

Briefing Memo

Reexamining TERAUCHI Masatake's Character - As a "Statesman"-

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Introduction

What comes to mind when you think of TERAUCHI Masatake (1852 - 1919)? For example, at the beginning of the Terauchi Cabinet (October 1916 - September 1918), it was ridiculed as being both anachronistic and a non-constitutional cabinet. Using NISHIHARA Kamezo, also known as Terauchi's private secretary, he provided funds of up to 110 million yen to the Duan Qirui government in northern China (the Nishihara Loans). The so-called Rice Riots broke out in his final year, and Siberian Intervention began. Terauchi was also called a protégé of YAMAGATA Aritomo, the leading authority on Army soldiers from former Choshu domain (Choshu-han).

On the other hand, what about the succeeding Hara Cabinet (September 1918 - November 1921)? Exactly 100 years ago, HARA Takashi had already started the cabinet that consists of all political party members, except for the three Ministers of the Army, Navy, and Foreign Affairs. After the World War I, a full-on party politics was developed in Japan as global diplomatic trends drastically changed.

Compared to Hara, Terauchi has not been evaluated. After Chinese-Japanese relations deteriorated following the Twenty-One Demands in 1915, the aforementioned Nishihara Loans, implemented for recovery, were over-extended to the only northern part of China, the Duan Qirui government only for a limited time. Then, ultimately, the Loans did not lead an improvement in relationships. Thus it can be said that, until recently, Terauchi's character has been almost entirely neglected by academia.

However, while Yamagata, who was once called as the source of the Showa Army, is being reconsidered (Edited by ITO Takashi, *YAMAGATA Aritomo to Kindai Nihon [YAMAGATA Aritomo and Modern Japan]*, Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2008), is there not also room to reconsider Terauchi? We will reexamine Terauchi below.

Terauchi Masatake's profile

Terauchi belonged to the Choshu-han corps (armed forces) during the Boshin War, served in both present-day Aomori Prefecture and Hokkaido. He triumphantly returned to Tokyo in 1869. And he received orders from the Ministry of War, then studied French infantry in Kyoto. At the recommendation of YAMADA Akiyoshi who was his boss, Terauchi stopped thinking of returning home and instead desired to become a soldier. It seems that this was the big choice for Terauchi, 17 years old at the time.

During the Seinan War (also known as the Satsuma Rebellion), Terauchi (a Captain in the Army at that time) was injured in his right arm and treated at a temporary hospital in Osaka. According to ISHIGURO Tadanori (the military surgeon inspector general for later) in the surgery, there was another officer before Terauchi, also injured in the upper right arm, who had his arm completely amputated in surgery. In contrast, Terauchi had all of the crushed bones removed, the arm was left intact "for

therapeutic testing”, and splints were applied. The deep connective tissues of Terauchi’s arm later hardened, and after a few years he became able to hold a sword with the assistance of a leather device. However, Terauchi had great difficulty writing during his lifetime. As will be discussed later, this seemingly personal phenomenon led to problems that cannot be ignored while researching history.

Terauchi was 30 years old in 1882 (a Major in the Army at that time) and sailed overseas for the first time as an assistant to Prince Kan’in Kotohito, who studied in France. Terauchi studied languages while in France and devoted himself to researching the history of war, including the Franco-Prussian War. In 1884, a group of 15 people from the Army, including Lord OYAMA Iwao, MIURA Goro, NOZU Michitsura, KAWAKAMI Soroku, and KATSURA Taro, etc. went to European countries to inspect the military systems as they moved to the division system. The fact that Terauchi took them in France would later make a considerable significance in his career, and his stay in France lasted almost three years.

Terauchi (a Major General in the Army at that time) served as the Minister of Transportation and Communication during the Sino-Japanese War. And from 1896, after the war, he spent more than a year inspecting and observing the armies of France, Russia, Austria, Germany, and other countries. In France he caught a glimpse of Russian-French relations, and in Russia, he was received in audience by Emperor Nicholas II of Russia, and focused on the organization, equipment, and training methods of the Imperial Guard. In Germany, Terauchi was able to hear in detail, from military personnel working in the Prussian Ministry of War, about the army’s budget and organization. Such abundant overseas experience and his administrative skills as the Army Minister during the Russo-Japanese War are indispensable facets when considering Terauchi.

Terauchi and the People around Him

As mentioned at the beginning, Terauchi and Hara Takashi (1856 - 1921) tend to be seen in contrast, but they both had experience serving in the same Cabinet during the Meiji Era (1868 - 1912) and had a relatively good relationship. The two-division expansion problem (a conflict in the cabinet over expansion of funding for two divisions in the Imperial Army) brought a disagreement within the second Saionji Cabinet because of UEHARA Yusaku’s ardor for expansion. After that, the cabinet fell in 1912. While Uehara’s solo performance was finished and led to the fall of the cabinet, Hara evaluated Terauchi as a person who would not have maneuvered and fought like Uehara, and Hara kept a certain level of trust in Terauchi (*Diary of Hara Takashi*, October 16, 1913). Hara led the Rikken Seiyukai political party (Association of Friends of Constitutional) during the Terauchi Cabinet period and supported Terauchi from an impartial and unbiased standpoint.

Nishihara Kamezo (1873 – 1954) was an individual who idolized Terauchi. Nishihara repeatedly expressed his views on industry and economics on the Korean peninsula since the time Terauchi was Governor-General of Korea, and Terauchi came to him for further opinions. Nishihara, together with Terauchi, deplored the second Okuma Cabinet’s policy towards China, represented by the Twenty-One Demands. After the Terauchi Cabinet started, it must have been a matter of course for Nishihara to try and improve the relationship between Japan and China in response to Prime Minister Terauchi’s wishes. However, Terauchi’s approach was to unify China, different from Nishihara who tried only to increase support in the north. Nishihara left behind a large number of handwritten historical materials due to his dedication to Terauchi and his passion for improving Sino-Japanese relations, but was unaware of the difference between himself and Terauchi.

The relationship between Terauchi and YASUKAWA Keiichiro (1849 - 1934), a titan in the Kyushu industrial

world, is also very interesting. When China was essentially divided into north and south after the end of 1915, Yasukawa, the founder of Kyushu Steel Corporation, had a close relationship with Sun Yat-sen, who was based in the south of China. Yasukawa thought that there should be mediation while respecting the initiative between the north and south China. This modest stance was extremely similar to Terauchi's attitude towards China. After the United States banned steel exports during the World War I, Yasukawa frequently appealed to Terauchi about the importance of Chinese iron resources.

Surprisingly, YOSHIDA Shigeru (1878 - 1967), alongside Nishihara, must also be mentioned as another person who was devoted to Terauchi. Yoshida began interacting with Terauchi soon after beginning his diplomatic activities in Manchuria. From 1912 to 1916, when Terauchi was appointed as the Governor-General of Korea, Yoshida was concurrently serving as the Governor-General's secretary, in addition to his duties as consular representative to the city of Andong (currently Dandong city, Liaoning province, China). Yoshida was persuaded to serve as the Prime Minister's Secretary, especially when Terauchi was appointed Prime Minister, but he declined. At this time, Yoshida, who was in his 30s, recalled in his later years that Terauchi would give in earnest advice and encouragement to later generations.

Finally, some research on the Nishihara Loans, which has been very helping in examining Terauchi and the Terauchi Cabinet, will be touched upon. Its purpose is assisting in future Terauchi research.

The Time when Nishihara Loan Research was Prosperous

Relying on Nishihara's abundant historical manuscripts, the "Nishihara Kamezo Collection" which are held in Tokyo Main Library, the National Diet Library, one study group was established at Graduate School of Economics, the University of Tokyo in the 1960s. Research on the Nishihara Loans was extensive until the 1980s. In contrast to Terauchi, who had an injury in his right arm and was not able to produce lots of historical materials, historical discussions on the Terauchi Cabinet and the Nishihara Loans began from the many historical materials left behind by Nishihara's views.

Hosei University President OUCHI Hyoe was the person who played a leading role in the research. Ouchi once worked at the Ministry of Finance after graduating from The University of Tokyo, and during the Terauchi period he watched Nishihara's entering and exiting the government building, along with Minister of Finance SHODA Kazue. It doesn't seem that researchers' emphasis about the collaborations between Terauchi, Shoda, and Nishihara is unrelated to Ouchi's image of Nishihara and Shoda.

In the 1960s, Japan was in the period of the Sato Cabinet, in rapid economic growth, and had an overwhelming advantage over China economically. And Sino-Japanese relationship looked like the Duan administration in China and the Terauchi Cabinet, in an unprecedented economic surplus in Japan during the World War I. Research results about the Nishihara Loans were published one after another, while the United States approached China, China ascended to the United Nations, and normalization between Japan and China continued. When China has taken its place in the full-fledged international community, Japanese public opinion sought the ideal Sino-Japanese relation that do never fall into the war. There is no denying that Terauchi's negative image was spread as a by-product of Nishihara Loan research in academia.

Even the above-mentioned period, when Nishihara Loan research was in full swing, has already been considered for historical study. Needless to say, it is important to recognize that the historical materials left by Nishihara are important for Terauchi research. However, Nishihara was not Terauchi's all. This is more important for an approach to the reality of who Terauchi was.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

As mentioned above, it seems that there is room for the conception of Terauchi. Until now, there have been many discussions about Terauchi through the lens of Nishihara, but from now on it will be a challenge to reconstruct Terauchi's image from the perspective of Terauchi's relationships with people other than Nishihara.

In this article, Terauchi's contacts with civilian politicians, businessmen, and diplomats, etc. have been pointed out. For more extensive contacts, look at the academic books listed below. But in any case, Terauchi was more of a "statesman" than a soldier. Although an old expression, "Heikou Jihei" (meaning "Fair and Impartial") was Terauchi's motto, it was not an exaggeration since Terauchi earnestly and sincerely took on dignitaries in various realms outside of the army.

The composition of the contrast between Terauchi and Hara, and the cooperation between Terauchi and Nishihara, is a view that has been taken for granted until now. However, it seems that the reality of Terauchi becomes clearer after we break away from this double veil. Such an approach may also be useful in correcting ideas that tend to perceive civilian politicians and military personnel in rivalry.

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