

Okinawan Contract Migration to Mexico

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Key Words : Okinawan migration, migration to Mexico, Japanese migration, contract migration, Meiji period migration.

I . Introduction

The Okinawan migration to Mexico has been a limitedly addressed topic, probably because Okinawan descendants are quite dispersed in this Latin American country and few expressions of the ancestral culture remain. Nevertheless, the history of the Okinawan immigrants and their descendants is an important issue that should not be neglected. The objectives of the present research are: first, to revitalize the history of the Okinawan migration to Mexico, through the recovery of the history of Okinawans in Mexico, and Japan's and Okinawa's situation at the time of migration, in order to nourish this period with the personal histories of immigrants, second, to share the research findings with the Okinawan descendants, contributing thus to revive the meaning of being an Okinawan descendant in Mexico; and third, to encourage further researches on Okinawan migration issues.

This paper includes: first, some references on the situation in Mexico and Japan at the beginning of the twentieth century, to understand the historical context; second, an explanation of the working conditions in the places to where the immigrants were assigned —mainly, the coal mines in Coahuila State, the plantation fields in Veracruz State and the railroad works in Colima State—; and third, some preliminary findings obtained during my field research, which aims to recover the personal histories of the immigrants.

II. Background

The background for the Okinawan contract labor migration to Mexico was, first, the Enomoto colonization company established in the southern state of Chiapas in 1897, and later, the contract labor migration from mainland Japan. Although the colonization enterprise failed due to the insufficient knowledge of the geographic conditions and to an inadequate planning of the area devoted to agriculture, the negotiations between the two governments for the introduction of contract labor to Mexico were successful, until it was stopped in 1907 because of the Japan-U.S. Gentlemen Agreement.

At the time the Japanese contract migration started, Mexico was under the dictatorial regime of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911). Díaz had the idea to modernize the country through the investment of foreign capital and the opening of new lands for colonization¹⁾, in order to boost the national economy and the industrialization of the country. The Meiji government described Mexico as a place of great hope²⁾ because the opportunities for investment and reception of Japanese surplus population. In fact, the U.S. and Western countries had already started investments in the mining industry, agriculture plantations, and the construction of the national railroad, since the end of the nineteenth century.

The new economic developments required a large number of workers that local settlements could not provide. In some cases—as in Coahuila State—it was due to the lack of population, since villages had been recently founded. But, in other cases, the “defective social organization, lagged economy and people’s ignorance”³⁾ were the main reasons for the lack of human power. Foreigners who arrived to Mexico to work came from China, Arab countries, Korea, Italy and Japan. Although Japanese immigrants were the last to arrive, they enjoyed a very good reputation for their serene character and admirable diligence. Also, they had the ideal height to easily move in the mines tunnels and pits⁴⁾.

III. Japanese contract migration

The objective of Meiji leaders to expand the country’s economic and military interests were exposed in the slogan “Rich nation, strong army”, and the policies adopted to promote the incipient industries and finance the military expeditions were loaded on the backs of the Japanese peasants through increased exactions. Then, overseas migration was one of the safety valves for the oppressed peasant population, but it was also a policy measure the Japanese government encouraged.

Contract labor migration to Mexico was carried out mainly by three Japanese companies—

Kumamoto Immigration Company, Oriental Immigration Company and Continental Colonization Company—from 1901 to 1907. These companies were in charge of recruiting workers to send them to Mexico. In 1903, the Japanese-Mexican company of Commerce and Colonization was established. This company was in charge of handling the orders that came from the mine owners and the Mexican plantations owners. The association of this company with Japanese companies worked until 1908, when immigration was forbidden because of the Gentlemen Agreement ⁵⁾. According to the reports of the immigration companies, the number of Japanese contract workers introduced to Mexico from 1901 to 1906 was 8,789. However, Mexican official sources established a total of 12,983 Japanese immigrants ⁶⁾.

IV. Okinawan contract labor migration

The increased tax burden imposed by the Meiji government to the peasant class, remarkably affected Okinawan people. Simultaneously, they had to support the cultural assimilation policies imposed by the Japanese government after the integration of the prefecture to the system. However, the implementation of political, legal and economic reforms was delayed in comparison with that of mainland Japan. For instance, land adjustments in mainland Japan were carried out during 1873-1879, while in Okinawa these adjustments took place from 1899 to 1903. The belated appearance of newspapers (1890s), the suppression of freedom of speech and religion, and the overlapping of laws, obstructed the development of a popular social and political consciousness ⁷⁾. Thus, overseas migration and Noboru Jahana's Civil Rights Movement were two ways for the Okinawan peasants to respond to the increasingly harsh situation.

Okinawan contract laborers began arriving to Mexico in 1904. However, thousands of emigrants had already left the country and headed towards Hawaii and to the U.S., since the beginning of the Meiji period. Also, when Okinawan immigrants arrived to the working places in Mexico, there were already Japanese workers from Mie, Wakayama and Fukushima prefectures ⁸⁾. The first immigrants who arrived to Mexico were 202 people transported by the Oriental Company. They sailed from the Naha port on June 22, made a brief stopover in Kobe, left for the Port of San Francisco in the United States on July 6, and finally arrived to Coahuila state on July 31. They were assigned for a three year contract period to the coal mines in Las Esperanzas, erected in 1900. They were owned by the Mexican Coal and Coke Co., which for many years was the first coal company in Mexico, producing about half a million ton of coal and more than 50,000 tons of coke, before the Mexican revolution in 1910.

According to the Okinawa Emigrants List of Names I, we can observe that 152 of the first 202

emigrants came from the Kunigami district in the Yanbaru region. The following shipments led by the Oriental Company took place in May and October, 1907. Together, a total of 195 persons were transported, which were also assigned to Las Esperanzas. One of them came from Shimajiri gun Mawashi majiri, the rest of them came from the district of Kunigami. Overall, the Oriental sent 397 immigrants to the Mexican coal mines in two years⁹⁾.

The Continental company sent 131 contract workers from Okinawa to Mexico in three occasions. In the first trip—which took place in October 1906—21 persons were sent to La Oaxaqueña sugar cane fields, in Veracruz, with a contract for two years. The second trip took place in December of the same year, in this occasion 59 persons were sent to the same plantations, and 8 of them were sent to the construction of the railroad. However, the 8 workers that had been recruited for the railroad works, were assigned to the sugar cane plantations after their arrival to Mexico, because no more workers were needed in the railroad. The third trip took place in April of the following year, with a total of 43 Japanese people. One of them was assigned for agriculture and the rest for the railroad works. These last workers were also destined to the sugar cane plantations once they arrived to Mexico, because the railroad works at Colima had already finished. In this way, the Continental company recruited a total of 131 workers that came mainly from Nakagami and Shimajiri in the center and south of the main island of Okinawa, respectively.

On the other hand, the Kumamoto Company was the last one to send workers from Okinawa, despite the fact of being the first that sent immigrants to Mexico. This company could only sent two persons from Iejima, in Kunigami district. Altogether, the three companies sent a total of 530 contract workers during a three-year period (1904-07)¹⁰⁾.

V. Okinawans in the coal mines

The limited local population in the coal region of Coahuila State in northern Mexico required a large amount of labor hands, which was supplemented by foreign and Mexican workers. The latter were brought from other mining zones of the country, like San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas and Guanajuato. Japanese workers living with them became part of the Mineral or Enclave system¹¹⁾ prevailing at that time. It is said that only the Coahuila Coal Co. in El Hondo and the Mexican Coal and Coke Co. in Las Esperanzas hired five thousand Japanese workers¹²⁾. The large number of Japanese in the zone was usually highlighted in the Mexican newspapers: “Japanese immigration to the northern zone of Coahuila has increased considerably, to such an extent that some towns of the region seemed more Japanese than Mexican” (El Imparcial, July 25, 1907)¹³⁾.

Despite this big number of Japanese workers concentrated in the coal mines, the frequent collapses and explosions caused by the fearsome presence of firedamp, which claimed many lives, discouraged them to continue in that work. Ramiro Flores counted a total of 1,403 deaths between 1889 y 2011, due to the firedamp, without considering other causes of death in the mines¹⁴⁾. In the Shin sekai newspaper published in San Francisco, they referred to the mines in Las Esperanzas as the “Valley of hell”.

Due to these conditions, Japanese workers started riots and refused to work. Even the police had to intervene in some occasions. In fact, the last years of the nineteenth century¹⁵⁾ and the beginning of twentieth century were an intense period of strikes in the mining region. Japanese labor struck in 1902. These workers had been brought from the U.S. by the Mexican Coal and Coke Co., so they were able to compare the unequal working conditions in both countries. They “protested against the low wages which they deemed insufficient to maintain a basic standard of living, the dangerous working conditions, and the presence of armed company guards”¹⁶⁾.

Also, the negligent activities and abuses of the immigration companies caused the adverse situations Japanese immigrants suffered in Mexico and led to massive escapes to the U.S. From the immigrants who arrived in 1901, only 9 of them remained at the mines by March 31, 1903. From the 12,000 immigrants that arrived between 1901 and 1908, 8,000 to 9,000 headed towards the U.S.¹⁷⁾. Companies charged commissions for all kind of services and insurances to avoid losses if the immigrants ran away, fell sick, died or caused disturbances or strikes and were not able to fulfill the contract. Moreover, once workers landed at Mexican ports, immigration companies offered to lead them to the U.S. in exchange of an additional payment. Even after President Roosevelt prohibited the entrance to the U.S. of Japanese immigrants with tickets to Hawaii, Canada or Mexico, they continued entering the country by land and sea routes¹⁸⁾, though in a minor scale.

As the Okinawa immigrants were not accustomed to other work rather than agriculture, many of them arrived to the Mexican mines, located near the U.S. border, with the idea to sneak into the U.S. later. Less than a month after the arrival of Okinawan immigrants, many of them had already fled in groups of 30, 40, 50 or 60 people¹⁹⁾. Escapees were aided by Japanese and Okinawans in Chihuahua and El Paso, in their pathway towards the farms near Los Angeles. Also the “Japanese Bureau” and the “Japanese Benevolent Association”—established in 1907 and located at Ciudad Juarez-El Paso on the U.S. border—were organizations that operated offices and lodging facilities²⁰⁾ to assist escapees to cross the frontier. Once in the U.S. farms, immigrants earned at least the double they could earn in Mexico, and some of them became members of the Minami

California Kenjinkai, established in 1909.

After the Mexican revolution broke out in 1910, coal mines in the region decreased their production and eventually closed due to the successive attacks, burning and destruction perpetrated by the revolutionary factions. The Japanese immigrants moved out gradually to different places in Coahuila or to other parts of the country, in search for a new job and new life opportunities. Those who remained within the coal mine region were already engaged in a work different than mining, for example vegetable farmers or flower growers.

In the times to which we are referring (...) agriculture was at its peak; there was no hunger (...) Many people worked in the farms and all of them were very disciplined towards the boss. Sugar canes were plentiful in this region—white cane and coloured cane from which the powdered brown sugar is obtained. Corn, wheat, pumpkins, vegetables, lettuce, chard, beet, turnip..., etc., were cultivated abundantly. There were also many tomatoes (...) . Chinese and Japanese immigrants were there, behind San Juan de Sabinas and they had beautiful vegetable gardens. At night, they cut all they had in order to sell it here, in the Mineral...²¹⁾

The records and archives of the coal companies “were destroyed when the companies finished their functions or were sold out, thus, a great part of that significant history was lost”²²⁾ . Nonetheless, other information sources should be examined to shed light over immigrants’ daily life. The works of local historians and narrators are important literary sources to be considered. They describe in some way the steps of the Japanese in those remote locations, faraway from their homeland. In “El Hondo”²³⁾ ... una cuenta pendiente de la Historia, Ramiro Flores mentions the mass grave where Asians and other workers that were not recognized or claimed by their family or acquaintances, were buried²⁴⁾ . At that time, the gravestone was full of tablets with Oriental inscriptions with the names of those who perished in the great explosion that took place in January 31, 1902. In the municipal graveyards of Sabinas, tombs with the engraved names of Japanese immigrants²⁵⁾ can still be found nowadays.

In the popular narrative, we find “La Historia de Endo Hiraki”, an influential member of the Japanese community, accused as a spy and arrested at the international confrontation between Japan and the U. S.²⁶⁾ Poems like “Flor del Oriente”²⁷⁾ , also let us know the popular imaginary that local people of the mining villages held on Japan and Japanese immigrants:

Flor del Oriente

Llegaron hace mucho
cuando mi pueblo cambiaba apenas
su vida agrícola y sencilla
por otra jamás imaginada:
por la vida minera

Al Palaú nuevo
el que heredara del Hondo y San Felipe
aquella recia estirpe carbonera.

Llegaron de muy lejos
enrolados para servir
en las exigencias rudas del trabajo:
obtener del seno de la tierra
el ébano pétreo del carbón.

Fueron la flor de oriente
arrancada de un tajo y para siempre
del exótico y lejanísimo jardín
de donde dicen que nace el sol.

Tal vez por la intrepidez
de conocer un nuevo mundo,
guiados por el afán de ser
o por sus locas quimeras
de verse florecer en otras tierras,
con un ánimo emprendedor y fecundo;
pero llegaron al fin de cuentas,
un día, cuando empezaba
dinámico y estrepitosamente
aquello de las minas,
ilusionando encontrar aquí
el fulguroso horizonte de sus vidas
y en el agreste Palaú
la tierra prometida.

*Flower of the East*²⁸⁾

They arrived long ago
when my people was about to exchange
their farming and simple life
for an ever unthought-of one:
mining.

To the new Palaú
bequeathed by Hondo and San Felipe
to such harsh, coal-mine lineage.

They arrived from afar
enlisted to serve
the rough purposes of labor:
procure from the earth's bosom
the carbon's rock-hard ebony.

They were the flower of the East
uprooted once and for all
from the exotic and outermost garden
from the place where the sun
is claimed to be born.

Perhaps out of the dauntlessness
to meet a new world,
led by the eagerness to be
or by their insane delusions
to witness their blooming in another land,
on a venturesome and prolific momentum;
eventually they arrived,
on a day, at the dynamic and pulsating
onset of mining,
thrilled to find
the gleaming horizon of their lives
in the wild Palaú,
the promised land.

VI. Okinawans in Veracruz plantations

The life of the Okinawan immigrants at the plantations in southern Mexico was not less hard than the mine workers' life. Agriculture plantations—mainly coffee, hemp, tobacco and sugar cane plantations—were owned and managed by foreign capital. Most of the immigrants were assigned to the plantation La Oaxaqueña, engaged in the production of sugar and alcohol distillation and owned by the Tabasco Plantation Land and Development Co., located in Veracruz State.

The Continental Colonization Company was responsible of the transportation of the Japanese workers to the plantation, located in Santa Lucrecia village, today renamed as Jesus Carranza. In the plantations, even though workers were not exposed to the explosion risks as in the mines, they suffered the extreme tropical climate, working under a burning sun, with temperatures over 40° C, with poor nutrition and unsanitary living conditions. They easily fell ill and died because of severe diseases. Also, the immigration companies inflicted abuses on the workers. At plantations, workers usually received their payment from the employer. However, in the case of the Japanese contract labor, the employer paid the contractor per hectare or tone of sowing or cropping, and this contractor was the one who distributed the money. As the contractor could decide on the works, wages and services provided to his labor crew, he profited of this situation²⁹⁾. Workers usually earned 1.50 Mexican pesos per day in the case of men, and 80 cents in the case of women, working 6 days a week, for 10 to 12 hours a day, depending on the labor they performed. However, every day the immigration company collected 20 cents from the worker's salary, as a deposit to guarantee the ship's return ticket and as insurance in case of flee. Accommodation, fuel, water, bath and medicines were provided by the employer without any cost³⁰⁾.

Those days were the prelude of the Mexican revolution, and the first social manifestations began in Veracruz. In some way, Japanese immigrants also became participating actors of the economic, political, and social transformation of the country. At La Oaxaqueña plantation, an uprising started by the Japanese workers took place on December 17, 1906. According to the file "En relación al asunto de los japoneses" (January 2, 1907), one Japanese worker was reluctant to work and after his insistence, he influenced his countrymen to follow him. At the end of the day, the plantation foreman decided to pay them only half of the salary, because they had not worked the whole day. This action ignited the workers' rage and more than 100 Japanese workers armed with farm tools, rioted causing damages at the plantation facilities. An outstanding fact was that they were looking for the contractor of the Continental company, Mr. Beppu, to kill him. The reason for this was that Mr. Beppu was viewed as the main responsible of their plight. Some of the rebels were arrested and taken to the judicature, but as they could not speak Spanish, Mr. Beppu

acted as the interpreter. It is possible that wanting to save his position, Mr. Beppu could have altered the defendants' statements.

Despite the Immigrant Protection Ordinance³¹⁾ proclaimed by the Japanese government in 1894 in order to have a control over labor contracts, to assure the return of immigrants, and to regulate the recruitment and shipping practices of the companies³²⁾, contractors frequently committed abuses against foreign workers and accumulated their capital in that way.

At present, more than a hundred years after the arrival of the first Okinawa contracted immigrants to Veracruz, we can still find descendant families living in the surroundings of the area that used to be the sugar cane plantation. In the preliminary findings of the field research stays carried out to Veracruz (December and April, 2011, December, 2012 and July, 2013), the families identified, have been: Taba, Tamanaha, Tokutaira, Yamashiro, Shimabukuro, Kobashigawa, Higa, Sōtoku, Hirata, Matsushima, Okumura and Zokei.

Based on the personal stories told by their descendants, the immigrants spent a hard time during the first years of their stay in Mexico. However, after some time, they received support from other Japanese immigrants, established relations with locals and married with Mexican women. The knowledge about their own ancestors is limited, in general terms, because the first immigrants did not transmit to their offspring their personal histories and experiences they lived in Okinawa. Also, as immigrants were mainly men, they spent most of the time out of home, devoted to work, and that situation did not contributed to spread the Okinawan cultural practices. The Japanese language—much less Okinawan language—was not taught to their offspring. For that reason, the ignorance of the history and costumes of their ancestors remained in the next generations.

However, after all these years, descendants are proud of being half Japanese and half Mexican, and they would like to see their ancestors' history rebuilt, which would be useful for the preservation or recovery of their own identity. Some Nikkei have asked the Japanese Embassy in Mexico to help them find their relatives in Japan, and they have received some kind of support. Interestingly, the members of one family who traveled to Japan hanged in their bodies a paperboard with their name, with the hope to find other people with their same family name.

The reunion between families living in Mexico and the ones living in Japan will become more difficult due to the passing of time, and other factors such as the fact that many Okinawa villages disappeared after the territory reconfiguration at the end of the Second World War, or because some families in Mexico moved to different places or changed their last names. For instance, the descendants of Eikō Kobashigawa³³⁾ changed to Koashicha, because it was difficult for the locals to pronounce it. Sōtoku Arata's family used Sōtoku instead of Arata as last name, and they

later changed Sōtoku to Soto, because it is a more common last name in Mexico. Descendants of Kama Higa³⁴⁾—after the Mexican government recruited the Japanese during the international confrontation between Japan and the U.S.—decided to register their offspring using their mother's last name. However, there are also exceptional cases, as the one of Taro Taba Nakamura's family³⁵⁾ in which a member of the Okinawan family—after a long period of search—found the Mexican family in Veracruz, and they met each other in Mexico, in 2008.

Unfortunately, most of the personal histories have been lost over the years and it is almost impossible to recover them, after more than a century. In the municipal cemeteries and in La Oaxaqueña plantation's former graveyard, we still can find tombs with Japanese inscriptions. But as most of the Japanese moved to other places after finishing their contracts or even before, it is quite difficult to find traces of them. The publication of a paper with more complete information related to the Okinawa immigrants' descendant families that still remain in Coahuila and Veracruz is expected later.

VII. Okinawans in the railroad works

The Mexico Central Railroad works were located in a 68 km stretch between Colima and Tuxpan—localities separated by a difference of 1,000 meters of altitude. In this place, the Japanese workers lived in small bamboo and wood rooms, thatched. One room was occupied by 10 to 20 people. Immigrants who arrived from Okinawa were few. In the first group of workers (the ninth of the Continental) assigned to the Colima Central Railroad that arrived to Salina Cruz' port in January 23, 1907, 67 people were from Okinawa. In the second group (the tenth one of the Continental company), which arrived on May 1907, there were 30 persons from Okinawa; 29 of them were assigned to the railroad and one to La Oaxaqueña. However, as soon as they arrived to Colima, they were forced to cancel the contract and were sent to La Oaxaqueña. With the cancellation of the contract, the company expected the workers to give 20 yens back. Immigrants sold their belongings and when they handed the money over, the immigration company returned them the ticket and the contract. The company, however, managed these cases as flights, for it also expected to receive a compensation on the part of guarantors in Japan³⁶⁾.

VIII. Conclusions

The study of Okinawan immigrants in Mexico is a history that deserves to be more deeply studied. After the first contacts with Okinawan descendants in Veracruz, I realized the limited knowledge they have on their ancestor's migration history and the land from which they came.

They do not have special relationships among them that allow them to identify themselves and to be identified by others as a different group within the community. They do not preserve Okinawan customs, nor have contact with their families in Japan. Descendants from Okinawan immigrants in different parts of Mexico do not belong to the Okinawa Prefecture Association (Okinawa kenjin kai) , located in Mexico City. The lack of communication and any other kind of contact with their family in Okinawa explains the absence of the return migration at a great scale, as it has been common among Brazilians and Peruvian.

As the Okinawan descendants are quite dispersed, and some of them live in places far from the country's capital, they have integrated themselves more easily with the local people than with the Japanese community in other parts of the country. Thus, the sense of belonging to their ancestral roots is quite blurred. However, in some way, they feel proud of having Japanese ancestry and would like to know more about Okinawa and their family in Japan.

To deepen on this topic, the following are future research objectives. First, to gather more information on the Okinawan descendant families in Coahuila and Veracruz states, that allows to follow the steps of those immigrants who remained in the country. Second, to study the role of the Okinawa kenjinkai in different periods of time, for—contrary to popular belief—it does not integrate the national Okinawan community. At present it includes about sixty members, most of them from Mexico City and not all of them from Okinawan origin. Some of them are young people that joined the association just because they like Okinawa taiko and use to play it.

Notes

- 1) Decree on Colonization and Demarcation Companies (1883) .
- 2) Kunitomo Iyo Imura, Japan and Mexico, 1888-1917, Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1975, p. 56.
- 3) González Navarro, Moisés, El Porfiriato. La Vida Social, en Cosío Villegas, Daniel (dir.) , Historia Moderna de México, volumen IV, México, Hermes, 1955, p. 146.
- 4) Flores Morales, Ramiro, El Hondo, una cuenta pendiente de la historia, Gobierno del Estado de Coahuila de Zaragoza, Sabinas Coahuila, segunda edición, 2011, p. 22.
- 5) Kunitomo, Iyo, op. cit., p. 67.
- 6) Ota, Mishima, María Elena, Siete migraciones japonesas en México, 1890-1978, El Colegio de México, México, D.F, 1982, p. 51.
- 7) Ota, Masahide, “Social Consciousness in the Ryukyus”, in Essays on Okinawa Problems, Yui Shuppan, Co., 2000.

- 8) Prefectures with experience in mining labor.
- 9) 具志川市史 (The History of Gushikawa city), 第四卷, 移民・出稼ぎ, 編さん委員会, 2002 年, 259p.
- 10) Ibid., pp. 259-260.
- 11) Enclave or Mineral system was similar to a “company town” or kigyō jōkamachi) in Japan) . See more detailed explanation in Sariego, Juan Luis, Enclaves y minerales en el norte de México, México, CIESAS, 1986.
- 12) At that time, the population of Sabinas, San Felipe, El Hondo, Esperanzas, La Conquista, Rosita, Agujita y Cloete was approximately 15,000 people.
- 13) Flores, Ramiro, op. cit., p. 22.
- 14) Ramiro Flores recognizes that this number is modest compared to the data published by other authors who have taken into account certain explosions that are not registered in any archive or library.
- 15) The first strike reported occurred at the Sabinas coal mines in January, 1886.
- 16) Calderón, Roberto, Mexican Coal Mining Labor in Texas and Coahuila, 1880-1930, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2000, pp. 202-203.
- 17) Kunitomo, Iyo, op. cit., pp. 65, 75.
- 18) 名護市史 (The History of Nago city), 本編 5, 出稼ぎと移民, 名護市役所, 2008 年, 120p.
- 19) The History of Gushikawa city, op. cit., p. 261.
- 20) Kunitomo, Iyo, op. cit., p. 75.
- 21) Sariego, J., op. cit., pp. 85-86.
- 22) Flores Morales, Ramiro, El Hondo ..., op. cit., p. 73.
- 23) “El Hondo” was the second largest mine of the country, located in Sabinas, Coahuila.
- 24) Flores Morales, Ramiro, op. cit., p. 68.
- 25) Flores Morales, Ramiro, Arqueología Funeraria de Sabinas Coahuila, Coahuila, Sabinas, Coahuila, 1999.
- 26) Peña Chávez Amador, La Muerte Huele a Grisú, Estampas de la Historia Popular de Palaú, Editorial Albarda, Monclova, México, 2004, pp. 136-140.
- 27) Peña Chavéz Amador, Cantos a mi tierra bruna (Palaú) , México, Albarda, 2005, pp. 140-148.
- 28) Translation by Fernanda Arámbula
- 29) Aguirre, P. Eulogio, Aportaciones para la historia regional del Sotavento, Compilation and

notes by Alfredo Delgado Calderón, Unidad Regional de Culturas Populares de Acayucán, Veracruz, México, 2000, p. 52.

- 30) The History of Nago city, op. cit., p. 30.
- 31) The Ordinance was substituted by the Law and Detailed Regulations for Protecting “Imin” in 1896.
- 32) Masterson, Daniel M., The Japanese in Latin America, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 2004, p. 16.
- 33) Eikō Kobashigawa was from Gaja mura, Nishihara-magiri, Nakagami-gun, landed at Salina Cruz port on January 26, 1907, and he owned river steam boats in Minatitlan, Veracruz.
- 34) Kama Higa arrived to Mexico in July 1904. He was from Nakagusuku-magiri, Nakagami-gun.
- 35) Taro Taba Nakamura was from Heinza, Yonagusuku-magiri, Nakagami-gun. In Minatitlan, Veracruz, he owned river steam boats.
- 36) The History of Nago city, op. cit., pp. 132-133.

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