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Foreigners in Japan: The 2020 Olympics as a Conduit for Better Policies

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Foreigners in Japan: The 2020 Olympics as a Conduit for Better Policies

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1. Introduction

Japan has long been averse to foreigners entering the country and integrating into Japanese society. This is evident throughout its history, when the only times they interacted with foreigners was when they traded with them. Given that isolationist policy was forcibly terminated by Commodore Matthew Perry in the year 1852, it wasn't of their own volition. (J.W. Hall, Japan, p.207) Despite the attitudes and adversity encountered in Japan, more and more foreigners have been residing within its borders, and their numbers continue to rise. According to foreign nationals data from the website e-Stat, as of June 1st, 2016, the number of foreign

nationals living in Japan is 2,247,967 out of a total population of 126,118,235. Unskilled workers usually herald from Japan's neighbors in Asia, and the numbers clearly reflect Japan's need for them. The highest immigrant populations are: Chinese at 830,385 people, South Koreans at 510,669, and 251,932 Filipinos. There are still thousands who come in illegally, to be exploited for cheap labor. As such, it isn't possible to get the entire picture of foreign national labor in Japan.

This paper analyzes the majority of incoming working migrants in Japan, and contrast that with the demographics the current policies are aimed at. After that, the reason "unskilled" workers are necessary for the future of the country will be discussed. Finally, this paper will consider whether the 2020 Tokyo Olympics could become a potential conduit for better migrant/immigration policies as a result of global pressure. Japan's main immigration policies since the end of World War II and the potential motives behind their proposals will also be examined. The number of immigration/migrant policies put in place during the past Olympics Japan hosted will then be compared to those coinciding with the 2020 Olympics. This paper hopes to determine whether or not The Olympics will provide the policy push Japan needs to admit more foreign workers.

2. Terminology

First, the meaning of several key terms which will be used must be declared. These terms are: immigration policy, migrant policy, unskilled and skilled workers. Immigration policy has to do with the traversing of people across the borders of a country, usually to live or work there for short, long, or indefinite periods of time. (US Legal) Migrant policies, however, deal with the rights of those workers, students, and their families who make it through the immigration process. (US Legal) These policies deal with rights, such as: healthcare, voting, welfare, etc.

Throughout this paper, the definition of “unskilled worker”, as a member of the “workforce associated with a limited skill set or minimal economic value for the work performed. Unskilled labor is generally categorized by lower educational attainment, such as a high school diploma, GED, or lack thereof, and typically results in smaller wages”. (Staff) Conversely, “skilled labor” is the “specialized part of the labor force with advanced education. Examples of skilled labor include physicians, plumbers, attorneys, engineers, scientists, builders, architects and professors”. (Staff)

3. Background

Throughout its long history, Japan has been involved in several wars with its neighboring countries. (Smith) This has set up a subconscious reaction to other Asians that is quite apparent. This is most likely due in some form by both an undercurrent of racism left over from times of war, in-grained in some people, and the Japanese identity. (Nakane 30-78) During the Meiji Period, Japan had a sentiment known as “Datsu-A Nyū-O”, which can be translated as “Leaving Asia” or “De-Asianization”. (Du)

We do not have time to wait for the enlightenment of our neighbors so that we can work together toward the development of Asia. It is better for us to leave the ranks of Asian nations and cast our lot with civilized nations of the West. (Du)

From the translated excerpt of the editorial, the intention is cast in the favor of the west. At the time, Japan can be viewed as seeing itself as superior to its surrounding neighbors, wishing to align itself more with the West. (Du) During Japan’s colonization of Korea, Taiwan, and parts of China, Japanese promoted The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Historians have since seen its conceptualization as Japan seeing itself as superior to its Asian neighbors. (Dower) These could both be contributing factors in Japan’s current outlook on other eastern countries.

Furthermore, ethnicity and nationality are not distinguished under Japanese law. Most countries separate racial background from one's nationality, but that is not the case in Japan. (Nakane 30-78) This lack of separation sets a standard which makes it seem impossible for foreigners to integrate, discouraging immigration as a result. (Moshavi) One of several factors impacting Japan's modern-yet-largely-unchanged-policies, is the homogeneous nature of national identity. (Nakane 30-78)

When a nation's foreign population falls at 1.7% of its population, a large focus on their needs is not necessarily taken. (Harlan) This is especially true in the case of Japan, whose cultural identity is cited as a main reason for its closed-door immigration policies. (Nakane 30-78) The United States is largely built upon individualistic ideals, that values open debate and discourse. Japan, however, is a group-oriented society, placing the efficiency of the overall machine over any thoughts pertaining to the well-being of any one particular cog. Both foreigners and Japanese people questioned about the possibility of more foreigners entering the country brought up concerns about the rigid expectations of assimilation. (Harlan) In a study by Harlan, a majority of the Japanese questioned stated that assimilation on the foreigner's part is to be expected. The foreigners questioned tended to speak about it with a sense of dread; feeling the weight of the staggering expectations weighing down upon their backs, and if they cannot match up to the expectation, they fear deportation. (Harlan) In addition to the above factors, locals are sometimes encouraged to look out for any "suspicious" foreigners by police. (Moshavi) Many Japanese citizens still fear foreigners committing crimes, but this fear is unfounded as crime has decreased in the past few years, despite an increase in the foreign population. (Moshavi) A survey in 2017 given to foreign residents showed that, within the past five years, nearly a quarter of those who responded had been denied jobs and approximately 40% seeking housing had their

applications denied. Almost 95% of those denied jobs and 90% denied housing were quoted as having “conversational, professional or fluent” levels of Japanese, so this suggests that the grounds for their denial had been due to their ethnicities. (“Foreigners in Japan Face Significant Levels of Discrimination, Survey Shows”)

4. Societal Attitudes

Japan’s population numbers are projected to decrease to 100 million by 2055, a significant decrease from its 2017 population of 127 million. Based on current projections, Japan is heading toward a future in which there will be three or fewer workers to support every two retirees. It is expected that Japan will reach this point by the year 2060. (Harlan) The aging and decline of people of optimal working age would also cause more problems to social security systems such as pensions and medical care. (Akashi 175-196)

Japanese government officials are aware of the shrinking birth rate, and the loss of jobs which comes along with that. (Harlan)

The fundamental problem of the Japanese economy is that the potential growth rate is low ... To raise that, big structural reforms including ... immigration policy are necessary. (Reuters)

While there are many people aware of the problem and seeking a solution, there seem to be just as many against changes to immigration policies. Takaaki Mitsuhashi, an economic analyst who openly opposes immigration, said that Japan will be fine only if foreigners do not attempt to infiltrate the labor market. "If foreigners came in to make up for the shortage of workers, there would be less need to increase productivity and our economic growth would be lost". (Reuters).

People like Mr. Mitsuhashi see foreign workers not as a conduit through which his home country’s economy can grow, but rather a detriment. He believes that a lack of essential

manpower can be counterbalanced by a smaller number of hard-working Japanese. A poll from Asahi Shinbun posed the question of whether or not residents would be in agreement with more foreigners coming in to “maintain economic vitality”. Sixty-five percent of those questioned were against the idea, while twenty-six percent approved. (Harlan)

Japanese citizens fearing an influx of foreign workers negatively impacting their economy is unfounded. If we are to look at the effects of immigration on countries with a higher immigrant-to-native ratio, like The UK, we see that as of 2015, neither negative nor positive impacts to their economy could be ascertained. (“Election 2015 Briefing – Fiscal Impacts of Migration to the UK – Migration Observatory”) As of 2011, the UK had 12.7% of its population marked as “immigrants”, nearly six times the size of Japan’s, for reference. (“Migration in Great Britain: Census Factsheet – Migration Observatory”)

The rapidly-increasing aging population of Japan needs proper care, which means nurses and medical services are necessary. Despite the shortage of native Japanese nurses, the policies in place for foreign nurses remain restrictive. For nursing students to become nurses, they must all pass a certification test. Of ethnically Japanese nurses, ninety percent of them pass. In the year 2010, three out of two-hundred-fifty-four immigrant trainee nurses passed it. Looking at the year before that, zero out of eighty-two managed to pass. The test comes down to a high level of proficiency in the Japanese language, and a window of time too short for the trainees to learn adequately during. This speaks more about the difficulty of memorizing kanji and the Japanese language than it does with actual racism, but it is still something keeping valuable nurses out of Japan, even if their Japanese is sufficient enough for conversing with patients in order to ascertain their ailments. (Harlan)

One Filipino nurse from Harlan’s article says that she has been in Japan for eleven

months. On arrival, she could not speak any Japanese, but can now speak at a conversational level. She is terrified of being sent home for her lack of fluency, but she remains passionate about giving the best care that she can to her patients. (Harlan) Due to the rigid rules for the certification test, nurses like her will continue to be sent away from a country that needs them.

Recent policy changes could be seen as opening the door to foreign labor, but upon closer inspection, this is doubtful. When the intent of each policy is considered, it does not seem to be out of concern for immigrants. In order to better understand Japan's proposed policies and the circumstances that led to them gaining enough attention to be ratified, we need to take a look at Japan's immigration and immigration policy history.

5. Historical Overview of Policy

Japan's seclusion period began in the year 1639 and lasted until 1853. There was either very little immigration during this period, or very little documentation on it. (Kondo 155-168) After the doors were opened, both emigration and colonial immigration began. Approximately 777,000 Japanese nationals left to work in Latin America and Hawaii. Immigrants to Japan during the same period were mostly Taiwanese, Chinese and Koreans, due to the colonization of either all or some parts of those countries. (Kondo 155-169) Koreans, in particular, entered Japan, mostly as conscripted workers, and by the year 1945, their numbers had reached around two million. After Japan's defeat in WWII, immigration was strictly regulated from 1945 until 1951. Combined with losing their colonies, this caused the foreign national population to shrink from 1.5 million to 600,000. (Kondo 155-169) Those who remained were just over 150,000, comprised of mostly Koreans, with a smaller number of Chinese and Taiwanese. ("Japanese Immigration Policies: Responding to Conflicting Pressures") After their countries were freed from colonial rule, those still in Japan lost their citizenship, and consequently, their rights as

citizens. They could, however, gain that citizenship back if they took on Japanese names. (Kondo 155-169)

Japan's post-war Constitution forms the basis of immigration policy today. The main immigration policy is The Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act of 1951. The following year, it was renamed the Immigration Control Act, which was exactly what it was designed to do: control. The intention shines through with its inclusion of an 'exclusion, discrimination and assimilation policy'. (Kondo 2002, p. 418) Japan largely continued to deal with immigration in much the same way until the 1981 amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Act. This happened in connection to the ratification of the International Covenant on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights in 1979, which improved the quality of living of foreign migrants. There were two contributing forces for the new policies and amendments; the first being that G7 summit member states had put forth the suggestion for the better treatment of Indochinese refugees. The cause of this concern, however, can also be said to be Japan's desire to be viewed more positively on a global scale, as it is often under international scrutiny for its immigrant treatment. (Kondo 155-169)

The next major policy change happened in 1985: the Nationality Act was amended, and the requirement to take on a Japanese name was abolished. (Kondo 155-169) Another important facet to this amendment was that it gave descendants of a Japanese bloodline, or, Nikkeijin, a way to enter the labor market with unrestricted access to work. (Kondo 155-169) Foreigners became attracted to Japan and began to immigrate there in large numbers due to their then-thriving economy, and this policy was created in response to that. (Milly 60-81) In the 1980s, discussions about relaxing Japan's immigration policy began. In the end, the LDP decided to keep a closed-door policy to immigration, but the two policies proposed by the Minister of

Labor, which came from that debate: i.e. “specialized and technical labor will be actively admitted” and that “admission of so-called ‘simple labor’, that is, unskilled labor, will be cautiously examined”. (Kondo 155-169) This ideology of actively accepting skilled labor while scrutinizing unskilled persists in current policies.

In 1989, many businesses utilizing manual labor turned to refugees as their main work force, even though it was not legal to do so. The strong yen encouraged companies to cut down on costs by hiring foreign workers. The companies making use of refugee labor were largely shipping companies, the fishing industry, and the construction industry. As the main source of pressure to The Liberal Democratic Party of Japan was businesses, the debate continued on between the members of the LDP. (Milly 60-81) The LDP, still adamantly against low-skilled workers coming in without heavy regulation, searched for a way to tackle the influx of unskilled foreign migrants. They eventually settled on the Trainee Program in 1993, but it ended up having no monitoring body to prevent companies taking advantage of the workers, unlike its originally-proposed version. Unfortunately, groups concerned with the well-being of the immigrant workers had no hand in the discussions. (Milly 60-81) The discussion about whether or not to allow a greater amount of foreign labor migration was not the only thing halted until the late 2000s; the discussion of migrant policies meant to support foreign migrants, their families, or possible permanent settlers was as well. (Milly 60-81) A policy was passed in 2009 by the Japanese government, which attempted to get the unemployed Nikkeijin out of Japan. This was done by offering both they and their families money and a safe passage home. (Sekiguchi) Taking advantage of this offer would result in them being banned from returning to the country, which put Japan under heavy criticism. The ban was lifted after international condemnation in 2013. (Sekiguchi)

Other immigration related policies ratified during the same period were “Guidelines about Permanent Residence” in 2006, while 2007 saw the Economic Partnership Agreement (ERA) ratified. (Akashi 175-196) Those policies dealt with the acceptance of foreign care workers and setting up a system for nurses from The Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia to train in Japan. The EPA was foreign-policy based, and came about because the Ministry of Health has “refused to acknowledge their recruitment as a solution to labor shortages in the health sector”. Their stance is that if foreign labor must be utilized, to only do so only under “very strict conditions”. (Akashi 175-196)

In 2010, Japan became the first Asian country to accept refugees from third-world countries with the Fourth Immigration Control Master Plan. The third-country refugee program’s purpose was most likely to cut down on the criticism Japan receives about their position towards refugees. (Akashi 175-196) While Japan may be the first Asian country to allow for third-country refugees to be admitted, they only actually allow a maximum of thirty per year, usually only ever meeting half of that proposed quota. The Points-based System for Highly Skilled Professionals came about in 2012. The points system had been supported by businesses from its inception ten years before its ratification, so there was little opposition. (Akashi 175-196)

Recent proposals for policy changes reflect how divided policy makers are, as most of the changes did not end up being ratified. Those who wish for change don’t make up a large enough number of people to ratify them. One proposal from the LDP during 2008 called for “10 million immigrants (ca. 10% of the total population)” and “large-scale structural reforms of the legal system”. (Akashi 175-196) Another during 2008 from the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry called for “making up the shrinking working-age population by increasing immigration”. Despite failures, the attitudes reflected in these proposals show that there are

people in government aware of the underlying problems. The “concept of Japanese-style immigration policy” proposal made in 2009 called for the “necessary transformation of Japan into an immigration country through bringing in foreign nationals in a large number”, and continued to suggest “educational measures to avoid frictions with host society”. (Akashi 175-196) A 2013 proposal from the Kansai Association of Corporate Executives called “Revitalizing Japan through the promotion of permanent foreign residents” emphasized “public supports targeted at settled migrants”, which is something that would greatly benefit Japan. (Akashi 175-196)

6. Contemporary Policy and Future Outlook

Now this paper will observe the recently-proposed policies put forth by Prime Minister Shinzō Abe. They consist of: a watchdog body for the Trainee Program, a longer visa allowance for construction trainees for the next few years, foreign agriculture workers for specific farm lands, more foreign nurses in a wider range of places of employment, a greater percentage of foreign students in universities, and a new Green Card system for skilled workers to be able to migrate to Japan more quickly. (Kyodo News, News, The Japan Times)

The Trainee Program, officially named The Technical Intern Training Program (“Japan International Training Cooperation Organization”), was first introduced in 1993 by the Japanese government as a way for foreign nationals from developing economies to work in Japan for six months, with a maximum period of three years if they renewed their visas. It was touted as a way for the interns to: “advance their careers” and contribute to their home countries after returning with their new skills, help to reform the quality of work practices from their new knowledge, and to strengthen the relationships between Japanese companies and overseas companies. (Japan International Training Cooperation Organization)

Despite the stated positive aims of the Trainee Program website, other countries have called it into question. There has never been an official body of watchdogs to monitor the fair or unfair treatment of interns. (Kyodo News) Thus, without proper monitoring, the program is open to abuse. It was likened to indentured servitude and even modern slavery in a Xinhua News Agency article about the mistreatment of Chinese interns in Japan. The policy has been called out as a cover-up for companies taking advantage of cheaper labor. There is no law stating that wages must be equal to those paid to ethnic Japanese in the same position, it is taken advantage of often. (Xinhua News Agency) Some of the interns go through a middle-man to enroll in the program, and often arrive on the shores of Japan with insurmountable debt before they begin the training program. Once there, they are often put under contract, so even if they dislike the treatment they receive from their bosses, they cannot change their place of employment. (Belanger et al. 31-53) As such, you can begin to get a clearer image of the sort of things that caused policy reform to occur: it was not out of worry for peoples' lives and how to make them better, but rather how to turn more of a profit.

An oversight body to help fight abuse of trainees was proposed before the program's ratification in 1993, but finally might be pushed through. The program would provide support to trainees, and employers found to be "engaged in irregularities" would be fined and in some cases, publicly named. Another addition would be the introduction of a consulting office with staff able to speak the language of any trainee having difficulties. The staff would even be able to protect the trainees if they should ever feel threatened. Employers shown to behave and treat their trainees well would be able to keep them in the country for an additional two years, making the maximum amount of time allowed five years. (Kyodo News)

As for the increase in foreign construction workers, Japan will allow foreign nationals

who are currently in the trainee program for construction work to continue working in Japan an additional three years. This allows construction trainees to stay in Japan for up to six years: an optimal time for working on the upcoming Olympic Games. Shinzo Abe was adamant about his intentions, stating it was not a change in immigration policy. (Sekiguchi) According to Sekiguchi, much like the agriculture industry, Japan's construction industry is rapidly aging, dropping 26% in number of employees since 1997. (Sekiguchi) An immigration official said, "The program is designed to prevent the setting down or roots by guaranteeing that they return to their countries by keeping their stays short". A labor union official named Masatoshi Taguchi was quoted as saying, "This addresses none of the structural problems in the industry that has led to the rapid decline in workers". (Sekiguchi) Japan once again states its intention of keeping unskilled workers as a temporary existence within the country.

Foreign workers will also be allowed to farm in special economic zones in Akita, Nagasaki, Aichi and Ibaraki prefectures, due to the number of aging farmers. (The Japan Times) It is only offered to skilled workers, with prerequisites of sufficient knowledge of Japanese and university-level knowledge of agriculture in their home country. (The Japan Times) A much-anticipated part of the new proposal is that foreign workers are expected to be paid the equivalent of Japanese people for the same job. (Kyodo News) It is, however, worth noting that it was "expected" to, and not put into definite terms. In the year 1950, 48% of people in Japan worked in agriculture, shrinking to 3% in 1992. (Smith) It continues to get even lower, so bringing in migrant workers was the only feasible solution. (Kyodo News)

Two proposed bills call for the expansion of work the trainees can undertake, while the other focuses on their training. (News) The expansion comes with concerns that medical care could deteriorate if the bar for understanding Japanese is lowered enough to allow more

immigrants to pass the exam. Another concern is that the new bills do not offer any sort of protection for the workers. The bill is estimated to “help Japan make up for an estimated lack of 380,000 care workers in 2025”. (News) When asked why the Japan Federation of Bar Associations did not set up a watchdog for the healthcare workers, they merely said that even if they had, the issue would not truly be resolved. (News)

The last policies proposed were for university students and skilled workers. (Landers and Koshino) The proposal pertaining to university students has a goal to “raise the proportion of foreign students in Japan who stay in the country to work after finishing their studies”, and is estimated to reach 50%, a twenty-percent increase from the current 30%. (Landers and Koshino) Concerning the policy for a faster permanent residency system, the LDP was then quoted as saying, “grave effects are emerging because Japanese people alone are insufficient in the work force...large increase in foreign workers is anticipated”, but this is still only targeted at skilled work. (Landers and Koshino) The proposal for the so-called “fastest permanent residency card” has not yet specified how fast it would end up being. (Landers and Koshino)

These proposals are strange coming from Abe, whose previous stance on dealing with the declining working population was to improve conditions for women through his “womenomics” program. The program was created to return them to the workplace after having children: a time when a majority of them stop working altogether. (“Why Japan's ‘Womenomics’ Needs a Booster Shot - The Asia Foundation”) His sentiments are not shared by the whole of Japan, and his own officials have given up on their original goal “of women occupying 30% of management positions by 2020”. Even if womenomics were to succeed, it would not completely solve Japan’s labor shortage. (Rafferty)

With the approaching Tokyo 2020 Olympics, Japan is under more global scrutiny than usual. When a country hosts the Olympics, all eyes are on them. Billions of dollars go towards extravagant stadiums and performances. For reference, the London Summer Olympics of 2012 ended up costing a total of US \$14,600,000,000 (“London 2012: UK public says £9bn Olympics worth it”). It is clear that the hosting country of the games puts a lot of effort, time, and money to make their country look as good as possible to others. Japan has hosted three games in the past: the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympics, the 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympics, the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics. Japan scheduled to host the summer games in 1940, but this was scrapped due to the outbreak of WWII. (Kazuyoshi Funaki, Sapporo 1972 Winter Olympics - results & video highlights, Tokyo 1964 Summer Olympics - results & video highlights) Japan spent approximately US \$2.2 billion in 2015 dollars hosting the 1998 Nagano Olympics. (Flyvbjerg, Stewart and Budzier 5-7)

Japan is already under heavy criticism for several of its policies, especially the Trainee Program and the annual refugee allowance. Previous Olympic Games largely did not coincide with any major policy changes, but the 1998 Games did occur five years after the Trainee Program. This is a similar amount of time before the Games that the current policies have been proposed but the reasoning for those policies did not seem to stem from outside pressure, as the watchdog system remained unimplemented. The LDP only wanted to regulate the migrant workers, as companies were already illegally bringing them in at the time, rather than create opportunities for them. Therefore, it is unlikely that the previous Games led to any real policy changes. Based on the policy changes around the 1998, the 2020 Olympics would not alone be enough to influence policy this significantly. It is more likely that the rising fear of population decline, together with womenomics failing, Japan’s desire for more skilled foreign work, and

global pressure due to the Olympics is the cause. Japan has made its intentions clear about their desire for more highly-skilled foreign workers, but in its recent (pre-2015) policies did not end up attracting very many skilled workers. It could be said that a majority of the LDP now agree that fair treatment of manual labor trainees would off-set some of the undesirability of living in Japan, and help it to gain the desired highly-skilled workers.

7. Conclusion

Japan's recent increase of both immigration and migrant policies is due to outside pressure. Regardless of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these policies, the evidence presented throughout this paper supports this conclusion. Shinzo Abe's drastic change in approach to the worker shortage reflects this, though he is quick to deny the policy for construction workers as a permanent change in policy. Recent policies seem progressive, but that speaks nothing of their effectiveness. The pre-2015 policies, like the Refugee Act and points-system, did not garner the results the government hoped. This begs the question of how effective the post-2015 policies will end up in the real world. Requiring someone to go university in order to be a farmer limits the number of potential immigrants, because they learned how to farm as they grew up on their family's farm. It is reasonable to some degree, however, as the government would not know whether or not an applicant was lying about their capabilities. The recent policies still seem largely aimed at skilled workers, as opposed to unskilled. The unskilled workers are still being treated as temporary visitors, while the skilled get to stay longer. The skilled laborers still have to go through a similar application processes, however, so they don't have an advantage in that regard. They have been shown in surveys to still experience discrimination based on their ethnicity. Japan is largely ignoring its labor shortages in manual labor. Trying to entice more highly-skilled foreigners into their country could do well for

improving the view of foreigners, reducing fear of a rising crime rate. It would not solve the source of the problem, namely a shrinking working population, and it would also offer a skewed view of foreigners.

Japan still has several hurdles to overcome before they can be seen as a globalized immigrant economy and a willing player on the world stage. Japanese citizens remain divided on the issue of permanent immigration to their country. The main reasons for this being: fear of foreigners committing crimes, historical racism, and homogeneous national/ethnic identity. First, the concept of ethnicity being equal to nationality should be done away with. This only perpetuates that Japan is only for those with Japanese blood. Adopting ‘jus soli’ or “right of soil” in Latin, over the current ‘jus sanguinis’: “right of blood”, would be a start. Secondly, the notion that a foreign presence in Japan is temporary is outdated: that number is rising even at Japan’s snail pace. Once they accept foreigners as a part of their country, without the condition they assimilate or remain isolated within their own groups, they can truly begin to move forward as a globalized superpower. It is impossible to stay a homogeneous society in this day and age, as they no longer are regardless of whether they wish to accept it or not. One need only look to the number of Koreans within their country to see that is true. Discrimination based on ethnicity, while illegal in public spaces, is still legal in private spaces, which allows businesses to deny foreigners business. This needs done away with as well. These backward thoughts become a barrier keeping Japanese society from integration, rather than conditional assimilation. The world must come together without forcing others to be alike. The push for foreigners to assimilate in their culture is a reflection of the wrong way to go about this. This could also help to improve the overarching sentiment of racism. The last thing they should do is focus on unskilled working migrants coming in, rather than highly-skilled. Right now they are focused on

highly-skilled, while unskilled is an afterthought. The manual labor jobs are what are mostly in short-supply, so their focus for them should increase. This paper was heavily hindered by the author's inability to read Japanese labor policies from the source, therefore, there could be other factors at play. Future studies could fix this by researching the source material in its original language.

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