

**WAVES OF RESCUE:
BRITISH FUNDRAISER TO JAPAN DUE TO THE 1896
SANRIKU TSUNAMI**

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| <p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Maisterintutkielmassani käsittelen Japanin ja Britannian välisiä suhteita 1800-luvun lopulla. Suhteiden käsittelyssä syvennytään Japanissa tapahtuneen tuhoisaan tsunamiin, joka tapahtui Sanriku-rannikolla vuonna 1896. Lähestyn aihetta tutkimalla, minkälaisia eurosentrisiä teemoja Japanin suhteen tsunamista uutisoinnissa ilmenee. Lisäksi huomio keskittyy humanitaariseen apuun. Lontoossa perustettuun rahankeräys tsunamin uhreille. Tässä tutkimuksessa on tarkoitus tarkastella, minkälaisista erilaisista yhteiskunnallisista taustoista keräykseen lahjoittaneet tulivat ja minkälaisia yhteyksiä heillä oli Japaniin.</p> <p>Japanin modernisoituminen ja teollistuminen Meiji restauraation (1868) jälkeen oli nopeaa. Yksi tähän vaikuttava tekijä oli ulkovaltojen osaamisen ja asiantuntijoiden hyödyntäminen. Esimerkiksi suuret joukot brittejä saapui Japaniin kehittämään teollisuutta. Modernisoitumisen myötä Japani oli voittoisa sodassa Kiinaa vastaan (1894–1895). Voitto sodassa muutti länsimaiden suhtautumisen Japanista. Se nosti arvostuksen maata kohtaan kehittyneenä, modernina valtiona.</p> <p>Tarkastelen aihetta kahden tutkimuskysymyksen avulla. Ensimmäinen tutkimuskysymys vastaa, kuinka Yokohamassa julkaistu englanninkielinen <i>the Japan Weekly Mail</i> uutisoi tsunamista, ja kuinka siitä on löydettävissä eurosentrisiä vivahteita. Toinen tutkimuskysymys lähestyy aihetta humanitäärisen avun näkökulmasta. Lontoon Japan Society:n rahankeruu tsunamin uhrien auttamiseksi julkaistiin <i>The Times</i> -lehdessä. Tutkin keräykseen lahjoittaneiden motiiveja, ja koko keräyksen yhteyksiä laajempaan Viktoriaanisen ajan hyväntekeväisyysperinteisiin. Lahjoittajat tulivat aina aatelistosta teollisuuden yrityksiin. Lähteiden analysoinnissa käytän lähiluvun menetelmiä.</p> | |
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1 INTRODUCTION

It will be some time, doubtless, before full particulars reach Tokyo of the cruel disaster that has overtaken the people living along the coast of Rikuzen and Rikuchu. At intervals, happily long, Japan is visited by earthquake waves that devastate her shores and sometimes bury whole villages permanently under their waters.¹

An un-named writer about the 1896 Sanriku tsunami

On June 15th, 1896, Japan was struck by one of the most devastating natural disasters in its history: the Sanriku earthquake and subsequent tsunami.² This calamity was the deadliest tsunami in the history of Japan. In comparison, the notable Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami (2011) had a death toll of 20,000; the 1896 earthquake in Sanriku, a death toll of 22,000.³

This thesis explores how Britain's ethnocentric views of Japan and its people were reflected in British reports of the tsunami. Analysis will shed light on how the 1896 Sanriku tsunami was reported in English-language and what kind of Eurocentric nuances, that were typical in the 19th century, arose in the newspapers inspected. This will contextualise a British fundraiser that was set up for the tsunami victims. As the fundraiser's progress was reported

¹ *Japan Weekly Mail* 20.6.1898, "The Earthquake and Tidal Wave", 681.

² Modern research has shown that the magnitude of the earthquake and the tidal wave in 1896 account for the use of the word *tsunami*.

³ Though the 2011 tsunami had other quite significant reasons to justify the interest in research, for example, it was the most powerful earthquake in the history of Japan, and it caused the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. Nakahara & Ishikawa 2013, 70.

on *The Times*, a part of this study will more closely examine the several donors, which will give a non-traditional point of view on British and Japanese relations on the eve of the 20th century.⁴

After the Sanriku tsunami, the Japan Society of London, founded in 1891 and still active in 2024, founded a fundraiser to collect money for the victims. The donors' source of income varied from trade industries to politics, indicative of the connections between Japan and Britain. Setting up a fundraiser and asking newspaper readers to send money was common practice in the 19th century. Characteristic for 19th century charitable practices was their ad hoc perspectives; fundraiser committees reacted to individual crises, and after the fundraiser had done its task, these committees dissolved. Funds were used to answer to the most urgent needs, not for creating long-term solutions to the areas struck by different disasters. Ad hoc type humanitarianism was replaced by organised humanitarianism in the early 20th century, where the fundraisers were established by permanent organisations. For funds operating internationally were aimed at exceptional disasters, such as natural disasters.⁵

General public was informed of disasters and fundraises through newspapers. Typical for fundraisers at this time, was that appeals for donations were interwoven with reports from the disaster areas and of stories of the victims' fates. Especially giving detailed descriptions of families and children's suffering, highlighting the natural disaster's unpredictable nature, and how the people were not at fault. As observed through the aspects of humanitarian narratives.⁶

1.1 Research questions, sources, and methodology

While using relevant source materials, the intention of this study is to answer the following research questions:

1. *How were the events and aftermath of the 1896 Sanriku tsunami reported in the Japan Weekly Mail?*
2. *Who were the people who subscribed to the Japan Society of London's fundraising, and what reasons can be found on why they donated money?*

⁴ When implying to the *West* in this thesis, I aim to refer to the industrialized, and politically and militarily powerful nations of the time: the US and Western Europe (Britain, France, Germany). It holds the contrast of difference between the physical west and east of the world (from European perspective). The West was seen as the most advanced and the only nations that had any real say in the goings of the world, which are topics discussed in the thesis.

⁵ Götz et al. 2020, 25, 27-28.

⁶ Newby 2023, 132.

3. *What does this charitable action reveal about contemporary British attitudes towards Japan, and aspects of late-Victorian charities more generally?*

These questions will shed light on British relations and perceptions towards Japan during the late 19th century. British scholars and diplomats had been following Japan's development in the Meiji era, acknowledging, and appreciating many steps in assimilating Western customs to Japan's society. The state of developing was keenly kept up with in Britain, providing sufficient background for the imminent Anglo-Japanese Alliance signed in 1899.⁷ Studying reactions to the tsunami gives perspective to how deep the quite recently formed relations between the countries went, from the British side. The first question will shed light on what made the 1896 Sanriku tsunami the deadliest in Japan's history, and how reporting about it in *the Japan Weekly Mail* conveys Western prejudices. The second and third questions will answer what motivated the most notorious donors to participate in the Japan Society of London's fundraiser, as examined on *The Times*. Establishing a fundraiser was a form of humanitarian aid, linking it to a broader charity tradition of ad hoc humanitarianism during late-Victorian era. There were no existing infrastructure nor official instructions on how to conduct an international fundraiser.⁸ In the case of the Japan Society's fundraiser, the donations were to be directed to the Society, and they were handled by the members.⁹

Primary sources

In this study, *The Times* and *the Japan Weekly Mail* are used as the main primary source material. Both papers are accessed in a digital form.

The Times was founded in London, 1785. In the 19th century, *The Times* was already a respected newspaper known for accurate sharing of both domestic and overseas information.¹⁰ Before the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), *The Times* saw Japan as a country of no interest to have correspondence with, but by 1897 they had a permanent correspondence network in Tokyo.¹¹

It was typical for *The Times* to publish of funds and subscription lists vying for donations. For example, the Indian famine in 1861 amassed donations from Britons, which tells that the fundraising for aid of the tsunami sufferers was nothing unusual.¹² Such fundraisers were

⁷ Fathil 2006, 152-153. Alliance between Great Britain and Japan.

⁸ Götz et al. 2020, 33.

⁹ As can be seen in the Appendix 1; *The Times* 6.8.1896, "The Earthquake and Tidal Wave in Japan", 6.

¹⁰ *The Times*, "About Us".

¹¹ Heere 2020, 15-16.

¹² *The Times* 27.3.1861, "Indian Famine Relief Fund", 8. Brewis 2010, 899.

typically operated by established committees, rather than being government led. The committees organised both collecting and transporting the money to the disaster sites, additionally, they had to document the subscribers and donations.¹³

In addition to *The Times*, *the Japan Weekly Mail* will shed light on how the effects of the tsunami were reported. *The Japan Weekly Mail*¹⁴ [hereafter *the Mail*] was a Yokohama established and British owned, weekly published English newspaper.¹⁵ *The Mail* translated vernacular press into English. As accessing the original Japanese press that was translated to *the Mail* is impossible, it cannot be known how much the editors and reporters have edited the original Japanese news reporting. Even though *the Mail*'s stand was stated as neutral.

The Mail provides significant information of how the tsunami affected the Sanriku coast, and its people. Commonly, Japanese newspapers not only reported on numerous natural disasters that had happened, but the papers contributed to the recovery processes as well, such as printing names of people still missing, and giving space for fundraisers. Natural disasters typically gained nationwide attention, partially thanks to the press spreading information of them.¹⁶

The Mail's press located in Yokohama, in a British trade port, which made sense as it was one of the few areas British nationals were allowed to stay at.¹⁷ Thus, an English based readership existed. Also, lot of *The Times*' reports of the tsunami seem to be very similar in both style and topics, as those published earlier in *the Mail*, showing the information spreading.

Even though the Japan Society of London has active archives, they unfortunately did not have any minutes or other mentions of the fundraiser's establishment.

Methodology

As this thesis focus will be on analysing newspaper sources, the chosen method is close reading. This will be used to extensively understand different 'hidden meanings and nuances behind the exterior of the written materials examined, to find how British perceptions of Japan can be seen within the source material.¹⁸ In order to do this, the primary source material was read thoroughly and several times.

¹³ Götz et al. 2020, 33-34.

¹⁴ *Japan Weekly Mail* operated independently until 1918, when it was absorbed into *the Japan Times*, which is the oldest and biggest English newspaper in Japan.

¹⁵ Paine 2002, 109.

¹⁶ Smits 2014, 62, 72.

¹⁷ Ion 2019. Build by Western standards and models, it was a place for the locals to see and experience "western lifestyle", and where foreign ideas came to Japan.

¹⁸ Brummet 2018, 7-8.

For analysing *the Japan Weekly Mail*, close reading will work as finding out potential motives for the people who wrote reports of the tsunami. These articles included descriptions of the tsunami itself, but also exhaustive reports of the destruction done to the villages and the anguish of the people. How the topics considered in *the Japan Weekly Mail* contain meanings and discourses that convey more than just what the tsunami did.

The Times had printed the lists of donors for the Japan Society fundraiser. Examining the donors required comprehensive research of their background and history. This enabled creating connections between the donors, their motivations and the Japan Society's fundraiser. Close reading makes it possible to consider the donors' personal and public lives for these purposes. In support of close reading, different connotations, and discourses that end of the 19th century Europeans had of the Asia will have to be kept in mind.

Close reading is a research method aiming to critically examine and understand different kinds of written material. It has connections with critical history and literary research.¹⁹ Close reading analyses word choices and language, aiming to find deeper meanings and discourses within. To interpret these literary choices made in the materials examined, historical and social contexts will be considered. To properly implement close reading, source materials are to be carefully read several times over, which enables finding different narratives from within the text.²⁰

This study includes the usage of two Japanese ukiyo-e (woodblock print). Their key relevance is to illustrate how the 1896 Sanriku tsunami was conveyed to local population, and especially what details were conveyed. Thus, they hold value in showing how the event was understood already in 1896. As their part is not central for this research, close reading is sufficient in their analysis. Looking at what is illustrated in the prints must be compared to what was known of the tsunami at the time, and in subsequent literature.

1.2 Japan in the late 19th century

The 19th century was a benchmark for several important developments in Japan's history. The Meiji Restoration²¹ (1868) officially ended Japan's isolation of over 200-years, the so-called closed doors policy.²² It opened the country for foreign trade and for foreign powers to

¹⁹Lentricchia & DuBois 2002, 2. Järviluoma et al. 2010, 331

²⁰Pöysä 2010, 338.

²¹ Meiji restoration started the Meiji era (1868-1912) in Japan, named after Emperor Meiji. The restoration restored government's rule to the emperor, setting forth modernisation and industrialisation to make Japan into a modern nation state.

²² Checkland 2002, 29.

establish treaty ports in Japan. Treaty ports, Yokohama for example, were cities that were opened to foreign trade, due to the so-called unequal treaties concluded between Japan and Britain, the US, and others. They were the only place foreigners could reside in Japan, and they were built with European style, a miniature European society. For locals, the treaty ports were a window to western lifestyle, also introducing western ideas to Japan. The British were the largest group of foreigners in Japan, only in 1920s they were outnumbered by Americans. Treaty ports operated in Japan until 1899.²³ Part of the restoration efforts were looking up to the industrialised countries in the West. It was believed that these modernised countries had something worth incorporating into Japanese society and culture. Japan wanted to secure their ‘superior’ culture from Western influences, while still maintaining Japanese culture.²⁴ While looking for to incorporate ideas from Western modernisation, Japan was also careful not to repeat China’s mistakes, the so-called ‘way of China’: overt Western imperialistic expansionism and the resulting Opium wars.²⁵

Japan’s extensive modernisation efforts were incorporated in the outbreak of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), which finally changed European and American perceptions of Japan. The outcome was Japan’s victory over China. Before the war, China had been seen as the main political force in Asia, and as the most prominent country for trade. After Japan defeated China in the war, China was labelled as the “Sick Man of Asia”, which highlighted even more the growing, perhaps sudden, respect Japan received as a modern and politically equal nation to the Western, industrialised countries.²⁶ Japan’s goal in going to war against China was a desire to change the dominant perceptions in the West, and the outcome did make Japan a country to be taken seriously.²⁷

Japan used the (First) Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) to contest China’s influence over Korea. Korea had been a tributary state of China, Japan challenged this by forming a treaty with Korea, in the 1880s. In which Japan imitated Western treaties where the West had given themselves an obvious advantage. This unmistakably undermined China’s influence and power in Korea, as well as China’s position as the greatest player in Asian politics. As Japan and

²³ Otte 2019, 71-74.

²⁴ Maintaining the Japanese culture had been a reason for the so-called closed doors policy.

²⁵ In 1839-42, Britain against China, and in 1856-60, Britain and France against China. The wars were about maintaining and strengthening British/French influence in China, as well as enforcing the trade of, and legalizing the use of opium in China. This led to Japan realising the threat of Western powers, that eventually led to Japan modernising, and not getting colonized. Caquet 2022.

²⁶ Paine 2002, 18. “Sick Man of Asia” as a reference to the Ottoman Empire and the similar title given to it.

²⁷ Beasley 2001, 368.

China did not agree about who had primary influence and power over Korea, the two countries went to war. This was Japan's first step towards Japanese imperialism.²⁸

Japan justified their entry to the war as means to secure their economic and political interests in the area. As well as to civilise Korea through colonialisng the country and to take away Korea's sovereignty over itself.²⁹ These were also Japan's justifications for later entering other Asian countries, a rhetoric that can be seen as Japan's equivalent of the "white man's burden."³⁰ Japan was the one to start the Sino-Japanese War, and Japanese public was supportive of that decision.³¹

Before 1894, and during the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War, Western press supported China. They believed China's win to be inevitable, based on just the sheer mass of the Chinese troops, and longstanding presumptions regarding Japan's 'backwardness'. China's defeat, in addition to their actions in the Sino-Japanese War, changed Western idea of China's greatness, and slowly, respect for China disappeared.³² China had been seen as the great power of Asia. The fact that it was defeated in the war, shattered British predictions from 1894; many British believed China would rise as one of the four 'world-powers', along Russia, the US and Britain.³³ As an un-named observer had said of Japan in the wake of the Sino-Japanese War; "Everyone considered them [Japan] a nation of dolls and pretty toys, and were astonished when they found brains in their heads and courage in their hearts"³⁴, another that "Seldom, perhaps never, has the civilized world so suddenly and completely reversed an estimate of a nation as it has that with reference to Japan."³⁵

Such thoughts portray the presumptions held of Japan's power, or rather, the lack thereof. Japanese efforts in the war were, as Heere has written; "completely overturned all conventional

²⁸ Beasley 1991, 55. Paine 2002, 44-45, 81.

²⁹ Jo 2023, 8, 161.

³⁰ Paine 2002, 111. Also, a prelude to Japan's imperialism during the 20th century.

³¹ Japanese aggressions in China and Korea during the 19th and 20th centuries are still very much remembered in China and Korea, conversations arise about, for example, Japanese terror in the areas and the missing apology to the Koreans working as 'comfort ladies' during Japanese colonialism. For example, Easley 2023.

³² Paine 2002, 138, 171. Keene 1971, 140-141. For example, China was still warring by using the methods they had used for decades, when fighting in border regions and in different inner conflicts: not abiding to modern treatment of prisoners of war (as mandated in the 1864 Geneva Convention). For example, Chinese Army offered rewards for severed heads of Japanese soldiers. As well as not having any supply lines for their troops but resorted to looting and destroying the land they retreated on. Thus, having trouble feeding their own troops, lacking medical care, and so on. As Japan was successful on all these aspects, it only helped to raise Western respect for the success of Japan's modernization, and at the same time, creating anti-China discourse.

³³ Heere 2020, 11.

³⁴ Paine 2002, 16.

³⁵ Paine 2002, 16.

ideas about the ‘immobility’ of the ‘yellow races’³⁶, demonstrating that the country possessed “not only all the strength, but all the energy of a European Power.” Henceforth, “it must be reckoned with as if its people were white men”.³⁷ For British discourse of the topic, and the change of attitudes, their contribution to Japan’s modernisation should be noted. As should Britain’s relatively easy victory over China in the Opium wars, stressing Japan’s newly acquired power. As stated by a British diplomat, it was “very desirable [for Britain] to be on good terms with the Rising Power in the Far East.”, Japan.³⁸

1.3 British relations with Meiji Japan

The Meiji government's steps in modernising Japan stemmed from an urge to catch up with international competition. Japan’s urges to modernise, westernise, had received significant praise within Western discourse, during the 1870s and 1880s. The First Sino-Japanese War truly showed the extent of this success to the world, establishing Japan as a modern nation whose actions affected world politics.³⁹

From the start of the 19th century, Britain had showed interests in potential trade opportunities with Japan. British interests in Japan were as they had been in China: in forming trade relations. Opening British trade ports, extraterritoriality⁴⁰, in Japan contributed to supporting British actions in the eastern waters.⁴¹ One such trade port was Yokohama. Japan disliked these trading ports, and the unfair treaties that enabled them. Thus, for a new treaty, in 1899, between Japan and Britain, British extraterritoriality was to be ended, and new more lucrative tariffs for Japan were to be signed.⁴²

As Britain’s negotiations of co-operation in Central Asia had gone awry with Russia, in 1890s, Britain was pushed towards the idea of an alliance with Japan.⁴³ For British to relent on their extraterritoriality in Japan, one motivation was to ensure no anti-British movement would arise. As it would hinder their trade possibilities in Japan, who would turn elsewhere, if Britain

³⁶ At the time, using ‘yellow races’, or ‘yellow peoples’, was a common wording for describing people living in (parts of) Asia, in western discourses. For example, Arthur Diósy in his book *The New Far East* (1898). Linked with racial fears of the ‘yellow peril’, first used in Germany in 1890s, its usage then spreading in Europe. Fear of the rising powers in Asia challenging, even thought as being a danger for, the supremacy of Europe. Heere 2020. Diósy 1898, 41.

³⁷ Heere 2020, 11.

³⁸ Sir Francis Bertie, under-secretary at the Foreign Office (1894-1902), a key member in preparing the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1900). Best 2018, 107.

³⁹ Fröhlich 2014, 217.

⁴⁰ British nationals were allowed to live in Japan, in specific areas in the trading ports.

⁴¹ Ion 2019, n.p.

⁴² Lowe 1981, 18, 28, 40, 59-60. The new treaty was also known as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

⁴³ Steiner 2003, 88.

would not revise the treaties. Additionally, world politics were another factor, Britain was worried about Russia's interest for Korea, as well as Russia, France, and Germany's Triple Entente agreement which increased the potential of Japan's strategic value to Britain.⁴⁴

Before the Sino-Japanese War, an un-named British book had praised Japan, in regard of the country's modernisation, as "our [Britain's] rapidly developing protégé", which includes tones of British self-praise.⁴⁵ In the same book, Japan was described as "the only nation in the Orient which has shown itself possessed of the true instinct of civilized progress."⁴⁶ This same praise was further amplified after the war. As the extent of Japan's successful modernisation became evident, presumptions about Japan changed completely. The shift in attitudes led to seeing Japan as more than just a country of teahouses and temples.⁴⁷ As the power dynamics and assumptions of Japan's standing in Asia shifted, so ended the confidence in the idea of Western powers' superiority. Previously it had been seen as a fact that European countries were the only important players in world politics, but now Japan was a country to be taken seriously. The Sino-Japanese War's outcome changed international politics from being controlled by only Western powers.⁴⁸

The Sino-Japanese War led to Britain growing closer with Japan, appearing for example as Britain greatly contributing to Japan's development, from railways to shipbuilding industries. British contribution to Japan went as far as Japan using warships build and bought from Britain in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905).⁴⁹ Japanese trade, diplomatic actions, shipping, and migration expanded after the war.⁵⁰ Interest in forming diplomatic and trade relations with Japan stemmed from economic, political, and strategic factors, as from Britain's own interests in competing with France and Russia. Though, British interests were mainly on securing their trade relations in East Asia, Britain had been against China and Japan going to war in fears of losing the stability of their trade relations.⁵¹

1.4 Tsunami in Japan

As Japan is located near the seam of tectonic plates, the country has a millennium long history of seismic activity. History of tsunami research started properly after the 1896 Sanriku

⁴⁴ Best 2018, 106-107.

⁴⁵ Paine 2002, 15.

⁴⁶ Paine 2002, 15.

⁴⁷ Heere 2020, 16.

⁴⁸ Paine 2002, 7, 109.

⁴⁹ Grove 2005, 56.

⁵⁰ Heere 2020, 9, 10.

⁵¹ Spinks 1939, 319.

tsunami. Comprehensive actions in preventing the destruction of future tsunami, and schemes to improve infrastructure to withstand tsunami, started properly only after the 1933 Sanriku tsunami, however.⁵² Thus, there were no widespread, necessary preventive measure actions in use in 1896. Drafting for proper countermeasures for earthquakes and tsunami began due to the Great Kantō Earthquake (1923) that demolished Tokyo, Yokohama and surrounding areas, demonstrating that when destructive disaster struck the highly populous central areas, immediate action was necessary.⁵³

Systematic humanitarian aid for the disaster relief started after the Japanese Red Cross was officially formed in 1887, so the victims of the 1896 tsunami received assistance. However, it was only during the Great Kantō Earthquake (1923) that the International Committee of the Red Cross offered its help in natural disaster relief.⁵⁴ Come 20th century, humanitarian aid was more systematic and organised established institutions.⁵⁵ The level of tsunami destruction can be seen in the 1896 Sanriku tsunami's resultant economic damage, which was about 10% of the yearly national budget.⁵⁶

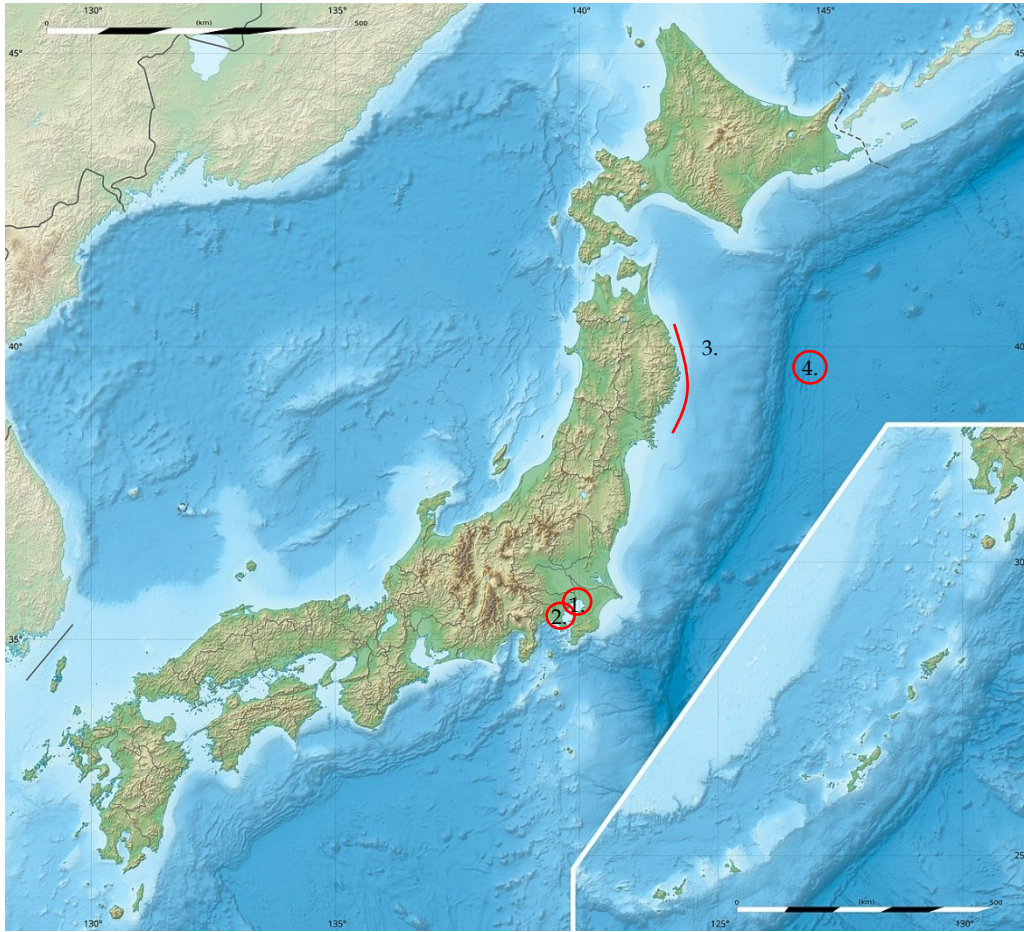
⁵² Smits 2014, 112.

⁵³ Shuto & Fujima, 2009.

⁵⁴ Suzuki 2019, 65, 93.

⁵⁵ Götz et al 2020, 30-31.

⁵⁶ Shuto & Fujima, 2009.



Map of Japan. Number 1 indicates Tokyo, number 2 Yokohama, number 3 the location of the Sanriku coastline where the 1896 tsunami hit, number 4 the earthquake's epicentre.⁵⁷

The 1896 Sanriku tsunami occurred on the evening of June 15th, around 8pm, on the tsunami-prone Sanriku coast of Iwate Prefecture.⁵⁸ At the time, this area was mostly rural area, and littered with coastal villages heavily relying on fishery. In 1896, around 22,000 people were killed in the tsunami. It is still the deadliest tsunami in the history of Japan.

The incredible destructiveness of the tsunami was partially due to the weak seismic activity of the earthquake. At the time of the quake, coast villages were in the middle of Boy's festival celebrations, held near the seashore. This untimely combination meant that the people

⁵⁷ Eric Gaba (Wikimedia Commons user Sting), CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Location_maps_of_Japan#/media/File:Japan_relief_location_map_with_side_map_of_the_Ryukyu_Islands.jpg accessed 24.4.2024

⁵⁸ On the map attached, the epicenter would locate on the upper right side. Surface wave's magnitude was 7.2M, typical for a tsunami earthquake. After the earthquake happened, it took around 30 minutes for the first tsunami to hit the coast. The epicenter was located at 39.5°N 144.0°E. Tanioka & Sataka 1996.

did not feel or hear the quake to evacuate for the wave.⁵⁹ Some heard thunder-like noises, but because so many were revelling, there noises went unheard or unheeded. The Sanriku coastal area had not seen such a severe tsunami in a long time, so the area lacked preparations for the possible disaster. The situation was further exacerbated because no one in the area had expertise with such massive tsunami, and therefore could not understand how best to prepare to withstand the tsunami.

1.5 Japonisme

Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) brought attention to their new-found political power, in both Europe and America. Japan was recognized as a 'civilized' state, but the perceived racial difference⁶⁰ remained an obstacle, and hindered the country from fully becoming a part of the international community of nations. Many in Europe also feared the rise of new power centre of world politics from Asia, and the "yellow races"⁶¹. At the same time, interest and fascination about Japan and its culture flourished in Britain, a trend known as Japonisme. This trend largely spread through Japanese exports arriving in Europe; for example art and porcelain. Various travel books, enhanced with picture, as well as paintings of Japan showed British audiences that Japan was "an earthly paradise, where a carefree people played, forever, with their children, under the cherry blossom"⁶². This contributed to growing admiration of Japan, and it prompted individuals' interest in collecting anything from Japanese art to porcelain.⁶³

Admiring Japan still had limits, as it was not acceptable to admire Japan above British culture, nor to see it as an equal to that of Britain. Still, the romanticization of Japan happened within forms of condescension: suggesting British superiority. The connections made between

⁵⁹ The Boys' festival is nowadays known as the Children's Day. Additional reason for celebrating were soldiers who had returned from the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). Boy's festival, Boy's Day, or たんご せっく 端午の節句 was one of the main seasonal festivals, celebrated on the 5th day of the 5th month, based on Lunisolar calendar. Smits 2014, 93.

⁶⁰ Ethnocentric views portrayed, non-Western, non-European nations and cultures as less developed and meaningful, different, and exotic compared to the nations and cultures that held the most power in the world. In the 1890s, numerous Asian countries were affected by Western colonialisation, the peoples' not seen as equals, and treated as such.

⁶¹ Heere 2020, 10.

⁶² Checkland 2002, xiii.

⁶³ Weisberg 2016, 10.

the countries stressed Britain as the industrialised and Japan as the romantic, pre-industrialised nation.⁶⁴ Abiding by the period's ideas of "Orient".

Edward Said's *Orientalism* concentrates on the distinction that was, is, between "Oriental" and "European", in favour of the European, as was the point of view during the time of this study; of the strangeness of the Orient compared to the familiarity of Europe. Said stated that in the Orient were Europa's greatest colonies, those cultures, and languages the most "other" to Europe. In the case of Japan, shortly, Said's juxtaposition between "Orient" and "the West" was different than between "the West" and Japan; Japan's rapid modernisation in the Meiji era as "the abandonment of the (Oriental) status quo in favor of a (Western) ideal."⁶⁵ Being in contradiction to Said's orientalism, where Asian nations were so different than in the West.

1.6 Previous research

A great deal of research has been done about Japan's modernisation, as is of its connections to Britain. Examining Japan's history sheds light on Britain and Japan's relations that are relevant for this study. For example, Cees Heere writes in *Empire Ascendant: the British World, Race, and the Rise of Japan, 1894-1914* how British perspectives towards Japan changed. From thinking of the country being an exotic and oriental place, to taking it more seriously due to the successes in modernisation and in the First Sino-Japanese War.⁶⁶ Olive Checkland's *Japan and Britain After 1859: Creating Cultural Bridges* covers the same topics but focusing more on cultural connections between the two countries, and during the early Meiji period. She writes how the British viewed Japanese, and of Japonisme, a "mild obsession with Japan that involved much of the British population", and its popularity in Britain.⁶⁷

Gregory Smith's *When the Earth Roars: Lessons from the History of Earthquakes in Japan* addresses the 1896 Sanriku tsunami, useful for the sake of comparing facts to newspaper material. Smith defines how the 1896 tsunami fits into a wider picture of natural disasters and their aftermath in Japan. Newspapers part of the relief operations is considered from identifying corpses to posting about charities. Smith also views the 1896 tsunami's impact on society, how the Imperial Earthquake Investigation Committee (of Japan) reported on it, showing how official sources reacted to the event.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Checkland 2002, 122.

⁶⁵ Minear 1980, 508, 513-514.

⁶⁶ Heere 2020.

⁶⁷ Checkland 2002.

⁶⁸ Smits 2014, 72, 96.

British Foreign Secretaries and Japan, 1850-1990: Aspects of the Evolution of British Foreign Policy by Antony Best is a study about British academics and diplomats, also of Japanese envoys in Britain. There are several similar publications that examine almost biographically individuals who have contributed to Anglo-Japanese relations. These are useful in identifying motivations for donors in the Japan Society's fundraiser.⁶⁹

Powers et al. is an example of humanitarian research in *International Disaster Nursing*. It addresses how disaster relief is universally managed and how researching these topics should be approached. Götz et al. in *Humanitarianism in the Modern World: The Moral Economy of Famine Relief* provides essential information about how relief campaigns were organised during the 19th century, ad hoc humanitarianism being the standard way of conducting charities in late-Victorian Britain.⁷⁰ Robert Powers sheds light in *International Disaster Nursing* on how dramatic events, photographic images, or in this case, precise descriptions, prompts more donations compared to slowly escalating disasters such as famines. He also emphasizes the importance of fast responses to avoid long-term damage on the disaster struck communities.⁷¹ This aligns with Japan Society's fundraiser being set up fairly quickly after the initial disaster in 1896.

Research into tsunami in Japan is plenty, yet the focus tends to be on the more recent ones.⁷² For the 1896 Sanriku tsunami, English-language research focuses on the tsunami mechanics, as it indeed was a milestone in tsunami research. For the Japan Society's fundraiser, and British influence in general regarding that tsunami, zero to no research has been found. As fundraisers were a typical aspect of Victorian era, there are a lot of research on different fundraisers and their relevance, not of charity for disasters in Japan. For these reasons, this study adds value in the research about Great Britain and Japan's history, in displaying a combination of themes from environmental and cultural history, humanitarian history and with international relations.⁷³

In the following chapter, *the Japan Weekly Mail's* role in portraying images of 19th century Japan to English audiences is examined. Focus will be on how humanitarian aid was done,

⁶⁹ Best 2022. Another example is *Japanese Envoys in Britain, 1862-1964: A Century of Diplomatic Exchange* (2007), edited by Ian Nish.

⁷⁰ Götz et al. 2020.

⁷¹ Powers et al. 2022, 502

⁷² Such as the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami.

⁷³ There may be research of this in Japanese, but due to language barrier, it was unobtainable. Thus, this research's focus on British point of view. Also, the experience of Japanese who received donations could not be researched here. It could be something to delve into later, to complement the discoveries of this research.

how the development of modern humanitarian aid can be seen in the 1896 tsunami. *The Japan Weekly Mail*'s writings will be viewed with Western presumptions of non-Western nations in mind. The third chapter will focus on the Japan Society's fundraiser, how it was written in *The Times*. Greatest focus will be on why the donors had chosen to donate. The chapter's topics will be linked to a broader context of charitable work.

2 JAPAN AS PORTRAYED IN THE JAPAN WEEKLY MAIL

It is typical in Japan that natural disasters receive nationwide mass media attention, as the extensive reporting of the 1896 Sanriku tsunami also shows. The first writings of the said tsunami in *Japan Weekly Mail* were from June 20th, five days after the initial tsunami. *The Mail* articles regarding the tsunami were either translated from the vernacular press, for English-speaking audiences, or first-hand reports from writers who had travelled to the destruction areas. Some of *the Mail*'s reports share similarities with *The Times*' reports of the tsunami, indicating that *the Mail*'s translations and first-hand sightings were used as source material.⁷⁴

The Mail addressed the tsunami with detailed descriptions. Death and destruction were reported with even seemingly exaggerating narratives of the dead, wounded, and of material damages. This was seemingly typical for news reporting.⁷⁵ Estimations of death tolls were reported already in the first articles, when it was still impossible to know the how extensive the destruction was. The first estimates of the total amount of deaths in *the Mail* were as high as 25,000, and over 60,000 were said to be suffering from destitution.⁷⁶ Other papers also stated death tolls, before the truth could be told; *the New York Times*, for example, wrote that the death toll estimate on the 26th of June was over 30,000, and *The Times* on the fundraiser article

⁷⁴ News reporting was very similar in stories told of the destruction and what had become of the victims and survivors, *Japan Weekly Mail* giving more extensive reports than *The Times*. For example, *Japan Weekly Mail* reported on June 27th that a family of eight was trying to cling on a beam of their house, their youngest child was carried away by the water, and that the mother jumped to save it, both thus perishing. Then, the remaining family was threatened by a floating debris, which the father tried to fight off to save his remaining children. He also perished, leaving five orphans. On the 3rd of August *The Times* wrote about the same incident, from them clinging on a wooden beam, the mother trying to save her baby, and the father trying to fend off incoming debris. Showing that at least common Japanese sources were used. *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, "The Earthquake Wave", 711. *The Times* 3.8.1896, "The Seismic Wave in Japan", 8.

⁷⁵ Smits 2014, 62. Writing that the death toll was in tens of thousands in the first days after the disaster.

⁷⁶ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, "The Earthquake Wave", 709.

that 27,000 lives had been lost.⁷⁷ The real number of deaths was around 22,000.⁷⁸ Even most aid had not been able to arrive within the first days. Yet, it heavily stresses how severe the situation indeed was, and how it was understood straight from day one. Imperial Earthquake Investigation Committee's (IEIC) report⁷⁹ regarding the 1896 tsunami sums up the scope of the disaster: "Several thousand are dead and injured and the homes and vessels washed away or destroyed are too numerous to count. There is no town or village along the [Sanriku] coast that has not suffered severe damage. In the worst cases, entire villages have been washed away or destroyed."⁸⁰

Traditional Japanese beliefs about natural disaster stem from religious, Buddhist, Shinto, beliefs, and folklore. By these traditions, natural disaster could be seen as signs of heavenly punishment or karmic retribution. In Buddhism, cause for natural disasters can be perceived as the universe being at odds with people's desires. When this occurs, one should not be conflicted with the way things are, shedding some light also on Japanese tradition on humanitarian aid for said disasters. That "(t)he pain of one part of humankind is the pain of the whole of humankind".⁸¹ *The Mail's* reporter who had travelled to the villages destroyed by the tsunami, had asked locals if they would still live in the disaster-prone area. Their answer was that "the gods have cast this disaster, we escaped and were thankful" and "it was now our turn and the wave was sent as a punishment for our sins".⁸² Yet, in 1896 divine retribution was not commonly seen as the reason for the tsunami. Though only an example, *the Mail's* reporter focusing on that rhetoric because it matched the images of how Japan was viewed in Western discourse. Creating an idea of how the local consensus was, only through an example.

Heavenly punishment discourse in Japan relates also to thoughts of natural disasters occurring at time of great changes in Japan, such as modernisation or the Sino-Japanese War that had taken place just before 1896. This tradition has persisted well into the 21st century. For example, even in 2011, regarding the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, the Tokyo Governor claimed in a speech that the event was a "divine retribution for greed".⁸³

⁷⁷ *The New York Times* 13.7.1896, "Thirty thousand killed: terrible obstruction by the tidal wave in Japan", 5. *The Times* 30.7.1896, "Earthquake and Tidal Wave in Japan", 8.

⁷⁸ Smits 2014, 94.

⁷⁹ IEIC was established in 1892, operating under the Ministry of Education. Smits 2014, 74. Unfortunately the precise date of said report could not be found, though *The Times* writes on 1.9.1896 that an official Japanese report of the tsunami had already been published. *The Times* "The Seismic Disturbance in Japan" 1.9.1896, 5.

⁸⁰ Smits 2014, 96.

⁸¹ McGuire 2019, 117-118, 122-123.

⁸² *Japan Weekly Mail* 21.6.1896, "The Great Seismic Wave", 710.

⁸³ McGuire 2019, 116.

In Europe, where the success of implementing humanitarian relief stemmed from Christian ideology, also that of people helping their neighbours in need. In Japan, such organisations were formed on pre-existing, local, values and grassroots networks of civilians aiding their neighbours in need.⁸⁴ Samurai etiquette had been another influence. Wars, advanced weaponry, and imperialism in 19th century Europe were a starting point for the global humanitarian movement, such as the Red Cross Society.⁸⁵ This global humanitarian wave spread to Japan too, and Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) was established in 1887.⁸⁶ It spread quickly through Japan, and was well received, as it was based on Tokugawa (era) medical discourse and the said existing ideas of goodwill.⁸⁷ Especially the Sino-Japanese War generated interest in the JRCS, with an increase of membership by more than 130,000 between 1894 and 1895.⁸⁸ The JRCS was efficient at helping wounded on both sides of the war. JRCS hospitals were officially focused on providing aid during wartime, they greatly emphasised treating patients on peacetimes.⁸⁹

In 1893 the JRCS had set a national mandate for nature disaster relief as a top priority of their operations.⁹⁰ The JRCS medical workers were assigned to the 1896 Sanriku tsunami disaster areas.

“And how about the work of the Red Cross?” I asked. “Oh!” and his face lighted up: “They've done wonders. It isn't so much the doctors, for with the military surgeons we could have got along. But the nurses! The skilled, kind nursing; the unwearied service: the knowing just what to do and what is wanted - we should never have enjoyed this but for the Red Cross.”⁹¹

They treated the victims, totalling thousands, and set up field hospitals in the villages.⁹² For the efficient help towards those wounded by the tsunami, this mandate had been lifesaving. As the victims were so numerous, the JRCS had to act in preventing diseases spreading.

⁸⁴ McGuire 2019, 118-119. Suzuki 2019, 64, 77.

⁸⁵ Suzuki 2019, 63.

⁸⁶ Götz et al 2020, 27.

⁸⁷ Konishi 2014, 1148.

⁸⁸ Käser 2016, 17, 26. 71,705 new members in 1894, and 65,392 in 1895. Total membership in 1895 was 182,414.

⁸⁹ Konishi 2014, 1149, 1152.

⁹⁰ Suzuki 2019, 93.

⁹¹ *Japan Weekly Mail* 4.7.1896, “The Great Seismic Wave”, 17.

⁹² *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, “The Earthquake Wave”, 709. Checkland 1994, 21. For example, in Shizukawa, JRCS field hospitals were set up after European examples.

Despite the JRCS's efforts, they were hardly able to help everyone. For some areas, it took several days for the JRSC to arrive, due to the mountainous geography and the destruction blocking the roads. In cases like these, *the Mail* reported, few villagers who had survived were not enough to give aid to the wounded, who were in a state of dying of neglect, while waiting for the aid to arrive. If a village was secluded, the help might have arrived after bodies had been lying around for ten days.⁹³ Showing how great the need for JRCS's was as local aid structures were not enough to cover the amount of help needed. Reporting on this in *the Mail* was an indirect way of showing the urgent need for donations.



Utagawa Kokunimasa “Red Cross at Tsunami Rescue” 1896, Stephen Topfer/Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

A ukiyo-e (Japanese woodblock print) by Utagawa Kokunimasa showcases how the JRCS operated at the Sanriku tsunami disaster site among the destruction, tending the dead and wounded. The print confirms the central duties they carried out: a field hospital tent, aiding the wounded in collaboration with other officials. It suggests that the idea of the JRCS was already established in Japanese culture, thought formed in the 1887. Remnants of buildings destroyed trees and unextinguished fires. Even a ship marooned on the mountainside illustrates the level of disaster to people seeing the print.

The ukiyo-e in this context was to not spread propaganda, as they were used during war-times. Development of the printing press meant that ukiyo-e played a part in sharing information about what had happened to the public, as an illustration. Pictures also worked as

⁹³ *Japan Weekly Mail* 22.6.1896, “The Great Seismic Wave”, 721.

spreading news of events among people who could not read the news reporting. Even though the Meiji Restoration had focused on developing education, fair number of Japanese were still illiterate.

Literacy in 19th century Japan was higher in the cities than in the countryside, partially thanks to reading newspapers. Temple and government schools contributed to the literacy rate, and in the early 1800s it was around 40% for boys and 10% for girls, which rose after the Meiji Restoration's focus on developing the education system with compulsory school system.⁹⁴ Another source states that the literacy in Edo Period (1600-1867) was around 60% among men and 40% among women, in cities such as Edo (Tokyo), Kyoto and Osaka. For the countryside, it was around 10 to 20%.⁹⁵ Though, as Japanese writing system include multiple forms, what constitutes as literacy is complicated.⁹⁶ Officials may have used ukiyo-e to mobilise even more people to come and help the survivors and rebuild the villages. Ukiyo-e showing the JRCS at the tsunami site shows to Western nations that Japan already had their own, modernly working, Red Cross Society, having caught up with the modern nations of Europe and the US on this front.⁹⁷

In the 19th century, charity campaigns to support foreign lands and people in an event of distress were common. This was recognised in *the Mail* as well, where foreign residents in Japan had tended to show their generosity towards the locals in situations of distress:

Their condition excited all the more sympathy, and the foreign residents, with charitable generosity that invariably marks their attitude towards any case of serious suffering among the people of this country, subscribed a handsome sum for the relief of the unfortunates. It appears to us that the present [1896 Sanriku tsunami] calamity ought to evoke a similar effort of benevolence.⁹⁸

Such benevolence was naturally needed, due to the extent of the devastation, which description is brutal to read even in the 21st century. Charities were needed even more because the tsunami-hit areas were poor, and locals were not able to contribute enough just by

⁹⁴ Huffman 2021, n.p.

⁹⁵ Tsujimoto 2000, 44.

⁹⁶ Rubinger 2021, Chapter 1.

⁹⁷ Mason 2016.

⁹⁸ *Japan Weekly Mail* 20.6.1896, "The Earthquake and Tidal Wave", 681.

themselves.⁹⁹ Appealing for donations was indicated both directly, and indirectly by reports describing the distress.

Help in the tsunami struck villages was urgently needed. *The Mail*'s reports vividly shed light on the scope of the disaster. Following the tsunami, the first round of help was done at night. Darkness made helping the trapped and wounded a challenge, the helpers “groped their way from place to place, guided by the sound of groans.”¹⁰⁰ After a long night, dawning of the new day finally showed the full extent of casualties. Mangled bodies, and corpses were laying here and there. *The Mail*'s writers did not hold back with their observations and graphic descriptions of torn off flesh, twisted limbs and eyes forced out of their sockets.¹⁰¹ Misery of the living was shown in similar precision: “121 bodies were found on the shore and over 40 were dug out of the sand. Children were seen weeping over the bodies of their parents, and mothers wandering about with the corpses of their babies in their arms.”¹⁰² First articles of the disaster seem to be written based on translations from Japanese press, but a few weeks after the event, reporters had travelled to the Sanriku coast to make these descriptive first-hand observations for *the Mail*. A writer even emphasised writing in the middle of the bodies, how the air was poisoned by their odours. How he even did not want to realistically convey what he had seen.¹⁰³



Utagawa Kokunimasa “Tsunami Disaster in Meiji Era” 1896, Stephen Topfer/Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

⁹⁹ Smits 2014, 98

¹⁰⁰ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, “The Earthquake Wave”, 709.

¹⁰¹ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, “The Earthquake Wave”, 713.

¹⁰² *Japan Weekly Mail* 20.6.1896, “The Earthquake and Tidal Wave”, 681.

¹⁰³ *Japan Weekly Mail* 21.6.1896, “The Great Seismic Wave”, 720.

Illustrating the Sanriku tsunami, Utagawa's other ukiyo-e shows the havoc wrecked by the tsunami. The print shows extensively destroyed buildings and how people were trying to cling desperately on to anything to survive the tsunami. An erupting volcano in the background highlights the severity but also the premise of the event, showing how it was partially understood already at the time.¹⁰⁴ Another detail is of a woman floating on a wave in a bathtub. This was based on a true story, as a local woman had floated in this matter until settling on a mountainside where, at last, saved.¹⁰⁵ Showcasing these positive survival stories was a part of the discourse of natural disasters, to raise people's spirits amid the disaster.¹⁰⁶

After aid teams had arrived and started to attend to the wounded and the dead, a priority was to keep the remaining survivors alive. The solution for this was food. The tsunami had destroyed houses and food stores, but also the crops in its path, making access to food more challenging. Another challenge for nourishing the people was a side-effect of the wave: most fish had receded further to the sea, challenging fishing even more.¹⁰⁷ Hence, donations were needed and collected to urgently provide food, as well as seeds and other agricultural implements. Without forgetting clothing and building materials. Aid and money were needed for everything, to make sure the people had means of surviving.

Reports on how the survivors were so starved that they had to eat raw fish washed up to the shore played a part in raising sympathies within the readership.¹⁰⁸ Donations to merely feed the people were urgently needed. As most villages income relied on fishing, and those supplies now destroyed and fishers' families dead, there was no fish to eat, and no way to gain more. Thus, donations were also to cover the extensive losses in fishing supplies.

A problem for local relief funds was that they had restrictions issued by the government. In the 1880 Relief Law¹⁰⁹, which was based on previous calamities, donations were to be only spent on food, victims' shelters, and *agricultural* implements. This shows that the law was made based on aiding farming communities, not for coastal areas. This was a big problem for the local fishing industries that were heavily affected by the Sanriku tsunami, as fishing gear could not be bought with the money from national relief funds. This was recognized and

¹⁰⁴ Modern description for tsunami is that it is caused by an earthquake. Only until 1960s was earthquakes origin understood. Cartwright & Nakamura 2008, 154. Smits 2014, 75.

¹⁰⁵ Mason 2016. Fittingly, the direct translation for ukiyo-e (浮世絵) means 'pictures of the floating world'.

¹⁰⁶ Smits 2014, 115.

¹⁰⁷ *Japan Weekly Mail* 4.7.1896, "The Seismic Wave", 17.

¹⁰⁸ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, "The Earthquake Wave", 709.

¹⁰⁹ Yoshikawa 2021, 26. Central funding required prefectural compliance. This was done as a part of the Meiji government's acts of establishing the prefectural system. The law was a result of the elites' mistrust of the subjects, that too easy aid would make them lazy.

accentuated in *the Mail* too; need for foreign donations was made more significant, as they could be used for buying fishing gear.¹¹⁰ Additionally, as summer was the prime season for fishing, such gear was even more urgently needed. Making foreign donations more needed, for the fishers to continue their work. Even during the night of the disaster, many fishing boats had been out in the sea, where the wave was not felt. While they were returning to the harbours, some had heard cries of help from the sea, but this was counted as ghosts, as in local lore. Then, when nearing the shoreline, the boats found themselves surrounded all around by floating bodies. It was even written in *the Mail* that some of the fishers saw their family members floating by.¹¹¹

As the fishing industry was affected by the tsunami, so too were the villages and buildings themselves, revealing the degree of earthquake resilience. During the Meiji era, neither architects nor seismologists were interested in focusing on buildings' earthquake and tsunami durability. It was typical that houses were built with wood, and roofs were heavily tiled, which did not fare well in the event of an earthquake nor tsunami.¹¹² As the 1896 Sanriku tsunami hit rural villages, where buildings were made with said materials, they did not endure massive natural forces. Had the tsunami occurred in more populated central Japan, the damage, and reaction, may have differed. Nōbi earthquake in 1891 was less destructive than the Sanriku 1896 tsunami but it received wider attention, due to its proximity with Tokyo, and the destruction's extensiveness. The Tokyo area already had modern buildings and infrastructure, largely planned by foreigners, also through Japanese architects who had studied under, for example, British professors, making Meiji architecture very European looking. An example of foreign influence is the Ginza area, designated by, an Irish, architect Thomas Waters.¹¹³ Brick buildings crumbled easily in an earthquake. Seeing how easily buildings and bridges built with British knowledge, and thought to be durable, were destroyed, created a sort of trauma in Britain. Making the disaster more disturbing within British discourse.¹¹⁴

In late 19th century Europe, traditional Japanese architecture was seen as reflecting the idea of typical Japanese characteristics. Paper thin, lightless, refined, and feminine were aspects associated with the Meiji era, and this was thought to be reflected in Japanese architecture as

¹¹⁰ *Japan Weekly Mail* 4.7.1896, "The Seismic Wave", 7. The article states that the authorities were not able to buy fishing gear due to the regulations of the Relief Fund Law.

¹¹¹ Smits 2014, 125. *The Times* 4.7.1896, "The Great Seismic Wave", 15.

¹¹² Smits 2014, 86.

¹¹³ Clancey 2006, 12, 16, 19.

¹¹⁴ Clancey 2006, 6.

well.¹¹⁵ The state of the villages was shown in *the Mail*'s reports, but not as extensively described as could be, compared with the descriptions of the villagers' fates. Focus on the writings was on what had become of the people. For it gained more sympathies and was something anyone could emphasise with. Compared to villages' structures and how the tsunami affected them, which ought to have been foreign to European readers with no proper experience of rural Japan. Detailed depictions of how Japanese architecture fared and was affected did not interest the wider audiences.

A first-hand report, by an un-known "special correspondent", in *the Mail* stated that "I must note, before closing this letter, that Kuji and Hachinohe [villages on the Sanriku coast, affected by the 1896 tsunami] are, beyond all comparison, the poorest, dirtiest towns I have seen in Japan." The state of the buildings and building habits was not polished: "It is not a pretty habit and argues laziness on the part of the builders."¹¹⁶ This type of comment underlines the persistent Eurocentrism of 19th century. Even though assumptions of Japan had greatly changed by the 1890s, condescending views in Europe of 'other' cultures still existed. A writer wondered how the survivors' living conditions were in the aftermath of the tsunami. This was in contrast with how sympathetically the victims' miserable situation was portrayed. Descriptions of damaged areas' buildings were often highlighting the community's state of underdevelopment, as much as the plight of survivors.

The need for donations had been made clear. In addition to foreign donations, a level of domestic aid was also provided. As pleas for foreign help was so intense, it can be assumed that Japanese charities also gathered donations, although these lie outside the direct scope of this study. However, help from the imperial family had become a norm after the 1891 Nōbi earthquake, thus it was distributed also in 1896.¹¹⁷ It is of a similar context that the *The Times*' fundraisers show that individuals of a high rank, and public figures, were expected to contribute to charities, and that this was to be displayed in newspapers. The imperial family's presence and benevolence was to be broadcasted. It was also seen as a gesture which provided a good example for the common people, encouraging them to also donate. For the 1896 Sanriku tsunami, donations from the emperor totaled to around 477,000 yen.¹¹⁸ As beliefs of natural disasters as heavenly warnings existed, it must have been a motivation for the imperial family,

¹¹⁵ Clancey 2006, 9, 17.

¹¹⁶ *Japan Weekly Mail* 4.7.1896, "The Great Seismic Wave", 15, 17.

¹¹⁷ Yoshikawa 2021, 27. He had donated "a small" amount of 230USD.

¹¹⁸ *Japan Weekly Mail* 18.7.1896, "Current Topics", 58.

and the government, to visibly offer their condolences in the form of donating. At least so that no moral suspicions were pointed towards the state's authority. As in Finland in 1867 when Prayer Days were introduced; Finnish people were encouraged to ease the famine crises by prayer during the said day, at least contributing to unifying the people and giving them hope.¹¹⁹

Natural disaster could have been viewed as a sign of rulers' competence, as their failure in preventing the tsunami and its damage. In addition to bare donations, the government's legitimacy was tested in its ability to restore the destruction area. The rebuilding started properly after summer of 1896, the period covered in this study.¹²⁰ Proper government led measures against tsunami were not adopted until in the 20th century, yet small-scale preventive measures were taken and funded by individuals, such as relocating houses to a higher ground.

Interestingly, in *the Mail's* reports, there is a whole article about a donation made by Sir William Hannam Henderson. He was an admiral in (British) Royal Navy, serving on HMS Edgar, and stationed at various ports in Japan (Nagasaki, Yokohama, Kobe, Hakodate) from 1895 to 1896. *The Mail's* article shows a letter he had written to a Japanese Baron, informing him of his donations to the Japanese fund for the victims of the 1896 tsunami. The article states, that this was the first occasion where "such action on the part of a British man-of-war, has attracted considerable attention."¹²¹ This was brought all the way to the emperor, demonstrating the importance of the gesture.¹²² It also shows the gratefulness and acceptance locals felt towards foreign donations.

Additionally, in *The Times'* lists of donations to the Japan Society's fundraiser, a certain W. Henderson is mentioned, as in "D. & W. Henderson and Co." Unfortunately, that is not the same W. Henderson as above, but another shipbuilding and marine engineer company, that operated in Glasgow.¹²³

The Mail's articles from the tsunami disaster areas were written by individual reporters. Unfortunately, not much is told of them in *the Mail*. As the paper was mostly constructed by translations of vernacular press, great attention was not on writers themselves. For first-hand

¹¹⁹ Newby 2023, 46.

¹²⁰ Smits 2014, 73, 102.

¹²¹ *Japan Weekly Mail* 11.7.1896, "H.M.S. "Edgar" and the Seismic Wave", 36.

¹²² *Japan Weekly Mail* 11.7.1896, "H.M.S. "Edgar" and the Seismic Wave", 36. "Letterbook containing out letters of HMS EDGAR (Capt W. Henderson) 1895-96", Archives of Royal Museums Greenwich.

¹²³ <https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/people/cp62912/d-and-w-henderson-and-co> , <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F182860> cited 27.5.2024.

reports, the writer could have been cited as “from a special correspondent”, leaving the person unnamed.¹²⁴

These on-site reports often included observations that were not necessarily directly relevant to the tsunami. An example was about silk producing. The writer stated that not all were able to go and help the survivors, as June was said to be the busiest silk producing season, the farmers had to stay and tend the silkworms.¹²⁵ The reporter may have seen the state of silk producing as a point of interest for foreign readership. As silk was a luxury item imported from Japan, and for example, to Europe, where it was trendy. Giving an example of how the disaster had affected people’s line of work gave the reader a direct point to sympathise with, as it was easily picturable.

Because the scope of the disaster was described as such, and the press distributed the information, severity of the situation was realised in English discourse too. The Japan Society’s fundraising in *The Times* reached for the sympathies in England, just as *the Mail* aimed to reach the English-speaking population within its circulation. Numerous times *the Mail* wrote how financial aid was sorely needed. They appealed to “the foreign communities throughout Japan, who have always been generous and prompt in such emergencies, to do something for these hungry, naked, sick, wounded, and houseless people.”¹²⁶ Dramatic descriptions of the destruction played a part in increasing donations by reminding the readers of their own mortality and the possibility of such a tsunami or earthquake occurring again.¹²⁷

Even after the continuous pleas for donations, already in the first days of July, *the Mail* wrote how public’s interest had begun to shift from the tsunami’s victims and the disaster to scientific background of the phenomenon.¹²⁸ Thus, the urgency for continuously reminding of need for donations, as the people and villages harmed were not able to move on and forget. The way in which the press cycle moved on relatively quickly also mirrors the actions of foreign donations. Most disaster reliefs in the 19th century kept the donations going only for the immediate need. When the most urgent help was done, the donations came to an end, and the public’s interest moved on.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.7.1896, “The Great Seismic Wave”, 720. For this example, only the location of the report, Shizukawa, and a date, June 21st 1896, were given.

¹²⁵ *Japan Weekly Mail* 21.6.1896, “The Great Seismic Wave”, 721

¹²⁶ *Japan Weekly Mail* 22.6.1896, “The Great Seismic Wave”, 722.

¹²⁷ Zagefka & James 2015, 163.

¹²⁸ *Japan Weekly Mail* 4.7.1896, “The Seismic Wave”, 4.

¹²⁹ Götz et al 2020, 28.

The Japan Weekly Mail portrayed Japan through reports of the tsunami. The reports held undertones of Ethnocentrism. Yet still showing how natural disasters were dealt with. *Japan Weekly Mail* was British owned newspaper, making mentions of fundraisers and donation pleas for the victims urgent, but specially making it adhere to the broader trends of charitable work that was typical for late-Victorian Britain. Even when no specific fundraiser stood out in *the Mail*.

The next section will focus on the donors in the Japan Society's fundraiser, as published on *The Times*. Focus will also be on exploring the charitable field in late-Victorian era. The donors would have been able to follow up with the tsunami's havoc, for example through at least *The Times'* reporting. Giving them at least partially similar information of the events as was covered in this chapter. The donors' identities and motivations to donate varied from personal connections to business relations to personal motivations to donating as one's societal standing required.

3 DONORS IN THE JAPAN SOCIETY FUNDRAISER

“Many more will perish, if private charity does not come to their relief.”¹³⁰

The Japan Weekly Mail on 1896 Sanriku tsunami victims.

The Japan Society was founded in 1891. Its goals were to be " the encouragement of Japanese studies and for the purpose of bringing together all those in the United Kingdom, and throughout the world, interested in Japanese matters.”¹³¹

Japan Society’s membership included several influential British and Japanese scholars and diplomats passionately contributing to Anglo-Japanese relations. The reason for the society’s establishment was to encourage people in the study of “Japanese Language, Literature, History and Folk-Lore, of Japanese Art, Science and Industries, of the Social Life and Economic Condition of the Japanese People, past and present, and of all Japanese matters.”¹³²

The formation of the Japan Society fits in the wave of interest of all things Japan, Japonisme. Japonisme spread in Europe, first among the higher classes, through the increase of availability in Japanese art, porcelain, theatre plays and so on. Gradually becoming accessible to a wider population, spreading knowledge of the nation even more.¹³³

Charities were a central element of society during the Victorian Britain. Charitable and philanthropic organisations were established to provide either short- or long-term aid to

¹³⁰ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, “The Earthquake Wave,” 709

¹³¹ The Japan Society, “Brief History”.

¹³² The Japan Society, “Brief History”.

¹³³ Checkland 2002, 111. Ono 2003, 5.

particular emergencies or social problems. Charity work was a field of activity on its own, and charities were considered with a sense of duty and moral obligations. Domestic charities collected money for example for constructing churches or orphanages, as well as to aid people in need.¹³⁴ International funds were typically directed for disaster reliefs. These often gained notable donations, thanks to appealing to donors' sympathies, social norms and Christian attitudes of giving help to the people in need, seen as an overarching motivation for donating.¹³⁵

In charities contributing abroad, due to the distance, the funds' transmission was typically entrusted to a third party.¹³⁶ In the case of the Japan Society's fundraiser for the 1896 Sanriku tsunami, donations were directed to be transferred by The Eastern Extension, Australasia and China Telegraph -company.¹³⁷ Even with charities being as popular as they were in Victorian Britain, they were a private matter, with no supervision or regulation from the government, a feature of ad hoc humanitarianism.¹³⁸ This left accountability and monitoring to the committees, which in the name of transparency often published accounts of charities and fundraisers in the press. Alongside this material, they naturally gave background information of the purpose for which donations were being collected, from background information to numbers of sufferers and more precise accounts which underlined the urgency of the charity. This showed the public that for the pre-existing problem, donations could make a vital short-term impact.¹³⁹

Printing lists of donors worked as showing the readers that others had already donated, raising the motivation for them to donate too. Donation lists were printed in a strictly hierarchical manner, with the higher social classes providing larger sums presented at the head of the lists. Notable donors' sums were too much for most readers to match up to, but the donor lists were long and had seemingly 'normal' people donating too. This demonstrated that each individual could donate whatever they could afford, and that every small amount would help.¹⁴⁰

The 1896 Sanriku tsunami was reported in *The Times*, from June 18th onwards, three days after the disaster had struck.¹⁴¹ As information of the tsunami gradually increased, via

¹³⁴ Shapely 2001, 47-49.

¹³⁵ Shapely 1998, 190.

¹³⁶ Roddy et al 2015, 190, 192.

¹³⁷ The company was an amalgamation of the British Australian Telegraph Company, the British Indian Extension Telegraph Company, and the China Submarine Telegraph Company. Bright 1898. A map of their cable lines can be found from Museums Victoria Collections; <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/items/1146746> cited 24.4.2024.

¹³⁸ Götz et al. 2020.

¹³⁹ Mahood & Satzewich 2009, 56-57.

¹⁴⁰ Zagefka & James 2015, 161.

¹⁴¹ "A terrible earthquake, accompanied by a tidal wave, has occurred in the Northern Province of Japan. *The Times* 18.6.1896, "Latest Intelligence", 5.

telegrams, the Japan Society's fund was announced on the 22nd of July, over a month since the tsunami had happened.¹⁴² The donations in total were around 4000£.¹⁴³ This is relatively small amount, as for example, donations sent from Quaker fundraisers from Britain for famine relief in Finland in 1857 were at around 8,900£.¹⁴⁴ For the Indian famine of 1896-1897, British donations totalled at around £1.7 million.¹⁴⁵ This shows that in the case of the Japan Society fundraiser, the symbolic value of donating was greater than the value of the actual donations. For maintaining the good relations between the countries, a fundraiser with some notable donors ensured that the goodwill was thus successful.¹⁴⁶

The Times' article on July 22nd gives a brief recap of the tsunami, and how the Japan Society's fundraiser was established. Renowned Society members' contributions to the fund was also announced.¹⁴⁷ Other articles of the fundraiser show lists of who and how much was donated, while reminding why and for what donations were gathered. This worked as ensuring Britons to care about Japanese tsunami victims, making them to donate. As the British public considered Japan with positive, if romanticised biases, the fundraiser did not need to excessively justify its intentions. As compared to a British charity in the 1920s that vied for donations to aid Russian children suffering from famine. In that context, the charity had to argue why the public should help children in a country that was seen as the 'enemy'.¹⁴⁸ It had to be specifically argued that the victims were deserving the offered charity. For Japan Society's fundraiser, it seemed unnecessary to argue the victims' right for the donors' help. It is interesting, how Japan was positively viewed, even though it had just in 1895 won a war against China.¹⁴⁹ For the peace negotiations of the war, the big nations of the time, Germany, France, and Russia, had pressed Japan on changing its political demands on China, Britain declined on doing so. In British ??? Kimberley's words, Britain was not to depart from their neutral stand in the war. Additionally, Britain did not want to pressure Japan into anything, as they were not willing to back those threats up by force.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴² *The Times* 22.7.1896, "The Earthquake in Japan", 10.

¹⁴³ *The Times* 7.8.1896, "The Seismic Wave in Japan", 10. Diósy 1904, 138. 4000£ equal to around 440,000£ in 2024. <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> cited 28.5.2024

¹⁴⁴ Newby 2023, 136.

¹⁴⁵ Brewis 2010, 899.

¹⁴⁶ Newby 2015, 114.

¹⁴⁷ *The Times* 22.7.1896, "The Earthquake in Japan", 10.

¹⁴⁸ Mahood & Satzewich 2009, 55.

¹⁴⁹ Newby 2023, 133.

¹⁵⁰ Cortazzi 2002, 17.

Three articles, in *The Times* 30.7., 6.8., 7.8., and 3.9.1896, include the lists of donors. The articles hold an undertone of urgency for donations, as the destruction was severe, and the people needed aid. Contributors and their motives for donating are examined in this chapter. As there were over 90 donors in total, only the most notable ones, with information found, were chosen for closer inspection in this thesis.¹⁵¹ They are grouped together by overarching themes, from Japan Society members, diplomats and high society members to companies and individuals contributing on the fields of commerce.

3.1 Japan Society

For the encouragement of Japanese studies and for the purpose of bringing together all those in the United Kingdom, and throughout the world, interested in Japanese matters.¹⁵²

Arthur Diósy, in the Congress of Orientalists (1891) about the formation of the Japan Society of London

The Japan Society of London set up a fundraiser to send financial aid for the survivors and for rebuilding after the deadly 1896 Sanriku tsunami on the eastern coast of Japan. The fundraiser was established by the Society, from their feelings of sympathy towards the victims. A fundraiser was decided to be the best way of expressing said feelings. The members had contributed to the fund before it was published on *The Times*. Being a member was a motive for the members to donate to the fund. All the members had distinct connections to Japan, such as having lived and worked in the country. When the tsunami occurred, the members in question resided in England. Having had first-hand experience of Japan and its culture, a certain nostalgia of the times lived there, and the people encountered, could be a reason to, first, establish the fundraiser, and then committing to it.¹⁵³ This all took place in the more general context of performative charitable work in Victorian Britain.

¹⁵¹ *The Times* 22.7.1896, "The Earthquake in Japan", 10. *The Times* 30.7.1896, "The Earthquake and Tidal Wave in Japan", 8. *The Times* 6.8.1896, "The Earthquake and Tidal Wave in Japan", 6. Seemingly 'normal' people with no titles contributed to the fund too, just no information could be found of them.

¹⁵² The Japan Society, "Brief History".

¹⁵³ Zagefka & James 2015, 163.

Arthur Diósy

Arthur Diósy (1858-1923) was the founder of the Japan Society (1891). He was the vice-president of the Society in 1896, and the Society's chairman from 1901 to 1904. He had been interested in foreign languages since a child and had studied the Japanese language independently. His family was able to send him to study in English and German universities.¹⁵⁴ Diósy was an active and respected lecturer of topics about Japan, and East Asia. Diósy's motives to donate for Japan are thus rather clear.

Prior to the Society's founding, several London-based Japanese and British Japanophiles gathered at Diósy's parents' house. After the number of participants grew larger than a dining room could handle, the idea of a Japan Society was formed.¹⁵⁵ For Victorian Britain, these kinds of societies, gatherings, of upper-class citizens were common practice. Understandably, the Society's members were known for their enthusiasm of Japan. Its founding, in 1891, can be seen as the epitome of an overall rising interest of Japan in Britain.¹⁵⁶ The official establishment happened during the 9th international congress of Orientalists, in London (1891).¹⁵⁷

Diósy's interest and knowledge of Japan was so great that he wrote and published a book about Japan, *The New Far East* (1898), before even visiting East Asia himself (which he did eventually in 1899). Diósy stated that his intention for the book was that readers with no prior knowledge of the region could enjoy and educate themselves. The book includes chapters on Japan, China and Korea's history, traditions, and people, with different descriptions of local way of living. The book played a part in enlightening English-speaking people of East Asian cultures, yet also helped to spread and fasten stereotypes of these cultures. It demonstrated even the most prominent scholars were products of their time, as shown by his observations of different cultures.¹⁵⁸

In the preface for *The New Far East* Diósy writes that he believed Britain's role that "of supreme interest in the future of Eastern Asia."¹⁵⁹ Patriotically, he thought that it would be most beneficial for Japan to keep importing machinery for its industries from Britain, rather than to start producing them in Japan.¹⁶⁰ Showing how British influence over Japan's modernisation was known, and that economic success was to be upheld.

¹⁵⁴ Nagaoka (長岡) 1997, 1-4.

¹⁵⁵ Adlard 1990, 51.

¹⁵⁶ Adlard 1990, 51, 55, 62.

¹⁵⁷ "The Japan Society, London", *T'oung Pao*, 242.

¹⁵⁸ Diósy 1904. The version used in this thesis is the book's fourth edition.

¹⁵⁹ Diósy 1904, xiv.

¹⁶⁰ Adlard 1990, 78.

In *the New Far East*, Diósy addresses the Japanese Red Cross Society and their aid after the 1896 Sanriku tsunami, which he described as the “the greatest natural catastrophe of recent time in the Far East” and that “the Red Cross Society was the means of saving thousands who would otherwise have perished miserably.”¹⁶¹ He then turns to mentioning the Japan Society’s fundraiser as “it does honour to the Japan Society that, immediately on receipt of the news of the appalling disaster, it commenced to raise a fund for the relief of the sufferers.”¹⁶² He then continues to praise their “prompt action” and how they managed to collect donations that were almost three times the amount of contributions from “all the other countries of Europe”, and how their donations were “much appreciated by the Japanese.” As seen in *The Times*, the Society’s fundraiser was able to collect donations quite well, Diósy’s account rings true. Though he does not shy away from self-praise on how *their* society was the one which collected the most funds, and how it specifically was appreciated in Japan. Diósy also noted that in gratitude for the received donations, the Japanese then donated for the relief efforts of the Indian famine, in 1897.¹⁶³

William Anderson

The first chairman of the Japan Society was Professor William Anderson (1842-1900). He was a professor of anatomy and surgery, working in London and Tokyo, where he worked for the British Legation.¹⁶⁴

Aside from contributing to medicine, his other lifework can be still seen in present-day Britain. While working and living in Japan, he gathered a collection of over 2000 pieces of Japanese and Chinese paintings, later sold to collections of the British Museum.¹⁶⁵ Collecting Asian art was an aspect of the interest people held towards Japan, of Japonisme. Anderson’s passion for Japanese art extended to him writing an extensive book of said art’s history.¹⁶⁶

Though his name does not appear in *The Times*’ lists, he was present when inaugurating the Japan Society fundraiser, as well as him being the chairman of the Society in 1896 makes

¹⁶¹ Diósy 1904, 137-138.

¹⁶² Diósy 1904, 137-138.

¹⁶³ Diósy 1904, 138.

¹⁶⁴ His work in anatomy is recognized in the Fabry-Anderson disease, which he was the first, with Johannes Fabry, to describe. Paskalev 2021.

¹⁶⁵ Seccombe & Pottle 2004.

¹⁶⁶ Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Account of a Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum* (London, 1886). Can be accessed at [archive.org](https://www.archive.org).

him a person worth mentioning. It can be presumed that he would have donated, though oddly enough, that no mention of his donation can be found on *The Times*' articles.

Lord Mayor of London

The initiative to establish the Japan Society's fundraiser came from the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Walter Wilkin.¹⁶⁷ For his part in the fundraiser, he would hold a relatively important role for this study. Unfortunately, the information found about him is limited. Regarding this fundraiser, he had given a statement to *the Standard* that the fundraiser had no political motives, it was set up only from their sympathies to give help towards the tsunami's victims.¹⁶⁸ Being the Lord Mayor of London is a political position. Officially stating that a certain action is not political does not directly mean so. Considering Britain's past influence and economic gains from cooperation with Japan, it could be hardly said that showing goodwill to Japan in times of need held no undertones of politics, especially as Japan had just in 1895 concluded a victorious war against China. As neither the British government, nor the Queen, had formally showed sympathy towards the tsunami victims, the Lord Mayor's comment seems to be the closest to an official statement.

Different newspaper articles show the Lord Mayor participating in several philanthropic acts. He was the President and Treasurer in the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund, which had received a good deal of column space on the influential medical journal *the Lancet*. Naturally, he also had contributed to that fund.¹⁶⁹ This reflects Victorian time, and what was normal, even expected, from people of their status: helping those in need, from local communities to afar. For example, in *The Times* on 30.7.1896, five other funds were mentioned on the same page the Japan Society's fund subscriptions were reported.¹⁷⁰ For illustrative purposes, refer to Appendix 1. showcasing how the donation lists were published in *The Times*.

¹⁶⁷ New Lord Mayor's appointing happens in every September, the term lasting for one year. *The Observer* 29.9.1895 "Election of Lord Mayor", 5.

¹⁶⁸ *The Standard* 22.7.1896, "The Recent Calamity in Japan", 3.

¹⁶⁹ *The Lancet* 1.8.1896, "Metropolitan Hospital Fund", 325–326.

¹⁷⁰ *The Times* 30.7.1896, 8.

3.2 Diplomats and dukes

To be a ‘respectable’ member of upper class society one certainly needed to command appreciable financial resources, but an individual also needed to have a ‘greater end’ and a sense of their ‘class duties’ – the ‘white man’s burden’ in the colonial context – in order to achieve the social high ground. This was the engine of Victorian philanthropy founded on ‘good works’.¹⁷¹

Brian Belton in *The Thames Ironworks : A History of East London Industrial and Sporting Heritage*.

For people who were active in the public sphere, as in this case, diplomats, politicians, and members of the peerage, contributing to charities and making it evident to the public was as a standard practice, a norm, of the time. Maintaining a certain public image was a way of looking after one’s role and position in society. Adhering to the norms of donating preserved elite’s legitimacy and social cohesion.¹⁷² Information about charities was published in the newspapers, again reinforcing the elite’s symbolic capital and social standing.¹⁷³

Contributing to charities was a social norm at the time, thus being a fundamental motivation for the elites to donate. The Japan Society’s fundraising was one of such. Donating to charities meant that the donors’ name would be visible on the printed paper, giving visibility the donors’ good and respectable reputation.

Additionally, a common motivation to donate to charities is to ease one’s distress of the situation. As individual donors in question had direct connections to Japan, which was another clear indication on why they contributed, but also meant that they were familiar with Japan and its people. As the tsunami hit the rural areas, the donors unlikely knew anyone affected, but sympathies stemming from knowing people more widely from Japan might have strengthened feelings of wanting to help.¹⁷⁴

Takaaki Kato

¹⁷¹ Belton 2015, n.p.

¹⁷² Shapely 2001, 47.

¹⁷³ Shapely 1998, 157.

¹⁷⁴ Zagefka & James 2015, 159, 161.

Perhaps the most renowned Japanese on the lists of donors, was His Excellency Takaaki Kato (1860-1926). At the end of the 19th century, he was the Japanese Ambassador to London (1894-1899). Kato also worked as Japan's Foreign Minister (1900-1906), again as the Ambassador to London (1908-1913) and as Japan's Prime Minister (1924-1926).¹⁷⁵

Kato's work contributed immensely to the Anglo-Japanese alliance.¹⁷⁶ At the end of 19th century, Japan's Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu's objective was to create good relations with Britain. During THE Shimonoseki peace negotiations¹⁷⁷, Kato was assigned to make this happen. After Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War, Kato was to "seduce" Britain to Japan's side, to lead Britain away from a friendship with China, which was something China was canvassing for. This was motivated due to Germany, Russia, and France pressuring Japan to cede Chinese territory in the peace negotiations, making Japan to look for an alliance outside these countries. Britain's stand in the Shimonoseki negotiations remained neutral, for wanting to secure their trade in East Asia, Kato's persistence and professionalism in the negotiations was favourable for Anglo-Japanese relations.¹⁷⁸

After a start in good Anglo-Japanese alliance, Kato remained his position as a negotiator. His work furthered the cooperation between the two countries towards the proper Anglo-Japanese alliance signed in 1899. His persona left a strong impression about Japan to British ministers he worked closely with.

Kato had received instructions from Japanese Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu that he was to "set out to influence the general public [in London] through the press as his predecessor, Aoki, had done." Which led to that "during his [Kato's] early months in London, the press there reported Japan more fully than ever before".¹⁷⁹ Demonstrating the significance of the press, and how it was taken advantage of.

As Kato was Japanese citizen living abroad in 1896, in addition to political nuances, he had a distinct personal motivation to donate. On the donations list of July 30th, Tako was the sixth one, with a donation of 10£.¹⁸⁰ Before him were donors representing British industries.

From helping the people in his homeland to maintaining his political role as a Japanese diplomat in London. Personally, he wanted to work towards improving, and creating, good

¹⁷⁵ Cortazzi 2002, 22-26.

¹⁷⁶ Officially signed in 1899.

¹⁷⁷ Peace negotiations for the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895).

¹⁷⁸ Nish n.d., 44-50.

¹⁷⁹ Nish 1968, 37.

¹⁸⁰ *The Times* 30.7.1896, "The Earthquake and Tidal Wave in Japan", 8. 10£ equals to around 1100£ in 2024. <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>

relations between the two nations, which could be seen in for example him enthusiastically showing up to the Japan Society's dinners and meetings. His appearances in the Society's events made sure he could create useful connections, benefiting his stay in London, as well as his country.¹⁸¹

Duke of Westminster

Even though it was from the Lord Mayor of London who proposed to create the fundraiser, the Duke of Westminster, Hugh Lupus Grosvenor (1825-1899), holds the highest rank within the donors, and therefore on the donations list, having given the greatest amount of money. It was also typically held by the most influential person in the fundraiser. Thus, the list reflected the social hierarchies of the society. The Duke was the first of his name, Queen Victoria elevating Grosvenor to a duke. The Queen was also present at his wedding, their children were on friendly terms, and she was quite closely acquainted with the Duke's first wife. Thus, the Duke's position in the social hierarchy within the peerage was stable. It was said that he was the richest person in England, right after the Queen herself.¹⁸²

The Duke's donation was announced as early as in the first news article that informed the Japan Society establishing a fundraiser (22nd July). His name was mentioned as the first to have already donated, but a more precise occasion for it is left unknown.¹⁸³

Even with all his wealth and prestige, he was also well liked and respected. As the fundraiser's first donors were more closely observed in *The Times*, his contribution was explained in high regard. He was said to be a

fine example of the great noble who, while following the same pursuits and amusements of other Englishmen of wealth and leisure, devotes a great part of his time to the service of those less fortunate than himself and to fulfilling with a strong sense of duty the obligations of his high rank.¹⁸⁴

A characteristic of an aristocrat's life, as that was the role they were expected to hold in society. Fundraisers were a fine way to fulfil these expectations, and very performatively. His

¹⁸¹ Cortazzi et al. 2022, 80-83.

¹⁸² Huxley 1967, 134. He owned a great deal of land and estates in London. From those he earned over 250,000£ a year, which translates to around 27 million pounds in 2024. <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>, cited 16.4.2024.

¹⁸³ His donation was 25£, approximately 2700£ in 2024. <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>, cited 16.4.2024.

¹⁸⁴ Huxley 1967, xi.

activeness in philanthropy was appreciated and respected even within the circles of elite donors. Even without *The Times* writing positively about him in 1896, other sources also report his paternalistic attitude towards those of lower social standing. In the face of newspaper materials, he seems considerate and a philanthropist. He made effort in donating and funding hospitals for example. He also spoke for the mistreatment of innocent (Christian) civilians in the Armenian massacres, as well as funding hospitals in Armenia (in the 1890s). “In fact, however, there was hardly a scheme of philanthropy for which his support was not solicited, nor a subscription list, ---, to which he was not asked to contribute.”¹⁸⁵ The way his deeds and philanthropic nature is expressed, his support seems to have come from a sincere want to help. Yet, his central role in British society implies that the fundraiser for tsunami victims was another charity to which the Duke had to donate to. A man with his social standing meant that he was to donate to fundraisers asking for them.

His connections to Japan specifically seem non-existent. He was said to be forward-looking, and he had visited India to “broaden his horizons”¹⁸⁶ of the world. Showcasing he had held an interest of parts of the world beyond England, as Eurocentric interest of nations and peoples outside of Europe, was a common in the 19th century, which could be a connection to why he participated in the Japan Society’s fund. Still, in the end, it was mostly his duties as a duke that made him participate in charitable work.

A.R. Brown

Albert R. Brown (1913) was a shipbroker in Japan, after his duties there finished, he was appointed as the Honorary Japanese consul at Glasgow in 1889. It was typical that many Japanese lived in different industrial centres in Britain, such as Glasgow. A British man was usually assigned, by the Japanese Imperial Court, as a consul in said cities to bring support and help to Japanese communities. Brown’s success in Japan led to him being the first foreigner to receive the Order of the Sacred Treasure from Meiji Emperor, in 1901.¹⁸⁷ Brown’s work made him as a considerable contributor to the industrial relations between Japan and Britain.¹⁸⁸

Brown’s career in Japan started in the 1860s, as a maritime consultant. In the 1870s, he formulated Japanese shipping and navigation legislation in line with international laws.¹⁸⁹ He

¹⁸⁵ Huxley 1967, 152.

¹⁸⁶ Huxley 1967, 36. Though, in 1850 India was part of the British empire.

¹⁸⁷ AR Brown’s history. <https://www.arbrown.com/english/company/step/> cited 22.4.2024.

¹⁸⁸ Munro et al. 2008, 80. Kita 2006, 61.

¹⁸⁹ Kita 2006, n.p.

partook in the formation of the first merchant ship school in Japan, currently known as Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology. Later in the decade, he was asked by the founder of Mitsubishi (Yataro Iwasaki), a person he had previously consulted, to supply them with steamships, starting Brown's career in Mitsubishi Steamer Company. His task was to buy ships from Britain for Japan to Mitsubishi. Between 1891 and 1914 Brown had bought 31 such steamships.¹⁹⁰ Contributing to Mitsubishi becoming one of the top shipping companies in Japan.¹⁹¹ Warships that Brown bought for Japan's government were a reason Japan was victorious in the Russo-Japanese war (1905).¹⁹² In 1886, he was appointed as the first director of the newly found *Nippon Yusen Kaisha* (NYK, "Japan Mail Steamship Company"), a company merging Mitsubishi and competitor *Kyodo Unyu Kaisha*. He worked as the company's director until the Meiji government decreed that foreigners were to be replaced by Japanese staff, leading to Brown's return to Glasgow in 1887.¹⁹³ In Glasgow, Brown set up a marine company, A.R. Brown McFarlane & Co, continuing his work for NYK, Mitsubishi by shipping marine materials from Glasgow to Japan.¹⁹⁴

Brown's contribution in establishing the formation of Japanese shipping industry was substantial. Making it reasonable to see his long history and meaningful work in Japan as a motivation to aid the people affected by the Sanriku tsunami. As he owed his career to Japan, and had lived there for many years, he might have felt a strong comradeship with the Japanese, strengthening his sympathies. Brown partook in local charity efforts in Scotland, reflecting the philanthropic duties of Victorian era.

Additionally, his role in the Japan Society's fundraiser was to gather the donations to be transferred to Japan. This part of his was published on *The Times'* articles too, as can be seen in the picture in Appendix 1. It was a great responsibility on itself, yet still he donated a sum of 54 pounds to the fundraiser.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰ Kita 2010, n.p.

¹⁹¹ Kita 2006, 58-59, 66. These ships were to take Japan's army to Taiwan. British and the US governments had declined this request to provide these ships, to not start anything with China. Brown then acquired dozen ships from China for Japan's government.

¹⁹² Kita 2010.

¹⁹³ Kita 2006, 61

¹⁹⁴ Kita 2010.

¹⁹⁵ *The Times* 7.8.1896, "The Seismic Wave in Japan", 10.

Professor John Milne

A British pioneer in seismology in Japan, John Milne, contributed to the Japan Society's fundraiser. He is said to be "the man who mapped the shaking earth".¹⁹⁶ His motives stemmed from his direct connections to the Sanriku tsunami. Through his field of study, he investigated that tsunami and its mechanics, of oceanic fault lines and the tsunami's effects on the global communications and oceanic cables. His contributions to the field of seismology resulted in setting up a global network of seismograph stations. Milne wrote in *The Times* the 6th of July 1896, that the tremors of the 1896 Sanriku earthquake had been recorded on a seismograph in the Isle of Wight, where he resided at the time.¹⁹⁷

Milne's presence in Meiji Japan was prominent. From holding a key role in founding of seismology in Japan, to teaching geology in Imperial College of Engineering (Kōbudaigakkō), Tokyo.¹⁹⁸ He was also one of the founding members of the Seismological Society of Japan (1880). Thus, he held a pioneering position in the field of seismology.

Among English speakers Milne was also referred to as the 'Father of Modern Seismology' or the 'founder of Anglo-Japanese seismology'. As a field, seismology's development to a modern science happened greatly in Japan. This was an intention of Milne's. He specialised in creating a system of recording earthquake shocks anywhere on the globe.¹⁹⁹ These 'seismographs' inscribed earthquake shocks. This was a crucial invention, as earthquakes, their strength and direction, used to be mostly researched by surveying the damage to buildings by earthquakes. It was naturally the European method, where brick and stone architecture was more commonplace than in 19th century Japan.²⁰⁰ Wooden buildings did not crash and crumble as such. Researching in Japan, Milne was able to learn how earthquakes originated and operated, these findings were then reported back to European audiences.

As Milne's career in seismology took greatly place in Japan, and researching Japanese earthquakes, he understood the extensive devastation caused by seismological events. A British pioneer in researching ground movements in Japan, leaves few questions of his reasons for wanting to help the tsunami's victims. A point for his motivations was that he indeed was while living on the Isle of Wright, away from the community of most Japan-minded Britons.

¹⁹⁶ Kabrna, Paul. "John Milne – The man who mapped the shaking earth" 2007.

¹⁹⁷ *The Times* 6.6.1896, "The Earthquake in Japan", 8.

¹⁹⁸ Clancey 2006, 63.

¹⁹⁹ Musson 2013, 792, 797.

²⁰⁰ Clancey 2006, 6, 64.

Having all these influential men participating in the Japan Society's fundraiser shows how the relations between Japan and Britain had been developing. From scholars to aristocrats, being connected to Japan was a positive thing, also showing how diverse the connections were. For members of the elite, contributing to charities was merely an important part of their way of living, of their role in Victorian society. Sending donations was a channel for the rich to bolster their standing. They wanted to have their names printed in the newspapers and associated with the fundraisers.²⁰¹

3.3 British industries in Japan

While other nations proceed by steps, Japan proceeds by leaps and bounds. What other nations are doing may be described as progress, but what Japan is doing must be termed a phenomenon²⁰²

Charles Cramp in *The North American Review*, 1897

In this part, British industries that contributed to the Japan Society's fundraiser are examined, how their contributions link to different trade relations between Britain and Japan. The interest towards Japan stemmed from the synergy of the recently arisen attention to Japan's rapid industrialisation and modernisation, during Meiji era. For British citizens, means of gaining information and interest of Japan was, for instance, via travellers, merchants, exhibitions, and theatre. For this to happen, commerce, British companies and people had established connections in Japan.

Britain's role in Japan's modernisation was significant. After the Meiji restoration (1868), Japan started developing its industries, society, and government, looking after Western nations as examples. For example, groups of Japanese students visited countries such as Germany and Britain to learn and copy facets of European nations and bring back that knowledge to Japan. Only the best would suffice. For this, sights were directed to the West, as in, towards Britain. Especially the shipbuilding industry was heavily influenced by Britain. As Japanese government's goal was to create a modern navy and trade, foreign example was looked for the

²⁰¹ Brewis 2010, 899.

²⁰² Cramp 1897, 446.

shipbuilding industry. Modern navy was seen as a requirement for the possibility of having to go to a war in the region.²⁰³

Before the so-called experts' decade from 1872-1882²⁰⁴, Japanese officers were sent to serve on British warships, to learn the profession, as it was completely useless to have modern ships but no men to work them. After which British experts went to build ships in Japan, to buy ships from Britain for Japan, and to educate Japanese officials in recently established training schools.²⁰⁵ Thus cutting the necessities to send Japanese to study abroad. Making the shipbuilding industry to properly flourish during the expert's decade, under Japanese government's support and steering.²⁰⁶

Britain's position as the most important maritime country, from navy to shipping, held strong until the start of the 20th century, making it an obvious choice to look for the most modern naval technology.²⁰⁷ Britain was looked as a model in both shipbuilding technology and ready-made warships, making British workers' role central in establishing Japan's shipbuilding industry. The cooperation between Japan and Britain gradually ended. In 1896, Japanese government stated that the domestic shipbuilding companies were to start supporting domestic manufacturing. Japan had received necessary knowledge from foreigners, and now could produce both officials and products themselves, the foreign workerd being sent home.²⁰⁸

For Britain's aspirations regarding aiding Japan to such levels, another encouragement was to make Japan into a strong front against the US. To make sure Japan would keep good relations with Britain and minimise Japan's contracts and contacts with the US, was a way of protecting British commercial interests.²⁰⁹

These big shipbuilding companies in Britain, namely Thames Ironworks, Elswick Shipbuilding Company, and Yarrow Shipbuilding highly participated in the British led modernisation of Japanese navy and shipping. All these companies contributed to the Japan Society's fundraiser, but Thames and Elswick are more closely examined in this section. Yarrow Shipbuilding's founder also donated, but not much was found of the company, nor its founder Sir Alfred Yarrow, also a donor. Additionally, companies such as Tangyes Ltd and Thomas Cook

²⁰³ Patalano 2012, 47.

²⁰⁴ Checkland 1989, xvi

²⁰⁵ Warren & Edgerton 1990, xiii.

²⁰⁶ Fitzgerald 1900, 369.

²⁰⁷ Davies 2010, 15, 21. Other major countries were for example the US and France. But as the US were dealing with domestic issues, and France in its colonies. (Steeds, Nish 1977)

²⁰⁸ Kita 2006, 69. Fitzgerald 1900, 371–372.

²⁰⁹ Cramp 1897, 447.

and Son also donated to the Japan Society's fund. These companies contributed to the Japan Society's fund, as seen on *The Times*. Aside for the companies themselves, Elswick Ironworks' founder Lord Armstrong and director Sir Andrew Noble contributed personally. All these companies had considerable connections in Japan, and their importance was reflecting in Japan Society's fund.

Donations from the companies, and their chairmen, share similar motivations. For them, Japan's government was a client among other governments, just with considerable orders. Donations reinforced the developing connections with Japan, providing aid was an indication of this relationship. Thus, all the companies played a big role in Japan and maintaining positive connections was crucial. In the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan had already used the warships and artillery provided by these British companies. Partially thanks to Japanese customers, the firms fared economically well, they had the resources to donate, in a way, to give back to Japan, who had been a lucrative customer to the British firms.²¹⁰

As marketing is focal for any business, marketing as a motive for participating in fundraisers should be noted. Donating can be seen more as promotion for the firm's good domestic, and foreign, public image, keeping potential partners and investors in mind.²¹¹ As Japanese sources cannot be examined for this study, it is left unknown whether the information about said companies' donations reached their partners in Japan, though the overall attitudes in Japan towards the donations was positive.

Not forgetting the social norms in Victorian era, as they were present in the lives of magnates as well. Donations part in business strategies can seem like opportunistic in the face of the disaster. Due to the companies and individuals' long connections in Japan, contributing to the tsunami fundraiser was a way of offering their condolences in a time of severe destruction.

Elswick Ironworks

The Elswick works manufactured warships and armaments in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the largest single industrial plant in Britain.²¹² The Elswick's founder and director in the 1890s was Sir William Armstrong, who also made a personal donation.

²¹⁰ Zagefka & James 2015, 158-160.

²¹¹ Navarro 1988, 67-68.

²¹² Warren 1989, xiii. In late 1800s.

The Elswick Shipbuilding Company was formed in 1859.²¹³ Their first years' focus was on manufacturing armaments, which later expanded to naval shipbuilding. A company of Elswick's size²¹⁴ and field of practice had a narrow number of potential customers. From the 1860s on, their customers were mostly national governments, from the British government to Meiji government in Japan. The Elswick were one of the first British armament manufacturers supplying internationally. The Elswick's held an oligopolistic position, due to little competition in large-scale manufacturing, thus their standing in the field was renown and stable. It also led to special conditions in the business.

Elswick's evolved into a global company partially due to the state of domestic markets. During the 1860s, British government held merely a 1/17 yearly share of the firm's total affairs. It was an economic push to start looking for customers abroad, as large-scale armament and ship manufacturing had only so much potential purchasers. This made the Elswick's one of the first international arms suppliers. Their foreign customers consisted of, for example, governments of Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey, and Japan.²¹⁵

To keep up with the competition, the firm had to adopt new technologies. They had to offer what the customer, the government, required, up to the customers establishing preferences for the company's specific products.²¹⁶ This can be seen in their influence over Japan's shipbuilding and armament development, in the 19th century. On several occasions when mentioning Japan's modernization regarding shipbuilding, the famous Elswick works were mentioned. Their contribution in building ships for Japan, to educating in the business in Japan was considerable. It also validates *The Times*' articles about the Japan Society's fund, as on the paper of August 7th, Elswick Shipbuilding Company was the first donor to be mentioned, with the largest donation.²¹⁷ The company's distinguished standing was eminent. As was that of Sir Andrew Noble's (1831-1915). He was a managing director (from 1860) and the chairman (from 1900) in the Elswick Shipbuilding Company, and the third donor on the same article.²¹⁸ His

²¹³ Warren 1989, 13. Briefly, the founder William Armstrong was appointed to work as an engineer for the government's war department, from where he later moved to establish his own company. With amalgaming said company with smaller firms, the Armstrong Whitworth Company, known as the Elswick works, was formed.

²¹⁴ They were the leading British armament manufacturer before the Second World War. They have built dozens of renown warships. Singleton 1991.

²¹⁵ Warren 1989, 16, 69.

²¹⁶ Warren 1989, 3, 5, 16.

²¹⁷ *The Times* 7.8.1896, "The Seismic Wave in Japan", 10.

²¹⁸ *The Times* 7.8.1895, 10.

role in the company's success was significant, from early growth on. Developing ballistics with his innovations in gunpower, was an advantage for the Elswick's business.²¹⁹

Thames Ironworks

In 1896, Arnold Hills was the chairman of the Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company. It was one of the important shipbuilding companies in Britain, warships for several governments, from domestic one to European nations, Russia, and Japan.²²⁰ Receiving orders from different national governments, Japan included, was not unusual, as Elswick Shipbuilding Company also indicates. What made commerce with Japan special, was the scale of the orders, as well as Thames Ironworks' employees going to Japan to instruct the locals and develop their industry on a grassroots level.²²¹

Before the turn of the century, Japan had acquired a convincing naval ship range, build by various foreign powers. In 1895, an order for modern battleships was sent to England. Shipyards both in the Thames Ironworks as well as in Elswick begun building these ships, with the same blueprints as the ones in the British navy.²²² These ships were later used in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905).²²³

Donation under Hills' name to the Japan Society's fundraising showed the company opportunistic compassion to the tsunami's victims, reflecting their immediate connections to Japan. Having built massive warships for Japan, which *The Times*' readership could have been aware of, based on previous news writing, goodwill reflected again how the company's public image was managed. With a note of giving back from the company's earnings to those in need, in a country that the company had contributed to. As the donation was not done under the shipyards name, it is of consequence to consider the chairman's personal motivates. Arnold Hills passionately acted towards progressing his company's employment satisfaction, "his faith in 'the enterprise' of Thames Ironworks as a philanthropic community were deeply set." Hills took pride in influencing positively his workers' lives. Again, a typical effort in Victorian charitable ambiance.²²⁴ Indicating the purposes for contributing towards the Japan Society fund.

²¹⁹ Warren 1990, 16, 32, 255.

²²⁰ Monument for Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company. <https://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/thames-ironworks-and-shipbuilding-company> cited 25.4.2024

²²¹ Saunders 2011, 81.

²²² Fitzgerald 1900, 367-368. The ships, *Fuji* and *Yashima*. *Fuji* by Thames Ironworks was Japan's first modern battleship.

²²³ Grove 2005, 56.

²²⁴ Belton 2015, n.p.

Tangyes Ltd

Aside the several shipbuilding companies, another major donor from the field of industries was from the founders of Tangyes Limited, a company who contributed to hydraulic lifting. The company was established in 1857, and already in the 1870s they were tasked with raising the Cleopatra's Needle in London. Along with other companies, Tangyes Ltd expanded their business abroad. In 1889, they had appointed a representative of the Far East, and market development in Japan, too, begun. In 1896, after the Sino-Japanese War was over, trade possibilities with Japan started to be good again, which the Tangyes took advantage of, restoring and enhancing trade with Japan. For them, motivations for donating seem to follow the same reasons as others: due to their business connections in Japan, hopes of developing these connections, as well as partaking in Victorian norms of charitable work.²²⁵

Sir Edward J. Reed

One of the individual donors was Sir Edward J. Reed, said to have been the most famous British naval architect during the latter half of the 19th century. He had worked as the Chief Constructor of the Royal Navy in Britain, overseeing the development from wooden ships to ironclads, until 1870. In 1879, the Japanese government invited Reed to Japan, to advise them on plans in strengthening Japanese navy. His designs include famous warships for Japan, but also to European powers too. Ships for Japan played a crucial part in its early 20th century warfare. Reed himself wrote a book of his stay in Japan, showing his keen interest of the country. Representing the period's trends, his book was a mixture of a historical account and a travel book. Reed goes over his travels in Japan, what he has seen and experienced.²²⁶

Thomas Cook and Son

In organised tourism's history, *Thomas Cook and Son* holds a notable part. Their business started, in 1861, from a railway excursion to London, and its popularity encouraging forward.²²⁷ In Victorian Britain, travel agencies were stigmatised by the elite. They were seen as immoral. The essential issue having been fear in the elite, that they would lose a distinctive

²²⁵ Waterhouse 1957, 36-49.

²²⁶ Elgar 1906, 153-154. Reed 2012. Travel books build knowledge of the wider world and different cultures. Hence, donations for the fundraiser could be expected, as people had prior knowledge of Japan.

²²⁷ Simmons 1973, 20. Hampel & Tracey 2017, 17.

trait of social standing, to the middle classes. That travel agencies would destroy clear class distinctions they held so dear.²²⁸ Another fear was being in close proximity with the middle classes, who were thought to be “invading” their favourite tourist attractions and resorts.²²⁹ Middle classes being able to join these holiday tours, shows the societal development in the rise of financial wellbeing.²³⁰ The middle-classes had gained the means to conveniently travel, so they certainly wanted to enjoy it, favouring to go to places previously vacated merely by the elite. For the greater annoyance of the elites.

In the 1860s, the public opinion, again mainly within the upper classes, was negative towards mass tourism. These opinions were spread, for instance, in newspapers. A company preparing travels for others, for money, and people paying for it, without putting any real effort in the preparations, seemed like cheating, too easy. Tour groups littering and crowding the attractions previously calm and uncongested. Cook’s sophisticated answer to his criticism was to show that the people on his travels were responsible, that he gave his customers the chance to travel freely within the tour’s schedules. In the 1870s, Cook’s discourse was that his services promoted British interests, as well as educating the population.²³¹ In both spreading knowledge of the tour destinations and cultures, and the other way round, advertise Britain at the same time. During the 1880s, Cook had become an institution, his tours seen as an agent of advancing British society. Even the elite saw that these tours were harmless and did not challenge their position.

After the success of domestic tours, Cook’s business expanded to include package tours abroad. Already in the 1870s, Cook’s tours included overseas trips to the “exotic destinations” in the East.²³² Popular were those to the “Holy Land” and the Ottoman Empire. Cook’s first ever round-the-world tour started from Yokohama.²³³ From these world tours, Thomas Cook wrote correspondence to *The Times*, updating the readers of their travels, as an advertisement for his tours. From Japan he wrote how “all that has been told us recently of Japan is abundantly confirmed by observation and experience. The land is one of great beauty and rich fertility. The inhabitants and the Government are rapidly transforming into enlightened, peaceful, and cordial citizens”.²³⁴ These reports also serving as advertisement for the business, showing where

²²⁸ Hampel & Tracey 2017, 4, 17-21.

²²⁹ Walton 2005, 45.

²³⁰ Smith & Cormack 1998, 4-5.

²³¹ Hampel & Tracey 2017, 31. Simmons 1973, 31.

²³² Hampel & Tracey 2017, 38.

²³³ Yang 2019, 531.

²³⁴ Smith 1998, 27.

they go and what could be experienced. He wrote of British influence and position in Japan, how it was seen all-round. Taking advantage of the public's excessive interest in Japan, these reports must have been read with great curiosity. Cook's travel reports, as well as the notable enough donation to the Japan Society's fund, played a part in Cook's marketing approaches. Just as Cook's responses to the previously mentioned negative comments about the idea of enterprise. Public reports were aimed to turn the tables for the company's advances, like any other marketing strategy.

At the turn of the century, a couple of plays about Japan were performed in London.²³⁵ They contributed to the British audience gaining 'experience' of Japan, and thus fuelling the furore of Japanese art and culture.²³⁶ Almost as travelling to the country themselves, holding similar influence as travel reports. These plays' topics reflected the imperialistic fascination of a typical British tourist.²³⁷ They made the societal conditions for the fundraiser's success suitable, as a broader interest of Japan was palpable, thus circumstances to expect and gain donors was favourable. Having prior knowledge of the area where the disaster had happened, increased the likelihood of public's interest in donating. As the area, culture, and the people and their suffering was easier to imagine, even while being physically far from the disaster area.²³⁸

3.4 Distribution of the donations

Not much is known how the Japan Society's donations were distributed. As *the Japan Weekly Mail* wrote, mentioned in Chapter 2, donations were typically used for buying food and clothing for the victims, and for reconstructing the buildings and villages. Money was not directly given as aid, as most locals were not familiar with using large sums of it²³⁹. Due to previous experiences of corruption and unfair distribution of foreign funds, they were now to be distributed straight by foreigners. This was seen to "help to strengthen the bonds of

²³⁵ Walton 2005, 104. *The Geisha: A Story of a Tea House* (1896), by Owen Hall, Harry Greenbank, *The Mikado* (1885) by Gilbert and Sullivan, and *Madame Butterfly* (1904) by Puccini.

²³⁶ Walton 2005, 104.

²³⁷ Steward 2005, 105.

²³⁸ Zagefka & James 2015, 171.

²³⁹ *Japan Weekly Mail* 11.7.1896, "The Disposal of Relief Funds", 32

friendship between Occidentals and Japanese - an end no less worthy of attainment than the conveyance of assistance to the sufferers themselves."²⁴⁰

The donors examined in this thesis are merely a sample of all the donors in the Japan Society's fundraiser. Not much can be found in English, how the Society's relief funds were used and distributed in Japan. Arthur Diósy wrote in *The New Far East* that many eye-witness reports told that the funds were distributed honestly and practically, by Japanese authorities on site. For example, fishing gear was purchased, as well as food and clothing, which was fairly distributed to orphans and other, "miserably poor", survivors.²⁴¹ Unfortunately, the allocation for the donations, such as how much food, fishing gear and so on was distributed, could not be attained for this thesis. Though these reports on who the aid was given to is left quite vague. Mentions on distributing the donations align with other similar fundraisers on how the relief funds were used.

²⁴⁰ *Japan Weekly Mail* 27.6.1896, "Disposal of the Relief Fund", 715.

²⁴¹ Diósy 1904, 139.

4 CONCLUSION

Japan's development into a modern state during the 19th century was done combining aspects of pre-existing Japanese expertise and examples from abroad. One of such partners was Great Britain. This connection was made visible in the themes of this thesis. Overall interest for Japan stemmed from the era's trends. This was visible in newspaper reporting, both in *the Japan Weekly Mail* and *The Times*.

As presented in the first research question on the role of newspaper reporting, the 1896 Sanriku tsunami was approached as an event of which information was to be spread. In addition to showing what had happened, *The Japan Weekly Mail's* reports about the tsunami and its destruction show typical 19th century Eurocentric point of views. Describing peoples outside of Europe as 'exotic', not as developed and different. Year 1896 fits well into the continuum of rising interest of Japanese culture. Exhibitions had been held and travel reports read, contributing to overall interest and knowledge of Japan. It also played its part in inclining people to donate for a fundraiser aimed at easing the suffering of the tsunami victims, as is the focus on the second and third research questions.

As observed in the third research question, a central aspect for late-Victorian humanitarian aid was ad hoc humanitarianism. Charities were organised by committees that were formed solely for the purpose of aiding suffering people. Information of said fundraisers was published in newspapers; both spreading information on what had happened, how the events escalated, and especially on asking for the public to donate to whichever charity. The donors were listed in the same occasions, working as a motivation for others to participate.

Examining the donors in the Japan Society's fundraiser for 1896 Sanriku tsunami's victims shows different motivations for donating. Individual donors from the higher classes

merely carried out the responsibilities of their social standing by donating to every other charity. As fundraisers were printed on newspapers, these people thus received validation from the common public, spreading the word of the elites participating in philanthropic acts. These motivations do not necessarily tell anything about attitudes towards Japan specifically. Japan might have been trivial, the aspect of donating and thus gaining social acceptance was more relevant.

A good amount of highly educated people, as well as scholars and diplomats, who had contributed to the Japan Society's fundraiser had had a personal connection to Japan. Having worked or lived in the country was a solid motivation for donating. As Japan and Britain's political relations had been developing towards a good mutual understanding during the latter part of the 19th century, donating to a charity that was to aid Japan and Japanese civilians in a severe need, contributing also held a symbolic role.

For British manufacturing companies contributing to the Japan Society fundraiser, major shipbuilding companies stood out. Their donations reflected the distinct connections between the company and Japanese government as their customer. The companies had held an important role in Japan's developing industries during the Meiji era. These firms' officials had stayed and helped create Japan's industries from railways and spinning to shipbuilding. Whilst enabling Japan's rise as a global superpower, building war equipment which Japan had used, and would use, when going to wars in the region. Donating was also a way of maintaining commercial contacts, a sense of duty as Japan had been notable for the companies' success. Sending aid was a small nod of gratefulness, or of opportunistic step ahead in the markets.

Furthermore, central overlapping motivations applied for every donor. Charities were awfully common in Victorian Britain. Donating was a social norm at the time. It was greatly a custom for economically well faring people and firms to donate to charities. This study highlighted the notable people and companies mainly because it was possible to find suitable information about them, still, it should not be forgotten that the general public also donated to the Japan Society fund, their names also published on the donor lists, but their identities and attitudes towards Japan were not attainable.

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Map of Japan

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6 APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

| EARTHQUAKE and TIDAL WAVE in JAPAN. | |
|--|------------|
| RELIEF FUND for SUFFERERS. | |
| THIRD LIST of DONATIONS. | |
| Amount already acknowledged | £1,753 7 6 |
| Elswick Shipbuilding Co., Newcastle-on-Tyne | 1,050 0 0 |
| Lord Armstrong, C.B. | 250 0 0 |
| Sir Andrew Noble, K.C.B. | 250 0 0 |
| Collected by Mr. A. R. Brown, Consul for Japan, Glasgow :- | |
| Messrs. Thos. Skinner and Co. | 5 5 0 |
| Messrs. D. and W. Henderson and Co. | 21 0 0 |
| Messrs. J. Bilaland and Co. | 2 2 0 |
| Messrs. Caldwell and Co., Ltd. | 5 0 0 |
| Messrs. Burrell and Sons | 10 10 0 |
| Messrs. J. Menzies and Co. | 5 5 0 |
| Messrs. Clarke, Chapman, and Co. | 5 5 0 |
| Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son | 25 0 0 |
| Sir Edward J. Reed, K.C.B., F.R.S. .. | 10 10 0 |
| Mr. Herbert J. Stockton | 5 5 0 |
| Messrs. John Craig and sons | 5 5 0 |
| Mr. R. J. Martinez-Danson | 5 5 0 |
| Messrs. James Morrison and Co., Ltd. .. | 5 5 0 |
| The Earl of Jersey, P.C., G.C.M.G. .. | 55 0 0 |
| Mr. S. Vaughan Morgan .. | 5 0 0 |
| Mr. Edward T. Agius .. | 5 0 0 |
| Mr. H. Shoda | 5 0 0 |
| The Hon. Walter Rothschild | 3 3 0 |
| Mr. Alfred Cook, Q. C. .. | 3 0 0 |
| Professor J. Allain, F.R.S. | 2 2 2 |
| Mrs. M. M. Dansen-Martinez | 2 2 0 |
| Mr. W. G. Bajors | 2 2 0 |
| Mr. Chas. A. Peters | 2 2 0 |
| Mr. George Benton | 2 2 0 |
| Mr. K. Shimidzu | 2 2 0 |
| Mrs. M. H. Bond | 2 0 0 |
| Mr. J. Gilbertson (second donation) .. | 2 0 0 |
| Captain Y. Takayama, I.J.N. | 2 0 0 |
| Mr. N. Hamada | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. John Sparks | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. W. C. Ward | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. Thos. Cushing | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. E. Phenipsiers .. | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. Alexander F. Baillie | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. Henry Derham | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. H. F. Thompson, Surgeon-Major-General .. | 1 1 0 |
| W. A. Thomson | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. George Cawley | 1 1 0 |
| E. U. B. | 1 1 0 |
| Miss Florence Holmes .. | 1 0 0 |
| Mr. James E. Liddiard .. | 1 0 0 |
| H. W. | 10 0 |
| Total | £3,473 9 6 |

Further Donations are urgently needed, and should be forwarded to the Hon. Secretaries of the Japan Society of London, 20, Hanover-square, W.

Cheques should be made payable to the Hon. Treasurer, Japan Society, and crossed "Barclay and Co., Japanese Relief Fund."

CHARLES HOLME, Hon. Secretaries,
T. F. K. TANABÉ, Japan Society.

The Times 6.8.1896, "Earthquake and Tidal Wave in Japan", 6.