The speaker, Professor Shusaku Kanazawa, began by thanking the Foundation and the audience for attending his talk. He explained that it was with the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake on the 17th of January, 1995, that the concept of charity first began to be widely discussed in Japan, with the major destruction and tragic loss of life it visited on the Kansai region. Words such as 'volunteering' and 'charity' were previously unfamiliar to most ordinary Japanese people, but they became common on TV news and in the newspapers, and 1995 became known as the 'first year of volunteering'. Before the earthquake, most Japanese people had rarely noticed the existence of charity in their daily lives, and at best charities had been regarded by many as something remote and distant; although this does not mean that was no tradition of charitable activity in Japan, it was not noticed by people in general.

Professor Kanazawa then began to compare charities in the UK and Japan. In the UK today there are 160,000 charities with donations amounting to £11.8 billion, while in Japan there are 50,000 charities with donations amounting to £5.1 billion. Given the comparative populations' sizes and GDP (66.43 million people and US$2.85 trillion in 2018, and 126.44 million people and US$4.95 trillion in 2018, respectively), the relative stagnation of Japanese charitable activities is evident. While large amounts are raised in the wake of natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis, the Japanese people are generally quite indifferent to charities. Compared with the high profile of a number of British charities such as the RSPCA, Cancer Research UK, and RNLI, Japanese charities are little known even in their own country. In the Edo period (1603-1868), apart from occasional famine relief such as soup kitchens put on by Buddhist temples, there was no substantial and stable charitable activity. Instead, with most of the population living in poor, rural areas, people were organised in tightly-knit communities centred around the family and the village, helping each other to survive. This reliance on family and local communities continued to be a conspicuous feature of poverty relief in early-modern and modern Japan.

In 1868 the 'closed country' policy of Edo-period Japan was ended and Western countries and charities were encountered by many for the first time. There was a significant issue of poverty, especially in urban areas, mirroring the experience of Western countries during the industrial revolution. Looking to the West for inspiration, the Japanese government established a system of poor relief composed of public measures and private charities, although it was less comprehensive and reliable than, for instance, the English model. In 1874, the government set up the Regulation of Poor Relief system, but this gave only a paltry sum to the single and destitute, and thus a number of private charities were set up as well. A number of Western Christian missionaries cam to Japan and were instrumental in setting up these charities, together with Japanese Christian converts; further, a number of Japanese Christians travelled to the United States of America and Europe to learn from Western charitable models. One such man was Taro Tanaka, who toured Europe extensively in 1908 and studied British and continental public and private poor relief practices. These Western poor relief models were studied at length by Tanaka and many others in the Meiji period (1868-1912).

In Britain in c. 1910, Professor Kanazawa explained, there were over 2,500 subscription charities with a cumulative annual income of over £12 million, and over 37,000 endowed charities with a cumulative annual income of over £2.2 million. The population at this time was 45.3 million, compared with 49.8 million in Japan, and with a much smaller

proportion of dwellers in rural areas, roughly 22% (1901) compared to 67% (1888) in Japan. In Japan in 1911, by comparison, there were only 550 charities, significantly fewer than in the UK, with a combined income of £0.25 million. Orphanages and medical institutions were proportionally well represented, with few charities focusing on helping women or the elderly. This was likely due to the prevailing social belief that these latter two groups were protected and maintained within the family unit, while orphans and the ill were regarded as beyond the reach of familial care. Another contrast with the UK is that there was little provision made for charitable education, with educational charities in Japan at that time focusing on education for disabled children, unlike in the UK where there was a long history of (especially endowed) charities providing primary, secondary, and higher education to the public at large.

Professor Kanazawa then looked at contemporary opinions on charities by Japanese figures, focusing on four important early 20th-century writers: Kosuke Tomeoka, Taro Tanaka, Magoichi Nunokawa, and Takayuki Namae. All four were Christian and wrote on aspects of charity at the time. Outlining a number of their notable works on charity, Professor Kanazawa noted that the development of public attitudes to charity can be traced in these writings. They observed that the Buddhist background of Japan had led in part to the stagnation of charities in Japan. Tomeoka, who had spent time in the USA and admired the liveliness of charities there based on deeply-held Christian faith, opined ‘‘if we want to increase charities more and make them more effective we cannot help turning to the power of Christianity for assistance…”, criticising Buddhism and Shinto for their lack of charitable activity and heritage. This attitude was echoed by Tanaka, who questioned “‘what on earth are the adherents of Buddhism doing now?” and urged seemingly dormant Buddhist bodies to spring into action. Nunokawa, meanwhile, remarked that “‘so far, any one of the famous well-known charitable enterprises in our country has had a Christian tinge, and it is observed that the Buddhists rather have lagged behind the Christians in establishing such institutions…”; however, he was wary of aspects of cultural imperialism hiding behind the veneer of religious evangelism, and was critical of Catholic priests who were active in Japan in the late 16th century and were behaving with ulterior political motives, noting that “‘in the present China and Korea, there are some missionaries with political and economic intentions in mind.” This ambivalence towards Christianity can also be found in Namae’s discourse, which points to widely-held Confucian attitudes about the importance of filial piety as evidence of indigenous care for the elderly, negating the need for extensive charitable activity in this area as seen in Christian countries. Professor Kanazawa explained that we can discern in these four writers’ works the wider shift from uncritical acceptance to cautious reservation, and even rejection, of Christianity as a driving force for charity in Japan.

But these writers also expressed ambivalence about the strong emphasis on familial support in Japan, he continued. They believed that while this did lessen the financial burden of public relief, it seemed at the same time to be preventing the growth of private voluntary charities. Tomeoka wrote that people in the West were “so highly advanced and developed that they themselves voluntarily do their duty without any supervision nor direction from the government”, while the Japanese behaved on the contrary “at the government’s beck and call.” Tanaka went further away from naïve adoration of the West in his efforts to understand the fundamental roots of the difference in family systems and attitudes between Japan and the West. He observed that in England every person is taken to be an independent individual, and “Even if a parent is about to be chargeable to the public, the child is not necessarily forced

to relieve and maintain him/her", while in Japan all family members would depend on the support of any family member with wealth, rather than rely on the state for assistance, and that as a consequence there were very few paupers who received public relief in Japan. He wrote that "in short, those who cannot support themselves are, in our country, relieved by the united efforts of their traditional kinsfolk lest they become chargeable to society." He identified this strong reliance on family, as well as the customary system of mutual aid in neighbourhoods and communities, as the main reasons for the lack of natural demand for charitable works in Japan. The contrast between Western individualism and Japanese familism and communalism led to a sense of rivalry with the West and the drive to identify unique national virtues, despite a shared hope that relief works would take root in Japan.

Despite the identification of these causes and the growing pride in 'unique' Japanese values of familial support, these writers continued to lament the stagnation of charitable activity in Japan, Professor Kanazawa went on. Tomeoka wrote that ''our charities seem to be too few compared with Western countries… they are still dispirited and at a low ebb," while Tanaka expressed envy for Britain's many charitable hospitals. However, in Britain itself there was the opposite issue: an overabundance of charities with some being redundant or useless, as demonstrated when Professor Kanazawa quoted a letter written to *The Times* in 1869 complaining about the excess of charitable organisations. Nevertheless, there remained the will in Japan to increase the number of active charities after the Western model.

The first National Conference of Charitable works was held by private individuals and bureaucrats in Osaka in 1903, and five years later the Central Charity Organisation Society was established in 1908 in order to organise charitable works in Japan. In 1911 the 'Saiseikai' Imperial Gift Foundation run by the government was set up following a gift of £0.15 million from the Meiji Emperor, to provide medical treatment for the poor, augmented by £2.5 million collected from the Japanese people by local authorities in 1912. Professor Kanazawa argued that the fact that this was ten times the total money raised by private charities in 1911 (£0.25 million) shows that government and official initiatives were taken far more seriously than private charities. In this way, the growth of Japanese relief work was achieved by organisation from above, through government and official administration, rather than through the efforts of the charities themselves.

Concurrently, there was a drive to present Japan to Western observers and nations as having a distinct charitable tradition and history. In the 1907 book, *Fifty Years of New Japan*, the Christian peer Taizo Miyoshi wrote a chapter titled 'Philanthropy in Japan', which emphasised the continuity of the charitable tradition from ancient times, portraying Christianity as a regenerative rather than creative force regarding charitable activity in Japan. According to Miyoshi, the characteristics of Japanese philanthropy lie in the dynamic between a benevolent sovereign and a people responsive to and imitative of this Imperial benevolence, as later demonstrated in the 1911 Saiseikai. Moreover, Baron Tadanori Ishiguro wrote in his chapter, 'The Red Cross in Japan', "Occidentals seem to hold, with a certain amount of pride, that the spirit of humanity which in these days tends to alleviate the horrors of war, is a product peculiar to their own modern civilization. But this magnanimity… has been a special characteristic of our nation from all time." *Fifty Years of New Japan* was translated into English in 1909, and reflects a concerted effort at promoting Japan as an historically charitable and therefore 'civilised' power to the West, as did three brochures advertising Japan's charitable

heritage which were published for distribution at the 1910 Anglo-Japanese Exhibition in London.

Further, the leading Japanese historian at the time, Zennosuke Tsuji, also came to engage in the advertisement of Japanese charities. Under the sponsorship of a younger brother of the Emperor, Tsuji edited and published *The Humanitarian Ideas of the Japanese* in 1932. The purpose of this publication was to persuade Western nations that Japan was charitable enough, and therefore 'civilised' enough, to stand on a par with the great powers, Professor Kanazawa argued. He went on to propose that this image of Japan was essentially a fabrication, and that these documents were created to hide the reality that poverty and hardship in rural Japan went essentially unaided and unalleviated by charitable help due to the Japanese insistence on the Confucian family-support model. Further, within Japan the state-oriented tendency of 'social work' rapidly turned into almost blind self-sacrifice to the national interest, and a forced subjugation of individuals' voluntary will to do good in favour of the collective will to serve the Empire.

After World War 2, disarmed and democratised Japan became the recipient of overseas humanitarian aid for some years. After the rapid economic development of the 1950s, the state welfare system was established in the 1960s and 1970s. Thanks to the new comprehensive welfare, lifetime employment system, and the significant role of family – i.e. unpaid female labour – Japan maintained a society with little visible presence of charity, Professor Kanazawa continued. In sum, pre-war Japan had family and countryside to absorb human risk and hardship and consequently dispensed with the need for charities, while post-war Japan had family and company in an equivalent way. By contrast, the long tradition of charitable activity in the UK was all but suspended during the welfare state years of the 1960s and 1970s, but regained its significance in the wake of Margaret Thatcher's reforms in the 1980s.

Professor Kanazawa concluded his talk by posing the question, 'What makes Japanese and British Charities so Different?' Building on his earlier points, he emphasised the key differences between the UK and Japan of the role of the family and the relationship of citizens with authority and official figures. He then explained that the ethic of British charity is not inconsistent with the spirit of capitalism, with different charities vying for the attention and money of the donor 'market'; from the point of view of the individual, charitable donations are essentially purchases of a (charitable) proxy service, which provides those in need with the help and assistance that donors are financially or temporally unable to provide themselves. Despite the enthusiastic and self-sacrificial efforts of a small number of charity workers, however, the donor market in Japan has not grown or matured enough to become appealing to the wider public, and consequently there is no public desire to 'purchase' charity services. Further, the lifetime employment system and ethic of familial support have all but gone in Japan, removing the support systems which were acting in lieu of charity, raising concerns for the future. Professor Kanazawa finished by saying that with the coronavirus pandemic and the global trend of neo-liberalism, both Japan and the UK face significant challenges, and it is only with a clear understanding of the histories of charitable activity in each country that the two countries will be able to overcome the present predicament.