Changing Media Structures & the Role of Media in Reporting Risks & Impacts from Natural Hazards & Risk Management

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Content

Introduction

Theoretical Approach

Methode

Research Findings

Conclusion: Media impacts on Disaster Management

Structural change in the media system:
Commercialisation and autonomous media system

Political Press

- Close relationship between press, political system, traditional institutions
- Media logic: public service (in a political sense)
- Audience: citizen
- Purpose: serving general public/ active citizen

Autonomous Media

- Companies, selling products in a competitive media market
- Independent from political system, strong influence of economic system
- Media logic: commercial
- Audience: consumer
- Purpose: profit

Methodology
Selection of data

Research subject: Newspaper coverage of nine floods

Newspaper sample: 4 major newspapers (Swiss, German language)

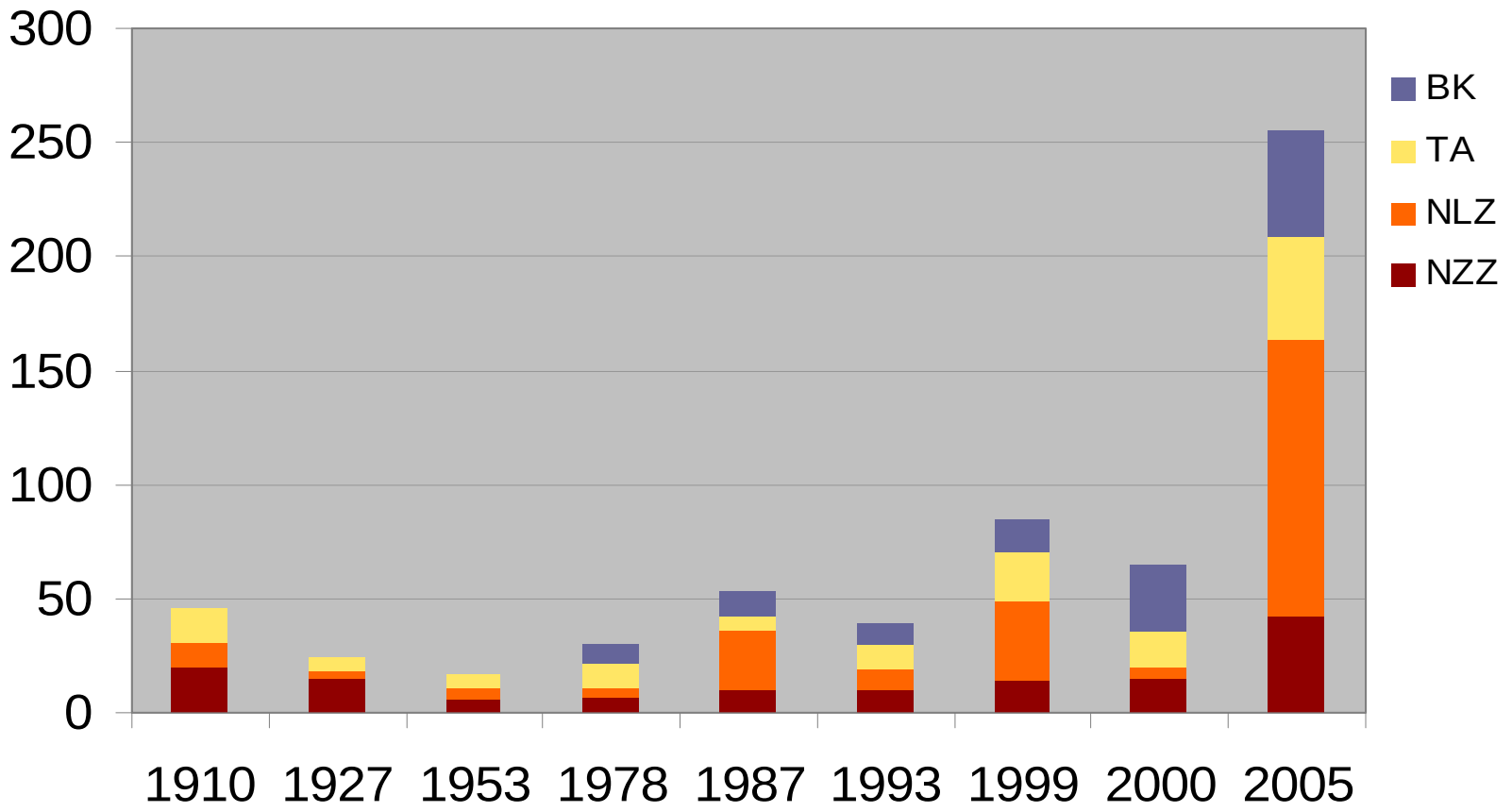
- Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ)
- Tages-Anzeiger (TA)
- Neue Luzerner Zeitung (NLZ)
- Blick (BK): tabloid

Time period of the longitudinal study: 1910-2005

Period of analysis for every event: coverage up to one year

Method: Content analysis

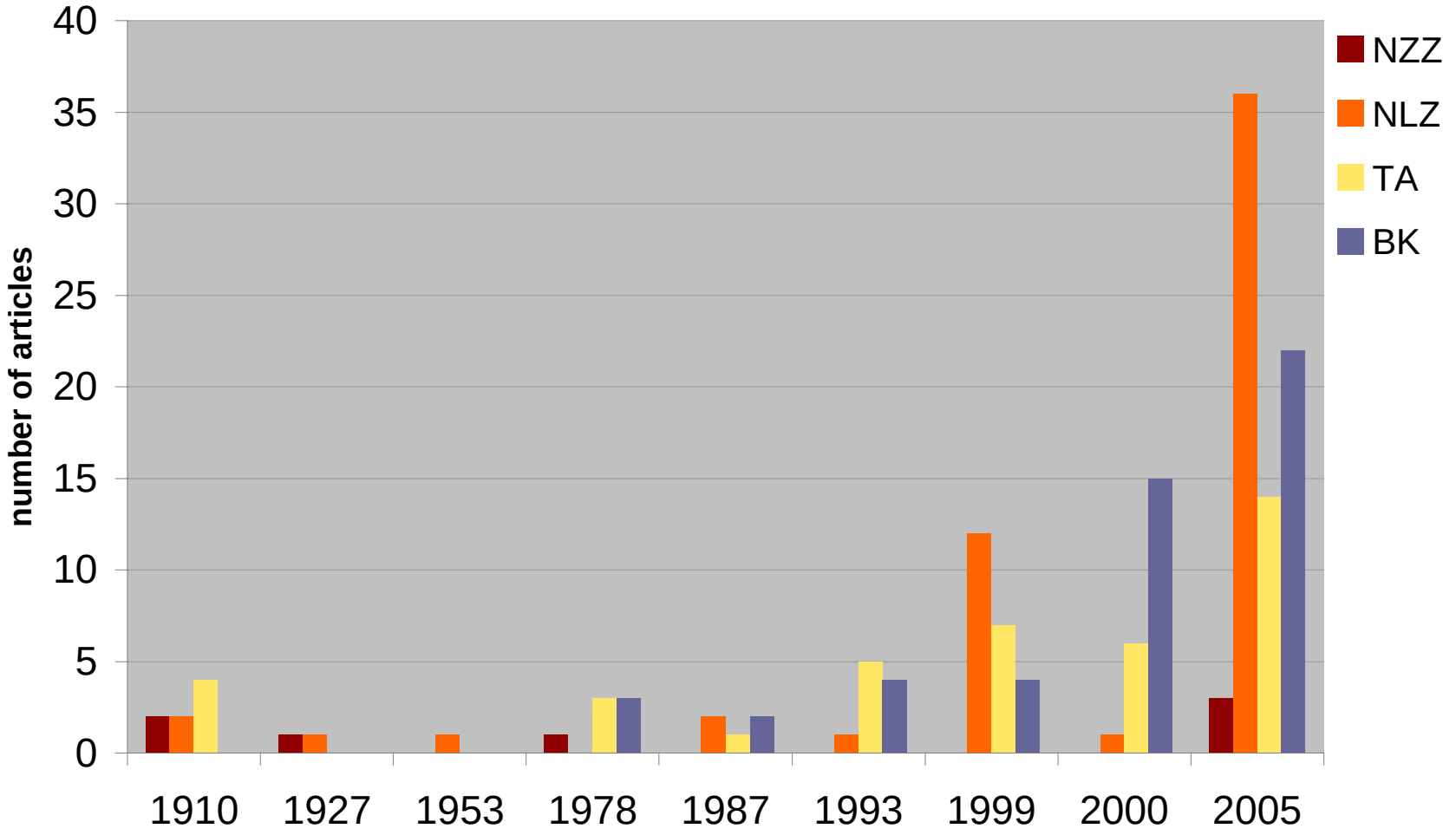
Number of articles on 9 Disasters from 1910-2005:
Swiss dailies Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ), Tages-Anzeiger (TA), Neue Luzerner Zeitung (NLZ), Blick (BK)



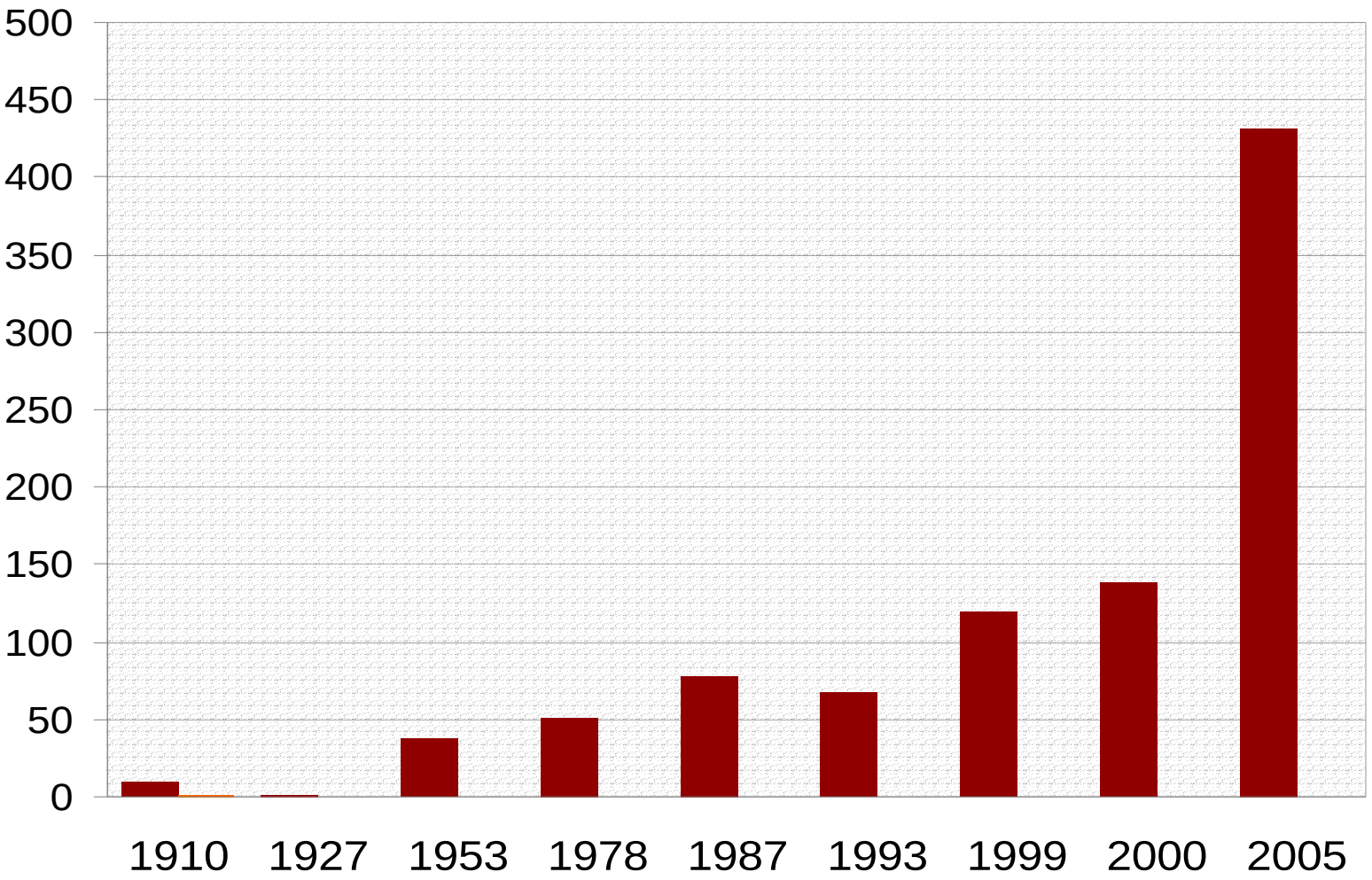
Trends in story focus in disaster coverage 1910-2005:
A comparison of 3 time-periods

Framing structure:	1910-1953	1978-1999	2000-2005
General description of event	19.1%	16.0%	12.6%
Safety/ Rescue operations/ Resettling	13.8%	8.8%	7.2%
Affected people/ Official impact report	13.2%	4.0%	3.8%
Political reactions/Consequences/Laws	12.6%	11.7%	8.6%
Private aid/ Organised solidarity	7.8%	4.5%	2.1%
Economy/ Employment	6.6%	8.5%	7.3%
Human Interest	6.6%	11.9%	15.6%
Science/ Technology	4.8%	9.7%	5.6%
Nature/ Environmental problems	3.0%	4.5%	4.5%
Damage/ Consequences	2.4%	7.2%	11.6%
Insurance/ Compensation	2.4%	1.7%	2.5%
Religion/ Church	2.4%	0.5%	0.5%
Retrospect/ History	1.8%	1.8%	2.9%
Entertainment/ VIPs/ Cultur	1.8%	2.2%	2.1%
Futur expectations	1.2%	4.5%	8.7%
Other topics	0.5%	2.7%	1.4%
Total N* 100% N*= "Main issue" max. 2 per articles	**100% (167)**	**100% (401)**	**100% (629)**

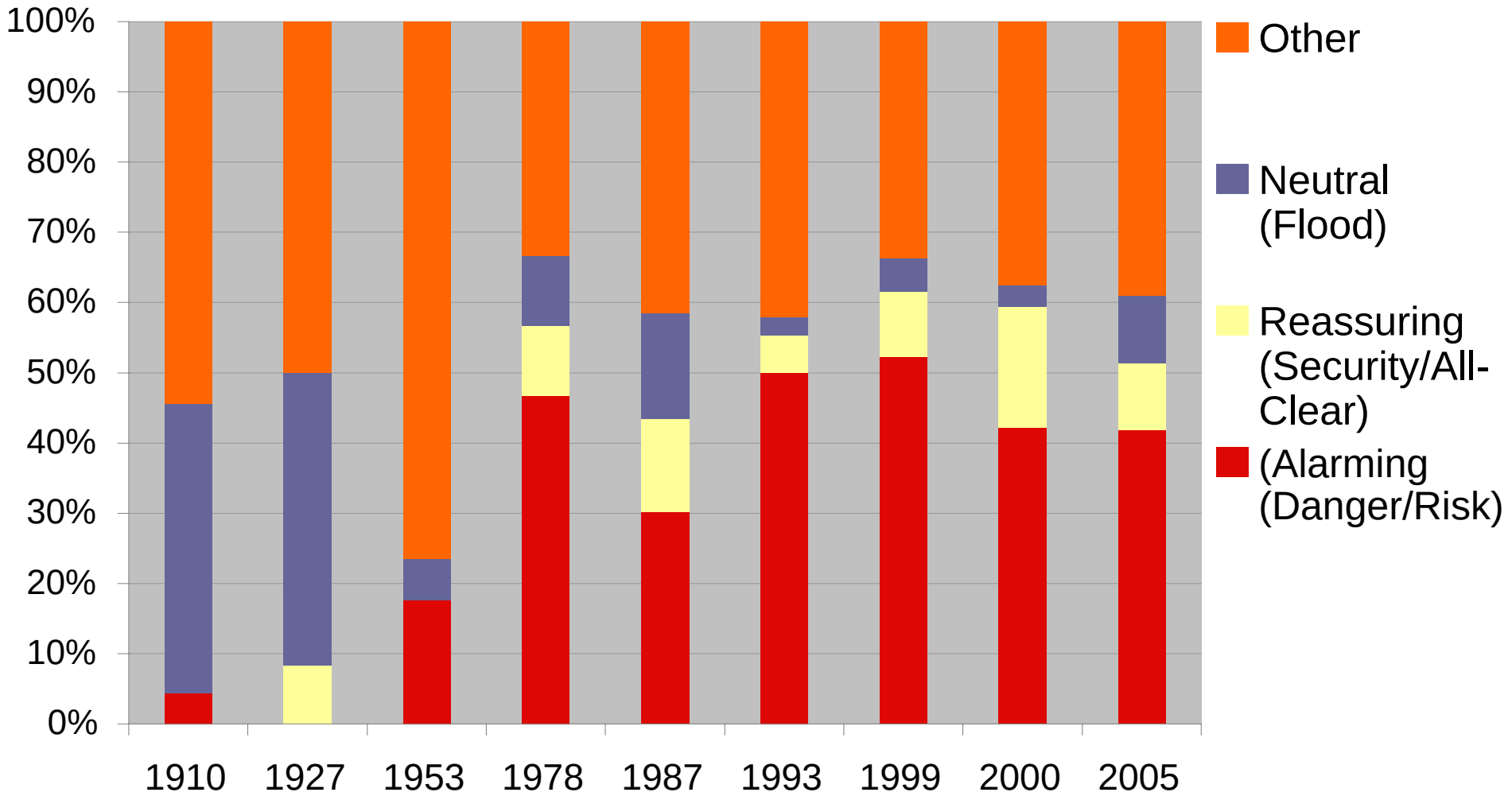
Human Interest stories in disaster coverage 1910-2005:
Swiss dailies Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ), Neue Luzerner Zeitung (NLZ), Tages-Anzeiger (TA), Blick (BK)



Disaster Visualisation from 1910-2005:
A comparison of the number of pictures



The production of drama in disaster reporting:
A comparison of headlines from 1910-2005 (NZZ, TA, VA/NLZ, BK)



Conclusions

Due to market orientation, the media abandoned traditional public service norms of disaster coverage. Reporting is now characterized by:

- Increase of disaster reporting
- Increase of visualization and dramatization
- Trend toward human-interest-story, the dramatic and sensationalism to engage emotions

Conclusions

Authorities and disaster agencies must take media-logic and potential risks posed by disaster coverage into account. Risk reduction measures include:

- Institutionalized monitoring of media content in various media types
- Improve cooperation and coordination between different players in risk management and the media before, during and after the disaster
- Improve media skills of risk managers and rescue workers

THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

BILD MINIKA FLÜCKIGER/POOL/KEYSTONE

Waten auf der Dorfstrasse: Bundespräsident Samuel Schmid besucht die Gemeinde Oey im Berner Oberland.

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