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# Reconciling China and Japan through Social Welfare : The Vision of Fumio Terakado

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## Abstract

この研究ノートは、寺門文雄氏の社会福祉の分野における日本と中国の間のブリージビルディング (bridge building) の働きを検討しています。両国が老人問題に直面しています。この問題で隣国同士が協力する事によって、市民レベルでの国と国との和解を図る事が出来ます。寺門氏をこの働きに導いた隅谷三喜男氏は、第二次世界大戦中、満州において中国人労働者を友とし、一生涯、日中友好関係のために努めました。又、愛恵福祉支援財団と財団の中国社会福祉施設を見学し、その指導者と交流を持つためのツアーが、寺門氏にこの働きのためのきっかけを与えた。

This article explores Fumio Terakado's work of building a bridge between Japan and China in the field of social welfare. As both countries face the problem of aging populations, collaborating on this issue points to one way grassroots reconciliation between these Asian neighbors. In his work, Terakado took up the mantle of sociologist and fellow church member, Mikio Sumiya, who had befriended Chinese workers while working in Manchuria during World War II. Reconciliation with China became a lifelong mission of Sumiya's. Tours to social welfare institutions in China Terakado led with the Love and Grace Welfare Aid Foundation helped him cultivate international friendships and continue this mission.

## Reconciling China and Japan through Social Welfare : The Vision of Fumio Terakado

While tensions have run high between China and Japan, Fumio Terakado has continued his quiet work as a private citizen for reconciliation and

understanding between the two countries. He describes the political and economic tensions as rough waves on the surface of the seas. Down below, at the personal level where the underwater currents of flow more placidly, Terakado has made a place for international fellowship and collaboration. From July 6 to 10, 2015, Terakado led a group of Japanese involved with social welfare to China to visit places including a home for the elderly run by a church, the Beijing YMCA and YWCA, Beijing University Hospital, the Japan-China Exchange Association, and the Chinese Association for the Disabled.

Concern for social welfare, in the eyes of Terakado, is an area in which citizens of both China and Japan can come together in a common cause.<sup>1)</sup> In this sense, he seeks to sow seeds of peace and cooperation that will bear fruit now and in the future. As in the biblical parable, Terakado is looking for the good soil that will produce a bountiful harvest. These seeds left unsown, he laments the future our children will inherit: currently strained China-Japan relations will only worsen.

As he approaches the age of eighty, Terakado also strongly feels the need to pass on his work of "citizen ambassador" to the next generation. To this end, he invited leaders in the Japan Christian Social Welfare Association to join this trip. He wants to leave in good hands the treasure of human relations, the "old friends" (he uses the Chinese "*lǎo péngyǒu*") he has nurtured over the past two decades. He counts as personal friends the head of the Beijing YMCA, and leaders in Chinese social welfare and medical institutions. In fact, Terakado left Japan for China thinking this trip would be his last. These friends in China, however, insisted that

this trip instead simply marked the beginning of a new phase of Terakado's essential bridge-building work.

According to Terakado, Japan has had much opportunity to learn from countries advanced in the field of social welfare. He feels that Japan, with its more advanced systems for medical care, care for the elderly and disabled, and for social welfare in general, has a large role to play in working together with a China that must deal, as does Japan, with the looming challenges of an aging population.

Asia is home to two-thirds of the world's elderly, and China, having introduced its one-child policy in 1979, will in 2025 have an over-sixty population of 290 million, 20% of its total population, and nearly three times the entire Japanese population. Naturally, governments, think tanks, and corporations know these facts, and have taken some step to prepare for (or capitalize on) this future. Realistically, however, no system exists to care for the vast majority of the aging even now.

Terakado's recent trip to China impressed on him the gravity of the situation there. "The government has no way to deal with the problem of the elderly, or of the inequities in the social welfare system in general."<sup>2)</sup> He gave the example of a person earning 100,000 to 150,000 yen a year with a family member that needed an operation costing 1,000,000 yen. Gathering money on loan from relatives, one may be able to pay for the operation, but lacking the power to repay, the family may face bankruptcy, or even commit suicide. This tragic pattern is all too well known, especially for those in rural areas. The rural-urban income gap has forced rural breadwinners to move to the city, leaving behind the young and old members of the family. In a much publicized tragedy, four rural children left behind by their parents, who had moved away to the city to

work, killed themselves using pesticide rather than live abandoned and without hope.

In the urban areas, on the other hand, a twenty-fold increase in land prices has created a bubble watched anxiously by many. Terakado reflected that the Chinese military's maneuvers around the Senkaku Islands are part of the government's efforts to avert the eyes of the public from the multitude of pressing domestic troubles like the ones mentioned above.

Still, in the quiet waters beneath the storms, Terakado seeks to find common ground with the Chinese people in the field of social welfare. He also sees in the rapidly expanding Christian population of China hope for the future of the country. One of the Chinese Christian leaders in the official church, a long-time personal friend, spoke of the need for pastors and church buildings to meet the needs of the growing number of believers. This leader spoke of a policy of establishing regional church centers that could serve as bases for ministry in each area.

### The Legacy of Mikio Sumiya

What are the roots of Terakado's vision, so full of hope for what can be done for China-Japan relations through friendship, fellowship, and collaboration across the national boundaries even by those who, like himself, lack economic or political clout?

Terakado sees himself as walking in some small way in the footsteps of leading Japanese sociologist, labor economist, and Christian leader, Mikio Sumiya (1916-2003). Terakado and Sumiya attended the same church, where Sumiya proved a sort of mentor for the younger Terakado.<sup>3)</sup> As Terakado invited others to join him on his recent visit to China, he invoked the legacy of Sumiya, "our forerunner in faith, and as one who served for twelve years as the

chair of the National Social Security System Council, our forerunner in social welfare."<sup>4)</sup>

Terakado then commended "Sumiya's way of life, who in 1932 as a youth of sixteen, prayed 'Give me the courage never to turn my face away from the cross, no matter what may happen. And make me a man who can bear the heavy cross as my beloved country faces grave danger.'<sup>5)</sup> Sumiya lived in just this manner to his last days."<sup>6)</sup>

"Sumiya went to China in 1941 at the age of twenty-four. In atonement for the Japanese colonial policy, Sumiya walked alongside the Chinese people through the struggles of their path to modernization as an intimate friend. Beijing University made Sumiya an honorary professor emeritus in 1991, and in 1993, Sumiya donated 10,000 books of his library to the university."<sup>7)</sup>

Honoring this old friend, the *lǎo péngyǒu* who dug the well, as in the traditional Chinese custom, Terakado and his group visited this Sumiya Collection at the Beijing University Library, and were guided on their tour of China by a Chinese student of Sumiya now living in Japan.

### The Legacy of the Love and Grace Welfare Aid Foundation

Terakado, along with his friendship with Sumiya, cites his relationship with an institution, the Love and Grace Welfare Aid Foundation (Aikei). Aikei provided Terakado a wonderful vehicle for building bridges of reconciliation with China.

For ten years, Terakado, as a board member and then chair of Aikei, led study tours to China for those in Japan concerned with social welfare. These tours, along with Terakado's relation to China through his work with the YMCA, have served to build up a "pipe" of connections and friendships with top leaders in social welfare in China. Terakado's involvement with

Aikei illustrates the parable of the seeds planted in good soil, and merits reference here. It also points to the splendid and intricate root system of the seeds of Christian charity that often produce fruit in unexpected ways.

Aikei was first founded as Aikei Gakuin, a Christian center for children and youth in 1930 in Adachi in Eastern Tokyo, then considered one of the worst slums in Tokyo. Aikei Gakuin sought to 1) support the development of young children, 2) create a healthy and clean environment; 3) build healthy bodies; 4) provide a place for the spiritual and moral development of you; 5) give relief to those in trouble or suffering; 6) foster the spirit of Christianity; 7) through the work of the Spirit, to support each other.<sup>8)</sup> Aikei continued in vital service in the Adachi area though the years of war and beyond.

In 1989, Aikei concluded this phase of its mission and reestablished itself as the Love and Grace Welfare Aid Foundation in 1998. Aikei's new mission took into account Japan's aging population, the declining birth rate, women's advancement into society and the labor market, and how these changes affect the way seniors, children, and the handicapped are cared for.

Terakado, a tax accountant, while in his fifties completed a two-year night course of study for lay people offered by Tokyo Union Theological Seminary. Rather than enter the pastoral ministry, however, he felt called to pursue Christian ministry in the context of his professional expertise. He has since been asked to serve as advisor, auditor, accountant, and or board member for a number of Christian organizations: the Tokyo YMCA, Seigakuin Schools, the United Church of Christ in Japan, Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, and the Japan Association of Christian Social Welfare Association,

a list by no means exhaustive. Where there is a need, he is quick to respond.

Aikei asked Terakado to help lay the legal and financial groundwork for its new foundation. He handled deftly these complex matters, working both within Aikei and in its relations to the Tokyo Municipal Government. Terakado's vision, however, reached beyond halls of the local bureaucracy and reams of required documentation. He actively promoted cross-cultural study tours to institutions for the aging and handicapped first in Australia, and later in Sweden and China as well. Accompanying these tours as their leader, Terakado, despite his limited communicative ability in English, won the hearts of social welfare and government leaders wherever Aikei toured. After Ipswich, Australia, where Aikei had visited many times, suffered significant damage from floodwaters, Terakado initiated a fundraising campaign within Japan. Ipswich responded to Japan's 2011 earthquake with gifts from the children of Ipswich to the children in Tohoku. When the City of Ipswich honored Terakado with the title of Citizen Ambassador in August 2011, he accepted the award in person. He there defined Aikei's vision saying,

"Globalization will continue in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and with it, the growing sense that we are brothers and sisters in the same family, working together across national boundaries for the common good. Our group is small, and limited in what it can do, but hand-in-hand with you, we would like to help create social welfare that focuses on the 'quality of life.'"<sup>9)</sup>

Fumio Terakado would in no way want this brief article to bring praise to him, or merely to spotlight his work for social welfare and international

relations. He would, however, warmly invite all who feel so called to share his passion for bridge-building and burden sharing, to plant the seeds of friendship, fellowship, and positive collaboration, however small these may appear, that will bear fruit and make the world a better place.

#### 注

- 1) Interview with Terakado, June 26, 2015.
- 2) Interview with Terakado, July 14, 2015. The anecdotes and details that follow are from this second interview.
- 3) Daita Church in Setagaya, Tokyo, part of the United Church of Christ in Japan, the UCCJ.
- 4) Letter from Terakado, March 2015. In possession of author.
- 5) 激怒の時代を逆らって生きて：一社会学者の回想 (Living Against the Flow Through a Turbulent Era : Reflections of a Sociologist ) , Chuo Koron Sha, Tokyo, 2001, p 9 . Japan had just entered the dark valley of the Showa era with its 1931 invasion of Manchuria. Sumiya tells the story of his relationship with the Chinese people and his burden to somehow atone for Japan's wartime mistreatment of the Chinese he in part witnessed firsthand in this book, his autobiography. The author commends the book, and will take up its contents in a subsequent writing.
- 6) Letter from Terakado.
- 7) Letter from Terakado. Seigakuin University, where Sumiya also taught, has a section in its library of books that he donated.
- 8) Explanatory Booklet of Love and Grace Welfare Aid Foundation, Tokyo, Japan.
- 9) Speech by Terakado, translated (and coached) by the author, a personal friend of Terakado. Byrd accompanied Aikei on trips to China and Sweden in 2009, and led a Bible study within Aikei.

(ぶらいあん・ばーど 聖学院大学総合研究所特任講師)