

COLONIAL DIASPORA: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION of WANSEI

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Abstract

When the Great Japan Empire surrendered in 1945, the destiny of a group of people changed. The Taiwan-born Japanese during the colonial period, who were termed as Wansei, as well as their families, were repatriated to Japan. Due to the social stigma imposed on those who returned to Japan after withdrawal, most of them have chosen to hide their identity, and their stories were much forgotten in Japan for decades. In recent years, people who care about this history, began to document and write about their affections and nostalgia. In this paper, the author discusses the process through which Japanese immigration policy during the wartime brought about the construction of the social category of Wansei and the imposition of it on this group of people. In addition, this paper analyzes Wansei's distinct situations and experiences after their arrival in Japan. The author employs secondary data including Japanese government documents and existing literary and audio-visual publications, some of which were produced by Wansei themselves or their offspring. This research is significant as it contributes to scholarly discussion on issues such as postcolonial discourse and diasporic identity by elaborating the diverse experiences and emotions of Wansei after repatriation.

Keywords: Wansei, social categorization, Japanese immigrants, diasporic identity