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## Immigration in Australian–Japanese relations, 1871–1971

*In Japan and Australia in the Seventies,*  
Edited by J.A.A. Stockwin,  
Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1972.





## Appendix I

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### Immigration in Australian- Japanese Relations, 1871-1971

Contacts between Australia and Japan are as old as the treaties that marked the end of Japan's seclusion. The young Melbourne merchant, Alexander Marks, established himself in Yokohama in 1859, the year that port was opened to foreign trade.<sup>1</sup> J. R. Black, the Scotsman acknowledged by Japanese writers as one of the fathers of the modern Japanese vernacular newspaper, arrived in 1862—from South Australia where he had failed in business.<sup>2</sup> In 1867, J. H. Brooke, after his youthful and short-lived career as a political leader in Victoria, went to Japan where he spent the rest of his life as the proprietor and editor of the *Japan Daily Herald*.<sup>3</sup>

The first Japanese arrivals in Australia were somewhat later; for at that time the edict of the *bakufu* that on pain of death forbade Japanese subjects to depart from their native land was still in force. It was repealed in 1866 by a decree authorising the issue of passports for the purpose of study or trade. The earliest Japanese of whom records survive who came to Australia under this dis-

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<sup>1</sup> *The Cyclopaedia of Victoria* (Melbourne: Cyclopaedia Co. 1903), vol. 1, pp. 289-90.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paske-Smith, *Western Barbarians in Formosa in Tokugawa Days 1603-1868*, (Kobe: Thompson & Co., 1930), p. 355; (*Japan Daily Herald*, 11 June 1880); T. Kubota, *Nijūichi dai senkaku kishaden* (Osaka: Osaka Mainichi Shimbun, 1930), pp. 211-38.

<sup>3</sup> *Japan Times*, 11 January 1902.

pensation and remained was Sakagawa Rikinosuke.<sup>4</sup> Like several of the earliest Japanese to go to the United States, he was an acrobat. Like them (and like other acrobats who performed in Australia in the following decade), he probably misstated his occupation when he applied for his passport, for in the eyes of Japanese officialdom, his was an unworthy calling. Sakagawa arrived in 1871. By the end of the century some thousands of his countrymen had come to Australia. Of these some hundreds had become permanent settlers; but only the merest handful had, like Sakagawa, taken an Australian wife, become naturalised and purchased land. Forty-six years later he was still in show business, a circus proprietor, moving through Queensland, town by town.

In the century that has elapsed since the arrival of this first Japanese settler, Australian attitudes and policies towards Japan have been chiefly influenced by three considerations, immigration, trade and defence. Trade receives detailed treatment in Appendix 2. This paper will deal specifically with questions of immigration.

Until the 1950s, there appears to have been a fairly widespread belief in Australia that the Japanese Government wished to despatch immigrants to this country. Despite occasional extempore statements by prominent Japanese that are consistent with such a belief,<sup>5</sup> there is, in my opinion little to suggest that this was at any time the case. This is not to say, however, that the exclusion of Japanese subjects from Australia has not been an irritant to good relations between the two countries. It can, I think, be argued that the history of Japan's negotiations with Australia (as with the United States) over the right of entry indicates that immigration *per se* was never regarded by the Japanese as a national interest, but that exclusion inevitably raised the question of prestige, which was a national interest. In the last resort, Japan would always accept a 'Gentlemen's Agreement' formula as a permanent solution. By this I mean a treaty right to most favoured nation treatment as regards right of entry, coupled with a declaration in some less solemn document such as a protocol or exchange of notes in which Japan indicated that she would herself prevent the emigration of labourers and artisans. This was the nature of the agreement reached with Queensland in 1897. The same for-

<sup>4</sup> As this man was illiterate in both Japanese and English his name is difficult to establish with certainty. It could equally well be Takaragawa. Queensland State Archives, Col. Sec. 1882/5058.

<sup>5</sup> See for example the reply of the Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Kishi, to a question in the House of Representatives on 3 February 1959 (*Dai-31-kai kokkai, Shūgin, yosan iinkai gijiroku, dai-3-gō, p. 25*).

mula was repeatedly offered to the Commonwealth. A similar formula was negotiated with the United States and Canada in 1908. Provided Japan's face was saved by a *treaty* recognition of equality with the European countries in the right of entry, she would concede the substance. The record suggests to me that the Japanese Government did its best to carry out these agreements, and that the apparent aberrations that caused such bitter feeling were usually the result of Japanese provincial authorities, influenced by local considerations, issuing passports in disregard of instructions from the central Government.

Until about 1890, the attitude of the Japanese Government towards the emigration of indentured labourers was generally hostile. In 1872 the Japanese Government had enacted legislation prohibiting contracts of service for periods of more than one year's duration, on the grounds that such were tantamount to slavery.<sup>6</sup> This policy appears to have been applied rigidly for some years. The first known case where it was relaxed was in 1883. Interestingly enough, this was a case involving Australia. Captain Miller, a pearler from Thursday Island was permitted to employ 37 Japanese to engage in pearling operations there for a period of two years. This marked a change in the attitude of the Japanese Government from blanket disapproval of all emigration under contract, to grudging approval of contracts in occupations that it considered consistent with Japanese prestige and whose terms it considered satisfactory. In negotiations that occupied six months, the Japanese provincial and central authorities looked very carefully at this contract and required several amendments.<sup>7</sup>

The only other group recruited in Japan<sup>8</sup> who came to Australia under this dispensation were some 40 or 50 men and women brought to Sydney by P. W. Willard in 1886, under a contract approved by the Japanese Foreign Ministry whereby he was to employ them in manufacturing. This, however, was a subterfuge. Willard was apparently a showman and had recruited them for an exhibition, 'The Japanese Village', which he presented in the Exhibition Building, Sydney, over the Easter holiday—a fact which the Honorary Consul in Melbourne (Alexander Marks) duly reported to Tokyo.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Regulation No. 295 of 1872, reproduced in Gaimushō, *Nihon Gaikō bunsho 1883*, p. 442. This series will hereafter be cited as NGB.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 444.

<sup>8</sup> There were also some Japanese recruited in Hong Kong for pearling at Thursday Island. *NGB-1885*, p. 527.

<sup>9</sup> Gaimushō tsūshō kyoku, *Imin toriatsukainin ni yoru imin no enkaku*, (Gaimushō, 1909), p. 56.

Late in 1890, a more positive attitude to emigration becomes apparent in the communications from the Foreign Ministry to Marks. On 11 November 1890 he was instructed that 'the Government's present policy towards emigration is not to restrain our labourers by severe laws from going overseas. If they are able to make proper agreements and work overseas it places no obstacles in their way. Indeed, our attitude is to assist them as best we can'.<sup>10</sup> This may have been the result of the appointment as Foreign Minister of Enomoto who later founded the Shokumin Kyōkai (Plantation Society). As we shall see, it was neither an extensive nor a permanent change of policy.

It was also in November 1890 that there occurred a chance event that may have lured more Japanese to better their lot in Australia. A syndicate of ten Japanese drew 'Carbine' in the Tattersall's sweepstake and returned to Japan the following month with their winnings, £22,500. They were not ungenerous. Before their departure, they made a contribution to the local cathedral building fund that exceeded those of the Governor, the Bishop and the Government Resident combined.<sup>11</sup>

Of greater significance, perhaps, was the emergence of the large Japanese companies established to act as brokers in the emigration of labourers. The first of these, the Yoshisa Emigration Co., was founded in December 1891 by Yoshikawa, Vice-President of the NYK (Nihon Yūsen Kaisha)—Japan's largest shipping company.<sup>12</sup> The relationship between emigration and the newly emerging shipping companies was important. From now on there are occasions when, although the Foreign Ministry and its officers in North America and Australia insisted that the emigration of labourers should be reduced or prevented as injuring Japan's diplomatic and commercial relations and her image overseas, the flow of emigrant labourers nevertheless continued. This may well have been due in part to the political influence of the shipping industry.<sup>13</sup> The expansion of her mercantile marine was regarded

<sup>10</sup> *NGB-1890*, p. 442.

<sup>11</sup> *Queenslander*, 3 December 1890.

<sup>12</sup> T. Irie, *Hōjin Kaigai hattenshi*, (Tokyo: Ida Shobō, 1942, vol. 1, p. 101).

<sup>13</sup> Japanese Consul to Premier of Queensland, 16 March 1900. [Queensland, *Votes and Proceedings of Legislative Assembly* (hereafter *QV&P*), 1901, vol. 4, 'Further Correspondence—Admission of Japanese into Queensland . . .', p. 1137].

Consul to Premier, 20 August 1900 (private), p. 3 [Queensland State Archives (Hereafter QA) PRE/102].

R. E. Minger, 'Taft's Missions to Japan . . .', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 30, no. 3, p. 288.

as an important Japanese national interest. Commercially, the carriage of emigrants may have been very important to the shipping companies as a steady source of revenue—particularly in the early stages of establishing new services against the competition of powerful foreign shipping companies. It was not without difficulty that NYK broke into the Australian service dominated by the Eastern & Australian, and the China Navigation lines.

The number of Japanese in Thursday Island rose from about 100 in 1891 to 720 in March 1894 causing widespread unemployment.<sup>14</sup> In response to representations from the Queensland Government the Japanese Government thereupon placed restrictions on emigration there.<sup>15</sup>

Under the auspices of the Yoshisa Emigration Co., whose area of operations was New Caledonia, Australia, Fiji and Guadeloupe, Japanese labourers were first recruited for the canefields in 1892.<sup>16</sup> By December 1896 their number had risen to 880.<sup>17</sup> By this time the attitude of the Queensland Government, initially favourable, had under the pressure of public opinion begun to change. In Parliament and the press a new stereotype of the Japanese was beginning to emerge: 'the Jap . . . is a very capable man and a great imitator who will not only compete with the white labourer but eventually must not only drive out the labourer but the artisan and trader as well'.<sup>18</sup> Soon Gladstone's aphorism, 'We fear them for their virtues', coined for another people, was applied to the Japanese, first by the *Brisbane Courier*, (with acknowledgment) and then, successively, by the Member representing Thursday Island in the Legislative Assembly, and Alfred Deakin (without acknowledgment).<sup>19</sup>

With the possibility of imposing some restriction on Japanese immigration in mind,<sup>20</sup> Queensland alone among the Australian colonies had in May 1896 commenced negotiations with the Japanese Government to join the 1894 Anglo-Japanese Treaty of

<sup>14</sup> *QV&P*, 1894, vol. 2, 'Report of the Government Resident at Thursday Island for 1892-93', p. 909.

<sup>15</sup> *NGB-1894*, vol. 2, p. 659.

<sup>16</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 1 December 1892, Irie, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 394.

<sup>17</sup> Bowden Bros & Co., 'Return of Japanese Agricultural Labourers . . . as at December 1898' (undated) (QA PRE/102).

<sup>18</sup> *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 70, p. 144 (Mr Turley, Labor, 28 June 1893).

<sup>19</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 12 May 1897. *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 77, 24 June 1897, p. 108, Mr Hamilton. *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 4, 12 September 1901, Mr Deakin.

<sup>20</sup> Telegram from Nelson to Premier W.A. 14 March 1895 (QA PRE/105).

Commerce and Navigation. She entered the Treaty in March 1897 by means of a special protocol in which the right of either party to regulate the immigration of labourers and artisans was expressly recognised.<sup>21</sup>

In April 1897, probably as a result of the establishment of a monthly Australian service by NYK with steerage accommodation at half the prevailing price,<sup>22</sup> the tempo of Japanese arrivals at Thursday Island began to increase, once again in a situation of unemployment.<sup>23</sup> In prompt response to cables from the Consul, the Japanese Government in June prohibited emigration to Thursday Island for pearling, and in August prohibited the emigration to all parts of Queensland of all labourers or artisans except where a contract with an employer in Australia could be negotiated before embarkation.<sup>24</sup> There were notorious cases in which these restrictions were circumvented by the emigration companies.<sup>25</sup> These gave rise to suspicions that the Japanese Government was insincere in its policy of restriction. That this was not the case is apparent from the reply of the Vice-Minister (22 January 1898) to a suggestion by the Acting Consul that the restrictions could be relaxed:

It is not our policy to encourage emigration heedless of the manifold problems to which it gives rise—just so that a few people can emigrate. Accordingly, until there is a complete change in the attitude of Queenslanders to Japanese immigration we shall continue to prohibit from going there emigrants who do not have contracts of employment.<sup>26</sup>

A proposal by the Queensland Government for complete cessation of Japanese immigration was rejected, but after prolonged negotiations a settlement was reached in October 1900 in which the Japanese population of Queensland at 31 October 1898, i.e. 3,247, was accepted as a ceiling not to be exceeded.<sup>27</sup> In the period that

<sup>21</sup> For a detailed treatment see J. B. Armstrong, 'The Question of Japanese Immigration to Queensland in the 19th Century', (M.A. qualifying thesis, University of Queensland, Department of History, 1970), Ch. 4.

<sup>22</sup> See a consular report c. 1897 in *Shokumin kyōkai hōkoku*, no. 23, p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> *NGB-1897*, pp. 601-2.

<sup>24</sup> *NGB-1897*, p. 603; Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives file MT 3.8.2.33.

<sup>25</sup> e.g. The landing of 59 uncontracted immigrants at Thursday Island on 16 July 1898 with passports for Northern Territory.

<sup>26</sup> *NGB-1898*, vol. 2, pp. 62-3.

<sup>27</sup> *QV&P* 1901, vol. 4, 'Further Correspondence—Admission of Japanese into Queensland . . .', pp. 1140-41.



elapsed before the coming into effect of the Federal Immigration Restriction Act in 1902 the Japanese made no special exertions to restore their numbers to 3,247. Their total in Queensland at the 1901 census was only 2,269. Furthermore, in 1902, although as a question of law the Japanese Government denied the Federal Government's contention that the Immigration Restriction Act superseded both the Agreement and the application of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty to Queensland, they nevertheless accepted it in fact. At the same time they continued to grant Queensland products the benefits of most favoured nation treatment until the Treaty was formally denounced in 1908.

The attitude of the Japanese Government to the Commonwealth's Immigration Restriction Act and the similar legislation that had been introduced into the Colonial legislatures after 1895 was as follows. Although they considered unreasonable the proposition that Australia's wide area and bounteous gifts should be enjoyed by the white races exclusively,<sup>28</sup> they did not join battle with this or with the determination of Australians 'to preserve unmistakably the European character of Australian colonisation'.<sup>29</sup> They were, however, prepared to accept the exclusion of their labourers and artisans provided this were done in a manner acceptable to their national pride: 'The point which had caused a painful feeling in Japan was not that the operation of the prohibition would be such as to exclude a certain number of Japanese from immigrating to Australia, but that Japan should be spoken of in formal documents, such as Colonial Acts, as if the Japanese were on the same level of morality and civilisation as Chinese and other less advanced populations of Asia'.<sup>30</sup> They would accept a degree of exclusion by such means as a test in the English language: This would exclude her labourers and artisans but not her merchants, tourists and professional men and would place Japan on the same footing as European nations.<sup>31</sup> The Immigration Restriction Act, however, provided a test not in English but in 'an European language', and it was administered in a manner to exclude all Japanese. As such, it was the object of protest by Japanese Government.

In February 1902, the Immigration Restriction Act completely

<sup>28</sup> *NGB-1897*, p. 607.

<sup>29</sup> Salisbury to Katō, 24 August 1897 (Public Records Office F.O. 46/548).

<sup>30</sup> Katō to Salisbury, 7 October 1897, (F.O. 46/548).

<sup>31</sup> Memorandum by Hayashi to Foreign Office, 8 August 1901, (F.O. 46/548).

closed Australia to further settlement by Japanese. At that date the Japanese population was 3,593, of whom 90 per cent were in Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. That total has never since been exceeded. Thereafter, until 1952, the only Japanese to enter Australia were a handful of merchants, students and tourists on temporary visas, and contract labourers for the pearling industry. None of these was permitted to remain for more than a few years.

The discriminatory treatment of Japanese subjects on account of race remained an important issue in Australian-Japanese relations. This was a wider question than immigration; for laws had been passed and continued to be passed circumscribing the rights of Japanese already in Australia. Among these laws the most important were, at the Federal level, the Franchise Act, the Nationality Act and the Bounties Act (whereby bounties were payable only for the products of white labour), and in Queensland the Elections Act (which disfranchised naturalised Asians), the Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-Mer Fishery Act, the Leases to Aliens Restriction Act and the Sugar Cultivation Act (which applied the dictation test to the acquisition of boat licenses, the renting of land, and employment in the sugar industry). A similar grievance was a Queensland industrial award that excluded coloured labour from cane cutting.<sup>32</sup> To remove these disabilities and marks of racial inferiority, as well as to secure her newly-won export markets against postwar competition, Japan in 1915-17 attempted to barter additional naval assistance to the Allied cause for Australia's entry to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of 1911.<sup>33</sup> She offered safeguards regarding the immigration of labourers and artisans similar to those given to Queensland in 1897.<sup>34</sup> Australia, however, was adamant in her refusal to end such discrimination.

Similarly at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 it was Australia that played a prominent role in bringing about the defeat of Japan's attempt in 1919 to insert in the Covenant of the League of Nations a clause whereby Members would undertake to accord

<sup>32</sup> Award of Court of Industrial Arbitration, 27 June 1919.

<sup>33</sup> Hughes to Pearce 21 April 1916 (Australian War Memorial, Pearce Papers, 'Letters and Cables—Mr Hughes').

Col. Sec. to G/G Aust. 3 January 1916 (F.O. 371/2688 p. 267).

Ambassador, Tokyo to Sec. of State, Tel. No. 93, 16 February 1916, ditto Desp. No. 64, 24 February 1916, (F.O. 371/2690 pp. 26 and 53).

<sup>34</sup> F. M. (Katō) to Ambassador, G.B., No. 2, 15 January 1915 (NGB-1916, vol. 1, p. 184 ff.).

equal treatment to aliens in their territories, irrespective of race.<sup>35</sup> This Japanese demarche prompted E. L. Piesse, the Director of the newly established Pacific Branch of the Prime Minister's Department, to include in the brief for the Australian delegation to the First Session of the League of Nations a memorandum in which he argued: 'In regard to the greater part of the Japanese nation, there is probably little reason now for applying discriminations based merely on race which are not thought necessary in regard to the less advanced European nations'. The Prime Minister, Hughes, minuted this passage with the single word, 'Rot'. In this document Piesse recommended inter alia that discriminations imposed on Asiatics on economic grounds should be reexamined in order to see whether they were still necessary on economic grounds and that those Japanese merchants, students and tourists who in fact were allowed to remain in Australia indefinitely should not be required to make yearly applications for extensions of stay. The memorandum elicited an indignant cable from the leader of the Delegation, Senator Millen, that it amounted to 'such whittling away of existing restrictions as would result complete abandonment White Australia Policy'.<sup>36</sup>

In 1930 some very limited progress was made in the direction that Piesse had proposed and merchants, students and tourists were thereafter required to apply for extensions only biennially.<sup>37</sup> Nothing however was done to amend discriminatory legislation. Accordingly, in the negotiations for a commercial treaty that commenced at the end of 1934, the Japanese pressed hard for most favoured nation treatment not only in tariffs but also over a wide field of activities. On this occasion their initial proposal was less accommodating than any made by them on this subject to an Australian government since 1897. They would recognise the right to regulate the immigration of manual labourers but not artisans and such regulations must apply equally to similar immigrants from all other countries.<sup>38</sup> The Australian side from the outset

<sup>35</sup> See E. Scott, *Official History of Australia with War of 1914-18*, vol. xi, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1937), pp. 789-97.

<sup>36</sup> Prime Minister's Department: S.C. 42/2 'Papers Prepared in the Pacific Branch in Connection with the General Assembly of the League of Nations'; S.C. 42/12 Cable—Millen to Hughes 17 October 1920; S.C. 42/12 Piesse to Secretary Prime Minister's Department 20 October 1920. (Piesse Papers, MS 882. Australian National Library)

<sup>37</sup> Exchange of Notes, 20 June 1930 (Commonwealth Archives Office (hereafter CAO) A981 Trade 68 Part 2).

<sup>38</sup> Cable No. 115 from Prime Minister to High Commissioner London, 10 December 1934 (CAO A981 Trade 68 Part 1). This is the formula that the Japanese tried unsuccessfully to secure in their treaty with the United States in 1894.

consistently refused to consider this.<sup>39</sup> From the very incomplete official files that are available in the Commonwealth Archives Office it appears that, after some fairly persistent battling,<sup>40</sup> they offered to withdraw this proposal if in return Australia agreed to make the extensions of stay for exempted classes of immigrants indefinite (instead of triennial) and abolish visas. This the Australian side appears to have been prepared to examine. The Japanese however continued to insist on the recognition of most favoured nation treatment in all that relates to or is necessary for the pursuit of their callings and in the acquisition and possession of 'every description of property . . .'. For these and other reasons the negotiations broke down.<sup>41</sup> To this day Australian governments are unwilling to negotiate with any country treaties that extend most favoured nation treatment to persons. The idea of a treaty of this nature was received by the Japanese firms at the annual joint meetings of the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee in 1969 and 1970 but received no support from the Australian firms.<sup>42</sup>

The Japanese population in Australia declined from 3,593 in 1901 to 2,080 in 1933. At the outbreak of war in 1941 all Japanese residents and with a very few exceptions their Australian-born children—a total of 958—were interned. At the end of the War the Australian-born were permitted to remain but all but 75 of the Japanese-born were compulsorily returned to Japan.<sup>43</sup> Their embarkation evoked an indicative response from the Melbourne *Age*. Under the headline *Sons of Heaven Sent Home—Packed in Holds of Japanese Ship* the reporter wrote: 'The main impression gained was that there was sufficient evidence on the ship to turn the whole of Australia against the Japanese and their code of morality for years. The holds . . . looked like resurrected Black Holes of Calcutta. . . . How the total of nearly 3,000 [i.e. POWs

<sup>39</sup> Comptroller-General, Trade & Customs to Cons-Gen., 19 December 1934; 18 January, 5 April, 8 November;

Min. i/c Trade Treaties to Cons-Gen. 4 February 1936

Min. i/c Trade Treaties to Min. External Affairs 13 February 1936 (CAO A981 Trade 68 Part 2).

<sup>40</sup> Cons-Gen. to Comptroller-General: 8 January, 7 March 1935 (CAO A981 Trade 68 Part 2).

<sup>41</sup> Cons-Gen. to Min. i/c Trade Treaties 18 January 1936 and enclosures. Min. E.A. to Min. w/o Portfolio [i.e. Min. i/c Trade Treaties D.C.S.S.] 11 February 1936.

<sup>42</sup> *West Australian* 10 May 1969; *Age* 20 May 1970.

<sup>43</sup> The birth and place of release of each internee is given on their Australian forms A111 and A112 which are filed as MP1103 at the Commonwealth Archives Repository at Melbourne.

and civilian internees D.C.S.S.] on the ship will fare in the tropics was left to imagination.<sup>44</sup> Today, the wartime achievements of the Allied navies and airforces suggest themselves more readily as the cause of the cramped accommodation than does the Japanese code of morality.

Little remains to record the presence of the Japanese immigrants, except perhaps the 378 headstones in the Japanese cemetery at Broome and the scores of inquest files in the Queensland State Archives, most of which record how yet another Japanese pearl diver, bent on earning more, tried to cut down the time lost in staged ascents.<sup>45</sup> In the United States, many Americans of Japanese descent today cultivate farms established by their immigrant forbears. But only a handful of Japanese immigrants in Australia married. Under the Immigration Restriction Act there could be no 'picture brides'. Today, one or two Japanese names survive here. Although most of those who settled on the Australian mainland probably came to work on the cane-fields, very few ever became farmers.<sup>46</sup> The typical occupations of the Japanese who remained after 1902 were field labourer, mill-hand, boatman, launderer and itinerant station cook. Apart from these there were a very few storekeepers and artisans (boat-builders and carpenters).<sup>47</sup> The Queensland legislation prohibiting Asians from selecting land or leasing more than five acres is a partial but not a complete explanation, for even before the enactment of the Leases to Aliens Restriction Act very few Japanese leased land.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *Age* 22 February 1946.

<sup>45</sup> S. Saitō, *Ōsutoraria tsūshin*, (Tokyo: Kokusai Kaihatsu Jānaru sha, 1971), p. 112.

From evidence presented to the Royal Commission on the Pearl-Shelling Industry it appears that the death-rate among Japanese divers in Australia from this cause in the year 1911 was 11 per cent. Commonwealth of Australia, *Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter C of A, PP) 1919 vol. 3, p. 593, q. 607 ff.

<sup>46</sup> From the applications for exemption from the Queensland Sugar Cultivation Act of 1913 it appears that there were at that date only 19 Japanese cane-farmers (Queensland Archives AGS/N359 159G 'List of Cane-Farmers'). The applications for Alien Registration in 1917 reveal an additional seven who were corn-farmers in that State (Commonwealth Archives, Brisbane Repository, Japanese Applications for Alien Registration 1916). On internment in 1941 14 of the Japanese residents in Queensland gave their occupations as farmer or vegetable gardener. Only 7 appear to have possessed any assets, of whom only 3 appear to have leased more than 5 acres. (Commonwealth Archives, Melbourne Repository, MP1103).

<sup>47</sup> Application for Alien Registration 1916. Internees' Australian Army Forms A112, 1941.

<sup>48</sup> *NGB-1905*, p. 240.

Some people had big plans for Japanese agriculture in Australia, but none of these saw the light of day. The South Australian Government in 1876 supported the scheme of Hack, a local missionary, to establish Japanese selectors in the Northern Territory. The Japanese Government, however, vetoed this.<sup>49</sup> Alexander Marks in May 1896 wrote to the Foreign Minister:

For the last two years I have been using my private influence to obtain a position in the Torres Straits for a Japanese colony and trying to obtain a large concession of territory from the Queensland Government.<sup>50</sup>

Like much that Marks did, this appears to have been quite on his own initiative. Whether the Foreign Minister replied is unknown; in 1898 J. L. Parsons, a former Cabinet Minister and Administrator of the Northern Territory, attempted to arrange the sale of a large area of private land there to Japanese for cultivation. He was prevented from doing so by the South Australian and the Japanese Governments.<sup>51</sup> In the same year, Komine, a successful Japanese pearler at Thursday Island, applied for naturalisation so that he could hold land as trustee for 'a number of wealthy Japanese' desirous of investing 'many thousands of pounds' in cultivating sugar and other tropical products in the Cairns district.<sup>52</sup> By that time the Queensland Government had decided that no more Asians were to be naturalised. Komine transferred his activities to German New Guinea where in 1914 he was officially commended for assisting the Australian Expeditionary Force in capturing the German naval yacht 'Komet'.

There were others who, like Komine, left Australia prosperous men. Nakagawa Matsugorō, the 'Tommy Japan' in the winning Tattersall's syndicate had in the ten years preceding his win risen from steward on the island trader *Ripple* (which, though badly wounded, he heroically defended against an attack by natives at Bougainville),<sup>53</sup> to the proprietor of two billiard saloons and a boarding house on Thursday Island.<sup>54</sup> Another unsuccessful applicant for naturalisation was Satō Torajirō. He arrived in Thursday Island in 1893 aged 25. He had already acquired a law degree at

<sup>49</sup> NGB-1877, p. 422.

<sup>50</sup> Archives of Japanese Foreign Ministry file MT 3.8.2.33.

<sup>51</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 July 1898; NGB-1898, vol. 2, p. 651.

<sup>52</sup> Queensland State Archives COL/73 Home Sec. 1898/05050.

<sup>53</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 September 1880.

<sup>54</sup> T. Hattori, *Nankyū no shin shokumin—Thursday Island*, (Tokyo: Hakubunsha, 1894), p. 11.

the University of Michigan. By the time he returned to Japan in 1901 he was a prosperous businessman with interests in pearling, ship-building and trade. On his return to Japan he founded a newspaper, the *Yokohama Shimbun*, was twice elected to the House of Representatives, and became a large landowner in Korea.<sup>55</sup>

There is little in the above story that is surprising. It was natural that a British colony of settlement with a large and enfranchised working class should wish to build the community in its own image and exclude races that it patently could not anglicise. This ideal meant as much to Australian Ministers in the 1930s<sup>56</sup> as it did to Reid and the other Premiers when they championed Asian exclusion at the Colonial Conference in the year of the Diamond Jubilee. It was not until the 1960s that people found that the dream had vanished unobtrusively some years before. It is not surprising that men of Hughes' generation, with this ideal and with the recollection of Chinese immigration and the towns in Australia with Chinese majorities that resulted, should have insisted on the complete exclusion of Japanese settlers. With the knowledge that we now have it seems obvious that the admission of Japanese merchants to settlement would not have prejudiced the attainment of their ideal. However with the recollection fresh in their memory of labourers arriving with merchants' passports in 1898, it is hardly surprising that in 1901 the Federal Government was prepared to take no chances—particularly as no one wanted Japanese merchants anyway.

Since 1952 a small number of Japanese have been admitted for permanent residence. Until the end of the Occupation, Australia refused to allow those of her servicemen who had married Japanese to bring them to Australia. This policy was abandoned only a few weeks before the Peace Treaty came into effect. Although figures are not available, it is thought that about 600 Japanese war brides were admitted.<sup>57</sup> The contrast between the long and disheartening struggle fought by the husbands and their well-wishers<sup>58</sup> before this was permitted and the ready acceptance of the brides by the Australian community may perhaps cause future historians, with some justification, to see this as a watershed in the development of

<sup>55</sup> Wakayama-ken, *Wakayama-ken imin shi* (Wakayama-shi: Wakayama kencho, 1957) p. 580-82.

<sup>56</sup> E.g. Pearce to Bruce, Cable No. 115 10 December 1934 (CAO A981, Trade 68, Part 1).

<sup>57</sup> *Mainichi Shimbun*, 4 October 1959.

<sup>58</sup> For some details see I. Carter, *Alien Blossom*, (Melbourne: Lansdowne 1965), passim.

Australian attitudes to the Japanese. The success that the very large majority of these women earned in their roles as wives, mothers and citizens in a new country<sup>59</sup> was no doubt one of the factors that made it relatively easy for the Australian Government in 1956 to lift the ban on the naturalisation of Asians, which had been in operation since Federation: Asians became eligible for naturalisation upon marriage to an Australian; other Asians became eligible after 15 years residence.<sup>60</sup> This enabled the war brides and the handful of Japanese who had remained since before the passing of the Immigration Restriction Act to become citizens. It ended the disqualification of the latter from old-age pensions. In 1956, the way was also opened for the occasional 'highly qualified and distinguished person' to enter for an indefinite stay and, if allowed by the Immigration Department to remain for as long as 15 years, to become naturalised.

In 1966 this latter category was enlarged to include 'persons with specialised technical skills for appointments for which local residents are not available', and naturalisation became possible after 5 years.<sup>61</sup> According to a statement by the responsible Minister in 1968, a non-European, in order to qualify for admission under this category would need to possess a special skill which is in demand in the Australian community; 'as a rule of thumb' he would need to be a university graduate; there would have to be the probability that he would be accepted by the people with whom he mixed, who would recognise his work 'by the way he dresses, the things he likes'.<sup>62</sup> In the light of this it is not surprising that out of 2,244 non-Europeans approved for settlement during the first three years of the new system (March 1966-February 1969) 1,960 were residing in Commonwealth or former Commonwealth countries, Europe, or the U.S.A., and that in comparison with 39 Japanese (19 principals and 20 dependents) there were 878 Indians and more than 550 Hong Kong or Straits' Chinese. Occupationally the Japanese were also at a disadvantage. The 2,244 non-Europeans approved were made up of 812 principals and their 1,432 dependents. Of the 812 principals the largest single occupational category was medical doctors, 183. None of these were Japanese; for a Japanese medical degree is not recognised in Australia. Of these 19 Japanese principals, 11 were academics,

<sup>59</sup> *Mainichi Shimbun*, 4 October 1959.

<sup>60</sup> *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (Hereafter CPD) *Representatives*, vol. 13, p. 1595, 18 October 1956, Mr Holt.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 March 1966, Mr Opperman.

<sup>62</sup> As reported in the *Age* 16 July 1968.



research workers, teachers or librarians. The 19 were selected from some 3,250 inquirers.<sup>63</sup>

Before the War the only Japanese admitted to Australia were, generally speaking, merchants (and their clerks and domestic servants), divers, students and tourists. Since the early 1960s, with the emergence of Japan as the principal market for our mineral exports and the need for Japanese capital and 'know-how' in 'joint ventures' in this and other industries, Japanese have been admitted for limited periods in managerial and specialist roles and, on rare occasions, as skilled tradesmen. This has involved considerable changes in traditional attitudes—particularly on the part of the Australian Labor Party and the trade union movement. In 1963, for example, the Leader of the Labor Opposition in the Western Australian Parliament agreed that there were occasions when it was reasonable that the Japanese should be able to send geologists, technicians and 'certain forms of management' to mines in which Japanese interests were concerned.<sup>64</sup> To this end his Party accepted legislation that empowered the Minister to issue certificates of exemption from Section 291 of the old Western Australian Mines Act which prohibited the employment of Asiatic and African aliens.<sup>65</sup> In 1965 the Western Australian Trades and Labour Council announced that there would be no objection to importing *skilled* tradesmen from Japan or elsewhere provided that there was a genuine shortage of Australian labour in the categories involved.<sup>66</sup> On this basis it permitted some Japanese specialists to be employed on a dredge to enlarge the harbour at Port Hedland to accommodate ore carriers. The Japanese were enrolled as members of the AWU. A great deal of water had passed under the bridge since the turn of the century when the AWU adopted its famous rule excluding coloured aliens from union membership.<sup>67</sup> In 1967 strikes did occur at Port Hedland in the course of implementing a similar agreement with the AWU regarding the employment of Japanese on a second dredge. The strikes were, however, settled satisfactorily on the basis of the principles enunciated in 1965.<sup>68</sup> According to a statement made by the Minister for Immigration

<sup>63</sup> These figures are calculated from information kindly provided by the Department of Immigration.

<sup>64</sup> *Western Australia Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 164, (1963), pp. 754-57.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 166 (1963) pp. 3915-17.

<sup>66</sup> [Perth] *Daily News*, 14 January 1965.

<sup>67</sup> *Australian Workers' Union Constitution and General Rules—as adopted at a Conference of Delegates of the Queensland and Southern Workers Unions at Brisbane, February 1904*, § 5.

<sup>68</sup> *West Australian*, 16 and 28 August, 28 and 30 September 1967.

to the Federal Parliament in 1967, Government policy in such cases is, after close consultation with the unions, to issue permits for periods no longer than the time likely to be required to train Australians for the job (e.g. an initial permit for 6 months, renewable thereafter at 4-monthly intervals for a maximum of 2 years).<sup>69</sup>

As of 31 December 1969 there were in Australia 225 Japanese specialists with 40 dependants. These were in addition to the 487 managerial and executive staff with their 625 dependants attached to the 146 branches of Japanese companies in Australia.<sup>70</sup>

Naturally a policy that regards them as less desirable than the nationals of other non-English-speaking countries with lower levels of education, public health and per-capita income is distasteful to the Japanese. Nevertheless, as emigration is not a Japanese national interest, discrimination against Japanese as settlers has not been the subject of official protest by the Japanese Government, although there is clear evidence that it disturbs well-disposed Japanese officials who regard warmer relations between the two communities as highly desirable politically for both countries.<sup>71</sup> Recently, however, Australian procedures for the admission of businessmen for temporary stays have been under attack from Japanese firms<sup>72</sup> and these have been given open support by the Japanese Government.<sup>73</sup> On this subject the Tokyo correspondent of the Australian Financial Review (5 June 1970) made this interesting comment

An analysis of the situation indicates that these days at least this type of discrimination is a good deal less common than most people think. But it is difficult to convince Japanese businessmen of this, partly because of actual discrimination in the past, but mainly because many Japanese tend to transfer their anger at Australian discrimination against Japanese immigrants into this area.

Early in the same report he says that

. . . many businessmen who do considerable business with Australia, while professing an enthusiasm for Australia, also

<sup>69</sup> CPD (*Representatives*), vol. 57, pp. 1566-67 (3 October 1967).

<sup>70</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 May 1970.

<sup>71</sup> See reviews of the Japanese Ambassador's book *Ôsutorariya tsûshin in the Australian*, 11 June 1971 and *The Australian Financial Review*, 9 July 1971.

<sup>72</sup> See *The Australian Financial Review*, 5 June 1970.

<sup>73</sup> See the remarks of the Consul-General in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 May 1970.

make clear that they have a great deal more sympathy for a nation like Canada because of that country's vastly better racial image—although a cynic might point out that it has only a marginally better performance.

In view of recent developments in the Australian Labor Party's policy on immigration it is perhaps appropriate to consider here whether there are likely to be significant changes in the administration of Australian immigration policy towards non-Europeans within the next few years.

At the Federal Conference of the ALP in June (1971) a new clause, 'the avoidance of discrimination on any grounds of race or colour of skin or nationality' was added as one of the bases of ALP immigration policy.<sup>74</sup> A cynic could argue that this is without significance since among the other bases listed is an effective escape clause, 'the avoidance of the difficult social and economic problems which may follow from an influx of peoples having different standards of living, traditions and cultures'. When taken together with the stated views of leaders of the Party, however, the non-discrimination clause is, in my view, important. In proposing the Clause Mr Dunstan described immigration policy as administered by the Liberal Government as 'the grossest of racial discrimination' and deplored the fact that Australia had accepted fewer Asian migrants since the War than Canada had in one year. Mr Whitlam appears to hold similar beliefs. As long ago as 1966 he is reported to have said:

If it is necessary for people to come here to install or service equipment which we cannot produce ourselves, or cannot produce promptly enough for our needs, then if they desire, they should be eligible for naturalisation after the same period of residence, wherever they come from.<sup>75</sup>

Once again a cynic could argue that this need imply no change in policy since in fact the period of residence for the naturalisation of foreigners is five years for both Europeans and non-Europeans alike. To me, however, a more reasonable interpretation is that Mr Whitlam favours in such circumstances the admission of Japanese (if they are technically the best qualified) as readily as, say, Greeks and on a permanent, not a temporary, basis. It also suggests to me that he feels that he will be able to muster sufficient support for these views in the unions. Accordingly I regard the June Con-

<sup>74</sup> As reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 June 1971.

<sup>75</sup> *Age*, 19 January 1966.

ference decision as presaging changes in our immigration procedures that would make for a better Australian image in Japan if Labor gains office. Furthermore, insofar as the non-Labor parties have, despite their Hugheses and their Pettys, traditionally tended to adopt policies on coloured immigration slightly less rigorous than those of the Labor Party, it can be argued that irrespective of who wins the next Federal elections, the policy of the Australian Government will move some distance in the direction favoured by Mr Dunstan.

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relations, 1871–1971

This text is taken from *Bridging Australia and Japan: Volume 1*.  
*The writings of David Sissons, historian and political scientist*,  
edited by Arthur Stockwin and Keiko Tamura, published 2016 by  
ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.