

Images of Japanese labourers in Queensland: 1889 - 1893.

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This article discusses sugarcane plantations in Queensland and images of the Japanese indentured labourers who worked them from 1889 to the early 1890s.

Stories of Japanese on Queensland's sugarcane plantations in the late 19th century are barely available to the Japanese public these days. However, images of the times survive in the minds of some modern Australians as an early Japanese invasion of Queensland or an ominous precursor to the Pacific War. Some writers conclude that the Japanese government had a long-standing ambition to send a large number of its people to Australia, and still does. This paper scrutinizes whether such images of an early "Japanese invasion" of Queensland are legitimate.

Chapter One reviews the scheme under which Japanese workers were indentured to work on sugarcane plantations in Queensland in 1889, and the negative responses expressed in the Colony, as seen in articles from periodicals such as the *Brisbane Courier* and the *Boomerang*. Chapter Two examines the appointment of Enomoto Takeaki as Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs in May 1891 and his personal influences on migration policy during his term in office. Chapter Three discusses the importation of labourers to Queensland sugarcane plantations in late 1892 and considers possible reasons for the decline in opposition to them in the Colony. Chapter Four considers Queensland parliamentary debates regarding Japanese labourers in 1893 and analyses how positive and negative images of Japan and the Japanese were utilized to support or criticise Queensland's immigration policies.