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# Re-nationalizing Repatriated Japanese into Post-War Japan: From Imperial Subjects to Post-War Citizens

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between the Cold War and returnees to Japan based on *Kikansha hikkei* 帰還者必携 (Handbook for returnees), a publication prepared by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture on June 1, 1949. This analysis focuses on the contents of *Kikansha hikkei* in order to clarify the meaning of democracy and re-nationalization in post-war Japan and show that the metahistory of returnees—viewed in previous research in terms of war history, the sufferings of people in colonized areas, and pre- and post-war continuities and discontinuities—originated in the new “Cultural Cold War.” Japan’s post-war reorganization sought the democratization of militaristic elements, and for this reason critical research on pre- and post-war continuities and discontinuities has centered on postwar reforms and/or imperial (colonial) history within the critique of decolonization. In this context, the basic perspective of the Japanese government toward returnees at the time seems to have been that overseas returnees living in direct contact with the old “pre-war” systems—empire and colonialism—should be re-nationalized as citizens of the “new Japan.” In this process, however, the Japanese authorities did not mean merely to reorganize subjects of the former empire into citizens of post-war Japan; returnees were also required to become the principle modernizing agents in realizing liberal democracy—another kind of warrior in the Cold War.

**Keywords:** Post-war Japan, repatriation, re-nationalization, *Kikansha hikkei*, post-war democracy

## Scholarship on Repatriation in Japan

After defeat in August 1945, Japan founded the regional Repatriates’ Relief Bureaus (*Hikiage engokyoku* 引揚援護局) with the help of the USGHQ and initiated the group repatriation of civilians. Before then, of course, many Japanese individuals who had felt threatened by the participation of the Soviet Army had returned to Japan. From 1945 to 1954, some 6,240,000 Japanese people, accounting for 10% of the entire Japanese population, relocated to Japan, while foreigners living in Japan at that time were deported. This repatriation occasioned a large-scale migration of people throughout the Japanese Islands. This repatriation was utilized as a powerful mechanism for national unity in line with the slogan “reconstruction of post-war Japan by pure-blood Japanese people” (Nanbara Shigeru 1946) and became a core element of modern Japanese nationalism. The metahistory<sup>1</sup> covering this repatriation has also affected scholarship on the subject. This

metahistory is inseparable from the larger tendency of Japanese scholarship to place the testimonies and experiences of returnees at the center of scholarship on repatriation, and to privilege themes of movement and migration in discussions of repatriation's social and political history.

Academic scholarship on post-war repatriation can be divided into three fairly distinct scholarly approaches. The first approach interprets repatriation chiefly as a form of migration and limits its focus to the experiences of detainees up until repatriation. This tendency can be seen in the Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum's<sup>2</sup> depiction of Japanese migrants in Manchuria as war heroes. The propensity to analyze repatriation through the lens of migration is also visible in the works of Japanese scholars Araragi Shinzō (1994; 2008; 2009; 2013), Tsukase Susumu (1998; 2004), Imai Ryōichi (2001; 2014) and Yamamoto Yūzō (2007), who discuss repatriation within the context of migration to Manchuria. A similar interpretation is present in the works of Katō Kiyofumi (2004; 2009), who discusses repatriation in the historical context of global migration. Japanese scholar Narita Ryōichi's research correlates World War II experiences with repatriation narratives, emphasizing personal stories of the war as experienced by Japanese returnees during the process of repatriation (1998; 2010). The appeal to themes of migration and movement in discussions of post-war repatriation is the result of an assumption by scholars that this history concluded with the repatriation of Japanese internees to the four main home islands. The scholars mentioned above focus on the process of repatriation through the lens of migration, highlighting the hardships experienced by returnees, but such an analysis unknowingly contributes to the construction of a narrative of national suffering and fortifies notions of victimhood nationalism. Moreover, this research trend can also be seen as an expansion of the reach of research on pre-war imperialism and colonial history (Katō Kōichi 2014).

The second scholarly approach asserts that narratives surrounding demobilized soldiers and citizens must be understood within the larger context of the Cultural Cold War. The term "Cultural Cold War" denotes not just the political, economic, and military tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, but also refers to the cultural, informational, and media strategies aimed at increasing hegemonic control in the spheres of culture, art, education, and entertainment (Kishi and Tsuchiya 2009). This attempt to understand repatriation narratives within the context of the Cold War can be found in the work of Japanese scholar Marukawa Tetsushi, who writes about "the Cold War internalized within us" (2010, 39). Marukawa's research transcends limitations imposed by the narrative of national suffering and presents a new paradigm for unpacking

<sup>1</sup> The term metahistory is borrowed from White (1973), who defines it as the overarching narrative or "grand récit" that gives order and meaning to the historical record.

<sup>2</sup> "Return to Maizuru Port—Documents Related to the Internment and Repatriation Experiences of Japanese (1945–1956)," <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/full-list-of-registered-heritage/registered-heritage-page-7/return-to-maizuru-port/> (accessed January 5, 2018).

the meanings of repatriation in Japanese society. Research on detainees held in Soviet territories is of particular importance in this second approach. Among all the scholarship on repatriation, research on these detainees is most intimately entangled with Cold War thinking. This second strand of research operates on the understanding that the metahistory of repatriation is structured by anti-Soviet and anti-Communist ideologies, and has been central to popular representations of the cultural Cold War (Tomita 2013, 2016; Asada 2016; Hosoya 2005; Pak Ijin 2013). In his book, *The Gods Left First* (2013), scholar Andrew E. Barshay brings together the memories and experiences of interned Japanese people to explore the historical meanings of forced detention in Siberia during the Cold War.

The third and most recent scholarly approach focuses on the lives of returnees *after* repatriation. These scholars highlight the marginalization and alienation experienced by returnees while adjusting to life in Japan. For example, the Japanese scholar Asano Toyomi, among others, has raised the question of why only painful memories from the repatriation period remain, despite the varied experiences of Japanese people who lived in the colonies. Other Japanese scholars have analyzed documents from the regional Repatriates' Relief Bureaus to better understand how returnees adjusted to life in Japan after repatriation (Asano 2004; Tanaka 2010; Takasugi 2011; Fujii 2014; Shimamura 2013; Pak Ijin 2014). Scholar Lori Watt (2009) analyses popular images of returnees in Japanese society, providing new insights into the post-war lives of repatriated Japanese people.

This essay contributes to the third scholarly approach, seeking a better understanding of the post-repatriation lives of Japanese returnees through an examination of the document *Kikansha hikkei: atarashiki shuppatsu e* (Handbook for returnees: A new departure 帰還者必携：新しき出発へ), published by the Ministry of Education on June 1, 1949. Instructional materials like this booklet were produced by the Japanese government to reeducate returnees in mainland reception centers and on ships transporting repatriates. The contents are intimately related to the post-repatriation lives of returnees. Therefore, an analysis of these educational materials is meaningful for what they can tell us about returnees' lives immediately after repatriation. Moreover, there is no previous research on this particular educational resource.

*Kikansha hikkei* attracts our attention because it contains specific clues for understanding the “re-nationalization” characteristics of repatriated Japanese and because it can inform us about the process of incorporating repatriated Japanese citizens into the new Japanese nation-state at the end of World War II. *Kikansha hikkei* portrays what the Japanese government—in 1949 under US supervision—believed subjects returning from abroad needed to know to become good citizens under a new democratic regime. Upon close examination, it turns out that the democratic reforms had a different impact on people who had been committed to the colonies (the repatriates) than on people who had remained in the metropole. On its own, the handbook appears to be a somewhat neutral, optimistic, and forward-looking document, but read in the context of the transition from imperial to democratic Japan and the Cultural Cold War, we can see how the Japanese government tried to use its imperial history and transform it for the sake of a new

democracy. We can also consider what political changes during the period 1945–1949 may have been of particular interest to repatriates.

This essay is also significant for revealing the conditions under which returnees were absorbed and assimilated into the mythos of a homogenous Japanese nation—an idea central to Japan’s post-war reconstruction ideology. In addition, the issue of returnees immediately after the defeat in war reflected the escalation of the Cold War; the politics of repatriation were also implicated in rising Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup> This essay analyzes *Kikansha hikkei*, contextualizing it during the late-1940s Cultural Cold War, and focuses on how the document was created in the intensifying confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The document examined also allows for an analysis of Japanese government policies designed to incorporate returnees into the post-war democratic system. Ultimately, this handbook demonstrates that the post-war democratic system—the most notable outcome of post-war reforms in Japan—was intimately related to Cold War politics. Accordingly, this paper specifies the core components of *Kikansha hikkei* and examines the “re-nationalization” of returnees in post-war Japan by analyzing not only its literal contents but also by reading between the lines. *Kikansha hikkei*<sup>4</sup> explains the new laws and institutions established during post-war reconstruction “for the benefit of Japanese returnees and demobilized soldiers.”

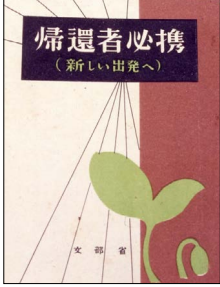
### **New National Holidays: The Overlaying of a Democratic “Temporal Order” on an Imperial One**

The booklet begins with a greeting from then-Prime Minister of Japan Yoshida Shigeru 吉田茂 (1878–1967) before introducing the newly implemented 1946 Japanese Constitution, the Public Assistance Act, the 1947 reformed Civil Code, the Basic Act on Education, the Labor Standards Act, and the 1946 Land Reform Act. The booklet not only familiarizes returnees with the complexities of the new legal system, but also provides a list of fixed prices for basic goods as of April 14, 1949; moreover, it identifies locations of public assistance institutions and information

<sup>3</sup> There is a joint study by Matsuda et al. (2012), which links the Cold War in Asia to the problem of repatriation. Their study analyzes how the Northeast Asian order under the Japanese Empire collapsed as a result of World War II, and then details how the reorganization of that order was reflected internationally through the movement of the Japanese remaining in China.

<sup>4</sup> In the “Postwar Repatriates’ Zone” section at the Peace Commemoration Special Fund, Museum for Peace and Reconciliation (総務所委託 平和祈念展示資料館), a display depicts returnees’ personal items such as dishes, children’s clothing, nametags, bags, and identification documents. *Kikansha hikkei* is displayed alongside passages providing historical background, introduced under titles such as “Life overseas” (the Japanese who went to Manchukuo) and “Chaos caused by the entry of the Soviet Union into the war.” The museum opened in November 2000 and contains a permanent display of materials related to the hardships experienced by Japanese soldiers and detainees in Siberia. The museum’s stated goal is to deepen citizens’ awareness of this history. After opening, the museum has actively promoted understanding of World War II history among the younger population through exhibitions, outreach activities, and a website. The museum has met with enthusiastic support from many sectors of society, and every year students hold a video contest related to the history of returnees. Meetings and interactions between returnees and regular citizens are held regularly, and the museum collects oral testimonies from returnees to publish for educational use. For more, see the Memorial Museum for Soldiers, Detainees in Siberia, and Postwar Repatriates website: <http://www.heiwakinen.jp/syozou/index.html>. It (accessed January 7, 2018).

**Figure 1.** Contents of *Kikansha hikkei: Atarashiki shuppatsu e.*

 <p style="text-align: center;">Front cover of “The Handbook for Returnees”</p>	<b>Front Cover (Title)</b> <b>National Holidays for Citizens Table of Contents</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o To the Demobilized Soldiers (Greetings from the Prime Minister of Japan)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current State of Detainees in the Soviet Union</li> <li>• Overview of the Repatriation Situation</li> </ul> </li> <li>o The Constitution of Japan [printed in full]</li> <li>o The Civil Code of Japan [excerpt]             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Civil Rights of Returnees</li> <li>• Preparing Oneself for Civic Life</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Basic Act on Education [printed in full]             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on Entering School</li> <li>• Information on Job Search Assistance</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Public Assistance Act [excerpt]             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on Public Assistance Institutions</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Land Reform Act [excerpt]             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Situation after the Implementation of Land Reform</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Labor Standards Act [excerpt]             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on Finding Employment</li> <li>• On Receiving Remuneration for Damages Received while Interned under Allied Forces</li> <li>• Table of Fixed Prices of Basic Necessities</li> <li>• Concerning One's Name and Address</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

on free health care and consultation services. Additionally, the handbook reports on the government's policy for land reform and redistribution, along with statistics detailing the ratio of men and women in specific occupations. Although imperfect, the booklet, at first glance, appears to provide returnees with adequate information for settling into the unfamiliar space of post-war Japan.

Indeed, for repatriated soldiers and civilians, Japan was an unfamiliar place seen only in textbooks. When returnees first arrived back in Japan, they spent their first few days in reception centers undergoing hygienic inspections and other procedures while acclimating to post-war Japan. This history is documented in the memoirs of Japanese who returned from places such as Manchuria, Korea, Taiwan, and Sakhalin. These events are also documented in the films, newspapers, magazines, and other media that were distributed at reception centers and disseminated on ships and trains that transported returnees. Cultural films such as *Furusato no Tsuchi* (Hometown soil), *Sengo no Nihon* (Postwar Japan), and *Kodomo gikai* (Kids' congress) were screened for returnees, as were films produced by the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE, 民間情報教育). The CIE was established with the goal of utilizing media to propagate democratic ideas among Japanese citizens, and beginning in September 1945, materials produced by the CIE were disseminated nationwide.<sup>5</sup> In a deliberate effort to allot time for returnees to acclimate to life in post-war Japan, a collection of films was compiled and shown every night from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm, excluding a returnee's first evening after arriving in Japan.<sup>6</sup>

Table 1 lists documents distributed by the Ministry of Education to returnees in 1949. Among the titles listed in the table below, *Kikansha hikkei* is the only extant document; therefore, the others cannot be analyzed in depth.

Notably, the first page of the *Kikansha hikkei* begins with a section titled

**Table 1.** Documents distributed by the Ministry of Education as of December 23, 1949

Name of publication	Number of copies	Units distributed
<i>Minshushugi no hanashi</i> (The story of democracy)	300,000	89,471
<i>Minshuteki seiji to himinshuteki seiji</i> (Democratic government and undemocratic government)	400,000	89,471
<i>Kikansha Hikkei</i> (The handbook for returnees)	200,000	89,471
<i>Hikiage no ikisatsu to genkyō</i> (Details of repatriation and the current state of affairs)	53,000	53,000
<i>Sengo no nihon</i> (Postwar Japan)	100,000	89,471

“National Holidays for Citizens.” The first page of *Kikansha hikkei* introduces readers to the nine designated national holidays that existed in 1949.<sup>7</sup> The booklet lists the type and significance of each holiday (Table 2), and offers the following general definition of national holidays as per the first article of the Law Concerning National Holidays for Citizens (*Kokumin no shukujitsu ni kansuru hōritsu*): “National holidays are for celebrating, thanking, and commemorating the citizens of Japan in their search for peace and freedom so that they may cultivate beautiful customs and forge a positive society and live rich lives.”

Among the national holidays listed above, Constitution Memorial Day and Coming-of-Age Day were newly created holidays held on dates identical to previous national holidays. However, the meaning and purpose of the new holidays differ

<sup>5</sup> After the promulgation of the new constitution in 1946, a manifesto titled “*Atarashii kenpō no hanashi*” (The New Constitution of Japan) was included in school morality textbooks for the stated aim of spreading the spirit of democracy. The document *Atarashii kenpō akarui seikatsu* (New constitution, pleasant life) was distributed to administrative districts and households “to be cherished and shared.” *Atarashii kenpō akarui seikatsu* provided an explanation of the new Japanese Constitution, which came into effect on May 3, 1947. It was published in first-year junior high social studies textbooks and contained the following chapters: 1. The Constitution, 2. The Definition of Democracy, 3. Global Peace, 4. Sovereignty Vested in the People, 5. The Emperor, 6. Leaving War Behind, 7. Fundamental Human Rights, 8. The National Assembly, 9. Political Parties, 10. The Cabinet, 11. Law and Justice, 12. Financial Affairs, 13. Local Government, 14. Reform, 15. The Supreme Law of the Land. Publication of this document ceased in April of 1952.

<sup>6</sup> Films screened for returnees included cultural films like *Shinkenpō no seiritsu* (“Birth of the New Constitution”), *Kodomo gikai* (“Kids’ Congress”), *Fujiyama no tobiō* (“The Flying Fish of Mount Fuki”), *Ō-sumō* (“The Grand Sumō Tournament”), *Atarashiki shuppatsu* (“New Departures”), *Sengo no nihon* (“Postwar Japan”), and *Furusato no tsuchi* (“Hometown Soil”). CIE produced films like *Sen kyūhyaku yonjūhachi nen furasshu* (“The Flash of 1948”), *Kokusai rengō kenshō* (“Charter of the United Nations”), *Sekai nyusu* (“International News”), and *Kokurensai* (“International Cooperation Festival”). Narrative films included *Itsu no hi ka hana sakan* (“When Will the Flowers Bloom?”) and *Hana saku kazoku, aruya no tonosama* (“Blossoming Family, One Evening with the Lord”). See 7th Regular Diet Session, responses, 1949.12.23. #7. Member of the House of Councilors, “A Question about Returnees beyond Consultation Fees,” submitted by Nakano Shigeharu. <http://www.sangiin.go.jp/japanese/joho1/kousei/syuisyo/007/touh/t007006.htm> (accessed January 7, 2018).

<sup>7</sup> Autumnal Equinox Day (*Shōbun no hi*), Culture Day (*Bunka no hi*), and Labor Thanksgiving Day (*Kinrō kansha no hi*) were designated national holidays in 1948; the remaining dates became national holidays on July 20, 1948 following the enactment of *Kokumin no shukujitsu ni kansuru hōritsu* (Law concerning national holidays for citizens), and persisted until revisions were made to the law in 1965. The enactment of this bill nullified the 1925 imperial edict number 25, titled *Kyūjitsu ni kansuru ken* (Law concerning holidays).

**Table 2.** National Holidays for Citizens as listed in the *Kikansha hikkei*

New Year's Day ( <i>Ganjitsu</i> )	January 1	A day to celebrate the start of the new year
Coming-of-Age Day ( <i>Seijin no hi</i> )	January 15	A day to celebrate those who have come of age and have chosen to live an honest life
Vernal Equinox Day ( <i>Shunbun no hi</i> )	On the Vernal Equinox	A day to venerate nature and cherish living things
The Emperor's Birthday ( <i>Tennō tanjōbi</i> )	April 29	A day to celebrate the Emperor's birth
Constitution Memorial Day ( <i>Kenpō kinenbi</i> )	May 3	A day commemorating the Constitution of Japan and the advancement of Japanese citizens
Children's Day ( <i>Kodomo no hi</i> )	May 5	A day to celebrate children and their innate nature, wish for their happiness, and praise mothers.
Autumnal Equinox Day ( <i>Shūbun no hi</i> )	On the Autumnal Equinox	A day for paying respect to one's ancestors and paying tribute to the deceased
Culture Day ( <i>Bunka no hi</i> )	November 3	A day for cultivating culture and appreciating freedom and peace
Labor Thanksgiving Day ( <i>Kinrō kansha no hi</i> )	November 23	A day for appreciating labor, celebrating productivity, and sharing comradery

**Table 3.** National holidays observed at elementary schools (including Japanese schools) in Korea (Ch'a 2004)

Prayer to the Four Quarters ( <i>Shihōhai</i> )	January 1	A ceremony officiated at the imperial household commemorating the beginning of the new year after the Heian 平安 Period
Vernal Equinox Imperial Ceremony of Ancestor Worship ( <i>Shunkikōreisai</i> )	March 21 (Vernal Equinox)	An imperial ceremony of ancestral rights commemorating the spirits of past emperors or important members of the royal family, officiated at a Shinto shrine
Emperor's Birthday ( <i>Tenchōsetsu</i> )	April 29	Birthday of Emperor Shōwa (a day to wish for the emperor's long life and successful reign)
Boy's Festival ( <i>Tango no sekku</i> ) <sup>8</sup>	May 5	A day to wish for the health and development of boys
Autumnal Equinox Imperial Ceremony of Ancestor Worship ( <i>Shūkikōreisai</i> )	September 23 (Autumnal Equinox)	An imperial ceremony of ancestral rights commemorating the spirits of past emperors or important members of the royal family, officiated at a Shinto shrine
Emperor Meiji's Birthday ( <i>Meijisetsu</i> )	November 3	A holiday on the birthday of Emperor Meiji for eternal commemoration of his great achievements
Offering of the New Rice Harvest ( <i>Kannamesai</i> )	November 23	A festival dedicating the first harvest to deity Amaterasu to give thanks for a bountiful grain harvest

significantly from their predecessors. To facilitate understanding regarding this point, Table 3 below lists the national holidays implemented in Korea during Japanese colonial rule.

The names of the majority of imperial-era holidays are based on Japanese history and are closely associated with Japanese customs and traditions. Additionally, it is significant that many of these holidays commemorate the ancestral rights of the imperial family and were officiated at the imperial household

<sup>8</sup> Boy's Festival was not included in the original document and was added by the author.



and Shinto shrines.

Comparing the two sets of national holidays, Culture Day—designated as a holiday for “cultivating culture and appreciating freedom and peace”—appears as a variation of Emperor Meiji’s Birthday, a holiday for the “eternal commemoration of his great achievements.” Likewise, the Offering of the New Rice Harvest, a holiday for giving thanks to Amaterasu (a deity central to the mythos of the founding of Japan) is replaced by Labor Thanksgiving Day, explained as a holiday for appreciating the value of labor in a democratic society. In brief, these substitutions signify the separating of national holidays in meaning and name from their origins in Japanese mythology and the imperial family.

Japan’s law concerning national holidays was established in 1873 (January 4, the sixth year of the Meiji era) through a government edict titled “Defining the Days of Legal Holidays and Festival Days” (*Nenjū saijitsu shukujitsu no kyūkahi o sadamu*), and it was revised multiple times. After coming to power, Emperor Taishō 大正 (r. 1912–1926) extended the reformed holidays to the Korean peninsula, and school holidays were established to conform to the new law. Some Japanese national holidays had already been introduced to Korea during the four years the peninsula was made a protectorate of the Empire of Japan; however, they did not carry legal authority and were only observed by a select stratum of society and at the instigation of the Resident-General of Korea. After Korea’s annexation, Japanese national holidays were legally applied on the Korean Peninsula, and government offices, schools, newsrooms, and other public institutions were allowed to close on these days.<sup>9</sup>

It would be unrealistic to investigate and compare every national memorial day in Japan’s former colonies. As mentioned earlier, however, the fact that the “emperor-oriented idea of time” was extended at least as far as Korea during the colonial period is of significance in that it shows the propagation of this imperial idea of time.<sup>10</sup> So what is the significance of the inclusion of the amended national holidays on the first page of *Kikansha hikkei*—a booklet intended to help returnees adapt to post-war Japan? The handbook’s subtitle, “*Atarashiki shuppatsu e*” (“A New Departure”) clearly implies a deliberate separation from an empire-centered sense of time and announces a new temporal order as the foundation for the lives of returnees in post-war Japan. Indeed, the handbook outlines the necessary criteria for post-war life, symbolized by the page “National Holidays for Citizens.” This suggests that the colonial temporal order that had been extended to Korea was transformed for application in postwar Japan.

On the next page of *Kikansha hikkei*, a short greeting titled “To the Demobilized Soldiers” is credited to Yoshida Shigeru, in which he discusses changes to post-war Japan and the current state of the nation. From this short text alone, the overall nature of the handbook itself can be inferred. This point reflects the message that this book tries to deliver to returnees.

<sup>9</sup> Official Gazette of the Governor-General of Korea, Formal Edict 19, September 9, 1912; “Hyuöbil kongsi,” *Maeil Sinbo*, September 18, 1912.

<sup>10</sup> According to Cho Nuri’s (2015) thesis, schools were required to provide education about national holidays in accordance with the goal of cultivating loyal subjects for the Empire of Japan.

According to Yoshida Shigeru, the war ended on August 14, 1945, when the protocol for the cessation of war was announced and after which a “significant change” came in the following year with the proclamation of the New Constitution of Japan. By “significant change” he meant the efforts to build up Japan as a peaceful and cultural nation, wiping out feudalism and militarism on a national scale through implementation of the fundamental idea of popular sovereignty and then establishment of revisions to the Civil Law and farmland reform. By the year 1949, three years after the promulgation of the new constitution, transformations to the Civil Code, election laws, and other administrative bodies were all being implemented—a reality reflected in the table of contents of *Kikansha hikkei*. Additionally, postwar democratic reforms in areas such as education, public assistance, agriculture, labor law, and national holidays were also being carried out. A democratic form had begun to be established, albeit with some limitations. However, Yoshida Shigeru pointed out that the independence of the national economy was not yet complete because of inflation and increasing expenditures, and described the situation as if “Japan was like a child walking guided by a stranger’s hand.” In other words, Yoshida Shigeru reminded returnees of economic dependence on the US, emphasizing that “liberation from the material challenges in life” was the most pressing problem hindering the “reconstruction of the fatherland.” Putting aside the limitations of these reforms, Japan had achieved the outward semblance of a democratic nation, according to Yoshida Shigeru. Yoshida also states that “national economic self-reliance has not been achieved”—an allusion to Japan’s economic dependency on the United States. He then emphasizes that freeing Japan “from difficult material conditions” is the most pressing task for reconstructing the nation. Just as returnees had previously fulfilled their duties as patriotic citizens by leaving Japan to give their all for the nation, the booklet emphasized that returnees must become workers of the highest quality for a new Japan. Indeed, the language can be understood as commanding returnees to transform themselves from subjects of the Empire of Japan into new citizens of post-war Japan.

In the past, Japanese people in the *gaichi* (the “outer territories,” i.e., colonies outside of mainland Japan) had been criticized for living in colonies as “subjects” of the Emperor with a sense of privilege. As the concept of people as ‘subjects’ was spread and internalized through many wars, Japanese people developed a sense of elitism (Pak Samhön 2016). Yoshida Shigeru’s admonition to seek national reconstruction not for the Emperor but “for the sake of Japan” correctly represents the meaning of the repatriation project at that time. The meaning of “subjects” in the prior perspective of imperialism was changed into that of “people in the nation-state of Japan,” and repatriation was closely related to the dissolution of empire and the strengthened order of a nation-state.

Yoshida Shigeru’s greeting is followed by a section titled “The Current State of Detainees in the Soviet Union.” The section begins by stating,

At the cessation of war there were an estimated 6,613,909 Japanese people living abroad. Among them, the 6,144,868 Japanese people who were living in China and Southeast Asia have repatriated without incident in accordance with the orders of the Supreme Commander

for the Allied Powers (henceforth, 'SCAP'). By contrast, not a single Japanese person has been repatriated from Soviet-controlled territory. (Monbushō 1949, 3–5)

However, when comparing this statement to the records from the Repatriates' Relief Agency, it becomes evident that it is not based in factual evidence.

According to the document *Hikiage engo no kiroku* (Records of repatriate relief) issued by the Repatriate Relief Administration, no interned Japanese person was repatriated from the end of March to the beginning of May 1949, suggesting the considerable difficulty in repatriating Japanese people at that time. However, steady repatriation from Soviet territories had occurred previously. Beginning with 28,421 internees in December 1946, followed by similar numbers every month in 1947, the ships were filled to near capacity with repatriated soldiers. Excluding January through February, roughly 40,000 internees (with the lowest month recording 37,215 internees) were repatriated throughout 1948. By 1949, an estimated 900,000 of the approximately 1,009,931 Japanese internees in Soviet territory had been successfully repatriated (*Hikiage engochō* 1950, 60–73). As of April 7, 1949, a total of 94,973 Japanese internees remained in Soviet territory. This number aligns closely with the statistic of 95,000 Japanese prisoners of war reported by the Russian News Agency TASS. However, Yoshida Shigeru seems to imply that repatriation from the Soviet Zone was never achieved.<sup>11</sup> This can be interpreted as reflecting the perspective of the U.S. occupation forces or may be related to the censorship of content that could have been interpreted as disturbing to the occupation forces.

News reports focusing on returnees, particularly those repatriating from Siberia, claimed they had received so-called “democracy reeducation,” either in the Soviet Union or on board repatriation ships, and had become loyal Communists (“Marxist-Leninists”).<sup>12</sup> Considering the realities of the early Cold War, it may be that *Kikansha hikkei* was published to reflect rising anti-communist and anti-Soviet sentiments in Japanese society. The booklet depicts for readers the post-war reconstruction of Japan after its loss in World War II and the reconstruction period is promoted as signaling a separation from the time/space of Imperial Japan while heralding the reorganization of post-war Japan. This was the period when post-war democracy was being established in Japan and Cold War influence was expanding.

<sup>11</sup> There are two graphs that appear alongside the “The Current State of Detainees in the Soviet Union.” They are titled “The Current State of Japanese Repatriation” (April 7, 1949) and “The Current State of Repatriation from the Soviet Union and Soviet Territories” (April 7, 1949). Both exhibit the same bias as the body of the text. In these graphs, repatriation from Australia, China, Dalian, Taiwan, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Korea (below and above the 38th Parallel), islands in the Sea of Japan, the Dutch East Indies, New Zealand, French Indochina, the Pacific Ocean area, the Philippine Islands, the Ryukyu Islands, and Southeast Asia were marked as “complete,” whereas repatriation from Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands (84,138), Manchuria (60,312), and Siberia (324,593) was classified as “incomplete.” The graph additionally reports that the total number of Japanese people still interned in the Soviet Union and its territories stood at 408,729.

<sup>12</sup> On February 2, 1949, SCAP drafted a report concerning the Communist conversion of Japanese internees, and on February 11 the story of Richard Sorge—an undercover German reporter dispatched to Japan to collect information on Axis powers and relay it to Soviet authorities—was revived to indict Soviet sabotage and subversion. See discussion below.

These Cold War developments demonstrate the relationship between American occupying forces and the Japanese government, an issue to which we will turn to next.

### **New Constitution: Subject to Citizen**

The repatriation of Japanese people began in earnest following an agreement reached between the United States and the Soviet Union leaderships on December 19, 1946. However, due partly to the introduction of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 and the Marshall Plan shortly thereafter in June, tensions between the two nations intensified. This signaled the beginning of Cold War relations—a development which obstructed Japanese repatriation from Soviet-occupied territories. Beginning in 1948, statements and statistics concerning the repatriation of Japanese internees from Siberia emerged as a controversial issue. On April 26, 1947, SCAP issued an exaggerated report claiming that over a million Japanese people remained unrepatriated. On July 10, 1947, groups comprising the Nationwide Conference Promoting Repatriation of Countrymen Abroad (*Zaigai dōhōkikan sokushin zenkoku kyōgikai* 在外同胞帰還促進全国協議会) was formed—and soon after, on August 15, a special committee was established by the National Diet, and the Resolution to Promote the Repatriation of Countrymen Abroad (*Zaigai kokumin kikan sokushin ketsugian* 在外国民帰還促進決議案) was adopted. Simultaneously, negative public opinion toward an uncooperative Soviet Union began to spread rapidly (Tomita 2013, 71–101). Amidst a climate of intensifying political antagonism between the United States and the Soviet Union, SCAP drafted an internal report on February 2, 1949, detailing the Communist conversion of Japanese internees in the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, anti-Soviet public opinion continued to surge. A *Mainichi shinbun* (June 25, 1949) newspaper article titled “*Shinsō shiranu hikiagesha*” (Uncertainty about returnees) reported, “Three out of four returnees lock arms and sing Communist ballads,” which helped solidify the image of “Communist returnees” in the public consciousness.

Just as the statistic concerning the number of Japanese people still interned in Soviet-controlled territories referenced by Shigeru was shown to be a purposeful exaggeration, it can also be concluded that *Kikansha hikkei* was published as part of an American-led media campaign to influence public opinion during the intensification of the Cold War. On July 4, 1949, police mistook a welcoming celebration for returnees held at Kyoto Station for a Communist rally, and forced participants to disperse. Not long after, on August 11, the government promulgated an Ordinance for the Maintenance of Order Concerning Returnees (Tomita 2013).

In 1949, General McArthur, then commander-in-chief of SCAP, ordered all Communist Party members and sympathizers to be expelled from their positions at public institutions and private enterprises. Known as the Red Purge, this order had far-reaching effects on Japanese society and stoked anti-communist sentiment. When a boat carrying 2,000 returnees from Siberia arrived in Japan and all aboard collectively joined the Japanese Communist Party, the government enacted measures to deprive returnees of the right to hold rallies, a clear indicator of increasing anti-communism in Japan. In February of 1949, a National Rally to Expedite Repatriation

was held to demand its acceleration of repatriation and the enactment of more effective legislation. Around this time, the resolve of returnees grew stronger and they demanded that the government take action, such as the release of an official list of names of Japanese internees in China and the USSR. Concurrently, conservative forces opposing Communism were emboldened in their opposition.

Considering the state of affairs in 1949, it can be argued that the *Kikansha hikkei* functioned as a propaganda tool specifically targeting Japanese returnees arriving from Siberia. This is corroborated by the observation that the number of copies of the handbook printed corresponds closely to the reported number of Japanese internees in Soviet-occupied territories at that time. Therefore, one might conclude that the handbook would place particular emphasis on democratic values as an oppositional logic meant to convert Japanese returnees sympathetic to Communism. By comparison, a similar handbook titled *Minshushugi* (Democracy) was produced in the late 1940s targeting domestic Japanese citizens. The text centered on the values of the new constitution and the historical and theoretical principles of democracy. By contrast, *Kikansha hikkei* propagandizes reforms in the areas of civil and family law, farmland distribution, and education. Hence, the objective of the handbook is not simply to reform returnees through anti-Soviet and anticommunist ideology and education on democracy; rather, the handbook attempts to convince returnees of the superiority of Japan's new social model in the domains of lifestyle and culture in order to transform them into new subjects of the Cold War order. Moreover, the handbook clearly targeted returnees (particularly those arriving from Soviet-occupied territories) rather than other Japanese citizens, further compounding its Cold War significance. Indeed, the contents of *Kikansha hikkei*, along with the profusion of discourses surrounding the repatriation project, all testify to the multilayered nature of the cultural Cold War order in the late 1940s.

The cultural policies carried out by the US State Department comprised an important facet of the Cold War. Historical aspects of the Marshall Plan—such as the utilization of modern design in consumer products and the encouragement of mass consumption, or the deployment of jazz musicians to the front lines of the Cold War—have received increased attention since the turn of the last century. Similarly, Kawabata Yasunari's 川端康成 (1899–1972) receipt of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1968 has been studied for its role in the larger Cultural Cold War and the hegemonic struggle for dominance (Ochi Hiromi 2014, 139–157). Scholar Christina Klein contends that American Cold War policies harnessed imagery, language, and popular narrative to amplify US influence. Klein's indictment of Cold War policy further reveals how new images of Asia were produced to buttress Cold War strategies—a process she calls “Cold War orientalism” (2003, 236). The project of repatriation was led by SCAP in Japan, and the Japanese government adopted reports drafted by W. J. Sebald at the Allied Council for Japan without modification. The situation of Japanese media was no different. Indeed, the often-repeated statistic of “370,000 unrepatriated internees,” which began to spread after December 1948, originated from a false interpretation of a number reported by SCAP. In a SCAP report calculating the total number of deaths among Japanese

internees between 1945 and 1948, 370,000 internees were marked as “circumstances unknown,” which was misinterpreted by the media to mean that 370,000 remained unrepatriated in Soviet territories.

Following the publication of *Kikansha hikkei* in June of 1949, a serialized document titled *Kikansha tokuhon* (A reader for returnees 帰還者読本) first appeared in the October 1949 edition of the newspaper *Nihon shinbun*—a newspaper published inside Japanese internment camps in Soviet-controlled territories. The newspaper began on September 15, 1945, and ran until December 30, 1949—publishing a total of 662 issues. It was published in the city of Khabarovsk and written by Japanese writers under the observation and guidance of Soviet officials. The newspaper sought to educate internees about the Soviet Union and Soviet ideology.<sup>13</sup> Subsequently, multiple newspaper articles denouncing it appeared in Japan and the United States. For Japanese internees, the newspaper served as a vital source of information about Japan. It is likely that the title of the serialized document *Kikansha tokuhon* intentionally imitated the title *Kikansha hikkei*. The article urged Japanese internees to immediately join the Japanese Communist Party and become activists upon repatriation. The document contains three sections, titled “Towards Establishing a New Life,” “Things Every Returnee Must Know,” and “How has Japan Changed?” The article claimed that the lives of the Japanese on the four home islands are difficult and that economic recovery is stagnant. It also claimed that Japan was not only undemocratic, but there had been a resurgence of militarism and fascism. The article continued, asserting that returnees often live in temporary housing and cannot find work, stating that, in 1948 over 60% of returnees were in search of employment (Tomita 2013). Although it is unwarranted to conclude that the document was a direct response to *Kikansha hikkei*, it is notable for its inclusion of quotes from Stalin to affect political education,<sup>14</sup> and its use of editorials to rouse readers to action (Tomita 2013, 44–46).<sup>15</sup> The rhetoric of both *Kikansha hikkei* and the *Nihon shinbun* serial demonstrate how policies affecting returnees functioned as a stage for the larger ideological conflict underlying the Cold War—while also highlighting the disputed representation of returnees and laying bare the process by which both SCAP and the Japanese government appropriated the image of the returnee for ideological and political objectives.

### **New Civil Code: Rights of the Democratized Subject**

The contents of *Kikansha hikkei* clearly reflect the enormous upheavals in both political and social life in Japan at the time, raising the question: How was democracy promoted and propagandized in the booklet? Let us now examine how the civil rights of returnees were explained to readers.

<sup>13</sup> For more research on the education received by Japanese people while interned in Siberia, see Barshay (2013), Igarashi (2016), and Oguma (2015). The contents of the *Nihon shinbun* have only recently become accessible to scholars and I intend to analyze it in future research.

<sup>14</sup> The article also includes quotes from Tokuda Kyūichi and Nosaka Sanzō.

<sup>15</sup> After the resumption of repatriation in 1947, the newspaper also reported on poverty and anti-assimilation in Japan, but mainly focused on the activities of the Japanese Communist Party.

The Japanese Constitution (The New Constitution of Japan) reflects the declaration, “We do not provoke war,” by specifically demarcating the symbolic emperor system, sovereignty of the people, and the renunciation of war (Article 9). This was one of the most significant reforms among the postwar changes in Japan. Following the promulgation of the new Japanese Constitution on November 3, 1946, the Allied occupation led by the United States directed efforts to increase public awareness and popularize the constitution’s significance. *Kikansha hikkei* includes the entire text of the Constitution, with all 103 articles occupying eleven pages of the handbook. The handbook states that the Civil Code, Basic Act on Education, Public Assistance Act, and Labor Standards Act were all based on the philosophy of the new Japanese Constitution, and its unabridged inclusion thus appears self-explanatory.

The Civil Code appears next in the handbook and is composed of 1,044 articles divided into the following five chapters: General Provisions, Real Rights, Claims, Relatives, and Inheritance. Even prior to the war, the Japanese legal system—which conferred all familial, property, and inheritance rights onto the male head of each household—was criticized for its adverse effects on the population. In 1925, guidelines were presented for reforming both the Inheritance Law and the Law of Domestic Relations during meetings held by a commission tasked with reviewing family law (Yamamoto 2013, 119–132). Indeed, reformers had already been calling for the dissolution of the patriarchal family system, raising the social status of women, and placing restrictions on the authority of male household heads. On December 22, 1947, these reforms to the Civil Code were implemented through chapters four and five—reconciling Japanese civil law with the foundational principles of the new constitution in the process.

In its explanation of the revised Civil Code, *Kikansha hikkei* defines the purpose of the reforms, clarifies the replacement of the term “civil court” with “family court,” and emphasizes the removal of the term “male head of household” from the Civil Code. Additionally, articles 14 through 18 of the old Civil Code, which had been removed as a consequence of the reforms, were printed in the handbook for reference purposes. The annulled articles dealt with the subjugation of women under the old patriarchal family system, which denied women legal authority in the realms of family, property, and inheritance. The handbook also contains excerpts from chapter 4 (Relatives, articles 725–881) and chapter 5 (Inheritance, articles 882–1044).

Of most interest to individuals repatriating to Japan would have been changes to property and ownership rights, along with the impact of Civil Code reforms on recovering lost assets and collecting compensation for personal damages.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, for returnees who had left all their property in the former colonies, an explanation of legal methods for recovering such property would have appeared rational. Rather

<sup>16</sup> Large-scale repatriation began in April 1946, and Japanese people returning from former colonies were restricted to bringing a maximum of 1,000 Yen along with them. Returnees had to flee while leaving all of their belongings behind. Although some returnees brought claims against the Japanese government demanding to be compensated for their lost property, this remains an unresolved issue to the present day (Pak Ijin 2014).

than addressing these issues, however, the excerpts included in the handbook relate to intricacies of family law—such as statutes regulating marriageable age, rules of adoption and adoption dissolution, parental authority and responsibilities, and inheritance. These articles are primarily concerned with repealing the patriarchal family system and instituting gender-equitable inheritance laws, as well as reforming laws governing marriage, inheritance, and family relations—all measures aimed at improving the social status of women. Therefore, the selective inclusion of these articles can be understood as promoting the “democratization” of Japanese family law in contrast to the pre-war Civil Code.

The prominence of these articles in the handbook indicates that changes to the concept of the family were of tremendous importance. Specifically, the repeal of the Family Register Law and the patriarchal family system—both of which facilitated the enforcement of the male right to the household—guaranteed equal parental authority for women and men, as well as gender-equitable inheritance. Prior to these reforms, marriage and the formation of a family entailed a woman having her name recorded in a man’s family register; thus, the reforms brought about new forms of marriage as methods for establishing a family (Nakagawa 2003). The far-reaching social improvements for women granted by these articles would have held particular importance for returnees. The expansion of divorce rights for women would have been especially relevant for female returnees seeking to form and maintain a family.

Although all subjects under the Empire of Japan were uniformly granted Japanese citizenship, the registration of legal domicile was divided among separate, legally defined regions, in accordance with a respective region’s Family Register Law. In turn, the division between domestic family registers and external family registers (Taiwan, Korea, and Sakhalin) became a criterion for real discrimination. According to the laws governing the registration of legal domicile, Japanese men were barred in most cases from traveling overseas to start a family (excluding the case of an adopted son or son-in-law who lived with his wife’s family). However, because Japanese women were written into their husband’s family registers under the patriarchal family system, they were eligible for registration in an external family register. Despite returning to Japan after the end of the war, Japanese women were prohibited from converting their external family registers to domestic family registers. Moreover, on April 19, 1952—not long before the San Francisco Peace Treaty took effect—these women were legally stripped of their Japanese citizenship. That is to say, before the San Francisco Peace Treaty was adopted, family registers were the criterion distinguishing Japanese people from “non-Japanese” people. For example, the Family Register Law denied Korean and Taiwanese people residing in Japan the right to vote or run for election. An additional clause added to the election laws in December of 1945 excluded individuals possessing external family registers from participating in elections even though they lived in mainland Japan. Moreover, the Alien Registration Act promulgated on May 2, 1947 stipulated that “as per the application of this order, for the time being Korean and Taiwanese people will live as foreigners.” As a result, Korean and Taiwanese residents in Japan were required to register as foreigners. Indeed, status as a Japanese person



was determined not by citizenship but by family register. On April 19, 1952, the Director of Civil Affairs within the Ministry of Justice issued an announcement titled “Resolving Issues Involving Citizenship and Family Registers Following the Implementation of the Peace Treaty.” This notification precluded Japanese residents born in former colonies and individuals with external family registers from obtaining Japanese citizenship (Chen 2007).

This article now turns to look at the lives of women who repatriated to Japan. Under the old patriarchal system, women held no legal capacity over their own personal matters without receiving permission from their husbands or relatives. Under the new Family Law, women gained the right to file for divorce, hold parental authority over their children, own property (but not exercise executive control over it), and form new families. Unlike ordinary Japanese citizens, for single women repatriating with their children the urgent task of settling into their new lives meant that moving from an external to a domestic family register via divorce, remarriage, adoption, or dissolution of adoption—and gaining custody over one’s children—would have been an exceedingly urgent matter. Therefore, this booklet provides legal information on resolving issues of parental authority and personal property that were topical for women trying to establish families in Japan after returning from former Japanese territories unaccompanied by a husband.

Appearing next in the handbook is “The Civil Rights of Returnees,” a section meant to inform returnees of their new civil rights as autonomous subjects. Curiously, Japan’s civil code does not actually include a section on the rights of the citizen. However, according to the handbook, returnees were granted the rights and responsibilities of Japanese citizens upon repatriating. The handbook proclaims, “A Japanese citizen must live in a particular district for over six months to be eligible to vote. [. . .] However, a returnee who submits his or her repatriation documents in the district they reside in will be granted voting rights immediately without restriction.” The civil rights introduced in the handbook are offered as an example of “the most basic human rights outlined in chapter three of the constitution.” The handbook emphasizes “the ability to achieve complete contract rights and real rights” through civic participation in elections. Additionally, the handbook explains that for the poor and destitute who cannot afford basic household goods or medical care, provisions will be supplied at no cost. The handbook also advertises free technical training offered at employment support centers, loans for new businesses, and active job placement through Public Employment Stabilization Centers, as well as aid available through “emergency relief countermeasures.” The booklet concludes that these measures—as rights bestowed on citizens for the purpose of “quick recovery and prosperity”—were “extremely significant symbolically.”

The next section is titled “Preparing Oneself for Civic Life” and enumerates ten principles of civic responsibility. The booklet explains that living a solitary life is unacceptable, and instructs that the proper attitude is to participate in community life centered on the village, town, or city. The text goes on to state that local political life is defined by “the administration of affairs according to everyone’s opinion and everyone’s financial contributions,” adding that “our voices, expressed through elections, are reflected in the politics of the village,” asserting

that one must regard the values of individuality, autonomy, and independence as foundational to civic life. Pursuant to this premise, the text warns that “in the event authorities neglect the people, this should be stopped by appealing to the proper procedures,” and that, “those who don’t participate in local politics or community life are unfit for citizenship.” The handbook strongly encourages readers to attend public debates, meetings, rallies, and public gatherings frequently and to express their opinions with confidence. The handbook further instructs that “if someone in a high position acts undemocratically, abuses his familial lineage or vested power, wastes public money, or works only to fulfill his own personal greed—it is the result of citizens having forgotten their own responsibilities. Everyone should be reflective and diligent, and appeal to legal recourse when the need arises.” Such statements reveal an awareness on the part of authorities of the damage wrought by militarism and totalitarianism. Taken together, the booklet seeks to spread grassroots democracy by emphasizing the values of (American-style) democracy, freedom, autonomy, and elections—as well as the importance of paying one’s taxes, rejecting rural mentalities, and appreciating public goods so that “the flower of a democratic society may bloom,” thereby allowing Japan to flourish and “gain the trust of others and raise our international status.”<sup>17</sup>

Among the handbook’s explanations of constitutional and civic law provided above, it is the emphasis on the revolution in the family through the abolishment of the patriarchal family system that is the most astonishing. Whereas previously women held no legal capacity, they could now divorce their spouses and invoke their rights to child custody and property. Indeed, the securing of women’s rights and their ability to live independently would have been a crucial question for Japanese women struggling to remake their lives after leaving the colonies. Additionally, the handbook devotes considerable space to a discussion of civil rights, which is not in the actual content of the Civil Code itself. Throughout this discussion, the handbook repeatedly identifies the need for autonomous, free citizens for the reconstruction of Japan—all of which are suggestive of a citizen-making project based on democratic values.

### **New Reforms: The Logic of Inclusion and Limits of Reform**

We now turn to an examination of the reforms to the Basic Act, the Public Assistance Act, the Land Reform Act, and the Labor Standards Act. The preamble to The Basic Act on Education states that the bill was enacted “in accordance with the spirit of the constitution of Japan, with a view to clarifying the aim of education and establishing the foundation of education for a new Japan.” The Act aims to “contribute to the world” and the “welfare of humanity by building a democratic and cultural state.”<sup>18</sup> The law took effect on March 31, 1947, and its promulgation was premised on the abolishment of the Imperial Rescript on Education (*Kyōiku*

<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that the rights emphasized here do not extend to the level of the National Assembly as guaranteed in the constitution, but instead are limited to participation in local politics. More research is needed on this subject.

<sup>18</sup> The English translation of this law appears in Edward R. Beauchamp and James M. Vardman, eds. (1994).

*chokugo* 教育勅語) from 1890. *Kikansha hikkei* takes particular note of the Equal Opportunity of Education (Article 3), which states, “The people shall all be given equal opportunities to receive education according to their ability, and they shall not be subject to educational discrimination on account of race, creed, sex, social status, economic position, or family origin.” Other significant reforms noted in the handbook include article 4, which stipulates a requirement of nine years of compulsory education, and article 5, which outlines the principle of coeducation. Furthermore, article 6 declares that only certified schools are recognized as institutions of formal education, while article 7 encourages “social education,” whether in the home or workplace. Similarly, article 8 states that “political knowledge necessary for intelligent citizenship shall be valued in education.” After introducing these provisions, *Kikansha hikkei* includes a supplementary explanatory text titled “Transferring Schools for Returnee Students.”

“Transferring Schools for Returnee Students” informs readers that 11,700 students have successfully transferred into universities, vocational high schools, and normal schools over seven different cycles since September 1948. The text also states that only students who were candidates for higher education before the war are eligible for transfer, and limits school transfers to those between “schools of similar type and degree.”<sup>19</sup> The handbook also announces the “advent of part-time attendance for high schools” as part of the newly reformed education system, and explains that distance learning is permissible for middle and high school students. Elementary and middle school education were incorporated into the purview of compulsory education, and students who were candidates for elementary school education before the war were absorbed into the new education system without conflict. Therefore, the issue of how to treat students currently attending high schools arose as a primary concern, with particular importance placed on the transfer of returnees into higher education.<sup>20</sup>

That said, what the handbook states about alternative education is more important for this study than the reformed education system. Indeed, the space allocated to alternative education is four times as long as the actual act itself. The section of the handbook titled “Information on Job Search Assistance” provides an exhaustive introduction to the types of jobs available at the time. A bit further into the handbook, a section titled “Introduction to the Employment Situation for Returnees” is included, along with the Labor Standards Act. The repetitive inclusion of this information suggests that authorities were concerned about returnees’ inability to adapt to Japan after spending considerable time abroad. To support returnees’ swift adjustment to life in post-war Japan, public courses in technical training, summer schools, and culture classes were offered—as were a variety of educational enrichment courses taught at community halls, which were deemed “the most widely dispersed and popular facilities for the cultural enrichment of

<sup>19</sup> The handbook stipulates that in certain circumstances, transfers between schools that are not equivalent are acceptable.

<sup>20</sup> Chūgakkō tsūshin kyōiku kitei 47 nendo bunkashō hōmei 25 gō.

adults in Japan.”<sup>21</sup> These measures were designed for the benefit of students too impoverished to attend school, despite being eligible for registration. The Labor Standards Act, portions of which are also included in the handbook, states that it is illegal to hire minors under the age of sixteen, explaining that “only those who have completed their compulsory education or an equivalent education program are eligible for employment.” The handbook also relates that with permission from an administrative office, children over the age of twelve may work outside of school hours. Furthermore, the government encouraged summer schools or vocational classes as an alternative for boys from poor families in order to negate the adverse effects of compulsory education on family labor—a system which likely functioned for the benefit of returnees, who were more likely to belong to the poorest segment of society. As is emphasized in the section “The Civil Rights of Returnees,” a variety of cultural enrichment classes were established for citizens outside the scope of compulsory education, and were promoted as an opportunity for citizens to learn about the history and culture of Japan. Such initiatives attempted to eliminate the effects of previous Japanese education policies in colonial territories, which emphasized patriotism and loyalty to the Japanese Empire in order to combat a perceived ignorance about Japan among Japanese children living in the colonies.

The Public Assistance Act was enacted on September 9, 1946. *Kikansha hikkei* contains excerpts from the following chapters: Chapter One: General Provisions; Chapter Two: Information on Public Assistance Facilities; Chapter Four: Types, Scope, and Method of Public Assistance; and Chapter 5: Expenses. Earlier, in the section “The Civil Rights of Repatriates,” the handbook explains that “the Public Assistance Act guarantees a minimum standard of living, and facilities such as national hospitals and nursing homes can all be used very cheaply or for free.” At the time, the state’s commitment to egalitarian principles through implementation of the welfare state and a guaranteed standard of living was praised as groundbreaking (Yi 1997, 315).<sup>22</sup> The Act committed the state to providing financial relief administered by welfare state bureaucracies. However, the Act’s enforcement was entrusted to local governments and city mayors (Chapter 2, Article 4). In practice, independent welfare commissioners were designated as auxiliary agencies tasked with carrying out the act (Chapter 2, Article 5); implementation therefore violated the separation of public and private spheres and presented a considerable limitation. Moreover, although the state acknowledged its commitment to welfare assistance, it did not recognize a citizen’s right to demand such assistance. Despite the law stipulating that all residents of Japan would benefit, only those who were unable to work or take care of themselves were eligible to receive support (Chapter 1, Article 2, 3). Chapter four introduces support services such as public assistance, medical care, small business resources, career support, and funeral expense support. However, it is apparent that returnees judged to “possess the ability to

<sup>21</sup> These short courses, lectures, and study groups taught general cultural education and current events.

<sup>22</sup> The Public Assistance Act was deemed a monumental achievement in Japan, as well. For more, see *Nihon Shakai Jigyō Daigaku Kyūbin Seido Kenkyūkai* (1960).

work” and thus “support themselves,” were ineligible to receive these services. Additionally, “if one is not a direct ancestor, such as a spouse or parent, or not a direct descendent, such as a child, one must live in the municipality for a full year” before the local government would recognize one as belonging to the poor and thus eligible to receive aid (Chapter 5). Consequently, returnees’ right to demand public assistance was not recognized.

The Land Reform Act was ratified on October 11, 1946. *Kikansha hikkei* contains excerpts of articles 1 through 9 as well as article 14, subsection 3, paragraphs 6 to 8. Printed alongside these excerpts in *Kikansha hikkei* is a passage titled “The Situation after the Implementation of Land Reform,” which provides a summary of land reform measures to aid readers’ understanding. First of all, the Constitution relates: “The government has practiced land reform for the sake of liquidation of conglomerates, farmland liberation, and tenant land liberation. As a result, a number of small tenant farmers can now own and operate independently their own plots of land.” In addition, pastures were also liberated, thereby expanding the scope of land liberation. “Land owners in rural regions could own about 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> per household (40,000 m<sup>2</sup> in the case of Hokkaido), and extra land lots were purchased by the government so that they could be sold to sharecroppers on condition of redemption by yearly installments.”

The handbook emphasizes the increase in owner-cultivated land and details the buying and selling of land by the government for farmland redistribution. Despite reforms appearing relatively progressive for limiting land distributed to landowners (one square acre; four square acres in Hokkaido) and allotting more land to small-scale farmers (three square acres; twelve square acres in Hokkaido), the measure merely granted tenant farmers ownership over their already diminutive plots of land, exacerbating independent farmers’ already difficult situation (Ge, 2009). Regardless, the handbook’s detailed treatment of this topic reflects its relevancy to repatriated Japanese, who likely worked in agriculture before the war. Finally, the handbook introduces the Labor Standards Act promulgated on April 5, 1947, emphasizing the elimination of feudal relationships and the declaration of egalitarian values in the workplace (Kim 2007, 73), such as the fair treatment of workers (Article 3), equal pay for men and women (Article 4), prohibition of forced labor (Article 5), elimination of intermediary exploitation (Article 6), prohibition of scheduled compensation payments (Article 16), prohibition of salary advance counterbalancing (Article 17), and advance notification of termination (Article 20). The handbook also covers conditions and restrictions governing other employee benefits such as maternity leave, menstrual leave, expenses for traveling to one’s hometown, workers’ compensation, disability benefits, and surviving family benefits. For returnees, however, the two supplemental sections titled “Information on Finding Employment” and “On Receiving Remuneration for Damages Received while Interned under Allied Forces” would have appeared more relevant than the democratized labor laws.

The section “Information on Finding Employment” begins by summarizing employment statistics for 1948, stating, “There are 4,635,385 job openings reported by companies, with 2,754,230 potential employees introduced to companies

**Table 4.** Employment situation of demobilized soldiers and civilians, disabled soldiers, and returnees.

1946, Jan – Dec	Demobilized soldiers and civilians	Seeking work	433,953	Employed	230,990
	Disabled soldiers	Seeking work	4,219	Employed	1,728
	Returnees	Seeking work	176,797	Employed	82,661
1947, Jan – Dec	Demobilized soldiers and civilians	Seeking work	165,358	Employed	92,451
	Disabled soldiers	Seeking work	2,844	Employed	766
	Returnees	Seeking work	144,274	Employed	77,167

through intermediary agencies, resulting in 963,283 people becoming employed, demonstrating an employment rate of 35 per cent.” The handbook continues, “The government is doing all it can to respond to increasing unemployment, and is implementing unemployment insurance as well as providing funds for each province to implement policies to offset unemployment.” The handbook also provides a graph (see Table 4) detailing the employment statistics for demobilized soldiers and civilians, disabled soldiers, and returnees. The graph reports the employment rate of regular citizens at 35 per cent, which is comparatively lower than the 50 per cent employment rate reported for demobilized soldiers and returnees.

By comparison, the section “On Receiving Remuneration for Damages Received while Interned under Allied Forces” is relatively brief. Indeed, former soldiers are specified as the main recipients of remuneration. Among civilian returnees, only those returning from Soviet territories are outlined as candidates for indemnification. However, what is significant is this section’s inclusion under the Labor Standards Act. The Labor Relations Reform Act was first introduced in September 1946, and the Labor Standards Act and Workmen’s Compensation Insurance Act followed in 1947. Post-war labor law reforms were further consolidated in 1947 with the enactment of the Employment Security Act in November and the Unemployment Benefits Act in December. The Factories Act, the pre-war law governing labor relations, had been completely transformed in just a few years. Indeed, measures to counteract the effects of high unemployment were integral to these legal reforms, and in May of 1949 more national and local government funds were secured for unemployment relief as part of the Emergency Countermeasure against Unemployment Act. The inclusion of “Information on Finding Employment” and “On Receiving Remuneration for Damages Received while Interned under Allied Forces” in the handbook can be explained by their relation to the Workmen’s Compensation Insurance Act and the Employment Security Act. However, the handbook completely omits references to practical information on unemployment aid, such as the Unemployment Benefits Act and the Emergency Countermeasure against Unemployment Act, which would have been desperately needed by returnees. Indeed, this omission indicates that although the returnees appeared to be treated as equal citizens, it can be inferred that in practice they were “imperfect citizens” who received differential treatment.

The laws and institutions introduced to readers in the handbook had direct relevance to their everyday lives and were firmly based in the values of the new constitution; therefore, their inclusion can be understood as reinforcing democratic

values. However, their inclusion can also be interpreted as an attempt to portray a modernized state in contrast to pre-war Japan. Furthermore, the government's pledge to ensure equal opportunities for education, guarantee a minimum standard of living, dissolve conglomerates, reform land ownership, and regulate workplaces can be understood as being motivated by similar ambitions. Despite the limitations and shortcomings of the legal reforms intended to benefit returnees introduced in the handbook, they were premised on a notion of the state securing a basic living standard for all citizens and were intended to bring about the peaceful repatriation of Japanese internees. Thus, the logic of inclusion underlying re-nationalization operated through an ambiguous negotiation of issues sensitive to returnees at the time—difficulties in acquiring Japanese citizenship due to external family registers, issues of property ownership, and the differential treatment of civilian and soldier returnees concerning compensation pay. Simultaneously, the government's policy toward returnees was structured by a pervasive urgency to consolidate control and reduce elements threatening the security of the state during the process of reconstructing Japan and ensuring national unity.

### **Conclusion**

Re-nationalization of returnees was realized at a time when reflection on wars of aggression and the colonialism of imperial Japan coincided with a transition into confrontation between the Communist camp and the Free World camp in the new era. Accordingly, returnees started to be understood not as parties implicated in the past war but as victims of the new war of governance systems called the "Cold War." This reorganization is also present in the official rhetoric of the Japanese government as it appears in the *Kikansha hikkei*. The text encourages separation from the old order of the Empire of Japan and emphasizes democracy and modernization, while demanding that returnees quickly adapt to post-war Japan and embody citizenship by becoming dedicated workers for post-war reconstruction. For readers of the *Kikansha hikkei*, the introduction of revised national holidays to illustrate the reorganization of time and space in post-war Japan would have held important symbolic meanings. Likewise, the handbook's emphasis on the revolution in the family through the abolishment of the patriarchal family system was equally influential. Whereas previously women held no legal capacity under the law, they could now divorce their spouses and invoke their rights to child custody and property. Indeed, the securing of women's rights and their ability to live independently would have been a crucial question for Japanese women struggling to remake their lives after leaving the colonies. Additionally, the handbook devotes considerable space to a discussion of civil rights, which is not in the actual content of the Civil Code itself. Throughout this discussion, the handbook repeatedly identifies the need for autonomous, free citizens for the reconstruction of Japan—all of which are suggestive of a citizen-making project based on democratic values.

The calculated inclusion of the Basic Act on Education, the Land Reform Act, and the Labor Standards Act can be construed as reinforcing an understanding of democracy, as they are all laws based in the new constitution. However, their

inclusion can also be interpreted as an attempt to portray a modernized state in contrast to pre-war Japan. Furthermore, the government's pledge to ensure equal opportunity of education, guarantee a minimum standard of living, dissolve conglomerates, reform land ownership, and regulate workplaces can be understood as motivated by similar ambitions. Despite the limitations and shortcomings of the legal reforms intended to benefit returnees introduced in the handbook, they were premised on a notion of the state securing a basic living standard for all citizens and were intended to bring about the peaceful repatriation of Japanese internees. That is to say, the logic of inclusion underlying re-nationalization operated through an ambiguous negotiation of issues sensitive to returnees at the time, such as difficulties in acquiring Japanese citizenship due to external family registers, issues of property ownership, and the differential treatment of civilian and soldier returnees concerning compensation pay. Simultaneously, the government's policy toward returnees was structured by a pervasive urgency to consolidate control and reduce elements threatening to the security of the state during the process of reconstructing Japan and ensuring national unity.

The political, legal, and social restructuring of Japan after World War II assumes the appearance of the democratization of militaristic institutions. The obvious question is whether such a change constitutes a mere revision or a thorough transformation. By extension, critical research interrogating whether the changes to pre- and post-war Japan should be understood as a continuation or a rupture exist as one major pillar of research concerning imperial Japan and the periods of American occupation and post-colonialism. The proposition to reform returnees into citizens of a democratized and modernized new Japan constituted the Japanese government's primary attitude towards the treatment of returnees—a reality clearly reflected in the *Kikansha hikkei*. However, this process does not signify a simple transformation from imperial subjects into citizens of a post-war Japanese nation-state. As the *Kikansha hikkei* demonstrates, returnees were called upon to realize (American-style) liberal democracy as both modern subjects and Cold War warriors incorporated into post-war Japan. As such, the disputed representation of the returnee reveals the foundational assumptions and strategies underlying the project of re-nationalizing Japanese citizens in the post-war reconstruction period.

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