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The Australian Embassy in Tokyo and Australia–Japan Relations

Kate Darian-Smith and David Lowe

On 24 January 2017, the Australian embassy in Tokyo hosted an informal afternoon tea for three former Japanese ambassadors to Australia. We were fortunate to be present as Ambassador Yoshio Okawara (1976–80), Ambassador Masaji Takahashi (1998–2001) and Ambassador Hideaki Ueda (2005–7) generously reflected on their time in Australia and their interactions with Australia’s leaders and ambassadorial representatives in Japan. These reminiscences were framed by broadbrush historical interpretations, situating the 1970s and early 1980s as crucial to the development of the Australia–Japan relationship, with Australia required to consider its regional relationship with Japan more seriously in the wake of Britain’s joining the European Community. The Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (known as the NARA Treaty, from ‘Nippon Australia Relations Agreement’) signed in 1976 was recalled as important in this process, although the bargaining over some of its terms was hard. The Japanese ambassadors also acknowledged the rich people-to-people interactions they experienced with Australians, both at official levels and in more vernacular terms. The deepening cultural ties between the two nations, such as the spread of ‘sister city’ agreements between municipal authorities, and exchanges of school students and tourists in both directions, were enthusiastically noted. The ambassadors also recalled key individuals who contributed to the bilateral relationship, such as

the transformative efforts of Japanese-speaking Ashton Calvert during the 1990s and early 2000s, first as Australia's ambassador in Tokyo and then as secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; and key moments when the social and diplomatic worlds merged to good effect, such as the friendly Australia–Japan competition at the Royal Canberra Golf Club.¹

One week earlier, the Japanese press had reported on the visit to Australia by Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, welcoming what appeared to be a close relationship developing between Abe and Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. A signed revision to the Australia–Japan Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement between the Australian Defence Force and Japan's Self-Defense Forces, enabling more sharing of supplies, led one Japanese government official to describe the two countries as 'quasi-allies'.² Both leaders looked forward to closer security cooperation, and while avoiding mention of China, also looked to the United States to continue playing a strong role in regional security throughout the Asia-Pacific. Although not all aspects of the Australia–Japan relationship were sailing smoothly—the Abe government was still smarting from being overlooked for the contract to build Australia's next generation of submarines, and anti-whaling activists reported the Japanese killing of whales in the Southern Ocean—the two prime ministers were keen to convey a relationship of breadth and deep historic roots. At a press conference, Turnbull reminded reporters of the looming 60th anniversary of the 1957 Australia–Japan Agreement on Commerce, signed when Abe's grandfather Nobusuke Kishi was prime minister of Japan, thus highlighting the role that 'Shinzo's' family had played in strengthening Australia–Japan relations.³

These two episodes at the beginning of 2017 suggested that relations between Australia and Japan had blossomed after the end of World War II in ways that defied early expectations, not only in the economic sphere but also through broader cultural and educational exchanges. Indeed, the 60th anniversary of the bilateral Commerce Agreement provided a time for reflection on more than just trading relationships. This book takes this general proposition as a starting point for examining the history of Australia's diplomatic representation in Tokyo, and how it has evolved over

1 Authors' notes from the meeting, 24 January 2017. It was also noted that both Calvert and Ueda had served respectively in Tokyo and Canberra as junior diplomats earlier in their careers.

2 Summary of the Japanese Press, Interpreting and Translation Unit, Public Diplomacy Section, Australian embassy, Tokyo, 23 January 2017.

3 Ibid.

time. These changes have occurred in response to the shifting political and economic pressures and objectives of both nations, which have unfolded across decades within wider regional and global contexts and alliances. However, the representative activities undertaken by Australia's embassy in Tokyo have also evolved through the extraordinary changes to technology, communications and security that have determined day-to-day practices, and opened fresh opportunities for interactions between the nations and their peoples.

The timing of this volume on aspects of the role of the Australian embassy in Tokyo and the Australia–Japan relationship also coincides with recent developments in what is often designated as ‘new diplomatic history’. This approach has encouraged scholars to focus more directly on the sociability of diplomacy, thus recognising that the complexities of ‘diplomatic sites’ and influence extend well beyond the public roles and actions of national leaders and their appointed representatives abroad.⁴ Such a lens takes into account, for instance, how businesses and international educational providers can be examined as diplomatic actors, and how ‘soft power’ can be advanced through channels of cultural diplomacy, sports diplomacy or science diplomacy. It seeks to uncover the experiences of those individuals and groups who have often been overlooked in the history of international relations, including senior diplomats. The role of the ambassador, writes Bruce Miller, a recent Australian ambassador to Japan, is both strategic and future-looking and akin to the role of a foreman on a building site.⁵ How was this unusual and diverse skill set wielded by successive Australian ambassadors in Tokyo? New diplomatic history also includes the crucial work in cross-national translation and negotiations undertaken by locally engaged staff (LES) at overseas missions, another feature of this book.

Fresh perspectives on diplomatic history have also evaluated embassies as places of architectural and social intent, as influential settings for the representational qualities of staged events and for particular modes of human interaction, ranging from dress codes to social encounters and elaborate

4 Iver Neumann, *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199327966.001.0001; Pauline Kerr and Geoffrey Wiseman, eds, *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Michele Acuto, *Global Cities, Governance and Diplomacy* (London: Routledge, 2013), doi.org/10.4324/9780203073810; see also articles in *Diplomatica: A Journal of Diplomacy and Society* nos. 1, 2 (2019 and 2020).

5 See Bruce Miller, ‘The Tokyo Embassy, Past, Present and Future: Reflections’, in this volume.

meals.⁶ In the case of Australian representation in Tokyo, this is not to ignore the substantive diplomatic work on such matters as trade, security, investment and cultural exchange but to enrich it by viewing the relationship more expansively and holistically, situating the activities of diplomats within their wider historical, social and political milieux. It is to acknowledge that official diplomacy might well be construed as the working of the state, in this instance either Australia or Japan, but that the boundary between state and society is necessarily porous: peoples of diverse backgrounds, and a broad range of material objects, exist outside of state-defined roles but then connect in particular ways when involved in diplomacy.⁷

Over time, too, social movements and demographic change have led to increasing diversity among the diplomatic workforce. Indicative of these shifts, and the entry of more women into higher education and professional and government roles, is that by 2019 a clear majority—61 per cent—of employees in Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) were women. Until 1966, Australian women in the foreign service were subject to a 'marriage bar', which usually required resignation upon marriage or, if ongoing employment was allowed, forbade an overseas posting. Australia had its first female head of mission in 1971, when Dame Annabelle Rankin took a political appointment as Australian high commissioner to New Zealand. The first female career diplomat to serve as an ambassador was Ruth Dobson, who headed Australia's embassy in Denmark in 1974. While women have subsequently taken more senior and ambassadorial roles within DFAT, gender equality has yet to be achieved at the highest echelons of Australia's international representation.⁸ In this context, the appointment in 2020 of distinguished career diplomat Jan Adams as Australia's first female ambassador to Japan is an important milestone in the history of the Australian embassy in Tokyo.⁹

6 For instance, see Louis Clerc, 'Global Trends in Local Contexts: The Finnish Embassy in Paris, 1956–1990', *New Global Studies* 11, no. 2 (2017): 101–15, doi.org/10.1515/ngs-2017-0017; Pascal Lottuz, 'Violent Conflicts and Neutral Legations: A Case Study of the Spanish and Swiss Legations in Wartime Japan', *New Global Studies* 11, no. 2 (2017): 85–100, doi.org/10.1515/ngs-2017-0018.

7 See, among others, J. Dittmer, *Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage and Foreign Policy* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2017), doi.org/10.1515/9780822372745; Costas M. Constantinou and James Derian, eds, *Sustainable Diplomacies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), doi.org/10.1057/9780230297159.

8 Moreen Dee and Felicity Volk, eds, *Women with a Mission: Personal Perspectives* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2007); Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *WIL (Women in Leadership) Refresh* (Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2020).

9 Adams previously served as Australia's ambassador to China (2016–19) and held overseas postings in Washington and the OECD Secretariat, Paris.

A further dynamic affecting the loosening and broadening of the field of diplomatic history is increasingly relevant, and concerns the questioning of the future need for ambassadors and sizeable overseas missions in a globalised and highly connected world. While the focus in this book is on the history, the legacies and the current state of Australia's diplomatic representation, and therefore contributors do not directly engage with the future of embassies, two features prominent in the scholarly literature and emerging discussion are important to note. Firstly, there is some degree of consensus among historians and other commentators that while embassies and consulates are likely to survive as important to diplomatic relations, the forms that these may take—including levels of staffing, and the need for prominent embassy buildings—will continue to be evaluated. Secondly, such debates have led to a greater interest in the past, prompting methodological innovation in understanding the role of embassies and overseas representation, including in the arenas of culture, education and sports, as these have developed and adapted to new circumstances.¹⁰

The chapters in *The Australian Embassy in Tokyo and Australia–Japan Relations* derive, in part, from a conference we convened at Deakin University in 2017, and are written by historians and others in academia and by observer-participants, including former ambassadors. This study has also been accompanied by the collection of oral histories conducted during 2017–18, and we are grateful for the generosity of those who agreed to share their memories. Interviews with several former Australian ambassadors to Japan were undertaken and are now held in a designated oral history collection at the National Library of Australia, where they constitute an important archive for future scholarship on Australia's diplomatic mission in Japan and the Australia–Japan relationship more broadly.¹¹ We also conducted interviews in Australia and Japan with past and present staff at the Australian embassy in Tokyo during 2017–19.

10 See Giles Scott-Smith, 'Introduction', *New Global Studies* 11, no. 2 (2017): 77–84, doi.org/10.1515/ngs-2017-0013; Alex Oliver, 'The Irrelevant Diplomat: Do We Need Embassies Anymore?', *Foreign Affairs*, 14 March 2016, www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2016-03-14/irrelevant-diplomat; Geoffrey Wiseman, 'Contemporary Challenges for Foreign Ministries: At Home and Abroad', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 30, no. 4 (2019): 786–98, doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2019.1673554; Philip Seib, *The Future of Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016); Paul Sharp, 'Who Needs Diplomats? The Problem of Diplomatic Representation', *International Journal* 52 (1997): 609–34, doi.org/10.1177/002070209705200407.

11 Australian Ambassadors to Japan Oral History Project, National Library of Australia, Bib ID: 7384765, see catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/7384765, accessed 1 November 2020. We acknowledge the support of the Australia–Japan Foundation, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in compiling the interviews.

This has ensured that the voices of those LES members who worked at the embassy have been considered, and indeed their long tenure and insider/outsider status provide distinctive perspectives on the breadth of external-facing activities and inner complexities of the embassy.

Making the Modern Relationship

While this volume is concerned with the post–World War II decades, diplomacy between Australia and Japan and personal and commercial interactions between the two countries date back to the nineteenth century. In the interwar period, a Japanese merchant class concentrated in Sydney participated in global trading networks, while small Japanese communities were located in the pearl shell industries of the remote north, including at Thursday Island, Darwin and Broome.¹² Relations between the two nations were strained by Australia’s anxiety about Japan’s military aggression in East Asia, and its emphasis on the maintenance of the racially restrictive White Australia immigration policy.¹³

During the interwar years, Australian trade missions were sent to Japan, and a trade commissioner in Tokyo was established in 1935. An Australian legation, led by judge and politician Sir John Latham, was in place in August 1940. Accompanying Latham to Tokyo as his secretary was Bernice Campbell, who was, according to the *Women’s Weekly*, the first Australian woman to be appointed by the Commonwealth to work in a foreign country (noting that appointments to London were not considered foreign).¹⁴ Following Japan’s entry into World War II on 8 December 1941, the legation staff were confined to the grounds of Hachisuka House before being repatriated to Australia in August 1942.¹⁵

12 See Paul Jones and Vera Mackie, eds, *Relationships: Australia and Japan: 1880s to 1950*, University of Melbourne History Monograph 28 (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 2001); Masayo Tada and Leigh Dale eds, *On the Western Edge: A Colloquium on Comparisons of Australia and Japan* (Perth: Network Books, 2007); and for a photographic history of the relationship see Melissa Miles and Robin Gerster, *Pacific Exposures: Photography and the Australia–Japan Relationship* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2018), doi.org/10.22459/PE.2018.

13 David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850–1939* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1999); see also David Walker and Agnieszka Sobocinska, eds, *Australia’s Asia: From Yellow Peril to Asia Century* (Perth: University of Western Australia Publishing, 2012); and for a political perspective, Warren G. Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston: An Intellectual in Australian Politics* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985).

14 *Australian Women’s Weekly*, 19 July 1941, 19.

15 Alan Fewster, *Trusty and Well Beloved: A Life of Keith Officer, Australia’s First Diplomat* (Carlton: Miegunyah Press, 2009), 211–26.

Prime Minister John Curtin famously declared that with Japan's entry into the Pacific War, Australia faced 'its darkest hour'. The nation quickly shifted to a total war economy, introducing rationing and civil defence, and providing a base for the US troops serving under the Allied command of US general Douglas MacArthur. In February 1942, the British naval bastion at Singapore fell to the Japanese, and Darwin was bombed, with more than 250 people killed; over the next 18 months, Japan was to attack Australia's northern towns around 100 times, and shells were launched on Sydney's harbourside suburbs. Australian forces played a key military role in Papua, New Guinea and across the Asia-Pacific; the fighting was intense, and more than 22,000 Australians were taken prisoner by the Japanese. The US dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August 1945 precipitated Japan's surrender, which took place formally on 2 September 1945. In Australia, the impact of World War II was profound, accelerating the move to a modern industrial nation and transforming the nation's approach to regional security, notably through an alliance with the US.¹⁶

Reflecting on the modern history of Australia–Japan relations, Neville Meaney suggests the period from 1945 to 1952 was to be the last phase of what was, from an Australian perspective, 'A Half-Century of Menace'.¹⁷ This immediate post–World War II period, and the transition whereby Australia came to regard Japan as a valued regional partner, has attracted considerable scholarly attention. This is especially so in relation to Australia's military involvement in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF), headquartered in the southern port city of Kure, in Hiroshima Prefecture. Between 1945 and 1952, more than 16,000 Australians spent time in Japan as part of the BCOF, and while their encounters with Japanese people were complex, they did encompass many examples of cross-cultural friendship and compassion. Two other aspects of the occupation period have also been analysed by historians: the trial of Japanese war criminals and the administration of Japan

16 See Kate Darian-Smith, 'World War 2 and Post-war Reconstruction, 1939–49', in *The Cambridge History of Australia*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 88–111, doi.org/10.1017/CHO9781107445758.035; Kate Darian-Smith, 'Pearl Harbor and Australia's War in the Pacific', in *Beyond Pearl Harbor: A Pacific History*, ed. Beth Bailey and David Farber (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2019), 173–93, doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvqmp3br.13; Hank Nelson, *P.O.W. Prisoners of War: Australians under Nippon* (Sydney, ABC Books, 1985).

17 Neville Meaney, 'Australia and Japan: The Historical Perspective', in *The Japanese Connection: A Survey of Australian Leaders' Attitudes towards Japan and the Australia–Japan Relationship*, ed. Neville Meaney, Trevor Matthews and Sol Encel (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1988), 18–20.

under Supreme Commander General Douglas MacArthur.¹⁸ Australia's contribution to the diplomatic work that laid the basis of the Peace Treaty with Japan signed in San Francisco in 1951 has also been examined by Australian scholars, largely as important context to the conclusion of the Australia, New Zealand and United States (ANZUS) security pact signed in the same year.¹⁹

One of the key features of the historical literature on Australia–Japan relations has been a focus on the 1957 Agreement on Commerce, the first step in extending the bilateral relationship beyond mere diplomatic recognition to one where trade and politics were paramount. Indeed, Australia was the first country to give Japan the trade status of ‘most favoured nation’ after the war. Few would disagree with the comment by economist Peter Drysdale that the agreement ‘was a remarkable watershed in the relationship, little more than a decade after the bitterness of the war’. Drysdale is one of Australia's foremost experts on the economic dimensions of the relationship, having been part of Sir John Crawford's research team on Australia and Japan created at The Australian National University (ANU) in the 1960s. In 2004 he wrote that the Australia–

18 On Australians in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force, see Robin Gerster, *Travels in Atomic Sunshine: Australia and the Occupation of Japan* (Melbourne: Scribe, 2019); Christine de Matos, *Imposing Peace and Prosperity: Australia, Social Justice and Labour Reform in Occupied Japan* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Press, 2008); Basil Archer, *Interpreting Occupied Japan: The Diary of an Australian Soldier, 1945–1956*, ed. Sandra Wilson (Carlisle, WA: Hesperian Press, 2009); Walter Hamilton, *Children of the Occupation: Japan's Untold Story* (Sydney: NewSouth, 2012); George Davies, *The Occupation of Japan: The Rhetoric and Reality of Anglo-Australasian Relations, 1939–1952* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2001). On the prosecution of war criminals, see Dean Aszkielowicz, *The Australian Pursuit of Japanese War Criminals, 1943–1957: From Foe to Friend* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018), doi.org/10.5790/hongkong/9789888390724.001.0001; Sandra Wilson, Robert Cribb, Beatrice Trefalt and Dean Aszkielowicz, *Japanese War Criminals: The Politics of Justice after the Second World War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017); Georgina Fitzpatrick, Tim McCormack and Narelle Morris, eds, *Australia's War Crimes Trials, 1945–1951* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), doi.org/10.1163/9789004292055. On the administration of occupied Japan, see Alan Rix, ed., *Intermittent Diplomat: The Japan and Batavia Diaries of W. Macmahon Ball* (Carlton: Melbourne University Publishing, 1988); Alan Rix, ‘W. Macmahon Ball and the Allied Council for Japan: The Limits of an Australian Diplomacy under Evatt’, *Australian Outlook* 42, no. 1 (1998): 21–28, doi.org/10.1080/10357718808444957; Ai Kobayashi, *W. Macmahon Ball: Politics for People* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2013).

19 See Andrew Kelly, *ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945–1956* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2018); W. David McIntyre, *Background to the ANZUS Pact: Policy-making, Strategy and Diplomacy, 1945–55* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1995), doi.org/10.1057/9780230380073; David Maclean, ‘ANZUS Origins: A Reassessment’, *Australian Historical Studies* 24, no. 94 (1990): 64–82, doi.org/10.1080/10314619008595832; and Neville Meaney, ‘Look Back in Fear: Percy Spender, the Japanese Peace Treaty and the ANZUS Pact’, *Japan Forum* 15, no. 3 (1990): 399–410, doi.org/10.1080/0955580032000124790.

Japan relationship that had grown since the 1950s was ‘one of the most remarkable diplomatic and political achievements in the past half century’, and that getting the relationship right with Japan had been key to Australia’s getting relationships right with East Asia more generally.²⁰ The chapters in this volume do not take issue with these broadbrush observations. They do, however, address much that lies in between a string of notable bilateral agreements, situating the work of the Australian embassy in relation to these developments, and examining some dimensions of the relationship that have not received sufficient scholarly attention.

Nuclear power has been a significant factor at key moments in Australia–Japan relations. The beginnings of the modern relationship were forged in the aftermath of World War II, when anti-Japanese sentiment was high in Australia. The Australian military personnel and a small number of civilians who were stationed in Japan during the Allied occupation were shocked by the destruction caused by nuclear warfare, and many were prompted to offer practical assistance to Japanese people, particularly women, children and the elderly. This included the establishment of orphanages, visits to children’s homes and, to give one example, the rebuilding of classrooms burnt by the atomic bomb at a primary school in the Senda area of Hiroshima city.²¹ Person-to-person interactions extended beyond everyday cooperation and the ban on fraternisation, to incorporate instances of friendship and respect between individuals. Some of these exchanges were romantic, and more than 650 Japanese women bravely migrated to Australia as the wives and fiancées of Australian servicemen.²²

Many decades later, and in a different context, Australia’s cooperation with and support of Japan and its people during a natural and nuclear disaster indicate the depth of the current relationship. On 11 March 2011, a massive earthquake unleashed a tsunami that inundated the Tohoku coast, in north-east Honshu, resulting in a death toll of around 20,000, damage to 800,000 buildings and a system failure at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. We open this volume with a chapter by Murray McLean, ambassador to Japan from 2004 to 2011, explaining how he led the Australian embassy’s on-the-ground response, and offering

20 Peter Drysdale, ‘Reflections on the Relationship with Japan’, *Japanese Studies* 24, no. 2 (2004): 160, doi.org/10.1080/1037139042000302465.

21 Gerster, *Travels in Atomic Sunshine*, 238–40.

22 See Keiko Tamura, *Michi’s Memories: The Story of a Japanese War Bride* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2011), doi.org/10.22459/MM.09.2011.

a lesson in crisis management. Although embassies of other nations closed in Tokyo, the Australian embassy sat tight, with additional DFAT staff flying in from Australia to help. Embassy staff kept the Australian government informed of developments, locating Australians who were in disaster zones, and preparing for a potential evacuation. They often risked their own safety to provide consular assistance, and facilitated Australia's aid and rescue efforts.²³ The swift arrival in Japan of then prime minister Julia Gillard, and her much-photographed emotional response as she toured the obliterated fishing village of Minamisanriku, demonstrated the strength of the bilateral relationship.²⁴ Later, embassy staff held a charity dinner in Tokyo to raise money for the people of Tohoku, and, with Australian expatriates, organised a sausage sizzle in Minamisanriku, selling lamingtons and Australian wines to raise funds for the local community.²⁵

Ambassadors and Embassy

Australia's ambassadors to Japan loom large in this study, but with the exceptions of two contributions by recent incumbents—Murray McLean (ambassador from 2004 to 2011) and Bruce Miller (ambassador from 2011 to 2017)—the chapters here do not pivot on the terms and experiences of individual ambassadors. Instead, in Chapter 3, David Lee and David Lowe provide a guide to those appointees who have served since 1952, with an eye for the changing status of the diplomatic post and the key issues demanding the attention of each head. This overview of Australian ambassadors to Japan matches this book's intention to capture, as best as is possible, the growth of the distinctive relationship between Australia and Japan as it occurred in diverse ways, and to highlight the presence of multiple forms of agency.

23 Liam Walsh and Angus Grigg, 'After the Wave: Untold Stories of Australia's Response to Fukushima', *Australian Financial Review*, 6 March 2021, www.afr.com/policy/foreign-affairs/after-the-wave-untold-stories-of-australia-s-response-to-fukushima-20210227-p576dq, accessed 31 May 2021.

24 'Gillard Tours Tsunami-Devastated Minami Sanriku', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 April 2011, www.smh.com.au/world/gillard-tours-tsunamidevastated-minami-sanriku-20110423-1ds1j.html, accessed 6 November 2020.

25 'Australia Stands with Tohoku', Australian embassy in Tokyo, japan.embassy.gov.au/kyo/tohoku.html, accessed 13 March 2021; Australia–Japan Foundation and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *The Reconstruction Initiative: Australia–Japan Foundation's Response to Japan's 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami* (Canberra: Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, November 2015), 5, 10–12, 17.

World War II was a formidable legacy for those Australians working in the embassy in Tokyo during the 1950s and 1960s. Even the purchase of the embassy mansion and property in Mita was leveraged from the value of disposed Australian equipment from BCOF. Fortunately, the Australian government appointed senior and skilled diplomats to this difficult task from the beginning, with initial appointments of E. Ronald Walker (ambassador 1952–55) and Alan Watt (ambassador 1956–59). As David Walton shows in Chapter 4, this enabled adroit responses to Japan's re-emergence in the international community, and mutually beneficial exchanges in the United Nations and with reference to the Afro-Asian bloc and growing turbulence in Indonesia.

Other Australian individuals stand out for their contributions to the relationship. David Lee describes in Chapter 5 the lead role played by Sir John Crawford, over nearly three decades, as the architect of major policy development in the Australia–Japan relationship. This chapter also highlights the importance of looking beyond the Australian Department of External Affairs (now Foreign Affairs) for developments that shaped the work of the Australian embassy in Tokyo. As secretary of Trade, Crawford played a crucial role in the negotiation of the watershed commerce treaty of 1957, arriving at a formula that extended most-favoured-nation treatment by Australia towards Japan while preserving tariff preferences for British imports. Afterwards, at ANU, Crawford collaborated with Saburō Ōkita, who became Japan's foreign minister in 1979, to set up a research program to further explore economic growth and complementarity for Australia, Japan and the Western Pacific. These efforts led to Crawford's strong push, eventually winning Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's support, for a more comprehensive Australian treaty with Japan. The 1976 Friendship and Cooperation Treaty (NARA Treaty) was the result, with Crawford continuing his advocacy afterwards to help establish the Australia–Japan Foundation (AJF), the first of Australia's cultural councils.

The Australian embassy's grounds and buildings, located in Mita, in the Minato district of Tokyo, are a prominent feature in the rich narrative of Australia's official representation in Japan. As Alison Broinowski and Rachel Miller show in Chapter 6, the site and its buildings are a symbolic and material microcosm of the last 450 years of Tokyo's history. In post-Meiji Japan, the Hachisuka family established a large estate in Mita, which incorporated the current site of the embassy. By the twentieth century, much of the estate had been sold, but during the interwar period

there was major work in the building and gardens in the section occupied as Australia's official diplomatic base. This boasted a special mixture of architectural and garden styles, with historical references straddling several centuries. In outlining the significance of this earlier history, Broinowski and Miller argue that the redevelopment of the Australian embassy site in the late 1980s, including the demolition of the historic residence, needs to be understood as part of the impermanence of Tokyo's built environment more generally.

The diplomatic symbolism of the 'new' Australian embassy is explored in detail by leading architectural historian Philip Goad in Chapter 7. He focuses on the implications of the destruction of the old Hachisuka mansion and sale of part of the land in 1987 for an extraordinary sum at the height of a recession, and the construction of the current embassy and residential accommodation for staff. Opened in 1990, the Australian embassy in Tokyo was designed by the Australian firm Denton Corker Marshall, who were also responsible for the Australian embassy in Beijing. As Goad points out, the Tokyo building invited comparisons not only with its immediate urban environment but also with the other major Asian posts for Australian diplomats. He describes how the architects drew upon an appropriate and assured internationalism and urban typology, with a building that was restrained rather than overtly defined by 'Australianness'. Embassy buildings are risky assertions of national identity, and to date there is has been little research on either the functionality or the symbolism and multiple identities of the built form of Australia's overseas missions; these chapters go some way, at least in the Tokyo case, in redressing this gap.

In Chapter 8, Kate Darian-Smith and David Lowe probe the inner life of the embassy, turning to the building itself as a place of work and cross-cultural friendships for local staff. In ways that are often invisible to the public eye, and indeed to the queries of historians, overseas missions are indebted to the skills and hard work of local employees who labour as translators, administrators, liaison officers with government and industry, policy advisers, and, more mundanely, drivers, cleaners, and caterers. Predominantly female, this group of Japanese nationals are instrumental to the continuity of diplomatic work, especially as, contrary to the fixed terms of Australian staff, they can remain in their embassy position for decades. Drawing upon oral histories with LES, this chapter adds further insight to the history of the Australian embassy in Tokyo.

Exchanges and Cultural Diplomacy

The NARA Treaty of 1976 heralded a new stage in Australia–Japan relations, enshrining both symbolically and formally the depth of friendship, combined interest and interdependence of purpose between the two nations. It provided a framework for strengthening investment and economic and political ties, and indeed over the next decade trade between Australian and Japan grew fourfold. Through this emphasis on cooperation, the founding of the Working Holiday Program, and unprecedented person-to-person relations between Australians and Japanese, the ghosts of White Australia and World War II were put to rest. New alignments were formed in the 1980s and 1990s, including through the formation of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) ministerial dialogues in 1989 and the Joint Declaration on the Australia–Japanese Partnership in 1995. In Chapter 9, Kate Darian-Smith explores how broad-reaching cultural connections between the two nations matured from the 1980s through a myriad of personal, institutional and government contacts and initiatives. These two-way flows have spanned tourism; cultural and educational exchanges; artistic residencies, performances and exhibitions; and sporting demonstrations and competitions. In Tokyo, staff at the Australian embassy led, supported and encouraged these activities and played a vital role in ensuring their success.

Crucial to these maturing bilateral connections was the Australia–Japan Foundation, which from 1976 was to fund educational and cultural programs that increased awareness between the two nations. As David Carter investigates in Chapter 10, the AJF was to fund important educational programs about Australia for Japanese schools, and in the tertiary sector to foster collaborative Australian–Japanese academic research across the sciences, social sciences and humanities. The growth of these scholarly networks led to the formation of the Australian Studies Association of Japan in 1989 and to the mobility of university staff and students between Australia and Japan. Carter examines the key role of the annual Visiting (Associate) Professor in Australian Studies, based at the University of Tokyo since the late 1970s, a role more recently supported by the AJF. In examining the connection between scholarly activity and cultural diplomacy in Australia–Japan relations, he finds that it was this relationship that was both the subject of and the inspiration for much of the pioneering thinking behind Australian cultural diplomacy.

By the mid-1980s the so-called ‘Japanese miracle’ of spectacular economic growth had attracted world attention, and the Australia–Japan relationship had expanded to a point that was, as Richard Broinowski says in Chapter 11, almost too good to be true. He describes, from the perspective of one at the heart of policy formation in Canberra, the urgent creation of committees in the late 1970s to better educate Australians about all aspects of Japan, and to coordinate the interests of Commonwealth and state governments, business, the public service departments and academia. This type of education and coordination became all the more important after Japan’s revaluation of the yen in 1985, prompting their need to curb imports or bargain for lower prices. Broinowski’s study of these events and policies from the late 1970s to mid-1990s reveals the importance for the Australia–Japan relationship of the steady building of networks, and institutional stability and guidance. Within APEC and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Regional Forum, some of the important architecture underpinning the relationship was also regional in scope.

Looking Back and Looking Forward

Two perspectives from Australian ambassadors to Japan serve to underline the scale of changes that are explored throughout this collection, from the end of World War II to today. In recalling his experiences as ambassador in Tokyo in 1957, Sir Alan Watt said that he went to Japan (arriving in 1956) with many reservations, partly on account of his previous posting to Singapore, where memories of the war were raw. ‘No Australian who served in Singapore and Malaya can forget Changi prison’, he said, ‘[or] what happened to Australian prisoners of war, and so I went ... not prepared to believe everything that I found in Japan.’²⁶ Watt found Tokyo both fascinating and challenging. It took him some time, he said, to understand Japanese motivations. Slowly, by reading Japanese history, building his social network (including as president of the Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club) and shedding certain assumptions, he began, in his words, to ‘untie some of the knots I had in my mind when I went in’.²⁷ Watt left Japan more optimistic about the country and about Australia–Japan

26 Transcript of Bruce Miller’s interview with Sir Alan Watt, 11 December 1974, TRC 306, 2:2/12, National Library of Australia (NLA).

27 Ibid., 2:2/13.

relations, but still puzzling over Japanese behaviours in ways that reflected both his intellectual curiosity and a residual, orientalist ‘othering’ of Japan.²⁸

By contrast, Ambassador Bruce Miller, who concluded his term in Tokyo at the beginning of 2017, reflects in Chapter 12 of this book on how his interest in Japan and its people shaped his learning and career. Miller’s first encounter with Japan was a Japan Foundation–sponsored study visit in his last year of high school, which sparked his study of Japanese language, history and literature, and led to further study in Japan and his subsequent joining the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs. He enjoyed three different postings to the embassy in Tokyo, the last as ambassador. Miller also found great satisfaction in watching, and being directly involved in, the maturing and broadening of the Australia–Japan relationship, including a free trade agreement signed in 2014. Not all the changes he witnessed should be interpreted in bilateral terms. A changing region, shifts in power and alliance dynamics, and the overarching features of globalisation drove some of the changes in the relationship. But Miller highlights how strategic and defence cooperation enjoys equal prominence with economic aspects of the relationship; he also points to the significant movement of people annually between the two countries, a mobility underpinned by education, tourism, and science and research connections.²⁹

This book testifies to the breadth of the modern Australia–Japan relationship by showcasing multiple perspectives not often gathered in the one place. While the relationship has undergone testing times as well as celebrated ones, it has grown in ways that were not anticipated when ambassadorial-level representation began in 1952. In 2016, the recently retired former secretary of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Peter Varghese, wished that Australian relations with India, another relationship in Asia he suggested was of great importance for Australians, might broaden and deepen in ways similar to what we had observed with Japan.³⁰ Most recently, a detailed report from the Australia–Japan Research Centre at ANU argues that it is time for an urgent ‘Reimagining the Japan Relationship’, given the formidable security,

28 Ibid., 2:2/14–15.

29 See Miller, ‘The Tokyo Embassy’ in this volume.

30 Peter Varghese, ‘Reflections on Australia–India Relations Since the 1990s’, October 2016, as reported by David Lowe in David Lowe and Eric Meadows, eds, *Rising Power and Changing People: The Australian High Commission in India* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2022), doi.org/10.22459/RPCP.2022.

energy and economic challenges facing both countries. But the report is also upbeat about the foundations upon which such a reimagining can occur:

Australia's economic, geographic and strategic interests are overwhelmingly in Asia and no partner is more important to those interests than Japan. Japan is Australia's benchmark relationship and strategic anchor in Asia and that is an enduring strategic reality.³¹

This volume, we hope, goes some way to explaining how the Australia–Japan relationship acquired benchmark status, and how the Australian embassy in Tokyo was involved.

31 Shiro Armstrong, *Reimagining the Japan Relationship: An Agenda for Australia's Benchmark Partnership in Asia* (Canberra: Australia–Japan Research Centre, The Australian National University, 2021), i.