
~~DOES~~ MAKING JAPAN STILL MATTER: TEACHERS, STUDY-ABROAD AND RELEVANCE

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ABSTRACT

With the rise of China and the maturation of the Australia–Japan relationship, the past decade—particularly within the generalist community—has increasingly heard the call: “Does Japan Still Matter?” The analogy repeatedly used to describe the bilateral relationship has been of a stable but unexciting old marriage. With this talk I argue that it is time to shift the discourse from why Japan still matters, or from encouraging acceptance of the new status quo, to a discourse about how we affirmatively make Japan relevant and exciting for the Australian community. It is time to shift towards selling Japan rather than defending its position. With this new approach, the focus is more on our youth—that is, students—than the established business, government and community leaders. To capture youth’s interest, it is critical to build a renewed emphasis on supporting our teaching infrastructure, increasing our study abroad to Japan through mechanisms such as the New Colombo Plan, and making Japan relevant to the interests and aspirations of a new generation.

Editor’s note:

The following paper is an edited transcript of Professor Anderson’s keynote address on day 1 of NSJLE.

Thank you very much for the overly kind introduction and the very funny Japanese. My apologies for not having PowerPoints. I'm going old-school with this and actually talking to you rather than to my PowerPoints, but my apologies for that beforehand. What better honour than to stand before you, the Japanese teachers who have contributed so much to this country, but to my own personal development too. And what better honour than to have that introduction by a former student. It really is a neat link of your contribution to us and those who speak Japanese within Australian society, flowing through in our roles as teacher to wonderful students such as Matt.

So, Your Excellency, Mr Endo from The Japan Foundation, Sydney, other distinguished guests, thank you for coming today. Also, thank you very much to my friends and colleagues, Chihiro, Robyn and the others, for extending the invitation for me to be here. In good Japanese fashion I think I was here thirty minutes early. I know there is a smattering of people here from the international conference; but with that, I also extend an apology to you, because I won't be talking about Japanese language pedagogy today. I'm going to try to take a slightly broader view and talk about Japanese language education within Australian society.

I was very glad Matt mentioned in his introduction that I have been a Japanese language teacher. I don't know if Matt took my course, but I used to teach Reading Japanese Law for lawyers and I had the privilege of supervising students as they did some competitions in Japan. But that is not my background and I am nowhere near the expert that any of you in the room are, and so it would be very presumptuous of me to explore that. Instead I'll stay on what is slightly easier territory for me, which is to talk about the language policy debate in Australia and particularly the role of Australian–Japanese relations.

How I want to start today is to talk a little bit about myself; I want to give you my Japanese story. One of my closest colleagues is Carol Hayes. Carol is not able to be with us today, but many of you will have heard her talk in the past about an exercise she's been doing for the last five years in her intermediate Japanese course centred around my Japan story. I'm going to use that as inspiration to start with. And I'll have three themes that will then run through the second half of my talk, where I'll talk about three pillars of the Australia–Japan relationship, very similar to what His Excellency gave us in his introduction. Then I'll shift into the last bit, which is to have a call to action to all in the room to come up with ideas about how we can enhance Australia–Japan relations, particularly cognizant of Prime Minister Abe's recent visit.

I always begin for an Australian audience with explaining my "North of Queensland" accent. There are one or two people who can pick my accent, which is indeed North of Queensland. I grew up in Alaska, in a small town – didn't have a passport, had never been overseas, was really interested in sports. And because of sports, ended up going to a university on the east coast of the United States six time zones away, really knowing nothing of the world. But as I went to this place, a place called Middlebury, I thought, "Well, I'm probably not going to be a professional skier", which is what I wanted to do, "so I'd better do something on the edge". And on the edge I thought, "Well, I'm at this place called Middlebury" – some of you might know it, it has a good reputation in languages – "so while I'm studying economics and politics I might as well pick up a language". And I couldn't enrol in the Russian class because it was the middle of the Cold War, and in the Cold War you couldn't study politics, economics and Russian. You had to either study literature in Russian or you had to do something else. And so, literally on the first day of class my supervisor said, "Well, what are you gonna do?" And I said, "I don't know. What do you have?" And he said, "Well, we teach twenty-three languages," and I said, "I don't know. Pick a hard one." And so, not having a passport, not having any background in Japan, I went with Japanese.

My first teacher – many of you might know – was Professor Miyaji, a very famous person on the American scene. My second professor was Professor Makino-sensei, who I know has come here many times. And my third professor was Professor Endo at University of Michigan, who I know many of you will also know. Those were my first three teachers. And as I was studying politics and economics and only occasionally doing a little bit of Japanese homework... I remember the first year of Japanese there were fifty students in the class and I finished forty-ninth. So, I persevered and the next year there was only thirty students, so I was definitely going to do better. And I finished about twentieth in the class. And then during the summer I did the Middlebury language program and indeed that's where Makino-sensei was my instructor. And it finally clicked, it finally made some sense to me, and from there I went on and studied at Nanzan University in the Ryugakusei [overseas students] Program and then came back, graduated from university and moved back to Alaska where I worked for an airline doing joint ventures, at that time mostly with ANA. From there I went to graduate school and as part of graduate school spent two years in Kobe. And one of the wonderful things about spending two years in Kobe is I was able to meet my now wife. From there, I was a commercial lawyer and then went back to university in England and ended up going back to Japan and teaching in Hokkaido University.

The second part of my story begins in 2001, when I moved to Australia to take up a position at the Australian National University in the Law School and in Asian Studies. At that time it was very easy. There was a position advertised for someone to teach Japanese Law. It wasn't Asian Law, it was Japanese Law. And it was very easy coming to this country as someone with a Japan background. I remember being a bit shocked in my second week in Australia being invited to the Japanese ambassador's house for dinner. That never would've happened in my wildest imagination – a kid growing up in Alaska without a passport, having dinner with the ambassador in his residence in my second week off the airplane. The point of that story is that in 2001, in Canberra... Japan – you didn't need to explain it, it was obvious. Everyone understood what was going on with Japan. Subsequently, in about 2006 I became head of the Japan Centre at ANU, and that was the time when Australia was just shifting into the period of the Asian Century conversation. And indeed Japan was still quite easy to explain to people, though there was a little bit of explaining to be done. The beginning of 2012, I moved from Canberra to Adelaide, where I am now the University of Adelaide's Pro-Vice Chancellor (International), and in that role I have had the opportunity to chair the Group of Eight International Strategy Committee and the Universities' Australia–Japan Strategy Committee.

Along with these transitions, my own role as advocate has changed too – from just having people know Japan without my explanation, to needing to saying a little bit about Japan, and most recently, in the last two years, to having to argue for Japan. In kind of clichéd terms I see these three periods in my life being understood in terms of the stages “Japan as Number One”, “the Asian Century” and “the China Century”. And that's one of the themes I want to bring out through my talk today. The other two themes – and I'll come back to these – are the importance of you, my teachers, in my own personal life, and the importance of getting in the country, feeling the land. I began my talk today by recognizing the connection between the indigenous people and this land, and I think that kind of land connection is an important one for all of us. I'll talk about that as part of my second theme. So, that's my story, but transitioning now into Australia–Japan relations.

When I wrote this address a couple of weeks ago, I was actually referencing back to 2010 when Foreign Minister Okada talked about shifting the Australia–Japan relationship from a complementary one to become a strategic partnership. But with Prime Minister Abe in Australia the last two days, I really think I need to use that as the next point for the conversation. If you heard or read the speech, I think you'll understand why I say we will look back in a number of years and see 2014 as the shift in the relationship. We've had our prime minister call Prime Minister Abe our closest friend in Asia; since then we've had “close partnership”, “friendship partnership”. We're changing the terminology, but everyone gets what we're on about, that there is an extremely close relationship between the two countries. That relationship has now moved beyond the traditional economic ties. And a lot of what the two prime ministers have been talking about most recently is what I would call the second pillar, the strategic ties between the countries. Underlining both of those are the people-to-people ties.

So, the three pillars of the relationship we normally talk about are the economic relationship, the strategic relationship and the human relationship. Let me review those three pillars before we make that shift into the future. The first one of course is the economic. In 1957, the Australia–Japan Commerce Agreement was signed, probably one of the most forward-thinking things that has happened, if you think about the time and how challenging that would have been. But it's on that foundation that Japan from the late 1960s all the way until 2009 was Australia's number one trading partner, our number one export market, during the era of Japan as Number One. We gained enormous penetration into that area. The Aussie beef brand had higher name recognition than Coca-Cola in Japan, and still does. So, enormous cooperation, ongoing. But the relationship, the economic one, while not decreasing – indeed it's still increasing – has been surpassed by the China relationship for Australia. In 2010, Japan fell from number two world economy to number three world economy. It was passed as Australia's first; it was passed by China becoming our number one trade partner. Subsequently, it was passed as China became our number one export market. And all of those things began a shift, which we can see played out in the newspapers quite clearly, to talking a lot more about China as our economic future.

The economic relationship with Japan is not static though, it's constantly moving, and there are two important newer developments. Everyone will be familiar with the EPA (Economic Partnership Agreement) signed in 2014 in April, when Prime Minister Abbott visited Japan. And we will see the impact of that going forward, but symbolically it was a very important moment. Perhaps what you're not as aware of, but that is more important I would say, is that foreign direct investment from Japan into Australia is increasing at a significant rate – such that in 2013 \$63 billion was invested by Japan into the Australian economy. That makes Japan the third largest foreign investor into Australia, but at a five year rate of fifteen percent increase. If we go on increasing even close to that going forward, Japan in the next three to five years will surpass the United Kingdom to be the second largest investor in Australia. There are some very significant investments as part of that – and again, I think a lot of this has been flying below the radar. Kirin bought Lion Nathan and

then subsequently National Foods, Asahi bought Schweppes, Suntory bought Frucor; Mitsui has invested significantly in the uranium mines and the wind farms; Mitsubishi, significant investments in coal and uranium. And indeed, that's why Prime Minister Abe didn't come to Sydney, but instead got on the plane to go to the Pilbara, way out in Western Australia. It's because Australia's largest foreign investment going through there is Japanese. So, the first pillar may indeed be trade related and is, of course, about overall economy size, but it's also about these foreign direct investments, which are deeper ties that have taken us from just trading things to actually being bound together.

The second pillar of the relationship is the one that's getting all of the press right now, and that is the strategic relationship. And for me, symbolically, this is the shift from the Japan as Number One era to the Asian Century era. Of course it predates that – it goes back to the 1990s – but most of the agreements around this period have been in the 2000s. So in 2007, we have the Joint Declaration on Security, making, for both Australia and Japan, our closest security ties with each other, after the United States. Also, slightly before that we have the Two-Plus-Two meetings. The Two-Plus-Two meetings are the Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers of the two countries meeting on an annual basis. Again, something on a level only seen with the United States, in both of those countries. You would have seen in the newspapers yesterday that this was enhanced yet again with the signing of the Military Intelligence Swap of Information. So we now have enormous bilateral ties, but as part of this triangle relationship with the United States.

Beyond the bilateral, though, it also goes to regional. Within the regional context, an important part has been peacekeeping. That's a story that begins in Cambodia in the early 1990s, where Australia and Japan were two of the five countries that were part of the peace settlement process, working very closely together. That advanced into East Timor, where peacekeeping was led by Australia, but Japan was one of the three countries that made a significant commitment. The Consul General here today could tell us a lot more about the Iraq cooperation than I, but very, very closely were Australia and Japan co-located in Iraq, and it's gone on to areas such as South Sudan and so forth. In other words, at a regional level when Australia deploys on these peacekeeping missions, oftentimes it's hand in hand with Japan.

This relationship goes beyond the bilateral and the regional also to the global level. The most famous example, of course, is APEC, the Asia Pacific Economic Community. People won't need reminding about the APEC story, but it was only because Australia and Japan aligned to push that through that it came about. Had it not been for Australia, had it not been for Japan, it wouldn't have happened. The APEC story is currently moving, I would say, on to the next story, which is the TPP, the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Still very controversial in Japan, but again with Australia and Japan as part of that, moving into this strategic relationship and cooperation at the global level as well. So, that second pillar of strategic partnership, as both the prime ministers said, will only get stronger as we go forward.

But for me, the most interesting bit is the bit you all participate in, myself as well, and that's the people-to-people connection – the human connections that are behind the economic utilitarianism or the security interest, but at the human level of engagement. The first of these is just the normal cultural exchanges. The Consul General mentioned the sister city relationships – at my last count there were 107 of these. Australia has nowhere near that number of sister city relationships with any other country in the world. And indeed, I haven't checked, but I'm pretty sure that would be number one in Japan as well for sister city relationships. Every single town from large to small in Australia you go to, you'll find an Australia-Japan society. Indeed, in my own Adelaide, I think we have three of them. (Lots of interesting reasons why you would have three. Sorry; that's a reference for any South Australians in the room.) But also, you'll be very familiar with things such as the Cowra cherry blossom festival or indeed the film festivals. You see this throughout Australia. Those people-to-people links are hugely important.

They're enhanced by the tourism links, and the inbound tourism to Australia that's happening now is not the kind that happened in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which was two-day trips to the Gold Coast. The tourism we're seeing now is much deeper, and therefore real bonds are developing off that. So, you have Japanese coming to do eco-tourism, cultural tourism. The demographic is older and so there are longer stays, enjoying the culture of Melbourne, enjoying the beauty of Kakadu. And you're also getting Australians going to Japan as tourists. The most famous of course is where I used to live, Hokkaido, and going out to Niseko, which is basically Australia-mura, but they're in many other places. I know my neighbour, a retired school teacher who had never been to Asia, decided to do autumn foliage viewing in Kyoto this year. That level of Australians, regular everyday Australians, going to Japan and seeing it as a regular normal place. In a different speech I could talk a lot about "normal", what is normal, but we'll save that for another day. The tourism bonds are in one way superficial, but we're moving beyond the transactional into these deeper kinds of relationships.

The third bit of the grassroots or people-to-people connection is the one you're involved with on a day-to-day basis, and that is education. As others said earlier, Japanese remains the most commonly taught language at the primary, secondary and tertiary level in Australia. On a per capita basis we stand ahead of everyone, except for Korea, for the number of people studying Japanese. And that's on the back of a massive investment by the Australian community, society and government over an extended period. We can date it to a number of points, but let's start back in 1983 when the NALSAS program came in. Between 1983 and 2003, for twenty years the Australian government invested significant funds into the Japanese language teaching infrastructure. Of course, that program was suspended for a more general program. We had the subsequent program in 2008–2011, NAALSP, coming in shorter-term but again going back to the fundamental idea. And I think Anne [de Kretser] this morning also mentioned the national curriculum, where not only do we have Asia as a co-curricular priority across all areas, we have the language curriculum coming in, and we have the enhancement of Japanese within that. What that says of general Australian society is a willingness to invest in you. That investment over now thirty years has left this country with the best Japanese language teaching infrastructure – and I use that word, *infrastructure* – in place. The only other country, I would argue, that could get even close to us would be South Korea, in terms of the infrastructure in place. My call to my Australian community is this: The investment has now been made; do not squander that investment.

So, it all looks pretty good. We've got this economic pillar, we've got a strategic pillar, we've got human pillars – and yet it all feels a bit quiet. Some have used now what I would almost say is a cliché to describe the relationship as that of an old married couple. Stable, but boring. As someone who's in an old married couple relationship myself, I rather like stable but boring. But perhaps it's time for us to think differently about that. Let me just use this morning's newspaper as one example of what I'm talking about. The prime minister of Japan, of the place our prime minister has called our closest friend in Asia, has been in the country for the last two days, and that has made it into the papers. I was in Perth yesterday and the cover of the *West Australian* read "Premier of Perth: A Grumpy Guy". Japan made page 7. If you looked at yesterday's *Australian*, indeed Japan was there, as a small column on the side. Clive Palmer made the top headlines. But here is this morning's *Australian* [...]. I don't know if anyone picked up the tabloids, there was nothing international on the front. I think the Blues won in some rugby league match overnight, I think they got the front cover – but let's use *The Australian*. Indonesia, China... that's the cover of this newspaper today, and we could go through... and I think you have to get to page 22 before you come to the fact that the prime minister of Japan was still in the country yesterday.

So, while it's stable and maybe not so exciting, I actually argue we're shifting into a phase which is a bit troubling. We've gone past the Japan as Number One, we've gone past the Asian Century, and we're now in what some people are calling the China Century. And that puts pressure on us to shift our thinking. Where once the people in this room could take it for granted that the students would show up in our classes, that the principal would come down the hall and say "Can you teach an extra load of Japanese?" and the parents would say "I really want Japanese in my school" – now the situation is more akin to what our other languages have seen for many, many years, which is that we have to promote, indeed spruik our language. To give you a few other example of that shift that I'm seeing, we've mentioned the New Colombo Plan; I have the privilege of being on that advisory committee for the government. Japan ended up being a part of it, but it was by no means a certainty. Earlier I was at the ADC (Australian Davos Connection) Forum Summit, and Japan was not mentioned once. I've already mentioned that, as part of the Group of Eight International Strategy Committee, many of us had to work extremely hard to have Japan even mentioned in the documents. And so forth.

So, we're shifting into a phase where I think we need to be more proactive and affirmative in ensuring that Japan remains on the agenda. We do that because we have those personal ties of our own, and because we personally believe in it. But I would suggest even more importantly we do it because it's in the national interest. It's in this country's interest to maintain that relationship, that cooperation with Japan, but also to reap the rewards of a thirty-year investment – indeed, of the fifty-year investment – that has been made. As we shift into this affirmative or proactive period, though, I think the target of our effort needs to move. Up until now the targets has been the business community and the government, and they are more or less on board. Businesses will make a decision based on their economic interests, and we've already gone through why the foreign direct investment and why being the third largest trading partner will do it. The government will make decisions based on its strategic interest, and we've already seen that. So, those efforts have already succeeded, but we now need to shift our efforts, and I would suggest the next target is youth.

In targeting our youth there are two controllable things that we know can have impact. And believe me, I have a 16-year-old son, there's very little I think that I do that can have any impact. Indeed, it seems he spends more time doing the exact opposite of whatever I tell him. But the research is absolutely clear. There are two things we can do that will have impact

on kids. One is teachers, and the second is study abroad. Quality of teachers and access to going overseas are two things that the research proves you can transform youth with. So, let's take a look at that. First is, of course, the schools' and the teachers' infrastructure. And we've already talked a bit about how in Australia the investment goes all the way back to the 1960s and Alfonso-sensei. It's the investment by Alfonso and the Australian government in those teaching materials that we see the legacy of today. Earlier in this second phase of the Asian Century, I was making the argument that we can take an approach much like our French language colleagues do. You can argue that the cultural value speaks for itself – pate, sushi, croissants... okonomiyaki – that we can treat it as the French do and simply stand with confidence in our product. But I believe that, unlike France, we now with the rise of China need to do more toward promoting our efforts. Japan is still active; it is still a safe, democratic, clean, predictable society. We need to make all of these things clear so that we remain an alternative to the other options, whether they be Indonesian, French or Chinese. We need to reap the benefit of this historical investment that we've made, and we need to invest in the youth of our future through training.

Going to training, and thinking indeed of Matt, my former student, and the kind of introduction he gave, how do we produce more of those in the future? In 2008 I was part of the Australia 2020 Summit, and one of the three primary things to come out of that was recognition that we should invest in the study of a number of our key partners: US, China, India, Indonesia and Japan. In 2008, I didn't have to make much of a case; Japan was there. And one of the specific things was – well, let's set up research centres to train the next generation of teachers, the next generation of experts. Prime Minister Howard had already given \$25 million to the University of Sydney to set up the US Studies Centre in 2006. In 2009, Prime Minister Rudd gave \$53 million to the ANU to set up the Australian Centre on China in the World; and later that year he also gave \$8 million to the University of Melbourne to set up the Australia–India Institute. In 2013, Prime Minister Abbott gave \$15 million to Monash to set up the Australia–Indonesia Centre.

Now, I've already confessed that I grew up in America, but does anyone know the old American television show *Sesame Street*? They had one segment on it which was, "One of these things is not like the other, one of these things..." We had five countries, five key partners that needed investment, and we've had four investments made over an eight-year period covering both sides of politics. Obviously there is one missing – and I call specifically for an Australia–Japan Centre to fill this space, to educate the next experts and to train the next great teaching cohort. I would do it differently, because this is a more mature relationship than we have with the other four. Those have had Australian government funding to support them. My argument, based on where our relationship with Japan is at, is that it could be a collaborative and a mutual investment in this centre. And because of that I will have dual nodes – one in Tokyo and one in an unnamed Australian city (though Adelaide is a very nice place... or anywhere else.) Collaboration is a reflection of the maturity of the relationship. The dual nodes would make it distinctive. Regardless, though, for Japan to be absent from the list is significant symbolically, and is something we should be aware of.

The second way we know we can have impact on youth, of course, is by giving them those passports, and having them taste that Kansai okonomiyaki for the first time. Study abroad can have the greatest impact in transforming our young people's lives. In Australia we're showing increases in that, and that is very positive. Unfortunately though, in Japan, the same trend is not there – indeed, a 38% decline over the last decade in the number of Japanese studying abroad. Both the Australian government and the Japanese government know the importance of study abroad in developing human capital and global competency, and in developing a knowledge economy. And because of that they've both set up programs to promote it: in Australia, the New Colombo Plan; and in Japan, Tobitate. One of the challenges, though, is that both of those are one-way – sending "our" students "there". And my argument on this – on study abroad – is we could do so much more if we align those programs and we leverage them off each other.

Let me use just one example of where that may be possible, coming from my own University of Adelaide's New Colombo Plan experience. In the first round of New Colombo Plan, University of Adelaide put Japan as our first choice and we received a large sum of funding. Two of my colleagues, Shoko Yoneyama and Purnendra Jain, incorporated Japan experience within the two courses they were teaching – one in sociology and one in political science – and as a mid-semester excursion they went to Tottori. I love that they went to Tottori rather than Tokyo or Osaka, because coming from South Australia that is the place that has synergies to build on. And what they were looking at was renewable energy. In light of Fukushima, in light of the fact that thirty percent of South Australian energy is derived from wind farms, what better idea than to take fifty students from Adelaide to Tottori. Wonderful. How much better would that have been if we could then bring the Tobitate students from Tottori to South Australia? Hopefully that will happen, but it will only happen in an ad hoc way. There is no coordination of those two projects. So, that's one example about how two separate domestic policies could be aligned internationally to have more impact.

A second example would be the JET Program. We already have the gap year of JET, and many of you probably have participated in that or experienced it. Earlier, a few years ago, there was a suggestion of a reverse JET, bringing young Japanese in to Australia to help teach. That proved very problematic with the teachers' unions here in Australia and so it went off the boil. But there is an opportunity to align the JET Program with something that's going on in Australia right now, and that's the Teach for Australia Program. Teach for Australia Program has been around for about six or seven years, no one's heard much about it, but recently Education Minister Pine declared that forty percent of those places should be dedicated to language study, language teachers. Now certainly that program is really talking about how we get Australians into the Australian classroom. But why not marry that with the incredibly successful working holiday program to get – like the JET Program – a reverse JET coming the other way? And again we could do that independently, we can adjust the law in Australia, but how much more powerful would it be if we could leverage the JET program with the Teach for Australia Program?

My third and final suggestion in this new affirmative phase is that we shift the message. My first ones were let's talk about teaching and here's a specific way of doing it, and let's talk about study abroad and here's a specific way to do it. My third message is much more messy. What I'm on about is mainstreaming Japanese culture. How do we connect to as many youth as possible? We know we can connect to some of our students by talking about geisha, by talking about samurai, by talking about ninja, by talking about anime, by talking about cosplay. But I can tell you that's not going to connect to all of our students. That exotic spinning of Japan only goes so far. So what I'm suggesting is we need to extend our message to mainstream Japanese culture as well as the exotic Japanese culture.

Let me provide just three examples in this area. The first is around music. And if you look at music, K-pop – Korean popular music – has had enormous worldwide success, such that if you turn on Triple J or *Rage* on ABC TV or if you turn on SBS, there are whole programs dedicated to K-pop. Japan of course has J-pop, but it has not received that mainstream exposure in the way K-pop has. I would suggest pop music is one entree into mainstream culture.

A second entree into mainstream culture is sports. And here I'm not talking about sumo. I love sumo. Indeed I'm probably the only one in the room who wrote a Master's thesis on ninth century sumo, and at one point in time I was the world's expert on ninth and tenth century sumo. But I'm not talking about sumo or karate or judo. Here what I'm talking about are mainstream sports in Australia like soccer and rugby. We're in the middle of the FIFA World Cup. Japan and Australia have both been there; but just as the Bledisloe Cup in rugby celebrates the Australia–New Zealand relationship, there should be the annual Australia–Japan soccer match that celebrates that relationship. Transitioning into rugby, Super Rugby is going from fifteen teams to eighteen teams. The last place has not been decided, but they say that it's going to go to an Asian country and it's down to Singapore versus Japan. If Japan were to succeed in getting a team, think about how exciting that would be for making Japanese relevant to a sixteen-year-old like mine who plays rugby and couldn't care less about anything else. You all of a sudden have an extra link to bring them in. Skiing and snowboarding of course are other examples.

And my third example is around fashion. Here I'm not talking about cosplay; no matter how much I like to dress up with orange hair and swords and in very short tights, that is fringe and exotic. Rather what I'm talking about is more mainstream. UNIQLO recently opened in Melbourne and there were hour-long lines outside to get into the store. Not to mention places like Muji or other street fashion. Here is yet another way to link with people who might not be interested in exotic Japan, and to extend our message to them. I don't have a specific proposal around this mainstreaming argument, but what I'm asking is for you as advocates, for you as activists in this area, to think about how you in your class can extend beyond those obvious exotic facets of culture to these additional ones.

In conclusion, I'm arguing for a shift in our attitude towards Japan in Australia. A move away from *acceptance* of its importance, or even *defence* of its importance, to a position where we affirmatively advocate and promote Japan as an important foreign priority among many strong alternatives such as the United States, the Anglo-world, China, France, Korea, Indonesia. Secondly, I'm advocating for a renewed message, not to be focused on business and government, but rather on youth. As we do that, there are specific things that we can do. One would be to fund a cooperative centre in Australia in Japan Studies, to train the next generation of experts and teachers. Another would be to leverage domestic schemes such as the New Colombo Plan and Tobitate or JET and Teach for Australia. But all of these rely on you; the most valuable Japanese resource in Australia are the people in this room today. You, the teachers who make the infrastructure that will train the future Matts of Australia. And for that, my most important message is to say thank you. Thank you very much.