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Seito Saibara: A Pioneer of Japanese Settlement Overseas

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Ⅰ. Introduction

Seito Saibara, 1861-1939, was a philanthropic proponent of Japanese immigration as a means of alleviating poverty and unemployment in Japan, who devoted half of his life to supporting permanent Japanese settlements overseas.

This paper attempts to shed light on what motivated Saibara to emigrate to Texas, Brazil and Taiwan by examining the historical background of that period in Japan, and the effects of U.S. immigration policy and its legal framework on Japanese immigration. It explains why Saibara moved to Brazil after 14 years in Texas and what he undertook in the 15 years he was there. Similarly, the author explains Saibara's sudden decision to go return to Japan in 1932 and provides details of his subsequent travels in Manchuria and Taiwan.

Kunio Mamiya's book, A Study on Seito Saibara, while providing a great deal of information on his early days and political activities in Japan, only briefly touches on the years spent in Texas and Brazil and his experience in Asia.[1)] Thomas K. Walls, *The Japanese Texans*, records the activities of Saibara and other Japanese settlers in the Houston area. To avoid duplication this paper has focused on Saibara's own accounts relating to the establishment of Japanese settlements in Texas. Walls, and other historians in Texas, have discussed his decision to move to Brazil,[2)] but provided no details of what he did there.

Ⅱ. Saibara: Early Years in Japan

Seito Saibara was born in Izuma, in the Kochi District of Shikoku Island, Japan, on 8

September 1861. His family belonged to the samurai class, which was severely disenfranchised as a consequence of the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Saibara's father was a farmer and the family was reasonably affluent but the suffering of the less fortunate that Saibara observed during this period of hardship was undoubtedly one of the factors that inspired him to take up the cause of Japanese emigration as a means to mitigate poverty.

Saibara studied law and passed the bar examination in June 1886, one of only eleven successful candidates out of 441.[3)] Saibara started practicing law in Kochi and immediately lent his legal support to the "Freedom and People's Rights Movement". As the "Movement" spread, and the Government applied more political pressure, they were ably represented by Saibara, which enhanced his reputation as a skillful lawyer and politician.

Saibara married Taiko Yamawaki in January 1883 and their only child Kiyoaki was born on 12 December 1884. Saibara and his wife converted to Christianity in Kobe in August 1890.[4)] They moved to Osaka in 1892 where he became a key member of the Liberal Party (*Jiyu-to*). Saibara stood for the Constitutional Party in the 1898 general election and was elected as a Member of Parliament, serving from 10 August 1898 until 1902.

Immediately after the election a bitter power struggle ensued, which soon led to the split of the Constitutional Party in October 1898. This was a great disappointment to the philanthropic Saibara, who wanted to improve the livelihood of the general public. Saibara believed that emigration had the potential to alleviate poverty and unemployment. Although he received some support leading to the implementation of schemes in Hokkaido, he was becoming disillusioned with the continuous bickering between the political factions. The assassination of his close friend and fellowpolitician, Toru Hoshi, on 21 June 1901, was probably the final straw.

Saibara left the Tokyo naval base of Yokosuka for London on 7 April 1902, as part of the Japanese delegation selected to attend the coronation of King Edward VII scheduled for 24 June. As this was postponed,[5)] he left London for Montreal and then on to Boston by train where he stayed until starting his studies at the Hartford Seminary in January 1903. When Saibara became President of Doshisha University in Kyoto in 1899, he was criticized for having insufficient knowledge of Christianity. This led to his decision to go to the United States to study theology at the Hartford Theological Seminary in Connecticut.

In early 1903, Ryoji Noda and his wife Miki visited Saibara. Although Noda (born in 1875) was 14 years younger than Saibara, they and their wives had been long-standing friends and remained so for the rest of their lives. When Saibara was practicing law in Osaka in the early 1890s, he supported Noda financially to complete his studies and Saibara's wife, Taiko, had helped to match

make Noda and Miki.

Noda was born in Fukuchiyama (formerly Ikaruga-gun), Kyoto on 10 November 1875 and studied at *Tokyo Senmon Gakko* (now Waseda University). He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1897 after graduation and was subsequently stationed in Busan (Korea), Manila, Mexico, Peru and Chile. He was transferred to Brazil on 4 April 1909 and worked at the Japanese Legation in Rio de Janeiro and Consulate-General in São Paulo until October 1934 where he played important roles in promoting Japanese emigration and supporting the welfare of Japanese immigrants. Noda wrote several books on Brazil and South America, and retired on 21 February 1935. It was very rare for a Japanese diplomat to have served in the same country for more than 25 years continuously. He started composing a Japanese-Portuguese Dictionary (*Nippo Jiten*) in two volumes, in 1949 and completed the work in 1965. He died on 23 June 1968 at the age of 92.

In 1903 Noda was working in Peru where he was involved in protecting Japanese immigrants. He recorded Saibara imparting that in addition to his Christian studies, he was monitoring developments in international and American affairs and would eventually leave the seminary.[6] It seems likely that their discussions on the plight of Japanese immigrants in Peru and the rise of anti-Japanese sentiment in California inspired Saibara to take up the cause of Japanese emigration again.

In his diary entry for 7 June 1903 Saibara recorded that he was studying the feasibility of Japanese immigration to the U.S. After receiving a report on the rice industry in Texas by Japanese Consul-General Sadatsuchi Uchida, Saibara travelled to New York to meet Uchida and obtain details. He was also impressed with a speech made in New York by Dr. Jokichi Takamine, a prominent biologist who encouraged Japanese students studying in the U.S. to remain there and contribute to its development rather than return to Japan.[7] His mind made up, he left the seminary on 12 August 1903 for Texas.

III. Texas: Saibara's New Homeland

Saibara arrived at Houston Station on 25 August 1903 and was met by Oswald Wilson, an officer of the Department of Agriculture who had been delegated to look after him. Wilson introduced Saibara to the Houston dignitaries and he started looking for land in the southwestern gulf coastal area.[8]

Also waiting at Houston Station were two Japanese brothers believed to be from the Kochi District: Hosho and Kaname Inoue.[9] Hosho Inoue had started growing rice at Del Rio, Texas earlier that year, but the reason for their presence at the station remains unexplained. Saibara

mentions the Inoue brothers in his diary but despite the fact they had travelled the 350 miles from Del Rio to Houston to meet him, does not elaborate as to their purpose. Hosho Inoue sold his land at Del Rio at the end of 1903 so perhaps they viewed Saibara as a potential buyer.

Consul-General Uchida from New York visited Saibara on 13 September 1903 and stayed in the Houston area for two weeks. On 16 September, Uchida accompanied Saibara and his lawyer to serve as a witness in his application for U.S. citizenship. After the hearing, Saibara escorted Uchida on a study tour of rice and oil industries in Texas and Louisiana.[10] It is somewhat unusual for a prominent Japanese government official like Uchida, to spend so much time with an immigrant involved in a modest project, which reflects Saibara's political connections.

Saibara received an approval of naturalization but this was declared invalid a year later.[11] The approval given to Saibara clearly contravened the Naturalization Act of 1790, which in 1903 stipulated that only free whites and those of African descent would be eligible for citizenship. In addition, applicants were required to declare their intentions at least 5 years prior to applying and to have resided in the U.S. for 5 years. His second application for American citizenship submitted in 1917 was rejected based on his Japanese ethnicity.[12] Another Japanese applicant for citizenship, Takao Ozawa, appealed to the Supreme Court in 1922 claiming that Japanese people should be classified as "free white persons", but his appeal was rejected.[13]

Saibara eventually bought 300 acres of land in Webster, a small town between Houston and Galveston about 20 miles to the southeast of Houston, on 26 November 1903 and cabled his wife and son (Kiyoaki) in Japan to join him. They arrived in San Francisco on 17 January 1904. Saibara went to San Francisco to escort them back to Webster. They arrived in Webster on 24 January.[14] In November 1906, Saibara went back to Japan, returning to Texas with his parents and several friends in May 1907.[15] During his stay in Japan he contributed several magazine articles describing rice farming in Texas and promoting Japanese emigration. On 10 July 1909, Saibara's son, Kiyoaki, married Shimoyo Iwasaki (from Sendai, Japan) at Webster Presbyterian Church.

While living in Webster, Saibara was visited by many Japanese dignitaries including Korekiyo Takahashi (Prime Minister), Jun'nosuke Inoue (Finance Minister), Admiral Tomosaburo Kato (Minister of the Navy), Admiral Osami Nagano, and General Masataka Yamawaki.[16] Takashi Hara, who became Prime Minister in 1918, sent Torajiro Nakano, a Member of Parliament from the Kochi District, to Saibara twice, requesting him to accept the post of Foreign Minister or any other ministerial post. Saibara declined these offers but his successful establishment of rice farming communities had obviously impressed Japanese politicians.

1. Saibara's Texas Project —— A New Type of Japanese Emigration.

From the late 19th century to the early 20th century many Japanese emigrated to East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia, the South Pacific, Hawaii, North America, South America and the Caribbean. The majority were labourers, and almost without exception, only worked in those countries for a few years before returning home after saving some money.

Conversely, Saibara liquidated all his Japanese assets to invest in rice farming in Texas. Although the amount was modest, he was the pioneer of this type of Japanese emigration, and 18 other Japanese investors in rice farming followed him. Typically, they allotted fields to Japanese immigrants on a tenancy or profit-sharing basis. About 100 Japanese were engaged in rice farming in Texas during this period.[17)]

Saibara had studied law, not agronomy or agriculture, but he had experienced working in the rice fields of Kochi during his youth and was intelligent enough to seek advice. To facilitate transport he chose sites close to the Galveston-Houston railway and selected well-drained land near a creek. These creeks were saline and boreholes were sunk to provide fresh water for irrigation. Saibara drilled down to 600ft (300ft deeper than many of his neighbors) and was able to maintain perennial fresh water. He also sent soil samples for analysis to an agricultural specialist, Dr. Knapp, whom he had befriended.[18)] He employed experienced rice farmers from Kochi as workers and tenants but employed local labour to operate horses and machinery. He also employed an agronomist from an agricultural research station in Hokkaido. The tenants were retained on a crop-sharing basis and provided for their needs until harvest. He grew a high-yielding rice variety, *shinriki* with seed procured from Japan, and as a consequence of all these factors achieved an average yield of 2.5 tons/acre, 78% more than the local average of 1.4 tons per acre.

Saibara’s rice farm prospered. By 1906 he had increased his land holdings to 860 acres and his spectacular progress in the business began to be noticed.

2. Dark Clouds Overhanging the Project

Japanese rice farmers in Texas made handsome profits until 1908 when the price of rice started declining. Their major market was California, with its high concentration of Asian immigrants, but the freight from Asia to San Francisco by ship became cheaper than that from Texas by rail, and Japan and Korea took over the California market. Moreover, the demand for rice was declining due to the banning of Chinese emigration under the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Many Japanese also left in response to increasing anti-Japanese sentiment. Faced with deteriorating prices, some Japanese rice farmers gave up farming or converted to other crops.[19)]

In 1910, Saibara diversified into the nursery business selling seedlings of mandarin (*Satsuma*) oranges. Headquartered in Webster, he had branches in Mobile, Alabama and Deming, New Mexico.[20] Saibara's nursery venture was very successful, although his Webster operation was damaged by a severe cold spell in 1914.[21] Around 1910 Saibara planted 500 acres of cotton at Webster, but this project stopped after the area was flooded in 1915.[22] Finally, Saibara moved to Mobile, Alabama leaving his son, Kiyoaki at Webster.

In early 1917 Ryoji Noda and his wife, visited Saibara again in Mobile, while they were en route to Brazil. Noda briefed Saibara on Brazil, emphasizing its liberal immigration policy in comparison to that of the U.S., where it was becoming increasingly difficult for the Japanese to emigrate and settle.[23] This time Saibara, perhaps frustrated by the failure of the U.S. Government to approve his naturalization application which was still pending after 14 years despite his excellent references, decided to abandon Texas and head to Brazil.

IV. Saibara in Brazil

Saibara arrived in Rio de Janeiro on 19 August 1917 first calling on Noda at his office in Petrópolis, outside Rio de Janeiro. Noda provided letters of introduction to prominent local leaders, and Saibara left for São Paulo and visited Consul-General Sadao Matsumura (also born in Kochi). Matsumura introduced him to Saku Miura whom he hired as a guide.[24]

Little is known about Miura's life prior to his arrival in Brazil. In 1908 he boarded the Brazilian Navy, training ship *Benjamin Constant*, in Shanghai as a Judo instructor and disembarked at Rio de Janeiro where he continued to teach Judo at the Naval Academy until 1910. He then travelled throughout the northeastern states, moving to São Paulo around 1915.[25] Miura could speak Portuguese fluently but does not appear to have had any knowledge of agriculture.[26] Later in the 1920s and 1930s, Miura was a popular editor of the Japanese newspaper "*Nippaku Shinbun (Japan Brazil Newspaper)*" but was eventually deported by the Brazilian Government in 1939.[27]

With Miura translating, Saibara began searching for land on which to establish a Japanese *colonia*, which he planned to develop and sub-divide to Japanese immigrants.[28]

Before 1910 most of the undeveloped, accessible land along the railways in Brazil was owned by powerful local coffee Barons as a reserve for future development but by 1915 coffee prices were depressed, due to declining European consumption as a result of the Great War, exacerbated by soaring freight rates across the Atlantic to fuel the Allied war machine in the face of U-boat attacks. Now with signs of overproduction some landowners in São Paulo started to sell land,[29] some of which was bought by Japanese settlement developers and sub-divided for sale to Japanese

immigrants. This was the beginning of the Japanese *colonia* in Brazil. There were also *colonias* established by Brazilians in which some Japanese immigrants settled.

Saibara and Miura visited the *Hirano Colonia* in Cafelândia on the Noroeste Railway Line and areas along the Sorocabana railway before returning to São Paulo. Saibara also expressed interest in land in Itararé, São Paulo, but abandoned this idea.[30)]

Coincidentally, another Japanese from Kochi, Naoe Ogasawara, also arrived in Brazil in August 1917 to search for land. Ogasawara had moved from Kochi to Hokkaido under one of the resettlement projects Saibara had helped establish when he was engaged in Japanese politics in the1890s. Ogasawara's farm in Hokkaido had prospered and he was now relatively wealthy. After arriving in São Paulo, he also met Consul-General Matsumura who introduced him to Ken'ichiro Hoshina, and in December 1917, Ogasawara joined Hoshina's venture, *Brejão Colonia*, in Álvares Machado, São Paulo. Although according to Teijiro Suzuki's "*Footsteps of Forgotten Pioneers*", Saibara approached Ogasawara to join him in 1917. There is no evidence to support this.

1. Saibara in Piracicaba

Saibara's initial plan to secure land, to develop and sub-divide it with Japanese immigrants proved to be beyond his financial resources. Hence he obtained a 6-year lease on 290 ha in João Alfredo, Piracicaba from a French sugar refinery. He allotted 126 ha for sugar cane contracted to the sugar mill and sub-leased the 165 ha remaining to 11 Japanese immigrant families (42 people) who grew grain, cotton and beans. Saibara employed 13 Japanese and 27 locals to develop sugar cane.

His contract with the mill fixed the price[31)] of cane at $3.08 per ton when the price of a 60kg of sugar was more than $8.97 and at $2.56 per ton below that. The contract also prohibited Saibara from selling to other mills. Soon after Saibara commenced operations the sugar price reached $17.95 a bag but he still had to sell cane at $8.97. Most cane contracts in Brazil at the time were linked to the market price on a sliding scale and it appears Saibara was taken advantage of.[32)]

Saibara's sugar plantation was located about 480 meters above sea level and frost damage reduced yields almost every year. Another disaster befell him in 1921 when fire destroyed 5 ha of cane and his venture failed.

As a result of his meeting with Nagata in 1920, two Japanese from *Rikko-kai*, — Keizaburo Honda and Yasutaro Moriya arrived in late June 1921 and started working at Saibara's farm in João Alfredo, Piracicaba.[33)] However, despite being sponsored by Saibara they soon left to join Ihara with *Rikko-kai* at São José dos Campos.

2. Saibara in Tremembé

As Saibara's venture in Piracicaba failed in 1921 because he lacked experience with sugar cane cultivation, he probably thought that he would be better off growing rice, a crop that he was familiar with. At that time the Paraíba do Sul River Basin was a major rice-producing area in Brazil and around 1922, Saibara leased an area of land from a Trappist Monastery in Tremembé, 130 km northeast of São Paulo, and started growing rice. Why he chose Tremembé is not known but he may have been influenced by Keisaku Ihara of *Rikko-kai*, who managed a farm at São José dos Campos, 50 km southwest of Tremembé.

Saibara had successfully grown wet padi in Texas and tried to do the same in Tremembé, but lacking an irrigation system the yield was solely dependent on rainfall. Saibara was aware of the importance of irrigation but despite receiving some financial assistance from Masahiro Matsumoto, a lawyer whom Saibara had supported as a student, the large investment needed to provide irrigation remained beyond his means.[34] Due to the lack of irrigation dry padi farming was the common practice in Brazil, but yields were much lower than wet padi.

In July 1924, Saibara contributed an article to a newspaper in Osaka encouraging affluent Japanese landlords to invest in plantations in Brazil and hire Brazilians to manage them, pointing out that land was cheap due to the Post-war recession. As landlords in Japan were currently suffering from labour disputes with their tenants, investing overseas in Brazilian plantations was appealing.[35]

Initially, Saibara wanted to establish a *colonia* for Japanese immigrants, now he was advising Japanese investors to hire local managers and employ local labourers or immigrants from Southern Europe rather than Japanese immigrants. For more than 25 years Saibara had been a passionate promoter of Japanese immigration but perhaps disillusioned by disappointment in Brazil, had come to realize that the economic structure of a colonia was incompatible with the temperament of Japanese immigrants who invariably aspired for self-employment.[36]

Dependent on rainfall the Tremembé rice farm did not do well and after a poor harvest in 1928, Saibara moved to Ana Dias, 90 km southwest of Santos, where there were many immigrants from Okinawa growing rice and bananas, to try vegetable farming. In late 1927 Saibara had his wife, Taiko join him at Tremembé. She had remained at Webster, Texas and they had not met since he had left for Brazil in 1917. In 1928, Taiko joined him in Ana Dias to find him in desperate financial circumstances,[37] having exhausted all his capital.

3. Growing Demand for Land from Japanese Immigrants

Some immigrants contracted with landlords to develop new coffee plantations. They obtained

advances of cash and food from the landlords, and in return cleared the jungle and planted coffee trees, rice, maize and other crops. The crops belonged to the contractors until the end of the contract period (usually 4 years).[38] Some signed 6-year contracts, which allowed them to harvest the first coffee crops. Many Japanese immigrants were able to build up savings as well as develop expertise in growing coffee and other crops from this contracting practice, which they subsequently used to buy and develop their own land.[39] Small tracts of land could be purchased in remote areas lacking infrastructure, at very low prices.

Other immigrants leased land to grow short-term crops: rice, potatoes, vegetables, cotton, cassava, sugar cane, onions, maize, beans, bananas, etc. These immigrants did not purchase land because:

i) They intended to return to Japan.
ii) When the soil was exhausted due to lack of fertilization, they moved to a new piece of land.

In the mid-1910s hundreds of Japanese started growing rice along the banks of the Rio Grande.[40] Some left during the post-war recession in 1919, but as rice is a staple food for Brazilians as well as Japanese, many prevailed and by 1935 Japanese immigrants produced 80% of the rice, 50% of cotton, 90% of tomatoes, 40% of potatoes and 60% of eggs in São Paulo State.[41]

In the 1910s, some Japanese immigrants, realizing that it would take a long time for them to earn enough money to return home, began buying small pieces of land from Brazilian landlords, and others moved to the *colonias* developed by the Brazilian Government.[42] As the number of Japanese immigrants interested in buying land increased, some better-off Japanese bought large tracts to subdivide and sell to their fellow immigrants. This was the beginning of the Japanese *colonias*.

4. The Japanese Colonias: a Change in Government Emigration Policy.

A new concept of emigration emerged in the early 1910s which aimed to make immigrants self-employed farmers. The Brazil Development Company (*Burajiru Takushoku Kabushiki Kaisha*), a private company established by prominent politicians (Prime Minister, Taro Katsura, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, Kanetaka Oura) and members of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry, started a Japanese settlement (*colonia*) in 1913 in Brazil and commissioned Ikutaro Aoyagi to acquire land. The company was granted 50,000 ha in *Iguape* by the São Paulo State Government.[43] Although this scheme became a model for Japanese *colonias* in Brazil, initially Japanese immigrants encountered difficulties with the settlement and the

Brazil Development Company, short of cash, was taken over and managed by *Kaiko*, (Overseas Development Company), a newly established, quasi-government, immigrant recruiting company in Japan.

Other well-known colonias established by the Japanese in the 1910s and 1920s are as follows:

Hirano Colonia in Lins, São Paulo	[1915: 3,920 ha]
First Ueduka Colonia in Promissão, São Paulo	[1917: 3,388ha]
Vai Vem Colonia in Santo Anastácio, São Paulo	[1917: 2,299 ha]
Brejão Colonia in Álvares Machado, São Paulo	[1918: 7,260 ha]
Second Ueduka Colonia in Lins, São Paulo	[1923: 3,388ha]

There were also some *colonias* developed by Brazilians and others who employed Japanese managers to sell the land to Japanese immigrants.

As Japanese immigrants settled in *colonias*, they encountered many difficulties: onerous land payments, crop price fluctuation, natural disasters (droughts, frost, insect attacks), poor soil conditions, unfamiliar crops, sickness, etc. and had to work hard to achieve success. Land speculators charging exorbitant prices and persuading some to buy excessive land caused immigrants to fall behind with their land payments.

Brejão Colonia in Álvares Machado, established by Ken'ichiro Hoshina and Naoe Ogasawara in 1918, is a typical example. Hoshina bought large tracts of land to sub-divide and sell to Japanese immigrants, when land prices rose due to strong demand; their agents encouraged immigrants to buy even more land. The end result was that immigrants fell behind in their land payments and speculators could not meet contracted debts to Brazilian landlords.[44] Hoshina and Shuhei Ueduka (who established the First and Second *Ueduka Colonias*) approached Ambassador Taduke to obtain an 850,000yen, low-interest, loan from the Japanese Government in 1924, which was approved in 1926.[45]

5. Saibara and Nihon Rikko-kai (Association of Spiritual and Physical Salvation of Japanese People)

The Reverend Hyodayu Shimanuki, founded the Protestant mission of *Nihon Rikko-kai*, or *Rikko-kai*, in Tokyo in 1897. He established schools and dormitories and accommodated financially distressed students encouraging many to emigrate to the U.S. and Canada. When Shimanuki died in 1914, Shigeshi Nagata was called back from the U.S., where he had been living since 1908, to become Chairman. Although Nagata had experienced discrimination and several anti-Japanese

movements in the United States, he continued to believe that it was essential to encourage Japanese youths to emigrate to alleviate poverty and unemployment. He was also concerned that urban poverty might promote the spread of communism.[46)]

In 1920, Nagata was sent by the Ministry of Education to North and South America to study the education of Japanese children in immigrant communities. He was particularly impressed by the Japanese communities in Brazil and on his return concentrated on promoting Japanese emigration to Brazil.

Previously, *Rikko-kai* had been sending most Japanese youths to North America but owing to restrictions imposed by the American and Canadian Governments, this was becoming increasingly difficult and some youths sponsored by *Rikko-kai* left the U.S. for Brazil before 1920. Saibara employed one of these men at Piracicaba and finding him an exemplary worker, wrote to Nagata to send more.[47)]

Nagata arrived in São Paulo in late June 1920 and Saibara went to meet him. They held long discussions and discovered that they shared the same views[48)] and obviously Nagata respected Saibara as an authority on Japanese migration. Although they had previously communicated by mail, this was the first time they had met. (In fact, Saibara had mailed Nagata in Japan, requesting him to meet his wife Taiko in New York and accompany her to Brazil), but this letter failed to reach Japan before Nagata's departure.[49)]

Shigeshi Nagata is known as a pioneer of the *Aliança Colonias*, Aliança, São Paulo. Nagata and his friends in Nagano District, Japan developed three *colonias* in the 1920s:

First Aliança Colonia, Aliança, São Paulo	[1924: 5,324ha]
Second Aliança Colonia, Aliança, São Paulo	[1926: 4,840ha]
Third Aliança Colonia, Aliança, São Paulo	[1927: 7,260ha]

Nagata initiated a trial emigration scheme to Brazil in 1921 and founded the First Brazil Development Co-operative of *Rikko-kai*, headed by Keisaku Ihara. Ihara and 8 other immigrants arrived in Santos on 4 January 1922. After arriving in São Paulo Ihara rented accommodation next to the Brazil Times (*Burajiru Jiho-sha*), a Japanese-owned newspaper. He learnt from the newspaper staff of a farm for sale in São José dos Campos and subsequently secured 242 ha for $ 2,710[50)] in April 1922. The farm had some over-mature coffee which Ihara cleared to plant short-term crops. Other members of the co-operative joined Ihara initially but gradually moved on to find better jobs elsewhere. Ihara continued without them.[51)]

6. Investment in Plantations by Japanese Conglomerates.

Two Japanese conglomerates invested in plantations: the Nomura Family (founder of the Nomura Group) established the Nomura Plantation in Bandeirantes, Paraná in December 1926 and the Iwasaki Family from Kochi (founders of the Mitsubishi Group) bought a plantation in Campinas, São Paulo in November 1927 and named it *Fazenda Tozan* (*Fazenda Monte D'este*). These plantation ventures were pure investments and had no relationship to emigration schemes.

Iwasaki and Nomura had previously managed plantations in Asia without employing Japanese immigrants as labourers. One of the Iwasaki family's projects was in the Paraíba do Sul River Basin, a major rice-producing area in Brazil, and some Japanese immigrants started growing rice in Pindamonhangaba, São Paulo, 10 km northeast of Tremembé.[52] Japanese Consul-General Matsumura visited Pindamonhangaba in 1915. During this visit he was requested by a Brazilian landlord to recommend a Japanese rice expert and in due course Ryoichi Yasuda started working there.[53] In 1924, Fujisaki & Co. in São Paulo purchased 965 ha to grow rice in Pindamonhangaba and Yasuda joined this project. In 1928 Fazenda Tozan of the Mitsubishi Group acquired Fujisaki & Co. land and with additional purchases of adjacent land increased their total holding to 4,825 ha and proceeded to develop cattle ranching, coffee and wet rice.[54] With a steady production of rice, Fazenda Tozan started producing *sake* (rice wine) in 1935.[55]

Fazenda Tozan is today still successfully operating in Campinas. Although their operations were not directly involved in immigration, both the Nomura and Iwasaki families did contribute to Japanese immigrant society. The Iwasaki family, in particular, helped extend credit and financial services to Japanese immigrants through Fazenda Tozan's banking (*Casa Bancaria Tozan*) and trading departments.[56]

7. Government-Sponsored Burataku Colonias.

To support the new policy of recruiting immigrants for Brazil the Japanese Government created a centralized department to promote emigration, protect immigrants, provide passage subsidies and secure land. To handle land purchases they formed; *Burajiru Takushoku Kumiai*: or *Burataku* (Brazil Colonization Co-operative), which acquired over 175,000 ha in 1928.[57]

Pereira Barreto, São Paulo	[112,983 ha],
Aliança, São Paulo	[3,211 ha],
Bastos, São Paulo	[29,040 ha],
Assai, Paraná	[30,250 ha]

Large numbers of immigrants were sent to the Pereira Barreto and Bastos *colonias* directly from Japan but they failed to adapt to the new environment and customs of Brazil.[58] As a result in 1932, the Japanese Government changed its policy and started allocating land in *Burataku*'s *colonias* to Japanese immigrants who had been working in Brazil for some years and therefore already familiar with local customs and agricultural practice.[59]

In addition to selling and leasing land to Japanese immigrants in its *colonias*, Burataku provided marketing and financial services and developed downstream processing facilities and by the late 1930s, owned rice mills, coffee processing factories, cotton mills, a sugar mill, silk mills, vegetable oil mills, tobacco drying factories, textile factories, tile and brick factories, agricultural machinery workshops, a saw mill and warehouses. These facilities made a significant contribution to the economic development of the Japanese immigrant population in Brazil.

Meanwhile, Cotia Agricultural Co-operative (*Cooperativa Agricola de Cotia*), originally established in Cotia, a suburb of São Paulo, on 10 January 1928 to market potatoes,[60] later expanded to include vegetables and eggs, diversified to include marketing, co-operative stores, warehouses, credit services, savings services and clinics to benefit many Japanese immigrants and became the largest agricultural co-operative in Brazil.

When they had savings, Japanese Immigrants purchased land wherever suitable and affordable. Some bought land in *colonias* on an installment basis (3-5 years) but they encountered difficulties due to crop price fluctuation and natural disasters. Needless to say, site selection, and the selection of suitable crops and appropriate growing techniques were essential for the farmers' financial success. In this regard Saibara realized the importance of agricultural research.

8. Saibara in the Amazon

The devastation caused by the Great Tokyo Earthquake combined with the new measures taken by Japanese Government to facilitate immigration to Brazil caused a dramatic increase in Japanese immigrant arrivals. The numbers and success of the Japanese in Brazil, particularly in São Paulo State, began to cause resentment among the Brazilian Caucasian elite and in October 1923, Fidélis Reis of the Brazilian National Congress submitted a draft law restricting the immigration of coloured people into Brazil. This prompted Japanese Ambassador Taduke, to focus on other states and he sent Ryoji Noda to the Amazon on a field survey in 1924.[61]

The Governor of Pará offered a huge tract of land in 1925,[62] which was accepted by the Japanese Government who nominated Kanegafuchi Textile Company (*Kanebo*) to undertake development. *Kanebo* sent a research mission to Pará in 1926 to carry out a feasibility study, which

was actively facilitated by Ambassador Taduke.[63] Finally, *Kanebo* established *Nambei Takushoku*: or *Nantaku* (South America Colonization Company) in Tokyo on 11 August 1928 and *Nantaku* formed a Brazilian subsidiary, *Companhia Niponica de Plantação da Brasil* in January 1929. The Pará State Government granted 600,000 ha in Acará (Tomé-Açu) to *Nantaku* and the first batch of 189 Japanese immigrants was sent in 1929.

Nantaku initially planned to grow cocoa in the Acará *colonia* but as this takes four years to mature, the immigrants had to grow rice and vegetables for consumption and sale[64] and *Nantaku* needed an expert to teach rice and vegetable cultivation.

Hachiro Fukuhara, President of *Nantaku*, together with some friends in New York City established the Co-operative of South American Enterprises. Fukuhara scouted for land in the Amazon and in 1926 bought 2,770 ha in Castanhal, Pará, 60 km east of Belém, from an Italian who had grown sugar cane and distilled rum for US$ 25,608.[65] In 1929, Fukuhara decided to convert the farm in Castanhal, into *Nantaku*'s research station and began looking for a suitable expert on rice and other crops and, probably on the recommendation of Ryoji Noda, approached Saibara.[66]

9. Change in Saibara's Focus on Emigration —— Agricultural Research

Saibara was appointed manager of the *Nantaku* agricultural research station, moved to Castanhal with his wife in 1929 and recruited Haruyoshi Kataoka as his assistant.[67] In 1930 Fukuhara purchased several hundred ha of adjacent land to grow wet rice using American large-scale farming techniques and Saibara took charge of this project.[68] Unfortunately, due to the low price of rice in the Amazon this project failed so Saibara refocused on research to support *Nantaku*'s emigration project in Acará.

Acará *colonia* was 70 km southeast of Belém, one day's journey by boat. The Japanese immigrants obtained provisions from the *Nantaku* company store, which was expensive due to transportation, so they cleared jungle to plant rice and vegetables for subsistence. Saibara's rice trials at the research station produced excellent yields and the immigrants he taught in the Acará *colonia* also yielded good results. Unfortunately, rice was an unfamiliar food to the residents in Belém and the price dropped due to oversupply.[69]

Thereafter the immigrants grew vegetables for market in Belém but like rice, vegetables were not that popular. However, with the help of Conde Koma (Mitsuyo Maeda), a respected Judo expert in Belém, and his British wife, Daisy May Iris,[70] the popularity and sale of vegetables increased gradually, which helped the immigrants survive.

Nantaku continued to send Japanese immigrants to Acará until the 1930s, but the hard labour, lack of amenities, malaria and economic uncertainty led to conflict. The agreement between *Nantaku* and the immigrants stipulated that they had to pay 30% of their sales to *Nantaku*, which was impractical. An impasse ensued; with the immigrants refusing to harvest rice in Acará *colonia* unless the tenant fees were waived. *Nantaku*, facing financial difficulties, was forced to concede.[71)]

As the Japanese community in Acará increased, the need for a Japanese consulate became an issue and in March 1930, Ryoji Noda volunteered to serve in Belém for one year to look after the immigrants in the Amazon.[72)] By this time disputes between the immigrants and *Nantaku* had become serious and many had already left Acará. Noda's experience with immigrant labour issues made him a valuable addition to the station at Belém. The temporary presence of a Japanese consular official in Belém continued until the consulate opened on 10 August 1934.

At the time of *Nantaku*'s financial difficulties, Saibara's health began to deteriorate and in about 1931 he resigned from the research station and moved to Santa Isabel do Pará, 40 km northeast of Belém, and started growing vegetables and fruit. Saibara was now 70 years old, his health continued to deteriorate, and he and his wife finally decided to return to Webster, Texas at the end of July 1932.

Meanwhile, Kataoka, who had continued to work at the Castanhal research station, began to conduct experiments into pepper[73)] cultivation using seedlings brought to Acará from Singapore in July 1933, by Makinosuke Usui, a *Nantaku* immigrant supervisor.[74)] The seedlings were brought to Singapore from Johore, Malaya and handed personally to Usui by Zensho Teruya, a Japanese agricultural Research Officer based in Singapore.[75)] Following Teruya's detailed instructions Usui carefully nurtured the 20 seedlings on board the ship, some survived the long sea voyage from Singapore to Belém and two seedlings were received alive at Acará. From this precarious genetic base, Kataoka successfully propagated sufficient nursery stock to commence field planting in Acará *colonia*. After World War II, Kataoka opened a very successful pepper plantation in Castanhal, remaining there until his death in 1962 at the age of 83. Subsequently pepper became the most successful industry in Acará and by the 1950s Brazil, was ranked fourth in world pepper production, a position, which it still holds today.

V. Search for New Destinations

1. Saibara's Passion to Promote Japanese Emigration

Had Saibara and his wife been planning to stay in the U.S., they should have applied for U.S. re-entry permits before departing Texas. In addition, during their time in Brazil they should have

renewed their U.S. re-entry permits annually at an American consulate in Brazil.[76] They did neither; presumably because they intended to emigrate to Brazil permanently.

When Saibara returned to Texas in early August 1932, he was diagnosed to have an aneurysm in his larynx, which his doctor informed him was likely to prove fatal.[77] At his age, one would have expected him to remain in Webster to live out his days with his family. Instead, Saibara left Galveston for Japan via Los Angeles after a stay of less than a week, embarking 16 August 1932 on the same ship, the *Rio de Janeiro Maru*,[78] that had brought he and his wife from Brazil.

Saibara's abrupt departure from Texas, almost certainly due to his nomination to join a Japanese Government feasibility study into emigration to Manchuria and re-embarking on the *Rio de Janeiro Maru*, which was still at Galveston was the quickest option.[79] He passed through the Panama Canal and arrived in Japan two weeks later, on 31 August 1932 and stayed in Tokyo for a month meeting old acquaintances. One of these was Ryutaro Nagai, who now as Minister of Colonial Affairs was responsible for the Manchuria project. Nagai had been one of the students at Doshisha University strongly critical of the selection of Saibara as the University President on the grounds that he had insufficient knowledge of Christianity, which eventually led to Saibara leaving Japan for the United States, some 30 years earlier. During a welcoming reception in Tokyo, Nagai publicly apologized to Saibara for his behavior, and when Saibara left for Korea and Manchuria to carry out the study, Nagai arranged an escort of seven soldiers to accompany him.

The Japanese Government established *Manchukuo* (Manchuria) on 1 March 1932 as a puppet state and planned to send large numbers of immigrants there. For Colonial Affairs Minister Nagai, Saibara was the ideal person to endorse the Manchuria immigration plan and most likely Nagai cabled Saibara in Brazil or Texas to enlist his support. How much Saibara knew about Nagai's plans prior to his arrival in Tokyo is unclear but Saibara believed that he could contribute to Japan by evaluating the feasibility of Japanese emigration to Manchuria although ultimately concluding it was unsuitable.

At the end of October 1932 he delivered a lecture on agriculture in Brazil at Seoul University. He travelled to Manchuria by rail and must have arrived in early November, when it would have been cold and harvest of local crops; soya beans, sorghum, maize and wheat was completed.

On his return to Japan, despite the Government's high expectations, Saibara advised that immigration to Manchuria would be a disaster; emphasizing that rice could not be grown and Japanese farmers had no experience of the crops grown there and would find it impossible to integrate with Manchurian society and culture.

2. Next Destination —— Philippines?

On his return to Tokyo, Saibara met his friend Teijiro Yamamoto, a prominent politician who had served as Minister of Agriculture and Commerce. Yamamoto was President of the Taiwan Sugar Manufacturing Company in Pingtung, 20 km east of Kaohsiung. They discussed Japanese overseas emigration, and Saibara decided to go to Taiwan in 1933 at the age of 73 and take up Yamamoto's offer of 2 ha in the company farm. Saibara had his son send him some Blue Rose variety rice seeds from Webster, Texas, which he then multiplied and distributed to various agricultural stations, and he expected that this would result in a significant increase in the Taiwanese rice yield. Meanwhile, Saibara engaged in research to develop a new rice variety suitable for a planned Japanese settlement in the Philippines and carried out research on vegetables; exporting tomatoes, eggplants and pumpkins to Japan and China. He encouraged various friends to join him and his sister-in-law, Takako, went to Taiwan from the Kochi District to look after him. The 2 ha plot on the farm was free but Saibara invested considerable sums of his own cash in the project and as the revenue earned exporting vegetables to Japan and China was insufficient, had to ask his son, Kiyoaki, to send him money from Texas.[80)]

Since the early 1910s, large number of Japanese had been engaged in the abaca (Manila hemp) industry in Davao, Philippines but under a revision of Public Act No. 926 (New Land Act) of 1919, the Filipino government restricted land ownership by foreigners. Under this revision, foreigners were only allowed to own land through a corporate entity with 60% Filipino ownership. Prior to the Land Act revision, many Japanese abaca planters had leased land (with leases up to 50 years) and sub-leased plots to smaller Japanese abaca farmers. But under the revised law, sub-leasing was illegal and the inflow of Japanese immigrants virtually ceased in the early 1930s. In addition the Philippines achieved self-governance from the United States on 15 November 1935 leading to full independence within 10 years. This political evolution towards independence ignited Filipino nationalism at the same time as Japanese aggression in China provoked anti-Japanese sentiments in the Philippines and throughout Southeast Asia.

Undoubtedly, Saibara was aware that land ownership issues made his proposed settlement project in the Philippines no longer feasible, nevertheless he continued his agricultural research in Taiwan until he returned to Japan in June 1937. He was 75 years old and his health had continued to deteriorate.

Saibara visited Doshisha University in Kyoto and his friends in the Kochi District, before leaving on his final trip to the U.S. on 22 September 1937. Prior to his departure he experienced one last difficulty with U.S. immigration authorities in securing a visa, but with the help of his

influential friends, Nagai and Noda, his visa was approved by the American Consulate in Kobe. He finally rejoined his family in Webster, Texas where he died on 11 April 1939 at the age of 77. He is buried at the Fairview Cemetery, Clear Lake, near Webster, Texas.

3. EPILOGUE

Since the Meiji Restoration in 1868 the Japanese Government had encouraged overseas emigration to alleviate the poverty and unemployment caused by overpopulation and limited agricultural land. From the late 19th century to the early 20th century many Japanese emigrated to East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia, the South Pacific, Hawaii, North America, South America and the Caribbean. Most of them were labourers who came out with nothing and worked at their destinations for a few years, before returning home as soon as they saved some money.

Saibara's emigration to Texas in 1903 was different. He was an educated man and brought funds with him with the intention of investing in his new homeland by establishing a Japanese settlement integrated with local society, and wished to live there permanently. Although his operations in Texas were financially successful he realized that he could not achieve his objective due to the immigration policy set by the U.S. Government, and in 1917 decided to move to Brazil.

Although Brazil had a more liberal immigration policy, Saibara failed to realize his ultimate objective of creating a permanent Japanese community due to a combination of adverse factors. By the time he started operations in Brazil his funds were limited and successive poor harvests due to crop selection, unfamiliar business practices and climate, rapidly depleted his reserves. Finally after the failure of his last farming venture in Brazil and his health deteriorating, Saibara decided that he could contribute more to the welfare of Japanese immigrants by concentrating on agricultural research.

Saibara was trained as a lawyer, not an agriculturist or in any other related science, and the only experience of rice growing practice before he emigrated was obtained on his father's farm in Kochi, Japan but today in Texas he is remembered for introducing significant improvements to existing agricultural practice for wet rice. In particular seed improvement, irrigation and drainage. The website for Webster, Texas, states:

"In 1903, Seito Saibara settled in Webster and established a small farming community of Japanese Christians. Saibara and his son, Kiyoaki established the foundations of what became the rice industry of the U.S. Gulf Coast."[81)]

Some of Saibara's farm was taken over by NASA and is today the site of the Johnson Space Centre. The proximity of the Saibara Farm to the Space Industry resulted in Kiyoaki Saibara

meeting the astronaut John Glenn in the early 1960s and this meeting revealed a hitherto unrecorded contribution made by Saibara to healing post-war relations between the U.S. and Japan.

The Houston Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League reported:

"When Kiyoaki Saibara had an opportunity to meet world-renowned astronaut, John Glenn in the early 1960s, the Webster rice farmer had a small request. Glenn, the first American to orbit the earth, was about to leave on a goodwill trip to Japan and Saibara asked him, "Colonel Glenn, when you get to Japan, if you should meet the Emperor, would you give him my regards?" Glenn later said he seriously doubted that Emperor Hirohito would recognize the farmer's name, but he honored Kiyoaki's request in Japan and asked the emperor if he knew a Mr. Kiyoaki Saibara in Webster, Texas. "The emperor immediately flashed a big smile and said, 'How is my dear friend, Mr. Saibara?'" It later transpired that Kiyoaki Saibara had devoted a great deal of time to strengthening relations between his native Japan and the United States after World War II. Ambassadors visiting the United States from Japan were known to stop by Webster to catch up on relations between the two countries before going to Washington, D.C."[82)]

At first the author had doubted the validity of this story but after discovering that Kiyoaki had been granted a solo audience with Emperor Hirohito in 1957 arranged by former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida,[83)] and seeing a photograph of the robe given to Kiyoaki by the Emperor,[84)] believed this episode to be true.

After Saibara failed to achieve his own objectives in Brazil, he took over as chief of Nantaku's research station in Castanhal, Acará in the lower Amazon. At Castanhal he employed, Yoshiharu Kataoka, as his assistant. Kataoka had been Saibara's assistant for many years prior to moving to the Amazon and he continued to work in the research station after Saibara left in 1932. Kataoka had gained considerable practical experience from Saibara and put it to good use when he received the two remaining live pepper seedlings brought from Singapore by Usui in 1933. Kataoka gradually built up sufficient planting stock to commence field planting. This was the beginning of the pepper industry in Brazil. After the war, pepper cultivation became the biggest industry in Acará, and by the 1950s Brazil was the fourth largest pepper producing country in the world, a position, which Brazil still holds today.

After leaving Brazil, Saibara was recruited by the Japanese Government to carry out a feasibility study on the proposed Government-sponsored migration scheme to Manchuria. However, despite the Government's earlier predictions that Manchuria would absorb thousands of immigrants he concluded that it was not a suitable country for Japanese emigration.

In Taiwan, Saibara continued to carry out research (much of this at his own expense) into improving the rice planting stock in Taiwan originally with the intention of developing seed for his proposed project in the Philippine and asked his son, Kiyoaki, to send him some *Blue Rose* variety rice seeds from Webster, Texas for this purpose.

Saibara rejoined his family in Webster, Texas in 1937 and died there on 11 April 1939 at the age of 77.

In 1953, after the revision of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, Kiyoaki Saibara became the first Japanese American in Texas to be naturalized. Finally, the ambitions of Seito Saibara for the complete integration of his family into American society had been achieved.

VI. Summary

This paper is an account of the life of Seito Saibara, 1861-1939, a Japanese philanthropist who spent most of his life promoting emigration as a means of alleviating poverty and unemployment in Japan. In 1903 he emigrated to Texas and established a permanent Japanese settlement in which efforts were made to further the integration of immigrants with the local community. In Texas and the U.S. Gulf States he is recognized as laying the foundations of the rice industry. Disappointed by the refusal of the U.S. to grant him citizenship, in 1917 he relocated to Brazil where restrictions on immigration were more flexible but due to insufficient capital, unfamiliar climate, crops and business practices, Saibara struggled and his Brazilian ventures failed. In 1929 he was employed to run an agricultural research station in the Amazon. In 1932, his health failing, he and his wife, returned to Texas but less than a week after his arrival, he left alone for Tokyo to participate in a study for an emigration scheme to Manchuria. Later he moved to Taiwan to develop a new variety of rice. He went back to Texas in 1937 where he died in 1939.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Tom Parker of Houston, Texas who took him to the site of Saibara's farm and his grave at the Fairview Cemetery in Clear Lake. Tom, along with the author's daughter, Yuko Shimomoto, provided valuable suggestions and helped with editing. Masayuki Fukasawa, Chief Editor of *Diario Brasil Nippo*, and Kenji Matsuzaka of *Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros*, kindly sent the author many books on Japanese immigrants in Brazil. Lastly my grateful thanks to Ross Ibbotson and Fr. Cosmas Lee of Sabah, Malaysia who condensed and edited the final version of this paper.

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10）Mamiya, *op. cit*., pp.419-421.

11）Walls, *op. cit*., p.76.

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15）The Gentlemen's Agreement became fully effective on 18 February 1908.

16）Ino, *op. cit*., p.116.

17）Mamiya, *op. cit*., p.344. Table X-8.

18）Ino, *op. cit*., p.330.

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73）*Piper nigrum*, pepper vine, originally from Kerala, India.

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（しももと　ゆたか）

西原清東：日本人移民入植地建設の先駆者

下 元　豊

キーワード：稲作、テキサス、日本人移民入植地、ブラジル、作物栽培試験

戦前移民の多くは移住先で金を貯め、できるだけ早く故郷に錦を飾って帰ることを目的としており（錦衣帰郷）、現地に永住する考えをもつ者はほとんどいなかった。ところが西原清東は永住を目的として 1903 年テキサスに移住、日本人移民の居留地を建設しようとした。かねてより西原は日本の貧困、失業問題の解決には海外移住が不可欠で、しかも単なる出稼ぎではなく現地に永住・同化する必要があると考えていた。その実践のため西原は、弁護士、同志社大学総長、衆議院議員という経歴をすべて投げうち、日本での財産もすべて処分しテキサスで米作を始めた。

西原は新品種を導入し米の増産に成功、テキサスにおける米作発展に大いに貢献し「ライス・キング」とも呼ばれたほどである。ただ、西原のテキサス移住の目的は経済的成功もさることながら、永住・現地同化型の日本人居留地の建設にあった。しかし、1790 年帰化法が障害となり、西原だけでなく他の日本人も米国市民権を得ることができなかった。しかも 1907 年の日米紳士協定により日本人移民を制限し始めたことから西原は米国での日本人居留地の建設を諦め、大量の日本人移民を受け入れているブラジルでの日本人居留地の建設をめざし転住した。

ブラジルでは気候、作物、文化、言語、商習慣などの違いもあり、西原の事業はうまくいかず経済的に困窮した。西原は高齢となっていたこともあり日本人居留地の建設を諦め、その農業経験を生かしベレン郊外のカスタニヤールにある南米拓殖株式会社の農事試験場で農作物（ことに稲作）の栽培試験・技術指導を同社のアカラ植民地の移民のために行った。しかし、高齢で体力的な衰えもあり妻とともにテキサスに帰国した。

ところがテキサスに帰国して 1 週間もたたないうちに西原は日本に出発した。これは日本政府が目論んでいる満州移住計画に、「ライス・キング」、政治家、教育者としての評判の高い西原のお墨付きを得たいという拓務大臣の依頼によるものとみられる。しかし、満州移住計画は西原の理想とする日本人居留地建設とは相反するもので、西原は満州を移住先としては不適としている。その後西原は台湾に移り稲の品種改良に励み、台湾の稲作振興に寄与した。しかし、高齢で健康面の衰えもあり、テキサスに帰国し家族と余生を過ごすことになった。この西原の生き方は戦前移民のなかでは異色とも言えるものである。