

Japanese Pre-War Military Attaché System*

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to comprehensively examine and present a general overview of the system of military attaché, which has hardly been a subject of extensive research, focusing on military/naval attachés to embassies/legations of Japan up to the Second World War period. Relying mainly on official documents in the collection of the Center for Military History, the National Institute for Defense Studies of the Ministry of Defense as well as the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as primary historical sources, in addition to drawing on the diaries, memoirs, and testimonies of those who served as military attachés to embassies/legations before and during the Second World War and of their acquaintances, this article examines, in particular, the establishment and the evolution of the Japanese military attaché system (its origins, increases in the number of and changes to the countries of assignment, and the system's termination), the status of military attachés (status under international law, status at the embassy/legation, and status within military forces), the arrangements of the "Office of Military Attaché" (office room and staff), and personnel affairs (candidates, personnel management, place of appointment, reappointment, and locally limited assignment).

Military/naval attachés to embassies/legations of Japan were military personnel subordinate to the head of their respective military command, and at the same time, were diplomats. They were placed on the diplomatic list and bestowed diplomatic privileges and immunities as embassy/legation staff members who were supervised by their respective ambassadors/ministers. Although sometimes a military attaché's office was located within the embassy/legation building, it was very often established in a different location. Military and naval attachés generally had different offices. Accounting was independent of embassies/legations, and expenses were covered by the Army and Navy's budgets. Military attachés received a service allowance in addition to their basic salary, and were granted secret funds for expenses needed for entertainment, information gathering, and other purposes. The countries where military attachés served before the First World War were major Western powers and countries neighboring Japan. After the war, medium and small countries neighboring the United States or the Soviet Union also became places of appointment. During the war, military attachés were newly deployed to and had strengthened functions in neutral states that increased in value. The country to which a military attaché was assigned was determined mainly on the basis of the foreign language he had learned, as well as on his specialization. In general, military attaché personnel were Army War College or Naval Academy graduates who had excellent academic performance, along with experience residing in a foreign country.

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Introduction

Whether it is in the East or the West, there are very few studies on the military attaché and its system. Japanese military attachés, including the likes of Motojiro Akashi and Hiroshi Oshima, who undertook unique operations, or Makoto Onodera, who collected intelligence during the Second World War, have been studied relatively intensively. These are, however, quite exceptional cases. Most of the other military attachés (at least their activities during their service) or the military attaché system itself is rarely taken up as a primary subject of study.¹

The purpose of this article is to comprehensively examine the system of military attaché that has hardly been a subject of extensive research. This article, while unable to provide a total picture due to space limitations, aims to present a general overview. A military attaché, in the broad sense, means a military personnel who is on an overseas assignment. Under this definition, multiple types of military attachés exist. This article adopts a narrow definition of military attaché to mean an officer who is attached to an embassy or a legation. The discussion is focused on military/naval attachés to embassies/legations of Japan up to the Second World War period (their official title at the time were military/naval attaché to the Imperial Japanese embassy/legation in XX country).

The historical materials that this article relies on are mainly official documents in the collection of the Center for Military History, the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) of the Ministry of Defense as well as the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as primary historical sources. This article also draws on the diaries, memoirs, and testimonies of those who served as military attachés to embassies/legations before and during the Second World War and of their acquaintances.

1. The Establishment and the Evolvement of the Japanese Military Attaché System

(1) The system's origins

In the context of world history, the military attaché, as it is referred today, is said to have origins dating back to the rule of Napoléon Bonaparte in the early 19th century.² As for the Japanese military attaché to embassies/legations, its origins trace back to Kazukatsu Fukubara (then colonel) who was appointed military attaché to the Japanese legation in Qing state on February 2, 1875 (Fukubara departed for Qing state in April). It is considered that the deployment and assignment of Fukubara were the idea of Taro Katsura (then Major) and that War Minister Aritomo Yamagata accepted this idea. This took place in the previous year (1874), around the time of the conclusion of the Japan-Qing negotiations following the Taiwan expedition by Japan. Katsura identified the objectives of deploying an attaché to Qing state as: observing Qing state's system of military forces and its actual situation; and putting this knowledge into practice in the event of a contingency.³

¹ As far as the author is aware, studies on the military attaché system have included: in Japan, Masakuma Uchiyama, "Gunjin Gaikokan: Chuzai Bukan no Kenkyu" [The Military Diplomat: A Study of the Military Attaché], *Kokusaiho Gaiko Zasshi* [The Journal of International Law and Diplomacy], Vol. 74, No. 6, March 1976; in the West, Alfred Vagts, *The Military Attaché*, Princeton University Press, 1967; and a work by a journalist, Kenji Suzuki, *Zaigai Bukan Monogatari* [The Story of Overseas Military Attachés], Fuyoshobo, 1979. There are, in any case, very few studies.

² Vagts, *The Military Attaché*, p. 9.

³ Shunichi Uno, annot., *Katsura Taro Jiden* [Taro Katsura: An Autobiography], Heibonsha, 1993, p. 88; and Soho Tokutomi, ed., *Koshaku Katsura Taro Den* [Biography of Prince Taro Katsura], Vol. I, Hara Shobo, 1967, pp. 344-345.

In fact, it was at this time that Katsura first proposed the deployment of military attachés to Japanese legations in Western countries. Katsura asserted that if the Japanese Army wished to reform its system of military forces, it was necessary to invite suitable instructors from Europe, but it was even more necessary to dispatch the Army's competent officers to Europe to study the system. Katsura underscored that these officers must be qualified to conduct studies at the government departments in their destination countries, and must be ones with some experience. When Yamagata endorsed his opinion, Katsura advised Yamagata to dispatch Katsura himself. In this manner, Katsura was appointed military attaché to the Japanese legation in Germany on March 30, 1875 (Katsura departed for Germany in June).⁴

At the time of Katsura's departure, Yamagata set forth service requirements for the military attachés to legations. In these requirements, Yamagata appears to have placed particular weight on the relationship between the military attaché and the minister at the legation. Yamagata forbade military attachés from acting as they pleased, requiring that military attachés, who were in a subordinate position to the minister, comply with the rules of the legation and obtain the minister's permission in anything they would do. The requirements stated that the act of observing,⁵ which was the duty of an attaché, might displease the country to which he was dispatched, and thus, it was imperative that the attaché always entrusted the minister to make prudent decisions. In addition, the requirements instructed military attachés to utilize the communication mechanisms between legations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when reporting on information that was obtained through their observations.⁶

Yamagata's service requirements stated that there were no differences in any of the rights entitled to military attachés to legations and other members of legations. Presumably, this meant that the attaché was afforded diplomatic privileges and immunities, and was accorded status as a member of the legation. Military attachés to legations were officers of the Staff Branch and were under the Staff Bureau, which at the time was an external bureau of the Army Ministry (Article 14, "Staff Bureau Ordinance").⁷ The Staff Bureau became the General Staff Office in 1878.

What sort of an individual was Kazukatsu Fukubara who was chosen as Japan's first military attaché to Qing state? Fukubara was born to a family from the Choshu domain. In the final years of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1868), Fukubara had an illustrious career as a member of the *Kiheitai* (irregular militia), and according to one account, traveled to Shanghai with Ryoma Sakamoto to purchase weapons. At the beginning of the Meiji Period (1868-1912), Fukubara spent two and a half years studying in London and was appointed Army colonel after returning to Japan. For the negotiations with Qing state following the Taiwan expedition, Fukubara accompanied ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary Toshimichi Okubo to Beijing as his top aide. Fukubara dedicated himself to supporting Okubo's successful conclusion of the peace negotiations. As described, Fukubara was one of the greatest army brains with relatively significant experience. With a demonstrated ability to carry out diplomatic coordination, Fukubara was suited for dispatch

⁴ Uno, annot., *Katsura Taro Jiden*, pp. 87-88; and Tokutomi, ed., *Koshaku Katsura Taro Den*, pp. 343-346.

⁵ The objects of study by observation included the system of military forces, military law, military geographic information, statistics on military matters, relations with other countries, and weapons.

⁶ Tokutomi, ed., *Koshaku Katsura Taro Den*, pp. 346-347.

⁷ Tsutao Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo* [Japanese Army and Navy's Intelligence Organs and Their Activities], Kindai Bungeisha, 1994, p. 21.

as a military attaché.⁸ On the other hand, Katsura went on to become the Prime Minister of Japan. Like Fukubara, Katsura was born to a family from the Choshu domain. He studied in Berlin in Germany (still Prussia when Katsura arrived) for approximately three years from 1870. After returning to Japan, Katsura served in the Army. Even when considering that he himself established the prerequisites, Katsura had considerable experience and was fluent in German, making him suitable for military attaché.

What did the two individuals do as military attachés? To carry out observations, his primary duty, Fukubara, in taking up his post, immediately studied the situation in Shanghai to Beijing. After arriving in Beijing, he became tired of staying put in the same area and drew up a plan to study not only the whole Qing state, but also its neighboring countries. However, this was not approved. One of the alleged reasons was cost. Accordingly, situational studies of rural areas were entrusted to a dispatched officer, which will be discussed in the next paragraph, and an individual called an “European Pitman,” while Fukubara ended up studying the activities and war preparations of Qing authorities in Beijing.⁹

Along with conducting observations, Fukubara was tasked with the duties of supervising and overseeing dispatched officers to Qing state for the purpose of language study and field study. Specifically, Fukubara: gave guidance to dispatched officers regarding their place of stay and their activities there; always served as an in-between liaison when dispatched officers made requests, inquiries, or deliveries to the Staff Bureau, minister, consul, or others; and requested the central government for funding for dispatched officers.¹⁰

When Fukubara was assigned to Qing state, he was accompanied by an Army officer (first lieutenant), an 11th class supernumerary officer, an assistant to the military paymaster, an assistant to the military paymaster on probation, a non-regular staff, and several servants. The first lieutenant and the assistant to the military paymaster were stationed mainly in Shanghai for liaison purposes. As the lead aide, the first lieutenant served the role of what later became assistant to the military attaché, and supported Fukubara’s studies as well as supervision and oversight of dispatched officers. The assistant to the military paymaster had primary control over accounting, including that of the dispatched officers. Incidentally, Fukubara’s half-year expenses were equal to 2,900 yen (official business: 500 yen; allowances and accommodation: 2,400 yen) (the amount does not include allowances for aides, etc.).¹¹

In January 1876, Fukubara and his aides were ordered to return to Japan after a nine-month stay in Qing state. It is assumed that the Ganghwa Island incident, which occurred in September of the previous year, played a part in this. While Fukubara was a military attaché, it appears that a problem of some sort arose with the legation, over which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a complaint to the Army Ministry. However, the details of this are unknown, including what the problem exactly entailed. Fukubara himself stated that he had not the slightest idea (some speculate that because Fukubara was superior to the acting minister at the time on matters related

⁸ Toa Dobunkai [East Asia Common Culture Society], ed., *Taishi Kaikoroku* [Recollections on China], Vol. II, Hara Shobo, 1968, pp. 179-180.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-184.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181, 183.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181, 183, 187.

to formalities, aides, expenses and the like, trivial sentimental issues arose).¹²

What about Katsura? In order to study military administration, which he considered his primary objective, he requested the German Government via his legation to allow him to conduct studies while acquiring practical experience at the Supervision Department, III Corps, which was Germany's central agency for military administration, as well as at regional organizations, and he did this for about two and a half years. Subsequently, Katsura studied the Army's administration and accounting at the army ministry and general accounting office, in addition to working with army units. At the same time, Katsura went to Berlin University and attended lectures on law, economics, and other subjects. Additionally, under order, Katsura visited Austria to carry out observations and studies.¹³ As such, according to present-day understanding, Katsura's activities were more like those of officers assigned overseas for research purposes than those of military attachés to legations. Moreover, it seems Katsura was afforded the ability to make use of his status as military attaché to the Japanese legation to meet the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck on a public occasion at the chancellor's invitation, as well as make direct inquiries to Chief of the General Staff Helmuth von Moltke regarding military strategy, military administration, and more. In 1878, Katsura accompanied Kaoru Inoue (who later became the Lord of Foreign Affairs and then Foreign Minister), who visited Berlin, and together they toured Austria, France, and Britain. Katsura returned once to Berlin, but at the encouragement of Inoue who was sent back to Japan following the assassination of Toshimichi Okubo, returned to Japan with Inoue (in July).¹⁴

As for the Japanese Navy, it followed in the footsteps of the Army with a time lag of more than five years. Effective November 30, 1880, Masahisa Takada (then sublieutenant) was appointed naval attaché to the legation in Russia, and effective the following day, December 1, Tatewaki Kurooka (then lieutenant commander) was appointed naval attaché to the legation in Britain. As of October, Kurooka had already received an unofficial notice to accompany Prince Arisugawa Takehito on his overseas studies as his assistant. However, the Government was slow to authorize the funding of the overseas studies of the Prince, delaying the decision to December 1. It is inferred that the appointment of Kurooka was delayed accordingly. Kurooka left Japan in January of the following year, 1881.¹⁵

Kurooka came from a distinguished family in the lineage of the Shimazu clan of Satsuma. He was a subordinate of Sumiyoshi Kawamura, a former Lord of the Admiralty and then State

¹² Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkaei [100-Year History Editorial Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs], ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen* [100 Years of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Vol. II, Hara Shobo, 1969, pp. 1427-1428; and Toa Dobunkai, ed., *Taishi Kaikoroku*, Vol. II, pp. 182-184. Based on the text of Fukubara's letter to Yamagata, it is speculated that at the time of Fukubara's departure for his assignment, Yamagata issued service requirements as he did with Katsura (*Ibid.*, p. 182).

¹³ "Zaio Teikoku Koshikan ni Koshikan zuki Bukan Chuzai Gata ni tsuki Joshin no Ken Tsuki Zaidoku Teikoku Koshikan zuki Rikugun Shosa Katsura Taro woshite Tokidoki Okoku e Ofuku seshimete Gunji wo Shisatsu seshimu beki mune Kuntatsu no Ken" [Notification on the Assignment of Military Attaché to the Legation of Imperial Japan to Austria; Army Major Taro Katsura. Military Attaché to the Legation of Imperial Japan to Germany is ordered to make occasional round-trip visits to Austria to observe the military affairs in the country] (June 1875) (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Zaigai Teikoku Taikoshikan zuki Bukan Kankei" [Military Attachés to Embassies/Legations of Imperial Japan], Vol. I, Collection of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan).

¹⁴ Uno, annot., *Katsura Taro Jiden*, pp. 88-94; and Tokutomi, ed., *Koshaku Katsura Taro Den*, pp. 353-356.

¹⁵ Hisanao Kurooka, "Kurooka Tatewaki Den" [Biography of Tatewaki Kurooka], Self-published, May 1994, pp. 88-89.

Councilor. According to some analyses, Kurooka's status was comparable to that of Katsura vis-à-vis Yamagata in the Army.¹⁶ Around this time, under Kawamura, Kurooka was involved in the issue of making the naval command independent of the General Staff Office. It is deemed that in addition to assisting the Prince, Kurooka was dispatched as a naval attaché to the Japanese legation in Britain to find theories that could support independence by studying the British system of naval forces.¹⁷ Furthermore, Kurooka had the tasks of negotiating with Edward Reed, a British naval architect with whom Japan's Navy Ministry had entered into an agreement as an informant, as well as collecting and reporting information on the military affairs and diplomacy of other countries, and reporting the status of and managing the students dispatched by the Navy Ministry.¹⁸ Kurooka himself had studied in Britain for about one year following the Meiji Restoration.

In July 1882, in the wake of the Imo Incident in Joseon, Kurooka received a directive from Kawamura, who had resumed as Lord of the Admiralty, regarding the purchase of warships, artillery, torpedoes, and other assets in Europe.¹⁹ At the time, a merchant cruiser that Chile had commissioned was detained at the Port of Kiel in Germany, and its purchase by Japan had nearly been finalized. This cruiser, however, was not equipped with armaments. Seeing a need to manufacture armaments, Kurooka looked into the plants of Germany's Krupp and Britain's Armstrong, and learned that at least six months were needed to manufacture armaments. Kurooka proposed that Japan cancel the purchase of the cruiser, and this was accepted. It was decided that Japan would instead purchase the protected cruiser that Chile had commissioned Armstrong (Japan's first steel warship *Tsukushi*). Subsequently, Kurooka's proposal was adopted, and the Navy commissioned Armstrong to build two protected cruisers (*Naniwa* and *Takachiho*). In addition, Kurooka was involved in the placement of Japan's first order for auto-cannons.²⁰ In February 1883, Kurooka was dismissed from concurrently serving as naval attaché to the Japanese legation. He left Britain in April accompanying the Prince, and returned to Japan via the United States in June.

(2) Increases in the number of and changes to the countries of assignment

Established in this way, the system of military attachés to Japanese embassies/legations required a few years to become fully operational for both the Army and the Navy. In both cases, after the first attaché left, his post was not immediately succeeded by a replacement. The post was left vacant for as short as one year (the Navy's attaché to Britain) or as long as nearly five and a half years (the Navy's attaché to Russia). In short, the first attaché was a pilot case for the Army and the Navy. The system became fully operational after the second attaché was appointed, around which time attachés began to be dispatched also to other countries. The system evolved in this process.

¹⁶ Noboru Umetani, "Kurooka Tatewaki no Eikoku Ryugaku ni tsuite" [Tatewaki Kurooka's Studies in Britain], *Eigakushi Kenkyu* [History of English Studies], Vol. 4, 1972, p. 64.

¹⁷ Kurooka, "Kurooka Tatewaki Den," pp. 93-94.

¹⁸ Yoshiteru Yamamura, "Meiji Kokka Keiseiki no Zaigai Kokan zuki Bukan Hokoku ni tsuite no Ichikosatsu: Kaigun Gunjin Kurooka Tatewaki no Baai" [A Study of a Naval Attaché's Report in the Formative Period of the Meiji Era: The Case of Tatewaki Kurooka], *Aoyama Gakuin Daigaku Bungakubu Kiyō* [Journal of College of Literature, Aoyama Gakuin University], Vol. 35, January 1994, pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ However, weapon purchases at the time were the primary responsibility of diplomats, including Arinori Mori, Japanese minister to Britain, and Shuzo Aoki, Japanese minister to Germany, and later, military personnel dispatched by the Navy Ministry. Kurooka had a secondary position (*Ibid.*, pp. 9-10).

²⁰ Kurooka, "Kurooka Tatewaki Den," pp. 95-97.

In the Army, in January 1879, when the posts of military attaché to Qing state and Germany were vacant, Kiyokata Yamamoto (then captain), a clerk at the Japanese legation in Russia, was appointed military attaché to the same legation, marking the resumption of the system.²¹ In March of the following year, 1880, before the Navy appointed its first attaché to a legation, the second military attachés to Qing state and Germany were appointed to succeed Fukubara and Katsura. Simultaneously, Masachika Tajima (then major) was appointed military attaché to the Japanese legation in France. In April of the following year, Harujuro Tsuji (then second lieutenant) was appointed military attaché to the Japanese legation in Austria.²² It can be said that with these appointments, the Army's system of military attachés to embassies/legations became nearly fully operational. By the end of the 19th century, the Army had dispatched military attachés to legations also in Joseon (appointed in October 1882), Britain (appointed in March 1894), and Italy (appointed in April 1896). At this point, attachés were assigned to eight countries.

In the case of the Navy, the system resumed with the appointment of the second attaché to Britain in February 1884. Following this, Makoto Saito (then sublieutenant) was appointed naval attaché to the legation in the United States in September 1884. From 1887, the Navy dispatched a series of new attachés to legations—Qing state (appointed in May 1887), Joseon (appointed in November 1887), France (appointed in February 1888), Italy (appointed in February 1889), and Germany (appointed in May 1890). It can be said that by around this time, the Navy's system of attachés to embassies/legations was nearly fully operational. In the meantime, the second naval attaché to Russia was appointed in November 1888, such that the number of countries to which naval attachés were assigned reached eight as of 1890, earlier than the Army.

The number of countries to which military attachés to embassies/legations were assigned continued to increase even in the 20th century. At the same time, however, there began to be cases where the dispatch was terminated, where the dispatch was interrupted temporarily, or where a single attaché concurrently served as the attaché to other countries. The situation of the establishment of new posts and of concurrent posts was as follows.²³

Army: United States (May 1901)

Brazil (June 1906, officially August 1939)

Turkey (February 1907, officially September 1927)

The Netherlands (August 1914)

Switzerland (August 1915)

Sweden (February 1918, at one time concurrently served by the Attaché to the Soviet Union or Finland)

Chile (September 1919)

Greece (June 1920)

Mexico (December 1920, concurrently served as the Attaché to Colombia and Venezuela)

²¹ However, after Yamamoto left, the post of military attaché to Russia remained vacant for nearly ten and a half years until the appointment of his replacement.

²² However, after Tsuji left, the post of military attaché to Austria remained vacant for nearly 14 years until the appointment of his replacement.

²³ Ikuhiko Hata, ed., *Nippon Rikukaigun Sogo Jiten* [Comprehensive Encyclopedia of the Japanese Army and Navy], University of Tokyo Press, 1991, pp. 366-372, 432-435.

from 1939)

Poland (May 1921)

Hungary (February 1923)

Argentina (March 1924)

Latvia (August 1928, concurrently served as the Attaché to Estonia and Lithuania from 1937)

Thailand (December 1929)

Canada (August 1931)

Romania (April 1932, concurrently served by the Attaché to Poland until August 1939)

Manchuria (February 1933, concurrently served by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army)

Iran (September 1933)

Finland (April 1934)

Afghanistan (August 1936, terminated before becoming official)

Spain (January 1938, officially October 1943)

Bulgaria (December 1939)

Yugoslavia (April 1940, concurrently served by the Attaché to Hungary)

Portugal (March 1942)

Burma (August 1943, concurrently served by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Burma Area Army)

The Philippines (October 1943, concurrently served by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the 14th Area Army)

Navy: Austria (February 1908)

Sweden (February 1918)

Chile (June 1921, concurrently served by the Attaché to Argentina during December 1930-May 1942)

Brazil (June 1921, concurrently served by the Attaché to Argentina during November 1929-July 1941)

Argentina (July 1922, concurrently served by the Attaché to Chile until December 1930)

Turkey (December 1923)

Mexico (September 1925)

Canada (September 1932)

Manchuria (February 1933, concurrently served by the Chief of Staff of the Naval Command in Manchuria during April 1933-November 1938)

Thailand (October 1935, officially June 1936)

The Netherlands (July 1936, concurrently served by the Attaché to Germany until June 1938)

Finland (February 1938, concurrently served by the Attaché to the Soviet Union, Germany or Sweden)

Romania (February 1938, at one time concurrently served by the Attaché to Turkey)

Spain (May 1942)

Burma (August 1943, concurrently served by the Attaché to Thailand from April 1945)

Portugal (September 1943)
The Philippines (October 1943)

The following shows the number of military attachés to embassies/legations that was prescribed when revisions were made pursuant to the organizational realignment of the Army and the Navy (the number is not necessarily the same as the actual number).²⁴ Inside the parentheses are the countries to which military attachés were assigned during the same period and any changes that were made. However, it is not an exhaustive list of the changes.

Army: December 1908...8 (Britain, United States, Germany, Austria, Russia, France, Italy, Qing)
August 1920.....10 (New: Switzerland, Poland, and Greece; Ended: Austria)
April 1921.....11 (New: Mexico)
May 1925.....11 (New: Argentina; Resumed: Austria; Ended: Switzerland and Greece)
August 1928.....12 (New: Turkey)
July 193012
May 1931.....12 (New: Canada and Latvia; Ended: Austria and Argentina)
February 1937.....15 (New: Finland, Thailand, and Iran)
April 1937.....16 (Resumed: Austria)
October 194318 (Germany, Soviet Union, France, Italy, China, Turkey, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Spain, Portugal, Manchuria, Thailand, Burma, and the Philippines)

Navy: December 1916....8 (Britain, United States, Germany, Austria²⁵, Russia, France, Italy, China)
December 1922...10 (New: Chile, Brazil, and Argentina; Ended: Austria and Sweden)
May 1931.....10 (New: Mexico; Ended: Turkey)
October 193210 (New: Canada)
October 193310
October 193410
February 1937.....12 (New: Thailand)
April 1938.....17 (New: The Netherlands, Finland, and Romania; Resumed: Turkey)
April 1939.....18 (New: Manchuria)
November 1940...19
May 1941.....20 (Britain, United States, Germany, Soviet Union, France, Italy, China, Turkey, The Netherlands, Finland, Romania, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Manchuria, and Thailand)

The next section examines the reasons for choosing the countries of assignment of military attachés to embassies/legations. Before doing that, however, the prerequisites for their dispatch and assignment are reviewed. In general, they were as follows:

²⁴ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, pp. 48-61, 242-277.

²⁵ At the time, the posts were vacant as Germany and Austria were Japan's adversaries during the First World War.

- diplomatic relations/existence of a potential country of assignment,
- existence of a Japanese embassy or legation,
- budgetary provision of the Army or Navy/Japan's financial capability (state power),
- existence of candidates for the military attaché/adequate human resources,
- the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and
- the consent of the receiving state (country of assignment).

As Japan's state power strengthened and the number of independent countries increased, then the number of potential countries for the dispatch of attachés increased. However, naturally there was not an unlimited budget or supply of human resources. Furthermore, attachés were expected to deliver outcomes that were in line with the objectives of their dispatch as much as possible. Therefore, it was necessary to be selective as to where attachés were assigned. To examine the reasons that the countries of assignment were chosen, this section first considers again the starting point of the system—the opinion of Taro Katsura and the service requirements of Aritomo Yamagata discussed earlier.

Katsura proposed to dispatch attachés to Western countries and Qing state for different purposes. The purpose of dispatching attachés to Western countries was to conduct studies that would contribute to reforming the system of the Japanese Army. In other words, Katsura sought to bring in new knowhow from the West in order to modernize Japan's military forces. It is said that one of the objectives of the Navy's dispatch of Kurooka to Britain was to conduct studies of the military system. On the other hand, the purpose of dispatching attachés to Qing state was to observe Qing state's system of military forces and its actual situation and put this knowledge into practice in the event of a contingency. In other words, Katsura sought to collect information, viewing Qing as a potential adversary in the future.

Yamagata presented that making observations was the duty of the attaché, and required attachés to study and report on the country they were assigned to, notably, its system of military forces, military law, military geographic information, statistics on military matters, relations with other countries, and weapons. Yamagata outlined purposes that integrated Katsura's proposed objectives for dispatching attachés to Western countries and Qing state, with the addition of collecting information on relations with other countries and weapons.

In the end, in the initial stage, the purpose of dispatching military attachés to legations was primarily to acquire new and wide-ranging knowledge of military affairs and to collect information with contingencies in mind. It can be said that these objectives, combined with Japan's economic power at the time (the Army's and Navy's budget) and diplomatic relations, were taken into consideration in selecting the countries of assignment. In the years that followed, in principle, the countries of assignment of the attachés continued to be decided based on these factors.

In terms of the countries of assignment, the First World War (1914-18) became a major turning point for the system of military attachés to Japanese embassies/legations. Until this point, the primary countries of assignment had been Western developed countries—Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Italy, and the United States—and Japan's neighboring countries—Russia, Qing

(China from 1912), and Joseon (Korea from 1897).²⁶ With the exception of Joseon (Korea), all of these countries were considered major countries at the time. Since the First World War, however, the countries of assignment began to be expanded to small and medium countries. The following paragraphs examine these new countries of assignment of attachés in a little more detail.

Many of the newly established destinations of attachés following the First World War were located near Russia (Soviet Union from 1922) or the United States. The countries that corresponded to the former were countries in Eastern, Central, or Northern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, and Finland (many of them gained independence as a result of the First World War or the Russian Revolution that took place during the war), as well as Middle and Near East countries, such as Turkey,²⁷ Iran, and Afghanistan.²⁸ The countries that corresponded to the latter were Central and South American countries, such as Mexico, Chile, Brazil,²⁹ and Argentina, as well as Canada in North America.³⁰

At the time, Japanese military forces perceived Russia (Soviet Union) and the United States as the likely major adversaries, and dispatched military attachés to embassies/legations in countries located in the periphery of both countries to collect information. The Army sent attachés to all of the aforementioned countries surrounding Russia (Soviet Union). They were full-time attachés, aside from the attaché to Romania.³¹ In contrast, the Navy sent attachés to Turkey, Romania, and Finland, with Turkey being the only country where a full-time attaché was assigned in principle. In Romania, the post alternated between a full-time attaché and the attaché to Turkey who concurrently served as attaché. In Finland, the attaché to the Soviet Union, Germany, and Sweden concurrently served as attaché. Needless to say, the Army was far more concerned about Russia (Soviet Union) than the Navy. On the other hand, no differences are observed between the Army and the Navy with respect to their countries of assignment in the periphery of the United States. Although there was a period where both the Army and the Navy had a single attaché concurrently serving as attaché to Chile, Brazil, and Argentina in South America, this period was longer in the

²⁶ Aside from these countries, the Army informally sent military attachés to legations only to Brazil and Turkey.

²⁷ As noted in the previous footnote, the Army sent an attaché to Turkey in the form of an official trip for approximately seven years prior to the First World War. However, it was not until after the First World War that an attaché was formally sent to Turkey.

²⁸ In the countries near Russia (Soviet Union), an anti-Russian resistance movement already existed under the Czarist regime. There were also some countries that had advanced capabilities in espionage targeted at Russia (Soviet Union). Furthermore, these countries on the whole had a favorable view of Japan, which had won the Russo-Japanese War.

²⁹ As noted in footnote 26, although the Army sent an officer attached to the General Staff Office to Brazil for about two and a half years from June 1906, it was after the First World War that an officer began to be stationed continuously. It remained the case, however, that the officer was attached to the General Staff Office until August 1939. In the process of formalizing the dispatch of military attachés to the legation in Brazil, considerations were given to cooperation on anticommunist measures, as well as obtaining critical supplies from Brazil should the United States become an adversary (General Staff Office, "Mokka Shinkochu no Nichi-Haku Bokyō Kyōdo Dosa no Gaiyō oyobi Chunanbei Shokoku Hankyō Kiun no Gaiyō" [Overview of Japan-Brazil Joint Anticommunist Measures in Progress and Overview of Anticommunist Trends in Central and South American Countries] [dated February 15, 1928] in Army Ministry, "Showa 13 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1938], Vol. IV, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense).

³⁰ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, pp. 109, 111, 116-118.

³¹ For a long time, the military attaché to the embassy (legation) in Poland concurrently served as the attaché to Romania. A full-time attaché was assigned to Romania from August 1939, immediately prior to the Second World War.

case of the Navy. While there was certainly a period when there was no military attaché to the three countries in South America (from June 1931 to May 1938), surprisingly there were no major differences between the Army and the Navy with regard to the dispatch of attachés to countries in the periphery of the United States.

The countries of assignment of attachés that were newly established following the First World War reveal Japan's new strategic direction. Namely, this refers to the Navy's dispatch of attachés to Thailand and the Netherlands. Both took place in the mid-1930s and represent the Navy's interest in the South. This was precisely when Japan collaborated on the modernization of the Thai Navy.³² Partly owing to their many years of friendly relations, there were no problems between Japan and Thailand. At this time, however, Japan aimed to participate in oil development in the Dutch East Indies (today's Indonesia), which was an oil producing area and a Dutch colony. The Netherlands was deeply wary of Japan's aims and was not enthusiastic about accepting a naval attaché from Japan. The Japanese attaché's first job upon his arrival was to ease the wariness of the Netherlands.³³

Countries of assignment that take on increasing value during a contingency are neutral states. While they of course include countries that declared permanent neutrality, such as Switzerland and Sweden, they also include non-war participants, such as Spain³⁴ and Portugal during the Second World War. In addition, they include countries with which diplomatic relations became interrupted due to their participation in the war before the war ended, but had been neutral for some time after the war broke out—for example, Argentina and Chile during the Second World War.

In fact, it was during the First World War that Japan first sent attachés to legations in Switzerland and Sweden (only the Army in Switzerland). A few years after the war ended, the dispatch of attachés to both countries came to an end. The dispatch of the military attaché to Sweden resumed following the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, while the dispatch of the naval attaché to Sweden and the military attaché to Switzerland resumed during the Second World War. It was also after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War that attachés were sent to Spain and Portugal (only the Army in Portugal).

As for Argentina and Chile, while they were not new countries of assignment, they are examples of countries that had increased value due to their adoption of a neutral position even after war broke out between Japan and the United States. As stated earlier, in both the Army and the Navy, there was a tendency to have a single attaché concurrently serve as the attaché to embassies/legations in three South American countries, including Brazil. However, during the Second World

³² Japan's Kawasaki Heavy Industries built two coastal defense ships of the Thai Navy and delivered them in 1937.

³³ Shutei Tonaki became the first full-time naval attaché to the Japanese legation in the Netherlands in June 1938 (while he was attaché, he was promoted from lieutenant commander to commander). To dispel the Netherlands' wariness and demonstrate his presence, Tonaki made a production by purchasing and driving around a fancy sports car. It is said that Tonaki's efforts were successful, such that work proceeded smoothly thereafter (Shutei Tonaki, "Kaisen Hantai to Shusen Kowa Kosaku Hiwa" [The Untold Story of the Opposition to the Outbreak of War and the Peace Initiative], Kanei Hokama, ed., *Okinawa Kaigun Monogatari: Kaiyukaiin Kaisoroku* [The Okinawan Story of the Navy: Recollections of the Members of the Naval Friends' Association], Okinawa Kaiyukai [Okinawa Naval Friends' Association], 1985, pp. 2-3).

³⁴ However, between February 3 and March 3, 1945, more than 200 Spanish people died in clashes that occurred in the streets of Manila in the Philippines, causing damages also to the Spanish Consulate. As a result, anti-Japanese sentiment heightened in Spain, and diplomatic relations between Spain and Japan were severed on April 12.

War, especially after summer 1941 when Japan-U.S. tensions heightened significantly, concurrent posts were gradually eliminated, and the functions of the attaché were strengthened by sending a full-time attaché to each country.

As described above, neutral countries are perceived as having a higher value during contingencies. This is because, in general, these countries tend to be able to collect relatively accurate information from both contending sides of the war, swiftly and in large quantities. Furthermore, because participating in a war severs diplomatic relations with countries on the opposing side of the war, embassies and legations in these countries in turn are shut down. The diplomatic corps, including attachés, either withdraws to another country, or is confined within the country. Inevitably, the intelligence activities of the attaché in the opposing country are suspended, or at least the functions of these attachés decrease considerably. Hence, neutral countries in the area are suddenly drawn into the spotlight. In addition, what can be said from a human resources and budget perspective is that if neutral countries are near the opposing country, it is easy to relocate the attachés (or assistants to attachés and others discussed later) to be withdrawn from the opposing country. This eliminates complicated administrative work associated with selecting and dispatching personnel and saves cost and time. The examples of the above neutral countries, in fact, include these cases that were aimed at killing two birds with one stone.

It should be added that the post of attaché to an embassy or legation can be newly established based on the concept of reciprocity, which can be likened to a principle of diplomacy. An example is Austria, where the Japanese Navy decided to station an attaché in February 1908. At the time, Austria was part of the dual empire with Hungary, and was considered a major country. It is known for certain that the capital city of Vienna was one of the diplomatic hubs and a wealth of information flowed into this city. Partially due to these factors, the Army appointed its first attaché to Austria in 1880 as was already noted. The Japanese Navy, however, assigned an attaché to Austria in 1908 only because Japan and Austria had agreed to send naval attachés to each other's countries. It was based on the concept of reciprocity that the Japanese Navy decided to dispatch an attaché to Austria. In other words, the Japanese Navy had no particular need to dispatch and assign an attaché to Austria. It is said that the naval attaché assigned to Austria in fact had limited work on a day-to-day basis, and that one to two hours a day were normally sufficient for completing the work.³⁵

As regards Austria, it was not as though the Army had no motives to send an attaché. Among Army officers, Germany was the most popular country of assignment. Germany was also a popular country for dispatch of attachés. However, the number of attaché posts was naturally limited. One might request to be sent to Germany, but the request could not always be met. In such cases, the next best country of assignment after Germany was considered to be its neighboring country

³⁵ Yoshihiko Nakamura, ed., *Matsuoka Shizuo Taio Nikki* [Shizuo Matsuoka's Diary of His Stay in Europe] (Kindai Nippon Shiryo Sensho 8), Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1982, pp. 19, 59.

Austria, where German was also spoken.³⁶ Ironically, many Army observation missions and Army officials on official trips visited Austria, which is located between Germany and Italy. It is said that the military attaché had to frequently negotiate with Austrian authorities to gain permission to visit military facilities.³⁷

(3) The system's termination

With Japan's defeat in the Second World War, Japan lost diplomatic rights, and simultaneously, its Army and the Navy were disbanded, bringing an end to Japan's system of military attachés. This marked the termination of the entire attaché system.

With regard to the termination of individual assignments of attachés, they were generally the following cases:

- severance of diplomatic relations,
- decreasing need for assigning attaché,
- refusal by the receiving state (country of assignment), and
- extinction of the receiving state.

As a typical example, when a country becomes a party to a war, its diplomatic relations with the countries on the opposing side are severed. In effect, there no longer exist the perquisites for dispatching and assigning attachés, bringing an end to the assignment of attachés. In this case, the attaché will either withdraw to another country, or will be confined in the country he is in, as noted earlier. This was the fate that met the relations between Japan and its opposing countries in the First Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War, and the Second World War. A unique case is the China Incident. Partially because both Japan and China did not recognize the incident as a war under international law, and partially because Wang Ching-wei's government was established in March 1940, Japan continued to station the military attaché and naval attaché to the embassy in China.

Examples of countries to which attachés stopped being assigned due to their decreasing need are Switzerland and Sweden. As explained before, the First World War was the impetus for dispatching and assigning attachés for the first time to the two neutral countries. The underlying reason was that Germany and Austria became Japan's opposing countries, and therefore, diplomatic relations with the countries were severed, and attachés could no longer be stationed. In fact, attachés were also dispatched and assigned to Switzerland and Sweden because, for

³⁶ The reason for establishing the post of military attaché to the legation in Austria was considered to be as follows: "Austria is located between the powerful countries of Europe, and has a relatively strong military force. Therefore, it is vital to study the system of military forces of Austria in view of Japan's current situation." ("Zaigaikoku Koshikan zuki Rikukaigun Bukan Hokyurei Chu Kaisei no Ken" [Partial Revision of the Ordinance on the Salary of Military/Naval Attachés to Legations] [dated May 5, 1896] in Army Ministry, "Meiji 29 Nen 6 Gatsu Ni Dainikki" [The Second Document File, June 1896], Vol. I, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.) Incidentally, past military attachés to Austria include Hanzo Yamanashi, Hanzo Kanaya, Hiroshi Oshima, Yoshio Shinozuka, Tomoyuki Yamashita, Jugo Saigo, and Tadakazu Wakamatsu. Of these individuals, Yamanashi and Oshima were transferred from attaché to Austria to attaché to Germany.

³⁷ Morishige Morioka, *Yosei Zuihitsu* [An Essay on the Remaining Years of My Life], 1937, Self-published, p. 107.

obvious reasons, neutral countries were suited for intelligence activities in wartime, but also as a provisional measure to serve as replacements for the attachés to Germany and Austria. In actuality, after the First World War ended, the dispatch and assignment of attachés to Germany and Austria resumed, and accordingly, the dispatch and assignment of attachés to Switzerland and Sweden was terminated.³⁸

Also in the event where the country of assignment (receiving state) refuses the dispatch and assignment of an attaché, there no longer would exist the prerequisites for the dispatch and assignment of attachés, and the assignment of the attaché would be terminated. This was the case of the termination of the assignment of a military attaché to the legation in Afghanistan in November 1937. In August of the previous year, 1936, Yoshikazu Miyazaki (then major), who was attached to the General Staff Office, was ordered to make an official trip to Afghanistan, and became the military attaché to the legation for a locally limited assignment (discussed later). It is deemed that Miyazaki attempted to form an intelligence network in the border area between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union and between Afghanistan and British India, as well as incite an independence movement. Afghanistan contended that Miyazaki's activities hurt Afghanistan's relations with Britain and the Soviet Union, and requested Japan to replace Miyazaki and have him leave Afghanistan. Miyazaki was labeled a "*persona non grata*" (a person who is not welcome). Initially, Afghanistan was willing to accept a replacement for Miyazaki, and therefore, Japan had chosen a replacement and was preparing for his dispatch. In the end, however, Afghanistan postponed the acceptance of the replacement, contending that problems would re-arise if he succeeds the activities of Miyazaki.³⁹

The extinction of the country of assignment is another case in which the prerequisites for dispatching and assigning attachés would collapse, and the assignment of the attaché would be terminated. The primary examples are Germany's annexation of Austria in March 1938 (*Anschluss*), Poland's partitioning by Germany and the Soviet Union in the beginning of the Second World War in September 1939 (the Government sought asylum in Britain), and the Soviet Union's annexation of three Baltic states (Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania) during the Second World War. Military attachés had been assigned to the respective countries (a single attaché concurrently served as attaché in the three Baltic states). Incidentally, the personnel decisions that were made when these countries became extinct were as follows: Tadakazu Wakamatsu (then lieutenant colonel), who was the attaché to the embassy in Austria, became the attaché to the legation in Hungary which he was concurrently serving; Masao Ueda (then major), who was the attaché to the embassy in Poland, was relocated to Sweden because Romania, where he had concurrently served as attaché until August, right before Poland's partitioning, had just established the post of full-time attaché to the legation; Hiroshi Onouchi (then lieutenant colonel), who concurrently served as attaché to the legations in the three Baltic states, was transferred as the attaché to the legation in Finland; and

³⁸ "Konkai no Senekikan Sueden ni Koshikan zuki Bukan wo Chuzai seshimuru Ken" [Stationing an Attaché to the Legation in Sweden During the War] (dated December 24, 1918) in Army Ministry, "Taisho 7 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, 1918], Vol. I, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense; and "Okyokoku Zaikin Teikoku Koshikan zuki Bukan Fukkyu no Ken" [Restoration of Attaché to the Legation of Imperial Japan to Austria-Hungary] (dated December 9, 1922) in Army Ministry, "Taisho 12 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, 1923], Vol. II, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

³⁹ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, pp. 1431-1433.

Toshio Nishimura (then colonel), who was the attaché to Finland became the full-time attaché to the legation in Sweden which he served concurrently.

2. The Status of Military Attachés

(1) Status under international law

Attachés to embassies/legations were military personnel⁴⁰ as well as diplomats.⁴¹ They had diplomat passports, their names were placed on the diplomatic list, and they were bestowed diplomatic privileges and immunities. Usually, military personnel who were stationed overseas and were granted this status were only attachés to embassies/legations and their assistants.⁴²

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations adopted on April 18, 1961 codified diplomatic privileges and immunities as an international treaty. However, even in the period up to the Second World War that is covered in this article, diplomatic privileges and immunities were established as international customs, albeit with some uncertainties. Needless to say, diplomatic privileges and immunities included personal inviolability, immunity from jurisdiction, exemption from taxation, and inviolability of communication. Therefore, in principle, attachés to embassies/legations and their assistants were not arrested or sued (but may be considered a “*persona non grata*” and requested to exit the country as noted earlier). Furthermore, their bags were not checked when entering or leaving a country.

Attachés to embassies/legations received special treatment from their countries of assignment (receiving states). For example, they were invited to high-level official events as well as large-scale military exercises and reviews; did not require special permission to enter or leave government or military facilities; had opportunities to meet with heads of state; had easy access to senior officials; and were provided with information primarily on military affairs. In addition, assistants received treatment equivalent to attachés. In particular, when the attaché was absent, his assistant would serve as the acting attaché.

Attachés to embassies/legations in the same country formed a group called the “attaché corps.” Attachés to embassies/legations were eligible to participate. The group served as a forum for mutual exchanges among attachés, and furthermore, interactions involving their families. It did not merely deepen friendships; it was also a channel for information exchange and communication, and

⁴⁰ They were not necessarily active military personnel. Examples where reserve personnel became attachés include Katsumi Yukishita (then reserve rear admiral), who served as naval attaché to the legation in Argentina from July 19, 1941 to the end of the war (concurrently served as naval attaché to the legation in Chile until May 5, 1942).

⁴¹ Uchiyama, “Gunjin Gaikokan,” p. 2.

⁴² There were exceptions. Formerly, Japan was requested by the embassies of Britain, the United States, France, and other countries in Japan to place on the diplomatic list “resident attachés engaged in language studies” who were not military/naval attachés to the embassies or their assistants. As there was no reason for the Japanese side to refuse, the resident attachés were placed on the list and were given the same diplomatic privileges and immunities as general diplomats (Letter from Vice Foreign Minister Hanihara to Vice Army Minister Yamanashi, “Chuzai Bukan no Shikaku ni kansuru Ken” [Qualification of Resident Attachés] [dated February 18, 1921] in Army Ministry, “Taisho 10 Nen Dainikki Koshu” [Document File, Series I, Year 1921], Class VI, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense). Around the same time, Belgium indicated that where officers of the Japanese Army would be staying in Belgium for language study purposes, they would be included in the list of legation members if it received a notification from the Japanese Minister (Letter from Temporary Acting Minister Lemaire de Warzee d’Hermalle of Belgium to Japan to Foreign Minister Uchida [dated May 6, 1921] in Army Ministry, “Taisho 10 Nen Dainikki Koshu,” Class VI).

at times, served as an opportunity to foster camaraderie with other attachés who could be expected to provide support during negotiations with authorities in the receiving state.⁴³ Friendships that were developed while individuals were attachés oftentimes helped them later on, which can be said not only for the relations among attachés but also for the relations between attachés and military personnel in the country of assignment.

(2) Status at the embassy/legation

Attachés to embassies/legations were affiliated with their embassies/legations. The heads of embassies/legations were ambassadors/ministers, and attachés were embassy/legation members subordinate to them. However, attachés represented their respective military services⁴⁴ and had high status in the international community. While it varied by country, they were usually ranked second to ambassadors/ministers.

It is generally perceived that the relationship between ambassadors/ministers and attachés to embassies/legations was not a very good one. One of the leading origins of this present-day negative image is presumably the relationship between Hiroshi Oshima (colonel at the time of appointment; promoted to major general in March 1935 and lieutenant general in March 1938), who served as military attaché to the embassy in Germany from March 1934 to October 1938, and Ambassador Shigenori Togo (term: January to October 1938).⁴⁵ As described earlier, this issue started with Kazukatsu Fukubara, the first military attaché to the legation in Qing, and repeatedly came up until the termination of the attaché system.

In regard to the relationship between ambassadors/ministers and attachés, the aforementioned service requirements that Aritomo Yamagata presented to Taro Katsura expressed that an attaché “is under the control of the minister.” Later, this expression was revised to “is under the jurisdiction of the minister,”⁴⁶ “is under the minister,”⁴⁷ among other expressions. The finalized phrase as it appears in “The Service Rules for Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations” enacted in 1910 was “is supervised by the ambassador or minister.”⁴⁸

In the same service requirements, Yamagata noted that the attaché should always inquire the wishes of the minister and respect them, stating that the attaché should obtain the minister’s

⁴³ Uchiyama, “Gunjin Gaikokan,” pp. 2-3.

⁴⁴ This was stated clearly in the Army’s “Taikoshikan zuki Rikugun Bukan Do Hosakan Fukumu Naiki” [The Service Rules for Military Attachés to Embassies/Legations and their Assistants] (Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Iinkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, p. 1423).

⁴⁵ For more information on the relationship between Oshima and Togo, see Nobuo Tajima, “Nachi Jidai no Berurin Chuzai Nippon Taishikan: Hito to Seisaku” [Die Japanische Botschaft in Berlin in national-sozialistischer Zeit], *Seijo Hogaku* [Seijo Law Review], No. 48, 1995, p. 409; Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Iinkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, p. 1438, among other sources.

⁴⁶ Instruction issued by Army Minister Tomonosuke Takashima to Mitsuomi Kamio (then major), who was appointed military attaché to the legation in Qing (dated May 13, 1892), *ibid.*, p. 1414.

⁴⁷ Instruction issued by Navy Minister Gonbei Yamamoto to Makoto Kaburagi (then captain), who was appointed naval attaché to the legation in Britain in a notification addressed to Foreign Minister Jutarō Komura (dated March 2, 1904), *ibid.*, p. 1415.

⁴⁸ “Taikoshikan zuki Kaigun Bukan Fukumu Naiki” [The Service Rules for Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations], February 10, 1910 (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Zaigai Teikoku Taikoshikan zuki Rikukaigun Bukan Fukumu Naiki Seitei Ikken” [Enactment of the Service Rules for Military/Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations of Imperial Japan], Collection of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan).

permission in anything he would do, and that as the act of observing, which was the duty of an attaché, might displease the country to which he was dispatched, it was imperative that the attaché always entrusted the minister to make prudent decisions. This spirit had been passed down through the years, as seen in the text of “The Service Rules for Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations and their Assistants” (enacted in 1916). “The Service Rules” stated that the attaché should, “whenever carrying out tasks related to foreign governments, perform them upon requesting for the judgment of and obtaining the consent of the ambassador/minister” and “whenever attempting to conduct observations, execute them after the ambassador/minister has given consideration to and made a decision in advance regarding the matters, areas, and other aspects pertaining to the observation.”⁴⁹ In addition, the spirit is seen in the text of “The Service Rules for Military Attachés to Embassies/Legations and their Assistants” (revised in 1929), which stated that the attaché “should strive to maintain military and diplomatic peace by referring to the opinion of the ambassador/minister.”⁵⁰

As such, attachés to embassies/legations were always required to work collectively (*wachukyodo*: a term used in the instructions to military attachés to embassies/legations during the Meiji Period) and maintain close communications (a phrase used in the directives to naval attachés to embassies/legations during the Showa Period) with ambassadors/ministers.

At the same time, however, while attachés to embassies/legations were subordinate to the heads of the military command of the Army and the Navy, respectively, and were under the supervision of ambassadors/ministers, attachés did not receive direct orders from the foreign minister. This is evident from text in the notification that the Army and the Navy ministers issued to the foreign minister when attachés to embassies/legations were appointed, such as: the military attaché is under the supervision of the General Staff Office, and the Chief of General Staff will instruct the attaché on work-related matters;⁵¹ and the naval attaché is under the supervision of the Chief of the Naval General Staff, and at times, the said head will instruct the attaché on work-related details.⁵² It is thought that attachés did not receive direct orders from the foreign minister on the basis of the independence of supreme command, pursuant to the Constitution of the Empire of Japan.

A closer look reveals that diplomat Shinichiro Kurino described his understanding of attachés as follows in his public remarks dated March 22, 1910 when he was Ambassador to France:⁵³

In terms of the internal relationship, attachés engage in special tasks under their respective supervisory Army and Navy officers. In other words, in some ways an attaché has to be seen as a type of visiting officer dispatched from other government offices.

⁴⁹ “Taikoshikan zuki Kaigun Bukan Do Hosakan Fukumu Naiki” [The Service Rules for Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations and their Assistants] (August 1, 1916) (*Ibid.*).

⁵⁰ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, p. 1423.

⁵¹ Letter from Army Minister to Foreign Minister (dated May 13, 1892), *ibid.*, p. 1413.

⁵² Letter from Navy Minister Saito to Foreign Minister Komura (dated January 15, 1909), *ibid.*, p. 1415.

⁵³ Letter from Ambassador Kurino to Foreign Minister Komura (dated March 22, 1910) in Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Zaigai Teikoku Taikoshikan zuki Rikukaigun Bukan Fukumu Naiki Seitei Ikken” [Enactment of the Service Rules for Military/Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations of Imperial Japan].

In the same remarks, Kurino described the relationship with attachés as follows:

In reality, I believe there have been instances in the past when it was doubtful that the opinions of an attaché to an embassy were exactly in alignment with the opinions of the embassy.

Koichi Sugimura, who served as Ambassador to Germany, described his understanding of attachés as follows in his written opinion addressed to Foreign Minister Kosai Uchida dated June 20, 1912:⁵⁴

An attaché's duties are not subject to any and all restrictions. Based on his own views, he carries out business that is extremely broad in scope. An attaché is responsible for reporting to the head of the respective military service (Chief of General Staff of the Army and Chief of the Naval General Staff) on military affairs, as well as domestic affairs, foreign policy, financial affairs, and all other matters relating to his country of assignment. Therefore, an attaché also has the freedom to report his opinions on foreign policy, which are at times the exact opposite of the Ambassador's, without notifying the Ambassador.

An attaché's duties, especially his reporting duties, are not subject to any and all restrictions. It is based on his own views that he carries out his business. Moreover, an attaché is able to not only report on political matters without notifying the Ambassador, he is also not obliged to notify the Ambassador whether such a report has been made or not. Thus, not only is his title "to the embassy" inconsistent with the actual situation, it also makes the Ambassador's supervisory role in name only.

Sugimura stated that the content of the attachés' reports to the central authorities of the Army and the Navy covered a broad range of matters not restricted to military affairs, and that this trespassed into the work of diplomats. In a different section of the same written opinion, Sugimura showed concerns that this system could lead to dual diplomacy. It can be understood from the text that Sugimura was particularly enraged about attachés' ability to report on a view completely different from the ambassador's regarding politics and diplomacy, without notifying the ambassador.

In the service requirements Aritomo Yamagata presented to Taro Katsura, which have already been touched upon several times in this article, Yamagata instructed that attachés utilize communication mechanisms between legations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to report information that was obtained through their observations. However, this instruction on reporting is not found in the notice that Lord of the Army Iwao Oyama issued to Yasumasa Fukushima (then captain), who was appointed military attaché to the legation in Qing state eight years later

⁵⁴ Letter from Ambassador Sugimura to Foreign Minister Uchida (dated June 20, 1912), *ibid.*

in June 1883.⁵⁵ It follows that at the very least, attachés were no longer obligated to utilize the communication mechanisms between legations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for reporting to central authorities. Moreover, even Yamagata's service requirements did not stipulate that attachés inform the content of their report to ministers.

Although the above may give the impression that there were always poor relations between attachés and ambassadors/ministers, this is incorrect. The following lists a few cases where attachés and ambassadors/ministers had good relations.

- Nobuzumi Aoki, who served as military attaché to the legation in Qing state on four occasions, supported the ministers by taking advantage of his personal connections with Yuan Shikai and other Qing dignitaries, for which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed its appreciation.⁵⁶
- Chikataka Tamari (then captain), who was naval attaché to the legation in Britain from around the conclusion of the Japan-Britain alliance to the start of the Russo-Japanese War, rendered distinguished service in purchasing two armored cruisers from the Argentinian Navy (*Nisshin* and *Kasuga*). Tamari gained trust by deepening his friendship with leading figures in the British Navy, which greatly benefited Ambassador Tadasu Hayashi.⁵⁷
- The aforementioned Shinichiro Kurino appears to have had a good relationship with Atsushi Murata (then colonel), who was a military attaché when Kurino was minister to Russia, and requested that Murata remain in his post.⁵⁸
- Eiichi Tatsumi, who served as military attaché to the embassy in Britain twice from the late 1930s to the early 1940s, developed a trusting relationship lasting into the postwar years with Shigeru Yoshida, who was ambassador when Tatsumi was first appointed attaché.⁵⁹
- When war broke out between Japan and the United States, Saburo Isoda (then major general), who was a military attaché to the embassy in the United States, and Ichiro Yokoyama (commander at the time of appointment; promoted to captain in November 1941), who was a naval attaché to the embassy in the United States, provided significant support to Ambassador Kichisaburo Nomura in the process of the Japan-U.S. negotiations,

⁵⁵ Letter from Lord of the Army Oyama to Grand Minister Sanjo, "Fukushima Hohei Taii Kokuyu no Gi Joshin" [Official Notice on Infantry Captain Fukushima] (dated June 4, 1883) in Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Kakkoku Chuzai Teikoku Koshikan zuki Bukan Ninmen Zakken Shina no Bu" [Miscellaneous Matters Relating to Appointment and Dismissal of Attachés to Legations of Imperial Japan in Various Countries: Part of China], Collection of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

⁵⁶ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, pp. 1428-1429; and Letter from Foreign Minister Komura to Army Minister Terauchi, "Zaishin Koshikan zuki Bukan Aoki Shosho ni kansuru Ken" [Regarding Major General Aoki, Attaché to the Legation in Qing] (dated September 13, 1909) in Army Ministry, "Meiji 42 Nen Ji 7 Gatsu Shi 9 Gatsu Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, July to September 1909], Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

⁵⁷ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, p. 1430.

⁵⁸ Letter from Minister Kurino to Foreign Minister Komura (dated March 22, 1902) in General Staff Office, "Meiji 35 Nen Ji 1 Gatsu Shi 4 Gatsu Himitsu Nikki" [Secret Document File, January to April 1902], Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

⁵⁹ Eiichi Tatsumi, "Taisen Zenya no Eikoku Chuzai Bukan: Yoshida-san no Omoide" [Attaché to Britain the Night Before the Second World War: Recollections of Mr. Yoshida], "Dodai Kurabu Koenkai" Henshu Inkai, ed., *Showa Gunji Hiwa: Dodai Kurabu Koenshu* [Untold Military Stories in the Showa Period: Collection of Lectures of the Dodai Club], Vol. I, Dodai Keizai Konwakai, 1987, pp. 87-102.

partially owing to the fact that Nomura was a military personnel (in the reserve).⁶⁰

(3) Status within military forces

As already noted, as of the appointment of Kazukatsu Fukubara and Taro Katsura in 1875, military attachés to legations were under the jurisdiction of the Staff Bureau, which was an external bureau of the Army Ministry, and were subordinate to the head of the Staff Bureau (Article 14, “Staff Bureau Ordinance”). The Staff Bureau was abolished in 1878, and the General Staff Office was newly established. The General Staff Office Ordinance at the time contained no provisions concerning military attachés to legations. The revised Ordinance of October 3, 1893 set forth that the Chief of General Staff would preside over military attachés to legations (Article 4). Subsequently, pursuant to the revisions of the Ordinance on December 18, 1908 following the Russo-Japanese War, intelligence operations came under the control of the Second Department of the General Staff Office. In turn, military attachés to embassies/legations came under the responsibility of this department.⁶¹

As for the Navy, when the Navy Staff Office Ordinance was revised on October 18, 1890, it was decided that the Office would have jurisdiction over naval attachés to legations. When the Department was abolished on May 19, 1893 and *Kaigun Gunreibu* (Naval General Staff) was newly established, naval attachés to legations came under the jurisdiction of the *Kaigun Gunreibucho* (Chief of the Naval General Staff) (Article 9, “Naval General Staff Ordinance”). When *Kaigun Gunreibu* conducted an organizational restructuring and established divisions under groups on December 1, 1916 during the First World War, intelligence affairs became the responsibility of the Third Group, and naval attachés to embassies/legations came under the control of this group. On September 26, 1933, *Kaigun Gunreibu* was renamed *Gunreibu* (Naval General Staff) (*Kaigun Gunreibucho* was also renamed *Gunreibusochō* [President of the Naval General Staff]). Simultaneously, Group was renamed Department. Naval attachés to embassies/legations remained under the control of the Third Department.⁶²

Military personnel who were appointed attachés to embassies/legations were occasionally company officers in the early days of the system, but later on, as a rule, were required to be field officers in the case of the Army (lieutenant general and major general as necessary) and rear admirals and field officers in the case of the Navy. Attachés to embassies were generals and field officers, whereas attachés to legations were field officers. However, if the post of attaché to an embassy or a legation was newly created or was resumed, the post might not yet have been an official one, in which case a company officer was sometimes dispatched as an attaché to the General Staff Office or in the form of an official trip. In any case, most military personnel who were appointed attachés to embassies/legations were in reality field officers, and within the entire spectrum of officers, were mid-level ranking officers.

Attachés to embassies/legations did not by any means have significant influence within the military, in the Army or the Navy. The reasons may have included the following:

⁶⁰ Ichiro Yokoyama, *Umi e Kaeru: Yokoyama Ichiro Kaigun Shosho Kaisoroku* [Returning to the Sea: Memoirs of Rear Admiral Ichiro Yokoyama], Hara Shobo, 1980, Chapter 2.

⁶¹ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, pp. 21, 37, 48.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 235, 240-242, 250.

- most attachés to embassies/legations were mid-level field officers,
- information tended to be disregarded,
- excessive suspicions about non-ally foreign countries oftentimes arose, and
- officers with overseas posts, not limited to attachés to embassies/legations, were viewed in a negative light—for example, they were seen as acting authoritatively, not studying studiously, and having leisurely posts.

In this regard as well, Hiroshi Oshima was an exception. The reasons Oshima was able to exert influence on the Army's central authorities as an attaché to the embassy in Germany may have included the following:

- pro-German factions were mainstream in the Army,
- Germany at the time had enormous momentum under Adolf Hitler's regime,
- amid Japan's increasing isolation within the international community, a powerful partner other than Germany could not be identified,
- it was believed that Oshima had earned the trust of German dignitaries, including Hitler and Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop,
- Oshima was receiving high-level information from Germany,
- the information Oshima sent was favorable to the Army's central authorities, and
- Oshima was a highly-ranked officer—colonel at the time of appointment, promoted to major general in March 1935 and to lieutenant general in March 1938.

In contrast to Oshima, central authorities did not take notice of, or were infuriated by the information sent in by other military attachés to embassies/legations—for example, Eiichi Tatsumi (Britain) and Makoto Onodera (Latvia and Sweden)—regardless of how impartial or accurate the information was.⁶³

In the case of the Navy, although it would seem appropriate that the naval attachés to the embassies in Britain and the United States exerted influence within the Navy, no such evidence is found in particular.

3. The Arrangements of the “Office of Military Attaché”

(1) Office room

Attachés to embassies/legations were assigned to the location of their embassies and legations. This principle was outlined in the instruction that Navy Minister Makoto Saito issued to Tokutaro Hiraga (then commander), who was appointed naval attaché to the embassy in the United States in January 1909, entitled “Beikoku Chusatsu Chu no Ken” [Assignment in the United States] (dated January 25, 1909).⁶⁴ It is unclear whether similar instructions were given prior to the said instruction or at the Army, as far as the author is aware. However, in principle, attachés to embassies/legations, both before 1909 and afterwards, were assigned to the location of their embassy or legation, which was usually in the capital city of their country of assignment.

⁶³ Uchiyama, “Gunjin Gaikokan,” footnote 4, p. 5.

⁶⁴ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, p. 1416.

This is not to say there were no exceptions. For example, Yoshiji Umezu (then major), who served as military attaché to the legation in Switzerland following the First World War, “lived in a house in a town some distance away from the legation and used part of this house as the attaché’s official office.”⁶⁵ Kiyotomi Okamoto (then lieutenant general), who served as military attaché also to the legation in Switzerland at the end of the Second World War, had an office in the capital city of Bern, in the same city as the legation, but lived in Zurich, the information hub in Switzerland.⁶⁶ Furthermore, a number of military and naval attachés to the legation in Qing state were stationed not in Beijing, the capital city and the location of the legation, but in Tianjin.

Incidentally, there were cases where officers could not go to their places of assignment, despite being appointed attachés to embassies/legations. Representative examples are the cases of the military and naval attachés to the embassy in Russia during the Russian Revolution (e.g., Toshiro Obata [then major] from the Army and Mitsumasa Yonai [then captain] from the Navy). After the revolution broke out, diplomats stationed in Moscow escaped to places outside of Russia, and attachés went with them.⁶⁷ It was in April 1925, after the signing of the Convention Embodying Basic Rules of the Relations between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, that Russia’s successor state, the Soviet Union, and Japan reached agreement on mutual dispatches of military and naval attachés to embassies.⁶⁸ In the meantime, several generations of military and naval attachés, including Yonai, waited in Germany and Poland for the opportunity to enter the Soviet Union.

Attachés to embassies/legations worked at the premises of their embassies/legations, or rented space that was not part of their embassies/legations (e.g., a house, an apartment, a hotel room) (some were properties owned by Japan) and set up independent offices. In the case of Japan’s military attachés in the pre-war period, the latter was more common. When the Army and the Navy respectively dispatched an attaché to the same country, the military and naval attachés had separate offices in almost all cases. The reasons included the mutual non-intervention policy, the mutual avoidance policy, and the secrecy policy among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Army, and the Navy. The fact that the embassy/legation building itself was not very large could have been another reason. In 1925, as already noted, it became possible for Japan to dispatch military and naval attachés to the embassy in the Soviet Union. Partially because this embassy was a provisional office, temporary acting ambassador Naotake Sato considered it “impossible due to

⁶⁵ Hakaru Yano, “Suisu Chuzai no Umezu Bukan no Henrin” [A Glimpse of Attaché Umezu in Switzerland], Yoshio Joho, *Saigo no Sanbosochō Umezu Yoshiji* [The Last Chief of General Staff: Yoshiji Umezu], Fuyoshobō, 1976, p. 132.

⁶⁶ “Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (6)” [The Second World War and Attachés (6)], *Kaiko*, March 1979, p. 12.

⁶⁷ “Mosukuwa Chuzai Bukan Bengikyō Gata no Ken” [Provision of Support to Attachés in Moscow] (dated February 26, 1918) in Army Ministry, “Taishō 8 Nen 6 Gatsu Ouke Dainikki” [File of Documents from Europe, June 1919], Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

⁶⁸ Letter from Vice Foreign Minister Debuchi to Vice Army Minister Tsuno, “Chūro Teikoku Taishikan zuki Bukan Haken ni kansuru Ken” [Regarding Dispatch of Attachés to Embassy of Imperial Japan to Russia] (dated April 14, 1925) in Army Ministry, “Taishō 14 Nen Mitsu Dainikki” [Secret Document File, 1925], Vol. IV, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

extreme lack of space” for attachés to set up offices at the embassy.⁶⁹ Yuitsu Tsuchihashi (then colonel), who served as military attaché to the embassy in France from August 1937 to May 1939, personally believed that embassies/legations and the offices of military and naval attachés should be located at the same place (in around 1927, when Tsuchihashi was with the Military Division, Bureau of Military Affairs, Army Ministry, he heard that a new Japanese embassy to the United States would be built and requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to also prepare offices for the military and naval attachés at the new embassy. However, his request was refused.). He recollects, “The embassy in Paris is small, and there is no room at all to accommodate military and naval attachés.”⁷⁰

When attachés to embassies/legations established independent offices from embassies/legations, it was common for them to live on the same property as their offices. If it was a house, it served as both office and residence. If it was an apartment or other type of property and a single room was not sufficiently spacious, the room next to the office was also rented out to serve as the living quarters. Once a property was utilized as an office of a military or naval attaché, it tended to be utilized continuously by his successors through the generations.

As regards examples where attachés to embassies/legations had offices separate from their embassies/legations but still ended up “cohabitating” at embassies/legations include the case of the military and naval attachés to the embassy in the United States shortly before Japan and the United States went into war. It was noted earlier that attachés to embassies/legations enjoyed diplomatic privileges and immunities. At this time, however, it was unclear whether offices of attachés that were located outside of embassies/legations were accorded inviolability privileges. It was determined that strictly speaking, these privileges were granted only to the ambassador’s office. As a result, military attaché Isoda and naval attaché Yokoyama closed their respective offices and decided to move to the embassy, and the embassy accepted their decisions.⁷¹

This article earlier gave the example of an army attaché in Switzerland whose residence was located in a different place from his legation. However, there was also the opposite example. Shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War, Sadao Akamatsu (then lieutenant colonel)⁷² received an order to resume the office of the military attaché to the legation in Switzerland. Upon receiving this order, Akamatsu rented a room on the second floor of the legation to utilize as an office. He explains the reason for the “cohabitation” as follows: “I was all too aware that the three arms of the Army, Navy, and Foreign Affairs, situated in foreign land, had not been able

⁶⁹ Letter from Temporary Acting Ambassador Sato to Foreign Minister Shidehara (dated April 16, 1925) in Army Ministry, “Taisho 14 Nen Mits Dainikki,” Vol. IV. Kazuo Mike (then colonel), the first Japanese military attaché to the Soviet Union, and Kenichi Ikenaka (then commander), the first Japanese naval attaché, looked for property that was detached from the embassy and “cohabitated.” (Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, p. 294).

⁷⁰ Yuitsu Tsuchihashi, *Gunpuku Seikatsu Yonjunen no Omoide* [Recollections of Forty Years in Uniform], Keiso Shuppan Service Center, 1985, pp. 321-322.

⁷¹ Yokoyama, *Umi e Kaeru*, pp. 121-122.

⁷² Akamatsu was an assistant to an attaché, on locally limited assignment. The individual who was appointed attaché was Satoshi Yamamoto (then colonel), who was stationed in Germany. Yamamoto was also on a locally limited assignment (“Zaio Bukan wo Genchi Kagiri no Koshikan zuki Bukan narabini Hosakan to nasu no Ken” [Appointment of Attachés in Europe as Attaché to Legation and His Assistant on Locally Limited Assignments] [dated September 5, 1939] in Army Ministry, “Showa 14 Nen Mits Dainikki” [Secret Document File, Year 1939], Vol. VI, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense).

to take concerted actions and had become a laughing-stock of foreign countries. Especially in preparing for war, there was not a second to spare. It was a huge loss for Japan that the three arms were working separately under these circumstances.” Akamatsu recalls that when he first arrived in Bern, the legation turned down his cohabitation request, saying that the notification from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not yet arrived. The notification eventually arrived, and the legation gave its approval. Additionally, he notes that the rent was lowered as Akamatsu was an acquaintance of minister Eiji Amo. Subsequently, the Navy also sent an engineering officer to Switzerland and stipulated that he had the office next to Akamatsu’s office at the legation.⁷³

In terms of accounting, attachés to embassies/legations were independent of embassies and legations. The salaries and expenses of attachés were covered by the budgets of the Army and the Navy. The same was true for assistants and others. Attachés to embassies/legations received a service allowance (extra allowance) in addition to their basic salary. For their necessary expenses, while the situation varied depending on the times, attachés received allowances for office rent (housing rent), communication and transportation expenses, and vehicle maintenance fees if attachés had a vehicle (formerly horse breeder fees). When they applied to central authorities and their applications were approved, attachés received allowances for book and magazine purchases and business trip expenses. Furthermore, they were granted secret funds (reserve funds) for expenses needed for entertainment, information gathering, and other purposes.

(2) Staff

In a single country to which attachés to embassies/legations were assigned, there was either one attaché from the Army and the Navy, respectively (total: two people), or one military or one naval attaché. The size of his staff depended on the importance of his country of assignment. Multiple staff might be assigned under the attaché, or only the attaché might be assigned.

In the case of the former, there were often assistants to the attaché who enjoyed diplomatic privileges and immunities. The pioneer was Nobuyoshi Furukawa (then first lieutenant), who was the head aide accompanying Kazukatsu Fukubara, the first military attaché to Qing state, albeit in an informal manner.⁷⁴ It is believed that at first, following Western examples, officers dispatched overseas who had the duty of supporting the work of the attaché, combined with his original duties of military research and language studies, conventionally came to be called “assistants.” Initially, the assistant was not an officially prescribed post. At the Army, the assistant became an officially prescribed post when the General Staff Office Ordinance was revised on December 18, 1908.⁷⁵ At the Navy, as far as the author is aware, while historical materials could not be found to ascertain with certainty, it is speculated that the assistant became an officially prescribed post when “The Service Rules for Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations and their Assistants” were enacted on August 1, 1916, when the assistant’s service allowance was established in 1919,⁷⁶ or at the latest by the revision of “The Rules on the Naval General Staff’s Work, Organization, and Quota” on

⁷³ Sadao Akamatsu, *Tojo Hishokan Kimitsu Nisshi* [The Secret Diary of Secretary to Tojo], Bungei Shunju, 1985, pp. 283-284.

⁷⁴ Toa Dobunkai, ed., *Taishi Kaikoroku*, Vol. II, p. 180.

⁷⁵ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, p. 48.

⁷⁶ Kaigun Rekishi Hozonkai, *Nippon Kaigunshi Dai 6 Kan Bumon Shoshi (Ge)* [Japanese Naval History Vol. VI: A Short History (II)], Dai-ichi Hoki Shuppan, 1995, p. 58.

December 1, 1922.⁷⁷

The countries of assignment where the assistant first became an officially prescribed post were, for the Army—Britain, Germany, Austria, Russia, and France. For the Navy, while it is open to speculation, the countries were Britain and Russia if it was when “The Service Rules for Naval Attachés to Embassies/Legations and their Assistants” were enacted on August 1, 1916, Britain if it was when the assistant’s service allowance was established in 1919, and Britain, the United States, Germany, and China if it was when “The Rules on the Naval General Staff’s Work, Organization, and Quota” were revised on December 1, 1922. Subsequently, the Army established officially prescribed assistant posts in the United States and China (1920; terminated Austria) and Poland (1933), and the Navy in the Soviet Union (1931).⁷⁸

Similar to attachés, assistants to military and naval attachés to embassies/legations were subordinate to the Chief of General Staff and the President of the Naval General Staff (renamed in 1933 from Chief of the Naval General Staff), who headed the military commands of the Army and the Navy, respectively, and were supervised by ambassadors/ministers. At the same time, assistants received supervision, orders, and directions from attachés.⁷⁹ In a nutshell, the duties of assistants included, as previously mentioned, supporting the work of attachés, collecting information, and negotiating and coordinating with the military authorities of the country of assignment. Assistants served as acting attachés when attachés were absent.⁸⁰ It should be noted that it was the assistants’ role to create codes and translate documents.⁸¹ While it likely varied by the country of assignment, Haruki Isayama (then captain), for example, who served as assistant to the attaché to the embassy in France from July 1927 to January 1933, recalls that a majority of his work as assistant was entertaining visitors from Japan.⁸² Furthermore, Yoshio Nakano (then major), who served as assistant to the military attaché to the embassy in Britain from December 1938 to June 1941, accompanied attaché Ichiro Suganami (then lieutenant colonel) to social events on behalf of his spouse. Suganami took up the post without his family.⁸³

⁷⁷ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, p. 244.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 53, 247.

⁷⁹ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Inkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, pp. 1421-1423.

⁸⁰ Examples in which military/naval attachés to embassies/legations were away from their places of assignment for some length of time include cases where the military attaché to the embassy in Britain was assigned to Geneva or elsewhere as an Army representative to the League of Nations or as a personnel accompanying the delegate to the Naval Conference (Hitoshi Imamura, *Zoku: Ichigunjin Rokujuunen no Aikan* [Sixty Years of Joys and Sorrows of a Military Personnel: II], Fuyoshobo, 1971, p. 42; and Eiichi Tatsumi, “Shogun wa Kataru (Sono 1)” [The Story of the General: Part 1], *Kaiko*, December 1982, p. 7). In addition, in China, when Chiang Kai-shek established a government in Nanjing, the military/naval attachés to the legation who were stationed in Beijing relocated to Shanghai. During that time, their assistants remained in Beijing (Beiping) and performed work equivalent to that of attachés (“Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (2)” [The Second World War and Attachés (2)], *Kaiko*, November 1978, p. 18; and Teiichi Suzuki, “Shogun wa Kataru” [The Story of the General], *Kaiko*, February 1982, p. 25).

⁸¹ Imamura, *Zoku: Ichigunjin Rokujuunen no Aikan*, pp. 39, 46; and “Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (2),” p. 13. If there were no assistants, as a matter of course attachés did this work themselves (for example, Inoue Shigeyoshi Denki Kankokai, *Inoue Shigeyoshi* [Shigeyoshi Inoue], Self-published, 1982, p. 109). However, it appears that especially in the Army, if the attaché was accompanied by his spouse, it was customary for the spouse to help out with this work (for example, Yuriko Onodera, *Barutokai no Hotori nite: Bukan no Tsuma no Daitoa Senso* [At the Banks of the Baltic Sea: The Great East Asia War of an Attaché’s Wife], Asahi Bunko, The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1992 [originally published by Kyodo News in 1985], pp. 41, 55-56, 136).

⁸² Haruki Isayama, “Shogun wa Kataru (Sono 1)” [The Story of the General: Part 1], *Kaiko*, July 1982, p. 31.

⁸³ Yoshio Nakano, “Senpai wa Kataru (2)” [The Story of Senior Officers (2)], *Kaiko*, November 1988, p. 9.

Initially, similar to attachés, the number of assistants was one per country of assignment, for both the Army and the Navy. Later, the number increased to two to three people, depending on the importance of the country of assignment. The Navy was quicker to increase the number of assistants. By the final years of the First World War, the Navy had one to two assistants to the naval attaché to the embassy in Britain. From the early 1920s, it had two to three assistants to the naval attaché to the embassy in the United States. One of the assistants in the United States concurrently served as air resident officer. This system of air resident officer concurrently serving as assistant was also adopted in Germany in 1935, in order to appoint a supernumerary officer as an assistant by name on a locally limited assignment. As a result, the number of assistants to the naval attaché to the embassy in Germany became two to three people. By the Second World War, the quota for assistants in the United States, Britain, and China increased by one person, respectively.⁸⁴

Beginning in 1921, the Army, too, had two assistants to the military attaché to the embassy in the United States. In 1937, it had two assistants to the military attaché to the embassy in the Soviet Union.⁸⁵ Also in 1937, the Army had assistants to military attachés to embassies concurrently serve as air resident officers (resident officers dispatched overseas by the Aviation Bureau) in Germany, France, Britain, and the United States, as a locally limited assignment measure for the purpose of assigning a supernumerary officer.⁸⁶ This all started with the acceptance of the written opinion submitted by Hiroshi Oshima, military attaché to the embassy in Germany, which referred to the Navy's system that was implemented beforehand.⁸⁷ In addition, this measure was taken for engineering resident officer (resident officer dispatched overseas by the Engineering Bureau). As regards the assistant in Germany, measures were taken in June 1937 to have Arimitsu Yamagata (then captain), who was an officer dispatched to Germany, "support the work of the attaché to the embassy in Germany for the time being."⁸⁸ This position became an officially prescribed assistant post by October 1943 at the latest.⁸⁹

As already noted, the number of assistants was increased for the following reasons: assistants enjoyed diplomatic privileges and immunities; and assistants received special treatment from their countries of assignment—for instance, assistants were invited to high-level official events and large-scale military exercises and reviews, and did not require special permission to enter or leave government or military facilities. Air resident officers who served as assistants were able to enter

⁸⁴ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, pp. 252, 271, 275.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 56.

⁸⁶ "Koku Kankei no Gaikoku Chuzaikan wo shite Tai(Ko)shikan zuki Bukan Hosakan wo Kenmu seshimuru Ken" [Having Aviation-related Resident Officers Concurrently Serve as Assistants to Attachés to Embassies (Legations)] (dated March 20, 1937) in Army Ministry, "Showa 12 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1937], Vol. I, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense. Subsequently, a similar measure was also taken in Italy.

⁸⁷ Letter from Military Attaché to the Embassy in Germany Oshima to Prince Kotohito, Chief of the General Staff, "Koku Sennin no Hosakan Zoka ni kansuru Ken Iken Gushin" [Written Opinion Concerning Increasing the Number of Assistants in Charge of Aviation Affairs] (dated March 27, 1936) in Army Ministry, "Showa 11 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1936], Vol. VI, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

⁸⁸ Letter from Vice Chief of Staff Imai to Vice Minister of Army Umezu, "Chuzaiin wo Bukan no Hosa Gyomu ni Fukuseshimuru Ken Shokai" [Inquiry Related to Having a Dispatched Officer Perform Work to Support the Attaché] (June 1, 1937) in Army Ministry, "Showa 12 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1937], Vol. IV, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

⁸⁹ Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, p. 61.

and leave the Air Force Ministry for negotiations and coordination, and were invited to Air Force exercises. Especially as Japan did not have an air force, there was great significance to having such assistants for both the Army and the Navy.⁹⁰

When a single attaché concurrently served as attaché to the embassy or legation of multiple countries, an assistant was occasionally assigned to a country where this attaché was not based (locally limited assignment) to perform any work that was short-handed. For example, when Makoto Onodera concurrently served as military attaché to the legations in the three Baltic countries, Takeji Shimanuki (then captain) was ordered to go to Estonia, where he engaged in such work as liaising with the military authorities in the country (February to September 1938).⁹¹ Shutei Tonaki (during appointment, promoted from lieutenant commander to commander) was stationed in the Netherlands in the form of an official trip from March 1937 and became naval attaché to the legation in the Netherlands in June 1938, which he served until May 3, 1940, shortly before Germany's invasion of Western Europe. Underlying this assignment was a request for an assistant to be stationed in the Netherlands, which was made by Hideo Kojima (then commander), naval attaché to the embassy in Germany who concurrently served as naval attaché to the Netherlands.⁹²

As already noted, technical resident officers who later concurrently served as assistants to attachés to embassies/legations, including the engineering resident officer and air resident officer, were also referred to by titles such as “arms manufacturing supervisor” in the case of the Army and “arms manufacturing supervisor” and “shipbuilding supervisor” (resident officer dispatched overseas by the Technical Department) in the case of the Navy. Under the head of the bureau or department from which they were dispatched, technical resident officers had their own offices separate from those of attachés to embassies/legations. Their duties included collecting and reporting on technical information concerning the development of new equipment, such as new weapons, and conducting quality inspections when purchasing weapons.⁹³ Attachés to embassies/legations began to manage the relations between themselves and these technical attachés from 1919 in the Navy and from 1925 in the Army. (Later, military attaché also had the title of “senior resident officer,” and naval attaché the title of “lead supervisor.”) In the Army, as a rule, it was specified that the offices of technical resident officers be established jointly with the offices of attachés. An exception was resident officers in the United States, where both the Army and the

⁹⁰ Letter from Military Attaché to the Embassy in Germany Oshima to Prince Kotohito, Chief of the General Staff, “Koku Sennin no Hosakan Zoka ni kansuru Ken Iken Gushin” [Written Opinion Concerning Increasing the Number of Assistants in Charge of Aviation Affairs].”

⁹¹ “Zaigai Chuzai Bukan wo Genchikagiri no Hosakan to nasu no Ken” [Assigning a Resident Attaché as Assistant on a Locally Limited Assignment] (dated February 16, 1938) in Army Ministry, “Showa 13 Nen Mitsu Dainikki” [Secret Document File, Year 1938], Vol. IV, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

⁹² Kazushige Todaka, ed., “*Shogen Kiroku*” *Kaigun Hanseikai* [“Record of Testimonies” Committee for Review of Past Naval Activities], Vol. III, PHP Institute, 2012, p. 274.

⁹³ In addition, military/naval attachés often concurrently served as arms manufacturing supervisor or the like. For example, Hiroharu Kato (while he was attaché, promoted from junior captain to captain), who served as naval attaché to the embassy in Britain from May 1909 to September 1911, was ordered to concurrently serve as arms manufacturing supervisor at the time of his appointment. Furthermore, on June 8, 1909 (at this time, Kato had not yet departed), Kato was ordered to execute the tasks of the supervising director of shipbuilding and arms manufacturing while serving as arms manufacturing supervisor (Kato Hiroharu Taisho Denki Hensankai, *Kato Hiroharu Taisho Den* [The Biography of Admiral Hiroharu Kato], Kato Hiroharu Taisho Denki Hensankai, 1941, p. 543).

Navy had offices in New York. Furthermore, in the Navy, a special officer other than the attaché was appointed to the lead supervisor to the United States.⁹⁴

If there was no assistant, sometimes a dispatched officer supported the work of the attaché, as was done before the assistant system was established. The duties of dispatched officers were conducting military research and language studies. However, when attachés were busy, these officers fulfilled the roles of assistants in addition to their own duties, partially for the benefit of their own futures. Even when there were assistants, if assistants were busy and could not perform all of their work, dispatched officers supported assistants.⁹⁵ This was usually possible if the attaché issued an order to this effect to the officer. In some cases, however, central authorities issued orders. These officers were not granted diplomatic privileges and immunities, and normally did not receive any special treatment from the countries of assignment as did attachés and assistants. Accordingly, it was difficult for dispatched officers to fulfill important tasks, and they were often entrusted to entertain visitors from Japan, among other tasks.⁹⁶

Aside from these posts, telegram and communication operators were assigned under attachés to carry out telegram work, wiretapping, among other tasks in such countries as the United States, the Soviet Union, and Germany. At times, temporary measures were taken to assign personnel to support attachés under such titles as clerk, secretary to attaché, and office assistant. Japanese civilians living in the countries of assignment were occasionally employed as non-regular staff or employees. The pioneer non-regular staff was a commoner named Kansuke Okamoto who worked under Fukubara.⁹⁷ It was presumably during the Second World War that this system of non-regular staff came into most use. Due to the outbreak of the war, many trading company employees and bankers who were stationed overseas were unable to return to Japan. Thus, attachés stationed in allies or neutral countries employed these trading company employees and bankers as non-regular staff to collect information and carry out administrative work. Their salaries were paid by their companies.⁹⁸

As necessary, most attachés to embassies/legations employed local residents (some of them Japanese nationals living in the country) as private secretaries, clerks, typists, vehicle drivers (formerly coachmen), cooks, housekeepers, maids, servers, porters, and female domestic

⁹⁴ Gaimusho Hyakunenshi Hensan Iinkai, ed., *Gaimusho no Hyakunen*, Vol. II, p. 1422; and Ariga, *Nippon Rikukaigun no Joho Kiko to Sono Katsudo*, pp. 133-137, 302-306.

⁹⁵ “Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (1)” [The Second World War and Attachés (1)], *Kaiko*, October 1978, p. 7.

⁹⁶ According to Yuitsu Tsuchihashi, at one time he used to show around the Palace of Versailles to visitors from Japan at a pace of about once every two days when he was a dispatched officer in France (Tsuchihashi, *Gunpuku Seikatsu Yonjunen no Omoide*, p. 119).

⁹⁷ Toa Dobunkai, ed., *Taishi Kaikoroku*, Vol. II, pp. 181, 183.

⁹⁸ For example, Onodera, *Barutokai no Hotori nite*, pp. 163-154. In the case of the Army, non-regular staff were treated as junior officials of the General Staff Office (Makoto Onodera, “Shogun wa Kataru [Ge]” [The Story of the General (II)], *Kaiko*, April 1986, p. 25).

servants.⁹⁹ Some of the locally employed personnel lived and worked at the office of the attaché, while some commuted from their homes. These locally employed personnel tended to be employed by succeeding attachés through the generations.

Spouses who accompanied attachés to embassies/legations on their assignments were powerful supporters to attachés. The presence of spouses was critical at events where attachés interacted with the senior officials, military officers, and attaché corps in their countries of assignment.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, as those working under attachés, namely, assistants and officers subordinate to them, lived overseas without their families in principle, in some cases attachés welcomed their subordinates to their homes, where spouses served them homemade food and looked after them in both their public and private affairs.¹⁰¹ If the attaché did not have any subordinates, his spouse served as a replacement for assistants. Especially in the Army, it was customary for the spouse to help out with the telegram-coding work and management of the code table.¹⁰²

When attachés to embassies/legations were accompanied by their spouses, “wife allowance” was included in their service allowance. At both the Army and the Navy, the “wife allowance” was institutionalized by the revision of the Ordinance on the Salary of Attachés to Embassies and Legations in 1922. As a result, three-tenths of the service allowance began to be paid to attachés in Asian countries and four-tenths to attachés in other countries.¹⁰³

4. Personnel Affairs

(1) Candidates

While Taro Katsura was self-nominated, other military and naval attachés to legations in the early stages of the system, including Kazukatsu Fukubara and Tatewaki Kurooka, were generally individuals who had previously lived overseas for study or business trip purposes, or were fluent in the language utilized in their country of assignment, or both. In the case of both the Army and the Navy, it appears that until their education systems were developed, individuals deemed suitable as attachés were simply selected among field and company officers based on their past experience and

⁹⁹ In some cases, similar to how Fukubara brought along his servant Wasuke Nomura and others from Japan (Toa Dobunkai, ed., *Taishi Kaikoroku*, Vol. II, p. 181), attachés were accompanied by Japanese nationals with whom they were acquainted and familiar. For example, Shizuichi Tanaka (then colonel), who served as military attaché to the embassy in the United States for two years from May 1932, was accompanied by his maid (Kiyoshi Tsukamoto, *Aa Kogun Saigo no Hi: Rikugun Taisho Tanaka Shizuichi Den* [The Last Day of the Imperial Japanese Army: Biography of General Shizuichi Tanaka], Nippon Shuppan Kyodo, 1953, p. 141). Hideo Kojima, who served twice as naval attaché to the embassy in Germany, was also accompanied by a maid when he took up his post in February 1936. Kojima described that this had significant merits, stating that when his German friend visited him, the friend told the truth as information leakage was not a concern when only Japanese nationals were present (Hasegawa Kiyoshi Den Kankokai, ed., *Hasegawa Kiyoshi Den* [The Biography of Kiyoshi Hasegawa], Hasegawa Kiyoshi Den Kankokai, 1972, p. 220).

¹⁰⁰ Tsukamoto, *Aa Kogun Saigo no Hi*, p. 142; and Doi Akio Den Kankokai, *Ichigunjin no Yukoku no Shogai: Rikugun Chujo Doi Akio Den* [The Patriotic Life of a Military Personnel: The Biography of Lieutenant General Akio Doi], Hara Shobo, 1980, p. 103.

¹⁰¹ For example, Raishiro Sumita, *Watashi no Ashiato* [My Footprints], Self-published, 1980, pp. 85-86.

¹⁰² Onodera, *Barutokai no Hotori nite*, pp. 41, 55-56, 136.

¹⁰³ “Zaigaikoku Taishikan zuki oyobi Koshikan zuki Rikugun Bukan Hokyurei Chu Kaisei no Ken” [Partial Revision of the Ordinance on the Salary of Military Attachés to Embassies and Legations] (dated April 5, 1922); “Tai(Ko)shikan zuki Rikugun Bukan ni Tsuma Kaho Shikyū no Ken” [Payment of Wife Allowance to Military Attachés to Embassies (Legations)] (dated May 4, 1922) in Army Ministry, “Taisho 11 Nen Dainikki Koshu” [Document File, Year 1922, Series I], Class III, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense; and Kaigun Rekishi Hozonkai, *Nippon Kaigunshi Dai 6 Kan Bumon Shoshi (Ge)*, p. 58.

the skills they had as of then, and were appointed and dispatched.

In 1883, the Army established Army War College for the objective of training staff. It became customary for students who had outstanding performance at the time of graduating from the College (in later years, the top ten or so students per class) to be given opportunities to be stationed in Western countries. In principle, students other than those who had outstanding performance were chosen to be stationed in China.¹⁰⁴ In particular, those who had outstanding performance at the time of graduating from Army War College and had experience with overseas assignments began to be considered as candidates for attachés to embassies/legations. The first Army War College alumnus to be appointed military attaché to embassies/legations was Toyosaburo Ochiai (second graduating class of Army War College; then major), who was appointed attaché to Germany in July 1893. Since then, most military attachés to embassies/legations were graduates of Army War College, with only a handful of exceptions. It can be said that in the case of the Army, graduation from Army War College was almost a compulsory prerequisite to become attaché to embassies/legations.

In the Navy, it is a fact that many of the attachés to embassies/legations were graduates of Naval War College that was established in 1888. In the case of the Navy, however, unlike the Army, graduation from Naval War College was not a compulsory prerequisite for choosing attachés to embassies/legations. Similar to other personnel decisions, weight was given to academic performance at the time of graduating from Naval Academy. In other words, in principle, those who were considered as candidates for attachés to embassies/legations in the Navy were those who graduated from Naval Academy with outstanding performance and had opportunities to be stationed overseas. The first Naval Academy alumnus to be appointed naval attaché to embassies/legations was the aforementioned Makoto Saito (sixth graduating class of Naval Academy; then sublieutenant). He was appointed attaché to the United States in September 1884.

From the final years of the Meiji Period, both the Army and the Navy adopted a system of selecting individuals with excellent foreign language proficiency, dispatched them to Tokyo School of Foreign Studies as scholarship students, and had them study foreign languages.¹⁰⁵ Individuals who demonstrated outstanding academic performance under this system were provided with opportunities to be stationed overseas. This system produced individuals who were appointed attachés to embassies/legations in the years that followed. In this sense, this system offered a path of salvation for those who failed to graduate from the Army War College or Naval Academy with outstanding academic performance but excelled in foreign languages. Those who studied at Tokyo School of Foreign Studies as scholarship students and went on to become attachés to embassies/legations majored in the following foreign languages at the school: Army—Russian, French, English, and Italian; and Navy—Russian, Spanish, French, German, English, Italian, and Chinese. Noticeable traits are that many in both the Army and the Navy majored in Russian, and not negligible in the Navy majored in Spanish.

While the skills of the individuals were no doubt important, the personnel decisions suggest it was considered effective to appoint members of *kazoku* (Japanese peerage), in other words, those of noble rank for networking with foreign nationals, according to some views. In the Army,

¹⁰⁴ Tsuchihashi, *Gunpuku Seikatsu Yonjunen no Omoide*, pp. 255-256.

¹⁰⁵ Hata, ed., *Nippon Rikukaigun Sogo Jiten*, p. 585.

Marquis Toshinari Maeda, Count Masatake Terauchi, and Count Sadakoto Hisamatsu, and in the Navy, Prince Saneteru Ichijo, Prince Sanetaka Ichijo, and Prince Tadashige Shimazu served as attachés to embassies/legations in Britain (Shimazu and Maeda) and France (Ichijo family, Terauchi, and Hisamatsu).

(2) Personnel management

It is thought that the sure route to becoming an attaché to an embassy/legation was to achieve outstanding academic performance at Army War College or Naval Academy, spend time in a foreign country as a dispatched officer, serve as an assistant to an attaché to an embassy/legation in the same country, and become an attaché to the embassy/legation in the same country. Surprisingly, however, there were few people who followed this route. They numbered around 15 people in the Army and the Navy, respectively, including attachés who were based at intelligence agencies in the Russian (Soviet Union) Far East and Qing/China. One of the reasons not many people took the sure route was that there were fewer assistant posts compared to attaché posts. The fact that few attaché candidates were deployed to countries other than the Western powers and China as dispatched officers is presumably another reason. As a natural consequence, there were many people who became attachés without serving as assistants, as well as people who served as dispatched officers to countries different from the countries in which they served as attachés.

As to the posts they held in Japan until their appointment as attachés to embassies/legations, at the central level, there were many people in particular who worked at the intelligence department of the General Staff Office or Naval General Staff. In addition, in the case of the Army, there were people who worked at the Army Ministry's Extraordinary Commission of Military Inquiry (later renamed Military Inquiry Department and then Inquiry Department) or the Newspaper Group under it. In the Navy, there were people who served as Secretary to the Minister of the Navy. In both the Army and the Navy, there were several people who had teaching positions at Army War College, Naval War College, among other institutions.

Experts on Russia (Soviet Union) and China included many people who traveled back and forth between the divisions dealing with their specialty at the General Staff Office or Naval General Staff and the intelligence agencies or other agencies that the Army and the Navy established in Russia and China. On the other hand, some of those who specialized in Western countries, which are considerably further away from Japan than the Russian (Soviet Union) Far East or China, had opportunities to go to these countries through official trips or through other ways. However, there were not many such opportunities.

On the whole, it can be said that individuals who worked in the military administration field or in the intelligence field tended to be appointed attachés to embassies/legations.

(3) Place of appointment

The most essential factor in determining the place of appointment of attachés to embassies/legations was the language they learned up to their appointment. In the case of the Army, those who attended the Army Cadet School studied either German, French, or Russian. Those who attended junior high school learned English. At Army War College, students chose Russian or Chinese. At first glance, the major languages appear to be covered. However, there were large discrepancies between the number of people who studied each language. The language that was most studied

was German; conversely, few people studied English and Russian. The same trend can be observed among those who graduated from Army War College with outstanding academic performance. Meanwhile, in the case of the Navy, which lacked a cadet school, all attachés to embassies/legations were graduates of junior high school, except in the early stages of the attaché system. While they studied English, few studied other languages. It is believed that such circumstances were one of the reasons that scholarship students from the Navy at Tokyo School of Foreign Studies, referred to earlier, had more foreign languages to major in than those from the Army.

Furthermore, there were limits to the foreign language education at junior high schools and army/naval schools, as the aforementioned Isayama describes as follows: “Foreign language education in Japan, especially foreign language education at the Army, was completely worthless.”¹⁰⁶ As such, one of the important objectives of the Army and the Navy’s dispatch of high academic achievers to foreign countries was to raise their foreign language skills. For this reason, as much as possible they searched for room and board in rural cities where there were no Japanese nationals. For some length of time during their initial assignment, they lived among local people while diligently studying their foreign language by going to school and hiring tutors.

Going back to the original discussion, as was already noted, the place of appointment of attachés to embassies/legations was basically determined by the foreign language they studied up to their appointment. If the foreign language they studied was German, they were dispatched to Germany, Austria, or Switzerland; if it was French, to France or Switzerland; if it was English, to Britain, the United States, or Canada; if it was Russian, to Russia (Soviet Union); if it was Chinese, to China (Qing); if it was Italian, to Italy; and if it was Spanish, to Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, or the Philippines.

The problem was that attachés were also dispatched to countries where these languages were not the official language. Moreover, few studied Italian and Spanish, leading to the problem of unmet need. In such cases, it appears that geographic proximity was used as the criterion for selecting attachés.¹⁰⁷ For example, those who studied Russian or German were dispatched to Scandinavian and East European countries; those who studied French to South European countries; those who studied Russian to Near and Middle East countries; and those who studied English to Central and South American countries. Additionally, it is assumed that similarities between languages were taken into consideration. For instance, nearly half of the military attachés to Turkey and Romania were those who had studied French.

The political situation at the time was also taken into account. For example, those who studied English or French were dispatched as military attachés to Thailand, a country sandwiched between British and French colonies. Until October 1924, those who studied German were dispatched as military attachés to Sweden, and beyond that, those who studied Russian were dispatched. Conversely, until July 1941, those who studied Russian were dispatched as naval attachés to Finland, and beyond that, those who studied German were dispatched.¹⁰⁸

As a result of taking these measures of last resort, there were numerous attachés who were sent to countries with hardly any knowledge of the local language. Even those who were well

¹⁰⁶ Isayama, “Shogun wa Kataru (Sono 1),” p. 28.

¹⁰⁷ “Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (1),” p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ It is said that while the Finnish used German, they did not use Russian even if they knew the language (Yoshihide Kato, “Shogun wa Kataru (1)” [The Story of the General (1)], *Kaiko*, July 1985, p. 39).

versed in foreign languages faced considerable hardships. For example, Kiichiro Higuchi, who served as military attaché to the legation in Poland from May 1925 to February 1928, learned Polish in a short span of time after assuming his post, and on top of this, had to master French. This was because 90 percent of the invitations to receptions and other events were written in French.¹⁰⁹ There is also the example of Shigeyoshi Inoue, who served as naval attaché to the embassy in Italy from November 1927 for approximately two years. He was fortunate to have a locally hired Italian typist who was proficient in French. He had her translate documents received in Italian into French in order to understand them. Vice versa, when documents needed to be prepared in Italian, Inoue overcame the hurdle by writing the text in French and having the typist translate it into Italian.¹¹⁰

The hardships endured by those who not only did not speak the local language, but were dispatched to unknown land as the first Japanese attaché to the country, are beyond imagination. Even without these challenges, the first attaché had important tasks which were unique to first-time attachés to their countries—whether it was finding property for his office and accommodation, developing personal networks from practically square one, or demonstrating presence. Morishige Morioka, who was appointed Japan's first military attaché to the legation in Turkey in February 1907 (in the form of an official trip), studied Turkish by having a Turkish military officer serve as his teacher based on the motto of “in general, learn by practicing.” As a result, he became able to skim through newspapers and write Turkish letters. After being in Turkey for about one year, he traveled within the country and neighboring regions, and gradually gained some confidence. A Japanese national who operated a store in the country was the sole salvation for Morioka. “Fortunately, through this storeowner, I was able to synthesize and report information regarding the situation in Turkey,” he wrote. “Sometimes I would sit on the bench at the park all day and spend time fruitlessly in silence.” Morioka, who was in such a state at the time, later described that it was “perhaps foolish” to send someone like himself with slight proficiency in German to Turkey. “The No. 1 requirement for overseas work is mastery of language; at the very least, the officer should be versed in the language of his country of assignment,” he stated.¹¹¹

Along with language, importance was placed on expertise. The fact that many experts on Russia (Soviet Union) were dispatched not only to Scandinavian and East European countries but also to Near and Middle East countries is a testament to this.¹¹²

Earlier, this article noted that as a natural consequence, there were more people who were attachés to countries that were different from the countries where they served as dispatched officers. However, among the attachés to embassies/legations in Germany, France, Russia (Soviet Union), Britain, the United States, and China, where relatively a large number of dispatched officers were dispatched to, there were many people served as dispatched officers and attachés to the same country.

¹⁰⁹ Kiichiro Higuchi, *Atsu, Kisuka: Gunshireikan no Kaisoroku* [Atsu and Kiska: Memoirs of the Military Commander], Fuyoshobo, 1971, pp. 183-184.

¹¹⁰ Inoue Shigeyoshi Denki Kankokai, *Inoue Shigeyoshi*, p. 106.

¹¹¹ Morioka, *Yosei Zuihitsu*, pp. 97-98. Morioka also stated that “There were immense personal struggles in both public and private life,” and therefore, “I feel as though my health has deteriorated and I have aged several years.”

¹¹² “Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (2),” p. 26; and Kato, “Shogun wa Kataru (1),” p. 39.

(4) Reappointment

In principle, military and naval attachés to embassies/legations were replaced in succession in two- to three-year intervals. On this matter, the aforementioned Makoto Onodera comments as follows:

We go to foreign lands. Just as we become accustomed to their language and to the people and are about to get our work done, we are replaced. No wonder results are not produced.

One cannot deliver sufficient results in intelligence unless one is engaged in the same work over many years. I believe herein laid a significant shortcoming of Japan's intelligence work. Attachés were changed one after another every three or two years. Just by making this change, our achievements end up in vain.¹¹³

Under such circumstances, there were individuals who were attachés to embassies/legations in the same country multiple times, with some time lapse in between, albeit this was very rare. The record is held by the aforementioned Nobuzumi Aoki. Aoki served as military attaché to the legation in Qing/China four times from 1897 to 1913, for a total of about 13 years. Moreover, his fourth time lasted for as long as eight years and eight months, from January 1905 to August 1913. As will be discussed later, while the reappointment of attachés was by far most common in Qing and its successor state China for both the Army and the Navy, Aoki stands out among the group of reappointed attachés.

The fact that Aoki had earned the trust of Yuan Shikai, who was the leader of the Beiyang Clique and became the first President of the Republic of China, played a part in Aoki serving as attaché to Qing/China on four instances for as long as almost 13 years in total. When Aoki first served as attaché to Qing state, at Yuan's request Aoki became a military advisor for the military forces ("New Army") of Yuan, and in turn, the two became friends. Following this, through his activities, Aoki gained the confidence of Yuan and other dignitaries in the country.¹¹⁴ There is a story about Aoki that has been told through the years, which is that in November 1903, when the outbreak of war between Japan and Russia was becoming unavoidable, Deputy Chief of Staff Gentaro Kodama visited the home of Aoki and requested that he serve as attaché to Qing for his third time. It is said that at this time, Aoki was entrusted with an important mission for the Russo-Japanese War (systematically collecting information on the adversary and harassing the rear of the Russian forces in cooperation with the people of Qing state).¹¹⁵

The individual who was attaché to an embassy/legation in the same country for the second most number of times after Aoki was his close friend, Goro Shiba. Shiba was the first Japanese (acting) military attaché to the legation in Britain, and including this first time, served as attaché to the embassy/legation in Britain on three instances for a total of nearly six and a half years from 1894 to 1908. However, Shiba in fact is famous for his achievements as attaché to the legation in Qing. Shiba was an expert on China, and served as attaché to the legation in Qing for one year from March 1900. During his term, the Boxer Rebellion (North China Incident) occurred in Beijing, and

¹¹³ "Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (2)," p. 10.

¹¹⁴ *Taishi Kaikoroku*, Vol. II, pp. 319, 322.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

Shiba worked to protect foreign nationals who were living in Qing. Simultaneously, he overcame the grave situation by spearheading and commanding a mixed group of military units of different countries that were warding off the adversary in the area of the legation. Shiba's actions were praised by countries around the world, including Britain.¹¹⁶

The Army and the Navy respectively had 11 people who served twice as attaché to an embassy/legation in the same country, making the total 22 people. Among them, attachés to Qing/China far outnumbered other attachés and were the most in number. There were seven of these attachés to Qing/China, combining the Army and the Navy. Including the aforementioned Aoki, eight attachés to Qing/China were reappointed. It is uncertain whether this implies few personnel were capable of conducting Qing/China affairs, or whether the role of attaché to Qing/China was considered extremely difficult and it was highly necessary to send personnel who were experienced and had earned the trust of the people in the country. Incidentally, countries other than Qing/China where attachés were reappointed multiple times were Britain (including the aforementioned Shiba) and Thailand in the Army, and Germany, Russia, and Chile in the Navy.

The advantages of reappointing attachés were that, presumably, they had real-life knowledge of the country based on their previous experience and thus required a shorter time to prepare for their post. Furthermore, they were able to once again make use of the personal connections that were developed during their previous posting. While one would expect Aoki to have a vast source of information, so too did Eiichi Tatsumi, who served twice as military attaché to the embassy in Britain. Ever since Tatsumi was first attaché, he was close friends with the U.S. military attaché in Britain. When he was reappointed, then Deputy Chief of Staff Shigeru Sawada explained to Tatsumi that the evolution of the Second World War which broke out in Europe was a pivotal issue for Japan, and therefore, Tatsumi would be dispatched to Britain because information sources were needed.¹¹⁷

(5) Locally limited assignment

As has been noted a number of times thus far, those who were dispatched overseas as dispatched officer, resident officer, or in the form of a long-term official trip were frequently appointed as attachés to embassies/legations or assistants by name, on locally limited assignment, for convenience's sake in terms of executing operations. In particular, locally limited assignment was a method often utilized when the "Office of Military Attaché" was busy with work, where the attaché concurrently served as attachés to multiple countries, where there was an increased need to make contact with air forces which Japan did not have, and where the post of attaché or assistants would be newly established.

As already explained, attachés and assistants were placed on the list of members of embassies/

¹¹⁶ For example, letters from British Minister McDonald to Japan to Foreign Minister Kato (dated January 15 and 21, 1900) in General Staff Office, "Meiji 34 Nen Dainikki Tokugo Shorui" [Document File, 1901: Special Documents], No. 1, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense; and Mahito Ishimitsu, ed., *Aru Meijijin no Kiroku: Aizujin Shiba Goro no Issho* [Records of a Certain Meiji Figure: The Posthumous Writings of Goro Shiba from Aizu], Chuokoron-sha, 1971, p. 140.

¹¹⁷ "Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (3)" [The Second World War and Attachés (3)], *Kaiko*, December 1978, p. 19; "Dainiji Taisen to Zaigai Bukan (5)" [The Second World War and Attachés (5)], *Kaiko*, February 1979, p. 7; and Eiichi Tatsumi, "Shogun wa Kataru (Sono 2)" [The Story of the General: Part 2], *Kaiko*, February 1983, p. 20.

legations, enjoyed diplomatic privileges and immunities, and received special treatment from their countries of assignment. This was the big difference between them and dispatched officers, resident officers, and officers on official trips. It was difficult for dispatched officers, resident officers, and officers on official trips to adequately perform duties associated with negotiating and coordinating with the military authorities of the country of assignment, networking with attachés dispatched by other countries, and collecting information. Consequently, the idea was borne to change their titles to attaché and assistant—both in name and substance. Moreover, based on international practice, attachés were limited to one per military service, meaning an attaché could be appointed on locally limited assignment only if a military service still did not have an attaché. On the other hand, assistants did not have number restrictions like attachés. Therefore, to a certain extent it was not a problem to increase the number of assistants. Additionally, oftentimes, dispatched officers, resident officers, and officers on official trips had ranks equivalent to assistants'. Herein laid the basis that led to the excessive appointment of assistants on locally limited assignment.

Technically, attachés and assistants on locally limited assignment were supernumerary officers. In principle, they were approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a temporary convenient method, or a measure for the time being until an official prescribed post was established. However, increasing the number of prescribed posts for attaché and assistant involved achieving a balance with other posts, and furthermore, required budgetary measures. In this regard, this was no easy task. In reality, when the Army established the post of attaché to the legation in Mexico in 1939, the post of assistant to the attaché to the embassy in Germany was eliminated as a consequence. Of course, it was not the case that there was decreased need for assistants to Germany. Hence, measures were taken to have assistants on locally limited assignment fill in the hole left by the elimination of the assistant to the attaché to the embassy in Germany.¹¹⁸ Thus, while officers on locally limited assignment were supposed to be a measure for the time being or temporary convenient method, the challenges of establishing new posts, this time, led to a situation in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was repeatedly requested to take measures to enable the replacements of these officers to enjoy the same treatment and handling as their predecessors as officers on locally limited assignment by name (e.g., placement on the registry of embassies/legations, issuance of diplomat's passport, notification to receiving state, and provision of relevant benefits).

Incidentally, as far as the author is aware, these officers on locally limited assignment by name date back to Tadashi Takaoka (then captain) in the Army, who was dispatched to Brazil under the title of "resident officer" in May 1921. When appointing Takaoka, then Minister to Brazil Kumaichi Horiguchi requested Foreign Minister Kosai Uchida to act as an intermediary to grant Takaoka the title of "attaché to legation." Takaoka's predecessor Yasumichi Ishida (then captain) worked under the title of "resident officer," which caused inconveniences for conducting studies as well as networking. Horiguchi felt that this was regrettable for the purposes of executing duties. He perceived that if Takaoka was dispatched not as "resident officer" but as attaché to the legation, this would create a good appearance for the Brazilian Government, would be favorable for maintaining

¹¹⁸ "Chudokukoku Bukan Hosakan tarishi Mono wo Izen Genchikagiri no Hosakan to seraretaki Ken" [Wishing that the Assistant to the Attaché in Germany is Assigned an Assistant on Locally Limited Assignment As Before] (dated April 2, 1939) in Army Ministry, "Showa 14 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1939], Vol. VI.

a balance with the Western powers, and would be extremely convenient for the officer's official duty of conducting studies as well as for attending social gatherings with the attachés of other countries. However, Takaoka assumed his post as "resident officer." Therefore, Horiguchi once again urged Uchida that for the purposes of carrying out official duties and attending social gatherings, it was "necessary to make Takaoka attaché to the legation by name" and requested negotiations with the Army. The fact that the Navy had established the post of attaché to the legation in Brazil immediately prior to Takaoka's appointment, and that Takaoka had good relations with Horiguchi upon the former's appointment, contributed to Horiguchi's efforts.

Horiguchi's request was communicated to the Army through the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs. Concerned that granting the title of attaché would require considerable expenses for networking and other uses, the Army confirmed with Takaoka that becoming attaché would not entail expenses and that all the Army needed to do was give tacit approval to the use of the title. Upon review, the Army decided not to flatly reject and to agree to Horiguchi's request, judging that the legation was adopting a starkly different approach from its usually inconsiderate ways of rejecting the requests of the Army and that consent should be given to help develop favorable relations between the Army and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Army responded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that while the Army was not able to formally appoint Takaoka as attaché for budget and other reasons, the Foreign Ministry was asked to take measures as stated in the Minister's request.¹¹⁹ Takaoka died during his service, and when appointing his successor Yasusaburo Nakayama (then major), the Army did not only obtain the consent of the Foreign Ministry to make Nakayama attaché by name similar to Takaoka. Both the Army and the Foreign Ministry reached agreement that all succeeding officers would always be granted the title of attaché by name.¹²⁰

In addition, there are examples in which measures were taken to appoint attachés by name for locally limited assignment as a convenient method to satisfy the wishes of the receiving state. In December 1929, Kanji Tsuneoka (then lieutenant colonel) was ordered to go on an assignment in Thailand (then Siam) in the form of an official trip. When Thailand's Prince Alongkot visited the local Japanese legation, he stated that because several countries had already assigned attachés to legations, "it pains him to give resident attaché treatment to the officer from Japan, a country with which [Thailand] has especially friendly relations." He requested Japan to "make the officer attaché to the legation when he makes his official trip." In response to this request, the officer was made "attaché to the legation by name externally."¹²¹

¹¹⁹ "Takaoka Hohei Taii wo Meigijō Koshikan zuki Bukan tarashimuru Ken" [Making Infantry Captain Takaoka an Attaché to the Legation by Name] (dated October 10, 1921) in Army Ministry, "Taisho 10 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1921], Vol. VI, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

¹²⁰ "Nakayama Taii wo Meigijō Koshikan zuki Bukan tarashimuru Ken" [Making Captain Nakayama an Attaché to the Legation by Name] (dated June 8, 1922) in Army Ministry, "Taisho 11 Nen Mitsu Dainikki" [Secret Document File, Year 1922], Vol. II, Collection of the Center for Military History, NIDS, Ministry of Defense.

¹²¹ Letter from Foreign Minister Shidehara to Minister Yatabe in Siam, "Tsuneoka Chusa Koshikan zuki Bukan no Meigi nite Shamukoku e Shutcho no Ken" [Official Trip to Siam by Lieutenant Colonel Tsuneoka Under the Title of Attaché to the Legation] (January 20, 1930) in Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Zaigai Kokan zuki Bukan Kankei Zassan" [Miscellaneous Documents Relating to Attachés to Legations], Vol. I, Collection of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Prince Alongkot was the younger brother of Rama VII, then King of Siam, and served as Chief of General Staff.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to comprehensively examine and present a general overview of the system of military attaché, which has hardly been a subject of extensive research, focusing on military/naval attachés to embassies/legations of Japan up to the Second World War period. In summary, the following can be stated.

Military/naval attachés to embassies/legations of Japan were military personnel subordinate to the head of their respective military command, and at the same time, were diplomats. They were placed on the diplomatic list and bestowed diplomatic privileges and immunities as embassy/legation staff members who were supervised by their respective ambassadors/ministers. Although sometimes a military attaché's office was located within the embassy/legation building, it was very often established in a different location. Military and naval attachés generally had different offices. Accounting was independent of embassies/legations, and expenses were covered by the Army and Navy's budgets. Military attachés received a service allowance in addition to their basic salary, and were granted secret funds for expenses needed for entertainment, information gathering, and other purposes. The countries where military attachés served before the First World War were major Western powers and countries neighboring Japan. After the war, medium and small countries neighboring the United States or the Soviet Union also became places of appointment. During the war, military attachés were newly deployed to and had strengthened functions in neutral states that increased in value. The country to which a military attaché was assigned was determined mainly on the basis of the foreign language he had learned, as well as on his specialization. In general, military attaché personnel were Army War College or Naval Academy graduates who had excellent academic performance, along with experience residing in a foreign country.