This chapter demonstrates the following: Shōgekijō's quest for national identity had a great influence on the whole Japanese theatre, not only 'honyakugeki', which was a symbol of Shingeki. The activities of Shōgekijō urged theatre practitioners to reconsider 'honyakugeki' which had been produced in a style where every effort was paid to be faithful to the original Western production. As a result, Japanese theatre obtained the ability to take advantage of the double function of 'honyakugeki'. In order to demonstrate this, I would like to investigate the change in ways of producing 'honyakugeki' by taking some typical examples: Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Shakespeare's plays and Mishima Yukio's *Madame de Sade*.

Before examining each case, I will mention the approach of Shingeki from the 1960s to Western avant-garde theatre. Translated Western plays are important in the repertoires of Shingeki. The first generation criticised the conservatism of Shingeki which, seemingly, had concentrated on presenting Western realist texts such as Ibsen and Chekhov. In fact, however, Shingeki had presented various Western plays as well as realist plays. Shingeki actively presented European avant-garde plays during the pre-war and the post-war periods. Bungakuza, the leading theatre company in the post-war Shingeki, established an 'atelier' (a studio) to present experimental plays which could not be performed in the regular season of Shingeki. It was Andô Shinya of the Bungakuza Theatre Company, who first translated and directed Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in Japan. The Japanese version of *Waiting for Godot* was presented in 1960, seven years after the first performance in Paris. The Kumo Theatre Company¹ presented Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* in 1963, four years after this play's world premiere. The Haiyūza Shōgekijō² presented Beckett's *Play* in 1964, the year after the first performance. These examples show Shingeki's active participation in avant-garde theatre. Therefore, it is possible to say that Shōgekijō, as the Japanese avant-garde theatre, was born of nowhere else but Shingeki itself. The former theatre company of Suzuki Tadashi's Waseda Shōgekijō called themselves 'Shingeki'.

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¹ This company is the predecessor of the Theatre Troupe En which presented Joanna Murray Smith's *Honour* in 2002 (See Chapter 4).
² The company was established by the members who withdrew from the Haiyūza Theatre Company, one of the leading Shingeki companies along with the Bungakuza and Mingei.
Besides, Suzuki Tadashi and Betsuyaku Minoru adored Samuel Beckett. As the example of the Waseda Shôgekijô shows, the leaders of Shôgekijô showed a great interest in Western plays at the beginning. The first play that Kara’s Jôkyô Gekijô presented was Jean-Paul Sartre’s *La Putain Respectueuse*.\(^3\)

Especially from the beginning of the 1960s, Shingeki attempted the reform of theatre by absorbing Western avant-garde theatre before the rise of Shôgekijô. However, the impact of Shôgekijô’s quest for national identity changed Shingeki’s approach to ‘honyakugeki’.

*Waiting for Godot*

The criticism of ‘honyakugeki’ was based on the disappointment that ‘honyakugeki’ always lacked the ‘authenticity’ of Western plays. After the theatrical revolution of Shôgekijô, there emerged a realisation that authenticity is not fundamental to the presentation of ‘honyakugeki’, and that it is possible to express the essence of a play without authenticity. As mentioned above, Beckett had a great influence on the first generation of Shôgekijô. Also, *Waiting for Godot* is one of the most-often presented Western plays in Japan from the 1960s to the present. I will investigate how Japanese theatre has presented this avant-garde play in the form of ‘honyakugeki’, which had developed to reproduce Western realist plays faithfully. In this investigation, the issue of slavish faithfulness to the original in ‘honyakugeki’ becomes clear.

It was the Bungakuza that first introduced Beckett to Japan. The Bungakuza presented *Waiting for Godot* in 1960, seven years after the first performance in Paris. What was different from the presentation of ‘honyakugeki’ until then is that there were active discussions about ‘anti-theatre’ and *Waiting for Godot* in Japan before the Japanese premiere. This situation was quite different from the case of Shakespeare’s plays: Tsubouchi Shôyô, the person who first translated the whole works of Shakespeare, never went to Britain to see Shakespeare’s plays in English, and when he first translated and presented them, only few Japanese had seen Western plays. In 1950 when the Moscow Art Theatre came to Japan, the Japanese audience saw the ‘real’ Russian production of Chekhov’s play for the first time. It is interesting that, in 1960, just a decade after the tour of the Moscow Art

\(^3\) Shichiji Eisuke, “Suzuki Tadashi, Kara Jûrõ, Satô Makoto: 60 nendai no zenei ga hataashita yakuwari” (Suzuki Tadashi, Kara Jûrõ and Satô Makoto: the role of
Theatre, many of the Japanese audience came to the theatre with their own images of anti-theatre and Beckett.

First, I will survey what happened before the first presentation in 1960. In 1953, *Waiting for Godot* was presented in Paris. The Japanese journal *Shinchō* carried an article about the first performance in the same year. In 1956, the critic Watanabe Jun mentioned *Waiting for Godot* in his article, and then, the latest movement of French Theatre became known in Japan. In 1956, *Waiting for Godot* was translated by Andō Shinya (1924-2000), a member of the Bungakuza, and published in Japan. In a commentary in the published Japanese translation, Andō reported the impact of the first performance of *Waiting for Godot* to the French audience as ‘the contemporary version of the Hernani affair’. Just after publishing his translation, Andō gave a paper entitled “The present state of French avant-garde theatre”, which was the first study to analyse ‘anti-theatre’ in detail in Japan. By 1960, there were two special issues of Japanese journals concerned with ‘anti-theatre’: the literary journal *Mita Bungaku* and the theatre journal *Shingeki*.

The scholar of French theatre Iwasaki Takashi wrote that there was criticism that the Japanese were too excited about ‘anti-theatre’, despite not knowing its substance. In November, 1960, Andō Shinya wrote:

Unfortunately, the word ‘anti-theatre’ became trendy [in Japan]. I am responsible for it as one of the persons who have used this funny word. ...In

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4 About this, I consulted the work of Kazama Ken. See Kazama Ken. “Nihon ni okeru anchi teatoru: iyonesuko to beketto wa ikanishite yunyū saretaka” (Anti-theatre in Japan: how were Ionesco and Beckett introduced to Japan?) *Kenkyū Kiyō, Nihon Fukushi University* 74, December 1987, pp.131-176.
7 Victor Hugo’s *Hernani* provoked a riot between young supporters and conservatives at its first performance of 1830 at Comédie Française, Paris.
8 Andō Shinya, “Furansu zeneigeki no genjō” (The present state of French avant-garde theatre) *Bungaku* 25(1), January 1957, pp.78-83.
9 The issue was published in 1958.
10 The issue was published in 1960.
Japan, this word is used despite lacking real meaning.\textsuperscript{12}

These remarks reflect that the Japanese in those days had only a hollow impression of the word 'anti-theatre'.

It was in these circumstances that \textit{Waiting for Godot} was first presented by the Bungakuza Theatre Company in 1960.\textsuperscript{13} A review of the first performance of 1960 says:

As the translation by Andô Shinya was published long time ago, the attraction of this play has been known [in Japan]. People have read the play with their own images.\textsuperscript{14}

Unlike realist plays, 'anti-theatre' refer to plays where contexts such as nationality and ages are not important. Therefore, when the Japanese present those plays, they, seemingly, do not have to worry about their lack of 'authenticity', compared with Western realist plays. Nevertheless, theatre critics of the time demanded that the Japanese productions should have been perfectly faithful to the cultural context of the originals. Take for example the theatre critic Suwa Tadashi's review of the Bungakuza production of 1960. The review criticises the production saying that, as \textit{Waiting for Godot} was written as a resistance to Western modernism, the meaning of 'resistance' cannot but change in the translation because Japan has not shared the history of Western modernism. In other words, the reviewer points out that the translation makes ambiguous what \textit{Waiting for Godot} resists. Besides, the reviewer points out that there was no dispute about the play at the first performance in Tokyo although there was a hot dispute in Paris. The reviewer supposes that is because the translation was too natural to make the Japanese audience consider this play, so that the audience found humour and pathos rather than the impact as avant-garde.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Andô Shinya, "Watashi no riyû" (My reason) \textit{Teatro} 206, November 1960, pp.28-30; quote from p.28.}
\footnote{Other plays categorized into 'anti-theatre' which were presented in Japan in the 1960s include Ionesco's \textit{The Lesson} and \textit{Rhinoceros} (both were presented by the Bungakuza in September and December, 1960), and Arthur Adamov's \textit{Paolo Paoli} (presented by the Bungakuza in 1968).}
\footnote{Ibaraki Tadashi, "Gekihyo" (Reviews) \textit{Higeki Kigeki} August 1960, pp.8-10; quote from p.9.}
\footnote{Suwa Tadashi, "Shingekihyô: godô wo machinagara" (Review of \textit{Waiting for Godot}) \textit{Shingeki} 84, July 1960, pp.24-25; quote from p.26.}
\end{footnotes}
In 1966, *Waiting for Godot* was newly translated and presented at the Mingei Theatre Company, one of the leading Shingeki companies. The translator/director Watanabe Hiroko (1935-1998) simplified the play by removing decorative expressions and the cultural context.\(^{16}\) A review criticised this new version saying it lacked the reality of Paris where *Waiting Godot* was first presented in 1953.\(^{17}\) For the Japanese production of *Waiting for Godot*, this reviewer required the same kind of 'authenticity' which Shingeki had argued about 'honyakugeki' for a long time. After pointing out that the play did not provoke the argument that occurred at the first French performance (which Andô Shinya described as the contemporary version of the *Hernani* affair) and above all the reality of Paris, the reviewer Ryu Keiichi argued:

> The reality is supported by nothing but France of 1953, the empty stage of Théâtre de Babylone, a shabby small theatre situated quietly in a dark place along a broad avenue between Boulevard Saint-Germain and Montparnasse, the little drifter in Europe in the first half of the 20th century who became a clown at a dingy cabaret despite wishing to be a great actor, the keen sense of Roger Blin who discovered this once-and-for-all great actor, and the audiences' irritation with avant-garde which could not distinguish itself from the conventional theatre.\(^ {18}\)

He concludes that the Mingei's *Waiting for Godot* lacked all of these elements.\(^ {19}\) As we have seen, there was a cry for authenticity in the Japanese productions of *Waiting for Godot* in the 1960s. Theatre critics blamed the Japanese productions

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\(^{16}\) Watanabe Hiroko, "Beketto no butaika wo tōshite" (Through the presentation of Beckett) *Shingeki* 154, February 1966, pp.23-27.


\(^{18}\) Ibid., p.113.

\(^{19}\) There is another example to show this attitude of demanding of avant-garde plays the same 'authenticity' as is demanded for realist plays. The director Asari Keita reviews a Japanese production of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* as follows:

> An actor tried to express the characteristic of the Italians. There are a lot of actors who cannot play a Westerner. Therefore, I would like to praise his will to perform a Westerner, especially a variety of Westerners. (Asari Keita, "Han-engeki to Mingei no butai sōzō" [Anti-theatre and the stage creation by the Mingei] *Teatoro* 269, February 1966, pp. 56-60; quote from p.57.)

This remark shows that Asari thinks that the Italians, "as a variety of Westerners", should be performed differently from the other Westerners in this avant-garde play
for lacking the context of anti-theatre as a resistance to modernism, and the context of the French contemporary culture. These criticisms clearly show that the critics in those days were indifferent to the question of how the Japanese should understand this play from the Japanese perspective.\(^20\)

The playwright Betsuyaku Minoru says that the productions of the 1960s were too early because it took more time to reform the theatrical sensibility of the Japanese.\(^21\) Indeed, it was the 1970s when there appeared various attempts to direct *Waiting for Godot*. For example, *Waiting for Godot* was presented by the Mei no kai in 1973. The Mei no kai was a group founded by Noh and Kyogen actors with the assistance of Shingeki actors in 1971. The Mei no kai presented *Oedipus* as the first play, and *Agamemnon* as the second one. *Waiting for Godot* was the third play for them. According to the director Ishizawa Shūji (1930-present) from Shingeki, they dared to challenge *Waiting for Godot*, not Greek tragedies which were easy to perform in the Japanese traditional theatre.\(^22\) Along with Shingeki actors, Noh and Kyogen actors acted *Waiting for Godot*, not in their own traditional ways but in the style of Western realism. Kanze Hideo, the Noh actor who appeared in this production, found common ground between Noh and *Waiting for Godot*. According to him, the play, which shows not a narrative but a series of simple situations, resembles Noh, which shows not a narrative but a passion out of situations.\(^23\) Nomura Mannojō, the Kyogen actor in the cast, found something buried in Kyogen while he was performing *Waiting for Godot*.\(^24\) These episodes show that the actors of Japanese traditional theatres intuitively found common ground between the play and the traditional theatres (not Kabuki, newer and...
more realistic theatre, but Noh and Kyogen, older and distinguished for their symbolic expressions). Takahashi Yasunari, the scholar of English literature, pointed out common ground between Waiting for Godot and Noh from the academic viewpoint in 1982. He had an interest in episodes when some audiences left in anger as nothing happened at the end of Waiting for Godot, and when Westerners and Japanese youngsters, who were not familiar with Noh, often became angry as nothing happened at the end of Noh plays. Takahashi compared Waiting for Godot with Noh plays, and found some similarities and differences between them. After pointing out that there were many Western actors and directors who said learning Noh is the best way to understand Beckett's plays, Takahashi concluded that Waiting for Godot performed in the style of Noh might be the best way to reproduce the world of Beckett. In a conversation with Betsuyaku Minoru, Takahashi more clearly says that Waiting for Godot requires a different form of expression from Western modern theatre. What is important is that he pointed out that the Japanese can perform Waiting for Godot in a Japanese way, even if the performance lacks authenticity as a Western play.

In 1980, Waiting for Godot was performed with cast including a comic duo named Saint Louis. They were very popular comedians in those days, and specialized in Manzai. Manzai is Japanese stand-up comedy performed by two men. One talks nonsense, and another is irritated and corrects it. Their talk is about their personal affairs, and does not have a dramatic structure. The producer of this production found common ground between the talk of Manzai and the talk in Waiting for Godot, and cast Saint Louis in the roles of Vladimir and Estragon. This production was an experiment, performing Waiting for Godot in a completely different way from Shingeki. The director allowed Saint Louis to ad-lib about their near affair. Fujita Hiroshi, a reviewer, pointed out that Shingeki actors, who try to be faithful to the script, cannot do this. He praised the director and the producer for casting the most popular comedians, not dull Shingeki actors. After pointing out that this production discovered the buried fact that the play was not a very

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25 He was also a co-translator of Waiting for Godot and other Beckett’s plays with Andō Shinya. Takahashi translated Beckett’s plays from English texts while Andō translated them from French texts. They checked their translations each other and completed the final translation. Their translation of Waiting for Godot was published along with Krapp’s Last Tape, All That Fall and Embers as the first volume of Beketto gikyoku zenshū. (The Complete Works of Beckett) Tokyo, Hakusuisha, 1967.

26 Takahashi Yasunari, “Beketto to no” (Beckett and Noh) Sekai May 1982, pp.226-238.

serious avant-garde play, Fujita argued as follows:

The production created a stir in Japanese theatre circles by being performed in a Japanese way. Therefore, this production will be a turning point of promoting the freedom for performing *Waiting for Godot*.\(^{28}\)

As we have seen, a different attitude towards *Waiting for Godot* from the Shingeki productions of the 1960s was promoted by the productions inspired by Noh and Manzai. At the same time, there appeared the understanding that it is not impossible to present *Waiting for Godot* without knowing the play's complicated cultural background. Betsuyaku Minoru, the leading Japanese playwright specializing in Beckett-like absurd plays, points out that it is possible to understand Beckett's works via the Japanese sensibility. According to him, the Japanese traditionally have a pessimistic ethos, which very effectively becomes absorbed in the world of Beckett.\(^{29}\) Furthermore, he argues that the Japanese can sense the passing of time where rational and sometimes irrational nature slowly circulates around a human being, and that this sense is shared by the Japanese and Beckett's works.\(^{30}\) Betsuyaku's argument about Beckett shows a new way of thinking, that the Japanese do not have to stick to narrow 'authenticity' if the Japanese intuitively understand what Beckett expressed. His argument also encourages the Japanese to understand and present Beckett's works from the Japanese viewpoint.

What is important in the history of translating and presenting *Waiting for Godot* in Japan is that, in the 1970s and the 1980s, the belief that it was imitative 'authenticity' that was crucial was shaken, and that the Japanese discovered the possibility of directing the play from a Japanese viewpoint. Also, this fundamental transition in Japanese theatre is clearly influenced by the quest for national identity in the Shôgekijô movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

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\(^{29}\) Betsuyaku and Takahashi, 1982.

Shakespeare's plays

The shift from the respect for authenticity to the Japanese perspective was not unique to the case of avant-garde plays such as *Waiting for Godot*. This shift can be found in the case of other 'honyakugeki'. Let us take Shakespeare for example. Shakespeare is the playwright whose plays have been presented from the earliest days of 'honyakugeki' to the present, and have become most important in the repertoires of Japanese contemporary theatre. In order to understand the shift of 'honyakugeki' in the 1960s and 1970s, it is useful to take Shakespeare's plays as examples.

The first performance of a Shakespeare play in Japan was in 1885, when *Sakuradoki zeni no yononaka*, adapted from *The Merchant of Venice*, was performed by Kabuki actors. This was the adaptation for a Kabuki play. The first translation (not an adaptation) appeared in 1884, when Tsubouchi Shōyō, Professor of English at Waseda University and the leader of the movement of reforming theatre, published his translation of *Julius Caesar*, which was performed by a Shinpa company in 1901. Although Tsubouchi Shōyō's translation was written in the style of Kabuki and Bunraku, this was the first Japanese translation of a Shakespearean play which was actually performed. Although Tsubouchi Shōyō continued to translate Shakespeare's plays, most of the plays performed from the middle of the 1880s to the middle of the 1900s were adaptations. Tsubouchi Shōyō completed the translation of all Shakespeare's plays in 1928, and continued to revise them until his death in 1935. The style of his early translations was traditional seven-and-five syllable meter. After various attempts, he succeeded in inventing 'modern Japanese' without nuances of specific periods, places, and classes.31 Despite Tsubouchi's struggle to translate Shakespeare's works, Shakespeare has not been regarded as so important in the history of Japanese modern theatre. Especially from the beginning of 1910 to the 1950s, the mainstream of Shingeki was dominated by contemporary Western realist plays. As the purpose of the presentations of Western plays was to modernise Japanese theatre, pre-modern theatre such as Shakespeare did not become mainstream during the period. However, the complete works of Shakespeare translated by Tsubouchi were read widely in Japan. After the translating works of Tsubouchi, many scholars studied Shakespeare. As a result,

Shakespeare's works became not plays for performance but plays to be read to access British culture.

Many scholars translated Shakespeare's plays and published them just as literature. This parallels the situation where *Waiting for Godot* was translated and published soon after the first performance in Paris, and there were active discussions of the play among Japanese intellectuals before the first performance in Japan. In the case of Shakespeare, the period when Shakespeare's works were regarded as readings was so long that the recognition spread widely in Japan that his works were the highest pinnacle of literature in the world.

It was not until 1955, when *Hamlet* was presented by Bungakuza Theatre Company, that Shakespeare's plays were re-evaluated as 'plays for performance'. Fukuda Tsuneari (1912-1994), the director and the translator of the 1955 production of *Hamlet*, says that Shakespeare's works are rooted in the essence of drama more than any other plays. About Fukuda's recognition of Shakespeare's plays, Anzai Tetsuo points out that Fukuda focuses on the differences between Shakespeare's plays and the tradition of Japanese theatre, compared with Tsubouchi Shōyō who finds similarities between Shakespeare's plays and Kabuki.

Fukuda's recognition that only Shakespeare's plays as 'British plays' held the essence of drama, and that we should not apply any Japanese equivalent to Shakespeare's plays, parallels the attitude of Japanese scholars of English literature who studied and translated Shakespeare's works as literature before Fukuda's presentation of *Hamlet* in 1955. For example, in the 1950s, Fukuhara Rintarō, the scholar of English literature, points out that the more he studies English literature, the more differences from the Japanese culture he finds. According to Fukuhara, the Japanese should not try to understand English literature from the 'different' Japanese perspective. Rather, the understanding of English literature from the 'English' perspective (which the Japanese have to gain through their efforts) is the only way to approach real English literature, which

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33 Anzai Tesuo, "Tsubouchi Shōyō to Fukuda Tsuneari: nihon ni okeru Shēkusupia rikai no ichidanmen" (Tsubouchi Shōyō and Fukuda Tsuneari: one aspect of the Japanese understanding of Shakespeare.) *Sophia.* 15(1), Spring 1966, pp.42-64.
provides much wisdom to readers.\textsuperscript{34} Fukuhara even refused to translate and 'Japanise' Shakespeare's plays. Unlike Fukuhara, Nakano Yoshio, another scholar of English literature in the same period, translated Shakespeare's plays to introduce the attractions of Shakespeare to the Japanese readers. However, even Nakano argued that the Japanese should understand Shakespeare in a completely different way from understanding Kabuki, and they should start recognising Shakespeare correctly in the context of Western and literal tradition.\textsuperscript{35} Fukuhara Rintarō and Nakano Yoshio agree that it is necessary for the Japanese to identify themselves with the British and Westerners in order to understand Shakespeare. Similarly, Fukuda Tsuneari says that he directed Shakespeare's plays without a Japanese way of thinking, a Japanese perspective, or even a consciousness that he was Japanese.\textsuperscript{36}

The feature of Fukuda's translations of Shakespeare's plays is that he translated them on the premise that they would be performed by actors. In this way, Fukuda's translations are different from the translations by scholars of English literature such as Nakano Yoshio, who translated them on the premise of they would only be read. Therefore, Fukuda focuses on the reproductions of poetic expressions, rhythm, and tempo which the original plays have. Since Fukuda regards Shakespeare's plays performed in English as the most ideal way\textsuperscript{37}, he often translates in the English word order, neglecting the Japanese grammatical word order. It appears that Fukuda believes that his translation in the English word order allows the Japanese actors to act exactly what Shakespeare originally intended. Since Fukuda's translations were epoch-making in terms of translations for performance, they dominated Japanese stages from the 1960s to the first half of the 1970s, replacing Tsubouchi Shōyō's translation.

It is important to note that Fukuda tried to reform Shingeki by translating and

\textsuperscript{34} Nakata Yoshiaki, “Fukuhara Rintaró to Nakano Yoshio: kyōyō to shite no Shèkusupia” (Fukuhara Rintarō and Nakano Yoshio: Shakespeare as culture) \textit{Nihon no Shèkusupia 100 nen.} (One Hundred Years of Japanese Shakespeare) edited by Anzai Tetsuo. Tokyo, Aratake Shuppan, 1989. pp.43-84.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36} Fukuda Tsuneari et al., “Zadankai nihon no Shèkusupia honyaku to jōen: Fukuda Tsuneari shi wo kakonde” (Round-table discussion about the translation and presentation of Japanese Shakespeare: with Mr Fukuda Tsuneari) \textit{Seiki} 256, September 1971, pp.65-80.

presenting Shakespeare. In realist plays such as Chekhov, important in the repertoires for Shingeki, actors concentrated on representing the details of characters while audiences only looked at them through 'the fourth wall'. However, Fukuda thought that Shakespeare's plays would be able to make audiences experience the similar excitement and catharsis to those which the characters experience in the plays.\(^{38}\) Fukuda's intention to involve audiences in plays can be regarded as the forerunner of Shōgekijō movement from the 1960s.

As mentioned above, although Fukuda's translations and presentations of Shakespeare's plays can be regarded as pioneer, Fukuda had his limitation as he still considered the 'authenticity' of the English plays as important. On this point, Fukuda's way of thinking parallels the fact that the Japanese intellectuals stuck by authenticity at the first Japanese performance of *Waiting for Godot*.

It was Odashima Yûshi (1930-present), translator and scholar of Shakespeare, who attempted new translations of Shakespeare's plays, as an alternative to Fukuda's translations. The first translation of Odashima which was performed in a Japanese stage was *Romeo and Juliet* in 1968. Since then, Odashima has continued to translate Shakespeare's works such as *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Hamlet*, which were still only variations of the works of other translators until the first half of the 1970s. The value of Odashima's translations changed in 1975, when the director Deguchi Norio (1940-present) started presenting Shakespeare's plays translated by Odashima at the small theatre Jan-Jan in Shibuya, the heart of Tokyo. Deguchi completed the presentation of the whole works of Shakespeare six years later. Since 1978, not only at small theatres such as Jan-Jan, but also at major theatres, Odashima's translations have become the most common scripts of Shakespeare.

The feature of Odashima's translations is his creation of new words to appeal to the sensibility of the young generation. Odashima also changed Japanese idioms, and introduced fashionable new words and Japanese puns into his translations. Fukuda and Odashima are quite a contrast: Fukuda never applies Japanese equivalents to Shakespeare's puns and references to current topics, while Odashima actively applies Japanese equivalents, especially new ones such as the language of younger generations. In 1977, in a newspaper, Fukuda and Odashima created a controversy about their different attitudes towards the translation of

\(^{38}\) Fukuda, 1961.
Shakespeare's plays. In this controversy, Fukuda says:

It is difficult to introduce the works of the world's best poet in the Japanese language. Unless the poetic atmosphere and the magnificence are preserved, the attractions of Shakespeare disappear.

Moreover, Fukuda argues that the translation of Shakespeare's plays should include a good sense of rhythm and crisp language, even if Japanese audiences cannot understand some parts of the translation. In contrast, Odashima points out that the translations of Fukuda and Tsubouchi are too old for the young generation to understand them. After pointing out the significance of understandable translations for the young generation, Odashima says:

It is quite nonsense to translate the plays into Japanese language of four hundred years ago only because Shakespeare's English is old.

Odashima seems to translate the plays on the assumption that Shakespeare lives in contemporary Japan. Odashima takes Macbeth as an example, and argues that, since Shakespeare introduced the contemporary issues of this time into the play, we should introduce the contemporary references into the scripts if they are effective in the performances. Odashima's argument reminds us of Suzuki Tadashi's theory (See Chapter 2). Suzuki created works consisting of fragments of masterpieces from all countries and all ages. Here the authenticity of each masterpiece is removed. Suzuki attempted to show how a contemporary Japanese actor lives the situation of those plays. On this point, Suzuki's attitude towards classic masterpieces is similar to Odashima's.

More importantly, Odashima translated Shakespeare's plays on the premise that they would be directed by Deguchi Norio first. Deguchi formed his company the Shakespeare Theatre in January, 1975. He revolutionised the presentations of Shakespeare in Japan. The features of Deguchi's works are that popular stars do not appear, that there are no gorgeous costumes and wigs for actors to identify with Westerners, and that the performances are presented on a small, simple stage with minimum props and that actors in casual clothes speak very fast like a

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40 Ibid.
machine gun.

These features indicate resistance to people who considered Shakespeare to be a classic. Deguchi’s approach caused a greater stir in the discussion of ‘honyakugeki’ than Fukuda did. Deguchi says:

I don’t mean to present their (British) Shakespeare. I present what the imagination of Odashima created from the original texts.41

For this reason, Deguchi regards Shakespeare’s works as equal to the works of the contemporary Japanese playwrights, such as Kara Jūrō and Betsuyaku Minoru.42 Although the Shakespeare Theatre was a company specializing in ‘honyakugeki’, it had many things in common with the first generation of Shōgekijō, such as actors’ motion and timing of speaking and acting. Like Shōgekijō, Deguchi also used rock music in his presentations.43 The audiences of the Shakespeare Theatre also had already prepared themselves for such rough performances.44 Influenced by overseas direction and theories,45 and the Japanese alternative theatre movement, Odashima’s translations and Deguchi’s direction suggested the possibility of presenting ‘honyakugeki’ from the viewpoint of the contemporary Japanese. Their attempts, along with the activities of the first generation of Shōgekijō, liberated ‘honyakugeki’ from the argument about how Japanese presentations of Western plays lack authenticity. As the Japanese presentations of Waiting for Godot were being Japanised by attempts such as the casting of Noh actors and Manzai comedians, the presentations of Shakespeare’s plays were also being Japanised gradually. There were two tendencies of the Japanisation: the

41 Deguchi Norio and Ei Kisei, “Rekishigeki: shogen teki dainamizumu” (Historical drama: its primal dynamism) Shingeki 343, November 1981, pp.53-61; quote from p.58.
42 Ibid.
45 Jan Kott’s Shakespeare, Our Contemporary (London, Methuen, 1964) was translated into Japanese in 1968, and had a great influence in Japan. Also, Deguchi admits that he was influenced by Alec Guinness’s performances of Hamlet (1938) in modern dress. See Deguchi Norio, “Shèkusupia soshite shèkusupia shiata” (Shakespeare and Shakespeare Theatre) Shingeki 23(5), May 1976, pp.68-78.
presentation by Western directors and the presentation by Japanese directors.

Since the 1960s, leading Shingeki theatre companies have invited British directors to direct Shakespeare's plays in their companies. The reason the companies invited them was to add 'authenticity' to their productions. The first British director who was invited to Japan was Michael Benthall, who was invited by Fukuda Tsuneari in 1965. After that, the visiting of British directors to Japan became common in the 1970s. What is important is the fact that, although the Japanese Shingeki theatre companies wanted the British directors to reproduce British productions of Shakespeare's plays with Japanese actors, the British directors did not reproduce British productions, but Japanised their works to suit Japanese actors. For example, Terence Knap's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* (1979) for the Theatre Troupe En was an adaptation set in Yokohama of the Meiji era. In 1972, Jeffrey Leavis directed *Troilus and Cressida* at the Bungakuza Theatre Company in collaboration with Deguchi Norio. Deguchi reports Leavis's way of direction:

Leavis could never endure that the Japanese actors in Western costumes disguise themselves as Westerners. That the Japanese actors should perform Shakespeare's play in Japanese costumes was Jeffrey's irrevocable principle.

After all, the production was set in Japan of a mythological age. It is significant that the British director, who was expected to add authenticity to the Japanese production, insisted on the Japanisation of the production, and that Deguchi Norio, who would form the Shakespeare Theatre afterwards, participated in the production as a collaborator.

There were also Japanese directors who attempted to Japanise Shakespeare's plays. The most memorable and epoch-making production of this kind was *Macbeth* directed by Ninagawa Yukio (1935-present) in 1980. Ninagawa's production was set in Japan of the Azuchi Momoyama era (1573-1596), in which

Macbeth was transformed into a Japanese war lord. However, the script was not an adaptation but the translation by Odashima Yūshi, and the names of characters and places remained English. Ninagawa made the proscenium arch a huge Buddhist altar in which the struggle of power was played. In the latter half of the production, Macbeth made himself up as a Kabuki actor, and the army marched along the auditorium isle, reminding the audience of 'Hanamichi', the ramp in a Kabuki theatre extending from the stage, through the auditorium, to the back of the theatre, serving as a secondary stage. The three witches talked and assumed postures in the Kabuki style. Theatre critic Yūki Masahide describes this production as "an epoch-making event since (Alec Guinness's performance of) *Hamlet* in modern dress", and regards it as a landmark of the world's history of the presentations of Shakespeare's plays.

Theatre critic Senda Akihiko explains the significance of this production in Japanese theatre history:

The direction brought an important turning point to the style of Japan's 'honyakuego. Ninagawa made a full-scale start of his work to interpret Shakespeare's plays by the Japanese or the Asian sensibility and historic materials, and create Shakespeare's plays with the Japanese style and aesthetics, rather than present Shakespeare's plays by mimicking the style of presentations in the West.

Theatre critic Ei Kisei writes that the Buddhist altar and the cherry blossom storm, which are both metaphors of 'death' in Japan, made the audience think about life and death. What is important is that, despite using an English play, Ninagawa's production of *Macbeth* reminds the audience of the traditional Japanese notions of life and death. The approach of finding a traditional Japanese

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49 In 1957, Kurosawa Akira made a film called *Kumonosu-jō*, where Macbeth was changed into a Japanese warring lord in the 16th century. However, unlike Ninagawa's production of *Macbeth*, this is an adaptation whose characters and place names are all Japanese.  

50 Yūki Masahide, "Sakura fubuki to butsudan to: toho NINAGAWA makubesu" (Cherry blossom storm and a Buddhist alter: the Toho production of NINAGAWA Macbeth) *Teatoro* 446, April 1980, pp.30-33; quote from p.30.  


52 Ei Kisei, "Chiteki bokenshin wo manzokusaseru: teigeki NINAGAWA makubesu." (Satisfying intellectual curiosity: NINAGAWA Macbeth at the Teikoku Theatre) *Teatoro* 540, February 1988, pp.25-27; quote from p.27.
notion of life and death is very different from the attitude of the Japanese scholars in the pre-war period and the 1950s, who thought that Shakespeare could never be understood unless the Japanese identified with the British. Here we can see the double function of 'honyakugeki' as discussed in the Introduction.

Odashima's translations of Shakespeare's plays became the turning point to change 'honyakugeki' fundamentally. However, it does not mean Odashima's translations drove out Fukuda's. Fukuda's translations have been used for many productions even since the latter half of the 1970s. Today, directors and producers choose the most suitable script for the production from the translations of Fukuda, Odashima, and Tsubouchi.

This section has demonstrated the transition of 'honyakugeki' from the early 1970s by taking Waiting for Godot and Shakespeare's plays as examples. This transition means that theatre practitioners realised that 'honyakugeki' did not have to be slavishly faithful to the original, and that they could interpret the original from the Japanese perspective. In other words, they obtained the ability to use the double function of 'honyakugeki' at last, as the example of Macbeth, in which the audience saw the traditional Japanese notion of life and death, clearly shows. This approach became the way of presenting 'honyakugeki' afterwards. This transition clearly indicates the influence of Shôgekijo from the 1960s. The quest for national identity as discussed in Chapter 2 made it possible for Japanese theatre to obtain the Japanese perspective with which to present 'honyakugeki'.

Sado Kôshaku Fujin (Madame de Sade)

Apart from the Shôgekijô movement, there was another epoch making event in Japanese theatre before the idea was established that the presentation of 'honyakugeki' does not need the slavish form of authenticity. The event was Mishima Yukio's Sado Kôshaku Fujin (Madame de Sade). The play of 1965 had enough strength to liberate 'honyakugeki' from 'authenticity'. By examining this play, I will investigate what happened to 'honyakugeki' just before the rise of the Shôgekijô movement. This section demonstrates the view that the acting of 'honyakugeki' was not a pure reflection of reality but just 'a style' emerged in the middle of the 1960s. Madame de Sade is a very unique play because it pretends to be a Japanese translation of a French play. More importantly, Mishima asked actors to perform this play in the acting style of 'honyakugeki'. The complex nature of this play reminds the performers and the audience of the fact that 'honyakugeki'
are impossible to reproduce as the original production perfectly. This approach liberated Japanese theatre from 'authenticity' which had interfered with the double function of 'honyakugeki'. In other words, Mishima made visible the cultural difference between Japan and the West, which Japanese modern theatre had attempted reducing in 'honyakugeki', by asserting paradoxically that the performance of 'honyakugeki' was not an authentic or faithful reproduction of Western drama but an independent 'style' developed in Japanese theatre.

In 1965, the world-famous novelist and Shingeki playwright Mishima Yukio (1925-1970) wrote Sado Kōshaku Fujin (Madame de Sade). He dared to write this play in the style of 'honyakugeki', that is, literalism neglecting the style of natural Japanese language's rhythm, idioms, vocabularies, word orders, and so on. Mishima's Madame de Sade is an experimental work to intentionally provide a completely new perspective about the issue of authenticity in 'honyakugeki'. In Japan, there have been various studies on Madame de Sade such as studies on its narrative and characters. What seems to be lacking in those studies is a consideration of the significance of this work in the history of 'honyakugeki'. I would like to discuss the role which Madame de Sade played in the history of Japanese modern theatre.

The story of Madame de Sade is as follows: in the latter half of the 18th century, the rumours about the abnormal sexuality of Marquis de Sade spread throughout France. Renee, Madame de Sade, understood her husband better than anyone else. Renee and her mother were from the bourgeoisie, and joined the aristocracy by Renee's marriage to Marquis de Sade. In order to protect her family's honour, the mother has hushed up all the scandals about Sade through her human network. However, after she knew that Sade had had a sexual relationship even with her second daughter, the mother requested the King of France to arrest him. The mother pretended to help Sade out of difficulties in front of her daughter Renee, while manoeuvring to keep Sade in prison. Knowing her mother's manoeuvring, Renee blamed her mother, and struggled to help her husband Sade. After Renee's devotion for decades, the day came when Sade was released. When she was told that Sade had arrived at the front door, Renee declares that she would enter a convent without meeting her husband Sade.

This play limits the scene to one place, the motion of the characters is extremely controlled, and all dramatic episodes are described just by the characters' speeches. This reminds us of French classical tragedy. Indeed, many critics have pointed out
that Mishima is influenced by the French classical tragedy of the 17th century, such as Jean Racine's plays.53 As a Shingeki playwright, Mishima had to confront the difference between Western and Japanese theatres. Mishima argued that the feature of Western plays, which Japanese theatre does not share, is that the plays represent conflicts in dialogue. According to Mishima, Western plays such as Racine's cause dramatic conflicts and tensions by the exchanges of words.54 This understanding of Western plays is reflected in his Kindai nohgakushū (Modern Noh plays) (1950-1950). In these works, Mishima modernized Noh texts by changing the settings and characters into contemporary ones. In order to write this modern version of Noh, he selected only eight texts out of hundreds of traditional Noh texts. According to Mishima, he found modernism in these eight texts because they had conflicts in dialogue.55 This example indicates that Mishima regarded conflicts in dialogue as the essence of modern theatre.

Although Madame de Sade was written by a Japanese playwright, it was reminiscent of a 'translated play' from a French play. Indeed, this play confused even French audiences when it was presented in France. In 1976, Madame de Sade was translated by the French novelist Pieyre de Mandiargues and presented by the Company Renaud-Barrault.56 According to Mandiargues, he did a translation faithful to the original, and all he changed was Sade's first name to the one which suited the aristocracy, and the correction of Mishima's mistake about the date when Sade was arrested.57 After pointing out that the episode in which Sade showed abnormal sexual behaviour at Black Mass was incorrect because really Sade was an atheist, Mandiargues argues that Mishima's idea of using

53 Kishi Tetsuo, "Engekiron toshiteno sado kōshaku fujin" (Madame de Sade as a theatrical criticism) Kokubungaku 7, July 1986, pp.100-106. Also see Kubota Yūko, "Mishima Yukio no engekiron: Sado Kōshaku Fujin to Iwashiri Koi no hikitsuna" (Theatrical criticism of Mishima: Madame de Sade and Iwashiuri Koi no Hikitsuna) Kokubungaku 45(11), September 2000, pp.126-132.
56 The American scholar of Japanese literature Donald Keene translated it into English in 1967. Afterwards, a Japanese student did French translation word by word. Mandiargues did his new translation referring to both translations.
Black Mass to describe Sade's abnormality was outstanding. The Renaud-Barrault production of Madame de Sade had a long run for one and a half years. In February 1976, there was a symposium about the production, attended by the audience, Pieyre de Mandiargues and Jean-Louis Barrault. At this symposium, an audience member said that he could not believe the author was Japanese, and asked whether this was because of the fundamental characteristic of this work or because of the translation by French. Barrault answered that the nationality of an author did not matter if the work reached to a supreme level. This question and answer showed that this was an 'authentic' French production, enough to make the audience forget the fact that the author was Japanese.

What is important about Mishima's Madame de Sade is that he attempted an experiment with 'honyakugeki' and the acting peculiar to 'honyakugeki'. Mishima describes the acting of Shingeki as "the notorious acting of 'honyakugeki'", and argues that Shingeki has concentrated on "imitating the Westerner's language and motion foolishly, faithfully, seriously, and elaborately". Unlike the leaders of Shōgekijō, however, Mishima, as a Shingeki playwright, did not consider it a completely useless thing. Instead, he writes:

Somehow the acting barely produced a notable result after the decades, and barely reached to the level which enables Japanese actors to perform Western plays, not so awkwardly from the Westerners' viewpoint.

Mishima describes this acting of 'honyakugeki' as "stylized acting", and argues as follows:

The acting of 'honyakugeki' is also following the process peculiar to Japanese performing arts, where the originally demanded realism gradually turns into stylization.

Then, Mishima ironically writes that this acting is what Madame de Sade requires

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60 Ibid.
as follows:

I thought that it was a shame to waste this glorious tradition of ‘the acting for imitation’. Therefore I wrote a mimetic French play to take advantage of it. The actors only have to share my shame and display the notorious acting of ‘honyakugeki’.  

What is important about Madame de Sade is that Mishima assumed the typical acting of ‘honyakugeki’ to be a ‘style’. Mishima successfully showed the work as a new quasi-‘translated play’ by deliberately assuming the acting of ‘honyakugeki’, not realism but a style. Mishima paradoxically claimed that the acting of ‘honyakugeki’, which Shingeki had believed as ‘realism’, was a very unique ‘style’ which Japanese modern theatre had developed, and took advantage of this ‘style’ effectively. It is very important that Mishima declared that what Shingeki had believed ‘realism’ was not ‘realism’ but ‘a style’ like Japanese traditional performing arts. If Shingeki’s realism is not so different from the stylized acting of Kabuki and Noh, and if the ‘stylized’ acting can depict the French aristocracy of the 18th century vividly, the quest for ‘authenticity’ should be nonsense. This viewpoint brought the possibility of releasing ‘honyakugeki’ from Shingeki’s preoccupation with ‘authenticity’.

Today, Madame de Sade is regarded as the greatest work of Japanese modern theatre. For example, in 1994, a poll was conducted among 54 Japanese theatre critics to determine the best Japanese works written from 1945 to 1994. It was Mishima Yukio’s Madame de Sade which won the first place. Japanese critic Nishiya Osamu argues about Mishima and Madame de Sade as follows:

It is certain that Mishima symbolises Japanese modernism because he inevitably confronted the conflict between the modern and tradition or the West and Japan, and performed it in an extraordinary way. Mishima deliberately wrote this French play, which has no relation to Japanese reality, only for a theatrical form including a bizarre structural perversion. Here the people and the world of modern Europe are depicted by Japanese modern theatre, which came out from the importation of Western theatre, as realism.

61 Ibid.
62 Ibid., p.145.
but in fact as a stylized form reminiscent of Onnagata, Kabuki's female impersonator stylizing women. This meant giving this theatrical form independence as a fiction.\textsuperscript{64}

If Mishima symbolises Japanese modernism as Nishiya argues, it is also possible to say that Mishima symbolises Japanese modern theatre which imitated Western theatre and was hampered by the lack of authenticity. The way Mishima chose to break through this obstacle was to give the theatrical form independence as fiction. In other words, the independence as fiction is an attitude not to persist with the authenticity of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century France. For example, although Mishima regards Racine's works as a model of Western theatre, he neglects the authenticity of classicism which French playwrights including Racine developed. \textit{Madame de Sade} lacks the unity of time among the three unities of time, place and action, the most important rule of classicism.\textsuperscript{65} Also, the period when Marquis de Sade lived was the 18\textsuperscript{th} century while the period when Racine lived and classicism flourished was the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. These indicate that Mishima never attempted to faithfully reproduce French classic tragedies such as Racine's works.

Mishima confesses that the language he used in \textit{Madame de Sade} is the language of the Taishō period (1912-26) in the Yamanote district of Tokyo (residential suburbs for the bourgeoisie).\textsuperscript{66} The fact that Mishima adapted the language of the Japanese bourgeoisie in the 1910s to the 1920s for the language of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century French aristocracy, reminds us of a fundamental issue about 'honyakugeki'. One of the most difficult issues of 'honyakugeki' was the question what kind of Japanese language should be adapted for the language of a class, a region, or a period in Western plays. After struggling for a long time, Shingeki somehow established a convention that a particular language should be adapted to particular Japanese. The adaptation of the Japanese bourgeoisie's language for the language of the Western aristocracies, as Mishima did in his play, is also one of these conventions.

It is possible to regard the conventions as an example of stylization. Since the stylization caused a conflict with realist style, the language and performance of 'honyakugeki' were severely criticised for a long time. Mishima deliberately followed this convention and adapted the language of the Japanese bourgeoisie for

\textsuperscript{64} Nishiya Osamu, "Pari no sado kōshaku fujin" (\textit{Madame de Sade} in Paris) Yuriika May 1986, pp.206-208; quote from p.208.

\textsuperscript{65} Kishi, 1986.

\textsuperscript{66} Mishima Yukio and Abe Kōbō, "20 seiki no bungaku" (Literature in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century) Bungei February 1966, pp.224-254.
the language of the 18th century French aristocracy, although he could use other languages for his new play. This meant that the play gave an opportunity for both Japanese theatre practitioners and the audience to reconsider the issue of language in 'honyakugeki'.

*Madame de Sade* also meant making the Japanese audience reconsider their attitude towards 'honyakugeki'. Until then, the audience expected authenticity in the presentations of 'honyakugeki', and was disappointed at the awkwardness of performances and speeches or the lack of authenticity in them. What *Madame de Sade* showed was the understanding that it is meaningless to expect authenticity in 'honyakugeki'. This understanding also provided a new perspective to 'honyakugeki'. All styles involve conventions shared by performers and audiences. For example, one who saw highly stylized Noh performance for the first time may not have understood what the performer expressed. The audiences understand what the performers expressed only after a convention is established between audiences and performers (such as a performer's drawing in his chin and holding up his hand in front of his forehead means grieving). Japanese traditional performing arts have many conventions as styles not only about such a physical expression but also about the structure of drama. If 'honyakugeki' should have a style as Mishima assumed, the convention which the style establishes would be that the audience should not care about the awkwardness of Japanese actors playing Western characters. It is possible to regard this approach as a strategy for Japanese theatre to cross cultural borders, which came out of the longstanding struggle for authenticity.

As discussed in the Introduction, 'honyakugeki' has a double function. They reflect not only the world of the original, but also the situation of the country in which they are presented. In other words, the production of a 'translated play' can be regarded not only as a work of the country in which the original was created but also as a work of the country in which the translated play is staged. Here it does not matter how an actor should approach authenticity of the original. Audiences can see the two worlds, (the world of the original and the world which the translation reflects) and go freely back and forth between them.

Various forms of experiments in the 1960s and 1970s, including *Madame de Sade* and the quest for national identity by the Shōgekijō movement, encouraged the transition of 'honyakugeki'. In 2003, *Madame de Sade* was presented at the New National Theatre, Tokyo. The director of the production Kaneshita Tatsuo, who
was one year old in 1965 when Madame de Sade was first performed, argues as follows:

Mr Mishima writes that he wanted to take advantage of Shingeki's acting technique of 'honyakugeki'. However, the "acting technique of 'honyakugeki'" has become obsolete words today. Also, it is not easy to establish such an "acting technique of 'honyakugeki'" now.67

Although the genre of 'honyakugeki' still exists today, "the acting technique of 'honyakugeki'" has already disappeared. Today, no actors wear 'nose putty' and blonde wigs, and perform with exaggerated gestures. 'Honyakugeki' in present Japan are free from the preoccupation with authenticity. It is important to note that the Australian plays which I will deal with in the next chapter were presented in the form of 'honyakugeki', which have the history as described above. That is because we can still find the issue of 'honyakugeki' and Japanese modernisation, and the issue of 'honyakugeki' and 'realism' in the presentation of Australian plays in Japan from the latter half of the 1990s, although they became far more subtle than ever before. 'Honyakugeki' is not just Western plays translated and presented in Japan but a genre with issues including Westernisation, modernisation and national identity as discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Without knowing this, it is impossible to understand the meaning of the Japanese productions of Australian plays in the form of 'honyakugeki'.

Chapter 4: The presentation of Australian plays as 'honyakugeki'

Since the middle of the 1990s, a number of Australian plays have been translated and presented in Japan. These presentations of Australian plays were promoted by both an increasing closeness of the relationship between Australian and Japanese theatre practitioners and by my translations of Australian plays. This chapter demonstrates how the Japanese productions of Australian plays reflected the history of 'honyakugeki', which I discussed in the previous chapter. In order to demonstrate this, I deal with the significance of presenting Australian plays in Japanese theatre from the middle of the 1990s, and case studies of the Japanese productions of John Romeril's *The Floating World*, Katherine Thomson's *Diving for Pearls*, Joanna Murray-Smith's *Honour* and the Australian production of Tanaka Chikao's *Head of Mary*.

**Australian plays as 'honyakugeki' from the 1990s**

In this section, I will survey 'honyakugeki' from the 1990s, and investigate the significance of the presentations of Australian plays.

From a certain period, discussions about 'honyakugeki' as discussed in Chapter 2, especially the binary understanding of whether 'honyakugeki' or 'original plays', suddenly disappeared. Some think it disappeared in the 1970s, and others think it did so in the 1980s. In 1998, Japanese scholar and theatre critic Ōba Kenji wrote:

> I suppose that two genres of 'honyakugeki' and original plays will diminish sooner or later".1

Since the 1990s, 'honyakugeki' has been presented not only by Shingeki but also by theatre companies of other genres. There are productions of commercial theatres in which film stars, TV stars and idol singers perform 'honyakugeki' in large theatres. On the other hand, there are also productions of Shōgekijō in which stage actors perform 'honyakugeki' in small theatres, the capacity of which is less than one hundred. Plays which are presented both in large and small theatres include the latest Western plays, especially American and British plays, as well as

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1 Ōba Kenji, "Kokusaika no naka no honyakugeki" (Honyakugeki' in globalization) *Teatoro* 672, September 1998, pp.28-30; quote from p.30.
Shingeki’s traditional repertoires such as Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams and Chekhov. The latest American and British plays are in large demand. There even exists a non-Japanese ‘broker’ who introduces new American and British plays into Japanese theatre companies. There are few discussions about the awkwardness of ‘honyakugeki’ which used to be a feature of Japanese modern theatre history. The audiences at commercial theatres who come to see TV stars and idol singers are not worried about this awkwardness, and the audience who are familiar with ‘honyakugeki’ are not worried about the awkwardness either, because they understand the conventions of ‘honyakugeki’ as discussed in the previous chapter. In this respect, Japanese and Australian theatres are the same. As Australian mainstream theatre companies present the latest Broadway or West End plays without feeling awkward, Japanese theatre companies seemingly continue to present those plays too. Indeed, I am a translator specialising in Australian plays, but while translating them, I am not conscious of the significance given to ‘honyakugeki’ in the Japanese modernisation. ‘Honyakugeki’ has lost their significant role in modernisation, and become just ‘consumer goods’. Besides, ‘honyakugeki’ now has equal value to Japanese plays. This situation is the reason Ōba predicted that “two genres of honyakugeki and original plays will diminish sooner or later”.

However, Ōba refers to an interesting example of the globalisation of ‘honyakugeki’. In 1996, a Japanese theatre company requested a mediocre American playwright to write a new play dealing with the biography of a celebrity, and they translated and performed it only in Japan. According to Ōba, the company claimed “Japan has just imported foreign culture and information, so that Japan is not good at exporting them” and “we hope we can correct this unequal relationship (by making the American write this play and by presenting it as a ‘translated play’)”. This example indicates that the Japanese ‘cultural cringe’ about ‘honyakugeki’ has not completely disappeared even as recently as the latter half of 1990s. Let us take another example. Theatre Project Tokyo, founded by a Japanese producer and a British director in 1993, is one of the major theatre companies which has concentrated on presenting Western plays. The manifesto of this company claims:

For the purpose of creating a new Japanese theatre...the theatre practitioners who lead the cutting edge of Broadway and West End collaborate with

\footnote{Ibid., p.29.}
Japanese actors and staff...and secure ‘the standard’ in Japanese contemporary theatre by presenting plays simultaneously with and in the same quality as world-class theatre.³

This manifesto shows the Japanese understanding that Broadway and West End are in the centre and Japanese theatre is on the periphery. More importantly, they believe that they can establish ‘the standard’ in Japanese theatre by presenting the latest American and British plays in the form of ‘honyakugeki’, as Osanai, the forefather of Shingeki, did so about a hundred years ago. Thus, ‘honyakugeki’ is still deeply related to the relationship between Japan and the West, which began with Japanese modernisation. ‘Honyakugeki’ which is presented in Japan today include few non-Western plays. Recently, theatrical exchange between Asian countries and Japan has increased. Nevertheless, there are very few attempts to present contemporary Asian plays in the form of ‘honyakugeki’ in Japan. This reflects that the Japanese do not regard Asian theatre as universal because ‘honyakugeki’ is a device to represent foreign works in the assumption that they are universal. Besides, the conventions which are needed for presenting Asian plays in the form of ‘honyakugeki’ have not been developed in Japanese theatre. This situation is similar to the fact that few Japanese plays are translated and presented in Australia. I will discuss this in detail in the next section.

In this context, Australian plays started to be translated and presented in Japan. Moreover, Australian plays are attracting more interest especially from Shingeki theatre companies since 2000.⁴ This movement arose as a backlash against the situation in which Japanese theatre companies were presenting too many British and America plays as well as classics such as Shakespeare and Chekhov. A story from February 2003 in the Asahi-shinbun newspaper reports that some Shingeki theatre companies are going to present the works of Bulgarian, Czech and Chilean playwrights in the 2003 season, and says as follows:

Shingeki was originally good at presenting ‘honyakugeki’. However, Shakespeare and Chekhov are no longer ‘mirrors reflecting the present’. These attempts to quest for excellent dramas regardless of areas and periods

⁴ The Australian plays which Shingeki theatre companies presented or plan to present since 2000 include Joanna Murray-Smith’s Honour and Rapture, Hannie Rayson’s Falling From Grace, Andrew Bovell’s Speaking in Tongues, and
will give new stimulation and diversity to Japanese theatre.\(^5\)

The popularity of Australian plays, especially within recent years, arose because Japanese theatre practitioners have sought “new stimulation and diversity” as in the cases of East European and South American plays. As discussed in the Introduction, Australia has been regarded as ‘cultureless’ in Japan. However, since information on Australian theatre has been introduced since the 1990s, the image of Australia as ‘a part of the West’ became important. In other words, because Australia is ‘a part of the West’, it is possible to see Australian plays as ‘Western plays’ in the form of ‘honyakugeki’. This is one of the major reasons why Australian plays have attracted interest from Shingeki theatre companies since 2000. For example, recently I was told that a major Shingeki company wanted to produce a new Australian play because they believed that the presentation of the play would be able to ‘revitalise’ their conservative and rigid company. This episode shows that Western plays, including Australian plays, still have significance more than just in the repertoire of Shingeki theatre companies. However, the Australian plays which Shingeki are interested in do not include Aboriginal plays. A Shingeki director said to me that it would be impossible for Shingeki to present Aboriginal plays because of the characteristic of Shingeki. In other words, as with other non-Western plays, Aboriginal plays are not regarded as universal by Shingeki. I will discuss this issue in detail in Chapter 8.

In this section, I surveyed the present situation of ‘honyakugeki’ and the significance of Australian plays in this situation. I move on to the investigation of Japanese productions of Australian plays from the middle of the 1990s.

**The Floating World**

In this section, I demonstrate that the Japanese production of *The Floating World* was received not only as an Australian work, but also as a work reflecting Japanese history and society, by audiences. Also, I demonstrate that this double function of ‘honyakugeki’ worked not only in Japan but also in Australia, by comparing with the Australian production of the Japanese play *The Head of Mary*.

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Elizabeth Coleman's *Secret Bridesmaids' Business*.

\(^5\) Imamura Osamu, “Shingeki wa honyakumono de shōbu: tōō ya nanbei no kessaku hakkutsu” (Shingeki’s new challenge of ‘honyakugeki’: they discovered masterpieces in East Europe and South America) *Asahi Shinbun* 28 February 2003.
The Floating World is the first Australian play which was presented in Japan in the form of 'hon'ya kugeki'. In 1995, the Japanese production of The Floating World by John Romeril, and translated by me, was presented, along with Japanese playwright Tanaka Chikao's Maria no Kubi (The Head of Mary) in the Japan-Australia Cultural Exchange Program. The Japan-Australia Cultural Exchange Program was jointly produced by the Tokyo International Festival of Performing Arts '95 and the 10th Melbourne International Festival of the Arts. In this program, Japanese and Australian theatre companies performed each other's plays in their own country's language. The two productions were shown at both festivals.

Moreover, there was an important social aim to the project. In 1995, during the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, both Japanese and Australian theatrical people and audiences have given consideration to the past and present relationship between two countries in reference to the theme of war. In The Head of Mary, which is set in Nagasaki, where one of the A-bombs was dropped, Japanese survivors pray for peace and their sorrow is healed by their faith in Christianity.

On the other hand, The Floating World is a story in which Japanese torment the people of other countries. In the middle of the 1970s, an Australian ex-serviceman who was a POW of the Japanese and forced to work on the construction of the infamous Burma-Thai railway goes on a cruise to Japan by sea. During the voyage, he is haunted by the ghost of an Australian soldier and a phantom of a Japanese soldier. By the time the ship arrives at Yokohama, he is, in a paranoid state, reliving the maltreatment dealt out by the Japanese army at the camp. It is very important for Japanese in particular to look squarely at these historical facts shown by an Australian. Nakane Tadao, the director of the Tokyo Festival, says,

> Although many plays with a war theme are being presented this year, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war, most of them are from the view point of the Japanese, and plays describing Japan as being responsible for the war are very rare.\(^6\)

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\(^6\) Nakane Tadao, Program note for The Floating World and The Head of Mary. The Tokyo International Festival of Performing Arts '95, 1995.
As a translator, the reason why I decided to translate *The Floating World* is intimately related to the Japanese attitude towards Australia. The theme of war which *The Floating World* deals with, is one of the most important matters for Japanese. As I mentioned in the Introduction, there is a wide gap in perception between Japan and Australia concerning the war. Although many Japanese know that they fought against such countries as the United States, Britain, and China in World War II, Australia is not considered to be part of that list at all. I doubt whether even the Japanese who were adult at the time of the war are aware of the history of events between Japan and Australia. Meanwhile, Japan-Australia relations have rapidly deepened in recent years. Nowadays, it is not too much to say that the country which the Japanese most want to visit is Australia, but their understanding of the present relations between the two countries is not at all connected with past events. While the memory of the war against Japan still lingers in Australia, overwhelmingly, the Japanese people who go there have no knowledge of the shared history. In such a situation, can we really establish a true friendship between the two countries? That was why I wanted Japanese people to know of the undeniable history shown in this play, and begin to bridge this large gap.

As discussed in the Introduction, Australian representations in Japan are dominated by stereotypical icons such as koalas, kangaroos, and images of the great environment. It is possible that this superficial understanding of Australia in Japan is responsible for Japanese lack of concern about sharing the past with Australia. Australian representations, which consist of harmless icons such as koalas and kangaroos and the image of a friendly country (although the image of the white Australia policy is still dominant for the intellectual class) leave little room for the memory of the war between Australia and Japan. My intention was, by introducing *The Floating World* into Japan, to complicate the superficial representations of Australia in Japan, and the underlying Japanese attitude towards Australia.

The attempt to make the Australians and the Japanese share the memory of the war was the most significant theme of the Japan-Australia Cultural Exchange Program. It is fair to say that the attempt itself was successful. One of the reasons the Japanese production of *The Floating World* was received favourably is the fact that it was a Japanese theatre group which presented the play, questioning the Japanese war responsibility in Australia. Several newspaper stories in Australia commented on the fact that a Japanese company performed this particular play at
this point in time:

...the fact it has been mounted by a Japanese company is a gesture of breathtaking humanity and heroic mobility.

It is worth 10,000 official apologies. The war, at last, is over.  

This was an astoundingly brave production and one can only wonder how this Australian play about Japanese war crimes went down in Tokyo in the reciprocal production.8

In Australia, two productions of The Floating World, both by the Japanese company and by the Black Swan Theatre Company and The State Theatre Company of South Australia, were presented in 1995, but these reviews indicate that the importance of the Japanese production did not decrease at all and that it provided a great inspiration to the Australian audience. There is no doubt that the Australian reviewers appreciated the significance of the fact that the Japanese company staged this play during the 50th anniversary of the end of war.

In Japan, the production evoked various opinions about the war and Australia. Theatre critic Senda Akihiko found in his review of the production of The Floating World a common point between this play and a new Japanese play called Minami e (To the South).9 This play, written by Oriza Hirata, one of the youngest and most important figures in Japanese contemporary theatre, was presented in Tokyo at almost the same time. In Minami e the story takes place on a ship which is carrying Japanese passengers to a southern island in the near future during the 21st century. On the ship Japanese reveal their racial prejudices toward an Asian waitress. Senda says:

It seems the author wrote this play as a warning against a potential future of Japanese who may become arrogant and exclusive as a result of becoming wealthy.10

9 Senda Akihiko, “Futatsu no gendaigeki” (Two contemporary plays) Asahi Shinbun 3 October 1995.
10 Ibid.
And he points out that this prejudice is the same as that found in *The Floating World*.

Senda quotes my suggestion that the title *The Floating World* refers to "Australia floating on the Asian ocean" and says:

> If so, we can consider the ship in *Minami e* as a symbol of floating Japan, too. These two ships are devices to embody 'Asia' as images for both Australians and Japanese. The ship bound for the south and the ship bound for the north. By looking at ourselves in each ship as mirror images, we can see that today our two countries are floating in Asia.\(^{12}\)

The main topic of Senda’s review of *The Floating World* was a comparison with *Minami e* and concluded that this, so to speak, Australian classic was a piece which could offer quite an interesting point of view for Japanese, even in comparison with a new Japanese play.

Theatre critic Imamura Osamu writes about *The Floating World* as follows:

\(^{11}\) A summary of my note for the program for the Tokyo production is as follows: The title, *The Floating World*, means "Australia floating on the Asian ocean". In other words, Australia as a nation, needs to survive in an Asian ocean where the cultural basis is not Australian, and her cultural basis is far away from Europe as well; she also noticed that she was threatened by Asia during World War II. Furthermore, nowadays she is exposed to the economic advance of Japan. The play severely reveals Australians' xenophobia and prejudice toward Asian people and warns them to overcome that attitude since they live together with Asians as part of the Asia-Pacific area.

Japanese people can’t help considering this Australian problem as their own problem too. First, as the importance of the Asia-Pacific area grows, Japan realizes that she must strengthen her relationship with neighbouring countries in this area, even though Japan has mainly favoured Western countries since the Meiji Restoration. And yet, Japan still can’t abandon her respect for the West, thus maintaining her prejudice toward Asia. This is an attitude common to both Japan and Australia. Secondly, there is no room to doubt that the symbols of the menace of Asia to Australia are the fury of Japanese army during World War II, and Japan's present-day economic advance. Unless Japan works to reduce Australian anxieties, these two countries will never become true partners. That is why we Japanese must look squarely at the history of relations between Japan and Australia. As to present-day relations between two countries, the poverty of people's thinking whose only concern is the fulfillment of their own desires, such as investment or tourism, must be reconsidered. As a great number of people are coming and going to each other's country, we should be willing to learn more about each other's way of thinking.

(Sawada Keiji, Program note for *The Floating World* and *The Head of Mary*. The Tokyo International Festival of Performing Arts '95, 1995.\(^{12}\) Senda, 1995.)
An extraordinary impact pervades the whole stage, which portrays the bitter memory of war unexpectedly shot from the cracks of peaceful life....

...According to the original text, Waiter (Isshi Yuki) and Comic (Magosaburo Yuki) are supposed to perform a double act. But the use of puppets removes excess contemplation and conveys the cruelty more objectively. However, this play is not only an accusation of the Japanese army's brutality. I think that the playwright clearly brings out the Australian people's identity and the nature of Japan-Australian relations, through the comparison between the Les's memory and his wife's simple-minded adoration of Japanese culture. At the same time, this intention confronts the audience with the tough question: who are we Japanese? Natsuyagi's long monologue is the highlight of this play and expresses the wounded heart in which truth and fiction are mixed together in madness.¹³

The review by Imamura Osamu held something in common with my thinking. For example, Imamura says, "This play is not only an accusation of the Japanese army's brutality". If the stories of numerous atrocities of the Japanese army at camps on the Burma-Thailand Railway told by Les existed only to arouse hostility toward Japanese, there would be no room for Japanese to be involved in the world of the play and reflect on various problems around them. If Les were a character whose only purpose is to list past agonies suffered at the hands of the Japanese army, the Japanese today would only hear his words with a slightly guilty conscience. However, these are not the only messages that this play can provide for Japanese.

Les's struggle was not only against Japanese soldiers, but also with doubts about the rightness of the army of his own country, and a contradiction between his racial prejudice towards Japanese and his own approach to Japan. At last, he was defeated, received psychological wounds, and was imprisoned into the past. I think this is the scene we Japanese must never avert our eyes from. Today, Japan is being called on to account for war crimes such as the use of POWs as slave labour on the Burma-Thailand Railway. Imagine how painful it is for Japanese to take responsibility for such actions. While the A-bombs which were dropped in

¹³ Imamura Osamu, "Horyo no kunō kokoro no dokuhaku ga akkan" (The agony of a POW and an overwhelming soulful monologue) *Asahi Shinbun* 27 September
Hiroshima and Nagasaki are usually viewed as justifiable by international opinion, numerous survivors are still suffering from the after-effects. Nevertheless, Japanese must positively face responsibility for their past. Therefore, they cannot ignore Les's agony, which even affects his very identity. His agony is another burden that Japanese must shoulder. Imamura says that this play confronted the audience with "the tough question of who we Japanese are". I think this means that, even if it causes a crisis of pride, Japanese must squarely look at the past and present and discover their real identities.

Japanese audience reactions to this production were surveyed by the producer of the Tokyo Festival. Information was gathered by questionnaires at each performance in Tokyo. Although there were only about thirty valid replies out of six hundred audiences at six performances, it was believed that this was a good opportunity to hear Japanese audiences' candid opinions. Indeed, the reactions were not what I had expected. Most opinions from comparatively older spectators indicate that the show gave them the opportunity to seriously face the war. For example:

"I could really feel Les's deep grief". (woman, 67)

"The show made me remember my experiences during the war. Till now, I had thought we were victims of the war, but I realised we were guilty at the same time". (woman, 70)

"I saw for the first time a play showing the war guilt of Japanese. Les's guilty feeling about the dead makes us Japanese feel more guilty. I wish to live without forgetting the dead". (man, 65)

On the other hand, the reactions of younger people surprised me because many of them avoided the theme of war. People in their twenties and thirties insisted that the war is none of their concern. Typical opinions were as follows:

"As for the theme of this play, that's not my business because I was born in the '70s. It sounded like a fairy tale to me". (man, 22)

"Stories of war are like one scene of a film and don't have any reality for me. So hearing such stories is a great burden". (woman, 32)

"I can't understand the purpose of showing this play to Japanese now". (woman, 27)
I was quite surprised by such a generation gap. Above all, I would never have expected young Japanese to be so indifferent to the history of their country. This was a great blow to me because I also belong to this generation. Of course, the most serious cause of this situation is the lack of historical education in Japan which has recently received a lot of criticism. Is it impossible to teach the reality of the war to the younger generation of Japanese which has been blessed with peace and wealth? If so, the history will become forgotten and the next generation will not learn any lesson from the past. However, some high school students who are much younger also came to see the show. Although students wrote in their questionnaires that the story was too difficult to understand, they tried to accept the play seriously rather than avoid its implications.

Interestingly, an Australian audience who saw *The Head of Mary* had a parallel impression to the impression of a Japanese audience about *The Floating World* saying “I had thought we were victims of the war, but I noticed we were guilty at the same time”. In the Melbourne newspaper *The Age*, an audience member commented:

> It really gives you the Japanese point of view. It gave you a view of another culture through their eyes... It was interesting to look at the Japanese as victims when we so often see them as the opposite.\(^\text{14}\)

These episodes show that the intention of the cultural exchange program to share the history and know each other revealed the differences between Australians and Japanese, and also between each generation of the Japanese in understanding of the war. Apart from this political reason, the Japanese production of *The Floating World* was praised especially in Melbourne for its artistic excellence. It is possible to regard the production as the highest achievement of 'honyakugeki' as a genre which has been developed in Japan.

Next, I would like to examine how *The Floating World* was directed in this production in 1995 in Tokyo and Melbourne, and how it was different from the productions which had been presented in Australia up until that point. I had an opportunity to see the production of *The Floating World* presented by the Black Swan Theatre Company and The State Theatre Company of South Australia in

\(^{14}\) "What they said" *The Age* 26 October 1995.
1995. Therefore, I will examine the Japanese production, comparing it with Black Swan & The State Theatre production or former ones described in published accounts.

According to the text, the narrator Harry tells a story of a Japanese businessman who comes to Australia to construct resorts and of Australian "Judases" who sell out their land to Japanese in the first scene of the play, 'Drum Poem One'. In the production by the Black Swan and the State Theatre the Japanese businessman appears as a puppet and chants "Drum Poem One" just like a Jōruri singer from the Bunraku puppet theatre. In the Japanese-language production, Satō rewrote the whole of this scene and had two Japanese couples appear in it. The couple are typical Japanese honeymooners wearing matching T-shirts and jeans, and the other couple are the executive of a company which is advancing into the tourist industry in Australia, and his secretary. These characters, portrayed by members of the Yūki-za Company without puppets, recite a new poem which seems more contemporary. For instance, the executive looks up Mururoa on a map and one of the young couple swears not to buy French products at the Balmain Markets in Sydney. They are a symbol of Japanese today, and work as a device to mix images of the past and the present when they appear once again with puppets of Japanese soldiers in the last scene, "Drum Poem Two".

One of the special characteristics of the Japanese version is the use of puppets. Puppets were used in the Black Swan and State Theatre production also, but the difference between the two productions in the use of puppets is significant. In the Black Swan and State Theatre production, puppets appeared only to portray some images which were narrated. As I have mentioned, in Drum Poem One, an image of a Japanese businessman whose words are chanted by Comic, a Jōruri singer, is embodied as a Bunraku puppet. When the Waiter sings a Japanese military song, a puppet appears in that song as a Japanese soldier. When Les recalls the miserable life in the camp filled with disease and starvation, a puppet like a skeleton appears as a symbol of the prisoners. On the other hand, in the Japanese production puppets manipulated by members of the Yūki-za Company represent actual characters in the play such as Comic, Waiter, Harry and Ship's Officer. In most cases the puppeteers wore the same costumes as their puppets; this means that the puppeteers exposed their faces, unlike puppeteers in the Black Swan and the State Theatre production or in Japanese traditional Bunraku theatre. As a result, the audience was able to enjoy the performances of both puppets and puppeteers. When the Waiter becomes a Japanese soldier and Comic becomes an
Australian army officer, only the puppets are quickly exchanged. Having puppets act the roles of Comic, Harry and Waiter was an effective device. Comic is the character who keeps telling dirty jokes, but most of his jokes are difficult to translate into Japanese, or even if it is possible, they might be dull for the Japanese audience. The puppet as Comic, however, performed the lion dance, a Japanese folk entertainment, and acrobatics instead of jokes, and interested the audience. Harry is a difficult role to present on stage. When Harry is performed by a single actor, in the Sydney Theatre Company production directed by Wayne Harrison and Richard Wherrett (1986) Harry's Drum Poem One was assigned to the character McLeod\textsuperscript{15} and in the Black Swan and State Theatre production, as mentioned above, it was performed by the Comic. As I saw in the Black Swan and State Theatre production, no matter how the part of Harry is curtailed, it requires at least one actor, and the function of that actor was vague. However, in the Japanese production, the puppet fitted the mechanical role of Harry very well. However, it seems that the biggest advantage comes from the use of a puppet to portray the Waiter. When Japanese casts perform \textit{The Floating World}, the question is how they can express that Les, when he is played by an actor with an Asian face, can racially discriminate against an Asian Waiter. But if a puppet performs the part of the Waiter, it is possible to distinguish this Asian as an object of the racism from other cast members playing Les, Irene and Robinson. In addition, the rapid transformation between Waiter and Japanese soldier in Les's imagination was simply expressed by exchanging puppets.

When \textit{The Floating World} was first staged, filling the stage with the surreal automotive movement of the Dippy Birds was used as a symbol of the Japanese economic invasion of Australia. In those days, Dippy Birds, invented in Japan, were a fad around the world and a large number of them were exported from Japan to Australia. Furthermore, they were also a symbol of the cheapness of Japanese products. However, nowadays with Japanese products considered to be high quality ones, who can find the original meaning given to the Dippy Birds? Elizabeth Webby commented on the Sydney Theatre Company production as follows:

\begin{quote}
The political message of the play was very much altered by replacing Dippy Birds, symbols of the inanity of contemporary Japanese commercialism, with
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{15} Wayne Harrison, "Maintaining the rage" Holloway, Peter (ed.) \textit{Contemporary Australian Drama}. Revised ed. Sydney, Currency Press, 1987, pp.504-518; quote
Kabuki warriors, a symbol of traditional Japanese culture and art. A negative symbol is replaced by one with positive connotations.\textsuperscript{16}

In the Black Swan and State Theatre production, the scene called "First-rate Japanese Product for International Market" remains and the Waiter who became a Japanese businessman explains the instructions for the Dippy Birds, while they no longer appear in the last scene, Drum Poem Two, despite a stage direction saying that the Dippy Birds are put around Les and "they nod away in perpetual insanity".\textsuperscript{17} In the Japanese production, the Dippy Birds were used. In the latter half of Drum Poem Two, after the Japanese honeymooners and the executive and his secretary manipulated their puppets, they appeared again with the Dippy Birds and made them surround Les. Why did Satô dare to use these objects whose symbolism had already faded? Satô explains the reason in his personal notes as follows:

In this production, the significance given to the Dippy Birds is larger, more equivocal, than what Romeril intended in his play. What do the Dippy Birds mean? I leave the question to each member of the audience. This is the technique I often use to write and direct plays. It is a so called 'chasm' that I intentionally created to make each spectator's imagination intervene in the drama. That's why I want to give the audience a strong impression of the Dippy Birds before the audience decides how to interpret the drama. The question of what they are stays close to the audience throughout and doesn't allow them to feel comfortable. I want to emphasize that what's happening on the stage is not a ready-made story, but a story that will be completed only after the imagination of each spectator takes part in the drama.\textsuperscript{18}

It is important that Satô's production attempted to use the Dippy Birds even after they had lost their cultural context completely. That is because this attitude of seeking different meanings in the original, rather than reproducing the original's cultural context faithfully, is a characteristic of 'honyakugeki' which experienced the impact of Shôgekijô.

\textsuperscript{18} Quoted from a note which Satô wrote to assist discussion of his production intentions with Romeril. Typescript in Japanese, 1995.
The running time of the production in Tokyo was more than two and a half hours, although a great deal had been cut. It is common for the length of a play written in English or other European languages to become longer when translated into Japanese. However, it was necessary for the production in Melbourne to be no more than two hours. Romeril saw the show in Tokyo and suggested that Satô shorten not only some scenes but also Les's monologue. As the subject of a cut, he mentioned Les's pre-war memory which does not have a direct bearing on the miserable situation in the camp. According to Wayne Harrison, the same kind of cut was also made in the Sydney Theatre Company production. However, Satô did not dare to cut this part. He explains his reason as follows:

Indeed, Les's recollection of his childhood is out of context. But I am not inclined to cut it because it makes an effective contrast with the other episodes spoken in the monologue. I want to make full use of the characteristics of the monologue such as leaps of imagination, devices of the writing style, and plays on words.

Indeed, this monologue was, so to speak, the highlight in the Japanese production. In striking contrast to the quiet and gloomy tone of Les in the Black Swan and State Theatre production, this scene was filled with brisk movements, rapid changes of rhythm and tone, and fine visual effects. For example, in the middle of the monologue Les is surrounded by puppets of Japanese soldiers, and when he struggles to shake them off, their faces and bodies are split in two and their heads fall off (this is not only a nightmare for Les, but from the Japanese audience's point of view also a pitiful image of Japanese soldiers who died tragically on the south sea islands). Moreover, when Les tells the story that he stole a bottle of vitamins from the Japanese and ate them, he holds a real bottle filled with pills aloft and sprinkles them on his hand. It was a beautiful effect of both sound and sense that the pills passed through his hand and scattered on the linoleum floor.

In the text, Les's wife Irene is described as an unrefined and uncultured character. Since numerous misstatements showing her ignorance, such as "Gherkins", "the Saveloy Plaza" and "a pathochronic liar", are difficult to translate into Japanese, Irene did not make so many mistakes in this production. The stereotype of a

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20 Quote from a note by Satô.
middle-aged woman, one characteristic of Irene, was depicted to some extent by Itô Yumiko who is good at comical roles. Director Satô provided a couple of scenes showing a new interpretation of the relationship between Irene and Les. The first is Scene 17 "Listen to the Band", in which, after the breakdown of the friendship between Les and Robinson, Les tightly embraces and kisses Irene who has just come from a restroom. Satô likes this scene which he added himself, and considers that it is "the last embrace, although neither Les nor Irene has noticed yet that it will be the last". In Satô's interpretation, "Les, like a drowning man, seeks Irene's helping hand unconsciously. But she misses his sign because she can't understand the meaning of his behavior". In other words, Satô interprets that there still remains a slight mutual reliance between Les and Irene at the heart of their cold relationship as shown in previous scenes. The other is Scene 19 "Yokohama Blues", in which Irene regrets that she has missed Les's inner voice asking for help and, even after the Scene 20 "Drum Poem Two" starts, she stands there, blaming herself. At this point Les is uttering his insane monologue beside her. This new scene shows the tragedy in the fact that they have been separated at last, although their unconscious affections still remained.

Director Satô took charge of the set design also. The design was fairly simple. There were railings of the deck at both wings of the stage. Steel screens with meshes were situated in the centre of the stage. Opening them allowed some scenes to begin like using a curtain; moreover, since it was possible to make the figures behind them appear on the screens by using a backlight, they were used to express an imaginary cage in which Les was shut up. On the left side of the stage was the space where Yas-Kaz, a musician, played music, and it was full of equipment such as synthesizers. Yas-Kaz performed all the tunes used in that show, and his music added weight to the play. The music composed by Yas-Kaz is characterized by its Asian tone. It stirs up not only Australian exoticism, but also Japanese. In the Black Swan and State Theatre production, a Japanese popular song was used whenever Waiter appeared as a Japanese. The difference in music between the two productions presumably arose from the difference in their purposes. In other words, the Black Swan and State Theatre production was presented on the assumption that only Australian audiences would see it, and only if the show presents a Japanese atmosphere can the production touch on the theme of the relationship between Australia and Asia in *The Floating World*. On

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21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
the other hand, the Japanese production was designed for both Japanese and Australian audiences. The exotic music indicates the important theme of the encounter with Asia to the audiences of both countries. In this sense, therefore, Yas-Kaz’s music adds a more cross-cultural point of view to the Japanese production.

It is possible to say that the Japanese production of *The Floating World* represents a landmark in the history of ‘honyakugeki’. This production can be seen as a fusion of ‘honyakugeki’ and Shôgekijô. In order to understand this aspect of the production, we need to understand the backgrounds of the director and performers. The director Satô Makoto is one of the leading playwrights and directors in contemporary Japanese theatre. As a leader of the first generation of Shôgekijô since the 1960s, he has led his own itinerant troupe called Black Tent. However, he gathered most of the actors from outside of the Black Tent company for this production. His career indicates that he does not belong to Shingeki which has presented numerous ‘honyakugeki’ in Japan. The casting is very interesting because it is rich in variety. Natsuyagi Isao as Les Harding is a very popular film star who has appeared in many films and TV programs. Miyabe Akio as ex-British officer Herbert Robinson is an actor from Shingeki (Presumably the use of this Shingeki actor was effective to represent the snobbishness of the British in the text, because Shingeki itself has been a symbol of ‘snobbishness’ in Japan). Muramatsu Katsumi is a member of Satô’s Black Tent, who has been involved in the Shôgekijô movement since the 1960s. Itô Yumiko (as Irene Harding) is an actress from a young theatre company which is categorized as the third generation of the Shôgekijô movement (if Black Tent is considered the first generation). Moreover, Yûki-za, a puppetry troupe whose puppets act as other characters, has a 350-year-tradition and performs classic plays, but which often works on modern plays also. Thus, performers belonging to various genres in Japanese traditional, modern and contemporary theatres were assembled for this production. The assembling of a cast consisting of Shingeki, Shôgekijô, and traditional theatre performers shows a new stage in the productions of ‘honyakugeki’.

Furthermore, this production involved collaboration between leading figures of alternative theatre in two countries. This collaboration is very significant from the point of view of comparisons between Japanese and Australian contemporary theatre. Both Satô and Romeril are influential artists who represent the reformation of theatre in both Japan and Australia from the 1960s to mid-70s, and who are members of the generation of the rise of counter-culture. Romeril chose
Satō as the director of *The Floating World* and Satō also seems to be conscious of the fact that he and Romeril have something in common. He says:

In the early 1970s, John Romeril’s *The Floating World* was born out of the new theatre movement in Australia. At the same time, similar changes were occurring in Japanese theatre; there emerged a need to find a new voice, a new way of looking at ourselves and of breaking away from the old traditions. My company Black Tent was formed in this atmosphere. When we started performing there were threats and warnings about the work we were doing, which called attention to things that were not right with society and history. Many people did not want to hear this. Some decades later, I am sure John Romeril will agree, when I say that we share and express the same ideologies, and that this collaboration is indeed a fortuitous event."

Interestingly, a director of a Shingeki company, who had directed the Australian play *Honour*, had known *The Floating World* before Satō staged his production, but he did not show any interest in it. I have argued that the first generation of Shōgekijō sought to reform the theatre as represented by Shingeki as part of a quest for national identity and their presentations of ‘honyakugeki’. It is possible that this experience made Satō choose the direction to use the 300 years-old traditional puppet theatre in the presentation of the ‘translated play’ *The Floating World*. About the puppet, Australian theatre critic Helen Thomson writes as follows:

> The wonderful puppets are not only delightful, they also subtly alter the tenor of many scenes. Used to brilliant comic effect in the ship-board entertainment section, they represent, as well, the wartime dream characters who haunt Les. Their diminutive status and exaggerated movements mean that the scenes of brutal conflict are removed from actual physical representation into the realm of play within a play. They are still sinister and threatening, but controlled by their puppeteers, their small size increasing their malevolence but also signaling their status as imagined and remembered characters now only alive in Les’s mind.

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This review shows how the traditional puppets worked effectively in this 'translated play'. The use of the traditional performing arts in the Japanese production of *The Floating World* clearly indicates the major shift of Japanese modern theatre from the approach of quest for authenticity in 'honyakugeki' to the approach of interpreting them from the Japanese perspective.

As discussed in the Introduction, one of the most important features of 'honyakugeki' is that they are received as 'in-between' two cultures. Due to this suspension of nationality, it is possible that some members of the audience regard the Japanese translation of an Australian play as an Australian work representing Australian society and ways of thinking, while some regard the play as a Japanese work representing Japanese ways of thinking.

As mentioned above, Senda Akihiko has argued for this double function of 'honyakugeki' which can make an audience think not only about the culture in which the work was originally produced but also the culture which the company presenting the play belongs to. Australian theatre critic Helen Thomson writes:

> It is an extraordinary moment and enormously moving, because this production has taken Römeril's play well beyond its original polemics and its affectionate portrait of a national type safely quarantined by history, to actually incorporate the play's feared Other. We are left not only with admiration for this company's acting skills, but for its courage in tackling this play to exorcise some of Japan's own demons, not just Les Harding's. ²⁵

This remark shows that the Japanese company's attempt to explore the element reflecting the Japanese society as well as the original dramatic focus was understood in Australia.

In contrast, in the Australian production of *The Head of Mary*, this function did not seem to work well. The story in *The Age* of 26 October 1995 reports the director Aubrey Mellor's motivation for directing *The Head of Mary*.²⁶ According to this newspaper story, the fact that Nagasaki was a Christian community was important for Mellor, but his intention was to universalise the theme by removing

24 Helen Thomson, "The Floating World" *The Age* 2 November 1995
²⁵ Ibid.
²⁶ John Mangan, "Japanese play staged to reflect Australia" *The Age* 26 October 1995.
the Japanese context, and depict the horror of an atomic bomb which could happen in Australia, too. However, after pointing out that the result of the cast representing multicultural Australia including “a Russian, a Romanian, a Czech, a Jew, an Arab, a Japanese, a Dutch and three Anglo-Celtic actors” was “extremely confusing”, Helen Thomson writes as follows:

In not recognizing the inherent contradictions in his conception, the director has fallen into some murky middle ground between Australians pretending to be Japanese, and their representations of Australian, not Japanese, identity.27

In the Japanese production of *The Floating World*, the nationality (or culture), which the company belongs to, made it possible to convey to the audience not only a story for the Australian but also a story for the Japanese. In contrast, the Australian production of *The Head of Mary* confused audiences.

In this section I have demonstrated that ‘honyakugeki’ becomes powerful when both the two cultures the original play and the company belong to are clearly visible. It also makes it possible for both the company and the audience to discover meanings which the original work did not intend. The Japanese perspective was not clearly visible in the productions of ‘honyakugeki’ which the Japanese theatre produced to follow Western plays as idealised models. Only after the Japanese acquired the ability to appropriate ‘honyakugeki’ from the Japanese own perspective, were they able to make their culture clearly visible in their presentations of ‘honyakugeki’. The Japanese production of *The Floating World* is a significant achievement of the Japanese modern theatre which has struggled with ‘honyakugeki’ and the Western modern theatre for more than a century.

**Diving for Pearls**

In this section, I demonstrate that the public reading of *Diving for Pearls* and the dialogue between Japanese and Australian theatre practitioners revealed one of the most important characteristics of contemporary Japanese theatre, that is, the avoidance of politics.

In 1999, Katherine Thomson’s *Diving for Pearls* was presented by Japan’s

National Playwright Association Conference in Sapporo, Hokkaido. First, I will survey the process by which *Diving for Pearls* was selected to be presented in Japan. In April, 1998, Japanese leading playwrights/directors such as Satô Makoto, Hirata Oriza and Saitô Ren were invited to Australia's National Playwrights' Conference. This visit gave rise to plans for an Australia-Japan exchange program, and Japan's National Playwrights' Association decided to present an Australian play as a reading in their conference. The choice of the play was left to John Romeril, and he talked with me about which Australian play should be presented. We decided on *Diving for Pearls*. This play is one of the most famous Australian plays in the 1990s, and was used as teaching material for secondary education. Although it was first performed in 1991, there were revivals including the Ensemble theatre's production in 1998 and the play still appealed to the contemporary audience. Those were reasons why we chose this play. Romeril arranged Katherine Thomson's visit to Japan for the public reading.

In Japan, drama reading is a form of theatre which started becoming popular just recently and public reading was one of the main subjects of the conference. The reading of *Diving for Pearls* was presented as follows: the director Hirata Oriza and actors (semi-professional actors based in Sapporo) formed a line on the stage. Hirata acted as a narrator and read stage directions, while actors read their lines with the scripts in their hands. Unfortunately the audiences occupied less than one fourth of the seats in the auditorium. The Japanese audiences looked as if they had heard a lecture rather than enjoyed a play. Thomson and Romeril were in the audiences and watched the stage earnestly. After the reading, there was a post-performance talk session which was attended by Hirata, Thomson and myself. Thomson said that she was satisfied with the quality of the presentation. Also, according to Thomson, she was able to realise which part of the play was being read even if in Japanese. To her surprise, the actors were not only suited to the characters but also had a similar demeanour to the actors who performed the original in Australia. As for the translation, she said that it perfectly grasped the rhythm of the original play.

Hirata asked Thomson about the economic situation of the beginning of the 1990s in Australia, which is the background of *Diving for Pearls*. Hirata seemed to be interested in the fact the setting of the play is an old mining town. Hirata pointed out that the setting of the play resembled the present economic situation in Hokkaido, where the mining industry had already collapsed, and the whole economy was shrinking. Wollongong, which the setting of the play is probably
modelled on, is very similar to Hokkaido in this point. Due to the huge gap between extremely cold northern towns of Japan and the Australian coast town with a moderate climate, one could overlook this similarity. Besides, there is a stereotypical image of Australia in Japan that it is a rich country in which everyone is wealthy and has no worries. In fact, Hirata said that he was surprised to learn that there are people who are struggling against harsh economic reality in Australia. Of course, this is one of the most typical misunderstandings about Australia in Japan. In this respect, the presentation of *Diving for Pearls* began to correct the superficial Japanese understanding of Australia.

After the reading, there was a symposium entitled “Contemporary Society and the Role of Playwrights” which was attended by Satō Makoto (chair), Thomson, Romeril, Saitō Ren, Japanese playwrights Ôta Shôgo and Kôgami Shôji and a Russian director. In this symposium, Saitō made an important remark about *Diving for Pearls* as follows:

> This kind of play, which deals with serious social and labour issues, can never be found in the contemporary Japanese theatre.\(^{28}\)

Moreover, Saitō talked about his visit to Australia’s National Playwrights’ Conference the previous year. At that time, the waterfront workers of Sydney went on a large strike, and the news of the strike was reported not only in Australia but also overseas. According to Saitō, when the report that the strike had ended with the victory of the waterfront workers was announced at the conference, Australian playwrights cried triumphantly and said “This is our victory”. Saitō was amazed at this scene. He said:

> In Australia, playwrights have a close identification with the worker’s cause. Of course there used to be an equivalent in Japan, but it disappeared by the 1950s.\(^{29}\)

The difference between playwrights’ political stance in Australia and Japan, which Saitō pointed out, is reflected in the difference in subject matter between Australian and Japanese plays. Compared with Japanese theatre, there are many works dealing with political and social issues in Australian theatre. Japanese

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contemporary plays tend to deal with fanciful and entertaining subjects, so that only small numbers of plays deal with political issues. Australian scholar Peter Eckersall has made an interesting investigation into Japanese theatre practitioners' avoidance of politics. Eckersall interviewed Miyagi Satoshi, a Japanese playwright/director who has emerged since the 1980s. According to this interview, Miyagi was originally interested in the issue of the discrimination against Korean residents, and campaigned for the rights of Korean minorities when he entered university. However, Eckersall writes:

While at university, Miyage [sic] felt that art had no place in student activist circles, thinking that "art was separate from political issues and the world of politics". Miyage [sic] has continued to articulate the separation of art and politics, arguing that "currently in the developed world there are few people who believe that the arts can change things in the world and make the move in certain ways".\(^{30}\)

I believe this example shows the typical attitude of the Japanese theatrical practitioners in this period towards politics.

There are some reasons for this difference between Japanese and Australian theatre. One of the reasons is the change in the Japanese theatre brought by the first generation of Shôgekijô. They resisted Shingeki, which valued politics and literariness in drama, and took the opposite direction. Japanese theatre critic/translator Matsuoka Kazuko points out that this direction of the first generation had a great influence on the boom of Shôgekijô in the 1980s.\(^{31}\) Matsuoka regards the major feature of Shôgekijô as "the enlargement of entertainment quality"\(^{32}\) consisting of gags, slapsticks, songs and dances, which was inherited from Kara Jûrô and Terayama Shûji, the leaders of the first generations of Shôgekijô. This character of the 1980s theatre promoted a qualitative change of audience in the Japanese contemporary theatre. Matsuoka describes them as an "audience who come to theatre only to laugh".\(^{33}\) Indeed, even

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\(^{29}\) Ibid.


\(^{32}\) Ibid., p.405.

\(^{33}\) Ibid., p.405.
now, the audience in the Japanese theatre is quite different from that of
Australian theatre. In Japan, the audience for particular types of theatre is
completely divided in terms of age or sex. For example, Kabuki theatre is for old
men and women, and Shingeki is for middle aged men and women. On the other
hand, Shōgekijō's audiences are almost completely occupied by women in their late
teens and twenties. It is a great advantage that audiences in Australia are not like
those in Japan. The most attractive asset of Australian theatre is that it has a lot
of serious plays dealing with political affairs and social problems directly, and both
conservative and non conservative audiences have enough intelligence to receive
such serious drama. In Japan, except for in the 1960s and the early 1970s when
the Vietnam War and Leftist movement affected Shōgekijō, obviously serious plays
have been avoided. Especially in the 1980s, theatre was not expected to be a
medium for discussing political and social issues. It is because theatre companies,
playwrights, and directors seem to think that they only have to create their
theatre to please their own, very specific fans. For example, Japanese
playwright/director Noda Hideki, one of the leading figures of the Japanese
theatre since the 1980s, has developed his plays by enlarging the frivolous element
too much, in order to please the audiences in their twenties, who come to theatre
as if they come to see their favourite rock stars. It is natural that this difference of
audiences affects the subjects which are dealt with in both countries' theatres.
Matsuoka argues:

In the 1980s theatre was attended only by 'boys' and 'girls', and plays squarely
tackling adult themes were in a minority.34

This attitude of theatre practitioners and audiences of the 1980s had an important
influence on the next generation. Although there appeared a political playwright
such as Sakate Yōji in the 1990s, the tendency to avoid politics in Japanese
theatre has been basically consistent until today. The presentation of Diving for
Pearls and the exchange of the Australian and Japanese theatre practitioners
reminded Japanese people who attended the conference about the difference
between Australian and Japanese theatres. The avoidance of politics in Japanese
contemporary theatre becomes an important issue when we think about the
Japanese productions of Aboriginal plays. I will discuss this issue again in
Chapters 5 to 8.

34 Ibid., p.404.
This section investigates the realist expression of 'honyakugeki'. Taking the Japanese translation and productions of *Honour*, I demonstrate what kind of strategies 'honyakugeki' uses to convince the audience of the production's 'reality'.

Joanna Murray-Smith's *Honour* is one of the most popular Australian plays in mainstream theatre, and it has been presented overseas including New York, Kuala Lumpur and London. In Tokyo, *Honour* was presented as a public reading in 1999. The playwright Joanna Murray-Smith came to Tokyo and participated in a workshop and symposium. In 2002, there were two productions of *Honour* by two leading Shingeki theatre companies. The Theatre Troupe En presented it in February and the Bungakuza Theatre Company presented it in December. It is unusual for a modern play to be presented by two theatre companies in the same year.

The Bungakuza Theatre Company, founded in 1937, is the only Shingeki theatre company to continue in its activities from the pre-war period to the present. Bungakuza is also regarded as the most prestigious theatre company in Japan. The company has presented the works of Japanese playwrights such as Mishima Yukio and Fukuda Tsuneari, as well as the works of foreign playwrights such as Shakespeare, Moliere, Tennessee Williams, and Neil Simon. Theatre Troupe En was founded in 1975 as a result of split from the Bungakuza Theatre Company after a series of conflicts between members of the Bungakuza; still, En shares the same artistic tradition with the Bungakuza. *Honour* was chosen as the first play to be presented by En after moving into their new theatre 'Stage En'.

As discussed in Chapter 1, there has been a peculiar acting style associated with 'honyakugeki'. Peter Eckersall, who saw both an Australian production and the Theatre Troupe En's production of *Honour*, points to differences between them. According to Eckersall, the Shingeki actors of the Theatre Troupe En attempted to show the surface of Australian characters by established styles of speech and acting. In other words, Australian realist expression requires actors to identify with characters, while Shingeki's realist expression requires actors to convince audiences that they look real.

If so, there might be two possible ways to present *Honour* in Japan: by using the acting style developed for 'honyakugeki' by the Shingeki or some other realist
expression apart for Shingeki's. In general, the Japanese may not feel reality in the dramatic world of Honour. For example, a young actor who appeared in the Bungakuza's production of Honour said:

The Japanese do not speak as many words as the characters speak in the play. You need a reason to speak so many words. It was difficult for me to find the reason.\(^{35}\)

This raises the issue, what kind of conversations do the Japanese have in general? Japanese playwright/director Hirata Oriza has an interest in this issue. In Hirata's plays, characters speak brief lines adjusting the timing to allow the other character to speak, but sometimes the words of characters overlap. It is quite a contrast to the dialogue of plays of Shōgekijō, from the 1960s to the 1980s, which was described as 'the acting of shouting'. Hirata's theatre, which became popular since the 1990s, is dubbed as 'Shizukana engeki' or 'quiet theatre', and some regard it as the style of true realist theatre for the Japanese. However, I do not agree with the claim that Hirata's 'quiet theatre' is the true realist theatre for the Japanese. That is because features such as brief speeches, adjusting the timing, and overlapped speeches can be seen in actual communications not only in Japan but also in any cultures. This issue raises an important question of how theatre can express reality, but these are too complicated to be examined in detail here. Instead, my interest is in what kind of problem arises about 'reality' when the Japanese perform Australian plays.

I would like to examine what kind of effects Japanese translation introduces to the issue of presenting 'reality'. The Japanese language is rich in words to indicate sex, age, social class, region, and period. The Japanese equivalents for the English word T are too numerous to enumerate (such as 'watashi', 'ore', 'boku', 'atashi', 'atai', 'washi', 'wai', 'wate', 'ora', 'oi', 'oiru', 'uchii', 'wagahai', 'midomo', 'sessha', etc). However, the form of Japanese language used in Shingeki or 'honyakugeki' basically comprises the language of middle class people in the Tokyo metropolitan area.\(^{36}\) This is a tacit convention between creators and audiences. Therefore, if there is an exception which breaks the convention, audiences sometimes blame the


\(^{36}\) Of course, there are exceptions. For example, there have been many discussions about what kind of Japanese language should be adopted for dialects in the original such as Irish dialects and American Southern drawl.
translation for being awkward. For example, a Japanese reader of my published Japanese translation of *The Floating World* wrote to me that the lines of Les Harding read like the language of younger generation than Les Harding. Since the Japanese language clearly indicates sex, ages, and social class of a speaker, the reader considered Les Harding’s lines to be the language of the young generation. In the original, Les Harding is a typical ocker, and always speaks slang, jokes, and limericks. As the equivalent slang is more often spoken by the younger generation in Japan, the translation might give the readers such an impression. However, if I had made Les Harding speak the Japanese slang which Japanese men as old as Les Harding had spoken in their youth, the translation could not but include the Japanese cultural context of the period when those Japanese men were young. In order to avoid such confusion, I decided to choose the current slang. Still, it is inevitable that Les Harding’s bad language, which middle aged Japanese men never speak, gives the Japanese a strange feeling.

The same is true of the dirty limericks Les Harding recites. Many Japanese audiences, irrespective of age or sex, were repulsed by Les’s dirty words. There is no equivalent to the dirty limericks Les recites in Japan. Although there are jokes in Japanese verse called ‘Senryû’ which have the same metre as Haiku, they don’t contain obscene elements, only satire. When I translated Les’s limericks into Japanese, I adapted the contents to the traditional Japanese metre. But the audience seemed to be amazed by the Australian characters who kept incessantly uttering coarse things. Taking notice of the limerick also helps to reveal cultural differences between the two countries through the varied reactions of the audiences in the theatres of the two counties. There are many limericks in Les’s last monologue. Whenever the limericks are funny, Australian audiences laugh at them even though they are part of a serious scene. The Japanese actors were amused by that kind of reaction at the Malthouse. They told me that Japanese audiences never laugh during such a serious scene even when it contains funny lines. This is how the reaction of audiences of the same performance in different countries shows each country’s cultural background in some way. This is perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the cultural exchange between different countries.

The fact that the variety of the Japanese language used in translations is basically the language spoken by middleclass people in the Tokyo metropolitan area is related to the fact that Australian English is less varied between region, sex, and age than Japanese. In other words, if the variations in Japanese languages are
adopted in a translation, it cannot but include Japanese social, historical contexts. To avoid it, a very limited form of Japanese is adopted for translation as a convention.

This language choice for translation and the associated style of speaking and acting has been established not only for theatre but also for films and TV dramas. The audience for films and TV dramas overwhelmingly outnumbers theatre goers. Foreign films are basically shown with Japanese subtitles at cinemas, but films and dramas are broadcast not with subtitles but with dubbing on TV. Since the 1950s when TV broadcasting started in Japan, numerous American TV dramas and films have been broadcast with Japanese dubbing. The dubbings have been played by professional dubbers and Shingeki actors. Even today, this situation is the same, and the dubbing work is a major additional source of income for Shingeki actors. The recent spread of DVD has provided even more dubbing work to Shingeki actors, because DVD's multi-track function has increased the demand of Japanese dubbing for foreign films. The Japanese actor who played Gus Spencer in Honour is not only an actor/director of Shingeki but a popular dubber who has many fans. In many cases, the scripts used in dubbings are more awkward than translations for theatre. However, combined with the acting style of Shingeki actors, a unique style has been established. The Japanese viewers apparently regard the style as an acceptable code for the Japanese to play the Westerners.

As mentioned, there was a difficulty in adapting the current Japanese slang to the language of Les Harding. In contrast, there was also a successful example of adapting a language which is against the code. When I translated the lines of Sophie, the protagonist's daughter, in Honour, I adapted the style of Japanese language which a female university student in her twenties typically speaks. There was some criticism of this language saying that she uses rough language although she is a female university student who grew up in an intellectual family, and that her rough language is reminiscent of that of younger generations. This criticism comes from the fact that rough language belongs to the young (teenage) generation exclusively, which reflects a tacit understanding that an intelligent woman in her twenties should speak a certain language in scripts of honyakugeki. However, theatre critic Ichinose Kazuo says about the Bungakuza's production that the conventional tone of honyakugeki was broken down by the appearance of Sophie speaking relatively rough language, and the scenes of Sophie gave 'reality'
One way to create reality is by avoiding the Japanese cultural context in the example of *The Floating World*. Another way to create the sense of realism as in *Honour* by breaking the convention of 'honyakugeki', that the Japanese context should be removed as much as possible and introducing a clear reference to that context by linguistic choices. When translating Australian plays, I vary the method according to the case, in order to give as much realism as possible to translations.

When the play is performed in the Shingeki's acting style of 'honyakugeki', it is difficult to reproduce the Australian reality in the original play. In contrast, if the play is performed in the style of 'true Japanese realist theatre' such as Hirata's plays, the appeal of the original play which emphasizes various forms of 'conflicts' will decrease. According to Joanna Murray-Smith, *Honour* is about conflicts between a man and a woman, a woman and a woman, and a mother and daughter, and conflicts in each individual. Those conflicts are revealed through scenes in which the characters confront and exchange many words with each other. It is impossible to express the conflicts by 'Japanese realism' such as Hirata Oriza's 'quiet theatre'.

To illustrate a parallel set of issues in the translation of foreign works into Japanese, we can look at the famous controversy about the translations of Shakespeare's plays, which I mentioned in the previous chapter. This is the controversy between Fukuda Tsuneari (1912-1994) and Odashima Yūshi (1930-present). Odashima criticised the conventional Japanese translations of Shakespeare's plays including Fukuda's translations. He focused on the fact that the original Shakespeare's plays are filled with jokes, puns, and current topics of the Elizabethan era, and added Japanese puns and jokes and current topics of present Japan to his translations, in order to include an element which the contemporary Japanese audience could laugh at. In contrast, Fukuda focused on the magnificence of Shakespeare's plays as classics, and criticised Odashima's attempts severely. The difference between them was that Odashima focused on Shakespeare's attitudes towards contemporary audiences, while Fukuda focused on Shakespeare's poetics. However, their approaches have in common that they


38 Joanna Murray-Smith. Public Lecture. International Theatre Exchange Seminar, the Japan National Directors' Association, MeijiGakuin University, Tokyo. 20 October 1999. The record was provided by the Japan National Directors'
attempt to represent an important aspect of the original faithfully. There may not be a correct answer to this issue, and this example also shows the fact that translation is always confronted with a question of what should be chosen at the cost of other elements.

As discussed above, it is inevitable that presentations of 'honyakugeki' will lose a sense of realism. Especially, Shingeki's acting of 'honyakugeki' will lack the realism which the original has due to its 'style'. However, when audiences understand that the acting is 'a style', it is possible for them to approach the core of a play. For example, Kabuki has a particular style. In this style, male actors called Onnagata perform the role of female characters. Their high-pitched voice is far from 'reality', but audiences understand it as a convention, and do not worry about its unnaturalness. Therefore, audiences are able to have sympathy with mothers and wives in tragic circumstances who are performed by male actors. Similarly, Shingeki's style gives 'independence as a fiction' to a play. This is facilitated by a tacit understanding between performers and audiences that one should not care about awkwardness and concentrate on the essence of the play.

This 'independence as a fiction' also encourages the audiences not to worry about untranslatable expressions or to think about the meaning of them afterwards. Take two expressions, which are frequently used in Honour, as examples. Honour has universal themes such as love between a husband and wife and love between parents and children (these universal themes make it possible for Honour to be presented in many countries). However, since those themes are expressed in English, they reflect the culture of English-speaking world to some extent. The word 'love', which is frequently used in the play, is simple and universal, but in fact it is difficult to translate it into Japanese. The word 'love' is usually translated into a Japanese word 'ai'. But, the word 'ai' is hardly used in daily conversation, especially in the case of indicating love between parents and children. There is a cliché that Japanese women claim that Japanese men do not say "I love you" compared with Westerners. Apart from the cultural difference between the East and the West, the difficulty of using the word 'ai' is caused by its origin. The word is originally a Chinese word, and as other Japanese words of Chinese origin, it contains a rigid impression. That is why this word is difficult to use in daily conversation. A translated expression cannot but include Japanese context which has no relation to the original. It is very difficult to translate the word 'loyalty' into...
Japanese, which also appears in the script of Honour several times. As mentioned above, Japanese vocabularies vary depending on sex, class, and age. 'Loyalty' can be translated into at least three Japanese words 'makoto', 'chûsei' and 'teisetsu'. Compared with 'chûsei' and 'teisetsu' which sound formal and masculine, 'makoto' is more suitable as an expression spoken by female characters in the play. Nevertheless, 'makoto' is an old-fashioned and awkward word as the notion of loyalty and fidelity drastically changed in the Japanese society in the recent decades. I could not but adopt 'makoto' for 'loyalty' in the translation, but, according to the audience questionnaires, they found awkwardness in the word 'makoto' (loyalty) as well as 'ai' (love).

Despite the difficulty of translation between cultures, the universal themes of 'love' and 'loyalty' were certainly conveyed to the Japanese audience. The style of 'honyakugeki' establishes a tacit convention that one should not worry about the lack of a total sense of realism. Of course, some audiences, seeing their first presentation of 'honyakugeki', might be embarrassed by the awkwardness. It is the same with Kabuki, where some audiences who first see it are embarrassed by the high-pitched voice of female impersonators. However, audiences, who are familiar with presentations of 'honyakugeki', consider the awkwardness to be a style to express the Western characters and dramatic world. Therefore, in the case of Honour, although 'ai' (love) and 'makoto' (loyalty) are words which the contemporary Japanese hardly use in daily conversations, these words did not prevent the audiences from understanding the work. On the contrary, the awkwardness of the words gave an opportunity for the audience to be conscious of and to reconsider the notion of 'love' and 'loyalty' which they may not have thought about. In fact, many of audience comments at both productions of Honour by Theatre Troupe En and Bungakuza Theatre Company were about 'love'. Many audiences wrote that the use of the word 'ai' (love) encouraged them to think about their own lives.

The presentation of a foreign play involves the choice of what style of realism the production will focus on. The style of 'honyakugeki' is one option. Shingeki has developed this style along with its audience. As mentioned in the previous section, since the 1980s, Shingeki has continued to present 'honyakugeki' as well as new Japanese plays while Shôgekijô has developed a theatre which appeals to younger

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39 20 out of 65 audiences who responded to the questionnaire at the Bungakuza production referred to the subject of 'love'.
generation exclusively. However, Shingeki's skill and style of 'honyakugeki' are still the more effective for the presentation of a play with adult themes such as Honour.

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In the Australia-Japan Exchange Program, the Japanese production of The Floating World was highly praised while the Australian production of The Head of Mary was severely criticised. After enumerating the downsides of the production of The Head of Mary, Helen Thomson concludes as follows:

The failure may be simply one of cultural untranslatability.40 However, is it really possible to understand a different culture 'perfectly' and translate it into another language without any difficulties? In Australia, very few plays in non-European languages are translated and presented. When Australian audiences see — for example — a Russian play, they might not regard some cultural differences as insurmountable obstacles to prevent their understanding of the play on the assumption that the Russian and the Australian share common European culture. In contrast, when an Australian audience sees an Asian play, they might think that they cannot understand its dramatic world without overcoming cultural differences perfectly. For example, in the case of The Head of Mary where the Japanese Christians explain Christian faith through the medium of some ideas of Buddhism, Thomson commented that this was:

...an obviously appropriate method for Japanese audiences, but downright confusing for an Australian one.41

In order to avoid such confusion, one possibility is to make a major change in the original text at the cost of being faithful to the original. However, without such a change, it might be more possible for Australian audiences to understand the main subject of the play that faith is the most universal and primitive behaviour adopted by human beings to survive a desperate situation (the explanation of Christian faith through the medium of Buddhism idea came from the historical fact that Christians were persecuted in Japan until the middle of the 19th century,

41 Thomson, 30 October, 1995.
and this is *not* 'an obviously appropriate method' even for the contemporary Japanese audience). Apart from the awkwardness of the translation and presentation of the play, the review seems to overestimate the differences between the East and the West and between Christianity and Buddhism. In Japan, this kind of discussion has been repeated over more than a century. The style of 'honyakugeki' has been established as a device to overcome cultural differences between the East and the West.

When we see the presentations of Australian plays in Japan since the middle of the 1990s, we find that each Japanese director chooses whether the production should be faithful to the original or drastically changed to fit the Japanese perspective, depending on each play. In Chapter 3, I took *Waiting for Godot* and Shakespeare's plays as examples of plays which have been drastically changed in accordance with the Japanese perspective. We might consider that such Japanisation was possible only because those plays are world-famous, and therefore, universal. However, the Australian plays which have been translated and presented in Japan since the middle of the 1990s include at least one example where an experimental fusion between the original and a Japanese traditional performing art was attempted. This shows the broadness of methodologies of 'honyakugeki' in Japan from faithful reproductions to daring localisations. Another thing we find in the Japanese productions of the Australian plays is that the Japanese practitioners and audience try to 'learn' from the Australian plays although they are not as keen to do so as the Japanese of one hundred years ago. For example, Japanese audiences learned about the Japanese war responsibility from *The Floating World*. In ‘honyakugeki’ before the Shôgekijô movement, the learning of theatrical methodology from Western plays was regarded as important. What the Japanese practitioners in the 1990s found through the presentation of *Diving for Pearls* was that theatre can deal with political and social issues. This was what the Japanese contemporary theatre had forgotten since the rise of Shôgekijô movement. What we find in the Japanese presentations of the Australian plays is a particular result of presenting a country’s plays continually. After the failure of *The Head of Mary* in 1995, there have been few Japanese plays translated and presented in Australia. However, it is rare that the first attempt to present a play from a completely different culture succeeds. For a successful presentation of plays from a completely different culture, it is necessary to accustom audiences to them by providing knowledge to cross the cultural borders. For example, recently, some Australian plays have dealt with a conflict between whites and Aboriginal people about land rights, such as Katherine Thomson's
Wonderlands and Hannie Rayson’s Inheritance. If they are ever translated and presented in Japan, they will be difficult for Japanese audiences to understand because they do not know the Australian social and historical background. However, by presenting Australian plays repeatedly in Japan, audiences will be able to acquire such knowledge. One needs a powerful incentive to mount repeat productions of foreign plays, and such an incentive is always born of the desire for ‘learning’. The history of Japanese modern theatre proves how the desire for ‘learning’ is essential to present foreign plays.

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Next, I wish to investigate how we may apply ‘honyakugeki’ to Patrice Pavis’s theory of theatre translation. Pavis writes,

The translated text ... forms part of both source and target text and culture, assuming that the transfer simultaneously involves the source text’s semantic, rhythmic, aural, connotative and other dimensions, necessarily adapted to target language and culture.  

He continues as follows:

This hermeneutic act — interpreting the source text — consists of delineating several main lines translated into another language, in order to pull the foreign text toward the target culture and language, so as to separate it from its source and origin.

Pavis investigates in detail the process by which the source text changes through the mediums of a translator, a director, actors and audiences. On this investigation, Pavis writes:

Reflection on translation confirms a fact well known to theatre semioticians: the text is only one of the elements of performance and ... of translating activity, or, put in another way, the text is much more a series of words: grafted on to it are ideological, ethnological and cultural dimensions.

In Japan too, many critics have discussed the characteristics of theatre translation as I have mentioned in Chapter 1. Discussions by both the Japanese critics and

Pavis, share a common interest: the process of the source text being transformed by translators, directors, actors and audiences in the target culture. However, there is a difference between Pavis and the Japanese critics. Pavis focuses on the process in which the source text is transformed to meet the expectations of a target culture. In other words, he focuses on the power of the target culture which “pulls the foreign text toward the target culture and language, so as to separate it from its source and origin.” On the other hand, Japanese critics have focused on measures that prevent the source text and culture from losing its original taste and context even when they are translated into Japanese. Although both attitudes are similar in terms of the acknowledgement of transformation of the source text and culture through translation, they are different in that Pavis takes for granted the influence of the target culture on the transformation of source text and the Japanese critics believe in the possibility of translating the source text without this transformation.

In order to understand this difference, we have to investigate the idea of the *language-body*, which Pavis mentioned in his translation theory. Pavis says,

> The set of gestural moments and variations in the *language-body* have been used to show how the translation involves the transfer of a culture, which is inscribed as much in words as in gestures.

According to Pavis, the source text is drawn to the target culture in two phases in which the translated text is performed by actors and received by audiences. Pavis explains this process by taking the French presentations of Chekhov’s plays as an example, as follows:

> Translated in France, Chekhov has to be adapted to the pace of French actors and audiences. In addition, according to Jean-Louis Barrault, there is the fact that ‘the French actor has the habit of relying on the text to regulate performance, since in French theatre the actor is most often enclosed within the text.’

Pavis continues:

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43 Ibid. p.155.
44 Ibid.
French actors tend to take the text as their point of reference and as an anchor for the language-body, upsetting the balance of the source text's language body that had been based on silence and silent action than on the unfolding of the text, while at the same time overloading the target text with a gestural weight that should have been shared more harmoniously between text and stage signification.45

In contrast, in the case of Japanese 'honyakugeki,' the enunciation and gesture of an actor who appears in 'honyakugeki' do not necessarily correspond with the enunciation and gesture of the Japanese as the target culture. Still, since Japanese actors perform the play, their enunciations and the gestures are different from those of the Western source culture. By taking actual examples, I have discussed this uncomfortable sense, which Japanese audiences feel towards unnatural gestures and enunciations in 'honyakugeki.' However, this uncomfortable sense has had a different effect: as I have discussed, 'honyakugeki' gained the double function, which lets audiences suspend their judgement with regard to the nationality of the play. When they see 'honyakugeki,' Japanese audiences consider it neither 'Japanese' nor completely 'foreign.' What I would like to emphasis here is that 'honyakugeki' is one of the genres in Japanese theatre. When a foreign play is translated and presented in Japanese, the text is transformed not through the Japanese language-body but through the honyakugeki's language-body:

Pavis's translation model is based on his theory of an hourglass. The upper bowl contains the source culture while the lower one is the target culture. Pavis explains:

> The mass of the source culture, metaphorically situated in the upper chamber, must pass through the narrow neck controlled by the target culture of the bottom chamber with, in this neck, a whole series of filters that keep only a few elements of the source culture selected according to very precise norms.46

If we apply this theory of the hourglass to Pavis's translation model, when a play is translated, the target culture has power to control the transformation of the

45 Ibid.
source text. In the case of ‘honyakugeki’, however, the target culture is extremely reluctant to exercise this power to make changes to the source text. In the process of its modernisation, Japan has been situated in the double structure in which it had to confront the West in an unequal relationship while it colonized Asian countries and minorities within its own nation. In the hegemonic relationship with the West, Japan has been forced to accept Western universalism. Therefore, if a Western play is presented as ‘honyakugeki’, Japanese actors will not apply it to the Japanese language-body as much as the French actors who had applied Chekhov’s plays to the language-body in France. Rather, a device has been created in order to widen the neck of the hourglass and to let the source culture drop into the lower bowl as unchanged as possible. That is ‘an imagined language-body’ in ‘honyakugeki’, which helps Japanese actors look like the Westerners.

Given the hegemonic relationship between the West and the non-West, it is inevitable that the device was developed in Japan. As Susan Bennett points out, while numerous Western plays have been presented in Asia, there are very few Asian plays, which have been performed in the West.47 While fragmentary elements such as technique and images in the non-West are often imported to the West, there are very few cases in which a complete piece, such as a play is imported there because it lacks ‘universality.’ In Japan, the task of theatre practitioners and audiences was to assimilate the universality of the West. Therefore, in ‘honyakugeki’, the style was developed into the device to widen the neck of the hourglass and absorb the Western source culture.

Today, Japanese theatre has obtained a new form of ‘honyakugeki’, which is based on the Japanese perspective, as discussed in Chapter 2. However, there still exists a form of ‘honyakugeki’ in which foreign plays are presented with little Japanese perspective. As mentioned in Chapter 4, a large number of American and British plays were imported and performed by means of the conventional ‘honyakugeki’ style. Moreover, many Western theatre companies tour Japan. We have to take account of the fact that ‘honyakugeki’ are presented in the diversity of Japanese theatre.

From February to October, 1990, there were various kinds of productions of Hamlet in Tokyo: 2 Shingeki productions, 4 Shôgekijô productions and 4 foreign

theatre companies including the Russian and Polish theatre companies and a
British theatre company called Cheek by Jowl. Susan Bennett discusses the
performance of Cheek by Jowl in Japan by quoting Don Furust's comment saying
that the Cheek by Jowl stunned and deeply impressed the Japanese audiences
who had “tended to regard Shakespeare as a kind of English kabuki: elaborately
set and costumed, formally paced and posed, declaimed in stately measures by
severe masters in togas and pumpkin pants.” As we have seen in Chapter 3, this
comment by Furust is not true because ‘honyakugeki’ including Shakespeare has
undergone a great change since the 1970s. Given that there were 4 Shōgekijō
productions of Hamlet only in the first half of 1990, the Japanese audience might
not have regarded Hamlet by Cheek by Jowl as so radical. In fact, Kanetaki
Masahisa, chief editor of the monthly theatre magazine Play Boat expresses an
opposite view to that of Don Furust about the 1990 production of Hamlet by Cheek
by Jowl:

Although I knew it is a radical theatre company, I have never seen a company
whose reputations and actual stage are different. Hamlet I saw was nothing
but an orthodox one. It never went beyond the canon of classic Shakespeare.
...For Cheek by Jowl, there may have been too many Hamlets this year.

After quoting Don Furst’s comment, Susan Bennett argues:

...how radical, irrespective of Furust’s claims, can this really be? ...it is none
the less Shakespeare for an Anglophilic Japanese audience who might do
some of their cultural tourism without ever leaving home.

Both Furst and Bennett homogenise Japanese audiences. Some audiences may be
surprised by Cheek by Jowl’s Hamlet because it was the first Hamlet they had
ever seen. Other audiences may compare Cheek by Jowl’s Hamlet with Russian,
Shōgekijō and Shingeki productions, which were presented in Tokyo in the same
year. If audiences only see Cheek by Jowl’s Hamlet, it may be a “cultural tourism”
as Bennett claims. However, by seeing various kinds of Japanese productions of

48 Yomiuri Shinbun. 18 January 1990.
50 Kanetaki, Masahisa. “Hamlet by Cheek by Jowl” [On-line] AvailableWWW:
Hamlet and Cheek by Jowl's Hamlet around the same time, Japanese audiences should be aware of the Japanese and foreign perspectives in those productions. In contemporary Japan, where audiences can always see various kinds of Shakespeare, 'honyakugeki' is no longer a substitute for the Western productions of Shakespeare. Also there are a number of experiments in 'hongeykugeki' productions of Shakespeare, which are stimulated by foreign productions visiting Japan. In this way, Shakespeare in Japan continues to change. Therefore, it is incorrect that Western companies' productions of Shakespeare in Japan are "the most obvious example of normative Western values" as Bennett claims.

The same is true of the case of an intercultural project producing an American text dealing with Asian identity, which Susan Bennett provides as an example. Bennett criticizes this kind of intercultural theatre:

...the far greater opportunity for the English-speaking practitioner to create intercultural theatre, to his or her product into another's culture with most of the 'benefit' accruing to the producer rather than receiver of that product.  

Indeed, Bennett's criticism is correct since there are imperialistic elements in many contemporary projects of intercultural theatre. However, she is indifferent to how Asian theatre has negotiated in order to accept the Western universality. What is important is not to point out a simple picture of the Western imperialism in intercultural exchanges. Rather, we should investigate who wanted the intercultural project, which language was used, how was the direction. Bennett omits all these things. However, it may be impossible to understand what the purpose of the Chinese theatre parishioners was, what they wanted to do in the intercultural theatre and how the Chinese audience received that product unless we investigate the above-mentioned details.

If an ideal intercultural theatre is not a hegemonic but corroborative exchange, it is difficult to categorise 'honyakugeki' as that sort of intercultural theatre since 'honyakugeki' has been a device to absorb the source culture without conflicts. There still remains one sort of 'honyakugeki' accepting the Western universality.

52 Ibid., p.201.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
with little resistance, which cannot but be an accomplice of the Western cultural imperialism. Christopher B. Balme says, "Less well studies... has been the appropriation of the Western model of theatre and drama by the colonized people themselves" and attempts to categorize the appropriations into three. The first category is that "a new theatrical-cultural system is introduced which eclipses and overwrites the existing one;" the second is that "the existing system remains dominant;" the third is that "a new equilibrium is established between the old and new systems." While he classifies Japanese traditional theatres which have been influenced by Western theatre into the second category and the mix of Western and folk theatres in the 60s Asia (it seems to include Japan's Shôgekijo movement) into the third category, Balme does not mention 'honyakugeki' or Shingeki movement in the first category. Although 'honyakugeki' has attempted the appropriation of the Western theatre for more than one hundred years, it has been 'a tricky exception' because it had been sophisticated in order to reduce the cultural frictions for a certain period.

Pavis also seems to regard the case of Japanese theatre as 'a tricky exception' and modifies his theory of the hourglass, saying that the theory is not applicable in the case of the intercultural perspective between Japan and the West. Pavis takes Shingeki, the theatre of Suzuki, and the butoh of Hijikata. Furthermore, by introducing James Brandon's analysis of Suzuki, Pavis classifies Suzuki's theatre as a "cultural college" and argues that the artists belonging to this category "cite, adapt, reduce, enlarge, combine and mix various elements without concern for the scale of importance or values." However, Pavis does not mention what makes Suzuki take such an attitude towards source texts. I think Suzuki's theatre has an element of postcolonial or syncretic theatre in the sense of what Blame describes. The reason why Suzuki has fragmented the Western source texts and put them in equal position to the texts of Japanese traditional theatre is that he has attempted a resistance towards the assimilation into Western theatre, which had been the inevitable task of the Japanese modern theatre. Furthermore, the process itself in which 'honyakugeki' obtains the Japanese perspective is

nothing but an intercultural attempt at resisting the assimilation. Also, 'honyakugeki' does not share the Imperialism with the West, which steals or borrows some exotic elements from the source culture depending on the target culture's interest. The genre of 'honyakugeki' has been developed through "cultural negotiations" between Japan and the West. Therefore, it is nonsense to homogenise 'honyakugeki' as an example of the appropriation of the Western theatre. Rather, it is more important to investigate as to what kind of intercultural exchanges are attempted by means of the 'honyakugeki'.

After investigating Pavis's theory, Lo & Gilbert proposed a different model of the intercultural theatre. Unlike Pavis's model of the hourglass, two cultures are put side by side. Both cultures are the source cultures and have mutual influences through exchanges "while the target culture is positioned along the continuum between them." The target culture's "position remains fluid" and this fluidity "not only foregrounds the dialogic nature of intercultural exchange but also takes into account the possibility of power disparity in the partnership." 69 Lo & Gilbert explain that their aim "is to adapt what is essentially an appropriative/assimilationist model into a more collaborative/negotiated one."

Since 'honyakugeki' a genre, was originally established to appropriate the foreign culture, it has an assimilationist characteristic. Therefore, there still remains a sort of 'honyakugeki', which concentrates on absorbing the source culture, while there are other types, which resist such assimilation.

Then, which target should we set for an intercultural attempt by means of 'honyakugeki'? What is important is to cause a new discovery and the overthrow of conventional values when two different cultures meet. In other words, as Lo & Gilbert writes, it is expected to "resist an unproblematic transfer of culture", 60 to create a place in which "cultural tensions would not be hidden nor difference naturalized" 61 and to "potentially function as a site where this intersecting of cultures is both reflected and critiqued." 62 In the case of the presentation of contemporary Australian plays, productions might fail to be an appropriative/assimilationist model for two reasons: first, the presentation of

60 Ibid., p.46.
61 Ibid., p.48.
62 Ibid., p.49.
Australian plays in Japan started only after the period ended when the appropriative/assimilationist type of ‘honyakugeki’ dominated the Japanese modern theatre. In other words, while there still remain such kinds of ‘honyakugeki’, a large number of ‘honyakugeki’ with the Japanese perspective have emerged. Second, as discussed in the Introduction, the relationship between Japan and Australia is complex and different from the hegemonic relationship between Japan and Western countries since Japan has a sense of superiority to Australia while Japan regards Australia as a part of the West. Owing to these reasons, the presentation of Australian plays in Japan has a potential to create a collaborative intercultural exchange.

For example, in the Japanese productions of Honour, the Japanese audience confronted untranslatability in the text and were urged to consider ideas such as ‘love’ and ‘loyalty.’ In the case of the Japanese production of The Floating World, when it was presented in Japan, it dispelled a stereotypical image of Australia and also reminded the Japanese audience of the responsibilities of the forgotten war. In this regard, the production succeeded in urging the Japanese audience to investigate the stereotypes they had. However, what is more important is that this ‘honyakugeki’ production brought an intercultural experience to the audience belonging to the source culture. Helen Gilbert writes about the Japanese version of The Floating World presented in Australia:

A number of critics commented on the complex irony elicited by the cross-cultural casting and the unexpected ways in which it perversely highlighted elements of ‘Australianness’.63

To ‘alienate’ whiteness, to make it noticeable as an unstable racial category, as Sato’s production inevitably did by opening up the gap between signifier and signified, is to take the first step towards dismantling the epistemological system from which so many of our discriminatory attitudes and practices derive their authority.64

As Gilbert argues, the Japanese production succeeded in making the Australian audience notice “Australianness” or “whiteness” and urged them to investigate their conventional values. What is noteworthy is the fact that, although this

'honyakugeki' production was created for Japanese audience, the production provided an intercultural experience to the audience of the target culture too. Also, the double function of 'honyakugeki' proved to work even in the place where the original was produced. Since the Australian audience received the speech of Les Harding, performed by a Japanese actor, as the speech of both an Australian and Japanese personality.

As we have seen, 'honyakugeki' itself is not necessarily a corroborative model of intercultural theatre. Also, it is different from Pavis's translation model in which the target culture chooses elements from the source text to meet an expectation of the target audience, or to adapt the language-body of the target culture. In 'honyakugeki', an intercultural exchange is often caused by the double function as in the case of The Floating World. The double function has a risk for the audience to assimilate the source culture, or, in contrast, to appropriate the source text to meet the expectation of the Japanese audience. Therefore, there is a need for the elaboration of various devices in order to avoid assimilation and appropriation.

When an Aboriginal play is presented as 'honyakugeki' in Japan, there is a risk for the production to lose the original politics and negotiations. In the next part, I will investigate this issue by examining the Japanese stereotype of Aborigines and Japanese indigenous people and discuss how Aboriginal plays were presented in Japan in order to break down those stereotypes.

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Ibid., p.69.
Chapter 5: Representations of Aborigines in Japan

In this chapter I investigate representations of Aborigines in Japan. The investigation of representations of Aborigines in Japan is important to this thesis because we need to know what kind of image of Aborigines the Japanese audience had before they saw the Japanese productions of Aboriginal plays. As discussed in the Introduction, Australia has been regarded in Japan as cultureless. Therefore, only a few cultural products dealing with Aborigines have been imported to Japan. Unfortunately, names like Cathy Freeman, Yothu Yindi, or Christine Anu are little known in Japan. The Australian film *Radiance* (1997) has not been released in Japan, although, exceptionally, *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002) was released and praised by some Japanese film fans. Apart from TV commercials for Australian tourism and a limited number of TV documentary programs dealing with Aborigines, the greatest influence on images of Aborigines in Japan has been provided by Japanese anthropologists. In this chapter, in order to clarify the issue of the representation of Aborigines in Japan, I investigate how Aboriginal Studies including anthropology have represented Aborigines. I will discuss this in the following stages: the history and the present situation of Aboriginal Studies in Japan since the 1970s; studies of Aboriginal arts in Japan; the position of Japanese scholars who study Aboriginal cultures; and the significance of the Japanese presentations of Aboriginal plays.

Representations of Aborigines and Japanese anthropological studies

In this section, I demonstrate that anthropology has played a central role in Japanese Aboriginal Studies which in turn have had a great influence on representations of Aborigines in Japan in general; that this field of study began with searching for primitiveness; and that anthropological Aboriginal Studies still have an influence on the image of Aborigines in Japan.

In Japan, information about Aborigines has been mainly provided by Japanese anthropologists. In 1974, the National Museum of Ethnology was established in Osaka. This marked the beginning of full-scale Aboriginal Studies in Japan. According to Kubota Sachiko, a Japanese anthropologist who specialises in Aboriginal Studies:

*(Before the foundation of the National Museum of Ethnology), anthropological*
research on Aborigines was inactive compared with research in other areas. Until the 1970s, there were almost only studies based on documents. Although there was some independent research by specialists in related fields such as Linguistics, Pedagogy, and Geology, they were not organisational research, and there was little research work written in Japanese. Since Social Anthropology was already active in Japan, it seems strange that researchers wishing to do Aboriginal Studies did not emerge in those days.¹

The National Museum of Ethnology was opened in 1977 at the site of the Osaka World Exposition (1970), which, in an era of rapid economic growth, Japan hosted with national prestige at stake. Originally, the museum was established to house and research Ethnological materials gathered for the Exposition. Koyama Shûzô, a leader of Japanese anthropological Aboriginal Studies based at the museum, started his full-scale research in Australia from the beginning of the 1980s, and received a research grant from Japan's Ministry of Education to do the first field work in 1982. Japanese anthropologist Uehashi Nahoko explains the state of Aboriginal Studies in Japan at the beginning of the 1990s as follows:

In 1990, compared with today, there was little information about Aborigines available in Japan. There were just about ten researchers conducting full-scale anthropological research, and many of them were researchers who had connections with the National Museum of Ethnology.²

Kubota says:

Koyama said 'I went to Australia to meet living Jōmon men'. He seemed to go to Australia in order to establish the viability of the development of Ethno-Archaeological studies on Jōmon men.³

Koyama sought a key to clarify the way of life of Japanese 'Jōmon men' by

investigating Australian Aborigines, who were regarded as living in the same way as the people in the Jōmon Era. The Jōmon Era comes just after the Old Stone Age, and Jōmon men are regarded as the origin of the Japanese. The point is that the image of Jōmon men which the Japanese researcher sought among Australian Aborigines was a type of primitive human being who had been extinct for a long time in Japan and whose primitive life without iron implements could be traced only through archaeological finds because they had no form of writing.

As everyone knows in Australia, the understanding of the Aborigine has changed drastically during the decades. Nevertheless, from the end of the 1970s to the beginning of the 1980s, the guiding principle of the academics who played a leading role in Japanese Aboriginal Studies was to seek primitiveness in Aborigines. By the 1980s, however, it had become obvious that Australian Aborigines both in urban and remote areas showed considerable political and cultural diversity. In an article written in 2002, Kubota looked back on the history of Japanese anthropological research on Aborigines which started with a problematic principle, without any criticism. We can see this attitude in Kubota's emphasis on the fact that the research project team in those days consisted of highly regarded members who are now at the centre of the Japanese academic world. Furthermore, she adds the fact that a government research grant was provided towards the research project. This indicates that the research project (including the aim to meet living Jōmon men) was officially recognised by the Japanese government.

The results of these studies have provided the main sources of knowledge of Aborigines for the general public, having been communicated for instance, in the form of public exhibitions. In 1985, commemorating the sister city relationship between Brisbane and Kobe, the Kobe City Museum held an exhibition called Kariudo no yume: Ōsutoraria aborijini no sekai (Hunters' dreaming: the world of Australian Aborigines) in association with the National Museum of Ethnology. The content included Aboriginal arts from Arnhem Land and the central desert, some created specifically for this exhibition. In 1992, the National Museum of Ethnology held an exhibition entitled Ōsutoraria aborijini: kariudo to seirei no 5

4 Ibid.
manner (Australian Aborigine exhibition: fifty thousand years of hunters and spirits). Sponsored by a major Japanese newspaper, this exhibition attracted thirty thousand visitors, and, according to Kubota, contributed to making Aborigines better known in Japan. The exhibits consisted of three categories: "the world of hunters and spirits", "life and art of the northern coast" and "life and art in the central desert". By exhibiting weapons, tools for hunting and collecting, equipment for daily life, stone, wood and bone implements, bark and sand paintings, each category informed exhibition visitors about subjects such as "the history of human beings and nature", "the structure of the society and the cosmos", "hunting, collecting, and fishing", "the principle of distribution and the money economy" and "myths and the spiritual world". Most of the exhibits were materials about Aborigines who live in the central desert and the northern coast, and there were few materials about Aborigines who live in cities. These did however include art works by Sally Morgan and Lin Onus.⁶

In the latter half of the 1990s, the Australian historian J.F. Morris investigated Aboriginal Studies in Japan, and wrote as follows:

While, as a characteristic of anthropological approaches, they (Japanese anthropologists) try to tell us about Aboriginal values and ways of thinking, it is a problem on the other side that they mainly research on Aborigines who have a life as close to a primitive state as possible, that is Aborigines in northern and central deserts where (European) settlement occurred latest. Consequently, "forgotten" aborigines in the area where the British settlement was early, who were forced to live in the society constructed by settlers for more than two centuries, remain disregarded. This unexpectedly enforces a fixed idea many Japanese have that Aborigines equal primitive men, and it is impossible to foster a perspective on problems of rights of Aborigines in rural societies and cities in the east and the problems of urban Aborigines....⁷

Even today, if someone in Japan wants to gain information about Aborigines, he/she will have to rely on sources based on the anthropological research. For

⁷ J. F. Morris, "Musaku no kôseki: 19 seiki kôhan ōsutoraria ni okeru aborijini seisaku to atarashii aborijini no mebae" (The success of a failed policy: Aboriginal policy in Australia, 1850-1900). Journal of Miyagi College for Women 84, 1996,
example, from July to September 2003, there was an Aboriginal arts exhibition called *Australian Aborigines contemporary Arts: Home of Spirits*, as a program of Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2003, which included an exhibition of works by more than 150 artists from around the world. It also included special exhibitions such as textile arts of the Arctic Inuit and Jōmon men's pottery excavated in Tōkamachi. This Aboriginal arts exhibition was based on the Guntner Myer Collection established to collect Aboriginal arts in the middle of the 1990s, which had toured various areas worldwide, including San Francisco, San Antonio, Texas, Washington DC, Melbourne, Brisbane, and will go to Beijing in December 2003. For this exhibition, a catalogue was published for Japanese visitors. Its general editor was Japanese anthropologist Koyama Shōzō, now Emeritus Professor of the National Museum of Ethnology. I was commissioned to write a chapter about the Stolen Generation by the promoter of the exhibition, but most chapters were written by Japanese anthropologists who have connections with the National Museum. So, in Japan, even if it is about "contemporary arts", information about Australian Aborigines is provided by anthropologists rather than art critics or researchers specialising in contemporary arts. However, since the 1990s, the scope of Aboriginal Studies in Japan has largely expanded. This variation consists of two directions: expansion of the disciplinary areas with this research interest, and diversification within Japanese anthropology.

The most active academic field in the new fields of study which emerged in the 1990s is pedagogy. Starting with a paper which surveyed the history and the present state of Aboriginal education, research works have been published dealing with a wide range of fields including educational environment, educational methodology, teaching materials, tertiary education, language education, etc. There are also works about politics. The main interests in this area include Aboriginal native title, and mining developments and nuclear issues. This development was no doubt prompted by the political and social movements initiated by Aborigines during the 1990s. For example, in Australia, there were epoch-making events about Aboriginal land rights: the Mabo judgement in 1992 and the Wik judgement in 1993. The issue of Aboriginal land rights, especially problems of Aboriginal land and mining developments, were reported in Japan before the 1990s in articles such as Yamanaka Masao "Aboriginal land rights and...

pp.33-64; quote from pp.55-56.

8 Itō Satoshi "Aborijini to Kyōiku I: ryakushi oyobi genjō" (Aboriginal education I: a brief history and the present situation) The Otemon Bulletin for the Australian
Australian mining developments".  

Besides, we should note that, even in Japan, there were some important events to prompt a change of Japanese people’s understanding towards indigenous people. In 1993, the United Nations constituted the International Year for the World’s Indigenous People. This affected Japanese policy towards the indigenous people in Japan, and consequently, Japan ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1995. Besides, the Japanese government enacted the Ainu Shinpo Act (the Act for the Promotion of the Ainu Culture and for the Dissemination and Advocacy for the Traditions of the Ainu and the Ainu Culture) in 1997, and, at the same time, abolished the 1899 Hokkaido Former Aborigine Protection Law. It is natural that the Japanese interest in Aborigines is related to the Japanese interests in Japanese indigenous people. Indeed, we can see an increase in the amount of research referring to the changes in the circumstances and the understanding of the indigenous peoples both in Japan and Australia.  

Next, I move on to the diversification of the subjects of Japanese anthropological research. In 2002, one of the most important books about Aboriginal Studies in Japan was published, entitled Tabunka kokka no senjumin: osutoraria aborijini no genzai (Indigenous People in the Multicultural Nation: the contemporary situation of Australian Aborigines).  

Leading researchers on Aboriginal Studies, who have connections with the National Museum of Ethnology contributed to this book. The fields dealt with in this book are wide. The contents of the book are as follows:

Kubota Sachiko “Anemu rando: aborijini shakai no genzai to josei” (Arnhem Land: the present state of Aboriginal societies and women)

Matsumoto Hiroyuki “Toresu kaikyo joyaku” (Torres Strait Treaty)

Uehashi Nahoko “Chiho no aborijini: kakuri to doka no aimai na hazamade”


10 For example, Maeda Koji, “Osutoraria no senjumizoku aborijini no gengoshakai to kyoku keikaku” (Languages and educational plans for Australian Aborigines) Academic studies: Education (School of Education, Waseda University) 45, 1997, pp.15-25.

(Rural Aborigines: at the ambiguous border between segregation and assimilation)
Matsuyama Toshio “Toshi ni ikiru: aru aborijini no kazokushi kara” (Living in a city: from the family history of an Aborigine)
Kamada Mayumi “Kokuminkokka no Aborijini” (Aborigines in the nation-state)
Horie Yasunori “Aborijini no machi, Maningurida no rekishi” (A history of Maningrida, an Aboriginal town)
Koyama Shūzō “Aborijini to shizenkankyō: busshu faiā no gijutsu to kokoro” (Aborigines and natural environment: skills and spirits of bushfire)
Goto Yoshiko “Shizenshoku no kanōsei: Aborijini no busshu fūdo” (Possibility of natural foods: Aborigine’s bushfood)
Sugifuji Shigenobu “Aborijini geijutsu no genzai kako mirai: Ōenperi monogatari” (Present, past, and future of Aboriginal arts: the story of Oenpelli)
Kubo Masatoshi “Aborijini to spōtsu” (Aborigines and sport)
Nicholas Peterson “Hunters-gatherers in first world national states: bringing anthropology home”

This range of subjects does reflect variations of anthropological approaches which have developed since the beginning of the 1980s. For example, the relationship between Aborigines and sports has been hardly known in Japan, although it is an important element of the Aboriginal life. Research on dietary habit and residential environments has also been developed in anthropological studies. This diversity reflects changes in anthropology itself as well as the changes in social and political circumstances of indigenous people both in Australia and Japan. The fact that postcolonial criticisms became an unavoidable issue for anthropology has urged this change. I will demonstrate how Japanese anthropology has dealt with this issue.

After pointing out that (non-Western ) cultures conceived as subjects of ethnology were often conceptualised through notions of the exotic and the primitive, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin argue:

…the most vigorous criticism suggests that ethnography itself, as a ‘science’, has historically existed precisely to locate the observed subjects in a particular way, to interpellate them as Europe’s others. Some of the more critical accounts have argued that anthropology itself was not simply a child of
colonialism, in that colonization opened up areas of research and ethnographers provided information to colonial administrations, but rather that it was ‘colonialism’s twin’. Anthropology reproduced versions of the colonized subject that both were motivated by and rationalized the exclusion and exploitation of those subjects by imperial discourse itself. 12

Furthermore, at the postcolonial moment, the people who have been watched, listened to, asked and collected, started to speak in their own tongues. In Japan too, of course, there are some anthropologists who take this postcolonial state seriously. For example, Ôta Yoshinobu, a Japanese anthropologist whose research fields are not Australia but Guatemala and Okinawa, says:

It is said that anthropology, which was institutionalised at the beginning of the 20th century, faces an aporia. The reason is not that “the primitive societies” which it takes as its research object are modernising and disappearing. Rather, the reason is that people in “primitive societies” started representing themselves. They no longer have to rely on anthropology, but what’s more, anthropologists are criticised that representation by anthropologists is producing the primitiveness of “primitive societies”. 13

So, have anthropologists sat back and done nothing about postcolonial criticisms? According to Ôta, anthropologists started reviewing anthropology’s assumption regarding culture as a closed system such as a notion of ‘patterns of culture’, which had been argued by Ruth Benedict. Ôta argues:

...in a place where two cultures contact each other, a fusion between two systems occurs. We can call this “border culture” as a generic term. In such a place, an existent culture does not form a system, and various hybrids are emerging. ...Besides, transportation between closed systems revealed the fictionality of the idea of system itself. Diaspora is an established theory rather than a general term of people moving between systems such as foreign labourers, refugees, and immigrants. The idea of a system as a model of

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culture is a concept modelling the result that nation-states tried to guard borders, suppress diversity within the state, and construct homogenous cultural spaces. Therefore, it is possible to regard Diaspora and borders as an alternative of regarding culture as a system. Such re-thinking has already been started among anthropologists.\textsuperscript{14}

However a related concept to the idea that culture is a closed system is also starting to be used in various situations around the world, especially among people who had been informants of anthropology and in effect prohibited from self-representation. As Ōta points out:

...we should recognise that there are social movements where they, as a result of negotiation, select "essentialism" as a strategy, and attempt restoration of their rights by speaking about their culture from the viewpoint of "essentialism". We should not neglect this situation.\textsuperscript{15}

According to Ōta, most of these movements promote restoration of native rights by claiming the existence of "authentic culture". It is possible that to achieve objectives of the movements, members of these movements might see viewpoints such as "cultural hybridity" and "Creole" as unproductive. Ōta argues that there are current political movements of indigenous people which are based on an idea of culture which is close to essentialism. The independent and objective standpoint of anthropologists which they have assumed, no longer exists. Also, there is a possibility that, due to emphasis on cultural authenticity by indigenous people themselves, anthropologists are forced to be involved in essentialism, even though they no longer subscribe to this idea of culture.

So what is happening in contemporary Japanese anthropology, especially anthropological research on Aborigines, in this respect? Kubota explains Aboriginal Studies in contemporary Japanese anthropology as follows:

The development of Aboriginal Studies in Japan shows an interesting parallel relationship with the present circumstances surrounding anthropology in Australia. ...anthropology in Australia basically has had a tendency towards applied studies. ...In research fields in Australia, there is a tendency that

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.38.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.47.
researchers have to make contracts with Aboriginal communities and clearly show what kind of contribution the researcher can make. In Australia, anthropology is requested to return a profit to informants in a more tangible manner than ever, and, without it, research would be impossible. Australian [Aboriginal] studies in Japan are leading in this line, and that is why it [Japanese anthropology] gets high praise from overseas researchers too.¹⁶

One of the main projects of research groups in the National Museum of Ethnology is developing computer software to work out and record the family trees of generations of Aborigines living in remote areas. This is probably a good example of returning the profit to the informants, but is also an example of where Aboriginal Studies in Japan have concentrated on proving informants' authenticity as Aborigines rather than investigating diverse new cultures amongst Aborigines.

In this section, I have investigated the significance of anthropology in the history of Aboriginal Studies in Japan. In the next section, I would like to focus on the field of the arts.

Studies in Aboriginal arts in Japan

I will survey studies in Aboriginal arts in Japan, and demonstrate what has been discussed in these studies. There are three main approaches in Japanese studies in Aboriginal arts: an approach from anthropology, an approach from the study of art history, and an approach from literary study. Moreover, research in Aboriginal arts in Japan has been limited to studies of painting, together with a small number of studies on Aboriginal literature.

Among Japanese anthropologists, research on souvenirs and commodities, which have Aboriginal designs and which are circulated through markets, seems to be regarded as an innovative direction. One of early attempts to explore in this direction is Koyama Shūzō's article called "T shatsu to aborijin" (T shirts and Aborigines). Koyama classifies designs of T shirts into each district, concluding that there are nationally common designs and designs with local flavours. Also, he says that he could not find any traditional designs in T shirts made in Arnhem Land, and that there are complicated questions about copyright. Furthermore,

Koyama says as follows:

The designs are powerful and the coloration is interesting, but I felt strange somehow. I believe that this was because I was a scholar of Aboriginal Studies. ...“Culture” always has distinct patterns. So, when the patterns are not followed in a design, it feels strange.¹⁷

This remark is interesting because, as “a scholar of Aboriginal Studies”, Koyama expresses a sense of strangeness about what deviates from (traditional) patterns. His remark that “Culture” always has distinct patterns apparently originates from the “patterns of culture” thesis argued by American anthropologist Ruth Benedict, whose work has been very influential in Japan since her book on Japanese culture entitled the Chrysanthemum and the Sword (1946). In other words, it appears that Koyama expects Aboriginal culture to be a closed culture following its pattern, and, therefore, he feels strange about a new cultural form of Aboriginality created to satisfy the tourism industry.

I would like to refer to another research paper on a similar subject: Uehashi Nahoko “Souvenirs as the creation of symbolised images of culture: a case study of the Yamatji, an Aboriginal people in mid-west Western Australia”.¹⁸ According to Uehashi, souvenirs have become an important subject for anthropology. As she puts it, souvenirs are commercialised productions of cultural images. They are often very different from the culture of daily life, but they do not exist without major elements of symbolised cultural images shared by local people. Created through an imagination of the essence of “our” culture which is different from others, a “symbolised image of our own culture” is therefore an image created with glances from others as well as glances to others with the gaze of the other as well as a gaze towards the other in mind. Uehashi examines the arts of the Yamatji people in mid-west Western Australia from this standpoint.

She points out that the Yamatji, who have lost most of their traditional culture, draw visual motifs to represent their area using techniques which have been

¹⁸ Uehashi Nahoko, “Kanko miyagemono ni hyōshō sareru shōchōka saretai jibunka imejī ni tsuite: nishiosutorala shū chūseibu no aborijini yamaji no jirei wo chūshin ni” (Souvenirs as the creation of symbolised images of culture: a case study of the Yamatji, an Aboriginal people in mid-west Western Australia) Journal
preserved in other areas and which they have been given as an image of Aboriginal arts through education and mass media. She concludes that the reason why using techniques which are not theirs does not contradict their image of self is that the Yamatji people regard not only their traditional culture but also the whole Aboriginal culture as their own culture.

These examples indicate that Japanese anthropologists have had interest in traditional paintings or contemporary artworks in which traditional paintings are used.

Japanese anthropologist Sugifuji Shigenobu reports sales records (sizes, quantities, and prices) of water colour paintings by Aborigines at an art centre established in Oenpelli, Arnhem Land, in 1989, and classifies myths treated in the paintings. Sugifuji also reproduces the stories of some myths depicted in the paintings. He explains that demand for traditional bark painting increased in the 20th century, and, since then, painting tools have developed from barks to drawing papers for water colour and silk-screens, from traditional pigment to acrylic and water colour paint. Sugifuji says:

It is difficult to avoid a direct and indirect influence of a genre of urban Aboriginal arts which emerged out of a process of reconstruction of Aboriginality by so-called urban Aborigines. In other words, we should consider that this art [from Oenpelli] has a political nature as a representation of Aboriginal identity and that these arts stand as Aboriginal arts in the context of Australian arts as a whole. ...Since the latter half of the 1980s, there has been a strategy of using performing arts and visual arts to re-establish the identity of urban Aborigines. That includes works citing the central desert and Arnhem Land as themes, and works containing political assertions. These works are highly valued at auctions and in the fine arts (world) in general.19

What is meant by urban Aboriginal arts remains very unclear here. Also, it seems

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strange that, despite the reference to performing arts, Sugifuji argues that these arts are valued “at auctions and in the fine arts (world) in general”. This might be acceptable if information about the art or creative activities by “urban Aborigines” was available as it is in Australia. However, there are only few books or other sources available to provide comprehensive information on contemporary Aborigines in Japan.

Moreover, I wonder if Japanese anthropologists adhere too much to the anthropological classification of Aborigines: urban Aborigines, remote Aborigines and rural Aborigines. Does their notion of ‘urban Aborigines’ really cover all aspects of the lives of contemporary Aborigines who live in cities?

In 1995, the first Japanese book on ‘urban Aborigines’ was published. This book, Suzuki Seiji’s Toshi no aborijini: yokuatsu to dentō no hazamade (Urban Aborigines: between suppression and tradition)\(^{(20)}\), was originally the author’s doctoral thesis submitted to the National Museum of Ethnology, and was published by Akashi Shoten, a Japanese publisher specialising in books about minorities and human rights. In his review of this book, Uehashi Naoko says:

> Previous studies on urban Aborigines have mostly been interested in investigating how much urban Aborigines retain traditional culture..., or how much they have lost it and adapted (or not adapted) to the White society.\(^{(21)}\)

In these terms, it is possible to say that this was an epoch-making book clearly distinguished from previous studies. In anthropological studies on Aborigines, the idea of ‘urban’ is constructed primarily as an alternative to ideas of ‘remote’ which have been research subjects of traditional anthropology. Suzuki seems to become aware of this point. Suzuki says:

> I suddenly felt that I had adhered unknowingly to the meaning of the word “Aborigines” depicted in conventional anthropological study. I thought that I had seen urban Aborigines, who were created through conflict with the Whites for more than 200 years, through the filter standard of remote Aborigines... Moreover, I noticed that, although “Aborigines” is the name of a category


\(^{(21)}\)Uehashi Nahoko, “Shohyō: Suzuki Seiji Toshi no aborijini” (Book review: Suzuki
meaning descendants of indigenous people and it is not a name of a tribe, I have treated it as the name of an actual ethnic group. Therefore, I thought that, since we would compare urban Aborigines with remote Aborigines forever if we continued adhering to Aborigines and Aboriginal culture, we should forget the name of Aborigines and see the people who call themselves Aborigines and who are called Aborigines and who are regarded as Aborigines in the peculiar urban circumstance where people with various cultural backgrounds are mixed up. 22

At least as long as we read this remark, Suzuki seems to start understanding Aborigines from a new viewpoint, criticising conventional anthropology. Nevertheless, in the next sentence, he argues about urban Aborigines as follows:

Then, I felt that something became visible which I had not been concerned with. For example, in interviews with a white man whom they met for the first time, some people showed cowardly behaviours, and others, by contrast, expressed hostile behaviours. This was irrespective of what kind of political views they had. These kinds of particular attitudes and behaviours seem to be related to the fact that Aborigines have always been marginalised and neglected in history. ...I found that being Aborigines rules their values and controls their behaviours in the urban circumstance. Therefore, from this viewpoint, I started investigating urban Aborigines.23

It is true that Suzuki is interested in diversity and hybridity in Aboriginal culture as we find in his remarks that he takes notice of “the peculiar urban circumstance where people with various cultural backgrounds are mixed up” and criticises conventional studies which have regarded Aborigines “as an actual ethnic group”. However, he apparently considers Aborigines living in urban circumstances as a kind of homogeneous group. We must admit that there is some truth in Suzuki’s remark, but we should not homogenise any group. According to Óta, “in anthropology, culture is a system of symbols as a medium for human behaviours”, and this requires “the assumption of homogenous social space”.24 Is it really possible that all people who have an Aboriginal identity show cowardice or hostility irrespective of their personality when they meet white men? Suzuki

23 Ibid.
apparently adheres to the category of 'urban Aborigines', and tries to find homogeneity in this category. In other words, Suzuki is still affected by the idea of 'urban Aborigines' from the viewpoint of conventional anthropology. Research in ethnology relies on relationships between researchers and informants. For example, Suzuki refers to the following remarks as a voice from the new generation of urban Aborigines:

Page (male) who is a dance teacher says, “Among Aborigines who are engaged in artistic activities, it's always the same issue of looking for land rights and at the white onslaught and looking at our ancestors being exploited. But we can't dwell in the past anymore, we have to create images of Aborigines now where it's positive, where Aborigines aren't the Aborigines who suffer (from poverty) in gutters, where Aborigines are tackling something”.

Who, amongst the readers of this book, imagines that this “Page (male) who is a dance teacher” means Stephen Page, Artistic Director of Bangarra Dance Theatre? It was in 1995 when this book was published. Bangarra Dance Theatre was established in 1989, and the company toured to Japan in the same year. Stephen Page worked at Sydney Dance Company as a dancer, and, in 1991, became Artistic Director of Bangarra Dance Theatre. Suzuki is the only authority on 'urban Aborigines' in Japan and he should have known Page's glorious career as an artist while he was writing this book. Indeed, in the same book, Suzuki quotes a remark by Tracy Moffat and introduces her as a female photographer, a film director, and an artist who considers herself as one of the new generation of Aborigines. For Suzuki, who categorises Stephen Page as an 'urban Aborigine', the description of “Page (male) who is a dance teacher” might be enough. It seems as if Suzuki has little interest in the subjectivity of Stephen Page as an artist. Therefore, we can perhaps say with fairness that Suzuki still adheres more than he knows to the

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When you go and see black theatre today it’s always the same issue of looking for land rights and at the white onslaught and looking at our ancestors and our mothers all being raped...But we can't dwell in the past anymore, we have to create stories now where it's positive, where blacks aren't the blacks that you see in gutters, where blacks are now controlling things. (p.122)
attitude of conventional anthropologists.

As we have seen, it seems that 'urban' as a category of anthropology is still defined in relation to other categories such as 'remote' and 'rural'. Theatre and performance could appear anywhere irrespective of whether it is urban or not. It is possible for urban theatre artists to go to remote areas and for remote people to appear in urban theatres. Besides, how should we categorise Aboriginal artists whose activities are cosmopolitan? I think if we emphasis too much the categorisation of 'urban', 'remote', and 'rural', we miss many elements of Aboriginal expression.

One of very few research works in Japan on Aboriginal arts from the viewpoint of art history is Japanese scholar Tamura Kayo's “1950 nendai no osutoraria kaiga to aborijini” (Australian paintings in the 1950s and Aborigines)\(^\text{26}\) Along with an analysis of images of Aborigines which Drysdale and Boyd depicted in their paintings, Tamura talks about Albert Namatjira, an Aboriginal artist who flourished in the 1950s. Tamura reports that there is confusion about how Namatjira's paintings, which were painted on the basis of the Western art tradition, should be evaluated. Moreover, Tamura refers to a claim that Namatjira might have painted “landscapes of his tribe” irrespective of Western tradition, and another claim that Namatjira's painting indirectly triggered Aboriginal water-colour painting, and as such was the origin of dot-painting. Tamura concludes that Namatjira depicted Australian landscapes from an Aboriginal viewpoint using Western methods of expression.\(^\text{27}\)


\(^{27}\) As for Namatjira, deeper and more interested discussion was introduced to Japan. Meaghan Morris's paper entitled “Beyond assimilation: Aboriginality, media, history and public memory” which deals with Namatjira's paintings and Tracy Moffatt's *Night Cries* was translated into Japanese and published in Japanese journal Shisō. Although this is just a translation of an Australian work and both Namatjira's works and Night Cries are not known at all in Japan, it is likely that this paper had an influence on the Japanese academic world as well as general Japanese readers to some degree because the journal which published Morris’s paper was one of the leading journals of humanities in Japan. See Meaghan Morris, “Doka wo koete: aborijini sei / media hisutori / paburikku memori” (Beyond assimilation: Aboriginality, media, history and public memory) Shisō 890, August 1998, pp.5-34.
Lastly, I will refer to Aboriginal Studies in Japan which use approaches from literary studies. Japanese scholar Nakamura Kazue's "Seinaru copiraito, zokunaru copiraito: senjimin bunka, tokuni aborijinaru kaiga to sono apuropurieishon nikansuru oboegaki" (Spiritual copyrights, secular copyrights: a note on indigenous culture, especially Aboriginal paintings and their appropriation)\(^{28}\) is a paper written from the viewpoint of Postcolonial Studies. After explaining the present situation in which the whites appropriate Aboriginal arts and Aborigines appropriate the Western arts, she argues that this syncretism is a characteristic of postcolonial society, and therefore, it is impossible for anyone (even Aborigines) to judge which is an authentic Aboriginal art and which is a forgery. She concludes that no-one is able to speak as indigenous people and that all she can do is to list examples of the syncretism and to speak "about" indigenous people. I disagree with her opinion. If we just point out the state of confusion about new Aboriginal expressions such as T-shirts and souvenir designs which Nakamura mentions because we cannot be specific about which is "authentic", does such a discussion have any meaning? I think that either giving up an attempt to find Aboriginality in Aboriginal arts, as well as the apparently opposite attitude of defining Aboriginality by the strict standards of authenticity, will overlook much of what Aborigines seek in Aboriginality. I will develop further discussion about this question later.

Kato Megumi's paper entitled "Mudrooroo: aborijini bungaku no jirenma" (Mudrooroo: a dilemma of Aboriginal literature)\(^{29}\) deals with a similar question. Kato refers to the fact that Mudrooroo, who has engaged himself in the theoretical construction of Aboriginal literature as a leading Aboriginal author, was subjected to question as to his credentials to speak as an Aboriginal by the mass media on the grounds that it was not clear that he was in fact of Aboriginal descent. Kato refers to discussions about Aboriginality in Mudrooroo's *Milli Milli Wangka: the indigenous literature of Australia* (1997), and she concludes as follows:

This category (of Aboriginal literature) has become diverse, and it is difficult


and even dubious to seek authenticity in authors and their works. In order to evaluate a work, it seems to become more necessary for both writers and readers not to depend on a biological proof, but to have responsibility and sincerity towards a work. 30

Katô's conclusion warns against inflexible ideas about Aboriginality such that cultural Aboriginality must be proved biologically. However, at least in Australian studies in Japan, we seemingly have not yet had any discussion about how we should evaluate Aboriginality in literary and artistic works without excessive adherence to authenticity.

Arimitsu Yasue, another Japanese scholar specialising in Australian literature, also discusses Aboriginal literature from the similar perspective to Katô's.31 Arimitsu discusses especially Sally Morgan's *My Place*. Quoting from remarks of Australian critics, she claims that this work lacks 'Aboriginality' because all Australian readers can read this work without translation, and because this work is a result of collaboration between the author and an Anglo-Australian editor. Interestingly, Arimitsu seems to have no interest in the content of the work. All she is interested in is the discussion in Australia about whether Sally Morgan and her work have 'authenticity' as Aboriginal or not. Her approach of focusing on the author's authenticity rather than the work itself is similar to the attitude of Japanese anthropologists. Arimitsu however avoids discussing the Japanese translation of *My Place* published in 1992. I believe that the question of how the Japanese translation affected the 'Aboriginality' of *My Place* is a very important issue. I would like to discuss this in detail later.

This section has surveyed studies on Aboriginal artistic expression in Japan. In the next section, I move on to the subject of Japanese scholars' positioning in their studies on Aborigines.

Japanese scholars' positioning in Aboriginal Studies

This section demonstrates how Japanese scholars have positioned themselves in Aboriginal Studies 'as Japanese'. It seems to me to be doubtful that Japanese

30 Ibid., p.23.
31 Arimitsu Yasue, *Oai dogata no aidentiti: bunka ni miru sono mosaku to juyô* (Australian Identity: Its Quest and Reception in Literature) Tokyo, Tokyo
researchers engaged in Aboriginal Studies have consciously confronted this question. This investigation is important because this serves as a useful reference point from which to understand the attitudes 'as Japanese' of Japanese audiences and theatre practitioners at the presentations of Aboriginal plays.

Japanese anthropologist Kubota refers to an episode in which Koyama, who pioneered Japanese anthropological research on Aborigines, received the following advice from an Australian anthropologist at the end of the 1970s when Koyama had just started his research in Australia:

One piece of advice was to include female anthropologists in the [Japanese] research group. The other was to take care of relationships with whites who are engaged in research fields, as well as relationships with Aborigines. The advice that female anthropologists should be included wisely reflected on the above mentioned deadlock of anthropological research (since most researchers are male, informants they contacted are limited to male), and the rise of gender studies in those days. Taking care of relationships with white men meant not only a key to carry on the actual business of field work but also the necessity of comprehending the relation between Aborigines and whites objectively to understand the real life of communities. It is possible to say that the advice given to the Japanese researchers was that a Japanese researcher would have a different viewpoint from that of Australian researchers.\(^{32}\)

Kubota, whose research field is gender studies in Aboriginal communities, considers this episode favourably since the advice from a white anthropologist made Japanese gender studies on Aborigines possible. However, I would like to point out that there is a problem in this episode. It was not because the Japanese anthropologists realised the necessity of the gender perspective by themselves that they included female researchers. Rather, they did so because a white anthropologist told them to do so. This is a problem because Japanese research started with the idea that they only had to include females in their group for field work. It is also interesting that Kubota emphasised the importance of the relationship with whites. It is impossible to understand diverse Aboriginal experiences only through the relationship of Aborigines and whites. Such understanding of Aborigines might for instance marginalise Aboriginal

experiences in the international sphere. Besides, Japanese scholars would not be unable to avoid belonging to the whites' side.

Furthermore, this reflects on a problem in the setting in which the Japanese study Aborigines. What is "a different viewpoint from that of Australian researchers"? If it means the situation in which Japanese anthropology gains high praise from overseas researchers because the Japanese are good at making contact with Aboriginal communities and clearly show the profits, which is not a peculiar viewpoint of the Japanese. What is even worse, the Japanese anthropologists, who are unable to be free from excessive adherence to authenticity, even risk reproducing the fault of Western anthropology in the colonial moment. Furthermore, we can see Japanese anthropologists who are marginalised and controlled by a residuum of colonialism in western anthropology.

So, what does anthropology mean in Japan? Japan has a history during which anthropologists have imitated Western anthropology, concentrating on proving the primitiveness of Japan's indigenous people, and depicting civilised, modernised and Westernised images of the Japanese (Detail is in Chapter 6). Even today, according to Ōta, it is difficult for a Japanese researcher to conduct anthropological research in Western societies:

Japan is a place which has "duality": it is a subject as well as an object of anthropological research. This duality looks like a duality originating between accepting representations from others as an indigenous strain and desiring to be an anthropologist, which I felt when I studied anthropology in the United States of America...This duality is a structural problem which anthropology involves. Anthropology, where everyone should be equal, consists of distinction of informants and anthropologists in reality. ...there are cases where one will not be allowed to speak until he/she accepts the position of an informant. In other words, there is a development of power to rule and control by allowing one to speak.33

The problem for Japan, which has taken part in colonialism by mimicking the

West and which has been "colonised" at the same time\(^{34}\), makes visible again the problem of anthropology which has seemingly overcome its colonialism. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin argue:

Contemporary ethnography, then, is concerned with describing and differentiating cultures in ways that acknowledge its own perspectives and role. A recent development has been the increasing internationalization of the discipline with major studies by, amongst many others, Kenyan, Nigerian, South African, Indian, Brazilian, Indonesian and Mexican anthropologists. Although in itself this is no answer to critiques of the substantive, philosophical basis of ethnography, the fact that in recent times substantial contributions to the discipline have been made by people in the erstwhile ‘target’ communities themselves has helped to focus attention on the possibility of a more ‘self-ascriptive’ mode of social and cultural analysis employing modern ethnographic methodologies.\(^{35}\)

As Ashcroft et al say simply and optimistically, it may be a significant development that people who have been allowed to speak only as informants have started to participate as investigators in anthropology. However, as long as there is a serious example such as Japan, it is difficult to resolve postcolonial criticisms of anthropology completely.

This issue is not specific to Japanese anthropologists. Let us take Japanese scholars of English literature for example. Until recent times, they have avoided thinking about the cultural-political meaning of studies of English literature in Japan. For instance, according to statistics during 1985 to 1989,\(^{36}\) there are about 7,000 Japanese scholars pursuing the study of English literature, and about 3,000

\(^{34}\) Rey Chow argues that the notion of 'coloniality' should not be applied only to the case in which race, territory, language was deprived and replaced by foreign ones. That is because such understanding makes 'political' deprivation invisible. See Ray Chow, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1993. p.9.

\(^{35}\) Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 1998. p.89.

papers on English literature are published in Japan every year. Nevertheless, almost all of these 3,000 papers written by Japanese scholars refer only to books and papers written by American and British scholars. References by Japanese to papers written by Japanese themselves are very rare; just five percent. This means that Japanese scholars do not recognize the value of studies conducted by Japanese themselves. In short, it seems that Japanese scholars do not actually study English literature, but rather mimic studies done by American and British scholars.

In other words, Japanese scholars of English literature have had to identify themselves with British and Americans. This attitude can be seen in the claim of Japanese specialists on Shakespeare of the 1950s that they could understand Shakespeare's works only after they identified themselves with the British. Japanese specialist on Australian literature Arimitsu's discussion on My Place, discussed previously, is also an interesting example. Arimitsu avoided discussing the Japanese translation of My Place although she knew the translation had been published in 1992. The issue about the relationship between translation and 'authenticity' as I have discussed might be less important in the case of the translation of purely fictional literature. Nevertheless, we can see interesting examples in this case also. For example, in the Japanese translation of Peter Carey's True History of the Kelly Gang published in 2003, since the narrator of the story is Ned Kelly, the Japanese translator translated the whole text into the excessively uncultivated Japanese language which Ned Kelly would be likely to speak if he was Japanese. As this example shows, the issue of the relationship between translation and authenticity is worth discussing in studies on literature. Arimitsu's attitude of neglecting the significance of the Japanese translation of My Place shows the avoidance of reading this Aboriginal work from a Japanese perspective. This is similar to the typical attitude of Japanese scholars of English literature. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the Japanese have always considered that they are on the periphery. Therefore, what they have felt they had to do first was to translate the 'central' originating culture as faithfully as possible. It is not easy to pass this stage and go to the next stage in which the Japanese interpret

that culture from their perspective, as the history of Japanese modern theatre clearly shows.

This section has demonstrated how Japanese scholars have positioned themselves in Aboriginal Studies. It is likely that general public knowledge of Aborigines is partial and insufficient in Japan because Japanese anthropologists have provided information about Aborigines without considering the cultural-political problems which anthropology has had historically and structurally, including the crucial question of “why do the Japanese study Aborigines?” In the next section, I move on to the reason Aboriginal theatre has been neglected by Japanese Aboriginal Studies.

Aboriginal theatre as a marginalised art

In this section, I investigate how Japanese Aboriginal Studies have dealt with Aboriginal theatre, and clarify the reason Aboriginal theatre has been neglected.

While anthropologists provide information on almost all aspects about Aborigines in Japan, Aboriginal theatre is a cultural product in which Japanese anthropologists have had the least interest. When the Rakutendan Theatre Company produced *Stolen* and *The 7 Stages of Grieving* in 2001, Wesley Enoch, who was invited to Japan gave lectures at universities in Japan through an arrangement with the Australian Embassy in Tokyo. The Embassy offered Enoch’s lectures to universities and research institutes to which researchers specialising in Australian studies belong. (For more detailed information, see Chapter 7). Enoch was invited to a class on Australian Cultural Studies at Waseda University, a class on Sociology at Keio University, a class of a lecturer specialising in English and Canadian literature at Meiji Gakuin University, and an external class at Nanzan University Australian Studies Centre, specialising in Economics. The Embassy also offered the lecture to a university to which one Japanese anthropologist belonged, but it was not accepted. I had a chance to hear from this anthropologist directly about the reason the visit did not occur. He said: “The offer came to me too from the Embassy. I asked my colleague, a scholar of English theatre, if Wesley Enoch was an important figure in theatre, but he answered that he had never heard the name of Enoch. That was why I refused the offer”. What is interesting is that this anthropologist is one of a few experts on the arts of Aborigines in Japan. Even so, he did not show any interest in this Aboriginal artist.
It is also important that the scholar of English literature did not show any interest. This reflects a conservative tendency in the Japanese academia, in spite of the fact that the waves of Postcolonial Studies and Cultural Studies have already arrived in the Japanese academic world. Ōta is one anthropologist who has taken the impact of Postcolonial Studies and Cultural Studies seriously. Ōta is struggling with the problem which contemporary anthropology in the rest of the world asks as a structural question: Do anthropologists have a right to represent voices of minorities in the postcolonial moment? On the other hand, Ōta regards Cultural Studies as a rival of anthropology. Ōta says:

In anthropology, culture is a system of symbols as a medium for human behaviours. On the other hand, Cultural Studies adds to it a "social recognition" that all of the people living in a society do not share such a system. In other words, while anthropology retained a definition of an idea of culture on the assumption of homogenous social space, Cultural Studies constructed an idea of culture effective enough to analyse because its research field was a society which refused the assumption of homogenous social space. ³⁹

Ōta concludes that that is the reason why Cultural Studies showed the possibility of contributing a representation of the viewpoint of minorities. One can see from the example of Ōta that it is true that Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Studies have had an impact on some Japanese scholars. However, it is dubious whether such movements have penetrated into the whole Japanese academic world. Indeed, Ōta repeatedly says that a scholar like him is a minority in Japanese anthropology.

The situation where the impact of Cultural Studies or Postcolonial Studies has not penetrated is hardly limited to Japanese anthropology. I wrote about problems of Japanese studies in English literature in Japan in 1997 as follows:

It will take some time, however, for this situation to change. Nowadays, a great change in the literary studies is occurring. "English" as a conventional field of study is about to be replaced by the latest theory, "cultural studies" which includes feminism, multiculturalism, post-colonialism, and so on. Of
course, Japanese scholars know as much. There are many Japanese scholars who know that the literature and culture, which has been marginalized, will gain greater importance from now on. However, even if cultural studies become more prominent, it's just a borrowed theory for the Japanese academic circle. Even after cultural studies destroys the conventional and strong influence which English used to have, Japanese scholars do not intend to re-think the meaning of English studied in their own country. ...it is impossible for old-fashioned Japanese scholars to discover entirely new values by themselves. Therefore, for quite some time I may continue to be the only scholar in Japan who studies Australian theatre, a quite new and unexplored field of study.  

Today, this situation might have improved to a degree. Since the period when I wrote this, numerous books on Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Studies have been published, and scholars specialising in these fields have drastically increased in Japan. Nevertheless, except for a few universities, English departments in most universities have not changed their ‘traditional’ curriculum — the same traditional curriculum as in English-speaking countries — by accepting the impact of Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Studies. Even at the exceptional universities, English departments make do with adding to the faculty some scholars specialising in literature in postcolonial countries such as Canada, and do not allow these studies to affect the ‘traditional’ curriculum of English. Although it is difficult to examine this in detail here, it is needless to say that the question of why the ‘traditional’ curriculum and canon of English are conserved in Japan has a close relationship to the discussion about ‘honyakugeki’ and Japanese modernisation as I have already argued. The question of whether the Japanese have a right to speak about Aborigines I will discuss later.

The situation is that Aboriginal theatre is marginalised doubly and triply in Japan because it is ‘Australian’, ‘indigenous’, ‘urbanised’, and ‘avant-garde’. This has a close relation with the problem that the whole Japanese academic world has failed to take the impact of the postcolonial situation seriously.

Besides, Japanese anthropologists specialising in Aboriginal arts have neglected
theatre because theatre itself is a minority art. When I gave the paper about the
history of Aboriginal theatre at the National Museum of Ethnology, a Japanese
anthropologist said “We anthropologists research not only an event but also its
influence upon the society. I think movies like Crocodile Dundee are worthy to be
researched because they are very influential. But, I wonder if theatre has such an
influence upon the Australian society”. Because I believe that theatre is an
indispensable research subject to grasp the status of contemporary Aborigines, I
was surprised by these comments by Japanese anthropologists.

We must admit that theatre has less influence on society than film because the
size of audience is small and it is scarcely a profit-making business. Literature,
as well as theatre, covers what the anthropological approach misses. However, at
least in Japan, what literary studies mainly discuss is the authors’ authenticity as
Aborigines. It assumed that an author writes novels and stories by himself/herself,
and his/her personality influences interpretation of the works, and that is why the
authenticity of the author as Aborigine (or other ethnicity) becomes important.
The above-mentioned Japanese scholars of Australian literature have a great
interest in an author’s authenticity as Aborigines. On the other hand, theatre is an
art of many creators, so the issue of authenticity of the creators is generally less
important than in the case of literature. Theatre is able to cross categories which
the Japanese anthropologists have stuck to.

In Japan, Aboriginal theatre has been neglected because this is a field which
Japanese anthropological and literary studies on Aborigines have not covered. The
reason why these studies have not covered theatre may have a relation to the
characteristics of theatre as a medium. For Aboriginal paintings and souvenirs,
strict analysis of their authenticity based on traditional patterns of culture might
be effective to some degree. However, we can perhaps say that theatre, involving
action in real time, is an art form of four dimensions (if paintings, carvings, and
souvenirs can be defined as respectively two and three dimensional arts) which is
able to depict long periods of the life of characters during the running time. In

41 Sawada, Keiji, “Engeki ga utsushidasu gendai no senjūmin” (Contemporary
indigenous people reflected in theatre) The National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka,
42 According to the investigation of 2004 by Japan’s Cabinet Office, the percentage
of people who saw theatre in a year was 12.9 percent, while people who saw films
in a year was 24.7 percent. Cabinet Office, “Bunka ni kansuru yoron chōsa” (The
opinion poll on culture) 26 January 2004. [On-line] Available WWW:
http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h15/h15-bunka/
other words, if paintings, etc. are art forms of “present tense” and “past tense” which place each work in a point of the past or the present, theatre is an art form of “present perfect tense” which is able to depict an event from a point in the past to the present. It is certain that there exists a life of Aborigines which can be depicted only through these forms of art. Possibly the Japanese anthropologists specialising in Aboriginal art do not have any methodology to understand this stream of time which connects the past with the present in theatre.

In Japan, Aboriginal theatre cannot avoid being a marginalised art because Aborigines did not have theatre in their traditional expressions. Compared with in Japan, in Australia, Aboriginal theatre is regarded as important. For example, Wesley Enoch discusses the history and significance of Aboriginal theatre in The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture (Oxford UP, 2000). Commenting on the fact that Japanese anthropologists have not shown any interest in Aboriginal theatre, Wesley Enoch says,

If the anthropologists want to say that only true Aboriginal culture took place before 1788 when it was free of other influences they really don’t understand how Aboriginal cultures work. Theatre is a growth, an adaptation of a deep seated cultural urge to tell stories and connect as a community.

Another reason why, unlike in Japan, theatre is regarded as an important cultural form of expression by Aborigines in Australia is partly because of a difference in the social role of theatre between Australia and Japan. The fact that Japanese contemporary theatre has been poor as a device to reflect social issues may be one major reason Japanese scholars have missed the significance of theatre in Australia (See the section about Diving for Pearls in Chapter 4). Besides, it is a big problem that the Japanese scholars are indifferent towards the question of why Aborigines are representing themselves by means of theatre.

As I mentioned above, anthropological studies on Aborigines started with the research which considered Aborigines as the living Jōmon men. Do the Japanese anthropologists exclude theatre because theatre is an expression which the Jōmon men never used? However, as we have seen in the contents of Tabunka kokka no

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44 Wesley Enoch, Personal interview with author via e-mail, 21 December 2001.
senjumin: ôsutoraria aborijini no genzai (Indigenous People in the Multicultural Nation: the contemporary situation of Australian Aborigines), the Japanese anthropological approach is now diverse. It is quite likely that there is another reason why Japanese anthropologists exclude theatre.

This reason concerns not only Japanese anthropologists but also Japanese people in general who are interested in Aborigines. For example, Wada Yoshio, the director of the Japanese productions of the Aboriginal plays, says:

A lot of people came to Wesley Enoch's lectures, but many of them did not show any interest in the productions of Stolen and The 7 Stages of Grieving. At a lecture at a university in Nagoya, Wesley himself announced to the audience that his play would be presented in Japan, but few people came to see the productions. About 130 people came to Wesley's lecture at the Embassy too. But I am afraid that very few people read the playscripts or saw the productions after the lecture. Wasn't he standing before them as a theatre director? Aren't his works important for the audience of the lectures?45

As Wada says, it might be true that many of the Japanese audience regard Wesley Enoch as an Aborigine, and that they are not interested in the subjectivity of Enoch as an artist. It is quite likely that this situation is related to the fact that anthropology has been virtually the only providers of information about Aborigines.

In the above mentioned paper of mine given at the National Museum of Ethnology in 2001, I surveyed the history and the present state of Indigenous Theatre in Australia, explained about the significance of Rakutendan's productions of Stolen and The 7 Stages of Grieving in 2001, and showed a video of the productions. Firstly, I was surprised by the fact that none of the anthropologists who attended my lecture, all of whom are contributors to the above-mentioned book Tabunka kokka no senjumin: ôsutoraria aborijini no genzai (Indigenous People in the Multicultural Nation: the contemporary situation of Australian Aborigines) knew of the existence of Indigenous Theatre at all. An anthropologist specialising in Aboriginal arts said, "We did not know that performing arts are included in the arts until we listened to your paper".46

45 Wada Yoshio, Personal interview with author, Tokyo, 18 December 2001.
46 He said that he had seen Charles Chauvel's film Jedda, but I do not think he had
This section has demonstrated why Aboriginal theatre has been neglected by Japanese scholars. In the next section, I move on to the subject of authenticity and essentialism.

'Authenticity' and 'essentialism' – the challenge of hybridity

If theatre is marginalised since it is a minority art, and if Aboriginal theatre is marginalised since it includes not only traditional but also new expressions, the presentations of translated text of Aboriginal plays are triply marginalised. Perhaps in fact it is very difficult to find Aboriginality in the productions of Aboriginal plays in which no Aboriginal performers appear. Did the Aboriginality, which existed in the original plays, disappear when the plays were translated and performed in Japan? In this section, I clarify what Aboriginality is, and argue that Aboriginality comes out only through actual dialogues.

In discussion of my paper at the National Museum of Ethnology, the Japanese anthropologists made comments including:

"The productions are hopeless. Produce them in English at the very least".

"My friend belongs to a semi-professional theatre company specialising in 'honyakugeki' productions of a Western playwright. Whenever I see their productions, I do not see any point in doing such a thing. The productions in the video reminded me of that".

"You should not treat Aborigines like that".

These remarks clearly reveal what Japanese anthropologists think about the authenticity of Aborigines. Certainly, Japanese anthropologists have started to show interest in varied fields including urban Aborigines, the relationship between Aborigine and sport, and Aboriginal souvenir designs. Nevertheless, for them, Rakutendan's productions of Stolen and The 7 Stages of Grieving are completely different from what they want to study as scholars of Aboriginal Studies. No matter how diverse their research fields are, the outcome of the research is always the knowledge of Aboriginal lifestyles. Therefore, the anthropologists try to analyse the social circumstances and the living environment of contemporary Aborigines through examples of Aboriginal painting. For example, seen Tracy Moffat's film Night Cries.
Sugifuji classifies paintings by artists in Oenpelli, Northern Territory into five sizes, and analyses their quantities and market prices. Here, Aboriginal art is used as a subject of research in order to understand Aboriginal life environment.

The methodology of anthropological research is based on the objective description of the research object. Ōta says:

This [Said's criticism of Orientalism] questions the right to speak about a culture, and it is possible to say that this question was historically created through a distinction between someone who speaks and someone who is spoken about. In other words, although no one has a right to speak about a culture, the distinction between someone who speaks and someone who is spoken about is justified as the 'science' of anthropology. Besides, even if everyone has a right to speak, such speeches are divided: a speech by someone who speaks is a speech as an anthropologist, and a speech by someone who is spoken about is a speech as an informant. Therefore, this distinction is embodied as a contrast between 'theories' of anthropology, the side of someone who speaks, and 'cultural practice' in a local communities, the side of someone who is spoken about.

On this point, collaboration between an anthropologist and an informant would be an unsuitable research object because deliberate manipulation is made of the object.

47 Sugifuji, 2002.
49 However, recent anthropology has started recognising the reality that anthropologists can no longer pretend to be completely objective observers. For example, Australian anthropologist Nicholas Peterson says “we [anthropologists] too are involved in the reproduction of aspects of indigenous culture” (Nicholas Peterson, “Hunters-Gatherers in first world national states: bringing anthropology home”. 8th International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies – Foraging and Post-Forging Societies; Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology 23(4) 1999). Ōta also says: “If we manage to find a possibility of anthropology, it might be a project where anthropologists collaborate with people who used to be their research objects in producing representations of their culture. Needless to say, based on such a theory, various research projects of “experimental ethnography” have already been attempted.” Nevertheless, Ōta has a negative attitude towards those attempts. Ōta says: “However, even the experimental ethnography fails to answer the question about ‘the right of representation.’ The question of ‘who owns a right to speak about a culture’ cannot be solved even if we improve methodology of ethnographic representations”. (Ōta, 2001, p.88)
When the Japanese anthropologists retain such a perspective, Rakutendan’s *Stolen* and *The 7 Stages of Grieving* do not meet a requirement to be research objects of anthropology. The response to my showing of the videos also reveals what the Japanese anthropologists imagine about the range of hybridity. As I have argued, although modern anthropology recognises hybrid phenomenon, it will not regard something as “Aboriginal” which goes beyond certain limitations. However, in the case of theatre, it is possible that hybridity is created through limitless combinations. For this reason, we should take notice of what happens in the process of hybridity and what comes out as a result of hybridisation in Aboriginal theatre, rather than try to limit to what extent hybridity is allowed in Aboriginal theatre.

As we have seen, Japanese thinking about Aboriginal literature takes great interest in how much ‘authenticity’ is needed in a hybrid work in order to call it ‘Aboriginal work’. In fact, there is no point in counting the percentage of authentic elements in the work. Rather, it is far more important to know how much the authentic elements, or Aboriginality ‘work effectively’ in the Aboriginal work. In order to think about this issue, the definition of Aboriginality by Aboriginal sociologist Marcia Langton is very useful.

According to Langton:

‘Aboriginality’ is not just a label to do with skin colour or particular ideas a person carries around in his/her head which might be labelled Aboriginal such as an Aboriginal language or kinship system... ‘Aboriginality’ arises from the subjective experience of both Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people who engage in any intercultural dialogue...

Indeed, before the British colonization, “there was no ‘Aboriginality’ in the sense that it meant today”.

Aboriginality is a concept which emerged from contact with an Other, and according to Langton it is created continuously by both Aborigines and non-Aborigines. Langton classifies cultural and textual constructions of Aboriginality into three categories. The first category is the experience of the

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51 Ibid., p.32.
Aboriginal person interacting with other Aboriginal people; the second category is the stereotypes which are created by the Anglo-Australians reproducing the existing stereotypes of Aborigines; the third category is the construction of Aboriginality through the actual dialogues between Aborigines and non-Aborigines. In this category, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people who engage in a representation of Aborigines seek the satisfying way of understanding an Other by examining and amending the representation. Langton argues:

...It is in these dialogues...that working models of ‘Aboriginality’ are constructed as ways of seeing Aboriginal people, but both the Aboriginal subject and the non-Aboriginal subject are participating. ⁵²

This is the approach which theatrical works dealing with Aborigines should take, and also the approach in which theatre specialises. Although theatre is a minority art, the greatest advantage of theatre is that it facilitates dialogues between performers and audiences. That is because directors create productions in part by imagining audiences, and because there is closer relationship between creators and audiences compared with other forms of arts. Wada Yoshio, the director of the Japanese productions of the two Aboriginal plays, regards Wesley Enoch highly because Enoch is clearly conscious what kind of audience he wants for his works. ⁵³

In other words, Enoch distinguishes his works by emphasising the significance of ‘dialogue’ with audiences. Wesley Enoch argues that theatre started reflecting the Aboriginal voices earlier than film and television because of the power which theatre has. ⁵⁴ Apart from economic reasons, theatre reflected the Aboriginal voices earlier than other media because theatre has a power to facilitate dialogues within society. Dialogue through theatre involves the possibility of creating various forms of ‘hybridity’: the presentations of works by Aboriginal theatre companies in other countries; translations and presentations of Aboriginal texts in other countries; the participation of Aboriginal performers in overseas productions: collaborative works between Aboriginal and overseas theatre companies; and the introduction of cross-cultural experiences into Aboriginal productions. These exchanges and dialogues will create various kinds of hybrid works about Aborigines.

The question of who has a right to talk about a culture has become an important

⁵² Ibid., p.35.
⁵³ Wada Yoshio, Personal Interview with author, Tokyo, 20 November 2003.
issue for us who live in the postcolonial moment. So who has a right to talk about Aborigines? Needles to say, non-Aborigines do not have a right to do so ‘as’ or ‘in behalf of’ Aborigines. However, if non-Aborigines only talk ‘about’ Aborigines ‘as an onlooker’, is it possible to convey the voice of Aborigines to as many people in the world as possible? Rather, we should encourage the construction of Aboriginality by dialogues between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Let us take Louis Nowra’s play Radiance (first performed in 1993) for example. The text written by Nowra was staged by Aboriginal director Wesley Enoch, and filmed by Aboriginal film director Rachel Perkins. In Marcia Langton’s terms there is Aboriginality in each form of this work because each has been constructed by the dialogues between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. In 2005, Radiance is expected to be staged by Japanese theatre company Rakutendan in Japan. The production may provide another dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

As discussed in this chapter, the presentations of the translated texts of Aboriginal plays are triply marginalised. That is because they are productions in which no Aborigines appear. Nevertheless, dialogues have arisen even in the Japanese productions of Aboriginal plays. The Japanese productions have two strategies to resist the representations of Aborigines in Japan. One strategy is the power of theatre to facilitate dialogues between creators, performers and audiences as mentioned above. The second one is the double function of ‘honyakugeki’ which invites Japanese audiences to think seriously about what kind of position he/she should take as a Japanese on the expressions of Aborigines. This would not have happened if the translations which I published were not presented as pieces of theatre. The translations also would have suffered the same fate as the translation of My Place, in which case translators and readers were able to stay on the sidelines. However, because they were performed by Japanese actors, the translations of the Aboriginal plays gained the power to make the Japanese audience think about Aboriginal issues from a Japanese perspective. Although the Japanese actors cannot talk ‘as’ Aborigines, they can talk ‘about’ Aborigines ‘as’ Japanese, and this attitude can be shared by the audience too. This involvement in Aboriginal issues makes it possible to create ‘dialogue’ between the Japanese and Aborigines. The Japanese productions of Aboriginal plays have the possibility of creating this intercultural dialogue.


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In order to clarify the impact of the Japanese productions of Aboriginal plays to Japanese audiences, this chapter has investigated conventional representations of Aborigines in Japan which have been influenced by Japanese Aboriginal Studies. In the next chapter, I move on to the subject of the Japanese attitudes towards minorities in Japan, which is deeply related to representations of Aborigines in Japan.