’s rationale to peg the story to the lingering cultural image of a foreign society in the NYT article on Italy struggling to adjust to the post- economic crisis conditions {NYT, July 31, 2010, which is also (Segal, 2010)}. The article - headlined “Is Italy too Italian?” - describes how Italy has been slow to adjust to the new economic realities because of age-old traditions and culture, and revolves around a family-owned clothing brand which has been passed down for generations. It is evocative of the common image of Italy as being saddled with tradition, culture and family-orientedness (albeit, male dominated) lacking in nimbleness, ingenuity, and wiliness to change in favor of new and innovative ways – perhaps characteristics that Americans generally attribute to themselves. The headline is not only stereotypical in itself, it crudely foreshadows the article’s stereotypicality.

Culture pegs and their attendant reductionist approach bring a structure of understanding to a complicated subject matter, dissolves the complexities, and assist in

the comprehension of contextually challenged readers. A topically organizing story-level peg short-circuits a complex issue by making a strong intuitive connection between the country/culture in question with the audience's stereotypic knowledge of it and perhaps gives them a sense of (or fallacy of) depth, naturalness and meaningfulness— a mythological quality.

Barthes has argued that myth's very nature makes it too illusive to define and to operationalize myth. It does not reveal itself by repudiating or approving anything but rather, it gives the story natural and eternal justification (Barthes, 1977), as already mentioned. Yet by his very words, two things appear to stand out as surface components of myth: eternity (or historicalness) and naturalness, the latter perhaps deriving from the writing structure and style as well as the very nature of the former: an historical account and showing the story as tied to long term trends and qualities, make the subject natural, self-explanatory and meaningful.

As the preceding analysis has illuminated (Method and Results/Findings), the most consistent content feature of the story-level pegs is that they are either based on a point of ancient history (type 1) or recent history - images and understanding of a culture built up through years of media reporting (type 2) that span several decades to a century. Type 1 and 2 were the case more than 90 percent of the time. Type 1 and 2 definitions - historicity of the subject matter - are the clearest point of convergence between articles identified as having a story-level culture peg and myth (RQ4).

The historicity of the story level pegs points the readers into the past and to the long, persisting image of the culture/society. The articles from *the New York Times*, *Guardian* and *Asahi* exhibit efforts by journalists to place the subject matter, foreign cultures and

societies, in historic time - in a manner of speaking. Locating other societies/cultures in history gives a news story a natural explanation for their behavior in the present. Keeping other societies/cultures in the past (or imagined past) in natural narrative accounts, and fitting them into the audience's well carved, pre-conceived understanding of other societies perhaps adds emotional stability to the audience's understanding of the world, informing them that the world is as you always knew and as you always understood. Order and stability is brought to the mental and cultural pictures of the world by allowing other worlds – chaotic and unpredictable - to “fall into place.” Falling into place can be rephrased as “meeting readers' expectation” which stereotypical news is understood to accomplish in readers' cognition (Lasorsa & Dai, 2007; Pêcheux, 1990).

The historicity and the repeatedness of a subject in turn bring strengths to the narrative form (Bird & Dardenne, 1997). Stories are not invented anew but “you constantly draw on the inventory of discourse which has been established over time” (Hall, 1984, p.6).

In a classic work on myths, Mead has said myth offers reassurance and familiarity in shared community experiences (Mead, 1925-1926). Assurance/familiarity and sharedness are important traits of culture (Chaney, 1994; Lull, 2000) as the purpose of culture “first and foremost is cognitive and social stability,” (Lull, p.139). Culture “works on a number of levels and through a number of forms to give a structure of predictability and continuity to the practice of community life,” (Chaney, 1994, p.139). Culture is a proven way we organize ourselves as individuals and members of a group “to create meaning, order and stability,” (Lull, p.133). Stereotypes about other cultures

are deeply connected to and linked to the in-group culture as they are the common perception of the outgroup culture by the ingroup. The ancient understanding of foreign countries is perhaps connected to the sense of ease – just like how culture in general adds ease, stability to one’s society and community (Lull, 2000). It is this aspect of the myths - the familiarity, naturalness and the repeatedness of the story, that removes complexity and fixes readers with a sense of comfort and stability.

Granted there are foreign news reports that do not resort to topical culture pegs, especially when the issue contains hard, breaking news elements, such as those on the spread of Ebola virus whose outbreak was widely reported during September and October, 2014. The urgency and the significance of the subject brings the news to the medium (Reinemann, Stanyer, Scherr & Legnante, 2012; Tanikawa, 2014). Yet, countries that were featured without hard news elements were seldom covered again without a culture peg treatment - there were hardly any articles giving a full topical treatment to Romania Japan and India in the Guardian, Israel and China in the NYT during the defined period of September and October 2014, other than those with strong topical culture pegs. During the defined period in 2014, NYT had another article from Israel - in addition to the one on Bat Mitzvah ceremony - which revolved around Israeli youths heading to Germany and the older generation’s opposition to the idea due to its past history of holocaust and Nazi dictatorship (Oct 17, 2014) – an article identified as having a clear story-level peg. During the period of September-October, only one article featuring Japan was found in the Guardian - Japanese animated character, Doraemon, accused of corrupting the minds of youth in China (Sept 17-23). Such soft power influences from Japan was viewed as having subversive effects on people who

suffered atrocities at the hands of Japanese military during World War II. This article contained two stereotypic components: Japan's wartime atrocities (Type 2) and Japanese animation (Type 3). Some important news has occurred in Japan as reported by Asahi, during the period (September-October, 2014) such as the eruption of Mt. Ontake (Sept 27), death of Takako Doi, Japan's first female lower house speaker and former head of the socialist party (Sept 28), and resignation of two female cabinet ministers on the same day over political scandal/misstep (Oct 20), none of which were reported in the Guardian (Weekly).

Social Psychology

The cognitive mechanism for stereotype formation has been explicated by two lines of reasoning. One argument focuses on cognitive underpinning of categorization – the need for cognitive efficiency and simplification - and the other emphasizes self-evaluative benefits for categorization. As for the former, people are constantly engaged in complex information processing, and thus stereotyping is an adaptive mechanism to cope with information and stimulus overload (Allport, 1979; Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind & Rosselli, 1996; Schneider, 2005).

The latter is based on the concept of social identity as a source of pride and self-esteem and thus premises that people gravitate towards messages and understanding that enhance the status and self-image of the group to which they belong. This can be accomplished by giving positive evaluation to the ingroup or by discriminating and holding prejudicial views against the out-group (McLeod, 2008) in a process known as

ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation (Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, & Hodge, 1996; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971).

When humans categorize different groups and form impressions of them, it would be colored by the perceiver's desire and motivation for positive self-evaluation. This reasoning, which came to be known as the social identity theory proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1986) may explain the content orientation of media stories with culture pegs. It also provides a point of convergence with cultural theories which view group differentiation ("We" versus "They") as the basis for social categorization and for holding different worldviews.

Textual analyses of the articles with culture pegs show they are overwhelmingly negative in content and tone. News overall may be negative than positive, and growing negativity has been associated with rising commercialism (Merriman, 2003; Patterson, 2000). But the idea that "the only good news is bad news" has been refuted (Harcup & O'Neil, 2001).³ It is also useful to note that past scholarship has observed that foreign news is more negative in valence than other types of stories (Golan & Wanta, 2003; Masmoudi, 1979).

³ Scholars found that only a third of the news in the three UK newspapers they examined were negative in valence and have found "surprising amount of good news" in the British papers (p.272).

But hardly any article with story level pegs ($n=93$) can be described as positive in their basic thematic structure (Tables 2-4).⁴

Most articles thematically centered on negative or gloomy prospects for the countries/cultures under reporting, and giving the subjects devalued cultural identities such as Asahi's reporting on conflicts in Africa (Oct 17, 2014; Sept 21, 2000), slums in Brazil (Oct 17, 2014), air pollution in China (Oct 12, 2014) and Indian reserves and racism in the United States – (Sept 9, 1985; Sept 9, 2014). The same can be said of the Guardian's reporting on white supremacists in the US South (Oct 11, 2000), hundreds of young women leaving Europe to join ISIS fighters (Oct. 3-9, 2014), and post-Chavez economic downturn in Venezuela (Sept 12-18, 2014), and NYT coverage of the radical Buddhist monks in South Asia (Sept 29, 2014), Palestinian uprising (Sept 12, 2014), economic crisis in Italy (July 31, 2010).

The previously mentioned Guardian article (Sept. 16, 2014) on Timbuktu continued from the segment already cited like below:

Timbuktu, city of gold, ancient centre of learning, is slowly turning to dust. The Sahara desert is stifling life, but residents know the blame lies not only with natural

⁴ One clear exception to this was the Oct 3-9, 2014 Guardian article on Pope Francis restarting a conversation and easing punishment on members of the Catholic church who divorced, which was written with a positive tone.

forces. Timbuktu is teetering on the edge of existence also because of human neglect, war and greed.

It would be quite rare in most domestic coverage to make a sweeping, negative and dismissive characterization of a city or country as “turning to dust” or their lives being “stifling” and that the city is falling apart due “to neglect, war and greed.” (One understands that in a domestic reporting, one cannot simply state that all can be single handedly be blamed to “neglect” and “greed” as if the entire city/country was plagued with it.)

Guardian’s coverage (Sept 19-25) of a new bill introduced in India to tame the “traffic anarchy” by rolling out a stricter system of license verification and traffic regulation, is equally disparaging of a foreign society by the inferences it provided: It exploits the common notion of urban Asian cities being crowded, chaotic and being without order: readers deduce from it the understanding that reason and rationality rule less in these societies than their own.

One would do well to revisit the NYT Italian story (July 31, 2010) yet again. The article noted:

To understand why his factory, and so much of Italy, is stagnant or worse, requires a bit of geopolitical history and a look at the highly idiosyncratic business culture here. It is defined, to a large degree, by deep-seated mistrust — not just of the government, but of anyone who isn’t part of the immediate family

— as well as a widespread aversion to risk and to growth that to American eyes looks almost quaint.

Descriptors such as “idiosyncratic” and “quaint” are in most contexts too harsh and judgmental to be used in most “domestic” coverage.

If the articles were not outright negative, they were negative by implication, judgmental or condescending. Asahi, like most Japanese press with a large contingent of foreign correspondents, reveals a practice of reporting condescendingly on issues of military conflict and religious tensions – the kind of issues that this secular country does not confront as a nation. An article interviewing a cardinal in the Vatican about the issues the Church was facing was cynically entitled “The country of God in agony” (Sept 21, 1985). Here, a tone of condescension is clearly observable. The reference was repeated in the text when it noted, “a new wave of issues is confronting the country of God.” A September 1, 2000 article which reported on the treatment of gay marriage in Italy had the headline “Debate on homosexual love heats up” (p.8) and describes the dilemma and tension between the Papal authority and the growing tolerance towards gays and lesbians in the wider Italian society. There is a rhetorical link between the Japanese expression for love “ai” and heating up “atsui” (or to grow passionate) indicating a touch of humor and a degree of ridicule and condescension. A photograph showing a gay couple, dramatically hugging and kissing in the street was as distasteful as it was inappropriate for western sensibilities.

Articles that were negative by implication include coverage of what might be perceived by the home audience as bizarre or exotic cultural practices such as the Parsi

tradition in India - to have vultures pick clean the body of the dead (Guardian, Oct 11, 2000) and the Japanese government tightening its screws on the gangsters, the so-called yakuza in Japan (Guardian, Oct 4, 2000) and the practice of black magic in Africa (Asahi, Oct 17, 2014). It is noteworthy that in September and October, 2000, there was hardly any coverage on Japan in the Guardian Weekly except this feature on yakuza (as was the case in the Guardian coverage of Japan for 2014 as described previously) nor was there any substantial coverage on India in the newspaper during the same period except the coverage on Parsi practice. No feature on Africa was found in Asahi either during the two-month period in 2014.

When articles with the culture peg were not considered to be clearly negative or judgmental, they all have the same effect most of the time: to stereotype and to homogenize the outgroup (the foreign country) by highlighting similarities within the group – while perceiving the ingroup as being rich and diverse (Diehl & Jonas, 1991; Fujioka, 2005), which occurs by implication. Stereotypic labeling indeed has strong evaluative tone. By their very nature it accentuates the similarities of people within the outgroup – known as outgroup homogeneity effect (Ostrom & Sedikides, 1992; Park, Ryan & Judd, 1992) – with distorting impact on viewer's perception.

Such effects – within-group assimilation and outgroup contrasts could be powerful when there is a negativity (towards the outgroup) involved. When an ingroup member engages in a positive behavior, it will tend to be viewed as a stable internal characteristic of the group as a whole while negative behavior on the part of the outgroup is seen as caused by stable negative group characteristics (Jhangiani, Tarry & Stangor, 2015). Meanwhile, positive outgroup behavior and unfavorable ingroup

behaviors are likely to be attributed to temporary or situational variables and/or conditions rather than to the characteristics of the group.

Consistent with the principle of ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation – and their link thereof - articles with stereotypic content or unflattering descriptions often are then connected to positive portrayal of one’s own country. The Asahi article on Chinese pollution (Oct 12, 2014), which is a stereotype about big Chinese cities, contains a reference to Japan. It noted how in Beijing on a particular day (October 11), the pollution reading of PM 2.5 is 4 times the pan-Chinese pollution standards and 9 times the criteria for Japan, strongly implying a cleaner air condition in Japan - and how reliable the system is for sanitation and air. (“PM” refers to atmospheric *particulate matter*).⁵

An October 14, 2014 feature article in Asahi about the ‘slums’ in Rio and the popular tours for holiday makers in anticipation of the 2016 Olympics in Rio also focused on the growing popularity of Japanese restaurants in the city which have popped up over the years. Similarly, NYT article on the restoration efforts for the home of Catherine the Great in a German town was connected to the story of US army’s emancipation of Germany from the Nazis and to the US victory in WWII. The previous article on Chinese classics (NYT, Oct 12, 2014) described how the Chinese president’s idea of rule of law was different from the Western liberal concepts – upon which the

⁵ Similar on noting inferior Chinese technology is the Sep 18, 2014 (Asahi) article that cast doubt over the Chinese government claim of having taken pictures of the disputed island territory using its drone technology.

United States is modeled - because his is not designed to circumscribe his power. The article thus compares the Chinese idea of rule of law with the West's only in unfavorable terms. Such cases of connecting the main story line to home audience's culture and society in a technique known as domestication (Gurevitch, Levy & Roeh, 1991; Tanikawa, 2015a) which was highly common in Asahi and in NYT in the studied content has been observed widely by journalism scholars (Alasuutari, Qadir, & Creutz, 2013; Eide & Ytterstad, 2011). It is, however, imperative that this technique be assessed theoretically and empirically from the lens of social identity theory and cultural relevance, which these studies have yet to conduct.

Content of the articles with thematically organized culture pegs demonstrate that each article contains at least some elements designed to gratify the audience's cultural identity, whether they lower/devalue the target cultures or elevate the cultural positions of the home readers, consistent with the social identity theory.

Point of convergence

The stereotype's very nature of deriving from (and perpetuating) "we and they" dichotomy is a point of convergence with the study of culture, which points to the culture's very orientation; it sets one group apart from another. Geert Hofstede's definition of culture stated: '[Culture] is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.' Hall (1997) stated that culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is happening around them and "making sense" of the world in broadly similar ways (p.2).

Sociologist Mayer Zald says culture refers to an organized set of beliefs, codes, myths, stereotypes, values, norms, frames, and so forth that are shared in the collective memory of a group or society (Zald, 1996). Culture thus has a set social group in mind as its source as distinguished from others. The norms, values, laws, codes, morals, traditions and art that constitute culture together become a distinguishing quality of a group as separated from others. Stereotype arises from such mechanism of group distinctions.

Desmarais and Bruce (2008) has argued: “Stereotype functions as group differentiation,” (p.342). They establish boundaries between “we” and “they” and fulfill the function of group differentiation consistent with social identity theory (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008). Similarly, cultural theorists including Richard Dyer (1977) and Jacques Derrida (1972) contended that stereotyping produces binary oppositions and the split between the normal and abnormal.

Herein lies the crucial meeting point between the study of culture by cultural scholars and the study of stereotype by social psychologists – culture systematically creates and consolidates an ingroup and divides between it and the outgroups. The stereotype, a commonly shared understanding of the outgroup by the ingroup, emerges – perhaps inevitably - from that splitting mechanism. The cultural system itself generates stereotypes. The stereotype as a perception held by the ingroup towards an outgroup *is* a constituent part of the culture of the ingroup (van Gorp, 2010; Zald, 1996) - it is a commonly held perception of *other* cultures.

Language and Stereotyping

Linguists, anthropologists, social psychologists and communication scholars have investigated stereotypes from the use of language point of view – as has been reviewed earlier. This is because stereotypes are defined, accumulated and perpetuated in language (Maass & Arcuri, 1996; Semin, 2008, p.12). Culturally shared beliefs are wired into language and thus some words and expressions are imbued with prejudicial semantics and overtones. As a representational system, language “offers a means of storing stereotypic beliefs at a collective, consensual level” (Stangor & Schaller, 1996, p. 11) which suggests an intersection with broader workings of culture.

The culture peg at the word level is linguistically structured and their uses are embedded in culture as already examined. They are essentially culturally resonant terms that are sprinkled in the text to boost readers’ association with the culture/country being covered. When they surface in the texts, they do so precisely. As operationalized, word-level culture pegs are words and phrases that required matching by coders in the reliability tests.

Word-level cultural pegs found in the news texts are thought to spur mental activation - to recall and to connect to related stereotypic knowledge and imageries that come under one cultural roof (i.e. “Exodus,” “hummus,” “anti-Zionist,” “holocaust” for Israel). This can be seen as spawning, connecting and strengthening the nodes of different objects in people’s minds (Entman, 2003, 2004). In examining the workings of word-level culture pegs, two key concepts in social psychology are relevant. They are the relationship between a category label and trait terms (Collins & Loftus, 1975;

Stangor & Schaller, 1996), and spreading activation (Anderson, 1983), as already reviewed.

Category labels have a cognitive organizing function since they provide the necessary point of reference around which stereotypic information is organized (Maass & Arcuri, 1996). They are the base upon which social categorization and stereotyping occur (Hoffman, Lau & Johnson, 1986). Activation of a label – even if unconscious – spreads through the entire knowledge network, and invokes traits associated with the category.

The organizing mechanism of the category label and associated traits terms that social psychologists describe parallel the relationship between the country/culture that is the target of stereotyping and word-level culture pegs. For instance, an article about young foreigners flocking to Spain to take flamenco dance lessons (NYT, March 16, 2010 {secondary case}), words and expressions such as “Andalusia,” “Gypsies” “passion” and “(dancers) stamp their feet” – word level pegs and equivalent to trait terms - are highly evocative of Spain, the category label (“flamenco,” the topical word (peg) appeared 29 times in the story). These culture pegs are considered as trait equivalents since words/expressions that activate associations with the category labels are deemed as such and include not only personality traits and behavioral tendencies, but physical characteristics (Maass & Arcuri, 1996, p.197) which these terms may represent. A strong association with Andalusia, for instance, which is simply a term of geography, may highlight and overemphasize the warm, sunny, breezy atmosphere on the Mediterranean coastline over other images associated with other geographic locations in Spain. Culture pegs conjure up (or “trigger”) images of the category, Spain

and add further to the perceived (and limited) cultural contours of the country/culture. (An association of Andalusia with warm, breezy weather may be accomplished in different media content that readers encounter elsewhere).

Similar examples can be drawn from culture pegs provided in the Results/Findings section. References in the article about Sweden's experiment with privatization (NYT, Sept. 9, 2014) to "H&M" and "Ikea" and "Social Democrats," were evocative of Sweden as was "nej sayers" (Guardian, October 5-11, 2000) in the context of a story from Denmark.

A highly common word-level culture peg found in Russia related articles is "Soviet." An October 12, 2014 (NYT) article on the airplane manufacturing industry in Ukraine being in the doldrums noted that the aerospace industry once "symbolized Soviet might," even though the article did not discuss the history of the Soviet Union or anything related to the socialist empire which collapsed in 1991. "Soviet" may associate readers with an archaic image of the communist regime with all its secrecy, dictatorship and the crumbling economy.

An October 10-16, 2014 (Guardian) article on a military equipment failure in Germany referred to "Nazi-Germany." In this example, "Nazi," the peg and "Germany," the category are closely paired, reflecting the association that already exists in the audience's minds. Other instances of word-level pegs in the Guardian include "Franco" in a Spanish story about the nation's plan to reduce access to abortion (Sept. 19-25, 2014), "Rugby" in an article from New Zealand (Sept 26 - Oct 2, 2014) concerning changing the design of the national flag. In all of these cases, the use of the peg

appeared rather far-fetched considering the main topic of the article, yet the trait terms (peg) may be reinforcing the association with the category (the country/culture).

When culture pegs are used in the text, category information (identification of the country/culture) is explicitly displayed most of the time at the top of the article. In the aforementioned flamenco story, the subhead stated: “The thousands of foreigners who train in southern Spain’s flamenco schools are exporting its culture and passion to different countries.” In the above-mentioned article on Sweden, the headline was “As Sweden Nears Vote, Center-Right Is Trailing.” (Often, the category information is even more explicit as the headline may state, “In Japan, ...”, “In India,.... ” or “Israel’s new law is....”) The previously mentioned NYT Italian story (July 31, 2010) with the title, “Is Italy, too Italian?” is not only excessive in invoking the category, it foreshadows a strongly stereotypical content about Italy as has been pointed out already. It could be presumed that news articles are structured linguistically (and perhaps visually) at the top section of the article to powerfully “prime” the readership with category labels, so readers will make relevant cultural associations with the content of the article where trait terms may abound.

Not all articles may include the name of the country per se – when other signifiers clarify the target culture. For instance, Guardian’s front page article on Russia’s aggressive foreign policy (Sept 5-11, 2014) had the headline: “Inside Putin’s Paranoid World.” “Putin” is more than sufficient to activate the Russia label. Since the overall topic is unmistakably about Russia, the audience has no difficulty connecting with word- level culture pegs in the article such as “the collapse of communism” and

“Brezhnev’s era.” The article also carried an oversized photo of Putin’s with images of Russian-style buildings with pointy turrets.

There is a strong automatic, and two-way trigger relationship between the two: trait terms and the category label. The category information primes people into thinking of the pegs (trait terms) and word-level pegs make readers think of a category.

Another significant applicable cognitive mechanism is spreading activation. Spreading activation model works on the basis of semantic network approach which premises that concepts are organized in human minds in terms of connected ideas (Anderson, 1983). Thus when one activates a certain concept, you are pulling up related concepts along with it creating a propagation of ideas that run through one’s cognition.

Spreading activation (Entman, 2004; Lodge & Stroh, 1993) is triggered from word to word (from one-word level peg to another), from the category (Spain) to culture pegs and back. Individual culture pegs may occur separately and in separate contexts but the category information perhaps has the “organizing function” (Maass & Arcuri, 1996) that brings them together in the audience’s mind as belonging to the same umbrella category/culture.

Culture pegs at the individual word-level perhaps activate and strengthen certain knowledge structures (schema) by grouping words and concepts together. It enhances the chance that thinking of one word would activate thoughts of another, thus strengthening association of different objects and boosting the automaticity for activation (Entman, 2004). Culture pegs used in media texts may well strengthen stereotypic belief of the readers overall, as ‘repeated encounters in different contexts

allow a stereotype to become activated automatically,' (Bargh, 1999) And as suggested, a reader may obtain specific stereotypic images of a culture in one place (i.e images of Andalusia) and plug it to another stereotypic information (i.e images of flamenco) and integrate the two under the same category label. This may repeatedly occur, accumulate and build up in the readers' stored image of different categories as they are constantly cued in (and primed) about which culture those stereotypic details belong to.

The linkage between word-level culture pegs and the broader communicative, discursive structure is observed by discourse analysis scholars. Major national stereotypes, though apparently independent, are seen as local entry-points into much larger discursive networks, which constitutes a macro discourse (O'Donnell, 1994). Using national stereotypes surrounding sports as an illustration, O'Donnell identified an operation of sporting stereotypes within particular cultures and argued there exists a discursive network binding them together at a "superordinate level" amplifying the meaning of their local interpretations (p.345).

Given the preceding cultural, linguistic, and social psychological analyses, it is theoretically presumed that word-level culture pegs and other forms of stereotypes do not exist in isolation. They prime related cultural thoughts and create spreading activation in people's mind working to strengthen the nodes of a reader's network of stereotypic knowledge and understanding about foreign cultures which are then connected to a broader, macro-discourse structures.

“Communication as culture” perspective

The preceding theories of relevance in cultural and literary studies, social psychology, linguistics and communication all seem to line up in connection with use of stereotype in the mass media. It indicates that as theoretically outlined, the culture peg in the news is consistent with past studies on how cultural devices work such as the myth (i.e its roles in the news). It also supports the premise of the social identity theory from social psychology in that articles with the thematic culture peg are favorably constructed for the culture of the home audience.

Coming from the “communication as culture” viewpoint, Carey (1975, 1992) has argued that two broad perspectives subsume the concept of and the practice of communication. The first view is that communication is an act of transmitting information from sender to receiver – a more orthodox view of the communication – in line with Shannon and Weaver (1949) and Lasswell (1948), the positivist standpoint.

Another definition of communication is that it is a form of and part of a ritual. It is a far more traditional/historically rooted notion of communication, one that conceives of communication as a practice of preserving tradition, culture and shared understanding of the values of a community. Critics have leveled harsh criticism (Fowler, 2001; Hannerz, 2007; Shaw, 2012) for the use of stereotypes in the news as reviewed in the preceding literature. Hafez (2007) has pointed out that news media continue to reproduce stereotypes in overseas news reporting and in so doing, the influential news outlets have not achieved better understanding of the world events and phenomena for the audience. Lamenting media’s lack of understanding of international affairs is a

chronic event. *Washington Post* columnist Meg Greenfield made an observation in 1979 on the failure of the American media to explain the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 and stated that intellectually and emotionally “we are about where Columbus was when he saw the natives and assumed they were ‘Indians’ – except that we are sailing in the other direction.” (Greenfield, 1977).

Journalists are then criticized for bringing to the foreign subjects their own cultural understanding rather than taking away from them – the opposite of learning (Hannerz, 2007; Ibelema, 2014). Negus (2002) has said that instead of being particularly creative, active or reflexive, the work of cultural intermediaries involves “habitual, unreflective, and uncritical adherence to well established production routines and occupational formulae,”(p. 510).

If, however, one were to apply the ritual view of communication, such would be the very point of communication. That is, to tell, retell, affirm, reaffirm - and to validate to the members of the same culture what they already know – about other cultures. Reproduction of stereotypes for consumption of the members of ingroup is a ritual. It is a way of affirming the pre-existing understanding other cultures – to one’s comfort - and to confirm one’s own system of values (and to elevate their own culture). Rituals ascertain and validate the society’s traditions and shared values in a never ending, two-way process. Rituals produce no new information but rather has as its essence, repetition (Carey, 1992) - stereotypes don’t deliver new information. Communication as culture argument does not preclude the news from having informative character (Carey, 1992; Bird & Dardenne, 1997, p. 335). It may well entail transmission of new information as virtually all news and feature articles with culture pegs do. Existence of

“news peg” in feature articles, for instance, indicate they are structured to link with previously reported news (Itule & Anderson, 2007; Yopp & McAdams, 2007.)

Carey’s rendition of communication lays out the purpose of such communication (ritual) thus:

The projection of community ideals and their embodiment in material form - dance, plays, architecture, news stories, strings of speech – creates an artificial though nonetheless real symbolic order that operates to provide not information but confirmation, not to alter attitudes or change minds but to represent an underlying order of things, not to perform functions but to manifest an ongoing fragile social process. (p.6)

Mass communication that entails cultural stereotypes closely match this interpretation as the reason for deploying stereotypes (the culture peg), which would not be to provide new information and teachings but confirmation of the underlying belief systems of the audience - emotionally and cognitively fragile in the face of unpredictable world. That writers do not take away but systematically bring in their own to foreign reporting is, rather than being perplexing, is fully in keeping with this logic.

If the culture peg, which applies stereotypic notion in mass mediated form, amplifies stereotype in the public space and in the public discourse and reproduces stereotype on a grand scale – instead of in face to face, personal communication context as most social psychologists have premised - what would be the implication? Similarly, what would be the implication if influential news media’s habitual reporting behavior

and its logic -with attendant impact on the reading public is a reflection of a ritual, the same way people attend mass, memorial and conduct traditional rituals?

Stereotype as culture

Extensive analysis in this dissertation is consistent with the assertion – albeit formulated rather generally – that stereotypes are a constituent element of a culture (van Gorp, 2007; Zald, 1996).⁶ As mentioned, if the culture peg is a cultural device along the lines Schudson (1989) has formulated, the stereotype itself should function to infuse the text with meaningfulness, resonance and memorability. The general analysis of culture presented in this dissertation (literature review) appears generally congruent with this proposition. Given such theoretical congruence, one might be able to replace “culture” with “stereotype” in the various formations offered by the cultural scholars. (It would be misleading to suggest that they equal one another, but the idea here is that stereotypes model certain aspects of culture thus replacing of the two terms on face often becomes possible.)

British sociologist John. B. Thompson (1990) has said:

“Culture is a pattern of meanings embedded in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals

⁶ These authors enumerated “stereotype” as one of the components of a culture (van Gorp, 2007; Zald, 1996). Among other things that constitute culture are, values (van Gorp, Zald), myths (van Gorp, Zald), archetypes (van Gorp), narratives (van Gorp) codes (Zald), norms (Zald) and frames (Zald).

communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions, and beliefs.”

Stereotypes in the form of culture peg *is* a pattern of meanings embedded in symbolic forms - symbolic from the lens of the home audience. They are used by the mass media to communicate with readers and to connect with them by virtue of shared meanings and perceptions. Hall (1997) said; “Primarily, culture is concerned with production and exchange of meanings.” He further adds that culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is happening around them and “making sense” of the world in broadly similar ways (p.2). Because we interpret the world in roughly similar ways, we are able to build up a shared culture of meanings and thus construct a social world which we inhabit together, Hall further notes. That is why ‘culture’ is sometimes defined in terms of ‘shared meanings or shared conceptual maps’ (p.18).

Unquestionably, stereotypes about a foreign culture allows readers to “make sense” of the foreign culture in similar ways as other members of the same culture because they are a point of agreement about those foreign cultures. Culture concerns “shared values” (Storey, 2012), and as cynical as it may sound, the stereotype is shared values of an ingroup about the outgroup – otherwise it would not be so persistently and meaningfully employed in feature articles such as the Chinese (NYT, Oct 12, 2014; Asahi, Oct 12, 2014), German (NYT, Oct 8, 2014), and Italian (NYT, July 31, 2010) articles that have been examined. The meaningfulness was further enhanced by creating a connection to the home audiences’ culture to validate their core values in each of these articles.

Chaney (1994) has said that culture functions as a resource because it provides “available meanings” (p.32) that greatly influence what can be expressed by cultural members in order to fashion distinctive habits, skills, styles, and social strategies. Likewise, stereotypic knowledge about the subject country/culture functions as a resource for writers as it provides available meanings that enable and enhance what can be said in the text (Schudson, 1989).

The repeated reference of culture to production of meaning – which culture peg does – is connected to how culture relates to symbols and representation, as cultural scholars nearly unanimously argue that culture concerns the production of ‘meaning’ and that it holds values as symbols and representation (Hall, 1997; Storey, 2012; Thompson, 1990). Concerning representation and culture, Zegarac (2008) states that in the final analysis, “culture crucially involves the way we mentally represent and think about the world,” (p.4). The stereotype is also “the way we mentally represent and think about the world,” at least partially, as our picture of the world is fractured through the lens of stereotypes.

Revisiting sociologist Mayer Zald’s argument, it would be usefully noted here that culture refers to an organized set of beliefs, codes, myths, stereotypes, values, norms, frames, and so forth that are shared in the collective memory of a group or society, that is mediated by and constituted by symbol and language (Zald, 1996). The meaning is then evoked powerfully when discursive strategies are cleverly employed (Schudson, 1989). Discursive strategy, the culture peg is. In essence, stereotypes behave like culture does generally. Desmarais and Bruce (2010) illustrated the discursive use of stereotypes in TV sports broadcasting – deriving from the rugby match between New Zealand and

French teams as an example. If media workers – sports anchors - are acting in accordance with their cultural logic to produce stereotypes of other cultures, as the pair argues, then they must be part of the audience's culture (Desmarais & Bruce, 2010).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This dissertation set out to show that the culture peg, a form of stereotype, is a communication technique employed in the mass media to increase the effectiveness of communication. It increases the communicative power of a message because as a form of cultural communication, it engages the stereotype which itself is discursive. It resonates because it makes use of the discourse structure in which the cultural/social frames reverberate, just like discourse analysts/ linguists (O'Donnell, 1994; van Dijk, 1990, 2007), framing scholars (Entman, 2004; van Gorp, 2007; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989), communication and cultural studies scholars (Hall, 1997; Halone, 2008; Schudson, 1989; Zegarac, 2008), and researchers in inter-disciplinary fields (Desmarais & Bruce, 2008, 2010) have contended from their respective disciplinary standpoints.

A common thread running through the perspectives by scholars in a variety of disciplines is that both the communicators and the recipients share cognition, culture and the symbolic understanding of a given object - which serves as a basis for and precondition for effective communication and resonance. Communication of a cultural nature takes place between the producer and the recipient in a discursive dimension that presumes a shared cultural and social framework between the two. The preceding discussion also suggests this structure can be quite rigid and restricting of the type of discourse available and possible: they perhaps are effective all the more when they are right on target.

In his work on cinematic fiction, McArthur (1982) described the organizing discourses within which the fiction is constructed. "A limited number of discourses

have been deployed.... to give the impression that no other constructions are possible,” (McArthur, 1982, p. 68-69).

In the discussions on cultural communication, media specialists are presented as “cultural intermediaries” that depend on discourse (Curtin & Gaither, 2005) which suggest they work within the confines of cultural space. Hall (1997) says: it is discourse, not the subjects who speak it, which produces knowledge. Similarly, Halone (2008) has argued that racist ideology is created in the media not because media workers themselves are racists but because the discourse guides their behavior.

As described in previous segments, culture pegs work on the same logical and empirical assumption that journalists encode by making use of a cultural frame – with the sub-conscious knowledge that it works in the audience because such cultural frames are shared. Culture pegs resonate because the audience shares in the same cultural understanding (Schudson, 1989) although it is shared understanding of *other* cultures, as repeatedly pointed out in this dissertation. Culture pegs as a form of stereotype, is also rigid and confining, similar to stereotype itself– they are often fixed, unambiguous and triggers automatic reaction (Bargh, 1999; Lasorsa & Dai, 2007). This very point, in turn, suggests stereotypes have strong resounding, discursive impact, when the audience possesses the same cultural framework.⁷

Lippmann’s famous quote – which prefaced this dissertation - is well worth revisiting:

⁷ However, like cultural scholars point out, culture does change albeit with passage of time.

For the most part we do not first see and then define, we define first and then see. In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture.

Lippmann's observation, points to the structure of (international) communication facilitated by stereotypes and culture with the emphasis on symbolic type of communication rather than pure, factual one. In the case of international/intercultural communication, it is stereotypical information of other cultures/countries that act as the shared notion and the basis for resonance between the journalist and the audience. Conversely, the culture peg, resonates because stereotype is discursive (stereotypic messages resonate through a discursive framework) – just like cultural scholars have noted that culture is above all else discursive (Chaney, 1994).⁸

They are also meaningful to the audience as the culture peg is deemed as a cultural device. The culture peg possesses retrievability, rhetorical force, and resonance (Schudson, 1989) to make media messages memorable, meaningful and emotionally impactful. Such messages are appealing because they offer to enhance the identity of the audience, either directly (ingroup favoritism) or indirectly (outgroup derogation). Yet such cultural dimensions of the communication are less perceptible to the audience as to their true nature because they are invoked along with factual, usually new information (news peg), and both the producer and the audience operate on the

⁸ Notably, Lippmann linked three things – the outer world (foreign countries/cultures), stereotypes and the home culture, the same elements that were repeatedly investigated and linked in this study.

assumption that news is about facts and information (Harcup & O’Neil, 2001). In reality, news becomes consumable and digestible by dint of the cultural dimension of the communication – just like other cultural devices such as myth – when brought in conjunction with facts and information.

Theoretical Review

Social psychologists’ have clearly laid out the rationale for stereotyping- imperatives for social identity and categorization for the sake of simplicity, the latter of which link back to the former, social identity needs: Members of the ingroup derive comfort from simplified and homogenized images of the outgroup. Our understanding from the cultural and journalism scholars’ investigations of the cultural forms of journalism, myth in particular, adds another dimension to the analysis. Members of the audience as well as the journalists have a cognitive tendency to place the subjects in “historically understood” categories. “Historicity” – characterized by decades of reporting on a particular issue or well distributed knowledge of ancient history - is perhaps one of the core characteristics of myth as antiquity provides a taken for granted understanding of cultures. Rituals affirm and validate the society’s traditions and shared values – the practices of which are also consistent with the social identity theory of stereotyping. Stereotyping, according to this theory, has as its rationale to uplift one’s self-concept – to exhibit, elevate and praise the culture’s strengths. This pattern was consistently exhibited in three different newspapers from three different countries/cultures. This suggests that the news media of influence – *the New York Times*, *the Guardian*, and *the*

Asahi Shimbun conduct international news reporting to not only relay facts from overseas but to satiate readers' desire for affirmation of their cultural values and identities. Some of the cultural theories support the notion that the culture peg is a cultural device (Schudson, 1989) and their formulation of culture is generally congruent with the formulation for the stereotype, thus linking the concept of stereotype back to culture.

These conclusions indicate that social identity theory from social psychology (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986;), the ritual view of communication (Carey, 1975, 1992;) and cultural theories in relations to stereotype (Chaney, 1994; Hall, 1997; Storey, 2012; Thompson, 1990) generally agree with the findings of this dissertation which offered voluminous examples of stereotypical content from three different international news media, based in the United States, United Kingdom and Japan, from three different time periods (1985, 2000, 2014).

The stark finding is that in those articles in which stereotypic themes are embedded, foreign news reporting is not precisely about foreign cultures and societies – except as superficial content - but rather, they are often more about one's own culture. Because of these curious tendencies we can understand certain categories of international reporting better as a ritual – description of the world as consistent with our own belief and culture and as gratifying accounts to us - rather than as pure transmission of new facts and information about other countries.

This observation will likely feed into the criticism of the news media's liberal use of stereotypes. Kai Hafez (2007) has said: "Media content is distorted whenever

international reporting more strongly reflects the national interests and cultural stereotypes of the reporting country than the reality of the country *being reported about*, ” (p.25, italics in the original).

An added criticism may arise from the perspective of journalism’s basic mission in the society. Journalists’ claim to special status in a democratic society is based on their ability to provide the facts, analyses, and exposure to the range of opinions that people need to function as citizens. In an interconnected world, journalists’ work includes reporting on other countries and cultures. In the most powerful states, whose policies dramatically affect other countries and cultures such as the three countries this dissertation took up, accurate reporting on other countries and cultures is especially important – one could argue.

But should the use of stereotype in the news necessarily be damned? Could there be a kinder interpretation for these media and their culturally oriented news practices? If the use of stereotype in the media is a ritual, it means such is a practice that constitutes our lives as cultural beings. It concerns how we live, the basis of how we construct communities, the culture and our world view. This perspective, however, simultaneously confirms that stereotypes of other cultures do become part of our culture as it percolate into the routines of our community and culture and perhaps get amplified by the mass media. It then builds itself and constitutes broader framework within which we communicate and construct our understanding of the world. If stereotype is part of culture, it forms such a crucial part of our symbolic identity as Americans, British and Japanese and so on vis a vis, the rest of the world cultures.

A clear dilemma such a position (to apologize for the cultural orientation of news) poses would be the assumptions of what the news is for the audiences. Readers generally do not understand that what they are reading about foreign countries are filtered through a cultural lens such that some of it is designed to elevate their cultural identities and is oriented towards maintaining their own traditions, culture and emotional stability. Rather, most believe that the news is primarily about facts and information – with some analytical insights - worth acquiring as new pieces of knowledge. If apologists are to defend the ritualistic dimensions of news, consumers must be made aware what they are receiving.

Cultural dimensions of the news are mostly invisible to the audience, as already mentioned, because they are invoked along with factual, usually new information (news peg), which give a semblance of news being constituted mainly with facts. Both the producer and the audience operate on the assumption that news is about facts and information, primarily (Harcup & O’Neil, 2001).

Relations of Power in the Text

It is undeniable that stereotypes and other prejudiced understanding of the marginalized social and cultural groups are and have often been leveraged by the power that be for the benefits of the ruling group (Berg, 1990, 2002; Lull, 2000).

But due partly to the framework and the approach this dissertation has taken – to spotlight the journalists’ tools (the culture peg) and their connections to the prevailing cultural and social psychological theories –findings in this study seem more congenial

to the “took kit” perspective (Swidler, 1984, 2013) that posits that a cultural device, which the culture peg is, is available for those who wish to use it to accomplish their goals. Culture peg use is on a clear uptrend over the past three decades, and if it reflects the intensifying competition in the marketplace and the editorial strategy to facilitate reader understanding of the increasingly complex and interconnected world, textual formations that employ stereotypes must have been embraced as an instrument to satiate the needs and desires of the news consumers.

Indications in this study are thus that stereotypes are a “tool” for mass communicator to increase resonance for the audience (Schudson, 1989) which could be used to promote readership at a time news media are facing a difficult competitive environment. It is also noteworthy who the news media under study were stereotyping and by whom. The Japanese newspaper Asahi’s chronic stereotyping of the US and UK objects as well as other western countries (e.g. Italy) suggests that stereotypically oriented reporting is conducted by a non-hegemonic country, that is non-hegemonic towards the countries and cultures to which the stereotypes are directed. While the precise cause remains indeterminate, Asahi’s baseline use of culture peg surpassed those of the US and UK media (for the earlier periods of 1985 and 2000 in sheer volume terms). Under the theoretical rationale of social psychology, if the media are oriented towards seeking to promote positive social identity and high self-esteem of their audience, the content should manifest such tendencies, whoever or whichever the countries they may be, free from the cultural hegemony of the outside world. (The previous analyses of hegemony offered by cultural scholars were instances of

stereotyping of the majority group vis a vis the minorities within a particular society, which were contextually different from this dissertations’.)

Stereotypes - especially, national stereotypes - can be used by anyone, and such uses can be especially liberal in the news media of sovereign, independent states and may accumulate as the local culture, and the act of stereotyping may attain the status of a ritual. Indeed, the social identity theory of the social psychology lends support for the took-kit viewpoint of culture since its theoretical rationale is explained by collective psychological needs of a social group. Social psychologist David Schneider (2005, p.23) provides a basis for this argument of culture as an instrumentality: “Culture does not force itself upon us but rather provides templates that help us organize our social experiences in ways that facilitate effective interpersonal behavior..... Culture provides categories for our cognitive activity.”

To what extent political and social power manifests itself on the surface of the text rests crucially on what level of analysis one decides to take (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013) and the methodological approaches chosen. Adopting the random methods in this dissertation, however, manifestation of social and economic power was not clearly observable. It is often the case that studies of power relations in the news media content are not executed through the methods of random sampling and content analysis as this dissertation has done but through the scholars’ arbitrary selection of topics, issues and materials to zero in on the most socially and politically controversial topics (Fairclough, 1995; Kitch, 2007; van Dijk, 1987, 2013).

Growth of stereotyping: what caused it, with what impact?

If stereotyping based on national cultures is widespread in foreign news – with noticeable growth observed in the last three decades in three major world newspapers, what does it reflect (what was its cause?) and what impact can we infer from it on the audience?

Why stereotyping increased?

If stereotypically oriented news content became more prevalent over the last few decades, it would contradict the famous prophecy of the “global village” à la McLuhan – which was thought to result as a consequence of proliferating technological affordances and globalization of the world economies. If the idea of the global village is one in which better understanding between peoples in distant locales are fostered thanks to openness of information and greater interaction among them (McLuhan, 1962), viewing each other with a colored lens and stereotypical viewpoints – a function of the division between the ingroup and the outgroup - would certainly be a contradiction.

An academic debate as to what extent the news media’s content reflects the more globalized world we live in by embracing a more global outlook befitting of the new socio-economic realities (Berglez, 2008; Olausson, 2014; Riegert, 2011; Tanikawa, unpublished) is ongoing, but a close examination of such an issue is not among this dissertation’s chief aims. Some hints, however, concerning why news content in the global media may not have gone the way of globalization can be gleaned from the literature examined in this study.

Social psychology has established that human cognition chooses to categorize (and thus to stereotype) – rather than to recognize each piece of information as individuating instance, in order to deal with a plethora of incoming information that overburden our senses. If the globalization and the technology have ushered in an era of information abundance, it may have necessitated greater human needs for sorting and classifying– at least requiring some level of assistance such simplifying methods offer, to make sense of the increasingly complex world. When there is stimulus overload, it leads to greater categorization efforts on the part of human processors (Stangor & Schallor, 1996). After all, Lippmann’s observation began at a time the media were starting to become a social (and international) phenomenon and information excess was recognized as a new human challenge (Lippmann, 1922). In the new era of globalization and information excess (Sparks, 2007), the news media may have, rather than educating the citizens, facilitated this process by resorting to simplified, facile, organizing devices that smoothed the consumption of news. As amply illustrated in this dissertation, the culture peg is a device that journalists can insert in the articles at will to improve the resonance of the text to the audience.

Additionally, social psychologists have consistently found that humans selectively attend to information that confirms their expectations while ignoring facts that do not conform to their pre-conceived ideas (Cohen, 1981; Darley & Gross, 1983). When people hold certain beliefs and expectations as this dissertation has noted, their brain search expectantly for “hypothesis-confirmation bits of information” (Ikeda, 1993). The news media may have responded to the audience demand for simpler and expectancy conforming information by injecting stereotypically oriented content, especially at a

time of growing market competition as well as technologically challenging environment that gave rise to new competitors that threaten existing players in the news sphere (Bagdikian, 2004; Meyer, 2009).

What impact?

Social psychologists in the cultural school have pointed out that the media are an important means through which people acquire stereotypes (Stangor & Crandall, 2013; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994). This chimes in with the general observation that people have stereotypes about those they never met, leaving only one possibility-mediated communication (Lyons, Clark, Kashima, & Kurz, 2008). Media scholars argue that news about foreign countries are likely to come from the mass media more than in the case of domestic news – lacking any direct sources of information (Louw, 2009). When this is all put together, one may advance the idea that imprints into our perception of stereotypes about foreign societies are powerfully generated by mass-based news media.

Media scholars' general findings of the impact of foreign news on audience members is undeniable (Ihlen, Allern, Thorbjørnsrud & Waldahl, 2010; McCombs, 2014; Salwen & Matera, 1992; Willnat & Weaver, 2003). The most elaborate findings arise from agenda setting studies which have shown foreign news can impact audience's perception and attitude toward other countries as Salwen and Matera (1992) have shown through scale surveys. In both volume and valence – greater coverage led the respondents to believe a foreign nation was more important to the United States and

negative coverage was associated with negative audience impression of the foreign nation (Wanta, Golan, & Lee, 2004).

Relatedly, scholars have argued and empirically demonstrated that higher exposure to foreign news are associated with greater knowledge about foreign affairs (Beaudoin, 2004; Kwak, Poor & Skoric, 2006). However, this dissertation's findings suggest that acquisition of such knowledge could entail stereotypical and prejudicial understandings.

Given the prevalence of the cultural and ritual dimensions of communication, it is logically imperative to consider the heinous possibility that mediated communication may reinforce stereotypes whether at a micro level or a macro level, although micro-level perceptions could eventually link up and coagulate into an interconnected whole (O'Donnell, 1994). Stereotypical structure of the news – which may expand or contract over time, may be a template through which new information is acquired. Increase in exposure does not lead to better understanding of the world. Reliance on the cultural structure suggests that international news will depend on and strengthen the pre-existing schema of foreign cultures that readers possess with all its attendant features of negativity, homogeneity, and social identification, while providing readers with some new information about the countries/cultures in question.

Yet, facts, names and details change almost daily but the framework into which they fit – the symbolic system – is more enduring (Bird & Dardenne, 1997, p.335). When a particular system of representation advances desirable values and goals, people tend to regard the underlying assumptions and the formal means of applying them as a

valid system of knowledge (Bennett, Gressett, & Haltom, 1985). It stands to reason that when the cultural lens through which the journalists lodge information into the audience's mind is accepted by the audience, the information has a high chance of registering in them even if it is of questionable quality. Stereotypic messages thus may find greater credence among the readers because of the cultural structures that conform to the audience's needs and understanding.

It must be reminded that ritual/cultural aspects of the news are perhaps not the only, not even the most predominant facets of the foreign news in the mass media, in a quantitative sense. However, given the structure of information deliverance for which there are two routes--- transmission of facts & information and the cultural/ritual dimension in which facts are conveyed simultaneously, suggests that information is often presented through cultural devices, which may take forms other than stereotypes, especially for domestic reporting such as the common myths (Lule, 2002; Kitsch, 2007). National cultural stereotypes might be just one device among others used for foreign news reporting by the major news media. That cultural aspects of communication are a crucial part of the mass mediated communication, has yet to be fully investigated as to its whole pictures.

Methodological contribution of this study

Past scholarship in cultural studies, communication and social psychology, when all considered, appears to have produced sufficient depth of studies relating to stereotyping, such that near coherent picture already existed to situate the media use of

stereotype in extant studies and theories. But aside from interconnecting existing strands of ideals, thoughts and theories, the most obvious contribution this thesis makes is the quantitative constructs it proposed. By identifying the culture peg as a variable that can be isolated and counted and be determined of its quantitative depth of uses, it has given the hitherto vague concept - stereotype - flesh and bones which can be used to weave together separate, freestanding theoretical and conceptual strands. Tangible concepts and quantitative devices render the work of connecting different shreds of thoughts and ideas more feasible and convincing as this dissertation has done. Conversion of a concept into a variable construct also permitted the investigation of news articles from different countries and languages, employing the standard processes and procedures of the quantitative content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005).

A quantitative perspective enabled the dividing the level of analysis to word level (micro level) and story level (macro level) culture pegs, further permitting the analysis to be connected to precise theoretical and empirical categories and concepts such as “use of words” analysis of the linguistics and spreading activation of the social and cognitive psychology. The mixed methodology which combined quantitative and qualitative methods made the work of selecting the articles and the texts for analysis less arbitrary and more random. Future studies in this line of inquiry can further refine the methodology as well as explore links with other related theories and empirical studies connected to stereotype and culture, which previously have been predominantly qualitative and critical in their methodological approaches.

Future Studies

The content this dissertation examined - news texts of major world news media - is evidently only one type of what could be investigated for the theoretical purpose of this study, that is, analysis of stereotype use in the public media. A large vacuum remains in the areas of pictures, moving images and sounds, which in most likelihood work with texts and with each other to produce comprehensive stereotypical imageries and understanding in the audience's minds. For instance, if "pagoda" as a word level culture peg is used in the context of an Indian story, readers must have certain visual understanding of it learned from somewhere else, perhaps the result of culture peg itself in movies, television coverage etc. If culture peg reinforces stereotypic understanding of a culture, it is strengthening the stereotype by complementing existing images emanating from other media. Stereotypes are a network of and system of knowledge (O'Donnell, 1994; van Dijk, 1987), and thus a full picture of understanding of stereotype uses and their effects is only possible when visual and other components are investigated in connection with textual materials and how they work with each other. The audience may link the knowledge acquired in one context and plug it to other related stereotypical images that come under one cultural roof such as Spain, Israel, India, China and Russia which then accumulate and consolidate for each separate category or sub-category within a culture. Theoretically, semiotics and related studies of signs and symbols (Bonnell & Hunt, 1996; Culler, 1997; Hall, 1997) may facilitate understanding of such a comprehensive study of stereotyping in the mass media that includes news, movies, advertising, internet and other forms of communication to which

audiences are exposed and which give them extensive and wide-ranging meaning making experiences particular to a culture.

A future study could review the stereotype use in international reporting from the lens of crisis of representation (Tracy, 2013) and the rhizomic nature of meanings (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Meaning is said to be rhizomatic when it is dependent on the ever-shifting meaning of other concepts. Stereotypes are known to shift and adapt as relationships and dynamics between the two groups – the ingroup and the outgroup change (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994; Shrieke, 1936). If the stereotypes change, it means international reporting of other cultures can change with it. The way we think of an overseas reality, thus could change not when reality changes but when stereotypes change.

Lippmann's felicitous phrase "pictures in our heads" are such a comprehensive image and understanding of a foreign society and culture in a world that is constantly changing and shifting, reflecting societal, cultural and intergroup dynamics.

Appendix

Table 1

Growth in Word-Level Culture Pegs 1985-2014

The New York Times

| | 1985 | 2000 | 2014 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| A. Total No. of Word Pegs | 43 | 70 | 113 |
| Ratio-A as a % of B | 30.9 | 53% | 120% |
| B. Total No. of Articles | 139 | 133 | 94 |

The Guardian (Weekly)

| | 1985 | 2000 | 2014 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| A. Total No. of Word Pegs | 62 | 121 | 169 |
| Ratio-A as a % of B | 63% | 125% | 129% |
| B. Total No. of Articles | 99 | 97 | 131 |

Asahi Shimbun

| | 1985 | 2000 | 2014 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| A Total No. of Word Pegs | 112 | 122 | 95 |
| Ratio-A as a % of B | 78% | 85% | 128% |
| B Total No. of Articles | 143 | 143 | 74 |

Tables 2-4

Table 2 NYT articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 2014)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| 9-Sep | The British Royal family - Prince William and Kate - and their newborn second baby * | 1 & 3 |
| 18-Sep | New Palestinian uprising leads to violent clashes in Jerusalem ** | 1 & 2 |
| 29-Sep | Thai government concerned about Thai food quality around the world and introduces measures to improve it *** | 3 |
| 29-Sep | Radical Buddhist monk calls for action and unity against Muslims and other religions | 1 |
| 8-Oct | Efforts to carry out restoration work for the home of Catherine the Great in a German town | 1 |
| 12-Oct | Nile River Dam project in Ethiopia stirs hope at home while creating tensions with neighbors | 1 |
| 12-Oct | Chinese President taps into Chinese classics for political wisdom and policy ideas | 1 |
| 17-Oct | Trekking in the Himalaya led to deaths for international mountain climbers | 1 |
| 17-Oct | Growing numbers of young Israelis moving to Berlin, Germany, stirs controversy/tension between young and the old generations | 2 |

17-Oct Japan's conservatives challenge accounts of war history 1

A group of Israeli women held the Bat Mitzvah ceremony at

25-Oct Western Wall, against the established tradition and the wishes of
the male orthodoxy who control the holy site. 1

* British Royal family, which goes back centuries (Type 1), is embedded in
British history, while being a highly popular subject for news and entertainment
reporting for the American audience (Type 3)

** Palestinian uprising against Israel is a well-known point of news from the
region. The origin of the conflict goes back millennia (Type 1) but there is strong
20th century dimension to the contemporary conflict (Type 2)

*** Thai cuisine is a lived experience (Type 3) for many American readers

NYT articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 2000)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|--------|---|------|
| 1-Sep | An exhibition that displays Poland's past: Polish struggle with its brand of communism and domination by the Soviet Union. | 2 |
| 11-Sep | New archeological dig in Egypt uncovers large numbers of mummies. | 1 |
| 11-Sep | Musicians in Nigeria tell stories in Afro-beat and defy dictators | 2 |
| 22-Oct | Dictator and his junta in Ivory Coast run the election to the detriment of popular democracy | 2 |

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| 22-Oct | Belgian cardinal says in a book that Pope John Paul II may soon retire, fueling a controversy | 1 |
|--------|---|---|

NYT articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 1985)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| 1-Sep | An Israeli doctor gains popularity in the Arab world by broadcasting a medical program in which listeners are invited to ask questions | 1 & 2 |
| 1-Sep | Liverpool, birthplace of "Beatles," became a site for tourism, events and shops for Beatlemania | 2 |
| 11-Sep | Sewage pollutes the beaches in Alexandria, a major holiday destination in Egypt, driving away many holiday makers | 1 |
| 11-Sep | Bi-racial people in South Africa find themselves in legal, cultural and societal limbo because of apartheid | 2 |
| 10-Oct | British author and politician Jeffrey Archer, and his novel about British premier Margaret Thatcher | 2 |
| 10-Oct | A funeral of an anti-fascist in Germany was attended by thousands | 2 |
| 10-Oct | Japanese prime minister will cancel visit to Yasukuni shrine, which is dedicated to the war dead, in an effort to avoid confrontation with the Chinese government | 1 & 2 |
| 22-Oct | Princess Diana pays a surprise visit to Northern Ireland and receives warm welcome from protestants | 1 & 2 |

Table 3 Guardian articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 2014)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| Sept 12-18 | Nuclear power plants in Ukraine become a concern as unrest in the country continues | 2 |
| Sept 12-18 | Economic downturn in post- Chavez Venezuela : the economy suffers from hyper-inflation, lack of investments and labor strife | 2 |
| Sept 19-25 | Oscar Pistorius trial suggests race still colors justice in South Africa | 2 |
| Sept 19-25 | The new bill introduced aims to tame the traffic anarchy in India which causes deaths of 150 thousand annually | 2 |
| Sept 19-25 | Water shortage causes great concern in California which produces 80 percent of the world's almond harvest | 2 |
| Sept 19-25 | Sweden grows tire of tax cuts and privatization - a reactionary to anti-socialist policy | 2 |
| Sept 19-25 | Hundreds of thousands in Catalonia take to the streets demanding Catalan independence from Spain | 1 |
| Sept 26- Oct 2 | Moscow's grows assertive toward Baltic states - people there are fearful of Russian aggressiveness | 2 |

| | | |
|-----------|--|-------|
| Oct 3-9 | Hundreds of young women and girls are leaving their homes in western countries to join radical Islamic fighters in the Middle East, a trend that has disturbed and shocked the Western world. * | 1 & 3 |
| Oct 3-9 | Romania dealing with the communist past: prosecution of a former communist prison commander brings up painful memories and wrenching social debate about the past. | 2 |
| Oct 3-9 | Hope rises that Pope Francis will restart conversation about easing punishment on Catholics who divorced - despite opposition to such moves within the church.** | 1 & 3 |
| Oct 3-9 | Environmentalists are warning that elephant poaching is occurring on an unprecedented scale in Mozambique | 2 |
| Oct 3-9 | Timbuktu, city of gold, is disintegrating due to war, greed and human neglect | |
| Oct 10-16 | "Clean India" drive in India: the government of India, spearheaded by premier Modi, has launched a campaign to make public places in India cleaner and improve the public hygiene | 1 |
| Oct 10-16 | Catalonian independence movement gains momentum and fever rises to unprecedented levels | 1 |
| Oct 17-23 | China's authoritative news media warns against and accuses Japanese animated character, Doraemon, for corrupting the minds of youth in China. Such soft power influences from Japan is interpreted as having subversive effects on people who suffered atrocities at the hands of Japanese military during World War II. | 2 & 3 |

| | | |
|-----------|---|-------|
| Oct 17-23 | Las Vegas and its wedding industry pin hopes on gay and lesbian marriage as the federal court lifts ban on gay marriage in Nevada | 2 |
| Oct 17-23 | Illegal logging in the Amazon go unrestrained as loggers find eager buyers overseas | 1 |
| Oct 17-23 | Large amounts of donation were raised in a conference to help rebuild Gaza but the city remains in shambles | 1 & 2 |
| Oct 17-23 | International aid agencies have warned of an impending famine in the Sudan as civil war intensifies | 2 |

*This article's "lived" component (Type 3) was the fact that the women associated with Isis were from the western world. Type 1 component was the Islamic religion and history.

** Type 3 component in this story is the fact that Catholic churches are found within the home (UK) country.

*** Doraemon or Japanese animation - widely available internationally - was considered a lived experience (Type 3).

Guardian articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 2000)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| 4-Oct | Israel contemplates ceding the administration of the Holy site in Jerusalem to UN control | 1 |
| 4-Oct | CIA and former Chilean secret police divulge secrets regarding the overthrow of the government of Allende in 1970 | 2 |

| | | |
|--------|---|-------|
| | National Police Agency's new policy to expose Japanese gangsters, the Yakuza, by making their names, addresses and affiliations public | 1 |
| 4-Oct | | |
| | White supremacists and neo-confederates in the South reassert their values and launch renewed independence movement | 1 |
| 11-Oct | | |
| | The Parsi tradition in India - to have vultures pick clean the body of the dead - faces extinction as population of the vultures decline | 2 |
| 11-Oct | | |
| | Charges against former Indonesian dictator Suharto was dropped as independent doctors find him mentally and physically unfit to stand trial | 2 |
| 11-Oct | | |
| | In a war crime tribunal in the Hague, a former Bosnia Serb general accused of leading Srebrenica massacre denied his role in the killings | 2 |
| 25-Oct | | |
| | Renewed violence between Arabs and the Jews brings in a new cycle of vengeance led by extremists on both sides | 1 & 2 |
| 25-Oct | | |

Guardian articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 1985)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| | Laws of apartheid keep the dead and the buried segregated in burial grounds | 2 |
| 8-Sep | | |
| | The government of president Botha is slowly moving towards reform and abolition of the racist policies | 2 |
| 22-Sep | | |

| | | |
|--------|--|---|
| | Analysis of the recent government move to restore citizenship to millions of blacks and further dismantling of Apartheid | 2 |
| 22-Sep | | |
| | South Africa's opposition party joins in the call to release Nelson Mandela from prison and to dismantle Apartheid | 2 |
| 20-Oct | | |
| 20-Oct | Essay: The myth, reality and tourism in the Polynesia islands | 1 |

Table 4 Asahi articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 2014)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| 9-Sep | A journalist's encounter with racism in the United States includes being called a "Navajo" on the street | 2 |
| 9-Sep | Princess Catherine is now pregnant with second prince | 1& 3 |
| 18-Sep | Article questions the claim/ ability of Chinese-made drone having taken pictures over the Diaoyu island (questionable Chinese technology) | 2 |
| 18-Sep | South Korean president Park expresses the desirability of holding a foreign minister level meeting with North Korea | 2 |
| 8-Oct | The Vatican discusses Catholic taboos such as birth control and gay & lesbian marriage | 1 |
| 12-Oct | Tension between India and Pakistan over Kashmir reignites | 2 |
| 12-Oct | A "South-North" meeting between Koreas may be called due to recent armed conflict | 2 |

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| 12-Oct | Air pollution in Beijing, China has exceeded the prescribed pollution standards | 2 |
| 17-Oct | Rio's slums and its squalid living conditions and the popularity of Japanese restaurants in pre-Olympics Brazil | 2 |
| 17-Oct | Black Magic in Africa: Reporter and his assistant's encounter with the fearsome black magician in Nigeria | 1 |

Asahi articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 2000)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| 1-Sep | South-North Koreas continue the dialogue at the ministerial level to improve relations | 2 |
| 1-Sep | Jerusalem mayor's statement - he is ready to accept a compromise solution on the city's control: "Sovereignty of the city belongs to 'God'" | 1 |
| 1-Sep | South Africa continues to grapple with racial discrimination and hatred | 2 |
| 1-Sep | Former Indonesian president Suharto faced trial for embezzlement but he was absent and only his lawyer showed up | 2 |
| 1-Sep | Analysis of the former dictator Suharto's regime | 2 |
| 1-Sep | Discussion on gay and lesbian relationships heats up in Italy, the country of Catholics, amid opposition from the Vatican | 1 |
| 1-Sep | US pledges financial aid package to Colombia for war on drugs | 2 |
| 11-Sep | Aung San Suu Ki remains "secluded" and is held up by the military junta and is unable to meet with foreign diplomats and journalists | 2 |

| | | |
|--------|--|---|
| 21-Sep | Aung San Suu Ki announces she will visit the countryside in defiance of the military government's order to stay put in the capital | 2 |
| 21-Sep | Ethnic Strife in Africa - ongoing conflict between the Tutsis and the Hutus | 2 |

*Content analysis found no story-level pegs in October of 1985 and 2000

Asahi articles with story level pegs (Sept-Oct, 1985)

| Date | Topic description | Type |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| 1-Sep | Chinese government attempts to lure Dalai Lama into returning to Tibet | 1 |
| 1-Sep | Anti-discrimination group in South Africa refuses to meet with European Community foreign ministers on grounds they will not meet with the imprisoned Nelson Mandela | 2 |
| 1-Sep | Death tolls from racial riots in South Africa rise | 2 |
| 9-Sep | US Federal government's plans to relocate Indians from the reserves in Arizona | 1 |
| 9-Sep | Riots in South Africa widen as security forces attempt to contain violence | 2 |
| 11-Sep | Analysis of the Post-war evolution of Chinese communist leadership | 2 |
| 21-Sep | South-North Koreas allow mutual visitation of families separated since the country split into two halves | 2 |

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| 21-Sep | Members of the South Korean group visiting North Korea include a former minister, a singer and a religious leader | 2 |
| 21-Sep | Interview with a Vatican leader on contemporary world issues and challenges | 1 |

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