Introduction

The Australia–Japan Research Project

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The Australia–Japan Research Project is pleased to be able to publish From a hostile shore: Australia and Japan at war in New Guinea. It contains a selection of modified essays and seminars from the AJRP website, which have been chosen because they are representative of the research undertaken for the project. New Guinea was an unwelcoming place far from home for the many Australians and Japanese involved in its air, land and sea campaigns. Participants from both sides faced an enemy they did not understand, in battles that often exceeded limits of physical and psychological endurance. The AJRP presents this book in the hope that the experiences of those who fought, suffered, died and grieved as a result of the war can be faithfully passed on to a generation of English and Japanese readers now distant in time from these hostile shores.

This introduction outlines the history of the project and introduces some of its activities. The role of New Guinea in Japanese wartime planning is the subject of chapter 1, which was written by Tanaka Hiromi, a prominent military historian from the National Defense Academy in Yokosuka, Japan, and Fellow of the Australia–Japan Research Project. Tanaka examines the significance of the New Guinea theatre within the wider context of the war. Chapter 2, originally a seminar by the Australian War Memorial’s Principal Historian, Peter Stanley, explores Australian fears of Japanese invasion during the war. The following two chapters examine the air and sea campaigns in the New Guinea region from a Japanese and Australian perspective. Shindo Hiroynuki, a military historian at the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) in Tokyo, provides an overview of Japanese air activities. David Stevens, from the Sea Power Centre in Canberra, examines the struggle for maritime power in the region and the influence of these campaigns on land operations.

Chapter 5, written by Tamura Keiko, a senior research officer with the project, explores the war experience of a Japanese soldier in New Guinea, based on his personal diary. The diary, which has since been returned to the soldier’s family in Japan, contains an often poignantly account of life far from home, and includes many poems which illustrate
encounters with the local people and environment. Mark Johnston, an Australian military historian and author, examines the attitudes of Australian soldiers to their Japanese counterparts in chapter 6. Wartime propaganda and stereotypes, and the brutal nature of the campaign, led most Australians to hate and fear their enemy, despite favourable evaluation of their martial prowess and occasional recognition of their civilian past and humanity. The last two chapters explore the postwar experience of two groups: the Japanese soldiers awaiting repatriation in Rabaul, and the families of Australians who died on the Montevideo Maru. In chapter 7, Tanaka Hiromi explores measures undertaken at Rabaul to feed and clothe the Japanese soldiers and prepare them for life back in Japan. In the final chapter, Margaret Reeson introduces the experience of the families of men who disappeared from Rabaul during the war.

Readers looking for further information about the project, as well as detailed footnotes for most of the chapters contained in this book, should go to the project’s website at www.awm.gov.au/ajrp. Japanese names throughout the book follow traditional Japanese order; that is, surname followed by given name.

Overview of the AJRP

In August 1994, then Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi announced the “Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative”, a project to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War the following year. The aim of the Initiative was to enable the people of Japan to “look squarely at the past” concerning the “unbearable suffering and sorrow caused among many people in the neighbouring countries of Asia” during the war. The Initiative provided support for historical research and exchange programs within several former Allied countries, including the Netherlands, Britain and New Zealand. Within Japan, the Initiative provided for the establishment of the Japan Center for Asian Historical Documents (www.jacar.go.jp).

The Embassy of Japan in Canberra began discussions with the Australian War Memorial early in 1996 to consider how best the aims of the Initiative could be realised in Australia. A planning workshop in December of that year was followed by a symposium in March 1997. Academics, military historians, archivists, Japan specialists and other interested parties from Australia and Japan gathered to discuss issues concerning the study of Japan–Australia relations, including the type, location and quantity of available source materials. (Many of the papers from the symposium have been published online at www.awm.gov.au/journal/j30/index.htm.) The symposium exposed the diverse range of projects and challenges involved in the study of Japan–Australia relations. The Australia–Japan Research Project was established in April 1997 as a result of these discussions. The project’s aim was to promote research on Japan–Australia relations and to facilitate exchanges between Australian and Japanese scholars and educational institutions.

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approaches available for the fledgling project, and the breadth of material available for studies of the relationship of the two countries.

It was decided that the AJRP would be established within the Military History Section of the Australian War Memorial, and that it would aim to provide a resource for historians and others interested in the relationship between Australia and Japan, especially in war, with a focus on the period 1901–57. The scope of the project’s charter is recognition of the basic lack of information available for the study of Japan’s war, particularly against Australia. Further, the few Japanese historians who have worked in these areas have not been known in Australia. Even the most basic secondary texts, such as the Senshi sosho (War history series), have not been available in English translation. A great opportunity existed for the project to provide finding aids for original historical material, to enable access to basic secondary texts, and to bring together researchers despite linguistic and cultural barriers.

The AJRP has been part of the Military History Section (originally Historical Research Section) of the Memorial since its inception. Staff of the project have greatly benefited from the experience and knowledge gained from working closely with military historians. The AJRP has been able to provide some assistance in return, by providing language support and advising on matters related to the project’s research. The varied activities of the AJRP have required a diverse range of skills from its staff. Japanese-language expertise was considered essential, owing to the nature of the historical materials described in the database, though later activities have admitted staff with a background in history or military history. In addition, much of the design of the project’s database and website was conducted in house by AJRP staff, after an initial consultancy from a local Canberra IT firm.

Activities of the AJRP

The construction of a database of historical sources relating to the period 1901–57 has been the core activity of the project. The database, which was later published on the internet, initially contained descriptions in English of Japanese-language documents. The underlying database for the AJRP was carefully designed in consultation with archivists and historians. While focusing on standards of archival descriptions, AJRP staff ensured that the database would enable historians and researchers to locate and access historical materials of most use to their research interests. The main feature of the database is the ability to browse records by several different categories, such as...
location, keyword, date, and functional classification (for example, “map” or “diary”). In addition, users can locate historical records in the database through interactive maps, or through a traditional search engine.

The first series of records described in the database was a collection of original Japanese-language documents known as AWM82. This series of approximately 800 items consists of two main parts: items captured in the field in the South-West Pacific Area, and items produced in the immediate postwar period at Rabaul. The former documents were captured in the battlefield and collated by the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS). Such captured documents were evaluated and classified by ATIS staff to indicate their usefulness as intelligence for current operations. These include official documents such as unit diaries, orders, battle reports, embarkation and nominal rolls, maps, personnel records and citation reports, as well as personal items such as military pocketbooks, savings books, personal diaries, letters and postcards. The second main group of documents was produced in the immediate postwar period and relate to the surrender and internment of Japanese soldiers at Rabaul while awaiting repatriation to Japan. These were collected by the Headquarters 8th Military District and include official reports, letters between the Japanese and Australian authorities, administrative documents concerning life in the camps, as well as personal items such as address books, diaries, letters, a song book, and educational material.

Around 85 personal items from the collection, such as military pocket books and postal savings books, were returned to the families of Japanese soldiers after a list of AWM82 documents compiled by General Kuwada Etsu (Ret’d) was published in Gunji Shigaku (Military History) in 1982 and 1983. Further lists of the collection were produced by Doris Heath, a wartime translator and interpreter, and Professor Tanaka Hiromi from the National Defense Academy. The latter list was used as the guide for entries in the AJRP database.

After completing the listing of AWM82 in the database, AJRP staff expanded the coverage of the database to include a list of administrative documents and newspaper articles concerning Australian involvement in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF). These items had been collected by the Kure Municipal History Office. The list was provided by Professor Chida Takeshi during a visit sponsored by the Japan Foundation in December 1998. Another section of the database details documents, similar in kind to those official records in AWM82, held by the NIDS library. These items were the 8th century poem "If I go by sea" by Otomo no Yakamochi was made famous in song during the Second World War. This illustrated version was painted in Rabaul after the war.
identified by Professor Hara Takeshi, a senior NIDS historian, during the planning symposium in 1997.

Another major section of the database concerns Japanese-language propaganda leaflets produced by the Far Eastern Liaison Office (FELO) and distributed to Japanese-occupied areas in the South-West Pacific Area during the war. These leaflets, a set of which is held by the Memorial, consist of three main types: surrender leaflets, news bulletins, and nostalgia leaflets (depicting domestic scenes of life in Japan), and were part of a wider campaign to weaken fighting spirit among the Japanese and build morale among local peoples. The AJRP was able to use its skills to provide an online finding aid for this valuable collection.

Captured Japanese-language documents deemed of strategic and operational importance, such as those held in AWM82 and by the NIDS library, were translated and distributed by ATIS during the war. These translations, in addition to transcripts of interrogations of Japanese prisoners, research reports and other intelligence records, are held by the Memorial in the series AWM55 and AWM56. Several printed indexes are available for this collection. The similarity of this material to Japanese captured records, however, has led the AJRP to incorporate descriptions of the ATIS material into the project’s database.

Collaboration has been a cornerstone of AJRP efforts to disseminate its research. Initially, four specialists were invited to contribute bibliographical essays that would complement the detailed database descriptions. These essays, and several more which were later commissioned, provide a detailed guide to research materials available for the study of various aspects of the wartime experience of the two countries. The essays concern official Australian records of the Pacific War (David Horner), historical records for the study of war in Papua and New Guinea (Hank Nelson), Australian unit histories of the Pacific War (Richard Pelvin), as well as an annotated selection from the photograph collection of the Memorial (Richard Reid). Further essays concern records relating to BCOF held by the Kure Municipal History Office (Keiko Tanura), and an overview of the AWM82 collection (Tanaka Hiromi). More recent essays discuss Japanese unit histories (Iwamoto Hiromitsu), and sources for the study of Japanese submarine operations against Australia (David Stevens) and Japanese attacks on the Australian mainland (Shindo Hiroyuki).

In addition, several Australian and Japanese scholars have presented seminars on themes
related to the aims of the project. In particular, a seminar series was held in 1998–99 with the assistance of the Japan Foundation. Topics discussed in these seminars, which have been attended by Memorial historians, curators and research centre staff, as well as academics from universities in Canberra, include an overview of Japanese military historical sources after the war (Tanaka Hitomori), the compilation of the BCOF history in Kure (Chida Takeshi), sources for the study of Allied prisoners of war (Utsumi Aiko), and the archives tradition in Japan (Muta Shohei). Other ad hoc seminars have been given on comfort women (Yoshimi Yoshiaki) and the Japanese officer class (Ted Cook).

These seminars and other activities have resulted in a network of contacts throughout Australia, Japan, the United States, Papua New Guinea, Britain and New Zealand. In some cases, the AJRP has been responsible for bringing together researchers with similar interests, but who have operated in entirely different fields. Of particular note is the continuing contact between the project and the premier institutes for military history in Japan, NIDS and the National Defense Academy.

There have also been numerous informal visits to the Memorial by scholars, researchers and others interested in aspects of the Japanese experience of war, or in the relationship between Australians (and other Allies) with the Japanese. In many cases, the AJRP has been able to provide specific assistance to these visitors to enable them to quickly locate material relevant to their interests. Noteworthy examples of such material are the diary of Kusaka Jin’ichi, a senior naval commander at Rabaul, and the diary of infantry soldier Tamura Yoshikazu, the subject of chapter 6 of this volume.

In addition to providing translations of several seminars and essays, the AJRP has undertaken to translate sections of the Japanese official account of the war in New Guinea. The Senshi sosho (War history series), compiled by the War History Office of NIDS, is a significant record of Australia’s major enemy during the Second World War, but inaccessible to Australian military historians and others without Japanese-language skills. The AJRP has received permission from NIDS to translate and publish on our website, extracts from the volumes dealing with the land campaigns in New Guinea, especially those relating to Papua early in the war.

Popular history
One of the central issues that has concerned the AJRP is the question of perspective in military history. Is it possible, for example, to represent objectively the experiences of former enemies, and even allies, without resorting to stereotypes and obscurity? Barriers are.

Introduction The Australia–Japan Research Project

加えて、日豪の研究者たちは、プロジェクトの目的に沿ったテーマでセミナーを行った。特に国際交流基金の援助で、1998年から1999年にかけてのセミナーシリーズが実施した。セミナー出席者は、戦争記念館関係の歴史研究者や学芸員や研究センター職員だけではなく、キャンベラの大学関係者も含んでいた。その内容は、田中進己による戦後の日本軍史の概要や、千田武志による英連邦占領軍史の概要や、内海愛子の連合軍戦争補償研究資料や、牟田昌平による日本の公文書の伝統であった。他の例としてセミナーでは、吉見義明が戦後懸案について、そして、リド・クックが日本の士官制度に関して発表した。

これらのセミナーや他の活動を通じて、オーストラリア、日本、アメリカ、オーストラリア、イギリス、そしてニュージーランドに広がるネットワークが出来上がった。また、戦争記念館で非公式訪問者のAJRPは、学者がそれらが関心のある資料を探究するために適切なサポートをした。その中でも、重要資料の例としては、ラバウルの海軍司令官であった百崎長一記念館で、第6章で触れられている歩兵田村義一記念館であった。

セミナー発表内容は写真を翻訳するだけではなく、AJRPはニューギニア戦の日本の公式記録の翻訳及び紹介をすることである。防衛研究所戦史編纂部の「戦史編纂」は、第二次世界大戦でのオーストラリアの主要敵国の戦史を紹介するために作られたものである。しかしながら、日本の歴史解釈能力に乏しく、オーストラリアの軍事史研究者や他の研究者達は被占領国を対象とした研究がされていない。AJRPは防衛研究所の許可を得て、ニューギニアにおける陸上作戦、特に戦争初期のニューギニア東部での作戦に関する巻より抜粋を翻訳し、プロジェクトウェブサイトに掲載している。

一般向け歴史記述
AJRPの一貫の関心事は、軍事史研究の視点についてであった。たとえば、元軍の経験あるいは味方の経験でさえも、固定観念や不明瞭さにとらえられることなく、客観的
of language, culture and national difference are often deemed too high to scale. Too often, this has resulted in historians writing accounts of the Second World War in the Pacific that lack a clear indication of how the other side experienced or represented their own encounter with war.

In an effort to engage these problems the AJRP undertook the Remembering the war in New Guinea project. It was supported by the Toyota Foundation and conducted in collaboration with scholars from the Australian War Memorial, the Australian National University, the National Defense Academy of Japan, NIDS, the University of Papua New Guinea, and from other institutions in Australia, the United States and Britain. The project aimed to bring together historians from different cultural, national and linguistic backgrounds to explore the diversity of experiences of war in New Guinea. The intention was not to find a common perspective from which to represent these experiences, but rather to provide a forum whereby a diversity of viewpoints could be freely exchanged in an international symposium and workshop, interviews, and other related research.

The results of the project are published on the internet and include transcripts from the symposium, detailed campaign histories, investigation of various themes, and answers to common questions related to the war in New Guinea. The website caters for all, from academics to students, with any interested person able to find out more about the experience of those involved.

In 2002 the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the battles in the Owen Stanley Range in Papua resulted in renewed popular interest in Australia about the war in the Pacific, particularly the campaigns along the Kokoda Trail. An immense amount of discussion and opinions filled the print, radio and television media, and a number of new monographs and articles discussed the details and significance of these battles against the Japanese in 1942. Despite this exposure and attention, it was clear that even though sixty years had passed, there was still little known about the Japanese experience of these campaigns. On a strategic and operational level, what were the Japanese intentions in New Guinea, and how well were they prepared? On a personal level, what was the experience of the individual Japanese infantryman, or the Formosan labourer, or the civilian doctor, all of whom found themselves in a hostile place far from home?

Clearly, there is a need for these stories to be told and for further research to be undertaken. The Human face of war section of the project’s website is an attempt to tell some
of these stories against the backdrop of histories of the campaigns written for an audience with different backgrounds. Some of the stories are well known in Japan among military circles, but relatively unknown in Australia. Others attempt to clarify misconceptions about the Japanese campaigns, or to explore themes common to both groups of combatants. These sections of the project’s website are provided in English and Japanese. It is the hope of the project that young people from both countries can see something of the experience of their former enemies, and move beyond stereotypical misconceptions and accounts of war soaked with nationalist sentiment.

The continued support of the Japanese Government through the Embassy of Japan in Canberra, and the Australian War Memorial, has enabled the project to enhance its reputation as an invaluable resource for historians and those interested in the history of the relations between our two countries. The AJRP is confident that the recent addition to its website of interpretive content aimed at a more popular audience, in both English and Japanese, will contribute to developing more balanced and accurate historical views of the experience of war, despite this often being painful and confronting. An awareness that a former enemy’s experience of war was often very similar to our own, though born from a different cultural and historical context, is, after all, the true nature of reconciliation.

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