

Diaspora in Reverse: Repatriation, Identity and Integration in Japan, 1945-1958

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The Japanese defeat in 1945 radically reconfigured the boundaries of the nation. Suddenly, more than 6 million Japanese found themselves overseas, and in a position where repatriation was both necessary and often slow and complicated. The initial flood of repatriates during the Occupation exacerbated the problems of daily life for those at home, and the later constant trickle raised issues around patriotic loyalty, ideology and national purity as Japan slowly recovered from the war. In this paper, I suggest reasons for the importance of this process to our understanding both of post-war Japan and of population movements in general.