

The Peach Girl Views: Appropriating the Gaze¹

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Introduction

Shōjo (girl) is, according to Sharalyn Orbaugh's concise explanation (2002: 458-59), a "cultural construct," which began to be circulated from about 1920 to recognise "a period in life when a female was neither naïve child nor sexually active woman," and which in contemporary society symbolises "a state of being that is socially unanchored, free of responsibility and self-absorbed – the opposite of the ideal Japanese adult," and hence can be used "as a tool for the critique of contemporary society." Thanks to a series of recent studies, the Japanese *shōjo* culture and its favourite themes such as *bishōnen* (beautiful boys), androgyny, transgender, transsexuality, and male homosexuality have gained some recognition within Japanese cultural studies. Nevertheless there still seems to be a strong

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Some parts of this paper overlap with my chapter entitled "Transgendering *shōjo shōsetsu*: Girls' inter-text/sex-uality," in Mark McLelland and Romit Dasgupta eds, *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan* to be published in 2005.

Japanese names are cited in Japanese order, i.e. the surname first, followed by the personal name without a comma in between. Translations of the Japanese texts are mine unless otherwise noted.

general tendency to regard the *shōjo* as a passive, frivolous, and vulnerable being who is easily manipulated by consumer culture. This is evident, for instance, in Horikiri Naoto's essay included in *Shōjoron*, which is one of the major publications on the *shōjo*. In his concluding paragraph Horikiri emphasises (Honda et al 1988: 128) that unsophisticated yet wise and tenacious village girls (*mura no musume*) in fairy tales who “assist men who are born to be failures” are, to his eyes, “far more attractive than the flippant² and dreaming *shōjo* of *shōjo shōsetsu* (girls' fiction) and *shōjo manga*, who are nothing but a byproduct of capitalism.” Closely connected to such a view is the positioning of *shōjo* as the object rather than the subject of gaze—particularly as the object of male sexual desire. In the same 1988 collection of essays on *shōjo* Iizawa Kōtarō quotes Shibusawa Tatsuhiko's “insightful analysis”:

And *shōjo*, more than anything, has responded best to the fundamental tendency of male sexual desire. For, generally speaking, she is, as mentioned above, ignorant and innocent both socially and sexually, and she symbolises the pure object, a toy-like being, who, like birds and puppies would never become the subject that initiates speaking (Honda et al 1988: 40-41).

This paper seeks to rescue the *shōjo* out of such lingering confinements and to recognise her critical and creative power, or to borrow Takahara Eiri's (1999) key words, her “freedom and arrogance,” in reference to two novels: Hashimoto Osamu's *Momojiri musume* (Peach-Bottomed Girl, 1978)³ and Kanai Mieko's *Indian Summer* (1988).⁴ Neither of these novels is specifically targeted at the *shōjo* audience but each, told by a young female first-person narrator, presents a parody of the *shōjo shōsetsu* and *shōjo manga*. There are two major issues here: intertextuality and gender criticism.

² Horikiri uses the term *hirahira*, which is the key word Honda Masuko (1982) used to explain the *shōjo*. The onomatopoeic term usually indicates flitting, fluttering movement; hence it symbolises the ribbons and frills fluttering, which may charm the observer but may also be taken, literally, lightly. Honda further points out the momentariness of this *hirahira* movement, the momentariness that can further be interpreted as indicating the capriciousness as well as implying the transient and transitional nature of the *shōjohood*. Horikiri, however, almost completely ignores such interesting and insightful complexity of Honda's term.

³ The publication date refers to that of the book entitled *Momojiri musume*, whose title is taken from the first story published in a magazine called *Shōsetsu gendai Gen* in 1977. The *Momojiri* series continued until 1990, when its sixth volume was published. There have also been some related products such as films based on the novel and Hashimoto's translations of classical Japanese literature into the “*Momojiri* language”.

⁴ The novel was first serialised in a magazine called *Ansanburu* (Ensemble) between October 1985 and April 1987. It was then published in book form in November 1988. The text used here is the paperback edition. The original Japanese title of the novel is written in the Chinese characters for *koharu biyori*, which does mean Indian summer. Kanai specifies the reading of these characters by putting the *katakana* “indian samā.” The Japanese term *koharu biyori*, incidentally, sounds very much like a title of a film by Ozu Yasujirō (though Ozu never actually made a film with this title), which is apt for the title of this novel whose protagonist and her friends are all connoisseurs in cinema.

It is well known that the theme of transgender was already evident from the outset of the two innovative and influential genres targeted at *shōjo*: Takarazuka and *shōjo manga*. The first is the all-women musical theatre founded by Kobayashi Ichizō in 1913.⁵ Tezuka Osamu's *Ribbon no kishi* (The Ribboned Knight, serialisation began in 1953, translated as *Princess Knight*) is widely known as the first *shōjo manga* ever to appear. Its androgynous heroine, Princess Sapphire, is dressed like a knight and fights like a knight. Tezuka is reported to have said that he “tried to transfer the world of Takarazuka into girls’ comics” (Fujimoto 1998: 132).

Although each was created by an adult man, these two genres and their transgendering aspects appealed to generations of young women.

One must also note that even in more conventional types of *shōjo shōsetsu* gender criticism can be found to varying degrees. In translated girls’ fiction, for instance, Hico Tanaka⁶ (in Saitō ed 2002: 18-24) recognises, among other characteristics, masculinity that is checked and modified by physical and mental/emotional illnesses and weaknesses. As Tanaka also points out, however, romantic heterosexual love is treated ultimately as the most important value in translated girls’ fiction classics. As we shall see, however, the two novels discussed in this paper reject or at least question heterosexual romance and its centrality in girls’ life and literature.

Unlike the issues concerning gender, the significance of intertextuality in *shōjo shōsetsu* has hardly attracted the scholarly attention it deserves.⁷ The term intertextuality is used here in a broadly Kristevan sense: “tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d’un autre texte” (Kristeva 1969: 85). The mosaic involves neither simple imitation nor repetition of preceding texts but absorption and transformation. We might also consider Genette’s notion of transtextuality,⁸ which refers to “all that which puts one text in relation, whether manifest or secret, with other texts,” and is divided into five types: intertextuality (effective co-presence of two texts), paratextuality (relation between the text proper and its title, preface, postface, epigraph, dedication, illustrations etc), metatextuality (critical relationship between one text and another), architextuality (generic taxonomies suggested or refused by the titles), and hypertextuality (relation between a hypertext and an anterior text, i.e. hypotext).

⁵ The troupe was originally named Takarazuka Shōkantai but within months changed to Takarazuka Shōjo Kageki Yōseikai, commonly known as Takarazuka Shōjo Kagekidan. “Shōjo” was to be dropped from the name in 1940 (Robertson 1998: 5).

⁶ This is Tanaka’s preferred name order and romanisation. Hico is normally written in *hiragana*.

⁷ Some exceptions exist: Kawasaki 1990 and Foster and Simons 1995, for example, do include some discussions of intertextuality.

Girls' intertextuality has a long tradition. From the age of *The Tale of Genji*, the figure of a girl preoccupied with tales, stories, romance and fantasies—all which have been regarded as belonging to “women and children” rather than to mature and respectable men—has emerged again and again in fiction, often with interesting meta-fictional debates and implications. While the young Tamakazura defends the “truthfulness” of tales as well as her own virtue against her seductive step-father, the Shining, if somewhat middle-aged, Prince Genji, Austen's young Catherine Morland eventually learns the absurdity of the Gothic novels she has been absorbed in. It may not be appropriate to declare, as Reynolds (1990: xv) does, that “[g]irls have always read more, and read more widely than boys,” for that certainly depends on the period, on the society and on class; many girls were/are not given opportunities to learn reading and writing or to spend time and money on reading, and today many other girls, like many boys, have many options—*manga*, films, games, mobile phones, *anime*, etc.—other than books. One can say at least, however, that a girl fantasising about the story she has read or heard is just as commonly seen in literatures of many different periods and cultures as is a girl dreaming or making up a story. Perhaps the most celebrated example in Japanese literature is the author of the *Sarashina nikki* (The Sarashina Diary, translated by Ivan Morris as *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams*), known to us as the Daughter of Fujiwara no Takasue. Recalling her girlhood in remote provinces, she writes:

Yet even shut away in the provinces I somehow came to hear that the world contained things known as Tales, and from that moment my greatest desire was to read them for myself. To idle away the time, my sister, my step-mother, and others in the household would tell me stories from the Tales, including episodes about Genji, the Shining Prince; but since they had to depend on their memories, they could not possibly tell me all I wanted to know and their stories only made me more curious than ever. (Morris 1971: 41)

The girl, not yet twelve, is in love with tales, particularly *The Tale of Genji*, and longs to read the real thing—perhaps just as heroes of tales often fall in love with a lady by hearsay and yearn to see her in person. In other word, “[s]he craved”, as Keene (1999: 384) notes, “not the social life that actually existed at the court but the vicarious pleasure of reading about imaginary people who had once populated it.” The narrator of the *Sarashina Diary* turns to religion in later life and regrets her earlier obsession with tales, but it is precisely this obsession that has charmed the reader, particularly women, for centuries. For reading, hearing, thinking about, or making up a story is an integral, and “real” part of a girl's life. It helps her

⁸ The following summary of Genette (1982) is based on Stam et al 1992: 206-210.

not simply “to idle away the time” but to overcome various difficulties—solitude, poverty, illness, boredom, and social restrictions including gender-based ones. One of the most celebrated girl protagonists, Sara Crewe, consoling her friend Ermengarde, says: “*Everything’s a story. You are a story—I am a story. Miss Minchin is a story.*” (Burnett 2002: 89. Italics as in the original.) Stories, read and imagined, have equally important places in Anne of Green Gables and many other girls.

All these girls were “absorbed” in reading. Absorption, however, is only one part of the intertextual mosaic: we need to acknowledge the other aspect, i.e. transformation, as well. Parody, allusion, quotation, adaptation, and travesty play significant roles in *shōjo shōsetsu*. The choice of these embedded texts and particularly their transformation strongly indicate the difference from, and often the antagonism towards, the non-*shōjo*, especially adult male culture. Thus intertextuality helps to construct and define the *shōjo* world, within which the writer, the protagonist, and the reader share the same texts woven into the primary texts. Furthermore the ambivalent relationship of a parody with its original—affectionate and respectful on the one hand and teasing and critical on the other—corresponds well with the ambivalent representations of gender and sexuality.

What I wish to show in the following is how the two issues, intertextuality and gender criticism, are inseparably connected in the two novels. To go along with the theme of the panel,⁹ I will also relate this to the dichotomy of the viewer and the viewed and include discussions of intertextuality involving visual texts such as film and *manga*.

Momjiri musume

Momjiri musume has four protagonist-narrators, who are all fifteen years old and attending the same high school at the beginning of the novel. The title of the six-volume series is taken from that of the first episode of the first volume, narrated by a girl named Sakakibara Rena. Rena and all the other narrators are given nicknames associated with fruit: “Peach-Bottomed Girl”, “Fig Boy”, “Melon-Seller Boy”, and “Princess Mandarin”—each of which seems to have some sexual connotations. In Rena’s case it refers to her back side clad in a pair of pink cotton trousers as viewed by a boy in her class when she was sitting on a hill above him.¹⁰ When she hears of this nickname apparently circulating among the boys literally behind her back, she is not pleased. To the majority of Rena’s generation, and in fact to most of the

⁹ As mentioned in footnote 1, this paper was part of the panel called “The Viewing Girl/ The Girl Viewed.”

¹⁰ The cover illustration of the Kōdansha Bunko edition of the novel (Hashimoto 1981) shows a girl with her lower half of the body in pink trousers comically exaggerated.

readership of this novel, the word *momojiri* may sound like an erotic coinage of Hashimoto (or in the story's context a boy called Yamashiro), but it was actually used in classical Japanese to describe an unstable state and position—for example someone sitting on a horseback insecurely like a peach that might roll over and fall off any time. Yamashiro explains this to his friend Kaoru, who, in turn, mentions this to Rena. So not only the narrator-protagonist but also the reader realises the classical meaning of the word, which is in a sense an apt metaphor for adolescent uncertainty and unsteadiness. This explanation of the term embedded in the story, however, does not diminish in any way the sexual connotations of *momojiri musume*. As far as her nickname is concerned, Rena is very much a girl viewed—by the adolescent boys in her class.

Rena never remains in the position of being viewed, however; she herself stares and observes boys. The boy who gave her the nickname, for instance, is described thus:

Yamashiro, seated next to me in class, is a real Stendhal, with his pimple-red face and his black uniform. Hidden underneath is his desire—and it's not Julien Sorel we are talking about! Disgusting! And I'm sure he himself finds it disgusting. That must be why he is so quiet. (Hashimoto 1997: 20)

The Peach-Bottomed Rena articulates the reality of an adolescent boy's unheroic, unsightly physique and sexuality by contrasting him with the romantic hero. This is but one example of intertextuality combined with gender/sexuality criticism.

The observant Rena notes that there is one exception in the generally unattractive bunch of boys at school:

But there's one, just one exception. There's a *bishōnen* in our Biology Club. By the way, why do I almost dribble when I pronounce the word "*bishōnen*"? Isn't it terrible? But he is a *bishōnen*. His cheeks are rosy, his eyes angelically lewd, and his lips—oh, how immorally sweet they are! (Ibid)

Rena in the late 1970s needed no Germaine Greer (2003: 11) advocating "women's reclamation of their capacity for and right to visual pleasure," for she and her peers were familiar with the *bishōnen* themes newly developed in *shōjo manga*. One might note here that Hashimoto is the author of the two-volume collection of critical essays on *shōjo manga* entitled *Hana saku otome-tachi no kinpira gobō*,¹¹ which was published in 1979, a year after

¹¹ It is very difficult to translate this title. When translating Takahara's essay which refers to this title, Barbara Hartley and I decided, after a series of discussion, on "The Tinned Pea Salad of the Maidens in Full Bloom."

Momojiri musume. That this collection, which has been an essential reading for researchers of *shōjo manga*, was written by a man may remind us of the cases of the Takarazuka and *Ribon no kishi*. References to *shōjo manga* within *Momojiri musume*, therefore, create complex and intriguing inter- and transtextuality, especially when we also remember that Rena's narrative style, which was to be called Momojiri-go, is a brilliant appropriation of contemporary girls' colloquial speech.

One of Rena's girlfriends, who wants to become a *shōjo manga* artist, openly declares that all heterosexual males are uncool (Hashimoto 1997: 36). In *Momojiri musume*, however, the gap between the *bishōnen* and homosexuals in *manga* and those in real life is clearly shown. While looking at the beautiful boy i.e. the "Fig Boy" Kaoru,¹² Rena tries to imagine her becoming a man and sexually violating him. This daydream and her hypothesis that the existential meaning of the beautiful boy is one to be violated shatter completely when the boy abruptly (though after all they are members of Biology Club) talks about his observation of the shape of the heart of the toad in comparison with that of the lizard. This is her reaction, though not directed at the boy in question but all kept to herself:

Would you pleeeeeeeeeease shut up, Kaoru-chan! You only disillusion me. Do the *bishōnen* need intelligence at all? I really wonder. [...] Actually, I don't mind a man speaking in this manner. But it's a matter of speech style. YOU, of all people, shouldn't speak like that! If you have to speak, Jirubēru, why don't you say something like "Sometimes the sun scares me"? (Hashimoto 1997: 21)

"Jirubēru" (Gilbert) is a reference to the *bishōnen* hero of Takemiya Keiko's pioneering *manga* entitled *Kaze to ki no uta* (The Poems of the Wind and Trees), which started to appear in *Shōjo komikku* in 1976. If the "Fig Boy" Kaoru does not at all speak or behave like a *bishōnen* of *shōjo manga*, another main character and later narrator, the "Melon-Seller Boy" Gen-chan, lets Rena glimpse the real male homosexual world with bars in Shinjuku where he is involved in part-time prostitution (i.e. *uri* [selling], which is a homophone of *uri* [melon]). So despite her nickname, the Peach-Bottomed Girl is by no means a passive object of male desire; neither is she a mindless consumer of material goods and texts. She is the desiring subject and the observer of self and other. The mosaic of citations in this novel deconstructs the *shōjo* as well as *shōnen*.

¹² The name Kaoru reminds the reader, or at least it certainly reminded the reader in the late 1970s, of the eighteen year old boy protagonist of Shōji Kaoru's *Akazukin-chan ki o tsukete* (Take Care, Little Riding Hood, 1969). The reader may also associate this name with the protagonist of the later chapters of *The Tale of Genji*.

Before concluding this section, let us briefly discuss one remaining protagonist, i.e. “Princess Mandarin” Samegai Ryōko.¹³ She is, like the Fig Boy Kaoru, beautiful, and unlike her peers she speaks in extremely polite style. She looks and sounds like a typical *o-jōsama*, an upper class young lady. It is revealed, however, that her father is the owner of a big “pink” (i.e. unrespectable) cabaret chain called “Lolita.” When Rena stays with Ryōko, the former is rather stunned to see the latter wearing the mandarin-coloured frilly lingerie—the kind that her father’s employees would wear at work. Here again we seem to have a case of the girl viewed. Does the innocent and beautiful Princess Mandarin become an easy prey for male sexual desire? There is no middle-aged professor who is infatuated with her. Instead she involves herself largely by her own choice in a series of disastrous relationships, including one with a boy whom the Melon-Seller Boy deeply and passionately admires. Her misadventures, like those of Rena and others, can be comic but they can at the same time be painful—an obvious example being the abortion she undergoes in her late teens.

Indian Summer

While Hashimoto’s novel still maintains the basic frame of a *Bildungsroman*, with a particular focus on self and sexuality, Kanai’s *Indian Summer* takes almost the opposite direction—the protagonist Momoko and her friend Hanako do not seem to be particularly interested in search for self or sexuality. Momoko and Hanako, both about twenty, may be older than average *shōjo shōsetsu* protagonists, but they are definitely free and arrogant *shōjo*. The title of the novel may be interpreted as a mild, pleasant day before the onset of winter (i.e. adulthood). The girls consume urban culture, including some “cute” cultural products, but they do revolt against the stereotypical image of cute and mindless consumer girls. In this revolt transgenerating and intertextuality play important roles.

The clearest example of transgender is Momoko’s father and his partner. The father, divorced several years before, lives with a “flower artist”. At the beginning of the novel Momoko is unaware of this new partner’s existence. Halfway through the novel she realises that the Flower Artist is in fact a man and that the divorce of her parents must have been caused by her father’s sexuality. A shock for Momoko, though it is neither a devastating nor a lasting shock. In this rather *shōjo manga*-like situation we see multiple play. First of all, the homosexual partner is far from a *bishōnen*; he is middle-aged, his face, we are told, looks like an earthenware pot, and he speaks like a retired *geisha*. Momoko becomes sympathetic to him when she finds out that her father is having an affair with another, younger man. Here

¹³ Both the surname Samegai (awake) and the given name Ryōko (cool) match her initially dispassionate personality.

homosexuality is treated not as a romantic and aesthetic trope but as a comic, almost farcical one—just like heterosexual relationships, in fact.

Flower motifs permeate this novel: Momoko literally means peach child and Hanako, flower child.¹⁴ Despite her literally “flowery” name, Hanako, in particular, represents an alternative to the stereotypical *shōjo*. She looks like a school boy with her extremely short haircut, and talks like one, using the plain male first person pronoun *ore*.¹⁵ So it creates a doubly comical effect, when Hanako brings a bunch of flowers—forget-me-nots and daisies—in her first visit to Momoko and her writer aunt, whose writing Hanako deeply admires. This admiration brings the following remarks from Momoko:

I was impressed but at the same time thought it was a bit too much when she started to recite from memory a passage from Auntie’s novel. To Auntie, the solitary novelist, this must be a very flattering, endearing thing. What a relief that she is my aunt rather than my uncle! For it would be a bit of a problem if a thirty-eight year old uncle, single, seduced a girl in my class. (Kanai 1999: 89)

All these flower motifs and the admiration of a young woman for another woman, of course, strongly remind us of the classic of *shōjo shōsetsu*, Yoshiya Nobuko’s *Hana monogatari* (Flower Tales, serialisation started in 1916, published in book form in 1920).¹⁶ Whereas Yoshiya’s stories are, as Kume Yoriko (2003: 110-12) points out, “pre-homosexual” and they ultimately “reinforce the existing gender system and women’s evaluation rather than shake heterosexism,” *Indian Summer* does not develop into a lesbian love story; for sexuality, hetero- or homo-, is not treated as something vitally important in this novel. This refusal is in itself a critique of the traditional *shōjo shōsetsu* which ultimately propagates romantic heterosexual love and/or the conventional gender system.

¹⁴ It may be worth noting that there are famous eponyms: the writer of children’s stories, Ishii Momoko, and the translator of stories including *Anne of Green Gables*, Muraoka Hanako. In the sequel to *Indian Summer* (Kanai 2002: 143) Momoko mentions a story by Ishii with a remark that in her childhood she was secretly proud of sharing the same name with the writer of her favourite story. Momoko may also be associated with the Girls’ Festival (March 3), which is also called the festival of peaches. The cute image of the name presents a striking contrast to the hero of the folktale Momotarō, who is supposed to be the strongest boy in Japan. Readers familiar with 1970s popular culture might further associate the name with *Momojiri musume* or with the actress Momoi Kaori, who was regarded as the champion of the recalcitrant and impudent girl. Hanako, on the other hand, would be associated with the magazine targeted at young women (slightly older than *shōjo*), *Hanako*, which was first published in May 1988, several months before *Indian Summer* was published in book form.

¹⁵ Unlike the younger sounding *boku*, which may be used by some girls as an obvious joke version of the first person pronoun, *ore* would normally be regarded as too rough and masculine in modern standard Japanese to be used by young women in that way.

¹⁶ See Kawasaki 1990: 9-37, Robertson 2002, Kume 2003, and Dollase 2003 about Yoshiya and this work.

One of the important features of the friendship of Momoko, Hanako, and the Aunt is that they enjoy sharing texts with each other. Those who cannot share the same texts, on the other hand, are excluded from their companionship. Momoko's father, for example, cannot join in because he is a snobbish poseur with no intellectual substance. This is what she says about him after one of their shopping excursions in Ginza:

Dear me! It makes you wonder. Being weak in the head, he's probably thinking of himself as the father in *Bonjour tristesse*. In other words he's a snob. I remembered the father in Mishima Yukio's popular novel *Megami* [Goddess] I read when I was a child. [...] Seeing his daughter choose a cocktail that would match the colour of her dress made him ecstatic about the fruits of his education. When we were back at home that evening, I had a good laugh with my aunt at the three of them, i.e. my old man, the father of the melodrama, and the author of the melodrama. (Kanai 1999: 46)

The mosaic of preceding texts makes the criticism sharper and more complex. Momoko's criticism is directed also toward her mother, especially her efforts to maintain traditional gender roles and respectability. Even more firmly rejected than Momoko's parents is the heterosexual father of Hanako, for he is a real "male chauvinist," who harasses women at work, and though an editor, is ignorant even of important books like *Anti-Oedipus*. Equally pathetic, if not as positively objectionable as Hanako's father, is Momoko's admirer. She has no illusions about food, marriage, and any of the other lures this rich and eligible young man has to offer, for obviously he cannot share texts with her.

None of these people can share textual pleasure with Momoko and Co. Those who can, on the other hand, share not only preceding texts but also their transformation. In fact *Indian Summer* structurally incorporates this notion of shared, transformed, and embedded texts. Inserted into the primary narrative told in Momoko's voice are eight short pieces written by the Aunt for literary magazines and other publications.¹⁷ The Aunt is very much like Kanai herself, and yet no reader would mistake this novel for an autobiographical text, for it is clearly about the adventures and experiments of the *shōjo* and ex-*shōjo* in reading, viewing and writing. The Aunt's texts are inserted because often Momoko and Hanako are their first readers and critics before they are faxed to the publishers. And we as the reader, in turn, can share their amusement and pleasure through reading *Indian Summer* and the texts within its text.

¹⁷ Some of these pieces seem to have been published individually. For instance, a short story entitled "Akachan kyōiku" (which is the Japanese title for Howard Hawks' 1938 film *Bringing Up Baby*) was published in the April 1983 issue of *Gunzō* (the title of which is mentioned in *Indian Summer*).

The most obvious example of intertextual amusement is a story entitled “Hana monogatari.” The Aunt’s “Hana monogatari” looks like a typical Yoshiya Nobuko story—a girl admiring a beautiful young woman whom she calls “Onēsama” (the elegant and respectful term for an elder sister/woman). With its title, the theme, and style it is obvious that this story is an *okaeshi* (return [gift]/ revenge),¹⁸ at once both an affectionate pastiche and a tongue-in-cheek parody of *shōjo shōsetsu*. That is if the text is read simply as a story published in a magazine, without the primary narrative of *Indian Summer*. There is much more to be enjoyed in the Aunt’s “Hana monogatari” than this: the beautiful Onēsama is an *ikebana* artist, who, to the great shock of the girl protagonist, is having an affair with her father. We cannot but smile at this radical transformation of the “real life” gay Flower Artist into the “fictive” Onēsama.

Amongst Auntie’s essays and stories there is a particularly interesting piece for our topic of viewed/viewing. It is an essay entitled “Kanshi suru hitobito” (People Who Watch) and its subject is how young women living by themselves tend to be under constant surveillance of neighbours, colleagues, and relatives etc. We know from Momoko’s primary narrative that the Auntie got the inspiration for this essay from Momoko’s mother, to whom respectability is no trifling matter, especially when it concerns sex.

Momoko and Hanako, and Obasan, as an ex-*shōjo*, may be watched; there is no doubt, however, that they are more of the viewer than the viewed. The trio are highly literate not only in literature but also in films. In fact the Aunt, like Kanai herself, is known as a film critic as well as a writer and has published several books on cinema. Like books, film provides a good yardstick to determine whether the person is worth talking to. It is a book that prompts the first conversation between Hanako and Momoko, and it is a free cinema ticket which marks the beginning of their friendship. Momoko’s admirer, on the other hand, is obviously not worth going out with, as he falls asleep in the middle of a Godard film. Her father also embarrasses both Momoko and her aunt by making the unthinkable mistake of citing Antonioni as a neo-realist director... In contrast Momoko and Hanako do not mind talking to the young men whom they meet at a cinema, for these boys are just as passionate and knowledgeable about film as they themselves are, and one boy happens to have a copy of Auntie’s book on cinema with him. There is absolutely no hint of romance in this meeting—in fact the boys believed that Hanako was Momoko’s younger brother even after a heated discussion lasting more than an hour.

¹⁸ Kanai (1999: 204) writes in her afterword to *Indian Summer*, “As someone who grew up reading *shōjo shōsetsu*, it has been my wish for many years to write at least one *shōjo shōsetsu* myself, as a kind of *okaeshi*.”

Aunt's writings are entertaining and subversive by themselves, but when juxtaposed with the primary narrative, the intra-textual writer (the aunt), her immediate readers (Momoko and Hanako), and the extra-textual readers can share the additional pleasure of identifying and musing about various connections between what is written and what has happened or has been talked about in the primary narrative. *Indian Summer* invites us to join in the trio to share *shōjo*'s intertextuality, for regardless of one's actual sex, sexuality, and age, one can be a *shōjo*, if not in reality but in intertextuality.

Conclusion

As we have seen, Rena and Momoko (and their friends) are more of the viewing girl than the girl viewed or watched. While both novels utilise *shōjo* culture and language of the time, they also question stereotypical views of the *shōjo*. Intertextuality provides a powerful and entertaining tool for such questioning and subversion. *Lolita*, which becomes the name of a cabaret chain in *Momojiri musume*, appears also in *Indian Summer* first in the form of *Lolita* sunglasses with a pink plastic frame and red heart-shaped lenses.¹⁹ This toy prompts commentaries of Momoko and Hanako about Nabokov's novel and Stanley Kubrick's film, as well as the convention in film and *manga* of the metamorphosis of a woman when she takes off her glasses.

The two novels are different, in fact almost opposed, however, in their treatment of growing up. On the one hand, *Momojiri musume*, typically of the genre, treats sexuality and identity as core issues. Rena and all the other fruit boys and girls experience "growing pains," particularly through their sexual and other relationships. *Indian Summer*, on the other hand, more or less rejects the notion of growth. Sexuality is not completely ignored, but it is regarded as something much less important than textual pleasure.

Like *Anne of Green Gables* and many *shōjo shōsetsu*, both novels have sequels. In the final volume of the *Momojiri* series published in 1990 both Rena and Ryōko are married, and the Melon Boy Gen-chan is a fashion designer. While Rena contemplates standing for a local election, Ryōko realises there still are many options for her. Momoko, Hanako, and Auntie, in contrast, have hardly changed in *Kanojo(tachi) ni tsuite watashi no shitte iru ni, san no kotogara* (Two or Three Things I Know about Her (and Others), 2000)²⁰ which is set ten years after *Indian Summer*. After completing a masters degree, Momoko works only as a part-time

¹⁹ See Kanai 1999: 177-180 for this episode and 181 for Kanai Kumiko's illustration of Hanako in *Lolita* sunglasses.

²⁰ The title (without the part in brackets) is taken from Jean-Luc Godard's 1972 film *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle*.

teacher at a *juku*. Hanako has worked as an editor in a publishing company for a while, but she gives up her job and moves back to the flat next to Momoko's, which the two girls shared ten years earlier. The final chapter of this sequel is entitled "Nakutemo ikite ikeru" (One Can Live Without [a clear purpose of living]). Without a husband, without a child, and without a full-time job or a respectable academic career, the two girls, now aged thirty, can live moderately happily, sharing and transforming texts and observing the world around them.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to enquire whether this difference comes from the difference between Hashimoto and Kanai (and if so, whether it is a personal difference or something to do with sex and gender) or whether it reflects social changes in the ten years between the two works. What we can say, however is that none of the girls (and boys) in these novels is what Shibusawa called "the pure object, a toy-like being." Within the small samples we have seen, diversity is evident in the representations of the *shōjo*.

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