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Building a Morally Respectable Nation:

Examining Japanese Foreign Policy through Ebara Soroku; 1913-1922

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Oberlin College, Class of 2022

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Introduction.....	6
Chapter 1: Ebara Soroku’s different identities; 1842-1912	19
Ebara as a samurai	19
Ebara as a Christian	25
Ebara as an educator	30
Ebara as a politician.....	32
Chapter 2: Ebara in America—Exporting moral respectability to the United States; 1913	37
Chapter 3: Japanese YMCA’s Relief Program—or Ebara’s independent assertion of moral respectability; 1914-1922.....	57
Conclusion: What would a morally respectable nation look like?: Reimagining moral respectability in Japanese foreign policy	75
Bibliography	81

Acknowledgements

History, along with PE, was my least favorite subject in high school. Like I did not enjoy running under the scorching heat, I did not enjoy memorizing what year Commodore Perry arrived in Japan. How would an eighteen-year-old react to the fact that I am writing the Acknowledgements section of my eighty-page thesis on history? During the hard times writing this thesis, there was an uncountable number of people whom I received support and who deserve appreciation. I would like to use this space to express my gratitude before starting the thesis.

First of all, I would like to thank my thesis advisors Professor Annemarie Sammartino and Professor Sheila Miyoshi Jager, for offering your time to meet me every week to improve my drafts. I appreciate the History Department that accommodated my special circumstance, where I was not able to find an appropriate thesis advisor within the department. Professor Jager from the East Asian Studies Department agreed to be my unofficial advisor, while Professor Sammartino, now the Chair of the History Department, was my official advisor. After all, it was invaluable to have two thesis advisors because I was able to obtain two different perspectives on my thesis.

I was able to ask both of them to be my advisors without hesitation because I knew them well before my senior year. Professor Sammartino's first-year seminar *FYSP154: Freud's Vienna* was revolutionary for an eighteen-year-old who hated history classes in high school. Despite the rigorous workload, I truly felt the intellectual joy in learning the history of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna from different aspects: psychoanalysis, geography, gender, art and music, and so on. As a science person in high school, majoring in History came as a surprise to my parents, friends, and especially myself.

I first knew Professor Jager working as her research assistant, translating Japanese sources on the Russo-Japanese War into English. After working for her remotely for a year during the COVID pandemic, I met her in person in her class *HIST367: The Other Great Game* in Spring 2021 for the first time. This course provided a thorough understanding of East Asian history from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, the topic on which my thesis focuses. Professor Jager's class prompted me to reflect upon my identity as a Japanese through the history of Japanese imperialism. This thesis is part of my continuous self-reflection and space for contemplating my responsibilities.

My thesis coordinator Professor Renee Romano was a supportive mentor who gave me constructive feedback every week. She encouraged me, the worst planner, to plan out a schedule for writing the thesis, and her weekly assignments forced me to keep up with my work. Even though I first met her in the fall of my senior year in her class *HIST435: Museums*, it feels like I have known her since my first year at Oberlin. I am genuinely grateful to have her as my thesis coordinator.

I was interested in researching an individual historical figure thanks to Professor Tania Boster's *HIST214: Oberlin Oral History* of Spring 2020, which changed my view on studying and writing history. Through the methodology of oral history, I learned that history could be told from the voice of an underrepresented personality. This course led me to search for a historical figure in my hometown, Numazu, Japan, on Google, where Ebara Soroku, the subject of my thesis, came up. In *HIST299: Introduction to Historical Methods* of Spring 2021, I wrote a proposal for an *imaginary* final project, which became the foundation of a *real* thesis, entitled "Ebara Soroku's Liberalism as the Intersection of Confucianism and Christianity."

I would like to thank Alex Copetas, the one and only comrade of the honors seminar. I knew Alex before my senior year, but I rarely talked with him despite being in two same classes. Although he was working on an entirely different topic from mine—the organization of mineworkers in the early 20th century West Virginia—, we supported each other by providing comments every week. Thank you for working with me, and good luck with your future career.

I would like to appreciate the archivists of the Numazu City Archives of Meiji History for showing valuable primary sources of Ebara Soroku. Without their contribution to maintaining the sources in clean condition and promoting Ebara Soroku's history to the local people, my research would not have been possible. I was able to use the ample funds that I have received from the Frederick B. Artz Honors Student Research Grant to complete my research in Numazu and the National Diet Library in Tokyo, Japan, in January 2022.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents, who have raised me and supported me for the last twenty-two years. As a first-generation international student, I could not have completed my four years in college without your love and support.

Commemorating the centennial anniversary of Ebara Soroku's death,

Oberlin, Ohio

May 2022

Introduction

Seinen Soku Mirai (青年即未来) or “Youth is immediately the future”—this was Ebara Soroku’s (江原素六, 1842-1922) vision of building the nation.¹ As the founder and the president of the Azabu Junior High School in 1895, Ebara always believed that the young people led the nation. Sharing a dormitory with his students, Ebara taught to them and learned with them what he considered the most important value in life: morality. His belief has been handed down to generations of students in the form of the motto of the Azabu School.

Ebara embodied the moral values that he taught to his students. Every day, he woke up at 5 in the morning, read the Bible, and did morning prayers.² After a busy day as the school president and a politician, he went to a communal bath with his students, took a class on the Bible with his students, finished his work of the day, and was asleep by 10 p.m.³ Ebara’s punctual lifestyle was his way of cultivating his morality on a daily basis so that he could overcome his spiritual flaws. Ebara demonstrated the ideal moral values to the students and people around him by practicing it. Although it is difficult to specify what he wanted to achieve throughout his disciplined life, it is certain that he considered his life as an everlasting process of moral reform.

Situating Ebara Soroku as the subject, this thesis first examines how his morality was formed by his different identities. Ebara was an ex-samurai, an educator, a Christian leader, and a politician of the Meiji and Taishō periods in Japan. The thesis portrays the complex ways in

¹ In this thesis, Japanese names are written in the order of last name, first name, with the exception of author names in footnotes and bibliography.

² Masumi Tsuji 辻真澄, *Ebara Soroku* 江原素六 (Numazu: Eibundō Shoten, 1985), 158.

³ Shirō Katō 加藤史郎, *Ebara Soroku no Shōgai* 江原素六の生涯 [Ebara Soroku’s Life] (Tokyo: Azabu Bunko, 2003), 191-192.

which his moral ideas were formulated. However, the scope of this thesis is broader than a biography. The thesis is primarily interested in investigating how Ebara navigated Japan's international relations between 1913 and 1922. It focuses on such a specific time frame since it studies how Ebara responded to the 1913 Alien Land Law, the First World War (1914-18), and the Siberian Intervention (1918-22). Ebara was involved in all of these international events as an individual who understood the world differently from the Japanese government. He insisted on seeing the world through a moral perspective, and he responded to these events using his approach of "moral respectability."

This thesis uses the term "moral respectability" to describe Ebara's approach of showcasing Japan's ideal moral image both to the Western powers and to the Japanese state. Ebara was concerned about what he saw as a lack of morality for many Japanese people, which he worried would lead to a lack of moral strength for the Japanese nation. He stated that "having many people with high moral characters is the one big element in enriching the people and strengthening the nation."⁴ For Ebara, who felt the dire need to strengthen Japan so that it can compare equally with the Western powers, it was vital to educating the Japanese people in "proper" morality. Ebara's concept of moral respectability shares similarities with the "politics of respectability," or "respectability politics," a term that scholars of Black history use to explain "a philosophy promulgated by black elites to 'uplift the race' by correcting the 'bad' traits of the black poor."⁵ Ebara similarly believed that Japan, as a nation and as a race, could be strengthened by correcting the "bad" traits of the Japanese people. The term "moral respectability" used in this thesis, nevertheless, distinguishes itself from the politics of

⁴ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, *Isogaba Maware 急がば廻れ* [Haste makes Waste] (Tokyo: Tōadō Shobō, 1918), 184.

⁵ Fredrick C. Harris, "The Rise of Respectability Politics" *Dissent* 61:1 (Winter 2014): 33.

respectability. While the politics of respectability was mobilized by Black elites as a tool to “prove to white America that blacks were worthy of full citizenship rights” during the Civil Rights Movement, Ebara used the concept to try to prove the worthiness of Japanese to other countries.⁶ However, moral respectability consisted of more than a mere language for Ebara. It was his life itself that represented a process of constant cultivation of morality.

This thesis argues that Ebara used his strategy of moral respectability aimed to present Japan as one of the great powers in the world and to indicate a moral vision of the Japanese nation to the Japanese state. On the one hand, Ebara mobilized morality as a rhetorical device to showcase Japan’s power in the international arena as a means to promote Japan’s interest as an empire. On the other hand, he provided a moral vision of Japan’s modernization process in catching up with the Western powers by embodying the morality in his life and philosophy. In this regard, Ebara’s use of the strategy of moral respectability was distinct from the approach that the Japanese government introduced to strengthen its nation. Hence, Ebara’s worldview offers a unique way of examining how his moral value was shaped and applied, and moreover, it provides an understanding of Japanese foreign policy in the early 20th century from an alternative perspective.

Ebara has been overlooked by historians as a historical figure who is worth researching. In my hometown Numazu, many elementary and junior high schools use Ebara’s life and personality as educational resources for teaching students the importance of moral and ethical values. However, Ebara remains a minor character in scholarship of modern Japanese history. In fact, only a few historians have explored him and his philosophy as subjects of their research. For example, Mizutani Yuri’s paper on Ebara’s idea of *Shūyō* (修養, “self-cultivation of moral

⁶ Ibid.

character”) examines his moral philosophy as his response to the lack of moral and religious development of the Japanese people after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05.⁷ Even though Mizutani provides an insight to Ebara’s moral values and their relationship with political and intellectual discourse of the Meiji period (1868-1912), she does not discuss how they were applied to politics in the Taishō period (1912-26). This thesis, on the contrary, highlights Ebara’s understanding of international politics in the Taishō period through his moral worldview, which has not been extensively discussed by any historians so far.

This thesis specifically focuses on the Ebara’s engagement with Japanese foreign policy in the 1910s, which can be described as a series of Japan’s imperial expansionism in East Asia despite the rise in political activism in Japan. Starting with Japan’s annexation of Korea in 1910, Japan expanded its imperial reach in East Asia in the 1910s by the siege of Qingdao, a part of the Shandong peninsula in China, in 1914 and the presentation of the Twenty-One Demands to China in 1915, which demanded, among other rights, the increase of Japan’s control over Manchuria and Inner Mongolia.⁸ On the other hand, the 1910s saw a surge in political activism in Japan, the time period which is known as the Taishō Democracy (大正デモクラシー). *Goken Undō* (護憲運動), which advocated for defending constitutional politics, gained popularity during the Taishō Democracy in response to military expansionism in the Japanese Army.⁹ Demand for constitutional democracy among the Japanese people echoed an international

⁷ Yuri Mizutani, “Nichiro Sengo ni okeru Kokumin Yōsei no Kadai to ‘Shūyō’ —Ebara Soroku no Shūyōron wo Chūshin ni— 日露戦後における国民養成の課題と「修養」—江原素六の修養論を中心に— [Mission of Developing the Citizens after the Russo-Japanese War and “Shūyō” —with a Focus on Ebara Soroku’s Theory of Shūyō—], *Ochanomizu Shigaku* 64 (March 2021): 1-26.

⁸ Shinichi Kitaoka, *The Political History of Modern Japan: Foreign Relations and Domestic Politics*, trans. Robert D. Eldridge and Graham Leonard (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2018), 89.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

transformation of power dynamics, which was represented by the establishment of the League of Nations in 1920 and the Washington Conference in 1921, where the great powers agreed to respect Chinese sovereignty.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Japan still implemented its expansionist project in Siberia during the Siberian Intervention, aiming an expansion of its imperial reach to the north.

This thesis considers morality as a medium that Ebara navigated Japan's international relations in the 1910s. Historians have situated morality in the Japanese foreign policy in the Taishō period as a rhetorical device that the Japanese government employed to assert dominance over other countries, both in forms of imperialism and consolidation of Japan's presence in the international arena. For instance, historian Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka claims that moral language played an influential role in Japanese expansionism in East Asia of the 1910s. After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan started to administer the Southern Manchurian Railway (SMR) under the leadership of Baron Gōtō Shinpei (後藤新平). The SMR was important for Japan to support its colonial interests in Manchuria against the United States. In implementing its foreign policy in Manchuria, Japan made, Matsusaka argues, “[a]ltruistic efforts to improve public health and education [that] strengthened Japan's moral authority in Manchuria.”¹¹ Matsusaka continues that this reinforcement of moral authority “represented a cultural struggle as much as a political, economic, and military rivalry” with other great powers, notably the United States.¹² Thereby, Japan showed itself as a morally respectable empire to the West, for it was always concerned about the Western gaze in expanding its territory in East Asia.

¹⁰ Ibid., 110.

¹¹ Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904-1932* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 183.

¹² Ibid.

Frederick R. Dickinson analyzes how moral language was so malleable that it was mobilized by both proponents and opponents of Japanese militarism during the First World War to create a form of Japanese morality in order to catch up with the Western powers. Many Japanese politicians believed that it was inevitable to introduce party politics to reject an authoritarian government in the mid-1910s, German triumphs in Europe meanwhile provided a strong reason for authoritarian rule. Japanese military officials who were convinced by the superior influence of German militarism, such as Tanaka Giichi (田中義一), used phrases like “national character” and “national morality” to overcome weaknesses of party politics by military strength.¹³ Nevertheless, proponents of party politics also employed a moral narrative in asserting the necessity of, quoting Japanese political thinker Yoshino Sakuzō’s (吉野作造) words, “learn[ing] the strong points of Anglo-Saxon civilization and build[ing] a noble and complete, gentlemanly national character.”¹⁴ Referring to Western modernity, they attempted to form moral values that gestured Japan’s respectability to the Western powers. The rhetoric of morality was used to justify the need for authoritarian rule and party politics, which were incompatible political systems.

Despite the different perspectives from which they view Japanese foreign policy in the early 20th century, Matsusaka and Dickinson both agree that in the 1910s, moral language was a significant instrument in representing Japan as a morally superior country to the great powers of the West. However, the scope of this thesis extends Matsusaka and Dickinson’s discussions. Ebara offers a different lens for understanding how morality was applied in the history of Japanese foreign policy. His strategy of moral respectability was not only a matter of language

¹³ Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914-1919* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 118.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 119.

that he used but the ways in which he lived through his history as an educator who taught his students moral values, as a politician who demonstrated Japan's moral respectability, and as a person who practiced his moral values daily. Since existing literature has been only focused on the use of morality by the Japanese government, it has ignored how an individual figure can illuminate the roles that morality played in understanding how Japan dealt with international relations in the 1910s. In this thesis, therefore, I restore Ebara as a historical figure who contributed to the discussion of Japanese foreign policy from a unique and personal position.

Morality held a special meaning for Ebara who lived with different identities. For Japanese Christians who were ex-samurais like Ebara, the treatment of Neo-Confucian and Christian ideas were essential in forming their moral identities. Historians have debated the role of Confucianism in the formation of moral values of Japanese Christians. Many Japanese Christians in the Meiji and Taishō periods were ex-samurais who converted to Christianity after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, and Ebara was one of them. For them, it was crucial to deal with Confucianism, which formed the foundation of the moral and ethical values of samurais, in the journey of establishing a new form of Christian faith.

Historian Helen Ballhatchet points out that Kozaki Hiromichi, a Japanese pastor who converted to Christianity as an ex-samurai in the late 1870s, successfully incorporated the “Japanese spirit” in Christianity without actively inculcating Confucianism in his faith. Kozaki justified the significance of Christian faith by arguing that it strengthens the loyalty to the Japanese Emperor.¹⁵ In this way, he proved that Christianity was compatible with the idea of State Shintoism, which placed the Emperor as the basis of Japan's spirituality. Kozaki's

¹⁵ Helen Ballhatchet, “Confucianism and Christianity in Meiji Japan: The Case of Kozaki Hiromichi,” *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1988): 366.

understanding of the relationship between Christianity and Confucianism was ambivalent. Confucianism, which formed the moral codes of samurais in the Edo period (1603-1868), according to Kozaki, was “an obstacle to Christianity in that ... many were prevented from actual conversation by their attachment to Confucianism,” but a “‘go-between’ to faith in Christianity.”¹⁶ He thought that Confucianism was a medium for achieving Christianity but not an ideal spirituality that one should have.

While Ballhatchet emphasizes the ambivalent position of Confucianism in the formation of Japanese Christianity, historian Jon Thares Davidann states that Confucianism played an essential role in creating the moral code of the Japanese Christians in the Meiji period. Since Confucianism “emphasized the public servant in society,” Japanese Christians found liberal theology, which emphasized “the immanence of Christ in the world and on the call to live out one’s faith in service to society,” as the ideal philosophy that linked Confucianism and their Christian faith.¹⁷ Discovering a similarity in the value of public service, Japanese Christians built their own form of morality by incorporating Confucianism. Whereas Ballhatchet does not place ideological importance in Confucianism in the formulation of Japanese Christianity, Davidann recognizes equal importance in Confucianism and Christianity in the moral values of Japanese Christians of the late 19th century.

This thesis agrees with Davidann that Ebara constructed his moral values through a combination of Confucianism and Christianity. Although Davidann and other historians succeeded in pointing out the amalgamation of Confucianism and Christianity on a theoretical level, they have ignored how they were practically amalgamated. This thesis portrays how Ebara

¹⁶ Ibid., 360.

¹⁷ Jon Thares Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress: The American YMCA in Japan, 1890-1930* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1998), 56.

formed his own moral values through his identities as an educator and a politician through a combination of Confucianism and Christianity. For example, Ebara practiced his moral values of patience and endurance, which incorporated Neo-Confucian and Christian ideas, by disciplining himself under the reverence to both the Japanese Emperor and the Christian God.

In examining Ebara's values and his actions, this thesis heavily relies on primary sources, mainly Ebara's two monographs, speeches and statements, and published articles in various magazines. The two monographs that he had written, *Seinen to Kokka* ("Youth and Nation") and *Isogaba Maware* ("Haste makes waste"), published in 1903 and 1918, respectively, are helpful in exploring his moral values and his future vision of the Japanese nation. *Seinen to Kokka*, which centers the discussion on building a nation based on moral and religious education, illustrates how Ebara envisioned a nation where people cultivate their moral character under Christian education that incorporated Confucian ideas. On the contrary, *Isogaba Maware* discusses various topics, including his view on the link between education and religion (Chapter 2), his involvement in labor movements (Chapter 11), his minimalist lifestyle (Chapter 13), and an autobiography of his early samurai life (Chapter 20). These two sources are valuable because they offer his actual voice on his moral and political ideals.

The thesis also draws on archival sources from the Numazu City Archives of Meiji History (沼津市明治史料館), located in Numazu, Japan. Also known as the Ebara Soroku Memorial Archives, this archive possesses the greatest number of primary sources related to Ebara, from his diary entries to government papers. In this thesis, I used "Ebara Soroku Shi no Danwa (Hainichi Mondai no Ken)" [Mr. Ebara Soroku's Conversation (On the Anti-Japanese Problem)], Ebara's statement of his understanding of US-Japan relations in 1913, and *Rengōgun Imon Jigyō ni Tsuite* [On the Allied Forces Relief Program], an official statement by Ebara on the

purpose of founding the Relief Program, in order to research Ebara's views on international relations in the 1910s.

This research relies on newspapers and magazines to grasp Ebara's actions during these political moments. I used Japanese and English newspapers published in Japan and the United States to get a sense of the timeline of Ebara's movements during his visit to the United States in 1913 to protest the Alien Land Law and how they were viewed by the public. The magazine *Kaitakusha* (開拓者) that was published by the Japanese YMCA was helpful in understanding the Army Relief Campaign, which was led by Ebara during the First World War and the Siberian Intervention, as it recorded details of the program and published journal entries by the members of the relief missions in the battlefields of the war. All the quotes that are used in this thesis from the primary sources written in Japanese are translated by me.

This thesis employs biography as a crucial methodology to indicate that he embodied the notion of moral respectability through his different identities. There are several biographies that were published immediately after Ebara's death in 1922.¹⁸ However, they cannot be considered as secondary sources as they lack in hindsight. The most recent and extensive biography is Katō Shiro's *Ebara Soroku no Shōgai* ("Ebara Soroku's Life"), which was published in 2003. Katō's biography contains rich analyses on Ebara's moral and political thoughts by exploring his words and actions. However, Katō does not examine in depth the

¹⁸ Biographies on Ebara that were published immediately after his death includes: Ebara Soroku Sensei Memorial Association ed. 江原素六先生記念委員会編, *Kurisuchan toshitenō Ebara Soroku Sensei 基督者としての江原素六先生* [Mr. Ebara Soroku as a Christian] (Tokyo: Miyagoshi Shinjirō, 1922); Reiichirō Yūki 結城禮一郎, *Ebara Soroku Sensei 江原素六先生* (Tokyo: Sankeisha Shuppanbu, 1926); Tsutomu Murata 村田勤, *Ebara Soroku Sensei Den 江原素六先生傳* [Biography of Mr. Ebara Soroku] (Tokyo: Sanshōdō, 1935).

political complexities that Ebara faced in the early 20th century, as Katō spends a large part of the book discussing his life as a samurai and a Christian educator.

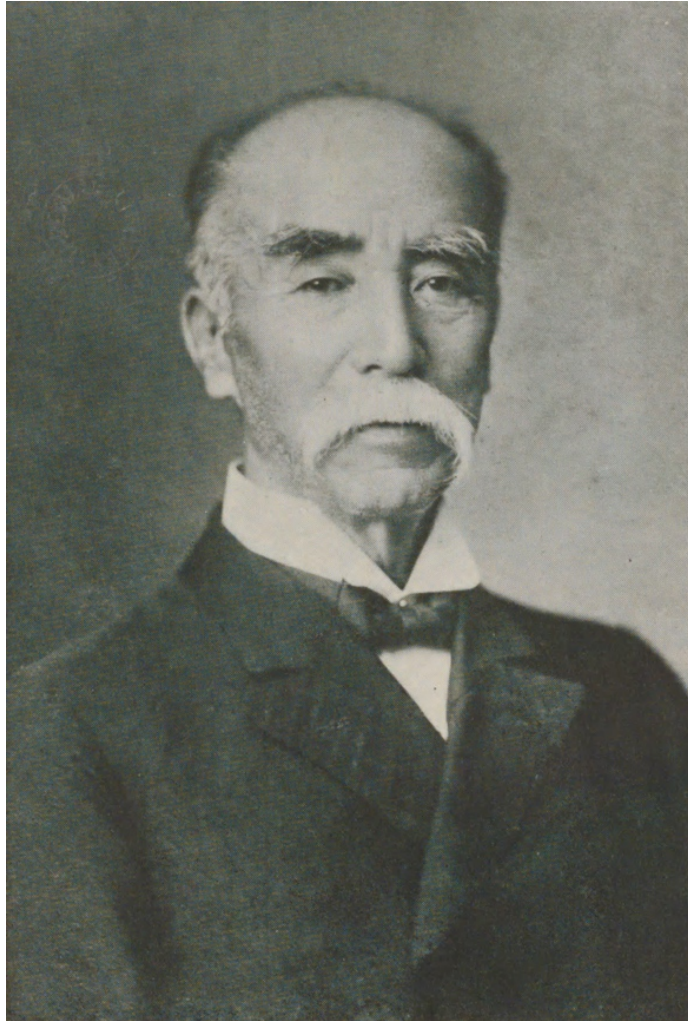
Different from existing biographies on Ebara, the methodology of biography attempts to portray how his moral and spiritual journey embodied the strategy of moral respectability that he took in the 1910s. By illustrating his personalities and experiences as someone who embodied different identities, the first chapter of this thesis shows that Ebara's moral values were formed because of the crystallization of his identities. This is related to his vision of moral respectability because he communicated his moral values to others by practicing them.

After a biographical chapter on Ebara's different identities, the thesis proceeds with case studies on his use of moral respectability in political events that were directly connected to Japan's diplomatic relationship with the Western empires. The politics of moral respectability was Ebara's strategy to strengthen Japan's place in the world by showing Japan as a nation that was morally equivalent or even superior to the Western powers. This strategy was particularly crucial in securing Japan's interests against colonial expansions of the Western empires. Chapter 2, for example, discusses how Ebara employed the politics of moral respectability to oppose the 1913 Alien Land Law of California. Situating its enactment of the Alien Land Law as a pivotal point in intensifying the tension between Japan and the United States, the chapter reveals that Ebara's vision of moral respectability was projected on Japanese immigrants, who were representatives of the Japanese people for the Americans, in the interest of alleviating the tension. Ebara embodied his moral values by educating the Japanese immigrants in them.

On a similar note, Ebara viewed moral respectability as a critical factor for Japan in gaining power on the international stage during the First World War and the Siberian Intervention. His leadership of the Japanese Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) by

supporting soldiers and civilians, which is illustrated in Chapter 3, was also his strategy of moral respectability that aimed to both assert Japan's moral strength over the Western powers and educate his moral values to the Japanese people.

Ebara's strategy of moral respectability demonstrates an individual approach to building a Japanese nation that would not depend on material development. His independent undertaking was distinct from the Japanese government that heavily emphasized on economic development. Ebara's condemnation of economic development was also a criticism of Japan's economic dependency on other great powers in its expansionism. By illustrating that Ebara's moral respectability was connected to Japanese expansionism, this thesis suggests that Ebara envisioned a way for Japan to continue its expansionism project without depending on the economy of other great powers. Following his moral and political values of independence, he was able to indicate the Japanese state a moral pathway to strengthening Japan. In this respect, Ebara broadens up the perspective of examining Japanese foreign policy in the 1910s.



*Figure 1: Ebara Soroku*¹⁹

¹⁹ National Diet Library, “Ebara Soroku,” <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/datas/517/>.

Chapter 1: Ebara Soroku's different identities; 1842-1912

A portrait of George Washington, the Bible, an encyclopedia for samurais, and the Analects of Confucius: these are some of the many objects that Ebara Soroku left in his house in Numazu, Japan when he died in 1922. They also symbolize the many different identities that shaped Ebara's moral values. Being an ex-samurai and a Christian, Ebara's moral views were formed by the amalgamation of Neo-Confucian and Christian values. Based on the idea of moral character shaped by this amalgamation, Ebara educated young Japanese people, whom he anticipated as the future leaders who would be responsible for building Japan as a morally respectable nation. His political philosophy of liberalism finds its origin in his moral pedagogy. Coining the term "rational independence and self-respect" (合理的独立自尊), Ebara pictured a political system of constitutional democracy where individuals independently reformed their own moral characters. It was these moral and political ideas that shaped how Ebara understood and reacted to international relations of the 1910s and that led him to develop his policy of moral respectability.

Ebara as a samurai

Ebara Soroku was born and raised by a family of the samurai class in 1842. His family lived in Tokyo, the capital of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Since his father was a lower-class samurai, his family was in "poverty that they suffered from making a living of every day."¹ To sustain a living of a family of seven, Ebara helped his father to make and sell toothpicks from his early age.² Ebara's father could not think about the education of his son because of the extreme

¹ Masumi Tsuji 辻真澄, *Ebara Soroku 江原素六* (Numazu: Eibundō Shoten, 1985), 5.

² *Ibid.*, 10.

poverty of his family. However, Ebara was able to go to a school with the strong persuasion of his uncle.³

In school, Ebara was trained as a samurai through traditional Confucian values. Confucianism, an ancient Chinese belief system founded by Confucius, was imported into Japan in the 6th century.⁴ It was later integrated with Buddhist and Shinto thoughts as a form of religion.⁵ During the Edo period, however, Confucianism was separated from religious beliefs and transformed into a purely academic discipline that permeated the entire samurai class.⁶ In order to distinguish it from religious values, this discipline was called Neo-Confucianism, or *Shushi-gaku* (朱子学) in Japanese.⁷ It was taught in schools for young samurais as a moral code that every samurai needed to follow.

Like every other samurai, Ebara embraced moral ideas in the form of Neo-Confucianism, namely filial piety and *Shūyō*. Filial piety states that respectability is based on one's age, and one should serve the elders. This value was particularly accentuated in parent-child relationships, where children need to show respect to their parents. Ebara learned the significance of the filial piety from the relationship with his father. When Ebara was little, he was able to play outside with the consent of his father, However, his father was furious when Ebara got back home even a minute late for dinner.⁸ Under his father's strict instructions, Ebara almost never got back late to home.⁹ By following the strong authority of his father, Ebara learned the

³ Ibid., 11.

⁴ Fumiko Fukase-Indergaard and Michael Indergaard, "Religious Nationalism and the Making of the Modern Japanese State," *Theory and Society* 37:4 (August 2008): 350-351.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 352.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Tsuji, 18.

⁹ Ibid.

significance of respecting the senior.

Ebara pictured family as the fundamental basis of moral education “because family is equipped with every element of humanity.”¹⁰ He continued to state that “morality between a parent and a child ... and every other social morality [in familial relationship] is an issue of humanity that one cannot lack.”¹¹ Since he believed that family is the basic unit of human relationships, he concluded that the improvement of family was essential to improving the society and thus the nation.¹² Respecting the elders in familial relationship, therefore, became important in Ebara’s moral values.

Ebara practiced filial piety by serving the Tokugawa Shogunate as his senior. In the end of the Edo period (1603-1868), he sided with the Tokugawa Shogunate Army in opposition to the New Government Army. One episode that shows his reverence toward the Tokugawa Shogunate was, when he was going to Osaka amid of the turmoil after the Tokugawa Shogunate announced the restoration of imperial rule in 1868, Ebara saw two cannons that someone left behind. Knowing that these cannons had been gifted by the French Emperor Napoleon III to the Tokugawa Shogunate, Ebara decided that he could not leave them there because it would be dishonorable for the Shogunate. Hence, he asked workmen to carry them to Osaka.¹³ Even though he was in a hurry to prevent further turmoil in Osaka after the dissolution of the Tokugawa Shogunate, he still cared about the honor of the Shogunate with a slight hope that it would maintain its authority. By showing consistent respect to the Tokugawa Shogunate, Ebara practiced the Neo-Confucian value of filial piety.

¹⁰ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, *Tsūzoku Kōwa: Ukiyo no Omoni* 通俗講話 浮世の重荷 [Popular Lecture: Heavy burdens in a fleeting life] (Tokyo: Isobe Kōyodō, 1915), 216.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 216-217.

¹³ Tsuji, 43.

Another Confucian value that Ebara embraced was *Shūyō* (修養), or the moral cultivation of the mind. Ebara's upbringing in a poor family was significant in forming this moral value. Since Ebara's father was raised without any proper education, he thought that studying makes people poorer. Ebara, who was able to study at *Shōheikō* (昌平黌), one of the top schools with Neo-Confucian traditions, when he was 16, studied harder. However, his father, who did not understand at all the importance of education, did not allow Ebara to turn on the light after sunset in order to use less kerosene.¹⁴ Ebara, therefore, did not waste any time to study and to earn money for his future education without depending on his family.¹⁵ His passion to study independently reflects the value of *Shūyō*, which also encourages a self-cultivation of morality.

According to the teaching of Neo-Confucianism, people should cultivate their spiritual minds towards the principles of Heaven, the logic that rules the entire world that includes the best way to live one's life.¹⁶ In order to cultivate this moral mind, they need to practice benevolence, courtesy, and morality that give spiritual happiness to themselves, their surroundings, and their society.¹⁷ To emphasize the importance of the moral cultivation of the mind, Ebara gives an example of Benjamin Franklin who, according to Ebara, had perfect innate character yet still cultivated his morality: "Even though [Benjamin] Franklin was equipped with virtuous character by nature, he still practiced *Shūyō* assiduously by achieve the perfection by setting the thirteen virtues as the ideal."¹⁸ Like what Franklin had practiced, Ebara encouraged

¹⁴ Ibid., 26.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Fukase-Indergaard and Indergaard, 360.

¹⁷ Gregory K. Ornatowski, "On the Boundary between 'Religious' and 'Secular': The Ideal and Practice of Neo-Confucian Self-Cultivation in Modern Japanese Economic Life," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25:3/4 (Fall 1998): 347.

¹⁸ Ibid., 288. According to Ebara, Benjamin Franklin's thirteen virtues were temperance (節制), silence (沈黙), order (秩序), resolution (確志), frugality (節儉), industry (勤勉), sincerity (誠實), justice (正義), moderation (中庸), cleanliness (清潔), tranquility (寧靜), chastity (貞潔), and humility (謙遜).

people to improve their morality by themselves. In Neo-Confucian thought, self-cultivation of morality was important because the individual cultivation “consisted of character development toward Neo-Confucian virtues in community-centered social relationship.”¹⁹ Therefore, moral self-reform was necessary for building a virtuous society where people can live without conflicts.

Ebara inherited the strict lessons of his father and Neo-Confucian ideas that he learned in schools to form a strong moral value that consisted of filial piety and the self-cultivation of morality. Through this moral view, he envisioned a society in which every person respects the authority and develops their own moral characters. However, traditional Neo-Confucianism brought an issue when ex-samurais converted to Christianity after the Meiji Restoration. Many Japanese Christians were forced to deal with Neo-Confucianism as a non-Western, conservative belief system that seemed to be incompatible with the Western, progressive Christian values. Ebara, who was also an ex-samurai who converted to Christianity, encountered the problem of introducing Christianity to traditional Japanese morality.

¹⁹ Ornatowski, 347.



Figure 2: Ebara in San Francisco, 1871²⁰

²⁰ Ebara Soroku Sensei Kenshōkai ed. 江原素六先生顕彰会編, *Ebara Soroku Monogatari 江原素六ものがたり* [Story of Ebara Soroku] (Numazu: Ebara Soroku Kenshōkai, 1998), 33.

Ebara as a Christian

Samurais have lost their status in the Meiji period, which came after the Edo period. Instead, the new Meiji government was enthusiastic in introducing Western ideas under the aim of modernizing Japan. One of the Western ideas that were brought to Japan in the mid-1800s was Christianity. When Western Christian missionaries began arriving in Japan after its opening in 1853, Ebara developed a close relationship with some of them. In 1877, Ebara, one of the many ex-samurais who tried to adopt Western culture, was baptized by George Marsden Meacham, a Canadian Methodist missionary, in 1877.²¹ Ebara's passionate Christian faith led him to establish the Numazu Church in the same year. Unprecedentedly, he was baptized again in 1881 after recovering from a serious illness because he believed the recovery was made possible because of his Christian faith and thus he wanted to reinforce his faith. In 1882, he quit from his official positions that he held by then, including his role as the president of the Numazu Junior High School and the mayor of the Suntō District in order to work as a missionary of the Methodist church.²² In the beginning of the 20th century, he was one of the most renowned Christian leaders in Japan by becoming the president of the Tokyo YMCA.²³

As a Christian who lived in a traditional Confucian society, he acknowledged the difficulties in introducing Christianity into Japan. One of the difficulties that Japanese Christians

²¹ Shiro Katō, *Ebara Soroku no Shōgai* (江原素六の生涯), (Tokyo: Azabu Bunko, 2003), 74. This thesis regards Ebara's Methodist denomination as irrelevant to the discussion of Christianity and Ebara's Christian values. Ballhatchet notes that "it seems probable that people [ex-samurais who converted to Christianity] joined different groups or denominations purely by chance rather than from any knowledge of the differences" at the beginning of the Meiji period (Helen J. Ballhatchet, "The Modern Missionary Movement in Japan: Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox" in Mark R. Mullins ed., *Handbook of Christianity in Japan* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), 37.).

²² Tsuji, 94.

²³ Ebara Soroku Sensei Kinen Inkai ed. 江原素六先生記念委員会編, *Kurisuchan toshiteno Ebara Soroku Sensei* 基督者としての江原素六先生 [Mr. Ebara Soroku as a Christian] (Tokyo: Miyagoshi Shinjirō, 1922), 218.

have faced concerning Christianity was a contradictory nature between Christianity and values that have been traditionally existed in Japanese society, such as Confucianism and Shintoism. In 1871, there were recommendations from the Japanese government to introduce a “new government ministry, one that would mobilize not only a ‘restored Shinto’ in opposition to Christianity but also Buddhism and Confucianism.”²⁴ The Japanese government thought that Confucianism and its values could effectively counter Christian values and slow the number of Japanese who were converting to Christianity as a result of the rise in missionary activities around Japan.²⁵ The Japanese government also deemed Christianity a threat to Japan's State Shintoism, which justified the superiority of the Japanese Emperor over any other religious idols.²⁶

However, Japan, which opened its border between other countries in 1853, were forced to recognized the Western gaze toward Japan’s traditional ideas. From the early Meiji era, the Western powers, where Christians were the majority of their population, strongly criticized Japan’s anti-Christian policy. In the late 19th century, when the Japanese government tried to revise the unequal treaties that it had signed with the Western powers in 1858, the Western powers demanded that Japan recognize freedom of belief and abolish any anti-Christian exclusionary policies in exchange for the revision of the unequal treaties.²⁷ As a result of external pressure from the West, the Japanese government tolerated Christianity with the

²⁴ Trent E. Maxey, *The “Greatest Problem”: Religion and State Formation in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2014), 48.

²⁵ Tasuku Asō 麻生将, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru Kirisutokyō to Kokka Shintō 近代日本におけるキリスト教と国家神道” [Christianity and State Shinto in Modern Japan], *Ritsumeikan Bungaku: The Journal of Cultural Sciences* (2020), 164.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 170.

restrictions in the Meiji Constitution proclaimed in 1889.²⁸ After the Japanese government's tacit approval of activities by Christian missionaries from the West, particularly the United States and Canada, Japanese people increasingly converted to Christianity.²⁹ Many Japanese intellectuals who lived in the cities were attracted to Christianity as a modern Western idea. Even some ex-samurais converted to Christianity as an idea that they could use to form a modern state as they found common grounds between Christianity and Confucianism.³⁰

Although Ebara was one of the ex-samurais who converted to Christianity, he was still a minor figure in Japan. In fact, less than one percent of the population were Christians throughout the Meiji and Taishō periods.³¹ Ebara was a rare figure as a powerful Japanese Christian, who was able to engage in intellectual discussions of modernizing Japan through an amalgamation of Confucianism and Christianity. One of the incidents that represent Ebara's attitude toward introducing Christianity into Japanese society was his speech concerning the Imperial Rescript on Education (教育勅語) that was published by the Japanese Emperor in 1890. The Rescript stated the ultimate superiority of the Japanese Emperor and required that this be taught in schools. It was important since it restricted the freedom of belief in schools by reinforcing the idea that Shintoism was the only national religion in Japan.

The backlash against the Imperial Rescript was exemplified by the 1891 Lèse-majesté Incident (不敬事件), in which Uchimura Kanzō (内村鑑三), a prominent Christian and a teacher of Dai'ichi High School, was publicly criticized because he refused to bow before the reading of

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Tasuku Asō 麻生将, "Kindai Nihon no Kirisutokyō wo meguru Gensetsu Kūkan no Keisei to Tenkai ni kansuru Shiron 近代日本のキリスト教をめぐる言説空間の形成と展開に関する試論" [An Essay on the Formation and Development of Discourse Space Surrounding Christianity in Modern Japan], *Rekishī Chirigaku* 54:3 (June 2012), 20.

the Rescript. Uchimura justified his Christian faith by arguing that believing in Christianity strengthened his patriotism. By interpreting the incident as a trial that God gave to him, he thought that overcoming this trial would reinforce his spirit of *Chūkun Aikoku* (忠君愛国, “loyalty to the Emperor and patriotism”).³² Uchimura attempted to change the concept of *Chūkun Aikoku* through Christianity.

As the backlash against Christians increased in Japan after the Incident, Japanese Christian intellectuals aligned with Uchimura in defending their faith, asserting that “Japanese Christianity” was distinct from Christianity that was believed in the West because of its nationalistic elements. Ebina Danjō (海老名弾正), a Japanese Christian philosopher and missionary, for example, claimed that Christianity contributed to the development of the Japanese nation under the imperial rule of the Emperor. According to Ebina, Japan was no longer a homogenous nation as it had actively adopted Western political and cultural systems since the beginning of the Meiji Restoration. For Japan to increase its presence in the world, he thought that it should adopt individualistic, egalitarian, and humanitarian values of Christianity, all of which are compatible with the ideals of the Meiji Imperial Constitution.³³ Uchimura and Ebina’s defenses of Christianity both appealed to the Japanese national pride as a strategy to sustain their Christian faith.

Ebara’s stance on Christianity was similar to the one that Ebina took. Regarding his view of the Rescript, Ebara stated that “the Imperial Rescript on Education is very noble, and we,

³² Akio Dohi 土肥昭夫, “Tennosei Kokka no Kakuritsu to Kirisutokyō 天皇制国家の確立とキリスト教” [Establishment of the Imperial Nation and Christianity] in Nishida Takeshi ed., *Kindai Nihon no Aporia: Kindaika to Jiga, Nashonarizumu no Shosō 近代日本のアポリア：近代化と自我・ナショナリズムの諸相* [Aporia of Modern Japan: Modernization and Selfhood, Different Aspects of Nationalism] (Tokyo: Kōyō Shobō, 2001).

³³ Dohi.

the people must firmly bear it in mind” because it illustrates the moral principles that Japanese people should follow.³⁴ He thus justified Christianity on the grounds that Christian education develops students’ moral character and loyalty to the Emperor. He thought that people’s moral character could only be improved through Christianity.³⁵ Ebara’s observation of the international situation was also similar to Ebina’s worldview. Ebara believed that it was necessary for the Japanese state to find a way to survive in international competitions among Western powers. For him, it was education of “the global mind and the progressive spirit that make them [students] feel to compete in a civilized society.”³⁶ In order to educate the so-called “civilized mind,” Ebara again highlighted the necessity of Christian education that is capable of developing future generations to push forward the *Fukoku Kyōhei* (富国強兵, “Wealthy nation, strong military”) policy. Ebara’s emphasis on the need for Christian education, nevertheless, did not mean that there was no way to cultivate the morality for those who did not convert to Christianity. In reality, Ebara was successful in forming his pedagogy by reconciling Neo-Confucianism and Christianity.

Ebara successfully reconciled Neo-Confucian and Christian ideas to form his moral values. Filial piety that he valued among the Neo-Confucian philosophy was compatible with the worshipping the Christian God. He juxtaposes the notion of *Tenri* (天理) and *Jinri* (人理) in order to position the parent-child relationship and god-believer relationship as equivalent:

Tenri, firstly from the position of monotheism, teaches to worship and believe in the only father—the almighty God. [...] In terms of *Jinri*, it places the priority in showing

³⁴ Yukio Hisaki 久木幸男, “Ebara Soroku Kyōiku Chokugo Henkō Enzetsu Jiken 江原素六教育勅語変更演説事件” [Ebara Soroku’s Incident on the Speech to Change the Imperial Rescript on Education], *Thesis Collection by the Department of Education of Bukkyō University* 4 (1992): 15.

³⁵ Katō, 14.

³⁶ Hisaki, 15.

respect to your father and mother, and to practice filial piety. Therefore, [Christ] teaches the way to worship the God in the direction of *Tenri*, and teaches parental love as the first step of *Jinri*.³⁷

Although he combined the similarities of Neo-Confucian and Christian values to consolidate his moral values, it was not enough to theoretically combine them. For Ebara, active engagement in education was necessary to put the theory into practice.

Ebara as an educator

For Ebara, education was a place to combine Neo-Confucian and Christian values. As a Christian educator, in 1893, Ebara became the principal of the Tōyō Eiwa School (東洋英和学校), which was established by the Canadian Methodist Church. Since Tōyō Eiwa School was legally a mission school, it did not qualify as a school that allowed its students to enter high school. In preserving a school that was based on his ideal pedagogy while being qualified for the legal standards of the government, in 1895 he decided to found the Azabu Junior High School (麻布中学校), which was an affiliated branch school of Tōyō Eiwa School. Later in 1899, the Ministry of Education banned any religious education and rituals in junior high schools. The Canadian mission, as a result, needed to close the Tōyō Eiwa School. After its closure, Ebara decided to transfer the Azabu School to the place in which it is currently located. In doing so, he had to secure approximately 50 thousand yen (190 million yen in present currency, which is almost equivalent to 1.9 million US dollars) for purchasing the land and constructing the building through fundraising campaign.³⁸ As this demonstrates, even without caring about his

³⁷ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, *Isogaba Maware 急がば廻れ* [Haste makes Waste] (Tokyo: Tōadō Shobō, 1918), 39.

³⁸ Katō, 115-16.

budget for establishing and maintaining different Christian schools, he was eager to continue Christian education in Japan.

Ebara educated his students based on Neo-Confucianism traditions that he embraced when he as a student. He achieved this by emphasizing the Neo-Confucian idea of *Shūyō* as the foundation of his pedagogy. In Chapter 18, entitled “Two directions of *Shūyō*” of *Isogaba Maware*, Ebara outlines the importance of learning Neo-Confucian values for the “improvement and development of moral character (品性).”³⁹ He cites Confucius’ disciple Zhuansun Shi’s words to explain that “blessing would naturally exist within the selfhood without demanding it if one achieves the moral character by criticizing less with your words and regretting less with your actions.”⁴⁰ He applied this idea to his educational philosophy to develop young people as the future basis of the Japanese nation. His pedagogy was directly connected to the ultimate ambition of the Meiji government: *Fukoku Kyōhei*. In order to strengthen the industry and the military of Japan as a modernized nation, he thought that Japan needed to produce young Japanese people with a high moral character through education based on Confucian values.

While Confucianism had a large influence on his moral education, he also believed that Christianity has a stronger potential in improving individual’s spiritually than Neo-Confucianism. One of the reasons he converted to Christianity in 1877 was the belief that Christian education was the best way to develop young people and thus the nation. In the same chapter, “Two directions of *Shūyō*,” Ebara introduced Christian values as the second direction for achieving the moral cultivation of the young people’s minds. In fact, he introduced them as ones that complement the weaknesses of his Neo-Confucian pedagogy. He argued that the Neo-

³⁹ Ebara, *Isogaba Maware*, 184.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 186.

Confucian idea of the moral cultivation of the mind has the tendency to forgive a certain degree of failure, for it claims that people should strive for achieving moral character as much as possible but not completely.⁴¹ This tendency weakens the spirit of *Shūyō* of each individual by making them easily led astray into temptation. In order to overcome this weakness of Neo-Confucian morality, the moral mind should be strengthened by religious faith, according to Ebara. In contrast to Neo-Confucian morality in which one needs to acquire moral character by coping against irrational temptations, the temptations do not exist in the realm of the religious because one had already repented in the face of the Christian God.⁴²

Ebara's privileging of Christian over Confucian values in the context of his pedagogy, nevertheless, did not immediately suggest that he entirely rejected Neo-Confucian values. Katō states that "his attitude of linking Christianity with civilization, social morality, or the teaching of Confucius and Mencius did not change fundamentally even after his conversion to Christianity."⁴³ Ebara's identity as a samurai persisted as a form of his moral pedagogy.

Ebara as a politician

Ebara's embrace of both Christianity and Confucianism shaped his philosophy as a politician. He was a member of the Japanese Diet in his later years for almost twenty years in the House of Representatives (the lower house of the Diet) between 1890 and 1912, and in the House of Peers (the upper house of the Diet) between 1912 and 1922. During his terms as the politician, he served in different political positions, including the chairman of the budget committee of the House of Representatives in 1898. He also advocated for the feminist

⁴¹ Ibid., 190.

⁴² Ibid., 193.

⁴³ Katō, 74.

movement, especially through supporting women's education.

When Ebara began his career as the member of the House of Representative in 1890, he belonged to the *Jiyutō* (自由党) Party that consisted of members who were part of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement (自由民権運動). This Movement was a national political activist campaign for constitutional democracy that continued until the establishment of the Imperial Diet in 1890. From its nature, the Movement was an antithesis against the Meiji government that was formed by the oligarchy of politicians from Satsuma and Chōshū domains (藩), who led the Meiji Restoration of 1868.⁴⁴ This domain clique (藩閥) was a target of criticism and eventually demolition for the activists of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, who pursued party politics under constitutional democracy. The *Jiyutō* Party, of which Ebara was a part, continued to endorse an attitude of anti-Meiji government after the Movement.

In 1900, he joined the *Rikken Seiyūkai* (立憲政友会) Party that was led by Itō Hirobumi (伊藤博文), also known as the first Prime Minister of the Japanese government. The *Seiyūkai* Party consisted of members from the *Jiyutō* Party. Supporting the party cabinet system, the *Seiyūkai* Party contributed to the phase of Taishō Democracy, a political tendency for liberal democracy between 1905 and 1925. After the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, many Japanese people begun protesting the government on account of its failure in acquiring reparations from Russia despite its victory. As they developed their political awareness, political parties including the *Seiyūkai* Party also criticized the Katsura administration, which was still based on a domain clique that led the Meiji Restoration, and they demanded for a party cabinet instead.

⁴⁴ Shinichi Kitaoka, *The Political History of Modern Japan: Foreign Relations and Domestic Politics* trans. Robert D. Eldridge and Graham Leonard (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2018), 37.

Being a part of different political movements that supported constitutional democracy and party politics, Ebara developed his political philosophy of liberalism based on his moral philosophy. The word “liberalism” is commonly used by historians as an idea that explains the political ideology that believes that the freedom of each individual is the political priority. In the 18th century, liberalism had a strong affinity with Christianity and its secularization because Christianity affirmed “the necessity of a better world in the future, work for the realization of which was the moral obligation of every enlightened person.”⁴⁵ From the 19th century, liberalism was used in parallel with democracy, the idea that denoted equality among every individual.⁴⁶

However, Ebara’s political liberalism, which was the extension of his moral philosophy, not only incorporated Christian values but also Neo-Confucian values. In his book *Isogaba Maware*, Ebara called himself a “liberal” by proposing the notion of rational independence and self-respect. According to him, “when we respect their liberty, respect their rights, and respect their honor, they would also become self-conscious and act independently and with self-respect.”⁴⁷ He imagined a society where every person simultaneously realizes the virtue (徳) of independence and self-respect, and respects the freedom and the right of other people.⁴⁸ Expanding this moral imagination to political philosophy, he advocates for constitutional democracy, where the people enact the constitution and law by themselves and follow what they have enacted: “Therefore, you people are assigned to serve for constitutional politics. Every one

⁴⁵ Richard V. Burks, "A Conception of Ideology for Historians," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 10:2, (April 1949): 192.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 193.

⁴⁷ Ebara, *Isogaba Maware*, 75.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

of us enacts laws and constitution and act according to them.”⁴⁹ Further, Ebara asserted that people have the obligation to exercise their right to vote. He suggested that elections were necessary to select politicians who have the appropriate moral character, and that people needed to vote in the election as it is their common interest to elect appropriate candidates.⁵⁰

For example, he thought that the moral progress of each individual was essential in developing the morality of the entire nation.⁵¹ His conception of liberalism echoes with the Neo-Confucian value of *Shūyō*. Neo-Confucianism believes that the individual cultivation of morality through altruistic actions, including benevolence and courtesy, contribute to the social cultivation of morality. Ebara juxtaposes his liberal idea to the Christian value of the Golden Rule—to treat others as you would like to be treated by others—as one of the most important “lessons throughout all humanity.”⁵² He thought that when we respect the liberty, rights, and honor of others, they would also become self-conscious and act independently and with self-respect.⁵³ He thus envisioned a political world, where there are simultaneous acts of respecting the freedom and independence of others and respecting the freedom and independence of oneself.⁵⁴

Ebara’s moral and political values was a result of a consolidation of his different identities. Throughout his career, Ebara envisioned a strong Japanese nation based on his moral and political values. His vision of a future Japan aligned with the *Fukoku Kyōhei* policy of the

⁴⁹ Ibid., 73.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 79.

⁵¹ Ibid., 68.

⁵² Ibid., 38-39.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ One can compare Ebara’s liberalism with classical republicanism, a political ideology that places “the notion of the absolute necessity of ‘virtue’ or ‘public spiritedness’ as the operative principle” on an individual level. It is plausible to argue that Ebara’s liberalism was similar to republicanism, which formed the basis of the foundation of the United States, provided that fact that Ebara had admired the founding fathers such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin (John T. Agresto, “Liberty, Virtue, and Republicanism: 1776-1787,” *The Review of Politics* 39:4 (Oct. 1977), 473.).

Meiji government. However, the thesis points out that Ebara attempted to strengthen Japan by using the policy of moral respectability. In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, the thesis explores two case studies where Ebara applied his policy of moral respectability to understand and respond to issues that were crucial to Japanese foreign relations in the early 20th century. Ebara used moral respectability to show to the world Japan's power, and he embodied it by promoting a self-cultivation of morality to the Japanese people.

Chapter 2: Ebara in America—Exporting moral respectability to the United States; 1913

On May 3, 1913, *Ship Korea* (コレア号) departed the port of Yokohama for the western coast of the United States. Passengers included Tsuda Umeko (津田梅子), the pioneer of women's education in Japan, Ibuka Kajinosuke (井深梶之助), the head of Meiji Gakuin School, other prominent Christian educators, and Ebara.¹ Ebara had visited the US before, travelling there in 1871, when he was only 29. That mission aimed to observe and learn from the different Western political systems and social norms so that the new Meiji government would be able to apply them to the development of a modernized nation.² Now, over forty years later, Ebara visited the United States for the second time as an old, powerful man. He was an educator, a politician, and a prominent Christian leader.

This chapter explores how Ebara used the strategy of moral respectability in an effort to resolve the tension between the United States and Japan. He visited the United States in 1913 to protest the Alien Land Law that was about to be enacted in California. This law reflected racism towards Japanese immigrants. Ebara was sent by the Seiyūkai Party to prevent the law from going into effect. Both Ebara and the Japanese government thought that racism against Japanese would damage Japan's pride. Since Japan's immigration policy was essential for Japan's expansionism, it was crucial to resolve anti-Japanese racism in order to maintain Japan's status in the international arena.

¹ Shiro Katō 加藤史郎, *Ebara Soroku no Shōgai 江原素六の生涯* [Ebara Soroku's Life] (Tokyo: Azabu Bunko, 2003), 165.

² *Ibid.*, 54-55.

However, Ebara also recognized the approach that the government introduced to face racism in the US was ineffective. The Japanese government was not able to solve anti-Japanese by using traditional diplomacy with the central government. By analyzing Ebara's actions and statements made in response to the Alien Land Law, this chapter argues that in asserting Japan's moral respectability to the US, Ebara emphasized the need for a moral reform of Japanese immigrants in the US instead of criticizing anti-Japanese racism. Although he used a moral language to negotiate with political figures of the US, more importantly, he advocated a policy of what I will term "voluntary assimilationism" as a way to practice his moral pedagogy. Since this moral pedagogy was somehow an extension of what he practiced in schools, the approach of moral respectability was an embodiment of his life as an educator.

Ebara went to the United States in May 1913 as a member of the relief mission (慰問使).³ Appointed the Seiyūkai Party, Ebara was instructed to provide relief to the Japanese nationals in the US who were affected by the Alien Land Law that enacted in California. Hattori Ayao (服部綾雄) and Soeda Juichi (添田寿一) also served as the members of the mission, appointed by the Kokuminto party and the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce respectively.⁴ Ebara and Hattori departed Japan on May 3, 1913, the day the Alien Land Law passed the Capitol of

³ "No Sting in New Japanese Bill," *The Washington Post*, April 30, 1913, 2. In this thesis, the Japanese word *Imon* (慰問) is translated to "relief" with the meaning of physical, emotional and spiritual assistance for those with special need or difficulty. I decided not to use the word "consolation" as a translation of *Imon* because it connotes a personal assistance for those with loss and grief, which is not the case in this thesis.

⁴ Katō, 165. Tabuchi Hirofumi points out that Ebara and Hattori were sent to the US in May 1913 by the invitation of the Interdenominational Board of Missions (Hirofumi Tabuchi 田淵博文, "Hattori Ayao no Shi to 1913nen no Gaikokujin Tochiho tonon Kanren ni tsuite 服部綾雄の死と1913年の外国人土地法との関連について" [The Death of Hattori Ayao and its relation to the Foreign Land Law of 1913] *Shūjitsu Ronsō* 23 (1993): 12.). However, Tabuchi does not cite any sources to support this point, and furthermore, I did not find any sources that state anything related to Tabuchi's point during the research process. In this thesis, I maintain that Ebara and Hattori were appointed by the Seiyūkai Party and the Kokuminto Party to become a part of the mission.

California.⁵ They arrived at San Francisco on May 19, 1913, the day Governor of California Hiram Johnson signed the anti-Japanese bill into law.⁶ During his visit to the United States, Ebara was accompanied by Yamamoto Kuninosuke (山本邦之助), the director of the Tokyo YMCA, as his interpreter since Ebara did not speak English.⁷



Figure 3: Ebara (left) and Yamamoto Kuninosuke (right) on July 11, 1913⁸

⁵ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, “Ryokō Zakkan 旅行雑感” [Miscellaneous Impressions of the Visit] *Geibi Kyōiku* 114 (October 1913): 2.

⁶ Kuninosuke Yamamoto 山本邦之助, “Zaibei Dōhō Imonshi Ebara Soroku Sensei Zuikōki 在米同胞慰問使江原先生隨行記” [Report of Accompanying Mr. Ebara, the Missionary for Providing Relief to Fellows in America], *Shinkō no Hito: Ebara Soroku Sensei 信仰の人 江原素六先生* [Person of Faith: Mr. Ebara Soroku] (Tokyo: Ebara Sensei Kinenkai, 1952), 45-46.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁸ Bain News Service, “Soroku Ebara and K. Yamamoto” (1913), Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2014693623/>.

Ebara's relief mission aimed to support the Japanese immigrants in the US in response to the enactment of the Alien Land Law. The Alien Land Law prohibited "aliens ineligible for citizenship" from owning land or possessing land by lease for more than three years in the state of California.⁹ Although the legislation affected all aliens who were ineligible for American citizenship including Chinese, Korean, and Indian immigrants in the United States, it implicitly targeted Japanese immigrants who formed a majority of foreign farmers in California.¹⁰ In response to the upcoming economic damage to the Japanese immigrants, Ebara recognized the purpose of his visit as the "relief of fellow Japanese in California."¹¹ As the mission referred the Japanese immigrants in the United States as "fellows/brothers in America (在米同胞)," it attempted to connect Japanese nationals in the US with mainland Japan through national and ethnic unity. In order to achieve his purpose, Ebara delivered speeches that sought to pacify "the feelings of the general public."¹² According to Yamamoto, Ebara gave 96 speeches to a total of 19,407 Japanese people in the US.¹³

Both Ebara and Hattori were sent to the US by the political parties that they belonged to because the Japanese government was concerned by the spread of anti-Japanese racism in the US. Japan was particularly fearful that Japanese nationals would be excluded from the US, similar to Chinese laborers who were prohibited to immigrate to the US by the Chinese

⁹ "Yo ga Tobei Shimei 予が渡米使命" [I was appointed as the missionary to the US], *Asahi Shimbun* [Tokyo, Japan], April 30, 1913, 3.

¹⁰ Gordon Morris Bakken and Alexandra Kindell. "Alien Land Law of 1913" in Gordon Morris Bakken and Alexandra Kindell, ed., *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration in the American West* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2006), 10.

¹¹ "Yo ga Tobei Shimei."

¹² Yamamoto, "Zaibei Dōhō Imonshi Ebara Soroku Sensei Zuikōki," 48.

¹³ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, "Ebara Soroku Shi no Danwa (Hainichi Mondai no Ken) 江原素六氏の談話(排日問題の件)" [Mr. Ebara Soroku's Conversation (On the Anti-Japanese Problem)]."

Exclusion Act in 1882.¹⁴ As the number of Japanese immigrants to California increased at the beginning of the 20th century, there was a corresponding increase in anti-Japanese sentiments in California. White Californians were concerned about the presence of Japanese “due to their style of clothing, their religion, the fact that they spoke a non-European language, and generally did not blend into society.”¹⁵ Organizations such as the Asiatic Exclusion League, which obtained strong support from white workers, supported the prohibition of Japanese immigration under the pretext that the Japanese would take over agricultural and industrial employment opportunities.¹⁶

American newspapers viewed that Ebara was a Christian representative rather than a political representative of the Japanese State. The article of the *Washington Post*, under the subtitle "Japanese Mission Unofficial," makes the purpose of the mission clear:

The facts are that their [Ebara and Hattori’s] visit has no official whatever, and Sacramento is not their objective, their purpose being to revisit Japanese centers in America as representatives of the Japanese Christians.¹⁷

As the statement says that "Sacramento is not their objective," considering the fact that the Alien Land Law was about to pass in the lower house of the State Capitol in Sacramento, Ebara’s mission did not intend to negotiate with Californian senators to try to stop the passage of the Alien Land Law. Furthermore, the article sees Ebara’s mission as “unofficial,” implying that they were not sent officially by the Japanese government but sent as “representatives of the Japanese Christians.”

¹⁴ Jan Misiuna, “The Impact of the Chinese Diaspora in the U.S. on the American View of China,” *International studies: Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal* 22:1 (2018): 158.

¹⁵ Bakken and Kindell, 10.

¹⁶ Allan W. Austin, “Anti-Japanese Movement” in Huping Ling and Allan W. Austin ed., *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia* (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2009), 383.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Ebara's representation of his position as a Christian during his visit to the US, however, is at odds with the fact that he was appointed by the Seiyūkai Party, the ruling party of the Japanese government at that time, to be the member of the relief mission. I argue that he represented himself as a Christian rather than a politician because the Japanese government wanted to use the language of Christianity to negotiate with the American authorities without showing national support for Christianity. In addition to Ebara, Hattori was a pastor of the Japanese Methodist church and Yamamoto was also the director of the Tokyo YMCA at that time. Recalling that there were less than one per cent of Christians in Japan at that time, it was no coincidence that the majority of the members of the relief mission were Christians. The Japanese government wanted to show itself to the US as a "civilized" nation by sending a relief mission of Christian members. He believed that Christianity was a "moral" medium that would enable the Japanese state to communicate its respectability to the United States. Therefore, it was crucial for Ebara to exhort the Japanese immigrants to carry Christian values as Japan's moral respectability to the United States to show Japan's ideological presence in the international scene.

Nevertheless, the Japanese government did not want to show that they mobilized Christianity as a diplomatic tool to mitigate political tension with the US. While Japan, at that time, had already entered the Taishō period where political values of individual freedom and democracy were upheld by the Japanese government, Christianity still contradicted with State Shintoism. As a result, the Japanese government could not show Ebara's mission as a Christian representative. It nevertheless was able to use the rhetoric of Christianity by sending Ebara to make him to use Christian values to connect with the US on behalf of the Japanese state.

For the Japanese government, anti-Japanese racism in the US was a signal of disrespect against Japan. The exclusionary politics of the US against the Japanese was also a threat to

Japan's expansionist policy. Japan's immigration policy to the US was a part of mercantilist expansionism that aimed to "establish footholds of international trade at foreign locations, to which Japan could send its export goods while exercising indirect forms of economic domination."¹⁸ The Japanese government also feared that growing American racist sentiments would complicate their Japan's imperial project in East Asia. Historically, the United States had its own colonial interests in East Asia, including taking the Philippines as a colony after the Spanish-American War of 1899.¹⁹ As Japan developed as an imperial power in East Asia by winning the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, US-Japan relations began deteriorating as the US became suspicious about Japan's imperial motives in Manchuria and Japan's naval expansion.²⁰ The enactment of the Alien Land Law thus appeared to the Japanese government as the first sign of US racial and political rejection of Japan as a global empire.

The Japanese government sent the relief mission in response to alleviating the tension between the US and Japan that was strengthened by anti-Japanese prejudice. Since the government focused on anti-Japanese racism, it was less concerned about the economic impact that the Alien Land Law would have on the Japanese immigrants. When Chinda Sutemi (珍田捨己), the Japanese Ambassador to the US, sent an *aide-mémoire* to the US Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan on June 4, 1913, in protest of the Alien Land Law, Chinda "denied that the legislation was based solely on economic grounds, and asserted that diplomacy ... would

¹⁸ Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 20.

¹⁹ Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914-1919* (Cambridge: Harvard university Press, 2001), 9.

²⁰ Akifumi Nagata, "American Missionaries in Korea and U.S.-Japan Relations 1910-1920," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 16 (2005): 160.

provide the most acceptable means for a solution.”²¹ The Japanese government rather viewed the Alien Land Law with respect to race and cared about eliminating the racial gap between the white Americans and the Japanese through diplomacy.

Similar to the Japanese government, Ebara worried less about the economic impact of the Alien Land Law and more about the heightened racism it represented. Ebara, Soeda, and Yamaguchi Yuya (山口熊野), a politician of the Seiyūkai Party who also visited the US, all observed that “the fellow Japanese in America did not feel any suffering by the land law.”²² In fact, Ebara pointed out that many Japanese immigrants in American saw the relief mission as “disrespectful”: they argued that “we, the fellow Japanese in America are not the ones who are not dismayed by such a trifling issue; your sympathy towards us means that you do not understand our situation well enough.”²³ Since he directly heard from the Japanese immigrants that they did not need any help from the mission, it was easy for him to confirm the absence of any damages inflicted by the Alien Land Law toward them.

Ebara was more concerned that the enactment of the Alien Land Law represented the disrespectful attitude of the US against Japan, and he worried about the spread of anti-Japanese racism to other states of the United States because he thought that it would damage the honor of the Japanese empire in the long run: “The land plan that was submitted to the Californian parliament this year is a grave problem of interests ... that is indirectly related to the honor of our empire.”²⁴ He even implied a possibility of a war between the US and Japan, stating that “there

²¹ Thomas A. Bailey, “California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913,” *Pacific Historical Review* 1:1 (March 1932): 49.

²² “Beikoku Shisatsu no Kekka 米国視察の結果” [The Outcome of Visiting the US], *Yomiuri Shimbun* [Tokyo, Japan], September 3, 1913, 2.

²³ “Ebara Soroku Shi Kichō 江原素六氏帰朝” [Mr. Ebara Soroku returned], *Asahi Shimbun* [Tokyo, Japan], September 2, 1913, 2.

²⁴ Ebara, “Ebara Soroku Shi no Danwa (Hainichi Mondai no Ken).”

are people who cry that this problem can only be solved by the ultimate method, and some who are imprudent immediately sent letters to the follow Japanese in the US that the outbreak of the war [between the US and Japan] is inevitable.”²⁵ For Ebara, the enactment of the Alien Land Law and anti-Japanese racism were so acute because of the tremendous impact on the interests of the Japanese empire that would not want to wage into war with the US.

Ebara believed that anti-Japanese racism was a huge obstacle to Japan’s interests in expanding its territories and respect to the international arena. He recognized that the immigration of Japanese nationals to foreign lands was an economic policy that could help alleviate problems in Japan that he thought were caused by the increase in population, including food security and the lack of housing.²⁶ In this respect, Ebara aligned with the Japanese government that promoted the immigration of Japanese people as a part of mercantilist expansion that would help improve the economic status of the working-class. When the Alien Land Law was enacted in California, where a majority of Japanese immigrants to the US made their livings, the government considered US-Japan hostility as an obstacle to Japan’s economic expansion. However, he had a strong conviction that the tension between the US and Japan would not be eliminated unless the Japanese immigrants demonstrated their moral respectability to the Americans.

Ebara and the Japanese government shared the same view that anti-Japanese racism in the US would damage the respect that Japan as an empire had toward the US than the Japanese immigrants who worked as farmers and laborers there. For them, the Alien Land Law, which symbolized the heightening racism in the US, should not be enacted so that they can maintain

²⁵ Ebara, “Ebara Soroku Shi no Danwa (Hainichi Mondai no Ken).”

²⁶ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, “Shakai Seisaku to Kaigai Imin 社会政策と海外移民” [Social Policy and Foreign Immigration], *Jiyū Hyōron* 9:6 (June 1921): 21.

both Japan's respectability over the Western powers and Japan's expansionist interest. However, Ebara and the Japanese government envisioned different approaches for alleviating US-Japan tension. Whereas Japan used diplomacy to negotiate with the federal government of the US to prevent the enactment of the Alien Land Law, Ebara instead advocated a strategy of moral respectability.

Ebara sought a common ground with the Americans through a language of Christianity, yet he did not emphasize the anti-Japanese racism in the US. He decided to employ a Christian rhetoric because he believed that it is the only language that the US shared with him. For example, during his visit to Washington D.C, Ebara met with State of Secretary William Jennings Bryan with the mediation of Chinda Sutemi on July 5, 1913. Chinda introduced Ebara to Bryan as the president of the Tokyo YMCA and the vice president of the Japanese Peace Society.²⁷ However, Chinda did not introduce him as the representative of the Seiyūkai Party. In addition, when Ebara met with the officials from the American Peace Society, he handed to Arthur Deerin Call, a letter of reference from the Japanese Peace Society of whom Ebara was the vice president.²⁸ Ebara represented himself as a Christian pacifist leader rather than as the representative of the Japanese government in front of American figures.

Furthermore, in order to share the same Christian language, Ebara used the Christian values of "justice and humanity" to create a relationship with the US. Ebara, for instance, stated that Californians were the only ones who were exclusionary against Japanese, and that Americans outside of California "showed goodwill toward Japanese and had no anti-Japanese

²⁷ Ebara Sensei Denki Hensankai ed. 江原先生伝記編纂会編, *Ebara Soroku Sensei Den 江原素六先生傳* (Tokyo: Sankeisha, 1923), 326.

²⁸ Yamamoto, "Zaibei Dōhō Imonshi Ebara Soroku Sensei Zuikōki," 52.

sentiments.”²⁹ Moreover, *Yomiuri Shimbun* of September 3, 1913, reported that Ebara, Soeda and Yamaguchi agreed that the US was a country of “justice and humanity” (正義人道), and thus Japan also should deal with the US with the same spirit.³⁰ In this respect, they concluded that Japan should participate in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, which was planned to be held in San Francisco in 1915.³¹

Ebara believed that the Christian language of justice and humanity was effective in alleviating the US-Japan tension than using diplomatic measures. He continued that “since this matter [the Californian problem] is related to justice and humanity, it should be resolved appropriately by guiding warm feelings like religion in the right direction.”³² His emphasis on “justice and humanity” as medium to pacificating the anti-Japanese racism in the United States corresponds with his observation that the US is a country of “justice and humanity.” More importantly, the language of justice and humanity” was closely connected to Christianity. As a Christian, Ebara had a conviction that every human being innately possesses religious faith that is based on the Christian lessons of “Love thy Neighbor” and the Golden Rule.³³ Recognizing that the United States is a country of “justice and humanity,” he attempted to appeal to the universal language of Christianity to communicate with important figures of the US.

Ebara believed that the common language of Christianity was able to show Japan as a modernized nation. For him, Christianity was still under the canon of moral respectability because Christian values were a part of his moral philosophy. However, he did not only employ

²⁹ “Ebara Soroku Shi Kichō.”

³⁰ “Beikoku Shisatsu no Kekka.”

³¹ Ibid.

³² “Yo ga Tobei Shimei.”

³³ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, *Isogaba Maware 急がば廻れ* [Haste makes Waste] (Tokyo: Tōadō Shobō, 1918), 38-39.

Christianity as a means to mitigate anti-Japanese racism because he did not necessarily want to make the Japanese immigrants to convert to Christianity. However, as a part of the relief mission, he also felt difficult to prevent the enactment of the Alien Land Law just through diplomatic language.

The traditional diplomatic tactics that the Japanese government adopted to negotiate with the US government were unlikely to prevent the implementation of the Alien Land Law. The Japanese government was passionate about resolving the crisis between Japan and the US. Chinda specifically exerted himself to negotiate with federal authorities to prevent the enactment of the Alien Land Law. In the beginning of May 1913, he protested the US government that the Land Law was “essentially unfair and discriminatory, and it is impossible to ignore the fact that it was primarily directed against my countrymen.”³⁴ Acknowledging the fact that Japanese expansionism in the early 20th century “collectively enticed American politicians to inscribe on Japanese immigrants an image of disloyalty and allegiance to a threatening foreign military power,” Chinda highlighted the point that the Land Law was only directed against the Japanese, not against other Asian immigrants in the US.³⁵ Since Japan's immigration policy to the United States was crucial in Japan's mercantilist expansionism, it was necessary for him to prevent other countries from taking over the position that Japanese immigrants have already taken in the US.³⁶ However, as President Woodrow Wilson communicated to Chinda, the federal government had

³⁴ The Japanese ambassador to the secretary of state, May 9, 1913, as quoted in Paolo E. Coletta, “‘The Most Thankless Task’: Bryan and the California Alien Land Legislation,” *Pacific Historical Review* 36:2 (May 1967): 175.

³⁵ Keith Aoki, “No Right to Own? The Early Twentieth-Century ‘Alien Land Laws’ as a Prelude to Internment,” *Boston College Third World Law Journal* 19:1 (September 1998): 47.

³⁶ Azuma, 20.

little authority over the decisions of the state of California.³⁷

Ebara recognized the limits of this diplomatic approach. The Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was sent by President Woodrow Wilson to persuade Governor Hiram Johnson of California to not enact the Law, or to at least change the “wording in the final bill that would not offend the Japanese.”³⁸ Nonetheless, Bryan’s effort was fruitless. Johnson not only enacted the Alien Land Law but also ignored Bryan’s advice to amend the legislation. Ebara was optimistic that anti-Japanese racism would not spread easily to other parts of the US because he already knew that “within the range of not interfering the American constitution and international treaties, each state has the ability to establish laws that are related to the interest of the state,” but he recognized that in the United States, the central government cannot easily interfere to the decisions made by each state as it was founded upon federalism.³⁹

Another challenge that Ebara noticed in taking diplomatic measures to counter the enactment of the Land Act was how racism was deeply rooted in the history of the United States. After their visit to the US, the relief mission confirmed that there was no possible way to solve the antagonism between the US and Japan.⁴⁰ For Ebara, racism was something that cannot be eliminated, for it is an emotion that is inherited over generations among the white race.⁴¹ Since he believed that the anti-Japanese sentiment in California was caused by racism, he argued that it was very difficult to eliminate racism from the Americans.⁴² Thus, US-Japan hostility, which according to Ebara was fundamentally caused by racism, cannot be eradicated since racism

³⁷ Herbert P. Le Pore, “Prelude to Prejudice: Hiram Johnson, Woodrow Wilson, and the California Alien Land Law Controversy of 1913,” *Southern California Quarterly* 61:1 (Spring 1979): 104.

³⁸ Coletta, 167.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ “Beikoku Shisatsu no Kekka.”

⁴¹ Ebara, “Ryokō Zakkan,” 2.

⁴² Ibid.

cannot be eliminated. Ebara's pessimistic, if not nihilistic, observation on the potential measures of ending anti-Japanese prejudice in the United States, nonetheless, did not keep him away from proposing ways to bridging the gap between the two countries, the two races.

While Ebara recognized the deep division between Japan and the United States, he still proposed a potential pathway that Japan could take in maintain its respect. Ebara as an educator comes into play when he saw moral education as the potential solution to racism of the white Americans. Although he believed that racism was almost impossible to eliminate, he still had hope in education: "Such thing as education shapes people's ideas in different ways, so it is not impossible to solve it [anti-Japanese sentiment] by education even it is a racial problem."⁴³ However, education in this case was targeted toward Japanese, not toward the white Americans. In his speech on May 25, 1913, with Hattori, he asserted that the issue regarding anti-Japanese legislation should be peacefully solved by the Japanese Americans under the laws of the United States.⁴⁴ This statement seems to be at odds with his view on the Californian problem because he saw racism of the white Americans as the source of the problem. However, Ebara suggested that education was needed to improve the moral character of the Japanese immigrants, not the white Americans who were the cause of the problem.

As Ebara saw it, the Japanese immigrants lacked the moral values that was needed to give the Americans a favorable impression of Japan. He thought that Japanese immigrants had better techniques in agriculture and industry, which exceed what Americans were able to do.⁴⁵ Yet, he still believed that it was more important for them to improve their moral character (品格). He particularly focused on the improvement of the moral character because he believed that the

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ebara Sensei Denki Hensankai ed., *Ebara Soroku Sensei Den*, 321.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 333.

morality of the immigrants influences the US-Japan relations. He observed that many Japanese immigrants were morally “delinquent” (不良):

In general, Japanese are better in every aspect than immigrants from Europe. That is why they are hugely welcomed by the capitalists. However, there are still guys who are terrible among the lower-class workers like the example above.⁴⁶

Using the immigrants’ lack of moral character as a reasoning, he insisted that the Japanese Foreign Ministry should not send an unlimited number of immigrants to the US,⁴⁷ but should focus on sending morally virtuous immigrants to the US.⁴⁸

Notions of patience and endurance were salient in forming what Ebara imagined as a moral respectable individual. In his speech at the Dreamland Rink, San Francisco, on May 21, 1913, Ebara anticipated the Japanese American audience to "be patient and prudent, and to struggle until you get the ultimate victory" in the midst of rising anti-Japanese prejudice in America.⁴⁹ The *New York Times* also reported on May 23, 1913 that Ebara “demanded Japanese immigrants coolheadedness and moderation,” a statement which seems to be said by him in the same speech.⁵⁰ According to Yamamoto, Ebara’s speeches during his visit to the US were so effective in dispelling growing anxiety that it discouraged many Japanese-Americans, who were afraid of a forthcoming war between Japan and the US, from returning back to Japan.⁵¹ In this context, the idea of patience that he had stressed in his speeches was a way to put the Japanese Americans at their ease. Shifting the perspective, Ebara’s insistence on the idea of patience was

⁴⁶ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, “Hokubei Imin to Seigen 北米移民と制限” [Immigration to the North America and Restrictions], *Zitsugyō no Sekai* 10:19 (October 1913): 30.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Yamamoto, “Zaibei Dōhō Imonshi Ebara Soroku Sensei Zuikōki,” 47.

⁵⁰ “Envoys Counsel Patience,” *The New York Times*, May 23, 1913, 3.

⁵¹ Yamamoto, “Zaibei Dōhō Imonshi Ebara Soroku Sensei Zuikōki,” 47.

also a means to reinforce a blueprint of what a moral character was for Japanese immigrants in the US.

In order to communicate the ideas of patience and endurance, Ebara envisioned a moral education under the American curriculum. Considering the difficulty of educating the Issei (first generation) immigrants, he indicated the significance of education targeted toward their children, or the Nisei (second generation). Ebara demonstrated this by observing the condition of Japanese children in Hawaiian schools. Private Japanese schools in Hawaii taught Japanese children under the Japanese curriculum, which was completely different from what the public schools in Hawaii was teaching.⁵² However, a majority of private Japanese schools in Hawaii at that time were Buddhist schools, which tended to be less strict compared to public schools, according to Ebara.⁵³ He criticized the private Buddhist schools in Hawaii on the basis that their students were often inactive and had a lesser degree of moral character; as a consequence, he considered them as one of the factors that incited anti-Japanese sentiments among the Americans in Hawaii.⁵⁴ Here, he situated the lack of moral education toward Japanese immigrants as a significant factor in promoting an anti-Japanese ideology in the United States. Yamamoto, Ebara's assistant during the visit to the US and the director of the Tokyo YMCA, supported Ebara's view on education, adding that Japanese children in the US should enter public schools, learn the spirit of American public education, and take supplementary classes on Japanese language and history.⁵⁵ Ebara thus envisioned a future in which Japanese would be able to understand and incorporate the American spirit by improving their moral character under the

⁵² Ebara Sensei Denki Hensankai ed., *Ebara Soroku Sensei Den*, 333.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Kuninosuke Yamamoto 山本邦之助, "Taibei Mondai no Hankyō 對米問題の反響" [Repercussions of the Issues on the US] *Kaitakusha* (開拓者) 9:1 (January 1914), 57.

American public school education; Japanese culture and ideas would be auxiliary to their learning.

In bridging the gap between the Japanese immigrants and the white Americans, Ebara accentuated the necessity of educating the Japanese immigrants in moral character, which was essentially the “American spirit” that as taught in American schools. In other words, it was a way of promoting their assimilation to the American society. According to a report that Ebara sent to Japan during his visit to the US, “despite numerous strong points in favor of the Japanese abroad, they still retain their peculiar traits which prevent them from associating with people among whom they live.”⁵⁶ Although Ebara supported the immigration of Japanese to the US, he thought that the “peculiar traits” of the Japanese would bar them from maintaining a good relationship with the Americans. He further explained the phrase “peculiar traits” in the article “Social Policy and Foreign Immigration.” He clarified that one of the primary causes of the Californian problem was the difficulty of Japanese immigrants had assimilating to the US because of their distinct “national character and ideas” (国民性と思想).⁵⁷ Even though his definition of the “peculiar traits” was still abstract, it is obvious at this point that they were particularly the lack of moral character. Since he commented that “he fears for the future of Japanese in foreign lands” if the Japanese do not care about adapting to American society, the social and cultural assimilation of the Japanese immigrants, according to him, was a necessary condition for them to live peacefully with the Americans.⁵⁸

Ebara’s assimilationist policy, which was closely linked with his notion of moral education, however, faced a challenge. Ebara recognized that it is impossible to force the

⁵⁶ “Article 3 – No Title,” *The New York Times*, July 20, 1913, 3.

⁵⁷ Ebara, “Shakai Seisaku to Kaigai Imin,” 21.

⁵⁸ “Article 3 – No Title.”

Japanese to assimilate to the US society: “It is impossible to forcibly compel the Japanese to Americanize.”⁵⁹ He instead pictured an assimilationist policy that was not compulsory but rather voluntary, a policy that did not refute his liberalist idea of the independence of each individual. However, he did not clarify what specifically a voluntary assimilation of Japanese immigrants would look like. Yamamoto’s article on US-Japan relations facilitates our understanding of Ebara’s voluntary assimilationism. In his article “Repercussions of the Issue against the US,” Yamamoto sided with Ebara in regard to the need for the voluntary assimilation. He indicated that it was possible only if the Japanese Americans became aware that they are the ones who are solving this issue, and the enactment of the Alien Land Law made them realize the need to improve their ideas, customs, and morality.⁶⁰

Revisiting Ebara's Neo-Confucian philosophy of *Shūyō* discussed in the previous chapter, Ebara believed that individuals could reform their moral character by themselves. Since he viewed that assimilation with the Americans can be only achieved by their voluntary actions of the individual Japanese immigrants, his philosophy of *Shūyō* transformed in this case as the moral self-reform of the individual Japanese immigrants. In his monograph *Seinen to Kokka* (“Youth and Nation”), Ebara argued that moral progress is as essential as material and scientific progresses in achieving civilization. Since young people are the ones who will lead the nation, Ebara stressed the significance of “practicing *Shūyō* by their will ... and hence habituating to fine customs such as discipline, endurance, study, contrivance, diligence.”⁶¹ By emphasizing the need for self-reform of morality, he thus tried to improve Japan’s moral respectability without

⁵⁹ Ebara, “Shakai Seisaku to Kaigai Imin,” 21.

⁶⁰ Yamamoto, “Taibei Mondai no Hankyō,” 56.

⁶¹ Soroku Ebara, *Seinen to Kokka* 青年と国家 [Youth and Nation] (Tokyo: Kinkōdō Shoseki Kabushiki Gaisha, 1903). 30-31.

negotiating with the US government.

Ebara's vision of voluntary assimilation of Japanese nationals in the US was also used to showcase Japan as a Westernized nation to the Western empires. Ebara insisted that young people need to respect their own individual will and act by themselves to contribute to civilization without government interference.⁶² Similarly, for Ebara, the self-reform of Japanese immigrants would contribute to the representation of Japan as a modernized nation. Referring to Fukuzawa Yukichi's (福沢諭吉) political theory, Ebara pointed out that the power of the government was very weak in "civilized" countries, which he clearly referred to the Western countries, and thus civilization should be achieved through a development of education by the hands of the Japanese people, not the government.⁶³ Believing in the power of the individual, Ebara thus advocated for the moral cultivation of the Japanese immigrants than diplomatic negotiation between central governments.

Moral education to Japanese immigrants was not only essential to alleviate US-Japan tension, but it was also a method to assert moral respectability to the international arena. Ebara, envisioned assimilationism as a strategy to show Japan as an equally "civilized" empire as the United States. He thought that the anti-Japanese sentiments that were rising in different parts of the world, including the US, China, and Siberia, were obstacles to the development of Japan as a global power.⁶⁴ For him, anti-Japanese racism in the United States, represented by the enactment of the Alien Land Law of 1913, symbolized the US rejecting Japan as the colonial empire. In countering this rejection, Ebara thus employed his moral values as a moral strategy for

⁶² Ebara, *Isogaba Maware*, 69.

⁶³ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, "Yo no Senpai oyobi Yūjin no Mitaru Fukuzawa Sensei 余の先輩及び友人の見たる福沢先生" [My senior and friend, Mr. Fukuzawa], *Mita Hyōron* 223 (February 1916).

⁶⁴ Ebara, "Shakai Seisaku to Kaigai Imin," 22.

demonstrating Japan as a powerful empire to the US.

Ebara returned to Japan on September 1, 1913.⁶⁵ Murano Tsuneemon (村野常右衛門), the secretary-general of the Seiyūkai party, and Fukui Kikuzaburō (福井菊三郎), the director of Mitsui Bussan and Ebara's son-in-law, and others welcomed his return.⁶⁶ Upon Ebara's arrival, he explained to an interviewer that “even there are still points to improve in the future, in general, it is very impressive to see their [Japanese immigrants'] moral characters” who were undaunted by the enactment of the Alien Land Law.⁶⁷ However, he still believed in the potential capacity of the Japanese immigrants to improve their own moral character. As an educator who believed in the capacity of his students, Ebara projected his pedagogical ambition to the Japanese people in the US.

⁶⁵ “Ebara Soroku Shi Kichō.”

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Chapter 3: Japanese YMCA's Relief Program—or Ebara's independent assertion of moral respectability; 1914-1922

Less than a year after Ebara's return from a four-month journey in the United States, on July 28, 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on Serbia, a conflict that later became known as the First World War. Although the war took place in Europe, Japan joined the war on August 23, 1914, with the Allies. Ebara, who remained as an educator, a politician, and a Christian leader, held important positions during the war. Most importantly, he was the president of the relief program of the Japanese YMCA even he was 75 years old.¹ His involvement in the relief program was one of his final projects as a Japanese Christian leader until his death in 1922. Ebara employed the strategy of moral respectability by providing relief to the soldiers in the war.

This chapter shifts the focus to Ebara's leadership in the relief program during the First World War (1914-18) and the Siberian Intervention (1918-22). As the president of the program, Ebara was responsible for sending relief missions (慰問使) to the battlefields and financing the program independently. Even though Ebara did not visit the battlefields and directly provided relief to the soldiers and civilians, he played a significant role in making the plan into realization.

This chapter first offers an overview of the Japanese YMCA's activity of army relief work during WWI and the Siberian Intervention. After discussing how Ebara was involved in this program as the leader, the chapter examines how the relief program functioned as his strategy of showing Japan as a morally respectable nation to the world through the language of Christianity. In addition to Ebara's outward representation of respectability to foreign powers, he

¹ Ebara had been the president of the Tokyo YMCA since February 1904, and had experience in working as the president of the Army Relief Program during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. During his presidency, Ebara travelled to Korea and Manchuria to serve the soldiers in May 1905 (Reiichiro Yūki 結城禮一郎, *Waga Ebara Soroku Sensei 我が江原素六先生* [My Mr. Ebara Soroku] (Tokyo: Sankeisha, 1926), 43.).

simultaneously educated the Japanese people into the moral values of frugality to contribute to the war effort. His presentation of moral respectability shows a continuity from his protest of the 1913 Alien Land Law, in which he tried to alleviate the tension between Japan and the United States by the moral reform of Japanese immigrants in the US. While Ebara aimed to support the national interest of Japan, he took a distinct approach from the Japanese government that pursued expansionism in East Asia. The difference in approaches between Ebara and the Japanese government highlights the significance of individual undertaking in examining Japanese foreign policy in the 1910s.

In order to investigate the ways in which Ebara understood the relief program of the Japanese YMCA as a way of deploying his strategy of moral respectability in the late 1910s, let us first explore the purpose of the relief program in the context of Japan's involvement in the First World War and the Siberian Intervention. On October 29, 1917, Ebara founded the Allied Forces Relief Program (連合軍慰問部) under the Japanese YMCA and became its president. As the president of the program, Ebara sent seven Japanese YMCA staff members in a total of two dispatches to different locations in Europe where the war was unfolding.² In the first dispatch, secretaries of the Tokyo YMCA, Hibiki Nobusuke (日匹信亮) and Yamamoto Kuninosuke departed Japan on November 15, 1917.³ Notably, Yamamoto was Ebara's assistant during his visit to the US in 1913. Masutomi Masasuke (益富政助) and Suga Giichi (菅儀一), who were in the United States at that time, also joined Hibiki and Yamamoto.⁴ The second mission, which

² Reiichiro Yūki 結城禮一郎, *Waga Ebara Soroku Sensei 我が江原素六先生* [My Mr. Ebara Soroku] (Tokyo: Sankeisha, 1926), 43.

³ Japan YMCA 日本YMCA, *Kaitakusha 開拓者* [Pioneer] 13:5 (May 1918): 62.

⁴ Ibid. Masutomi was the secretary of the Railway Youth Association (鉄道青年会), which was founded by Ebara.

consisted of Sagara Asahiko (相良朝彦), Hirayama Haruhisa (平山治久), and Okumura Ryuzō (奥村竜三) of the Japanese YMCA, departed Japan in August 1919.⁵

The purpose of these relief missions was to provide physical and spiritual assistance to the soldiers of the Allied powers who were participating in WWI. Ebara stated the objective of sending relief missions to Europe: “[the relief missions] attempts to appreciate the efforts of the people who provide relief, or visit officers and soldiers in the battlefronts, shake hands with them and directly provide them relief.”⁶ He also emphasized the importance of the relief program by distinguishing it from the Red Cross. Whereas the Red Cross was responsible for helping the wounded soldiers, the relief program of the Japanese YMCA was necessary in “vitalizing the combatants by encouraging and providing them relief.”⁷

Ebara particularly felt the necessity of providing relief during the WWI because of Japan’s involvement in the war effort of the Allies. Japan was involved in the war as a result of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance that was signed between Japan and Britain in 1902. Due to the provisions for mutual defense of the alliance, Japan was forced to participate in the war on the side of the Allies that consisted of Britain, France, the United States, Italy, and Russia. Although Japan’s contribution to the Allied powers was relatively small compared to that of other powers, Ebara still considered the need to support them. Ebara described that he was prompted to send the relief missions because “[a]s one of the members of the Allied countries, I do not have the heart to viewing this [the First World War] as a fire on the opposite shore.”⁸ Since Japan was a part of the Allies in WWI, he felt the need to help the Allied soldiers, who were damaged by the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, *Rengōgun Imon Jigyō ni Tsuite 聯合軍慰問事業に就いて* [On the Allied Forces Relief Program] (Tokyo: Rengōgun Imonbu, 1918), 7.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

catastrophe of the war.

The relief missions achieved their purpose by provide different types of relief to the soldiers of the Allied powers. Between January and February 1918, Hibiki, Yamamoto, Masutomi, and Suga visited military camps in New York and Boston and the war work office of the American YMCA before going to Europe.⁹ They visited armies of the Allies and field hospitals in battlefields, and YMCA offices in London, Paris, and Rome.¹⁰ They also gave speeches that highlighted how Japanese people appreciated the Allied powers, and offered personal conversations and religious lectures.¹¹

The relief missions also provided assistance to the Japanese army. As the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) begun participating in battles in the Mediterranean Sea, Hibiki and Sagara gifted ten thousand yen to the commander of the Special Squadron of the IJN, acknowledging the necessity of supporting Japanese naval officers.¹² Other than financial assistance, the relief missions distributed photos of the Japanese military, magic lanterns, postcards, and dolls to the soldiers.¹³ The Japanese YMCA focused on offering mental and spiritual assistance as much as material assistance to both the Allied and the Japanese troops.

While the two missions of the Allied Forces Relief Program travelled to different places in Europe, Ebara also sent relief missions in response to the Siberian Intervention. On July 30, 1918, the Japanese YMCA decided to rename the Allied Forces Relief Program to Army Relief Program (軍隊慰問部) and send personnel to Siberia, the far southwestern area of Russia, to

⁹ Tsunegoro Nara 奈良常五郎, *Nihon YMCA Shi 日本YMCA史* [History of Japan YMCA] (Tokyo: Japan YMCA Alliance, 1959), 222.

¹⁰ Japan YMCA, *Kaitakusha* 13:5, 55.

¹¹ Japan YMCA 日本YMCA, *Kaitakusha 開拓者* [Pioneer] 13:4 (April 1918): 97.

¹² Nara, 223.

¹³ Japan YMCA, *Kaitakusha* 13:4, 97.

support the soldiers and the civilians there.¹⁴ Ebara remained as the president of the program. The purpose of the relief missions in Siberia was similar to that of the relief missions of the WWI. They were responsible for mitigating the atrocities of the Siberian Intervention by providing material and emotional aid to the soldiers and civilians in need.¹⁵

The Japanese YMCA founded the Army Relief Program as a reaction to the Siberian Intervention, a military expedition that happened in August 1918, in which the Allies, including Britain, France, United States, China, Italy, Canada, and Japan, intervened the Russian Civil War in the name of rescuing the Czech Legion that had been captured by the Bolsheviks.¹⁶ Russia, which was governed by the Bolsheviks after the Russian Revolution, decided to withdraw from WWI by signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, a peace treaty between Russia and Germany.¹⁷ After the signing of the treaty, the Czechs, who were captured by the Russians, formed the Czech Legion to fight against the Germans in the Western Front. Britain and France, which feared German effort in the Western Front planned to transport the Czech Legion to the Western Front via Vladivostok. However, there were active combats between the Czechs and the Bolsheviks during its transportation.¹⁸ In the cause of rescuing the Czech Legion from the Bolsheviks, the United States, Japan, Britain, and France sent their troops to Siberia. They eventually sent troops to the side of the White Army in the Russian Civil War to prevent a worldwide communist revolution. For the Japanese, the Russian Civil War was an opportunity to take advantage of the situation in the newly established Soviet Union by enlarging its imperial

¹⁴ Ibid., 63.

¹⁵ Japan YMCA 日本 YMCA, *Kaitakusha 開拓者 [Pioneer]* 13:9 (September 1918), 84.

¹⁶ Paul E. Dunscomb, *Japan's Siberian Intervention, 1918-1922: "A Great Disobedience Against the People"* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 50.

¹⁷ Ibid., 40.

¹⁸ Ibid., 49.

reach into Russia.¹⁹

As the president of the Army Relief Program of the Japanese YMCA, Ebara sent more than seventy YMCA members to Siberia.²⁰ Yamamoto Kuninosuke became the secretary of the relief missions of the Army Relief Program, and he toured around different armies of the Allies.²¹ Even though the relief missions in Siberia provided assistance similar to that of the relief missions in Europe, they systematized their assistance by introducing the *kurabu* (倶楽部, club). For example, *Kasha Kurabu* (貨車倶楽部, Freight Car Club) specifically provided support to the garrison forces and starving residents in Siberia with food and snacks.²² The relief missions expanded their *kurabu* facilities, installing them in different locations of Siberia, such as Chita, Manzhouli, and Khabarovsk, and increasing the number of freight cars.²³ As a result of the systematic support system of the Army Relief Program, the relief missions were able to deliver a total of 1,363 items with a weight of 65,269 cabbies (approximately 39 tons) with a volume of 3,713 *sais* (approximately 1,800 gallons) to Siberia by the end of its activity.²⁴

Although Ebara led the program that provided relief to the Allied soldiers during WWI and the Siberian Intervention, he did not necessarily advocate for Japan's expansionism in East Asia. The Japanese government proceeded its expansionist project in both the WWI and the Siberian Intervention. Regarding WWI "as an ideal opportunity to complete some unfinished business in China," Japan seized the German concession of Qingdao in China's Shandong

¹⁹ Ibid., 36.

²⁰ Ebara Soroku Sensei Memorial Association ed. 江原素六先生記念委員会編, *Kurisuchan toshiteno Ebara Soroku Sensei 基督者としての江原素六先生* [Mr. Ebara Soroku as a Christian] (Tokyo: Miyagoshi Shinjirō, 1922), 152.

²¹ Nara, 224.

²² Ibid., 223.

²³ Ibid., 224.

²⁴ Ibid.

peninsula shortly after Japan declared war on Germany in August 1914.²⁵ The following year, Japan presented China with the Twenty One Demands that stipulated, among other things, that Japan be given full control of southern Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia.²⁶ The Siberian Intervention, which happened during WWI, was purely motivated by the imperial interest of the Japanese Army.

Even though he was skeptical of Japanese militarism in China and Siberia, Ebara still contributed to Japan's national interest of strengthening the nation. However, he did not prefer to strengthen Japan through expansionism and militarism. Instead, Ebara envisioned to strengthen Japan's moral respectability through the use of Christian language and moral reform of the Japanese people. Emphasizing the significance of moral development in comparison to material growth, Ebara stated:

[E]ven one has a good amount of material knowledge, one might demonstrate contemptible actions if that person does not have the *Shūyō* for improving moral character (品性). [...] Therefore, it is a big question in one's life to use the mind for acquiring a noble moral character."²⁷

Ebara favored moral reform over militarism as a way to advance Japan in the world because he believed that a moral and spiritual development is a necessary condition in achieving material development.

In strengthening Japan's moral respectability, Ebara employed a rhetoric of Christianity to show collaboration with the YMCAs of other great powers. Ebara founded the relief program

²⁵ Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914-1919* (Cambridge: Harvard university Press, 2001), 39.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, *Tsūzoku Kōwa: Ukiyo no Omoni 通俗講話 浮世の重荷* [Popular Lecture: Heavy burdens in a fleeting life] (Tokyo: Isobe Kōyodō, 1915), 74-75.

under the Japanese YMCA as a part of the worldwide army relief campaign. The YMCA's War Work Campaign was first led by an American YMCA leader John Raleigh Mott. It began immediately after the American participation in the WWI after its declaration of war on Germany in February 1917.²⁸ In Europe, the British YMCA initiated a campaign for relieving the soldiers under Arthur Yapp, the general manager of the British YMCA. Following the campaigns of the American and British YMCAs, the Japanese YMCA also started its program in October 1917, three years after Japan's declaration of war on Germany. The long gap between the start of Japan's participation in the WWI and the beginning of the relief program of the Japanese YMCA illustrates that the relief program was not at all spontaneous but was instead a reaction to what the American YMCA was doing in the battlefronts of Europe.

Ebara anticipated that the contribution of the Japanese YMCA to the international relief campaign would present Japan as a morally developed country through Christianity. He saw the importance of carrying out the relief program in part as connecting the Japanese YMCA to the international YMCA community. In his statement concerning the Allied Forces Relief Program, published in March 1918, Ebara wrote:

As in the past, our YMCA has an intimate relationship with the YMCAs of the whole world. The visit of our YMCA members, therefore, should have a feeling of "Is it not delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters?" for them [the YMCAs of the whole world].²⁹

Referring to the words of Confucius in the Analects that signify the importance of amity in Confucianism, Ebara underscored the obligation of the Japanese YMCA to join in the universal

²⁸ Nara, 220.

²⁹ Ebara, *Rengōgun Imon Jigyō ni Tsuite*, 8.

Christian friendship. He expanded the idea of inter-YMCA collaboration to international collaboration when he declared that the relief program “strives to be of some help toward diplomacy by the people (国民的外交).”³⁰ For him, Christianity was still a strong medium for envisioning international brotherhood.

In addition to initiating the relief campaign as the Japanese YMCA, Ebara tried to showcase Japan’s moral respectability through the humanitarian activity of the relief missions. During their campaign in Siberia, the relief missions of the Army Relief Program highlighted the significance of its humanitarian support for every soldier in the battlefield regardless of nationality of the soldiers. They provided relief not only the Japanese Army but also “the armies of the Allied powers, returned Polish soldiers, the Czech Army, the poor in Russia, and even POWs of German-Austria.”³¹ This description already lists diverse groups of people to whom the relief missions provided their assistance. Subjects of its support also included Russian soldiers, who were imprisoned by the German-Austrian Army, and the German-Austrian soldiers, who were imprisoned by the Allied forces, both released after the 1920 ceasefire of the Polish-Soviet War.³² By distributing material goods and providing emotional and spiritual support, the relief missions strived to support every individual who were affected by the war. By demonstrating itself as an independent organization that was separated from the interests of nation-states, the Japanese YMCA showed the universal nature of its humanitarian aid.

Ebara used the rhetoric of Christianity as it was a language that could be shared with the YMCAs of the world. The rhetoric of “justice and humanity” that was used by Ebara to communicate with the United States, where anti-Japanese racism was rampant, was also

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Yūki, 44.

³² Nara, 224.

employed in the relief program. In response to the Japanese YMCA's contribution, YMCAs of the Allied powers showed a positive attitude toward the relief missions of the Japanese YMCA. Reporting from France, Yamamoto felt that the missions were "welcomed with favorable feeling in the US, Britain, and every other place, and were able to communicate the spirit of brotherhood and sympathy of our nation."³³ Yamamoto's account demonstrates the effectiveness of the language of Christianity in gaining respect from the Allied powers.

Despite the fact that Ebara used the language of Christianity to showcasing moral respectability during WWI and the Siberian Intervention, Ebara sent over seventy members to Siberia in contrast to seven that he sent during WWI. Ebara concentrated the support for soldiers in Siberia because he wanted to conceal the brutality of the Siberian Intervention that contradicted to Ebara's strategy of moral respectability. While it was straightforward for him to show moral respectability to the Allied powers during the WWI as Japan was one of the minor belligerents in the war, it was more difficult to prove moral respectability during the Siberian Intervention as it was militarism that fueled Japan's involvement in it. During the Siberian Intervention, the Japanese government ended in sending over 72,000 soldiers to Siberia, while the United States only sent approximately 8,000, as a direct result of heightened militarism in the Imperial Japanese Army.³⁴ In this regard, it was critical for Ebara to show anti-militarist attitude as a major part of Japan's moral respectability by increasing more people to contribute to the humanitarian aid of the soldiers and civilians.

While Ebara attempted to stress Japan's moral respectability over Japanese militarism by deploying Christianity as a shared language with other Western powers, he practiced his

³³ Japan YMCA 日本 YMCA, *Kaitakusha 開拓者* [Pioneer] 13:8 (August 1918): 158.

³⁴ Dunscomb, 68.

strategy of moral respectability by educating the Japanese people in the moral value of frugality. For Ebara who prioritized moral development over material development, frugality was an important value that enables people to cultivate their moral character without depending on economic progress. Ebara defined frugality (儉約) as “the moral principle to never abandon the material as a waste.”³⁵ In contrast to luxury (奢侈) that exaggerates the need for unnecessary consumption of the material, Ebara claimed that frugality is an altruistic value that contributes to the larger good of the society.³⁶ It was crucial for Ebara to formulate frugality as a moral value because he believed that the individual practice of moral values results in the moral development of the nation.³⁷

In order to communicate the moral value of frugality to the Japanese people, Ebara pursued financial independence of the relief program of the Japanese YMCA. As the president of the relief program, he did not directly participate in the relief missions yet financially maintained the program through fundraising campaign. In fact, Ebara planned to visit Siberia to directly provide relief to the people there, although at this point, he was 79 years old. In March 1921, the Board of Directors, which included President Ebara, Directors Ibuka Kajinosuke, Hibiki, and Saito Soichi, Honorary Manager George S. Phelps, and Secretary Takahashi, approved Ebara to visit Siberia.³⁸ He planned to distribute comfort bags (慰問袋) that had been bought with money donated by the Japanese Emperor. Although he ultimately did not visit Vladivostok because of the spread of the plague, the plan indicates his willingness to directly support the soldiers in

³⁵ Ebara, *Ukiyo no Omoni*, 88.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

³⁸ Japan YMCA, “Dai 27 Kai Dai 28 Kai Guntai Imonbu Rijikai Kiroku 第二十七回第二十八回軍隊慰問部理事会記録” [Records on the 27th and 28th Board Meeting of the Army Relief Program] (March 11 and 25, 1921), 1-2.

Siberia despite his old age.³⁹ Instead, Secretary Watanabe was dispatched on behalf of Ebara to distribute the comfort bags to the Japanese Vladivostok Army.⁴⁰

However, Ebara was able to communicate the moral values to the Japanese people without directly contributing to the relief program. Ebara considered financial independence of the relief program as a way to practice frugality. The army relief campaigns led by the Western powers had powerful financial bases. Whereas the budget of the Allied Forces Relief Program of the Japanese YMCA was 100 thousand yen, the American YMCA collected over 300 million yen and the British YMCA also collected over 230 million yen for their campaigns during the WWI.⁴¹ Notwithstanding the weak fiscal basis, Ebara did not care the fact that the Japanese YMCA could devote less budget to its relief work. Although he was “anxious that my [his] reputation [would be damaged]” to carry out the program given the substantial difference in its scale with the American and British YMCAs, he felt that as long as the Japanese YMCA was contributing in any possible way to the international community, Japan would be considered as a humanitarian nation from the great powers.⁴²

At the same time, Ebara realized that some budget was needed to carry out the relief program. In the midst of the dispatches of the relief missions, Ebara prioritized fundraising and giving speeches in different places in Japan in order to make this program a success. In promoting fundraising to the relief program, Ebara was active in showing the condition in Siberia to the Japanese people in order to raise awareness of the efforts made by the relief missions. Members of the relief mission of the program included photographers of motion

³⁹ Japan YMCA 日本YMCA, *Kaitakusha* 開拓者 [Pioneer] 16:6 (June 1921), 96.

⁴⁰ Japan YMCA 日本YMCA, *Kaitakusha* 開拓者 [Pioneer] 16:7 (July 1921), 68.

⁴¹ Nara, 221.

⁴² Ibid.

picture, a newly imported technology for filming movies, and they filmed the lives of Japanese troops in Siberia. Ebara fortunately had the opportunity to show the Imperial Prince the photographs and movies that the relief missions have taken. The Prince praised him for his effort of supporting the Japanese soldiers in Siberia.⁴³ Moreover, the Japanese YMCA held exhibitions of items that were used by Japanese troops in Siberia, including entertainment goods, winter clothes, shoes, and dishes, at major cities in Japan.⁴⁴ All of these efforts made by Ebara to promote the Japanese people to donate to the relief program was a crucial process in communicating his moral values to them.



Figure 4: Postcard of Japanese YMCA in Siberia with a movie machine⁴⁵

⁴³ Nara, 225.

⁴⁴ Japan YMCA, *Kaitakusha* 16:6, 96.

⁴⁵ Cliff Smith YMCA Postcard Collection, "Movie Machine – Japanese Y.M.C.A. in Siberia," Digital Commonwealth: Massachusetts Collections Online, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/6w927x663>.

Due to Ebara's publicity campaign, information on the relief program quickly spread across Japan. Soon, multiple supporters' associations founded by businessmen, women, schools, and churches began to support the program.⁴⁶ Thanks to Ebara's adept leadership, the program was able to collect a total of 100 thousand yen (approximately 3 million dollars in current value), in which 70 thousand yen was donated by Japanese financiers and 20 thousand yen was collected from the members of the Japanese YMCA. The remaining 10 thousand yen was donated by the Japanese Emperor and the Empress as a form of an imperial donation (御下賜金), which was directly handed over by the Emperor to Ebara in December 1917.⁴⁷ From the private sector to the imperial family, Ebara succeeded in involving people from diverse backgrounds for constructing a sustainable financial basis. His simultaneous acts of limiting the cost of the program to the minimum yet effectively showing Japan's moral respectability represent his strong passion to carry out his mission.

Ebara's fundraising campaign was a form of communicating his moral values to the Japanese people because he viewed fundraising as a way to educate them the significance of morality. Saitō Sōichi (齋藤惣一), the secretary of the Japanese YMCA Alliance who was responsible for carrying out the fundraising campaign for the Allied Forces Relief Program, thought that "fundraising, which was effective both as an education/enlightenment and as a practice, was an important program for the YMCA."⁴⁸ Saitō considered fundraising as an educational campaign that aimed to change the mind of the people who perceived that the relief program cannot be realized due to the lack of budget.⁴⁹ Fundraising was not only about

⁴⁶ Nara, 222.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Yoshimichi Ebisawa 海老沢義道, *Saitō Sōichi to YMCA 齋藤惣一と YMCA* (Tokyo: Saitō Denki Shuppan Iinkai, 1965), 75.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

collecting money but to cultivate their minds so that they would donate the money for the social good. Saitō's strong conviction of fundraising as a moral reform corresponds to Ebara's moral value of frugality, in which according to Ebara, the individual practice of frugality contributes to the larger social benefit. The fundraising campaign, therefore, was effective in both the moral and economic development of the Japanese nation.

Ebara's moral respectability was thus embodied by his conviction of financial independence, in which he implemented the relief program solely through the voluntary donation of the Japanese people who were impressed by his actions. While the fundraising campaign demonstrated the significance of moral education to the Japanese people, it was connected to Ebara's interest of strengthening Japan's moral respectability in the international arena. In order to achieve this, Ebara needed to show to the great powers that the moral reform of the Japanese people contributes to the interest of the Allied powers.

Ebara compared Japan and other Western powers, particularly the United States, to convince the Japanese people that Japan should strengthen its morality from the basis. In the article titled "Don't lose against America," he asserted that the American troops, who were only trained for six months, were successful for fighting against the regularly trained German forces, during the WWI because they were able to procure provisions from the nation-wide food relief operation.⁵⁰ By praising the commitment of the whole American people of eschewing eating certain food, Ebara explained that this movement was a result of the patriotic morality of the American people. On the contrary, he criticized the Japanese people who were unable to prevent the rice riots (米騒動) of 1918, which were caused by the sudden rise of rice prices, by

⁵⁰ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, "Amerika ni Makeruna 亜米利加に負けるな" [Don't lose against America], *Kōdō* 320 (November 1918): 50.

consuming fewer rice.⁵¹ In other words, Ebara believed that the rice riots would not have happened if the Japanese individuals were morally involved in the war effort. He thus underscored the importance of strengthening the morality of the Japanese people, for it could influence the outcome of the war.

In spite of his anti-militarist attitude, Ebara was still able to support the Japanese war effort because he believed that it was necessary to combat against German militarism. By collaborating with the Allied forces, he believed that Japan could eliminate the threat of German militarism. When he praised the effectiveness of education in the United States in improving the public morality of the Americans, he gave an example in relation to the food relief operation of the US: when a child saw the mother eating bread on a “wheatless” day, the child said that she became a German spy.⁵² This example indicates that the concept of moral character, which Ebara believed that could be improved by education, was based on an anti-German attitude. For the United States, and Japan too, Germany was the opponent of the war, and someone to blame for their participation in the atrocity. By situating Germany as the “enemy of world humanity (世界人類),” he managed to support both his moral philosophy and national interests.⁵³ On the contrary, he showed respect and sympathy toward Britain, France, and the United States for their effort against the Germans who were “cruel and inhumane robbery.”⁵⁴ As long as he did not support Japanese militarism, he was able to use his moral philosophy to both gain respectability from the Allied powers and pursuing Japanese war effort from a moral perspective. In order to make his critique of militarism consistent, he did not communicate to the Japanese people that

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, “Keishin Aikoku no Hongi 敬神愛国の本義” [The True Meaning of Piety and Patriotism], *Kaitakusha* 13:10 (November 1918): 62.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 61-62.

moral reform leads to the nation's military strength but instead told them that morality itself is important.

Ebara's pursuit of financial independence in managing the relief programs illustrates his strong passion to show Japan as a morally respectable nation to the international arena. It was also the only way to strengthen Japan's power so that Japan could catch up with the Western empires. However, it was challenging for him to ignore, as a Christian who valued justice and humanity, Japan's imperial conquest in China and Siberia in the late 1910s. The brutality of Japan's expansionism in East Asia contradicted with the humanitarian effort of the Japanese YMCA. In the article "Broaden your worldview," Ebara criticized the Japanese who celebrated the 1914 siege of Qingdao by the Japanese Army more than the end of the WWI.⁵⁵ Furthermore, he condemned Japanese army officials and politicians who "announced something nonsensical like 'German victory is evident' until recently, and moreover, planned an expansion of armaments."⁵⁶ While Ebara condemned Japan's militarism on the basis of his emphasis on moral development, he accepted it if it was necessary for countering German militarism, which was required to show solidarity with the Allies. Hence, it was inevitable for Ebara to neglect Japanese militarism to justify the relief program.

The relief program of the Japanese YMCA was part of Ebara's project to increase Japan's presence in the international arena in the late 1910s, as well as part of moral education to the Japanese people to contribute to the war effort. These domestic and foreign manifestations of moral respectability were compatible with each other because he believed that individual moral reform of the Japanese people was directly connected to Japan's national interests. While he saw

⁵⁵ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, "Gankai wo Hirokuseyo 眼界を廣くせよ" [Broaden your worldview], *Kōdō* 333 (December 1919): 37.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

the Japanese immigrants in the US as potential media to asset respectability in 1913, Ebara in the late 1910s expanded the scope of moral reform to the entire Japanese population. He begun to see politics of moral respectability both as a foreign policy to resolve international tensions but also as a domestic policy to morally improve the Japanese state as a modernized nation.

Conclusion: What would a morally respectable nation look like?: Reimagining moral respectability in Japanese foreign policy

In the two previous chapters, we saw Ebara seeking to assert Japan's moral respectability over the Western powers when he engaged in the international arena. Chapter 2 examined how he tried to use a religious rhetoric to overcome anti-Japanese racism in the US. Chapter 3 similarly discussed how his leadership in the Japanese YMCA incorporated a project of showcasing the morality of humanitarian programs to the Allied powers. The continuity of Ebara's strategy is surprising, given the changes in social and political situations surrounding him. However, what is more surprising is the fact that Ebara embodied the moral pedagogy that he asserted by practicing moral education. Emphasizing the importance of moral reform over the condemnation of anti-Japanese racism, Ebara attempted to cultivate the moral value of patience to the Japanese immigrants. In parallel with the discussion of Chapter 2, Ebara preferred moral reform over militarism in strengthening the moral character of the Japanese people through the value of frugality.

Ebara maintained his identity as an educator in dealing with Japan's international relations in the 1910s. The moral values of patience and frugality were not merely something that he communicated to others, but there were also values that he lived through. In this regard, Ebara's strategy of the moral respectability was his way of living a moral life. He did not want to show that his life was one that is morally respectable, but he truly believed that an individual moral life would contribute to the moral development of a society and the nation.

There is a clear contrast between Ebara's moral respectability and the Japanese government's assertion of moral language to the foreign powers, even though they both had the same interest: to strengthen Japan. Whereas the Japanese government always prioritized

economic development in its foreign policy, Ebara always stressed the need for moral development in strengthen Japan. The different approaches that Ebara and the Japanese government employed to strengthen Japan was based on their different views of Japan's relationship with the Western powers. While the Japanese government relied on the existence of foreign countries, Ebara advocated for an individual cultivation of morality in developing Japan as the great power. This contrast is crucial when we examine Japanese imperialism and colonialism in East Asia in the early 20th century.

The Japanese government maintained the objective to strengthen the nation through economic imperialism. During WWI, the Japanese government expanded its economic interests in China by sieging Qingdao and demanding special privileges including the rights to railways and mining in the Shandong province and concessions in Manchuria. The Siberian Intervention, too, took a scheme of the “informal empire,” a phrase that historian Sven Saalar coins in describing Japanese military expedition as an indirect domination of Siberia by economic means. Saalar argues that Japan's interest in Siberia was primarily economic. Japanese unilateralists, who were represented by the General Staff Headquarters of the Imperial Japanese Army, attempted to gain markets and resources in Siberia in order to avoid imperial competition with the United States.¹ As a consequence, the Imperial Japanese Army ignored the limit of the number of troops and dispatched over 70,000 soldiers to different parts of Siberia in 1918.

Despite the deep division between the government and the military on the attitude of participating in the Siberian Intervention, politician Hara Takashi, who was cautious about

¹ Sven Saalar サーレルスヴェン, “Nihon no Tairiku Shinshutsu to Shiberia Shuppei: Teikoku Shugi Kakuchō no ‘Kansetsu Shihai Kōsō’ wo megutte 日本の大陸進出とシベリア出兵：帝国主義拡張の「間接支配構想」をめぐる” [Japan's expansion on the Asian continent and the Siberian Intervention: The idea of 'informal empire' in the Japanese Imperialism], *Economic Review of Kanazawa University* 19:1 (December 1998): 273.

Japanese military intervention, believed that the “financial and material support from the United States would be indispensable for carrying out an intervention on a scale contemplated by the general staff.”² With respect to the need for economic development, both parties acknowledged that Japan lacked a financial basis and needed to strengthen it whether taking economic resources from foreign lands or collaborating with the US that had a huge financial basis compared to Japan. However, Ebara neither agreed with the Japanese military nor the government; he still felt the need for a moral basis in order to consolidate Japan as the global empire.

Ebara’s strategy of moral respectability, which was used to educate the Japanese into proper morality in the 1910s, was expanded to achieving Ebara’s imperialist ambition by educating the Koreans into proper morality in the end of 1910s and the beginning of 1920s. When Wilson announced the Fourteen Points that formed the ideological basis of a post-war international political order, East Asian countries responded with nationalist uprisings. Inspired by the self-determination clause of the Fourteen Points, Korean students in Japan read the Declaration of Independence in front of the Tokyo YMCA building on February 8, 1919. This event fueled Korean nationalists to demonstrate against Korean independence from Japan, which is known as the March 1st Movement.³ The March 1st Movement was so influential that it contributed to the protests of May 1919 in China.⁴ Students from China and Taiwan, which was under the colonial rule of Japan since 1895, interacted with anti-colonial activists in Korea to seek a possibility of Pan-Asianism “as a tool from below to denounce Japanese colonial rule in

² Paul E. Dunscomb, *Japan’s Siberian Intervention, 1918-1922: “A Great Disobedience Against the People,”* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 48.

³ Shinichi Kitaoka, *The Political History of Modern Japan: Foreign Relations and Domestic Politics* trans. Robert D. Eldridge and Graham Leonard (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2018), 180.

⁴ Dolf-Alexander Neuhaus, “‘Awakening Asia’: Korean Student Activists in Japan, *The Asia Kunglun*, and Asian Solidarity, 1910-1923,” *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 6:2 (November 2017): 622.

Asia during the early inter-war period.”⁵ However, the March 1st Movement encountered a military suppression by the Government-General of Korea (朝鮮総督府), the Japanese colonial government in Korea.

Ebara was in a struggle between advocating for Wilsonian internationalism and for Japan’s colonialism in Korea. As the March 1st Movement was partly influenced by the Wilsonian notion of self-determination, which had a strong affinity with Ebara’s concept of political independence, the independence movement in East Asia was a focal point for his political contradiction. In addition, the fact that the Korean independence movement begun in front of the YMCA building in Tokyo emphasized Ebara’s contradiction. The YMCA was indeed “a hotbed of the student movement of the 1910s and ... an important space to mediate the interactions between Koreans, Chinese, and Japanese.”⁶ As a Christian, Ebara could not fully sympathize with the Japanese government’s violent intervention to the March 1st Movement. However, he still believed that Japan’s annexation of Korea was necessary to spiritually influence the Koreans in a “positive” way.

Like other Japanese imperialists, Ebara viewed the independence movement in Korea as an indication of King Joseon’s historic lack of control of Korean nationalists. Referring way back to the Japanese invasion of Korea between in the late 16th century, Ebara emphasized how the Koreans have historically been rebellious and cannot be controlled easily to justify that “there is no choice but to tame the Koreans with the will of *Jidai* (事大意思, “worship of the powerful”).”⁷ By denouncing the weak Korean government, Ebara argued the need for Japan to

⁵ Ibid., 609.

⁶ Ibid., 626.

⁷ Soroku Ebara 江原素六, “Chōsen no Sōyū ni tsuite 朝鮮の騒擾に就て” [Regarding the Turmoil in Korea] in Ken’ichi Kondō ed. 近藤釵一編, *Banzai Sōjō Jiken: San Ichi Undō, Dai 1 万才騒擾事件：三・一運動第1* (Tokyo: Chōsen Shiryō Hensankai, 1964), 38.

control the Koreans so that “Koreans will be pleased, and it would perhaps be easy to make them babies of the Emperor.”⁸ Ebara thus based his justification of Japanese imperialism of Korea on the benefit that Korea could gain from Japan’s colonial rule.

As a politician, Ebara was appointed as the temporary member of the Education Investigation Committee (教育調査委員会) at the Government-General of Korea in 1920. As a renowned Japanese educator with a background of once been recommended as the Japanese Minister of Education by Itagaki Taisuke, the Minister of Interior at that time, in October 1898, Ebara was responsible for reforming Japanese education in Korea for achieving assimilation of Koreans with the Japanese. In the late 19th century, many Japanese critics believed that the best way for Koreans to assimilate with Japanese society is to educate Japanese language. As someone who knew the actual situation in Korea, he had realized the need for spiritual assimilation because teaching Japanese language to the Koreans was not sufficient for them to assimilate.⁹ Since Koreans were under the colonial control of the Japanese, moral education to the Koreans was still within Ebara’s scope to strengthen Japan as a morally respectable nation.

This thesis could not devote its space to a thorough discussion of Ebara’s use of moral respectability in supporting Japan’s colonial rule in East Asia in the early 20th century. Nonetheless, it is intriguing to see how moral respectability was used both in relation to the Western powers and to East Asia in order to justify Japanese colonialism over East Asia without damaging Japan’s integrity in the international arena. In both cases, Ebara never changed his belief on moral development as the sole method to build a stronger nation. Ebara adhered to his

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Yukō Kubota 久保田優子, “Chōsen ni taisuru Nihongo Kyōikuron no Tenkai: Meiji-ki Kyōiku Jānarisumu no Bunseki 朝鮮に対する日本語教育論の展開：明治期教育ジャーナリズムの分析” [Theoretical Development of Japanese Language Pedagogy against Korea: An Analysis of Journalism on Education in the Meiji Period], *Kyushu Sangyō Daigaku Kokusai Bunka Gakubu Kiyō* 6 (1996): 10.

moral values by practicing them in his strategy of moral respectability. The consistency of his belief is best described by his motto *Kokki Seiyoku* (克己制欲, “Self-discipline and control of desire”). For him, Japan’s pursuit of economic development was a “haste that makes waste.” *Isogaba Maware*—moral respectability was what Ebara believed the most realistic solution to achieving the ultimate goal of building a morally respectable Japan.

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