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**From *The Floating World* to *The 7 Stages of Grieving*:
The Presentation of Contemporary Australian Plays in Japan**

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Contents

Summary	3
Acknowledgements	5
Introduction	6
Chapter 1: The emergence of 'honyakugeki'	22
Chapter 2: Shôgekijô and the quest for national identity	33
Chapter 3: 'Honyakugeki' after the rise of Shôgekijô	78
Chapter 4: The presentation of Australian plays as 'honyakugeki'	102
Chapter 5: Representations of Aborigines in Japan	145
Chapter 6: Minorities in Japan and theatre	179
Chapter 7: The Japanese productions of translated Aboriginal plays	217
Chapter 8: Significance of the productions of Aboriginal plays in Japan	233
Conclusion	259
Appendix 1	267
Appendix 2	270
Appendix 3	272
Bibliography	274

Summary

Many Australian plays have been presented in Japan since the middle of the 1990s. This thesis demonstrates that in presenting Australian plays the Japanese Theatre has not only attempted to represent an aspect of Australian culture, but has also necessarily revealed aspects of Japanese culture. This thesis demonstrates that understanding this process is only fully possible when the particular cultural function of 'translated plays' in the Japanese cultural context is established. In order to demonstrate this point the thesis surveys the history of so-called 'honyakugeki' (translated plays) in the Japanese Theatre and relates them to the production of Western plays to ideas and processes of modernisation in Japan.

Part one of the thesis demonstrates in particular that it was the alternative Theatre movement of the 1960s and 1970s which liberated 'honyakugeki' from the issue of 'authenticity'. The thesis also demonstrates that in this respect the Japanese alternative theatre and the Australian alternative theatre of the same period have important connections to the quest for 'national identity'. Part one of the thesis also demonstrates that the Japanese productions of Australian plays such as *The Floating World*, *Diving for Pearls* and *Honour* reflected in specific ways this history and controversy over 'honyakugeki'. Furthermore, these productions can be analysed to reveal peculiarly Japanese issues especially concerning the lack of understanding of Australian culture in Japan and the absence of politics from the Japanese contemporary theatre.

Part two of the thesis concentrates on the production of translations of the Australian Aboriginal plays *Stolen* and *The 7 Stages of Grieving*. This part of the thesis demonstrates that the presentation of these texts opened a new chapter in the history of presenting 'honyakugeki' in Japan. It demonstrates that the Japanese theatre had to confront the issue of 'authenticity' once more, but in a radically new way. The thesis also demonstrates that the impact of these productions in Japan had a particular Japanese cultural and social impact, reflecting large issues about the issue of minorities and indigenous people in Japan and about the possibilities of theatre for minorities. In particular the thesis demonstrates that these representations of Aborigines introduced a new image of Australian Aborigines to that which was dominant amongst Japanese anthropologists.

Statement

The work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously written or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in the bibliography and footnotes.

Keiji Sawada
Keiji Sawada

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Japanese names follow conventional Japanese usage: the surname first, followed by the given name. A mark over a Japanese vowel indicates that vowel is long. The mark is not used in common usage in Romanised form such as "Tokyo" and "Hokkaido".