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Economic experiences of Japanese civilian repatriates in Hiroshima prefecture, 1945-1956

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Abstract

After World War II, more than six million people returned to Japan from various parts of the former Japanese empire. Most studies of Japanese postwar repatriation have focused on the repatriation policies of the Allied powers and the Japanese government, the repatriation process between 1945 and 1956, and postwar memories of repatriates. In contrast, the economic experiences of repatriates in the postwar era have yet to be studied. This paper uses a large-scale national survey of repatriates' postwar lives conducted by the Japanese government in 1956, focussing more specifically on approximately 110,000 civilian repatriates living in Hiroshima prefecture in 1956. The findings of this research contrast with prevailing suggestions that repatriates were totally neglected by the Japanese government and society. Instead, this research demonstrates that in Hiroshima prefecture, repatriates' postwar job placement was facilitated by employment in agriculture, public sector employment, and the transferable skills possessed by some repatriates. The information from the 1956 government survey shows that approximately 60 per cent of repatriates fell in these categories, while the remaining 40 per cent found employment in new areas or became unemployed. Research on repatriates in other prefectures (Ibaraki, Osaka, and Kanagawa) shows a similar trend. As a result, despite the scale of the repatriation, the settlement was broadly successful. It can be argued that this type of transition helped to bring political and economic stability, which became a foundation of Japan's postwar economic recovery.

Introduction

The economic impact of large influxes of population is a complex topic that has been much debated. This research contributes to these debates by examining one of the most significant, but least researched, examples of postwar migration: the repatriation of more than six million people—three million civilians and three million demobilised soldiers—to Japan after World War II. One pervasive image of Japanese civilian repatriates is that of the immigrant farmers of Manchuria,

who had difficult experiences during their repatriation.¹ However, many returned from other regions of the Japanese empire, including Korea, Taiwan, and Sakhalin. Repatriates included not only farmers, but also colonial government officials, employees of public and private corporations, small business owners, teachers, and priests, amongst others.

Most studies of Japanese postwar repatriation have focused on the repatriation policies of the Allied powers and the Japanese government, the repatriation process (geographical routes and repatriates' experiences) between 1945 and 1956, as well as the postwar memories of repatriates. To better understand the overall profile of the Japanese repatriates, this paper uses a large-scale national survey of repatriates' postwar lives conducted by the Japanese government in 1956. This article specifically focuses on the approximately 110,000 civilian repatriates living in Hiroshima prefecture in 1956, in particular their occupational changes as a result of the repatriation.

History of Japanese migration and post-World War II repatriation

During the Edo period (1603–1868), Japan closed its borders, and the Tokugawa government banned international travel until the Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854. In the 1880s, limited numbers of Japanese people started to migrate to Hawaii as sugar plantation labourers under an agreement between the Kingdom of Hawaii and the Japanese government.² Some others migrated to other parts of Asia as temporary labourers, servants, merchants, and even as prostitutes. The number of Japanese migrants significantly increased after Japan colonised Taiwan (1895) and Korea (1910), and a growing number became long-term or permanent settlers. Hiroshima prefecture was consistently one of the major sources of Japanese settler immigrants in Korea, China, Taiwan, and the United States. After the United States tightened restrictions on Japanese immigration in the 1920s, Japanese

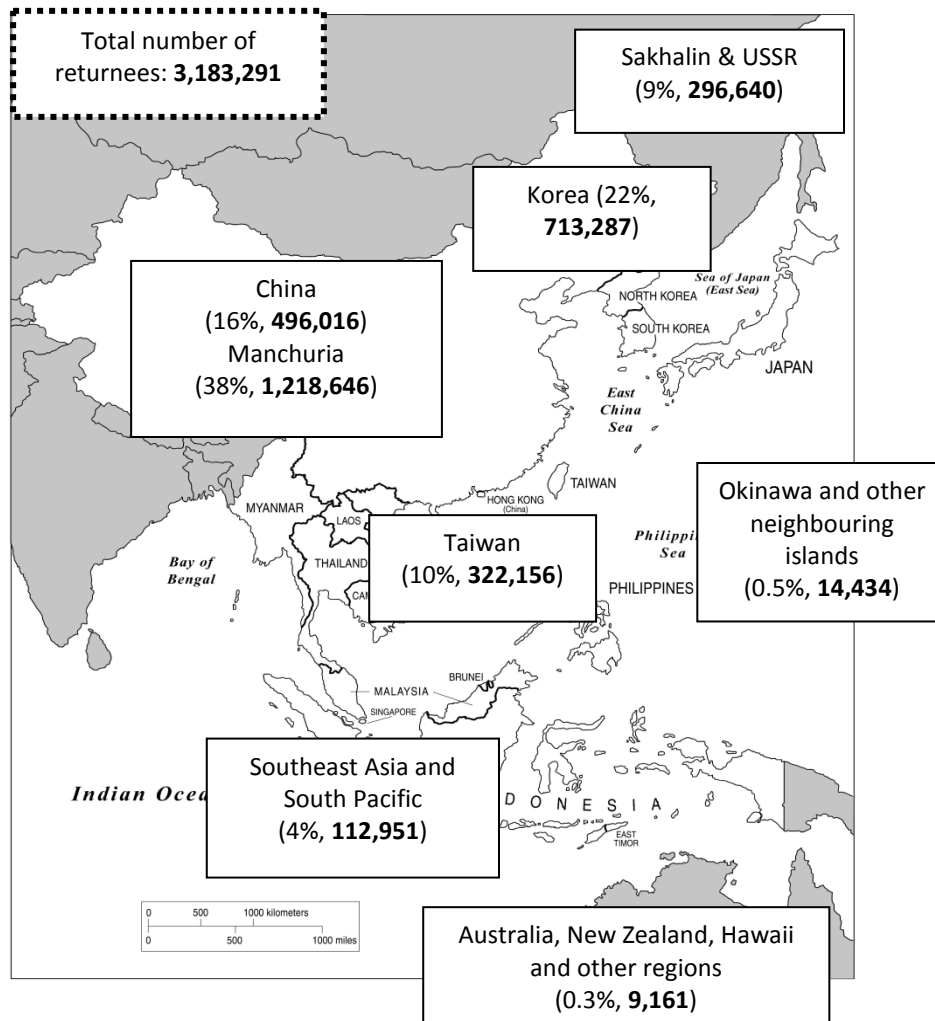
¹ Sengo Kaitakushi Hensan Inkaï, *Sengo Kaitakushi* (Tokyo: Zenkoku Kaitaku Nōgyō Kumiai Rengōkai, 1977), 31.

² Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Yokohama Japanese Overseas Migration Museum, "Hawaii Ni Watatta Hitobito," *Kaigai Ijū Shiryōkan Dayori* 32 (2014): 3.

immigrants' destinations expanded to include Latin America. In the 1930s, as Japan's war effort intensified, a larger number of Japanese people migrated to various parts of the Japanese empire. As shown in Figure 1, by the end of World War II in August 1945, more than three million Japanese civilians were outside of the country, together with three million Japanese soldiers.

Japanese post-war repatriation started immediately after the end of World War II. However, as shown in Figure 2, the process took many years to complete. Between the end of the war in August 1945 and the end of 1946, approximately 5.1 million repatriates (81 per cent of the total, including both civilians and soldiers) had arrived back in Japan. By the end of 1950, 99.3 per cent had returned.

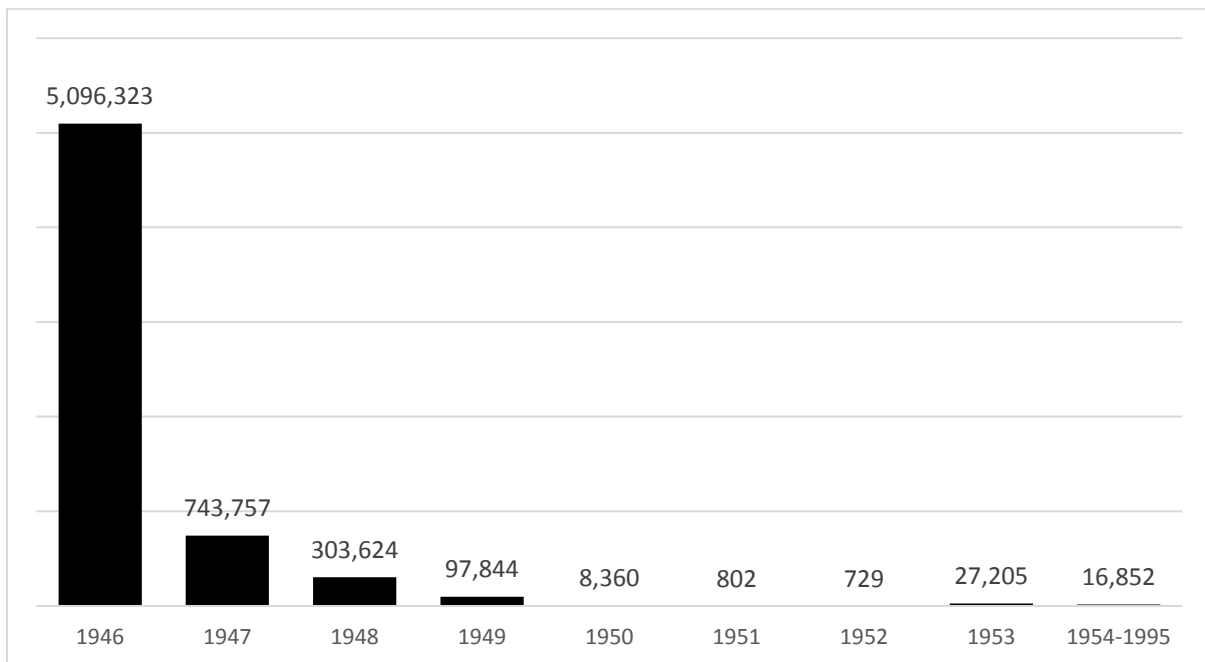
Figure 1: Civilian returnees by place of origin



The figures in parentheses are the number of returnees from each region and the percentage of the total civilian repatriates.³ Map created by the author.

³ Ministry of Health and Welfare, *Hikiage to Engo Sanjūnen No Ayumi* (Tokyo: Ministry of Health and Welfare, 1977), 690.

Figure 2: Number of repatriates arriving in Japan by year ⁴



The total number of repatriates in this figure is 6,295,496. This includes both civilians and military personnel.

With regards the regional origins of the repatriates, the areas controlled by Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang government (mainland China and Taiwan) deported the Japanese nationals relatively smoothly, sending back 97.6 per cent of the Japanese population by the end of 1946.⁵ By contrast, repatriation from the regions controlled by the Soviet Army (Manchuria, North Korea, and Russia) took much longer. From these regions, approximately 575,000 soldiers and civilians were sent to Siberia, Central Asia, and Mongolia, where they were used as manual labourers until 1956.⁶ China and Taiwan also detained Japanese soldiers and civilians, mostly for their technical skills. One group which faced particularly severe difficulties during repatriation were the Japanese immigrant farmers who were living in Manchuria. From the 1930s to the end of the war, around 270,000 people had been recruited from Japan and sent to the remote areas of Manchuria to physically occupy the region and defend the border against the U.S.S.R. The

⁴ Ministry of Health and Welfare (Shakai Engo Kyoku), *Engo 50 Nenshi* (Tokyo: Gyōsei, 1997).

⁵ Yasuo Wakatsuki, *Sengo Hikiage No Kiroku* (Tokyo: Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1995), 252-53.

⁶ Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare, "Siberia Yokuryū Chū Shibōsha Ni Kansuru Siryō No Chōsa Ni Tsuite," (Tokyo: Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare).

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisaku/2009/11/01.html>. Accessed on 9 November 2018.

Japanese government estimates that approximately 90,000 died during the repatriation from attacks by the U.S.S.R. military and local population.⁷

Existing literature on post-war repatriation

Although many books and essays on Japan's postwar returnees have been written, a majority focus on their difficult experiences during the journey home following the surrender. However, in these analyses, repatriates' post-war economic transitions are not fully examined. Among the few academic research papers on the returnees' postwar occupations is a short essay "Hikiagesha to Sensō Chokugo No Rōdō Ryoku" (Odaka, 1996).⁸ However, this paper only briefly summarises and explains the information published in the *1950 National Census*⁹ and the records of repatriation programmes published in the same year.¹⁰ *Sengo Hikiage no Kiroku* (Wakatsuki, 1995)¹¹ is probably the most comprehensive analysis of the Japanese civilian repatriation. In this volume, the author tries to fill the gap between personal memoirs and official records, using a wide range of source materials, including public records, Japanese military documents, scholarly essays on specific regions including Manchuria, personal memoirs, source materials on international law, as well as Japanese newspaper articles on the repatriation. Despite the wide scope of the topic, Wakatsuki manages to integrate various sources of information to offer a balanced overview of the repatriation. However, repatriates' postwar job experiences are not mentioned in this study. Written in English, *When Empire Comes Home* (Watt, 2009)¹² explores repatriation experiences and the discrimination postwar returnees faced. Several other works on Japanese civilian repatriates include some limited information on specific groups' postwar occupational transitions, including telecom engineers

⁷ Sengo Kaitakushi Hensan Inkaï, *Sengo Kaitakushi* 31.

⁸ Kōnosuke Odaka, "Hikiagesha to Sensō Chokugo No Rōdō Ryoku," *Shakai Kagaku Kenkyū* 48(1) (1996).

⁹ Statistics Bureau of Japan, *Population Census of 1950 (Final Report)*, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Statistics Bureau of Japan, 1955).

¹⁰ Repatriation Relief Bureau, *Hikiage Engo No Kiroku* (Tokyo: Repatriation Relief Bureau, 1950).

¹¹ Wakatsuki, *Sengo Hikiage No Kiroku*

¹² Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan*, Harvard East Asian Monographs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

repatriated from Manchuria and merchants from Dalian.¹³ However, these authors' main interests lie in people's wartime activities, or in the repatriation process itself, and they provide limited analysis of repatriates' postwar economic lives.

Although Japanese repatriation was a major challenge for the defeated country, Japan was not the only country that faced a sudden influx of returnees after World War II. Post-World War II repatriation and population transfer was also a major problem in countries such as Finland (250,000 returned from Karelia in 1944),¹⁴ India and Pakistan (around 12 million moved between the countries in the Partition of India in 1947),¹⁵ Italy (543,000 returned from Istria to Yugoslavia, Greece, Ethiopia, and Libya between 1947 and 1952),¹⁶ Turkey (140,000 returned from Yugoslavia in 1950 and 1951),¹⁷ and the Netherlands (230,000 returned from Indonesia between 1949 and 1957).¹⁸ Additionally, Germany absorbed more than 12 million expellees and war refugees.

Among various books and essays on German expellees and refugees, *Refugees and Expellees in Post-war Germany* (Connor, 2007)¹⁹ comprehensively analyses the challenges faced by German repatriates and examines expellees' postwar job experiences. Connor admits that refugees made a significant contribution to the West German economy in the 1950s, not only as a source of inexpensive and mobile labour, but also as consumers. Moreover, the commercial and industrial enterprises they established in the countryside played a crucial role in the

¹³ Asobu Yanagisawa, *Nihonjin No Shokuminchi Taiken, Dairen Nihonjin Shōkō Gyōsha No Rekishi* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1999).

Daqing Yang, *Technology of Empire: Telecommunications and Japanese Expansion in Asia, 1883-1945*, Harvard East Asian Monographs (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010).

¹⁴ Wakatsuki, *Sengo Hikiage No Kiroku* 347.

¹⁵ Andrew Whitehead, "Partition 70 Years On: The Turmoil, Trauma - and Legacy," *BBC* 27 July 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-40643413>. Accessed on 9 November 2018.

¹⁶ Wakatsuki, *Sengo Hikiage No Kiroku* 350-53.

¹⁷ Huey Louis Kostanick, "Turkish Resettlement of Refugees from Bulgaria, 1950-1953," *Middle East Journal* 9, no. 1 (1955): 41-52.

http://www.jstor.org/stable/4322664?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents. Accessed on 27 March 2017.

¹⁸ Wakatsuki, *Sengo Hikiage No Kiroku* 348-49.

¹⁹ Ian Connor, *Refugees and Expellees in Post-War Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

modernisation of West Germany's rural economy.²⁰ However, Connor is cautious about emphasising the successful integration of the expellees and refugees. For example, he touches on the rise of the handicraft enterprises established by refugees, but also discusses the problems associated with low wages and unfavourable working conditions in the sector. He states that the results of more recent studies indicate that the integration process was more difficult than had traditionally been acknowledged, and that the economic position of the expellees in the early 1970s still lagged behind that of the local population.

For Japanese repatriates, their occupational transitions in the postwar era have yet to be studied systematically. Further research therefore brings new insights into the three million civilian returnees' occupational transitions in postwar Japan. In order to capture comprehensive trends in Japanese post-war repatriation, I have constructed and analysed a statistical data set based on the Japanese government's 1956 survey of repatriates' postwar lives. This survey is exceptionally valuable for understanding repatriates' postwar lives, because approximately 2,260,000 repatriate household heads in 46 prefectures participated, and gave detailed information on their wartime and postwar addresses and employment.²¹ As one of the case studies, this paper specifically focuses on Hiroshima, a longstanding source of Japanese migrants, in order to fully analyse the postwar experiences of both colonial settlers in Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria, and those who migrated as part of national policies (including public servants and employees of public corporations, such as the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMR)), especially after the 1930s.

Overview of Hiroshima prefecture

Hiroshima prefecture is located in western Japan. The prefecture has large mountainous inner regions and coastal areas with numerous small islands. Until

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Hikiage Kiroku Dejitaruka," *Kōbe Shimbun*, 29 December 2015. Retrieved from <https://www.kobe-np.co.jp/rentoku/sengo70nen/sengo70nenkiji/201512/0008683019.shtml>. Accessed on 6 February 2018.

the 19th century, the major sources of the region's income were rice production, fishing, oyster farming, wooden shipbuilding, and iron production using iron sand (*tatara seitetsu*). The coastal region was also an important part of a sea trade route connecting the Hokuriku and Kyūshū regions with Osaka and Edo (Tokyo). The prefecture's location is displayed in the map below.

Figure 3: Location of Hiroshima



The prefecture's capital, Hiroshima city, has been an economic centre in the Chūgoku region and home to branches of government agencies and major companies since the Meiji period (1868-1912).²² In 1871, one of Japan's main military divisions (together with those in Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Sendai, and Kumamoto) was established in Hiroshima city. In 1894, the Sanyō railway was extended to Hiroshima city from the east, and the city became a sending port for

²² Hiroshima City Government, *Gaikan Hiroshima Shi Shi* (Hiroshima City: Hiroshima City Government, 1955), 150-51. Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, *Nikkei Toshi Sirizu Hiroshima* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1996), 10. House of Councillors, "Kokkai Taiken • Kengaku," <http://www.sangiin.go.jp/japanese/70/70-1.html>. <http://www.sangiin.go.jp/japanese/70/70-1.html>. Accessed on 1 May 2019.

soldiers who were dispatched to fight in the Sino–Japan War (1894–1895) and in the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905). Kure city, the third largest city in the prefecture, hosted the Kure Naval Station between 1889 and 1945. The navy’s factory became the largest military production facility in Asia.²³ In the cities of Hiroshima and Kure, steel, chemical, and machine manufacturing and shipbuilding rapidly expanded to serve the military’s needs.

The prefecture has historically had a high population density in relation to cultivated areas,²⁴ partly due to the prevalence of the Buddhist sect Jōdo shinshū, which prohibited abortion, a traditional means of controlling population in the pre-modern period.²⁵ Population pressure had led to continuing emigration to neighbouring regions such as Okayama prefecture, mostly in the form of temporary workers. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Hiroshima prefecture faced a severe unemployment problem as a result of the dissolution of the Tokugawa government, declining rice prices, and serious harvest failures. The economy of Hiroshima was too small to create new employment, and many people continued to migrate to other regions, including Tsushima in Nagasaki prefecture, and Hokkaido.²⁶ The destinations of Hiroshima migrants gradually expanded to include foreign countries. In 1884, when the port of Ujina was constructed near Hiroshima city, some residents lost the opportunity to earn a livelihood from fishing and started to migrate to Hawaii to work in sugarcane plantations. Between 1885 and 1895, 11,222 people migrated from Hiroshima to Hawaii, accounting for 38.2 per cent of the total Japanese migrants to the islands.²⁷ People also migrated to the Americas and Oceania, and later to Taiwan and Korea after Japan had colonised them in 1895 and 1910 respectively.²⁸ Hiroshima was the

²³ Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, *Nikkei Toshi Sirīzu Hiroshima*, 30.

²⁴ Akira Hayami, *Kokusei Chōsa Izen Nihon Jinkō Tōkei Shūsei 1* (Tokyo: Tōyō Shorin, 1992). Meiji 5 nen. According to the Statistics Bureau of Japan, 0.9 million people were registered as residents in Hiroshima prefecture in 1872, which was the largest figure among all prefectures.

²⁵ Chūgoku Shimbunsha, *Hiroshimaken Daihyakka Jiten Jyōkan* (Hiroshima city: Chūgoku Shimbunsha, 1982), 102. Tomoe Moriya, "Senzen No Hawaii Ni Okeru Nikkei Bukkyō Kyōdan No Shosō," *Ritsumeikan Gengo Bunka Kenkyū* 20, no. 1 (2008): 117.

²⁶ Hiroshima City Government, *Gaikan Hiroshima Shi Shi*, 148.

²⁷ Chūgoku Shimbunsha, *Hiroshimaken Daihyakka Jiten Jyōkan*, 102.

²⁸ Hiroshima City Government, "Hiroshima Shi Digital Imin Hakubutsukan," Hiroshima City Government, <http://dms-hiroshima.eg.jomm.jp/site.html>. <http://dms->

largest source of Japanese migrants to the United States by 1925 (29 per cent of total Japanese migrants to the country), the fifth largest to Brazil (6.8 per cent of the total to Brazil) and the fourth largest to Taiwan (4.4 per cent).²⁹

The atomic bomb and the end of the Second World War

On 6th August 1945, the United States dropped the atomic bomb codenamed “Little Boy” on Hiroshima city. The Hiroshima city government estimated that approximately 350,000 people were in Hiroshima city that day, and that the bomb killed approximately 140,000 people, roughly 40 per cent of those in the city at the time.³⁰ If the city’s population of 350,000 in August 1945 is compared with the total prefectural population of 1,963,000 as of February 1944,³¹ it can be estimated that 7.1 per cent of the prefecture’s population died. The Hiroshima city government estimates that among the 76,327 buildings in Hiroshima city, 51,787 were destroyed.³² In addition to houses and company buildings, public offices were also heavily damaged. Among the 1,400 staff members working for Hiroshima city government, approximately 270 people (including the mayor) died, and many others were injured. The Hiroshima prefectural government building was destroyed by fire, and 700 staff members lost their lives. Additionally, the West Police Station and Hiroshima Post Office lost all of their employees.³³

Even though Hiroshima prefecture had suffered near-complete destruction, Hiroshima’s wartime experiences and subsequent postwar problems were not

hiroshima.eg.jomm.jp/details.html. Accessed on 20 May 2015. Hiroshima Prefectural Government, *Hiroshimaken Ijūshi* (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Prefectural Government, 1993), 27, 35-41. Hiroshima Prefectural Archives, *Hiroshima Kara Sekai He: Ijūsha No Rekishi to Genzai* (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Prefectural Archives, 2015).

²⁹ Wakatsuki, *Sengo Hikiage No Kiroku* 23-24. According to Wakatsuki, the largest group of the Japanese population in Taiwan in 1935 came from Kagoshima prefecture, followed by Kumamoto, Fukuoka, and Hiroshima prefectures.

³⁰ Hiroshima city government, "Genbaku Higai to Fukko: Shishasū Ni Tsuite," <http://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/www/contents/0000000000000/1111638957650/>.

Accessed on 15 December 2014. Not all people died on the day of the attack. The death toll of 140,000 was those who died between 6 August and 31 December 1945.

³¹ National Statistics Center, "Jinkō Suikei Chōki Jikeiretsu Dēta: Wagakunino Suikei Jinkō (Taishō 9 Nen - Heisei 12 Nen)," (Tokyo: National Statistics Center). [https://www.e-](https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-)

[stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?page=1&layout=datalist&toukei=00200524&tstat=000000090001&cycle=0&tclass1=000000090004&tclass2=000000090005&second2=1](https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?page=1&layout=datalist&toukei=00200524&tstat=000000090001&cycle=0&tclass1=000000090004&tclass2=000000090005&second2=1). Accessed on 26 November 2018.

³² Hiroshima City Government, "Tatemonono Higai," Hiroshima City Government. Accessed on 29 May 2015.

³³ *Gaikan Hiroshima Shi Shi*, 195. Numbers are not included in the information source.

necessarily unique. For example, many other cities in Japan experienced significant damage from American air raids during the later stages of the war, sometimes on a similar scale to Hiroshima, and wartime industries had to be dissolved or converted to civilian businesses after the war. Moreover, as with many other prefectures, Hiroshima prefecture consisted not only of cities, but also of large agricultural regions, to which the excess population and displaced people could retreat. Table 1 indicates that Hiroshima prefecture's sectoral structure was quite similar to that of Japan as a whole in 1950: approximately 48 per cent of the labour force was in agriculture, 22 per cent in industry, and 30 per cent in services. This contrasts with the economic structure of metropolitan areas such as Kanagawa and Osaka, where agriculture was the smallest among the three sectors. In this sense, Hiroshima prefecture can be regarded as fairly indicative of the overall Japanese economic profile, which helps to make it a valuable case for the study of Japan's post-World War II history.

Table 1: Population in each sector in 1950 (per cent)³⁴

	All Japan	Hiroshima prefecture	Tokyo
Agriculture	48.3	48.0	6.4
Industry	21.9	22.2	37.1
Services	29.8	29.8	56.5

Hiroshima city's economic recovery, 1945–1956

The period August 1945-1947 was a time of economic and social confusion in Japan. This was especially true in Hiroshima city, which had lost one third of its population as well as many houses, buildings, and other infrastructure. Some survivors moved to suburban or rural areas. Others remained in the city and lived in barracks, which were made from construction materials that had survived the fire. ³⁵ Food was extremely scarce due to already low production towards the end

³⁴ Statistics Bureau of Japan, *Population Census of 1955* (Tokyo: Statistics Bureau of Japan,, 1956), 532-3.

³⁵ Takuya Motooka, "Sengo Shūdan Ijū Ni Muketa Kasenjiki Kyojūsha No Gyōseikoshō," *Doshisha University Shakai Kagaku* 46, no. 1 (2016): 26.

of the war, broken distribution channels, and the very poor harvest of 1945. The Hiroshima city government reported that black markets appeared around Hiroshima, Koi, and Yokogawa stations, and in the Ujina and Tenma regions. In January 1946 there were approximately 230 black market traders in Hiroshima city, but this number quickly increased to around 2,000 by the end of 1946.³⁶ The markets sold all types of food and daily necessities, including rice, wheat, soybean paste, steel nails and plates, electric wires, various tools, lumber, benzine, heavy oil, kerosene, machine oil, automobile parts, shoes, clothing, blankets, and medicine. Some of these items had been stolen from the Japanese and U.S. military facilities and illegally sold at the markets.³⁷ The Japanese government increased the money supply in order to pay off the wartime invoices and finance reconstruction. People also withdrew their deposits from banks to buy food and other items. The result was hyperinflation. The Japanese government was ordered by GHQ to set limits on the amount of deposits one person could withdraw from the bank, but inflation continued, and the economy did not start to stabilise until 1948.

Hiroshima prefecture had a population of 2,011,498 in October 1947, which made it the 14th largest prefecture in terms of population among Japan's 46 prefectures (excluding Okinawa prefecture which was under direct U.S. occupation).³⁸ After the war, repatriates started to arrive, some via Hiroshima port, where the Ujina Repatriation Centre was established, and others via Hakata or Sasebo ports in Kyūshū. According to the *Kōsei Tōkei Geppō*,³⁹ the repatriate population in the prefecture on 30 September 1947 was estimated to be 117,074. This figure accounted for 3.5 per cent of the total repatriate population in Japan, and Hiroshima prefecture was the 9th largest destination for repatriates. The civilian

<https://doors.doshisha.ac.jp/duar/repository/ir/22719/007001070002.pdf>. Accessed on 18 November 2018. Many of the barracks were built along the rivers or open spaces in the city, and they became major obstacles for urban redevelopment after the late 1940s.

³⁶ Hiroshima City Government, *Hiroshima Shisei Yōran Syōwa 21 Nen Ban* (Hiroshima city: Hiroshima City Government, 1947), 29-30.

³⁷ Kentarō Awaya, *Shiryo Gendai Nihonshi 2* (Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 1980), 114.

³⁸ Statistics Bureau of Japan, *Population Census of 1955*, 30.

³⁹ Ministry of Health and Welfare, "Kōsei Tōkei Geppō (Monthly Bulletin of the Welfare Statistics)," (Tokyo: Ministry of Health and Welfare, April 1947 to November 1949).

repatriate population in Hiroshima accounted for 5.8 per cent of the total prefectural population. A further 5.8 per cent were demobilised soldiers. This means that more than 11 per cent of the population in Hiroshima prefecture in 1947 were repatriates from Japan's overseas territories or battlefields. By November 1949, the civilian repatriate population had slightly decreased to 113,899, but the prefecture remained the ninth largest destination for repatriates.

The population of urban regions in Hiroshima prefecture started to increase due to the return of evacuated citizens and the repatriation of soldiers and Japanese civilians. Hiroshima city's population was 136,518 in November 1945, and despite the scale of destruction, the population had increased to 168,273 in April 1946, to 224,100 in October 1947, to 246,134 in August 1948, and to 285,711 in October 1950.⁴⁰ The destruction of Hiroshima city may, of course, have initially hindered the settlement of repatriates. Many who had no place to settle first lived in repatriate accommodation or temporary barracks. It is difficult, however, to examine the effects of Hiroshima city's destruction on the repatriates' settlement due to the fact that the government treated all war-affected people (both wartime Hiroshima residents and repatriates) as a single group, and the number of primary source materials specifically focusing on repatriates' early postwar experiences is also limited. At this time, Japanese employment prospects, including for repatriates, were not promising. The military and related industries had been dissolved, and companies often dismissed redundant workers. Many displaced people were engaged in black market activities, both as consumers and sellers.

In 1948, the economic situation finally started to improve. Business confidence came back as the Allied occupation forces decided to halt the confiscation of Japanese firms' production facilities. Investment levels and production increased. People had better access to food, housing and other materials. In addition, Hiroshima port was licensed by the government to engage in international trade in January 1948. Major exports from Hiroshima port in the early days included wooden ships, sewing needles, and other miscellaneous items such as umbrellas,

⁴⁰ Hiroshima City Government, *Gaikan Hiroshima Shi Shi*, 208.

furniture, sandals, toys, and canned food (fruits, mushrooms, oysters, and bamboo shoots), which were sent to the United States, Singapore, Sweden, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Belgium, Canada, and the United Kingdom.⁴¹ The city's 1948 annual report stated that people had started to look for secure jobs, rather than continuing to be involved in black market activities or being employed by businesses with limited future prospects.⁴² However, the economy remained unstable, and inflation was still a major problem. Based on 1934-36 wholesale prices (100), the wholesale price in 1949 was 220.⁴³ Living costs were high, and the Engel's coefficient (the proportion of average income spent on food) was 0.634 in 1948 and 0.633 in 1949.⁴⁴ In March 1949, an austerity plan (the so-called Dodge Line) was introduced. Due to the resulting monetary contraction, numerous small businesses were closed, and in Hiroshima, like other places in Japan, many people lost their jobs. Prefectural and city governments introduced many public works projects and employed a total of 104,696 staff members in the fiscal year 1949.⁴⁵

In 1950, the dramatic increase in U.S. military orders caused by the outbreak of the Korean War offered a further stimulus to the Japanese economy. U.S. military orders accounted for approximately 2.4 per cent of the country's GNP in 1951.⁴⁶ Hiroshima city's exports also increased in 1950. The total export figure for Hiroshima city increased more than six times, from 153 million yen in 1949 to 836 million yen in 1950. However, it is not clear whether the increase in Hiroshima's exports was the result of the Korean War, because machinery and parts accounted

⁴¹ *Hiroshima Shisei Yōran Syōwa 23 Nen Ban* (Hiroshima city: Hiroshima City Government, 1949), 53-54.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 98.

⁴³ Masanao Ito, "Sengo Haipā Infure to Chuō Ginkō," *IMES (Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, Bank of Japan) Discussion Paper Series* 2002-J-35 (2002): 182.

<https://www.imes.boj.or.jp/research/papers/japanese/kk31-1-7.pdf>. Accessed on 28 February 2018.

⁴⁴ Statistics Bureau of Japan, "Shōhi Jittai Chōsa Hōkoku," (Tokyo: Ichiryūsha, 1952-1953), 2.

https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=Cg4VcHrH_MC&hl=en_GB&pg=GBS.PP1. Accessed on 11 February 2019.

⁴⁵ Hiroshima City Government, *Hiroshima Shinshi Keizaihen* (Hiroshima city: Hiroshima City Government, 1984), 158-62. *Hiroshima Shisei Yōran Syōwa 24 Nen Ban* (Hiroshima city: Hiroshima City Government, 1950), 85.

⁴⁶ Shigeru Ashida, "Chōsen Sensō to Nihon - Nihon No Yakuwari to Nihon He No Eikyō," (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, 2003), 123. Accessed on 28 July 2018.

<http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/publication/senshi/pdf/200503/11.pdf>. According to this report, the U.S. procurement orders were worth 127 billion yen (354 million USD). This accounted for 2.3 per cent of Japan's GDP of 5,444 billion yen in 1951.

for only 3.1 per cent of the total exports, while a majority of the products were food items and miscellaneous goods such as needles. Furthermore, there was a decline in the total export figure in 1951 and 1952. ⁴⁷ It is generally believed that Hiroshima's economic recovery was led by heavy industries such as shipbuilding and auto manufacturing. However, until the mid-1950s, heavy industries accounted for only a small part of Hiroshima's economy. For example, in the economic statistics of Hiroshima city, the production level of heavy industrial products such as transport equipment (automobiles, trains, and ships), petrochemical products, and steel, did not exceed that of light industrial products until 1956.⁴⁸ Major companies which led this growth were Tōyō Kōgyō (later renamed Mazda) and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.

Repatriates' postwar economic experiences

Repatriates in the 1950 national census

We have very limited evidence on how repatriates survived the immediate postwar period in Hiroshima, and to what degree their lives have been different from those of the rest of population. At the national level, one important source of information on the repatriates' postwar lives is the statistics published in the 1950 population census. These statistics are unfortunately only available on a nation-wide basis in 1950, with no disaggregated figures available for each prefecture. It is also unfortunate that this information includes both demobilised soldiers and civilian repatriates, without differentiating between these two groups, which makes it difficult to understand the specific experiences of civilian repatriates. Table 2 is reproduced from the 1950 population census and shows the sectoral breakdown of repatriates' postwar employment in 1950.

⁴⁷ Hiroshima City Government, *Hiroshima Shisei Yōran Syōwa 28 Nen Ban* (Hiroshima City: Hiroshima City Government, 1954), 112-13. The number of three-wheeler trucks produced by Tōyō Kōgyō sharply increased from 8,496 in 1950 to 10,969 in 1951, 17,257 in 1952, 26,201 in 1953. However, Hiroshima city's report stated that the United States mainly ordered four-wheeler trucks from Japanese manufacturers. Tōyō Kōgyō's buyers may therefore have been Japanese firms located outside of Hiroshima prefecture. (*Hiroshima Shinshi Keizaihen*, 332).

⁴⁸ *Hiroshima Shisei Yōran Syōwa 34 Nen Ban* (Hiroshima city: Hiroshima City Government, 1960), 41.

Table 2: Employment in each sector in Japan in 1950 (per cent)⁴⁹

	Repatriates including demobilised soldiers (a)	Non-repatriate Japanese (b)	(a)/(b)*
Agriculture, forestry, and fishery	32.8	49.8	66%
Manufacturing	17.9	15.8	113%
Construction	5.9	4.2	140%
Mining	3.5	1.5	233%
Transport and communication	8	4.8	167%
Retail and wholesale	12.9	11	117%
Services	9.7	8.5	114%
Finance and real estate	1.3	1	130%
Public services	7.8	3.5	223%
Others	0.3	0.1	300%
Total	100	100	

Figures higher than 150% are shaded in grey.

The table shows that the largest proportion of repatriates (32.8 per cent) worked in the agricultural sector. This is not surprising, because Japan was still in many respects largely an agrarian country, with approximately half of the working age population (those older than 14 years old) employed in the primary sector. However, the percentage of civilian repatriates working in the primary sector was much lower than the 49.8 per cent for non-repatriate Japanese individuals. If we compare the participation rate of repatriates in each category with that of the rest of the population, as shown in the third column, we see an especially conspicuous concentration of repatriates in mining, in the public sector, and in transport and communication. In all these cases the percentage for repatriates was more than 160 per cent that for non-repatriate Japanese. In the next two sections, I will discuss the 1956 survey of repatriates' postwar lives, showing how analysis of the data that it contains can allow a more detailed examination of repatriates' postwar economic experiences, focussing in particular on the case of Hiroshima.

⁴⁹ Statistics Bureau of Japan, *Population Census of 1950 (Final Report)*, 8, 137.

The 1956 national survey of repatriates' postwar lives

As a core source material, this research uses a national survey of repatriates' postwar lives (*Zaigai jijitsu chōsahyō*) conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1956.⁵⁰ Each family member was asked for his or her name, sex, date of birth, the dates of emigration and repatriation, and whether or not they were receiving public aid in 1956. In addition, the household head was required to include the length of his/her overseas residence, four addresses (an address in Japan where the family was registered,⁵¹ a foreign address at the end of the war, the first address after repatriation, and the one at the time of the survey in 1956), and information on wartime and postwar occupations and employers.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Health and Welfare, "Zaigai Jijitsu Chōsahyō (Japanese Government Survey into Repatriates' Postwar Lives)," (1956). The Ministry of Health and Welfare conducted a national survey on repatriates' households in 1956. This was an effort to understand the situation of repatriates to prepare for a compensation programme for the lost assets of civilians in former Japanese territories. The compensation programme was implemented in 1957 and 1967.

⁵¹ In Japan, each citizen is required to register with a local government office in their hometown, to give their personal information (name, names and dates of birth of family members including parents, spouse and children, as well as an address where the family was registered). This registration system has its roots in China and has been used in Japan since the 7th century. The registration address (*honsekichi*) is not necessarily a place where a family is currently living, because it has usually remained the same even when the actual address changes. But in most cases, it is a place closely related to the family in some way. For example, it could be the one where the family is originally from.

Figure 4: A sample survey form of *Zaigai jijitsu chōsahyō*

引揚者在外事実調査票 広島県

氏名	終戦時の世帯主との続柄	本人	終戦時の住所	朝鮮咸興道興寧市					
現住所	広島市牛田町	番地	① 北 郡 6. 中 国 ② 東 郡 7. 南洋委任地諸島 ③ 台 湾 8. 南方部地域 ④ 韓 半 島 9. その他地域 ⑤ 調査、別表用						
本 籍	広島市牛田町	番地							
引揚後最初の住居先	広島市仁保町	番地							
現在の職業及勤務先	地方公務員	(勤務先)	広島市水道局	在外年数	17年 9月				
世帯員の状況 その① (生存)									
氏名	続柄	性別	生年月日	外 地 渡 航 月 年	引揚地	上 陸 地	在留期間	他 地 滞 留 の 有 無	
1.		女	昭和37年3月25日	昭和27年2月	朝鮮咸興道	樺太	有	広島県	
2.		男	昭和44年1月27日	昭和16年10月	朝鮮咸興道	樺太	有	広島県	
3.		男	昭和	昭和					
4.		女	昭和	昭和					
5.		女	昭和	昭和					
世帯員の状況 その② (死亡)					在外中の世帯主の職業状況				
氏名	性別	死亡の年月日	死亡の場所	区 分	職 業	勤 務 先	期 間		
	男	昭和20年12月22日	朝鮮咸興道興寧市	職 業 種 別	職 業 種 別	勤 務 先	期 間		
	女	昭和16年7月16日	広島市	職 業 種 別	職 業 種 別	勤 務 先	期 間		
	男	昭和		職 業 種 別	職 業 種 別	勤 務 先	期 間		
	女	昭和		職 業 種 別	職 業 種 別	勤 務 先	期 間		
世帯代表者の氏名	1. 官公署社員 2. 会社役員 3. 自営業 4. その他	名 称	所 在 地						
		新日本窒素肥料株式会社	大阪市北区宗室町1番地						
備 考									
昭和31年 6月18日	世帯代表者								
昭和31年 月 日	調査票受付団体代表者		広島県引揚同胞更生会々長					瀬戸道一	
			在外実態補填調停員調査広島本部事務長						
			市町村厚生課長又は厚生主任						
			団体支部長又は分会長						
			調 査 員					松下	

This survey into repatriates' postwar lives was a largescale national survey, and approximately 2,260,000 repatriates participated.⁵² However, due to the Act on the Protection of Personal Information of 2003, survey forms are available in only four of the forty-seven prefectures: Ibaraki, Hiroshima, Kanagawa, and Osaka.⁵³ Out of these four prefectures, only Hiroshima and Kanagawa have granted researchers access to the survey forms without imposing any restrictions. In order to track Hiroshima repatriates' occupational transitions, this paper makes use of these data to examine the profiles of 621 randomly selected households repatriated to Hiroshima, out of the total of 14,751 Hiroshima household heads who

⁵² "Hikiage Kiroku Dejitaruka."

⁵³ At the Osaka Prefectural Archives, researchers are not allowed to see the survey forms themselves. The only way to see the survey forms is to request a copy, which are prepared by a staff member of the Archives. For this research, due to the time constraints, the survey forms were collected only from Takatsuki city and Sennan County in Osaka.

participated in the 1956 survey.⁵⁴ A database was constructed based on the information obtained from this sample of 621 survey forms, and the next section shares the findings from this analysis. The numerical figures in the next sections are all obtained from the database, unless otherwise stated.

Overview of the repatriates’ wartime economic experiences and postwar transition

Analysis of the 1956 survey responses collected in Hiroshima prefecture shows that the average age of Hiroshima repatriates in August 1945 was 37.6 years old. They had stayed in various parts of Asia for 14.7 years on average. As shown in Table 3, the largest group had been in Manchuria during the war, followed by those living in Korea and other parts of China. Although Hiroshima had been a traditional source of migrants, approximately 60 per cent of the sample (372 individuals) had migrated after 1932, the year Manchukuo was established, which may indicate that the majority migrated in the context of Japan’s war effort.

Table 3: Repatriates’ wartime region of residence (August 1945) (as percentage of all 621 repatriates in the database)

Region	Number of repatriates	
Manchuria and Kwantung Leased Territory	252	40.6 %
Korea	168	27.1 %
China	115	18.5 %
Taiwan	61	9.8%
Other regions	25	4.0 %
Total	621	100.0%

⁵⁴ This research used the RANDBETWEEN function of Microsoft Excel for the selection of the sample survey forms. Out of the 621 Hiroshima repatriate sample, 49 individuals were female household heads. One third had been young working women who were office clerks, shop assistants, typists, telephone operators, teachers and nurses in 1945, and two-thirds were self-employed women, including shop or small hotel owners and those in agriculture.

Analysis of this sample is particularly informative in terms of shedding light on the wartime and postwar job experiences of Japanese civilian repatriates. Table 4 shows that the largest number of repatriates in the sample were in the tertiary sector, both at the end of the war and in 1956, much of which was accounted for by a large number of small businesses in retail and services. In addition to a large number of merchants and traders, Hiroshima prefecture also had a significant number of wartime public servants, as well as wartime employees of public corporations in transport, communications and utilities. Table 4 shows that, in August 1945, 134 individuals in the sample were employed in the public sector and 125 were working for public corporations in utilities, communications and transport. Additionally, 25 individuals were working for public corporations in manufacturing and mining. This means that close to half of the individuals in the database (284 people) were associated with the public or semi-public sector and were a part of the core of the Japanese wartime economy.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Table 4 shows that 125 people were in utilities, communications and transport in August 1945. For convenience of the analysis, this figure only includes public corporation employees in these sectors. A few respondents who were working in private transport businesses or news agencies were included in the tertiary sector.

Table 4: Wartime and postwar employment sectors of civilian repatriates in Hiroshima

	Agriculture	Mining, construction, manufacturing	Public and semi-public		Tertiary	Day labourers or unemployed	Out of labour force	Total
			Public offices & public associations (including wartime <i>tōsei kumiai</i>) ⁵⁶	Utilities, communications, transport (public corporations only)				
Wartime (August 1945)	48 (7.7%)	139 (22.4%)	134 (21.6%)	125 (20.1%)	175 (28.2%)	0	0	621 (100%)
June 1956	60 (9.7%)	131 (21.1%)	124 (20%)	37 (6%)	182 (29.3%)	39 (6.3%)	48 (7.7%)	621 (100%)

Figures are the number in the sample, out of the 621 repatriates in the database. Sectors where percentages are higher than 20% are shaded in grey

⁵⁶ *Tōsei kumiai* were semi-public associations which were established to facilitate wartime economic control.

The first column in Table 4 shows that only 7.7 per cent of respondents were working in the primary sector in August 1945, including immigrant farmers in Manchuria, who were subject to the Soviet attack on 9th August. It is noteworthy that this result sharply contrasts with the prevailing popular image of immigrant farmers in Manchuria as representative of the repatriate population.⁵⁷ Regarding the repatriates' postwar employment sectors, agriculture was still a minor destination, and only 9.7 per cent of repatriate household heads were in the primary sector in June 1956, despite the fact that in 1955, 27.8 per cent of household heads in Hiroshima prefecture (both repatriates and non-repatriates) worked in this sector.⁵⁸ This indicates that repatriates' occupations were skewed towards non-agricultural sectors, both at the end of the war and in 1956. It should also be noted that the number of those employed in the utilities, communications, and transport sectors significantly declined from 125 in 1945 to 39 in 1956. The next section analyses the situation of postwar repatriates in the agricultural sector.

Agricultural sector as a major post-war destination

As was often the case with repatriates elsewhere in Japan, many Hiroshima repatriates settled in their hometowns after they arrived in the prefecture. In this Hiroshima sample, 64.6 per cent (401 individuals) responded that on returning to Japan they had first settled in the town or village where their families had been registered (*honsekichi*).⁵⁹ Given the fact that more than sixty per cent of repatriates first settled in their hometowns, and Japan was still an agrarian society, it would be reasonable to assume that at least some found initial employment in agriculture, including family farming. As shown in Table 4, in the

⁵⁷ For example, between 2010 and 2018 at least 11 television programmes about the Japanese postwar repatriation were broadcast, of which eight featured those who had repatriated from Manchuria to Japan.

⁵⁸ Statistics Bureau of Japan, *Population Census of 1955 (Hiroshima Prefecture)*, vol. 5-34 (Tokyo: Statistics Bureau of Japan, 1956), 22.

⁵⁹ The proportion of repatriates whose families were registered in Hiroshima city, and who returned there after the repatriation, is lower, at 57 per cent, which indicates the loss of families or housing in the atomic attack. However, it is worth noting that even so more than half returned to Hiroshima city after the repatriation. Out of the 621 individuals in the database, in 1956 282 individuals (45.4 per cent) were still living in their hometowns, and 169 (27.2 per cent) individuals had moved from other prefectures. The rest (170 individuals, 27.4 per cent) were originally from Hiroshima prefecture, but living in places other than their hometowns.

sample of 621 household heads in the Hiroshima database, 60 individuals (9.7 per cent) were in the agricultural sector in 1956. The majority (51 individuals out of 60) were living in their hometowns. Others were engaged in agriculture outside of their hometowns, which included newly reclaimed farmland.⁶⁰

The post-war reclamation programme was introduced by the government in November 1945 to bring more land into agricultural production to address serious food shortages caused by the crop failure and the shortages of fertilizers.⁶¹ Another purpose of the reclamation program was to settle displaced military factory workers, demobilised soldiers and repatriates.⁶² In Hiroshima prefecture, there were 197 designated areas of new farmland, which had been reclaimed from wildland or previously military-owned land, and at least 2,637 households, both repatriates and other war affected people, joined the project.⁶³ The record of Hiroshima prefecture's post-war reclamation, *Hiroshimaken Sengo Kaitakushi*, includes various personal stories of farmers. For example, a former staff member of a public corporation in Manchuria (*Manshū Takushoku Kōsha*), which was responsible for wartime agricultural immigration to the region, joined the postwar reclamation project in Hiroshima in 1948, as he had no resources in postwar Japan, and was enthusiastic about becoming a farmer himself. A former staff member of the North China Railway lived with his wife's family in Hiroshima after the repatriation. Despite his reluctance, his father-in-law persuaded him to join the postwar reclamation scheme in 1948, because the in-laws did not have enough food, housing space, and other daily necessities to share.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ It should be noted that in the 1956 national survey, not all immigrant farmers identified themselves as a part of the postwar reclamation project, so it is not possible to know the exact number of postwar reclamation farmers in the database created for this research.

⁶¹ Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology, *Kagaku Gijutsu Hakusho* (Tokyo: Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology, 1890).

http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/hpaa198001/hpaa198001_2_005.html.

⁶² The Shidehar Cabinet, "Kinkyū Kaitaku Jigyō Jisshi Yōkō (the Cabinet Decision on 9 November 1945)," (Tokyo1945).

<https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/das/meta/M0000000000000689681.html>.

⁶³ Hiroshimaken Sengo Kaitakushi Hensan Iinkai, *Hiroshimaken Sengo Kaitakushi* (Hiroshima city: Hiroshimaken Sengo Kaitakushi Hensan Iinkai, 1986), 17-19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 166.

Of the 60 repatriates who were working in agriculture in 1956, three quarters had been working in other sectors during the wartime, including in retail and services, as well as in transport, communication, and utilities. There was also significant movement the other way, with expatriates leaving agricultural employment. It is intriguing to note that the majority of wartime farmers (33 out of 48) left agriculture after the war and entered other sectors such as retail and services as well as manufacturing (possibly as unskilled or semi-skilled workers). Table A1 in the Appendix summarises civilian repatriates' occupational changes in each sector in the form of a matrix. It is not possible to deduce the reason for this change in sectors, but it may relate to the fact that some people had sold their land before emigrating to Manchuria, so did not have access to land in postwar Japan. For those who did have access to farmland, including those engaged in family farming, settling in agriculture might have been the most accessible option, even though it meant that they had to give up their wartime careers and work experiences. Either through the reclamation programme or family farming, some stayed in agriculture at least until 1956, and others appear to have settled in the sector permanently. In either case, the presence of rural agriculture and its labour-intensive nature worked as a buffer against the sudden influx of population. Then, as the economy recovered, many gradually moved to other sectors.

Public sector employment

Much less widely known is the fact that many among the repatriate population had worked in the public or semi-public sectors during the war. For example, in our sample of 621 repatriates, 259 (41.7 per cent) responded in the 1956 survey that they had worked as wartime public servants, police officers, public school teachers, as well as staff members of postal services, public corporations and various public trade organisations (*tōsei kumiai*). Medical professionals, mostly doctors and nurses, are also included in this category because many had worked in public hospitals, public universities or public research institutions during the war, and their postwar license transfer was regulated by the government. Table 5 shows the number of people in the sample who were in the wartime public and semi-public sectors, and the breakdown of their wartime occupations. This table

shows that the largest group consisted of people who were affiliated with Japanese-controlled railway companies, which included the largest wartime public corporation, the South Manchuria Railway Company. The second and third largest groups consisted of public servants and school teachers, respectively. Together, these groups had formed a core part of the Japanese empire.

Table 5: The number of repatriates in the wartime public or semi-public sectors (as percentage of all 621 repatriates in the database)

	Wartime public sector				Wartime semi-public sectors				
	Public servants	School teachers	Medical professionals	Public associations (<i>Tōsei kumiai</i>)	Railway services	Tele-communications	Electric companies	Postal services	Total
Number in sample (August 1945)	76 (29.3%)	26 (10.0%)	14 (5.4%)	18 (6.9%)	81 (31.3%)	20 (7.7%)	15 (5.8%)	9 (3.5%)	259 (100%)
	134 (51.7 %)				125 (48.3 %)				

Jobs with percentages larger than 25% are shaded in grey.

Moreover, the postwar public and semi-public sectors in Japan became major destinations for repatriates. In fact, Table 3 shows that approximately a quarter (161 individuals) of the sampled 621 respondents in the 1956 survey said that they were working in these sectors. Thirty six of these individuals had been working in the private sector during the war but had found employment in the public or semi-public sectors in postwar Japan. Many others (125 individuals) moved from wartime public and semi-public sectors to their postwar counterparts. It is interesting to note that approximately half of wartime public or semi-public sector employees found employment in the postwar public or semi-public sectors. Examples of this kind of transition included wartime police officers who were in the same job in 1956, a staff member of the Office of the Governor-General of Korea who joined the Hiroshima bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and a former staff member at the Economics Department of the Manchukuo government working at the Hiroshima Tax Office. Although the hiring processes are not well documented, it seems likely that much of the hiring took place via personal networks at local public offices, an important characteristic of the Japanese job market. These jobs also included a significant number of temporary employees, who were hired to reduce unemployment among white-collar workers.⁶⁵ The strongest continuity of wartime and postwar employment can be found among school teachers and medical professionals. The government facilitated their job placement process by allowing the transfer of foreign licenses for doctors, dentists and nurses, as well as for teachers, to postwar Japan.⁶⁶ As a result, among 14 medical professionals, 13 were still in the postwar medical sector, working as doctors, dentists and nurses. Similarly, among 26 wartime teachers, 20 were still teaching in postwar Hiroshima in 1956, though a few had moved to private schools.

⁶⁵ Rōdōshō Shokugyō Anteikyoku Shitsugyō Taisaku Honbu, *Shitsugyō Taisaku Jigyō Nijū Nenshi* (Tokyo: Rōdōshō 1970), 168-69.

⁶⁶ Dōhō Kyūen Giin Renmei, "Hikiagesha Mondai," (Tokyo 1947). Foreign teaching certificates (for example, those which had been issued in Manchuria) were unconditionally transferred to postwar Japan. Medical doctors whose had licenses granted by the Governor-Generals of Korea and Taiwan and the Manchukuo government were required take a national exam in postwar Japan.

In addition to public offices, semi-public transport and communications agencies were major wartime employers of Japanese civilians in the Japanese empire. Table 5 shows that 125 individuals (20.1 per cent of the total repatriates in the database) were employed in colonial railways, telecommunications and electric companies, or in postal services in August 1945. The Japan National Railways in postwar Japan took in some of these wartime foreign railway workers. In the database, 16 repatriate railway workers were employed by Japan National Railways or private railway companies in 1956. As the total number of foreign railway employees in the sample was 81 in August 1945, this means that 19.8 per cent of wartime foreign railway workers were 're-employed' by railway companies in postwar Japan. There was a similar trend for those working in telecommunications. Out of 20 wartime telecommunications and telegraph service employees, eight (20 per cent) were employed by the postwar telecommunication company, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation. This was partly a result of the policy of the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Communications in postwar Japan to employ at least some individuals who had been associated with their wartime counterpart agencies.

For the reemployment of telecommunications workers, the industrial association called the Denkitsūshin Kyōkai acted as a mediator in the reemployment of the repatriates. This association was established in 1937 to coordinate the development of the telecommunications network in the Japan and its overseas territories. The members of the association were private companies such as Fujitsu, Hitachi, and Nihon Denki (NEC, Nippon Electric Company). After the war, this association agreed with its overseas counterpart association, the Daitōa Denkitsūshin Kyōkaito assist telecommunications repatriates from the Manchuria Telegraph and Telephone Company.⁶⁷ According to the former association's record, out of 8,855 telecommunications repatriates who applied to the Ministry of Communications for reemployment, 3,184 (36 per cent) were offered placements via this organisation. In addition, as a part of the programme

⁶⁷ Denki Tsūshin Kyōkai, *Denki Tsūshin Kyōkai 20 Nenshi* (Tokyo: Denki Tsūshin Kyōkai, 1958), 19-30.

to help the job search of telecommunications repatriates, the association helped establish 23 start-ups (details unknown), coordinated radio repair services that employed repatriate telecommunications engineers, and sent requests to private companies to hire telecommunications repatriates.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the number of repatriate railway workers was estimated to be approximately 180,000 in 1947. The Ministry of Transport also agreed to take in some of them. A document prepared by a postwar organisation of repatriate railway workers, *Tairiku Tetsudō Jūjiin Engokai*, states that the Ministry of Transport had absorbed approximately 11,000 repatriates by January 1947.⁶⁹ These positions were filled by those who had already arrived in Japan by the spring of 1947, as the Ministry terminated the reemployment programme in June that year. However, there are many exceptions in which repatriates who arrived in Japan later, in some cases after 1948, were reemployed by the Japan National Railways. It is difficult to know further details, but for these cases professional networks potentially mattered, as did those who supported repatriates in their job search. Other repatriate railway and telecommunications employees found employment in postwar public offices and in other areas of the postwar semi-public sector.

In addition to public offices or public corporations, semi-public associations such as agricultural cooperatives (*nōgyō kyōdō kumiai*) and public trade organisations (such as a transport association; details unknown) employed 11 of the 621 individuals in the database. These organisations had a strong relationship with specific ministries, as was the case with agricultural cooperatives organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. These organisations absorbed redundant staff from government offices and public corporations, and it seems that they also employed some repatriates, including wartime public sector employees. It is also noteworthy that the British Commonwealth Force stationed in Hiroshima (until November 1956 as a part of the United Nations forces) employed approximately 8,000 local Japanese people, including repatriates, as

⁶⁸ Ibid., 52-57.

⁶⁹ Tairiku Tetsudō Jūjiin Engokai, "Jigyō Gaiyō Kessan Hōkoku Tsuzuri," (Tokyo 1946-47).

quasi-public employees.⁷⁰ The Ministry of Labour and local employment bureaus were mainly responsible for their hiring, and most of their wages were paid by the Japanese government. Seven individuals in our sample were working for the British Commonwealth forces stationed in Hiroshima, for example, as an office clerk, a laundry worker, and a manual labourer.

The public and semi-public sectors thus played an important role in absorbing approximately one quarter of repatriates in Hiroshima prefecture. More than three quarters of postwar public or semi-public sector employees in the database had also been in these sectors at the end of the war. It should be noted however, that not all wartime staff members of the public and semi-public sectors were fortunate enough to find postwar jobs in these sectors. As was the case for non-public sector repatriates, some found postwar employment in the private sector using their skills, and others moved to new sectors where they had very little previous experience.

Employment continuity and skilled employment

Among the 621 individuals sampled, approximately half (313) were employed in the private sector in 1956. For repatriates, if their wartime employer had a business in Japan, the best option would have been to return to their wartime employers. Ten individuals in the database, were fortunate enough to be able to do so. For example, Nihon Cement Corporation employed 3 of the 621 individuals in the database. Furthermore, Mitsubishi Cement, Mitsubishi Shipbuilding, the construction firm Morimoto Corporation, Taisei Corporation, and the manufacturer Kure Grinding Wheel (Kure Toishi), as well as Daiichi Bank and Dōwa Fire & Marine Insurance appear to have hired a small number of their wartime employees, with each company employing one person in the database.⁷¹ All of these corporations had been major companies during the war and had

⁷⁰ Hiroshima Prefectural Archives, "Chūryūgun to Kengyōsei," (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Prefectural Archives, 2010). <https://www.pref.hiroshima.lg.jp/uploaded/attachment/41192.pdf>. Accessed on 20 May 2015.

⁷¹ Under the government's economic control policies, this company was established in 1944 by merging four major fire and marine insurance companies.

connections with the military. When they resumed postwar business operations, some repatriates joined them.⁷² For others, the postwar job search might not have been easy, but analysis of the sample indicates that some seem to have found employment in new companies, or to have started their own businesses. With only limited information, it is certainly difficult to clearly understand the degree to which the repatriates' skills helped their postwar transitions. Moreover, many respondents in the 1956 survey only offered the name of an employer without giving a job title. This makes it difficult to precisely understand the pattern of these repatriates' job transition. Therefore, this research assumes that a repatriate took up skilled employment if he/she continued the same job or found a job in the same area of private sector as they had in August 1945.⁷³ For example, even if a welder moved from wartime steel manufacturing to postwar shipbuilding, this research assumes that they found skilled employment in manufacturing. In cases where the respondent did not give information on their position, if he/she moved from wartime steel manufacturing to postwar shipbuilding for example, this research still assumes that the person found skilled employment in postwar Japan.

Skilled employment can be divided into three categories: a) jobs in heavy and light industries, such as engineers, technicians, and other blue-collar workers, b) jobs in the tertiary sector, and c) white-collar jobs both in industry and the tertiary sector, including managers and office clerks. Aside from the 10 individuals who were employed by their wartime companies, 157 people in the database seemed to have found skilled employment. Among this group, 66 individuals appear to have continued to use their technical skills in industries, 63 were in retail and services, and 28 were white-collar workers, both during and after the war. Table 6 shows the individuals in the database who returned to their wartime employers or found skilled jobs, as well as examples of their job titles and employers.

⁷² All these three companies (except Morimoto Corporation) were still in business as of 2018.

⁷³ In this research, the term 'industries' is used interchangeably with 'the secondary sector'. They include mining, construction and manufacturing.

Table 6: The number of repatriates who returned to their wartime companies or found other skilled employment (from the database. The sample size is 621)

	Number of individuals	Examples of job titles	Examples of postwar employers (numbers in parentheses show the number of individuals in the database employed by a company, if more than one)
People who returned to wartime employers	10	Electrical engineer, mechanic, white-collar workers	Nihon Cement Corporation (3), Mitsubishi Cement, Mitsubishi Shipbuilding, Morimoto Corporation, Taisei Corporation, Kure Grinding Wheel (Kure Toishi), Daiichi Bank and Dōwa Fire & Marine Insurance
People with technical skills	66	Architects, carpenters, plasterers, mechanics, welders, electrical engineers, factory workers	Mitsubishi Shipbuilding (5), Nichia Seikō (3), Nihon Densetsu (2), Taihō Kensetsu (2), Hitachi shipbuilding, Tōyō Kōgyō (Mazda) and numerous small and medium size enterprises (SMEs)
People in the tertiary sector	63	Sales staff or independent merchants	Numerous SMEs (no major firms are included in the database)
White-collar workers in industries and tertiary sector	28	Office clerks, accountants	Dentsū, ⁷⁴ Hitachi Shipbuilding, Mitsubishi Shipbuilding, Nihon Tsūun, ⁷⁵ Nisshin Fire & Marine Insurance Co., and various SMEs
Total	167		

Both during the war and the post-war period, the majority of people in industry were employees, except for a small number of self-employed people who worked as carpenters, plasterers and electricians, or small business owners who ran craft

⁷⁴ Dentsū is an influential advertising agency in postwar Japan, and the company recruited a large group of repatriates. See *Dentsū* (Tahara, 1984).

⁷⁵ Nihon Tsūun was a semi-public firm incorporated under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport in 1937 by the Nihon Tsūun Corporation Law (Nihon Tsūun Kabushikigaisha Hō). It became a private company in 1950.

shops or small factories producing goods such as food items, small-scale wooden ships, ropes, and wooden clogs. Among the individuals working in industry in August 1945, only 15.1 per cent in the sample were self-employed. By 1956, this figure had increased to 22.9 per cent.⁷⁶ The higher percentage in manufacturing in postwar Hiroshima may reflect the fact that some repatriates faced difficulties in finding postwar employment, causing many to decide to start their own business. However, for the majority who possessed technical skills, seeking employment at major business establishments or small and medium enterprises (SMEs) was perhaps the most natural option for earning better wages, because heavy industries and mechanised manufacturing had become increasingly dominant and more profitable.

When seeking employment at business establishments, white-collar workers and those with technical skills flexibly moved to other businesses, or to other sectors. For instance, many moved between the manufacturing, construction, mining, transport, and communication sectors. By moving to other sectors, some people managed to secure employment with major corporations such as Tōyō Kōgyō (Mazda), Mitsubishi, and Hitachi, which were likely to have been viewed as popular destinations for repatriates in postwar Hiroshima. For instance, we find that several repatriates in the sample from the SMR who had technical skills found employment at Mitsubishi Shipbuilding, Hitachi Shipbuilding, and small manufacturing companies. One employee who had worked for a construction company, Sakakidani gumi, in wartime Manchuria was employed by the Chūgoku Electric Company after repatriation.

Table 6 shows that some companies in heavy industry employed groups of skilled repatriates. For example, Mitsubishi Shipbuilding hired five repatriates in the sample. The wartime employers of these five repatriates had been the SMR (Harbin Railway Factory), Nippon Steel in Korea, a manufacturing company in

⁷⁶ In the database, out of 139 individuals who were employed in heavy and light industries in August 1945, only 21 were self-employed. In 1956, out of 131 individuals in industry in Hiroshima prefecture, 30 were self-employed.

Manchuria (details unknown, but this repatriate was a welder), a steel trading firm in Manchuria, and the Manchuria Telecommunications Company. Similarly, Nichia Seikō in post-war Hiroshima employed three repatriates (this company became part of Nisshin Steel in 1959), and Nihon Densetsu (a railway construction company which was established under the Ministry of Railways in 1942) employed two repatriates. It is not possible to fully understand the ways in which the skills of these repatriates were used by their post-war employers, but this may indicate that some Japanese companies saw the group of skilled repatriates as a resource pool and were willing to utilise their skills. From the repatriates' point of view, it seems likely that their skills, familiarity with certain businesses, and networks might have been helpful in finding postwar employment.⁷⁷

Among those who made the post-war transition by using their existing skills, 63 individuals were in retail and services (see Table 6). This sector was dominated by self-employed merchants, both during wartime and the postwar period. 60.3 per cent of the sample (38 individuals) were self-employed merchants at the end of the war, and the figure increased to 79.4 per cent (50 individuals) in 1956, because some former corporate employees in wartime retail and service sectors started their own businesses in postwar Hiroshima. Among this group, 36 were self-employed merchants, both at the end of the war and in 1956. Close to half (17 individuals) established the same businesses they had had during the war, which included grocery shops, fishmongers, a watch shop, a pharmacy, a barber shop, and restaurants. Another 66 per cent started different types of businesses after repatriation. Examples included a kimono merchant who became a hotel owner, a grocery shop owner who appears to have become a contract-based cook, and a cleaning shop owner who became a fishmonger. As entry barriers to small businesses in the retail and service sector are usually low, it seems likely that for

⁷⁷ For example, in the databases I have compiled based on information obtained from the 1956 national survey forms, 14 individuals out of a randomly selected sample of 640 in Kanagawa prefecture were working at Nihon Kōkan. Similarly, 12 individuals among a sample of 500 in Ibaraki prefecture were working at the mining company Nihon Kōgyō. In both cases, approximately half had been working for the South Manchuria Railway Company or the Manchuria Steel Company at the end of the war. In Takatsuki city in Osaka, 10 individuals out of the total number of 325 repatriates who participated in the 1956 survey in the city were working for Yuasa Battery in 1956.

wartime small business owners in the tertiary sector, setting up the same types of businesses, or new ones, may have been the most accessible option. Of the 50 post-war small retail and service business owners in the database, 24 individuals (48 per cent) had moved from other prefectures or municipalities in the prefecture to the five largest cities in the prefecture (Hiroshima, Kure, Onomichi, Fukuyama and Mihara). Individuals in this group may have had weaker family connections in their hometowns, possibly due to longer overseas experiences.⁷⁸ Alternatively, this may indicate that, although entry barriers in retail and services were low, the location of a new business was carefully chosen. In any case, by moving to or staying in cities, these repatriates tried to capture business opportunities in flourishing urban economies and to establish themselves in the new environment.

In the database, 28 of the 621 respondents were working as white-collar workers both in 1945 and 1956. Many were office clerks or corporate managers who were working in areas such as accounting and human resources. Similarly, when seeking employment at business establishments, some white-collar workers flexibly moved to other sectors. For instance, we find one wartime coalmine office clerk moving to a chemical manufacturing company, and an office clerk of Manchuria Steel Manufacturing moving to a postwar confectionery company. Other examples include transitions from the North China Cement Company to Hitachi Shipbuilding, from the Central China Telecommunications Company to Mitsubishi Shipbuilding, as well as from the South Manchuria Railway to Nihon Tsūun and the influential advertising agency Dentsū (for a list of these companies, see Footnotes 70 & 71). These transitions seemingly demonstrate a strong continuity between the major wartime sectors and major postwar business establishments. However, when some of the repatriates were interviewed, some said it was difficult for white-collar workers to find satisfactory employment after the repatriation. For example, the son of one SMR repatriate described his father's

⁷⁸ The average years of overseas residence for repatriates who were in retail and services in postwar Hiroshima was 15.2 years, while the figure for all repatriates was 14.4 years. It is difficult to confirm that people in wartime retail and services stayed longer in Japan's former territories, and had weaker connections with communities in their hometowns, but at least for some people, this might have been true.

struggle in postwar Japan. His father had graduated from Tokyo University and was a manager (a section chief called *sanji*) at the Bujun Mine in August 1945. After being repatriated, he found it difficult to find a stable job. After several of his postwar employers went bankrupt, he finally managed to land a position at Komatsu. According to the son, a family friend used to say to his father, 'Your employer always quickly goes out of business. It's such a pity'.⁷⁹

Repatriates also sometimes established businesses together, usually in construction or retail and services. For example, former employees of the South Manchuria Railway started various companies specialising in railway electric engineering, construction, and trading. In 1947, the number of these new companies established by SMR repatriates was recorded as 125.⁸⁰ For the sake of their businesses, repatriates continued their wartime connections with their former colleagues at Japan National Railways or in government offices. These connections often helped their start-ups win public works contracts by providing them with important information quickly, or by helping them to utilise their personal networks. Many companies were short-lived, but some of them became major businesses. For example, Shinsei Dengyō Corporation was founded in Tokyo in 1947 by around a dozen South Manchuria Railway Company repatriate engineers. The company specialised in railway electric engineering and became very successful. The company had a branch in Hiroshima city, and, according to a document prepared by the postwar organisation of South Manchuria Railway, at least nine repatriates were still working for the company in 1963.⁸¹ In addition, the construction company Taihō Kensetsu was established by those who had returned from the Manchuria Electric Company and South Manchuria Railway Company. There were two repatriates in the sample who were employed by this company in 1956.

⁷⁹ Interview with the daughter of a South Manchuria Railway repatriate on 12 October 2012. Her name is not included in this essay because she wishes to be anonymous.

⁸⁰ Mantetsukai, *Zaidan Hōjin Mantetsukai 60 Nen No Ayumi* (Tokyo: Mantetsukai, 2006), 32.

⁸¹ Hirono Club, "Hirono Club Meibo," (Tokyo: Hirono Club, 1968). Hirai Fumiko, *Hirai Tamaki* (Tokyo: Rokusōseisha, 1989), 8.

Individuals who entered new sectors

About 23.7 per cent of repatriates (146 individuals) in the Hiroshima database found new jobs in sectors in which they had no previous experience. Using the 1956 national survey responses in Hiroshima, it is possible to divide the people who entered new sectors into four categories based on the approximate significance of entry barriers:

- Level 1: Manual labourers and peddlers
- Level 2: Semi-skilled workers in industry, office clerks and small business owners in retail and services
- Level 3: People who found employment using skills which they had not used for their jobs during the wartime, and also small business owners possessing some capital.
- Level 4: people who obtained government licenses to start a new career, or those employed by major companies, which might have required significant efforts or useful connections.

Analysis of this group and the different levels are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Categories of employment for those entering new sectors (from the database. The sample size is 621).

	Occupation categories	As percentage of 146 individuals entering new sectors	Average age (years)	Percentage who returned after December 1946
Level 1	Day labourers, peddlers, unskilled labourers	10	37.8	25.9 %
Level 2	Small business owners in retail and services	55	36.6	14.0 %
	White-collar workers in SMEs	32		
	Semi-skilled workers in industry	19		
Level 3	People who used previously non-job-related skills	7	39.6	10.5 %
	Small business owners who established businesses which required some capital	12		
Level 4	White-collar workers at major companies	9	34.4	23.8 %
	Government licenses (tax accountants)	2		
	Total	100 %	Repatriates' average age in Hiroshima prefecture = 36.9	Percentage for all repatriates in prefecture = 19 %

Individuals in Level 1 were those who obtained employment with minimum skills and capital, including day labourers and peddlers, and unskilled employees, including a security guard, a handy man, a warehouse attendant, and packing service staff at major firms or SMEs. Level 2 consisted of the largest number of people. They found occupations to which entry barriers were usually low but required more effort than those in Level 1. This category included small business owners in retail and services, white-collar workers (mostly office clerks or sales representatives) in SMEs and semi-skilled workers in manufacturing. Level 3 consisted of small business owners who might have needed some capital, or individuals who used skills which had not been used in their professions during the war. Examples of this group include a wartime prison guard who became a carpenter, a wartime coalmining technician who became a furniture maker, a wartime clerk at the North China Railway who became a textile worker, a wartime farmer who became a painter, and a wartime diplomat who became a bamboo flute teacher.

Level 4 comprised occupations which were difficult to enter and required significant effort or access to useful connections. This group included those who needed to obtain public licenses (such as certified tax accountants and a licensed acupuncturist) and those employed by major companies such as Tōyō Kōgyō (Mazda), Taisho Insurance Company, Hiroshima Bank, Chugoku Electric Company, and Hiroshima Electric Railway Company, to name a few. Most employees of major companies included in the survey did not offer specific job information, and only responded that they were ‘employees’ (*kaishain*). They are included in Level 4, however, because in the Japanese corporate system, career-focused positions and office clerks were not clearly distinguished, and any *kaishain* in the database could be in a career track position unless they specifically identified themselves as blue-collar workers. Until the mid-1960s, management positions in large Japanese companies could only be occupied by white-collar workers (*shokuin*), and blue-collar workers (*kōin*) were limited to lower positions

with limited prospects for promotion.⁸² Examples of transitions in the Level 4 group include a chemical technician and a police officer, both of whom became bank clerks, a South Manchuria Railway station staff member who became an employee of the major real estate company Shokusan Jūtaku, and an individual who moved from the fishery sector to Chiyoda Insurance Company. It is not clear whether these repatriates were satisfied with their transitions, but it seems that they found more secure employment after repatriation. The Appendix includes more detailed analyses of the postwar economic experiences of repatriates who entered new sectors, taking into account their age, year of repatriation, and postwar mobility, all of which might have affected their postwar employment opportunities. The breakdown of the transition patterns of repatriates in postwar Japan discussed in the above sections are summarised in Table 8.

Table 8: Repatriates' post-war transitions (in the database)

Postwar transition patterns	Number in sample	% of total sample
Agriculture	60	9.7%
Public or semi-public sectors	161	25.9%
Skilled employment	167	26.9%
New sectors	146	23.5%
Unemployed /out of labour force and participants of public works projects (unemployment policies)	87	14.0%
Total	621	100.0%

As Table 8 shows, it should be noted that 87 individuals reported in the 1956 survey that they were not working, or were participating in public works projects, which were implemented as part of unemployment policy. Of these 87 individuals, 22 were unemployed even though they were of working age, 17 individuals were female repatriates⁸³ who may have become housewives, and 33 individuals were

⁸² Chiaki Nagumo and Osamu Umezaki, "Shokuin・Kōin Mibunsa No Teppai Ni Itaru Kōshō Katei," *KEO Discussion Paper No.104* (2006): 1-4. <https://www.sanken.keio.ac.jp/publication/KEO-dp/104/DP104.pdf>. Accessed on 19 January 2019.

⁸³ Out of the 621 Hiroshima repatriate sample, 49 individuals were female household heads. One third had been young working women who were office clerks, shop assistants, typists, telephone

already aged 60 or older. Moreover, 15 individuals were participating in public works projects (*shitsugyō taisaku jigyō*) implemented to reduce unemployment. Thus, we can calculate the unemployment rate of the repatriates in this Hiroshima database to be approximately 3.9 per cent.⁸⁴ If we simply compare this figure with the official national unemployment rate of 1.4 per cent in 1955, the employment rate for these repatriates seems to be significantly higher. However, it is not possible to know the circumstances under which these repatriates ended up being unemployed or became day labourers in public works projects. Wartime job experiences appear unable to explain why some people became unemployed or were working as day labourers in these public works projects. For example, this group included wartime employees of influential public corporations such as the South Manchuria Railway, the Manchuria Steel Company, the North China Railway, and the Sakhalin Railway. Others included wartime teachers and former public servants and police officers who had returned from Dalian and Korea. Their average age in 1945 was 38.5 years old in August 1945, which shows that they were only one year older than the average age of Hiroshima repatriates (37.6 years old). Some of these individuals may have been disabled, especially if they had been drafted in during the latter stage of the war, while others might have found it difficult to adapt to postwar Japan. As information associated with unemployed repatriates is limited and the number of unemployed in the database is small, it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions from these figures, but they may indicate that some repatriates struggled during the transition.

Conclusion

The findings of this research contrast with prevailing notions that repatriates were totally neglected by the Japanese government and society and suffered unreasonably in postwar Japan. Instead, this research indicates that in Hiroshima prefecture, repatriates' postwar job placement was supported by the following

operators, teachers and nurses in 1945, and two-thirds were self-employed women, including shop or small hotel owners and those in agriculture.

⁸⁴ The unemployment rate was calculated by dividing the number of unemployed individuals (22) by the number of individuals in the labour force (571 = 621 - 50 retired and female individuals).

factors: family farming or reclamation (9.7 per cent), government employment policies such as hiring at government offices and the transfer of foreign medical and educational licenses (25.9 per cent), and thirdly repatriates using their transferable skills to find work in the private sector (26.9 per cent). The remaining 38 per cent had to find employment in new sectors, and some ended up being day labourers or unemployed.⁸⁵ Yet, even in the last group, it seems more than half managed to set up their own businesses or find alternative employment. Of course, whether Hiroshima prefecture is representative of early post-war Japan should be carefully examined, but my research on repatriates in other prefectures (Ibaraki, Osaka, and Kanagawa) shows a similar trend: the majority of repatriates found the means to make a living in agriculture, the public or the semi-public sectors, found skilled employment, or entered new sectors as manual labourers, semi-skilled workers or small business owners in the tertiary sector.

Hiroshima prefecture's industrial production began growing more rapidly from 1951 partly stimulated by American military procurement orders during the Korean War. The 1940 production levels had been restored in Hiroshima prefecture by 1951, at almost the same time as in other prefectures.⁸⁶ The wage level in Hiroshima city was 16.3 per cent higher than that in rural areas of the prefecture, and this attracted workers from agricultural villages which had once absorbed excess population. As Japan's economic recovery gained momentum, repatriates were gradually absorbed into the postwar economy and many of their stories were forgotten. All that remained was a handful of repatriates' stories, predominantly from those who had suffered most during repatriation, such as the immigrant farmers who had returned from Manchuria.

⁸⁵ The breakdown of 14 per cent of 'day labourers and no employment' is day labourers (2.7 per cent), and not in labour force (7.9 per cent, which includes people older than 60 years in 1956, and women, who often did not work after marriage) and unemployed (3.7 per cent).

⁸⁶ Hiroshima City Government, *Hiroshima Shinshi Keizaihen*, 312-13.

Appendix

Table A1: Postwar occupational transitions of civilian repatriates. (Figures are represented in the form of the actual number in the sample, out of the total number of repatriates (621) in the database).

		1956							
		Agri- culture	Mining, construction, manufacturing	Public	Utilities, communication, transport	Tertiary	Postwar day labourers or unemployed	Out of labour force	Wartime total
August 1945	Agriculture	15	7	3	1	13	7	2	48 (7.7%)
	Mining, construction, manufacturing	9	59	15	5	32	9	10	139 (22.4%)
	Public sector	9	9	74	4	26	6	6	134 (21.5%)
	Utilities, communication, transport	13	30	20	27	20	6	9	125 (20.1%)
	Tertiary sector	14	26	12	0	91	11	21	175 (28%)
	Total	60 (9.7%)	131 (21.1%)	124 (20%)	37 (6.3%)	182 (29%)	39 (6.3%)	48 (7.7%)	621 (100%)

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