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Japanese shôjo: Emergence and developments of shôjo in 1910s through 1930s Japan

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Japanese *Shôjo*: Emergence and development of *shôjo* from 1910s through 1930s Japan
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Introduction

In *Gender Trouble,* Judith Butler argues that gender is a matter of performance, rather than "being" a certain gender. She states,

> The act that one does, the act that one performs, is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene. Hence, gender is an act which has been rehearsed, much as a script survives the particular actors who make use of it, but which requires individual actors in order to be actualized and reproduced as reality once again. ("Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" 526)

Thus, the gender role one performs is something which is constructed in the particular culture in which one lives, and it is reinforced by acting out that role.

I was born a Japanese girl, and that is what I have always been. Or rather, I have always "performed" the role of "Japanese girl," and I have continued this identity to adulthood. But I have always felt that something was amiss. And I realized this feeling came from the questions I had about the image of girls which did not quite fit me personally. First, I realized I could not understand why girls tend to gather and act in concert. I also could not understand why they tried to assimilate to each other, mirroring each other by acting or dressing the same way. I did not understand why they always "expelled" boys from their group to maintain their community solely for girls. Finally, I did not understand why many of them continued to call themselves "girls" even after they reached maturity, preferring to look like "girls."

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When I came to think of it, I realized I would like to take a closer look at the image of Japanese girl identity, in order to go beyond what "I do not understand." This is the moment when I decided to study girls' culture in Japan. In *Passionate Friendship*, Deborah Shamoon introduces two representations of *shôjo:* one appearing in pure literature or other forms of public discourse, and the other arising in girls' magazines (Shamoon 10). Here, Shamoon states, "[t]he fact that the shôjo is the main love interest in these canonical, genre-defining novels shows the extent to which the shôjo is one of the key sites in which issues of both gender identity and national identity have been contested in twentieth-century Japan" (Shamoon 11). By understanding how the gender, sexuality and identity of *shôjo* are constructed within modern Japanese society, I hoped to find ways to understand what makes Japanese girls the way they are. In order to do that, I decided to focus on the study of *shôjo* from the 1910s through the 1930s, hoping that I would find ways to better understand the *shôjo* personalities today by looking at the way shôjo emerged and developed at the very early stage of *shôjo* culture in Japan. The emergence of the *shôjo* figure around that time is the first stage in modern Japan where the idea of "Japanese girls" started.

From the 1910s through the 1930s, education for girls in Japan changed rapidly. After the Civil Code was introduced in 1893, girls were given the opportunity to go to girls' schools. And the curriculum gradually shifted to a focus on producing "good wives/wise mothers."[1] While the education for girls centered on practical matters such as

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[1] As Inagaki Kyôko explains in *Jogakusei to Jogakkô: Kyôyô, Tashinami, Modan Bunka*, higher schools for girls created new departments within schools such as "kaji [house chores]" and "saihô [sewing]." Girls' higher schools also had more hours for ethics and music and less time for foreign language, math and science compared to middle schools where boys went (Inagaki 37).

houskeeping, girls made communities where they could develop modern ideas. One of the

most important mediums they used to communicate with each other was the girls'

magazine. Through their communication, the image of *shôjo*, or girls was created. The

shôjo community developed significantly by the 1930s with the publication of *shôjo*

magazines, and many girls participated in the community to practice their *shôjo* identity.[2]

On the one hand, those girls were educated to become a "good wife/wise mother," the kind

of woman who maintained her family in support of the patriarchal society. On the other

hand, however, the image of *shôjo* in media also represented modernization. How then, is it

possible to understand the identity of the *shôjo* and its significance to the society? How is it

possible to understand the community of *shôjo* as it related to the formation of their own

identity? By analyzing the readers' communication in the *shôjo* magazine as well as the

shôjo novels they read, I will discuss the *shôjo* identity and the community they created. In

so doing, I will also apply the critical work of Judith Butler in order to understand the

significance of the *shôjo* image from a broader perspective. The application of the

contemporary Western viewpoint will make it possible to recast the identity of *shôjo*

gender and sexuality.

    In this thesis, I will start from the historical background of how *shôjo* emerged both

as a term and as an image. I will also discuss *shôjo* as a socio-economic category. Then I

will introduce the magazine community where *shôjo* culture developed. By presenting the

significant characteristics of the community and its teachings, I will explain how the *shôjo*

community connotes notions of both past and future. Then, I will compare the *shôjo* with

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[2] By 1938, the number of off magazine meetings of *shôjo* magazines increased. *Shôjo no tomo,* one of the best read *shôjo* magazine, for example, had 10 off magazine meetings in 1938, while it was only once or none before 1909 (Imada 152).

several different cases, including male-male relationships in modern Japan, the 'Modern Girl' figure, and American "movie-struck" girls. Through this comparison, I aim to highlight the correlation of *shôjo* identity with their age, sex, and nationality. Finally, I am going to discuss how female readers reacted to the image of *shôjo* created through media, made the identity their own, and passed it onto the next generation with the actual socio-economic impact.

Emergence of the *Shôjo*

While the term *shôjo* is now commonly used in Japanese to indicate female adolescents who are under twenty years old, this word was actually created through the process of modernization. *Shôjo,* as a word, first appeared after the end of Meiji period (1868-1912), when the school system was changing rapidly. According to Imada Erika, it is a common understanding among the scholarly community that the changing school system created the concept of *shôjo* and the media proceeded to develop that concept (Imada 1). Honda Kazuko also explains that the Japanese school system offered a kind of "*moratoriamu* [moratorium, postponement before entering adulthood]" for girls where *shôjo* culture could develop. Honda states that Japanese girls who attended girls' school were in a state where they belonged to neither adult society nor a children's community. To explain these ambiguous circumstances, Honda referred to girls' school days as *chûburarin* [up in the air]. Girls' High Schools did not provide any skills or knowledge that directly related to their future careers, nor were schoolgirls given a specific social role insofar as they were neither children nor adults. Honda also suggests that numbers of

shôjo magazines published after 1899 provided a more detailed image of the *shôjo* figure (Honda 179).

Before the term *shôjo* achieved currency, people often used the term *joshi* [female child] for girls. As Imada suggests, however, the meaning of *shôjo* differs from *joshi*. While *joshi* only indicates girls' biological sex and age range, *shôjo* is more associated with a certain image of girls. According to Imada, *shôjo* as a word suggests a postponement for young females before adulthood and she suggests that the term *shôjo* connotes emotional sensitivity and memories. So, those girls called *shôjo* would cherish their *shôjo* years in their hearts as a precious memory (Imada 42-43). In other words, *shôjo* suggests that girls get to experience rich emotions and experiences while they are in that period of their lives—experiences that they can never repeat.

For Shamoon, representations of the *shôjo* fall into two distinct categories. One is typically seen in late-nineteenth-century *junbungaku* [pure literature] and eventually throughout mainstream twentieth-century public discourse while the other is the image that arose in girls' magazines (Shamoon 10). Thus, the time of puberty for girls, or *shôjo jidai* in Japanese, is considered to be a very significant time in their lives. With this in mind, we can go on to ask "when did *shôjo* appear and how is the image of *shôjo* constructed?"

Up until the 1890s**,** both girls and boys were called "*shônen,*" meaning "youth," and magazines for children such as *Eisai shinshi* [Magazine for Talented Youth] (1877-1901/1902) did not clearly specify that it was aimed at the young male readership only (Imada 26-27). Around the time when *Eisai shinshi* started, education for children mainly focused on *risshin shusse* [rising in the world], and children were encouraged to study hard in order to succeed in the rapidly changing society. At this stage, girls who studied among

boys were not taken out of the wave of this *risshin shusse* "gospel." This does not mean, however, that people at that time were liberal about gender differences in the contemporary sense. Imada explains that there were few girls attending middle schools before 1879 when the Education Order declared that middle schools were only for boys and the existence of girls was marginalized. Since *Eisai shinshi* was targeted at young people twelve years and older, female readers were scarce compared to the general population of girls at that time (Imada 26-27). In this magazine, critics wrote that everyone would have a chance to succeed in school and society if they work hard, regardless of gender differences. As I explained earlier, however, this is because there were not many girls who were as highly educated as boys. Those girls who read this magazine were more or less regarded as boys whose biological sex just happened to be female, and they were by no means representative of ordinary girls. Imada argues that people involved in the magazine had the shared understanding that men were superior to women both physically and intellectually so women would never surpass men (Imada 51). Imada supports her argument by explaining how critics gradually began to talk about gender differences to justify their view on separate education for boys and girls as the number of girls being educated increased (Imada 36). Since the separation of education for boys and girls in 1879, *shônen* became the word for boys in particular. Finally, *Eisai shinshi* used the word *shôjo* for the first time in its 1890s' May issue. In other magazines, too, *shôjo* began to appear as a way to separate girls from *shônen* after 1897 (Imada 53). In 1902, the first *shôjo* magazine, *Shôjo kai*, appeared. Thus, girls were given a new identity and community as *shôjo* in their magazines, partly in order to eliminate them from "*shônen*" magazines. In

this way, boys remained in the category of "*shônen*" and girls were given the new name "*shôjo.*"

Shôjo* Magazine Community: *Shôjo no tomo

After the emergence of *shôjo* as a category, many magazines for girls were published. The magazines for *shônen* were interconnected with the proclamation of the Middle School Order in 1886 and were complemented by middle school education. For that reason, *shônen* magazines introduced many adult men who succeeded in *risshin shusse* as the role models for the readers (Imada 109). In contrast, girls' magazines were connected with the Order Regarding Women's Higher Schools issued in 1899 and used the "good wife, wise mother" ideology to inculcate the principles of the school system (Honda 186). As Honda argues, *Shôjo Club* (1923-1962, *Shôjo kurabu*), the most popular girls' magazine nationwide, encouraged female readers to follow the school rules and work hard on schoolwork to make themselves a "good wife, wise mother." However, not all the magazines continued to reinforce the education of "good wife, wise mother." Rather, most of the girls' magazines had a more progressive agenda. For example, *Shôjo no tomo* (1908-1955, Girls' Friend) targeted the rising middle-class families in the city, and it differed from other magazines by creating a modern atmosphere. *Shôjo no tomo* writers introduced stars and young women with jobs in the magazine far more often than they introduced mother-type women. Other magazines such as *Shôjo gahô* (1912-1942, Girls' Graphics), *Shôjo kai* (1902-1912, Girls' Illustrated), *Shôjo sekai* (1906-1931, Girls' World) were similar to *Shôjo no tomo*, although they had a lower subscription rate than *Shôjo no tomo* (Imada 116).

Shôjo Club and *Shôjo no tomo* were the two most widely-read magazines. However, they were very different in terms of targeted audience, philosophy of education, and the community they created both within and outside of the pages of the magazine. *Shôjo Club* was published for a younger audience who are still in elementary schools and many of the readers lived outside of the urban areas such as Tokyo and Ôsaka. *Shôjo Club* put emphasis on inculcating the "good wife/wise mother" ideology throughout the magazine. Imada argues that the "good wife/wise mother" role model appeared most significantly in *Shôjo Club* (Imada 110). *Shôjo Club* is also notable for its lack of accounts regarding movie and theater stars. In contrast to *Shôjo Club*, *Shôjo no tomo* and *Shôjo gahô* reserved a prominent place for popular celebrities and underplayed the "good wife/wise mother" content.

In sum, the ideal image of women introduced in magazines such as *Shôjo no tomo* and *Shôjo gahô* featured career women rather than those who pursued the "good wife/wise mother" image.[3] As this data indicates, *Shôjo Club* and *Shôjo no tomo* had opposite tendencies. Imada argues that these differences are the result of different targeted audiences. The readers of *Shôjo no Tomo* were typically from a group that Imada calls the new urban middle-class [*toshi shin shûkan sô*], a population that emerged in the process of modernization. According to Imada, this type of new middle-class family was modern and progressive in four ways. First, children were educated solely by their parents, not by the surrounding community or other relatives. Second, they considered that mothers would

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[3] In order to find out what kinds of female figures are introduced as girls' role models, Imada looked into the content pages of many different issues of major *shôjo* magazines (mostly from the first issue until the end of WWII) and counted the number of famous women appearing in those magazines. Here she categorized those women into ten groups: 1. Imperial family or noble women; 2. Elite women; 3. Artists; 4. Celebrities; 5. Athletes; 6. 'Good wife, wise mother' types 7. Dutiful daughters; 8. Working women; 9. Activists; 10. Women in the military. (Imada 110-111)

undertake the responsibility of their children's education. Third, they were the pioneers of couples who planned pregnancies in order to limit the number of children they would have. And fourth, they were devoted to the education of their children, since the careers that adults gained through education inclined them to believe that their children would benefit in the same way (Imada 8). Therefore, *Shôjo no tomo* succeeded by attracting girls from this new type of middle-class family. In contrast, *Shôjo Club* gained most subscribers among all the *shôjo* magazines by going in the opposite direction from other magazines in order to attract more conservative readers who prefer to read serious contents which are tied to the school curriculum (Imada 17-19). In other words, *Shôjo Club* was supported by those outside the new middle-class. However, Imada argues that *Shôjo no tomo* had a larger cultural impact than *Shôjo Club* despite its numbers of subscriptions (Shamoon 48). Through its readers' eager participation, *Shôjo no tomo* developed the community and culture of *shôjo*. For that reason, I will mainly focus on *Shôjo no tomo* for this thesis.

In *Shôjo no tomo*, readers adopted the *shôjo* culture introduced in the magazine and developed it on their own. One of the key characteristics of *shôjo* culture is the language they used for each other. Both in the fiction published in the magazine and letters that readers wrote, *shôjo* women used a language which is often termed *teyodawa-kotoba* [teyodawa-words]. *Teyo* and *dawa* are suffixes girls often appended to the ends of their sentences. One example is the words said by the main character Makiko in *Wasurenagusa* [Forget me not] (1932)*,* written by Yoshiya Nobuko. In this scene, Makiko gives a present to another girl Kazue but she does not accept it, thinking that it would be too much of Makiko to give such a nice present to her. Makiko says, "Sekkaku sashiageta mono, okaeshi ni nareba, watashi kanjô wo gaishiteyo! [If you return the present I give it to you, I will feel

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offended!] (Yoshiya 82)." Honda states that *teyodawa-kotoba* originated from the language that people in Edo used but it is more reasonable to understand this as the hybrid of indigenous Tokyo language as well as the new type of language which was made from those who came from outside Tokyo (Honda 133).

As well as the use of *teyo* and *dawa* at the end of sentences, *shôjo* also made many new words and phrases which they concocted from mixing Western languages such as English and French with Japanese. For example, they used "o-*senchi*" which is derived from the word "sentimental" with the Japanese prefix "o" to add the softer nuance. They used this word as "Sonna ni osenchi ni natte wa dame yo [You should not be that sentimental]." Another example is "*niyaristo*" which is the compound word of "niyaniya [grinning]" and the English suffix –ist to indicate the person. This word means a man who is always grinning and who leaves a negative influence as a result. [4]

Nakahara Jun'ichi and his illustrations

Another key characteristic of *shôjo* culture developed in *Shôjo no tomo* is its pictures of *shôjo* drawn by artists like Nakahara Jun'ichi (1913 - 1983). Jun'ichi is the multitalented artist who drew numbers of pictures of girls from 1930s through 1970s. When he was nineteen, he started his career as an illustrator for *Shôjo no tomo* and soon became the most popular illustrator in that magazine.[5] While he drew pictures of *shôjo* in this

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[4] Jogakusei words and example sentence quoted from the column "*Jogakusei Etosetora*" in Jogaku Techô (Uchiyama 85-87).
[5] Soon after he started working for *Shôjo no tomo*, Jun'ichi drew many pictures for novels, front color pages, and cover pages. He wrote pictures for numbers of novels within *Shôjo no tomo*, including Kawabata Yasunari's *Otome no minato* [Maiden's Harber](1946) and

magazine like other illustrators, Jun'ichi was distinctive from any other artists at that time

for his charismatic drawing and attitude toward beauty.

Cover pages of Shôjo no Tomo, 1937 (*Nakahara Jun'ichi to Shôjo no Tomo* 17)

One of the most important characteristics of Jun'ichi's pictures is the eyes. When

artists and designers who liked Jun'ichi's illustrations, they often mention the eyes of the

girls he depicted. Inoue Shôichi, the Japanese critic, states, Jun'ichi's early illustrations of

girls had significantly big eyes compared to other illustrators such as Takabatake Kashô

(1888 – 1966) and Fukiya Kôji (1898 – 1979) (Inoue *Utsukushiku Ikiru* 30).

Kashiwagi Hiroshi also points out in his article about the size of the eyes of Jun'ichi's

illustrations and states that his drawings looked Western to the readers because of the size

Yoshiya Nobuko's *Chîsaki hanabana* [Small flowers] (1952). By this time, Kawabata
requested the editor to use the illustration of Jun'ichi for his novel. From 1935 January
through 1940 June, Jun'ichi drew overall 66 cover pages for Shôjo no Tomo. Jun'ichi was
indeed the face of Shôjo no Tomo.

of the eyes.   He states that Japanese people formed the opinion that a big eyed girl was pretty and Westernized. According to Kashiwagi, this idealization of big eyed girls as Western and cute started even before Jun'ichi's time, when Natsume Sôseki (1867-1916) mentioned that Westerners have large eyes compared to Japanese eyes. Thus Kashiwagi concludes that girls who enjoyed Jun'ichi's illustrations also had the notion that big eyes are Western and modern (Kashiwagi *Yuriika* 113).

While the big eyes give the impression that they are Western, however, the girls were by no means a realistic portrayal of Western women or girls. While their big eyes may look more Western than the drawings of girls with smaller eyes, their overall facial features still look like the ones of Japanese girls. For example, their small but long nose and tiny mouth conform to the image of a typical Japanese beauty in various forms of drawings and paintings. Then what is it that Jun'ichi depicted in the images of girls?

Fujii Hideyuki states that the girls Jun'ichi illustrates are the reflection of the ideal girl he imagines and dreams. As Fujii explains, those girls Jun'ichi depicts do not exist in real life and instead are the image of girls in "the world of dolls" Jun'ichi imagines. Jun'ichi's girl images look away instead of looking directly to the eyes of the audience, and that is similar to dolls and mannequins, which give the impression that they are unrealistic (Fujiki *Yuriika* 154).

Fujii also explains that the eyes of Jun'ichi's girl illustrations have the power to move people and "absorb" their attention (Fujiki *Yuriika* 155). Takahashi also explains the eyes of Jun'ichi's illustrations function as the door to take the observer into another world of creation where there is the ultimate beauty with the notion of love and death (Takahashi

2). He explains that it is in some way mysterious and magical, as though the world they take in are almost like a labyrinth.

Indeed, Jun'ichi himself explains that the girls he depicts are by no means the portrayal of real Japanese girls. In the first series of "Jogakusei fukusô techo" in *Shôjo no Tomo*, Jun'ichi says, "There is no [real] model for the girls I illustrate, and also my illustration is *jojôga* [lyric illustration] after all. They are different from the real girls. But I think I see the real beauty that only girls have, and I do that more than anyone else" (Jun'ichi *Jogakusei Fukusô Techô*: May 1937).

This unrealistic and pretty image of girls also became the ideal for the readers because that was something they could never have. Tachihara Erika (1937 – present), a writer, says that Jun'ichi's illustration depicts girls who usual teenage girls can never emulate. She says,

> The girl Nakahara Jun'ichi depicts never looked healthy. Their wide opened eyes,
> small and well-shaped nose and lips, neck that is too thin for them to support their
> head, and hands and legs which would not be able to bear the hard work...those girl
> images had the beauty that lively teenage girls would never have. I was so drawn
> into them exactly because they had the beauty I could never have (Tachihara
> *Utsukushiku Ikiru* 23).

Uchiyama Motoi, the chief editor of *Shôjo no tomo*, also describes that Jun'ichi illustrates a girl who does not have a real life. Uchiyama says, "Nakahara-kun's illustration is very different from Yumeji's. There is no notion of women in Nakahara-kun's illustration. What he portrays is a transparent girl. It is the image of a beautiful transparent girl of closed Shôwa teens (1935-45) who is monosex without having life" (Takahashi 54). Here

Uchiyama compares Jun'ichi's illustration with the ones of Takehisa Yumeji(1884 - 1934)

and says Jun'ichi's portrayal of girls does not have the sense of female sexuality. Nakamura

Yûsuke (1978 – present), a contemporary illustrator who is famous for his illustrations of

girls, also notes that Jun'ichi's illustration makes an interesting impression on him because

the gaze of those girls does not seem to be the one of the male artist. Nakamura explains

that the illustration Jun'ichi depicts looks more like something a woman would draw, and

concludes that his aestheticism overcomes the binary of gender, and Jun'ichi really merged

himself into the world of women, becoming one himself (Nakamura *Yuriika* 64). This is

something that Takahashi also mentions. Takahashi explains that Jun'ichi's girl images do

not have the sense of sensuality (Takahasi 2). Jô Natsuko (1902 – 1995), a writer who was

a friend of Jun'ichi, explains that the lack of sensuality makes Jun'ichi's illustration different

from anyone else. She says, "Mr. Nakahara, I think, is very fond of 'cuteness' and what I

mean is that he loves something pure, right, warm, cute, and hates anything opposite to

that. Naturally, his illustration becomes like that, too. The reason why his illustration is so

elegant is probably because of that." (Takahashi 36)

     Jun'ichi's portrayal of girls is thus not the description of real girls but the way to

realize Jun'ichi's own view of aestheticism. Jun'ichi explains that illustration is the

expression of one's feelings and so one does not necessarily have to depict the person in a

realistic manner. He says, "In the case of myself, I portray what I feel, and that means

portraying what I feel about girls as much as I can. They are neither adult not child, and

there is one aspect of girls which only girls of that age have---that may be only one of the

aspects of girls' feelings---but that is what I draw." (Jun'ichi *Utsukushiku Ikiru* 15)

What he describes here about girls' feelings are similar to the comments of other people I introduced above. There is a certain sense of lack of sexuality in Jun'ichi's drawings which denies that girls here are target of the male gaze. What Jun'ichi instead reflect upon those girls are the sense of spiritual beauty without the sense of life. Big eyes of those girls not only give the impression of Westernness and that sense of "Western" is not same as the real depiction of the West but used more as the sense of "the other" on Japanese people's eyes. And as Takahashi says, those eyes function as doors to the other world of Jun'ichi's aestheticism.

While the appearance of girls themselves are unrealistic, however, Jun'ichi depicts their hair styles and dresses in a very realistic manner with a lot of details. Looking at the images of girls Jun'ichi drew for "Jogakusei Fukusô Techô," his own column in *Shôjo no tomo* for example, it is possible to say that the clothes girls wear are realistic enough so that the readers who saw the picture would be able to make their own clothes based on the illustration. In fact, he includes pattern of the dress he illustrates and suggests readers to make his own clothing by themselves. He also describes how to make the same hairstyle as the girl he illustrates with the detailed instruction. These two examples suggest how much Jun'ichi's illustration indeed depict clothes and hairstyles in a very realistic manner. Ozawa examines the contradiction of the unrealistic impression of Jun'ichi's illustration with the very realistic expression of their fashion and styles. Ozawa states, that Jun'ichi as a fashion stylist focuses on the realistic description of clothes despite the impression of the girls themselves in order to give the readers effective and useful ways to express their natural beauty as a girl (Ozawa *Yuriika* 79).

With such a powerful illustrator, *Shôjo no tomo* established an image of *shôjo* who gazes at nowhere in particular with big dreamy eyes while she has also a strong sense of beauty and identity which is unique to her own.

Shôjo community in *Shôjo no tomo*

Another unique characteristic of *Shôjo no tomo* is the community of readers that created through the magazine. Shamoon argues that *Shôjo no tomo* fostered close friendships and feelings of community associated with girls' schools (Shamoon 55). Endô also states from her own experience as a reader that the connection between the readers and editors was very strong in the *Shôjo no tomo* community. Endô claims that this reader-editor communication fared even better after the chief editor changed to Uchiyama Motoi. By the end of the 1930s, communication among readers became the most active, and *Shôjo no tomo* dedicated almost 15% of its content to reader-editor dialogue.[6] This is an impressive number of pages compared to other magazines for both boys and girls.[7]

Shôjo no tomo had two sections for readers' feedback and communication: "Tomo chan Club" and "Midori no heya." "Tomo chan Club" always starts with the chief editor Uchiyama's letter to the readers in which he introduces the contents of that issue of the magazine. He also writes updates that happened since the last issue. Uchiyama writes this letter in a very friendly manner. After that, there is space devoted to sections for regional

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[6] The 1937 issue devoted 51 of the total 340 pages for communication between its readers and editors. Even when the length of the magazine was decreased to around 200 pages in 1941, 27 pages were still used for readers' correspondence (Endô: 2004: 30-31).
[7] For example, Shôjo Club only spent 14 of its 337 pages for readers' communication. The number of readers who appeared in the magazine was as low as 51..

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clubs. Regional clubs are very diverse that include "Kantô kurabu," "Kansai kurabu," "Chôsen kurabu," "Taiwan kurabu," and so on. There was an "Ikoku kurabu [overseas club]" as well. In each club, letters from the readers of each region are introduced, and each letter has Uchiyama's comments affixed (Endô 31).

But these clubs were not limited to correspondences within the magazine. In fact, readers created off-magazine events called "Tomo-chan Kai." These events were organized by the readers, who ran the meetings themselves with the help of editors.[8] This was an opportunity for readers to meet with others in their region, so many girls participated in it.[9]

"Midori no heya" was a page for readers who received awards for their stories, poems, drawings and so forth. Those award winners received special gifts—such as a silver watch— as a prize, and the right to be able to appear in "Midori no heya" was a privilege for them. Their artwork and correspondences with editor Uchiyama were also published in "Midori no heya," and they proudly took leadership within the magazine community. They were also typically older than most of the other readers, so they often took the initiative in organizing each regional "Tomo-chan Kai." Imada states that friendship among girls in "Midori no heya" did not end within the pages of the magazine but continued in their real lives as well. She says that the sense of privilege they acquired

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[8] In each Tomo-chan Kai, participants talked about topics they brought for others to discuss. These typically concerned matters inspired by things introduced in the magazine, or about the behaviors and communications of girls both inside and outside the magazine community. They also performed singing or dancing together. And at the end of the meeting, they would sing the "*Shôjo no tomo* no uta [Song of *Shôjo no tomo*]." (Endô 32, Imada 151)

[9] The biggest meeting was the one held in Tokyo on October 30, 1938. For this Tomo chan club, more than 400 girls attended and celebrated their performances together (Imada 2007: 150).

for being chosen as a member of "Midori no heya" served to bond the girls together. Furthermore, the girls' communication did not end with the exchange of letters but some of them even went on to start publishing private literature magazines [*bungei dôjin zasshi*] by themselves.[10] Thus, *Shôjo no tomo* helped readers' to communicate beyond the magazine and create networks that connected girls through things like off-magazine meetings and self-publishing activities. Imada suggests that "community" is a concept which is strongly associated with a place, so people usually use the word to indicate a group of people who belong to a certain place. She states, however, that the intimate friendship among readers of *Shôjo no tomo* went beyond the pages of the magazine and spread beyond to create what Imada calls a "*shôjo* network" (Imada 153).

When discussing the significance of the network that readers of *Shôjo no tomo* constituted, it is impossible to overemphasize the role that Uchiyama played. He was indeed a very important figure for *Shôjo no tomo*. Uchiyama encouraged readers to organize off-magazine events by themselves, as he believed that girls should not only have opportunities to write and draw, but should also practice independence by assuming leadership and speaking up (Endo 94-96). Then, what kind of person was he?

Uchiyama Motoi was born in Yokohama in 1903 and spent his early childhood in Seoul, Korea. After graduating from Waseda University in 1928, he started his career as an editor in Jitsugyô no Nihonsha, thethat publisher of *Shôjo no tomo*. In 1931, Uchiyama became chief editor of *Shôjo no tomo* and started editing from the 1932 January issue. He communicated with the readers eagerly both inside and outside the magazine community.

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[10] Members of "Midori no Heya" often wrote about their personal communication with each other, including their self-publishing activities.

He often went to the "Tomo chan kai" with other editors and artists when he could, and sometimes looked back on the event and commented upon how the girls behaved in the magazine. He often said good things about the active engagements of the girls to the discussions. He also welcomed readers who stopped by when they visited Tokyo (Endo 32). Uchiyama was a very encouraging figure for girls, believing that self-cultivation and independence should be more emphasized in girls' education.

Uchiyama kept focusing on how girls should take initiative in organizing events and speaking up. He also commented on the girls' innocence as something respectable. "I think you girls are very adorable. When I see your works submitted to *Shôjo no tomo*. I really think that souls of *shôjo* are precious. That is because you girls feel things so simply and think of things so innocently" (Imada 161). His attitude was remarkable at the time when girls' education was still heavily focused on the "good wife, wise mother."[11] Shamoon states that not only did the number of submissions increase under Uchiyama's editorship, but also the contents of their letters changed from an exchange of light jokes into more emotional content such as their struggles within their families, creating a sense of a shared community (Shamoon 52). For one thing, it is because of the attitude of Uchiyama toward

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[11] Endo explains that Uchiyama's policy vis a vis *Shôjo no tomo* was different from the one propagated by the government. For example, he wrote in one of the issues about Germany before the end of war, saying that Germany is influential but not respectable. This is the response when one reader commented that Germany was the strongest country in the world, so that Japan and Germany would win the war. Here, he indicates that Germany was not just a strong country to be respected but a nation that did horrible things that girls should have taken into consideration. He also continued to introduce the readers to different types of great art and literature from all over the world which would be thought as harmful influence under the strict censorship because of the origins of the works. By doing so, he kept encouraging girls to appreciate art and study for themselves (Endo 28).

those girls; he responded to the readers in a kind manner, using a polite language without much orders.

Yoshiya Nobuko, who was the best-known writer of *shôjo* novels, also agreed with Uchiyama's ideas on girls' education. Yoshiya wrote as follows in 1938, "Since education focused too much on the practical side, I think our education lacked culture to lead us become a better person. So, I once wished there were teachers who could treat us as one human being without the gender binary and put 'good wife, wise mothers' policy aside." Thus, the community of readers, editors, and writers in *Shôjo no Tomo* enabled Uchiyama and Yoshiya to implement their beliefs regarding education for girls.

Yoshiya Nobuko as a Reader, Writer, and Pioneer

Yoshiya Nobuko started her professional career as a writer by writing stories for magazines for schoolgirls such as *Shôjo gahô*. Before she began her writing career, Yoshiya was a reader involved in the magazine community. After being influenced by a speech by Nitobe Inazō,[12] she began to think that women should have opportunities to learn and improve themselves, and not meekly succumb to the "good wife, wise mother" Dictum. The

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[12]In Yoshiya's essay, *Watashi no mita hito* [People I saw], Yoshiya talks about the memory of Nitobe Inazō. When Yoshiya was in the first year of Tochigi Girls' Higher School, he came to her school and gave a speech in front of the students. He said, "Women's education in Japan aims for raising good wives and good mothers, but I believe you all should be a good person before you become a good wife or mother. The aim of education should not be creating good wives and good mothers. You all have to learn not to be a good wife and a good mother, but to be a good person." Though the school teachers later told the students not to follow his words, because it conflicted the girls' education curriculum at that time, Nitobe's words left a strong impression on Yoshiya, and that inspired her to pursue a true personhood regardless of her gender.

notion of self-improvement motivated her to write novels specifically for girls and women

to foster discovery of a modern self through intimate and supportive relationships of girls

and women.

In 1910, Yoshiya submitted a short story to a magazine for the first time, and it won

first prize. After that, she began writing stories to submit to a variety of magazines,

including both *shôjo* and *shônen* magazines.[13] Since fraternizing with members of the

opposite sex was considered bad behavior for a girl, Yoshiya's father disapproved of her

doing that like many fathers at that time would do. He also did not think that young

women should write stories at all, even though he himself was fond of composing haiku

(Komashaku 22). Luckily enough, however, Yoshiya was able to find ways to continue

writing despite her father's attitude. But it was still a challenge for her to do so. Under

such a circumstance, the magazine community was the place where Yoshiya could express

herself fully without her father's suppression.

In 1916, she began writing her first series of short stories called *Hana monogatari*

[Flower Tales] in *Shôjo gahô* at the age of twenty. From then on, she wrote many stories

that captured girls' hearts and soon became enormously popular. Her stories had a huge

impact on schoolgirls, so they started to exchange letters and communicates with each

other in the same way Yoshiya's characters would do. As a result, *Hana monogatari*

established the foundation for so-called "Class S" culture. The "S" stands for "Sisterhood"

and Class-S novels depict platonic same-sex love among schoolgirls. This genre achieved

its peak in the 1930s, by which time Yoshiya had become one of the wealthiest people in

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[13] In Komashaku Yumi's *Kakure feminisuto*, she writes that Yoshiya submitted her stories
to magazines such as "*Shôjo sekai*," "*Shôjo kai*," "*Bungaku sekai*" and "*Shinchô.*"

Japan, with an annual income more than that of the ministers of state (Suzuki 34). In

addition, many of her stories were adapted into movies and dramas and are enjoyed even

today.[14] Her novels also influenced many people of later generations, such as Kanai

Mieko[15] and Takemoto Nobara.[16] Along with her novels and her writing career, Yoshiya as

a celebrity recounted how she contributed to women's liberation. In most of her

photographs, Yoshiya appeared in the style of the so-called Modern Girl. According to

Komashaku, Yoshiya cut her hair short as she emerged as a professional writer. She kept

her hair style, which was proudly symbolic of her independent life, until she died in 1972.

Yoshiya never married; rather, she adopted her female partner Chiyo[17], with whom she

lived for the rest of her life. Moreover, because of her sociable personality, she was often

invited to meet with celebrities to interview them and write columns about them.[18]

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[14] For example, Yoshiya's *That Road, This Road* [Ano michi kono michi] was adapted into a TV drama series twice, and the second one was broadcast in 2005. Today, the name of Yoshiya Nobuko and "S" culture has again receive attention thanks to Takimoto Nobara, a Japanese essayist who is a big fan of Yoshiya and her comic version of *Flower Tales*.

[15] According to Aoyama, Kanai Mieko intentionally uses many motifs from Yoshiya's *Flower Tales* in her novel *Indian Summer* (Aoyama 60).

[16] Takimoto Nobara writes quite a few columns on "S" culture and often mentions Yoshiya Nobuko. In the article entitled, "Yoshiya Nobuko ga kaita 'esu' naru tokimeki: Otome tachi dake ga shitteiru kizuna no musubikata," [Heart throbbing "S" that Yoshiya Nobuko wrote: The way for strong bonds that maidens know] he explains how S culture is something that is not controlled by men, but is rather solely for young women. He also says that the spirit of S continues today, even though the term itself is no longer used (Takemoto 45).

[17] According to Komashaku, Yoshiya met Monma Chiyo in 1923, and they began living together three years after that. Chiyo was a mathematics teacher when she met Yoshiya, but given how busy Yoshiya was, she quit her job and became a housewife as well as Yoshiya's private secretary. At the moment when Yoshiya made a decision to live with Chiyo, she decided to devote herself to writing popular literature for women (Komashaku 231-233).

[18] People Yoshiya worked with include sport players, musicians, nuns and monks, and politicians and people in the army.

Although Yoshiya achieved celebrity status, her novels were far from gaining serious literary recognition, and she was not held in high esteem during her lifetime. Since she wrote novels categorized as popular literature and largely oriented to a female readership, these were not considered on the same level as so-called pure-literature (*jun bungaku*). In fact, Nagai Kafû, one of the leading writers at that time, wrote about Yoshiya in his journal *Danchōtei nikki*. Here, he refers to "this person called Yoshiya Nobuko [*Yoshiya Nobuko naru mono*]," which is by no means respectful to her, and goes on to relate an episode that is different from what actually happened. He writes that it was Yoshiya who asked him to take a picture together, but actually, they did so just because they met by accident and the photographer who was with Yoshiya suggested taking their picture. Yoshiya later mentions in an essay that his version of the story was not true and that Kafû changed it to make himself appear superior to her.[19] Not only Kafû, but other male writers and critics harshly criticized Yoshiya's novels. Kobayashi Hideo, for example, criticized her novel *Female Friendship* [*Onna no yûjô*] as boring, childish, and exasperating. [20]

Despite such an attitude toward Yoshiya's works as well as her philosophy of education for girls, *Shôjo no tomo* editor Uchiyama was the one who understood her and agreed upon her opinions. In fact, many writers and artists who worked for *shôjo* magazines were working toward the same goal under the supervision of Uchiyama. Reflecting on her ideas on how girls should learn to acquire modern selfhood, Yoshiya

[19] In *Watashi no Mita hito*[People I saw], Yoshiya writes about this episode along with how Kafū wrote in his diary. She showed some resentment that Kafū wrote her as "Yoshiya Nobuko toka iu mono" and ends her essay by pointing out how Kafū dramatized his own life by adding some things that were not true on his biography

[20] In *Kakure Feminist* Komashaku points out that Kobayashi intentionally used the word "childish" and "for children" to indicate women to look down upon female readers (Komashaku 98).

wrote one long story called *Wasurenagusa* [include translation]. This story was serialized in *Shôjo no tomo* from April through December of 1932. Here Yoshiya portrays female characters whom readers can easily identify with, for each character has her own problems and struggles. Instead of being pessimistic about the given situation, however, Yoshiya makes the story hopeful by using female friendship as a vehicle for the girls to learn from each other.

Female Friendship and Sisterhood in *Wasurenagusa*

Wasurenagusa is Yoshiya's first long Class-S fiction and it is one of her best-known works. In this story, Yoshiya depicts a love triangle among three girls who go to a girls' higher school in Tokyo: Aiba Yôko, Saeki Kazue, and Yuge Makiko. They are all in the third grade of the girls' higher school, but they have not communicated with each other before the story starts. As a prologue, the narrator explains that there are two major coteries in this girls' high school: *nanpa* [the 'soft' group] and *kôha* [the 'hard' group]. *Nanpa* indicates softness or flirtation. This group of girls are those who follow the lastest trend of *shôjo* culture; They are eager to engage in female-female romance and they are into movies and popular theater such as the Takarazuka and Shôchiku revues. According to the narrator, one third of the school population is categorized as *nanpa*. In contrast, *kôha* girls remain hard and diligent without any intention to engage in romance or after-school entertainment. Rather, their goal at school is to memorize every single thing written in the textbooks. Their attitude toward school and study is indeed very serious so that they give a impression that they are hard as the word *kôha* indicates. Many of them actually take pride

in academic success so that they would be able to serve the country. *Kôha* girls also occupy one-third of the school population. In between these two camps there is a "neutral zone" where the remaining third of the girls belong. The narrator casts these girls as liberals, who occasionally enjoy theaters and movies like *nanpa* people but also study hard for exams like *kôha*. For the most part, these are ordinary girls. Among them, though, are several who are called "individualists." They prefer solitude and are sometimes hard to deal with because of their unique characteristics.

Yôko is a typical *nanpa*— a beautiful girl from a very rich family who lives in a Western-style house. People call her "Cleopatra" because she is the queen of the *nanpa* camp. She also likes everything modern and Western. In this story, Yôko is the one who initially tries to start an S relationship with another main character Makiko. Kazue, on the other hand, is typical of the *kôha* camp. She is known as boss of the *kôha* and is not interested in romance; the only thing she seems to care about is succeeding in school. Because of her serious attitude toward everything she does, *nanpa* girls call her a "robot." Makiko is one of the individualists. She has an attractive androgynous look with tanned skin, thick eyebrows, and big cold eyes. Her serious but attractive looks make people nervous and uneasy, so other girls did not have the courage to create any nicknames for her. Makiko is therefore just called "Yuge-san" by most of them.

The story starts with the scene where Makiko talks to Kazue to ask if she could copy her notebooks for the classes she was absent from and Yôko sees that. Since it is not common for girls like Makiko to talk with anyone, Yôko becomes curious and talks to Makiko after she borrows notebooks from Kazue. Then, out of curiosity, Yôko invites Makiko to come to her birthday party, saying that Makiko "may" come if she really wants to.

Despite Yôko's arrogant attitude, however, Makiko plainly says she would not go. Yôko is furious about this, since she has never failed to get anything she wanted. But Makiko's attitude makes Yôko want to attract Makiko. In the meantime, Makiko goes home and talks to her mother about Yôko's invitation to her birthday party. When Makiko tells her that, her father overhears the conversation and tells Makiko to attend the party to make Yôko happy because Yôko's father is a donor of Makiko's father's laboratory. Since her father is a workaholic professor who thinks of Makiko as no more than a future "good wife and wise mother," he does not care much about how Makiko thinks and she feels rebellious against him. Her sick mother understands both her husband and daughter well, so she kindly suggests that Makiko go to the birthday party. With her mother's suggestion, Makiko ends up going to the party despite her initial refusal.

Not knowing the background details, Yôko is happy about Makiko's appearance at her birthday party and takes her everywhere she goes. As soon as Makiko arrives, Yôko takes Makiko into her bedroom to put her make up on and dress her in pajamas which look like a Spanish man's outfit. Makiko looks astonishingly beautiful, reminiscent of a male-role actress of Takarazuka, and Makiko is surprised to see herself in the mirror and feels as though she is living in a dream. Yôko shows Makiko to all the party guests as though she is her toy, and they then go to the back yard where Yôko asks Makiko if she is willing to be her good friend. But as soon as Yôko asks this, Makiko notices Kazue walking along the street outside the house. The three girls recognize each other with Makiko's voice, and Yôko laughs at Kazue. After Kazue left without saying anything, Makiko feels embarrassed that Kazue saw her with Yôko.

After the party, Makiko decides to go out shopping to buy a belated birthday present for Yôko as well as the thank you gift for Kazue, for her notebooks. In the department store, she purchases a little silver candy case for Yôko and a plain inkstand for Kazue.[21] Makiko brings both of the presents on the next school day to give to Yôko and Kazue. When she gives the candy case to Yôko, however, Yôko rejects it and takes the inkstand instead, since she wants something which reminds her of Makiko. Makiko cannot say no to Yôko's arrogant but appealing behavior, so she ends up giving the fancy candy case to Kazue. This makes Kazue wonder if there is any special meaning beyond the thank-you gift.

Yôko continues to attract Makiko, and Makiko becomes infatuated with Yôko even though Yôko's attitude is often selfish and oppressive. For Makiko, Yôko opens up a dream-like world she has never experienced. So Yôko's seduction appeals to Makiko so much, especially after her mother's death when she desperately needs some escape from harsh reality. Yôko is like a drug that eases Makiko's pain.

Makiko's relationship with Yôko ends suddenly, however. Thanks to Kazue, Makiko realizes that it is not just her who is feeling sad about her mother's death: her little brother Wataru. One day, he becomes lost and gets hit by a car. Though only slightly touched, Wataru falls to the ground. Kazue and her younger siblings happened to witness the accident and take Wataru home. When Makiko sees Kazue bringing Wataru back, she feels embarrassed for what she has done to Wataru, unlike Kazue's sisterly care for her brother

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[21] During the time of *Wasurenagusa*, Western sweets like candies were not commonly eaten and both candies and candy cases were luxury goods for girls from ordinary middle-class families such as Makiko's and Kazue's. Since Yôko is from a rich family, Makiko thinks it would be suitable for her. But Makiko ends up spending most of the money she got from her mother for the gift for Yôko. This indicates how expensive it was compared to the inkstand she buys for Kazue.

and sister. Makiko then decides to end the friendship with Yôko in order to stop escaping

from reality and face the loss of her mother with her brother. Yôko becomes furious about

Makiko's letter to her and Makiko's decision to choose Kazue over her. After that, Yôko

disappears from school for a long time due to her sickness and realizes that she does not

actually have any real friends who visit her or even care about her. Finally, Yôko learns

that spiritual connection is more important than the superficial attractions she has given to

Makiko. Towards the end of the novel, Yôko writes a letter to Kazue to confess her past

mistakes. She writes,

> ” Dear Kazue, I envy you. I cannot help thinking that you are the happiest person in
>
> the whole world. Finally, I could not make "friends" with *that person.* And I deserve
>
> that. I tried to get *her* in a wrong way. How arrogant and prideful I was! How
>
> thankful it was for me that sickness broke my arrogance, ostentation, and many
>
> other external 'shells.' I feel helpless and refreshed at the same time, for abandoning
>
> everything. I will continue my life holding only the pitiful love I have for my own."
>
> (Yoshiya 209)[22]

Then, Yôko asks Kazue to forgive her and help her find the way out. Kazue shows this letter

to Makiko and, in the final analysis, the three girls become good friends.

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[22] In the original version, the quote goes as follows.
「一枝様、私は貴女が羨ましい、今の私には貴女が世界中で一番幸福な方に思えてなら
ない。ついにあの方のお友達になり得なかった私、でも当たり前なのです。間違った方
法で私はあの方を獲ようとしました。驕慢な思い上がった私、病気が私の驕慢や虚飾
や、その他のいろいろの殻を打ち砕いてしまってくれたことはなんという有難いことだ
ったでしょう。私はなにもかもすててしまったようなよりどころの無さと、そして清々
しさを一緒に感じます。私は自分の可哀そうな愛情だけをそうっと抱いてこれから生き
てまいります」

Throughout the story, Yoshiya depicts the inner changes that occur to the three girls because of the love triangle. Yôko does not get the S partner she had initially wished. Her character at first is depicted as very oppressive. When she invites Makiko to her birthday party, for example, Yoshiya writes, "Yôko approaches [Makiko] with a spoiled bourgeois attitude, as though she never gives up on what she starts no matter what others would think" (Yoshiya 18). Yôko is also depicted as someone who is not at all afraid to break the rules since she thinks everything she does will be approved. She often "buys" people with expensive items when she wants attention or some help from others. While her attitude is not at all agreeable to Makiko, this still makes Yôko dangerously attractive. At the end, however, Yôko realizes that "buying" people does not gain her any real friendship. By depicting how she fails to "get" Makiko, Yoshiya suggests that people's feelings and emotions are not something that can be readily obtained with superficial attractions such as one's appearance, expensive gifts, and excitement. But at the same time, Yoshiya also leaves hope for the readers by portraying Yôko finding real friendship after growing up. Therefore, Yoko's lesson teaches us to stop pursuing exterior beauty and attraction because internal beauty and maturity are more important.

As for the communication between Makiko and Kazue, Yoshiya highlights how they become good friends through understanding each other from within. Makiko and Kazue both struggle with their role as sisters who take care of younger siblings. They both feel dilemma because of their role as older sister even though they have their own needs and wants as adolescent girls. For Makiko, Kazue is the one who brings her back to reality, which she had tried to escape. Through the way Kazue treats her younger brother and sister, Makiko learns the importance of supporting each other in their hardship. After

Makiko meets Kazue with her siblings and sees her sisterly love for them, she thinks, "Ah, I too have to become a good older sister like Kazue. If I devote myself to being a loving sister, Father's heart would also soften and he would become a good father like the face he shows to Kazue . . ." (Yoshiya 203).

Before he talks with Kazue, Makiko's father thinks Wataru should become stronger and inherit his laboratory in the future even though Wataru has a sensitive heart by nature. But after he talks with Kazue and her siblings, Makiko's father says that Wataru can keep on playing the piano. He even starts to accept that Wataru as a boy with a sensitive heart and musical talent, so it is better for him to pursue his passion to play the piano rather than trying to become a professor like himself. After hearing what her father says, Makiko realizes that even her conservative father changes his attitude when he talks with Kazue. Kazue's appearance to her family thus teaches Makiko that the caring heart brings about a change in people's attitude. Makiko learns that her family will change for the better if she cares about them with a loving heart.

While Kazue teaches Makiko such an important lesson, Makiko also gives what is needed for Kazue. For Kazue, Makiko serves as a key to open up her heart. Through the communication with Makiko, Kazue is able to gradually open her heart and reveal her inner beauty like Makiko finds in Kazue. The narrator describes Kazue as a girl who becomes very serious about everything, including her friendship. Under her plain face, Kazue has a very innocent heart who takes everything seriously and passionately (Yoshiya 92). Ironically, people call Kazue a "robot" without looking her true nature. As the narrator says, "those who are called a 'robot' by others are indeed ones who, despite their impression on the surface, have passions and deep thoughts within themselves more than

anyone else" (Yoshiya 92). As this description says, Kazue is a girl who is not easily

understood by others and she is often ridiculed because of her devotion to academic

success. At the beginning of the story, Kazue is described as someone who is too serious to

freely accept another's kindness. In fact, she almost returns the thank-you gift Makiko

gives to her. Nonetheless, Makiko makes Kazue accept her gift, which later serves as a key

to bring them together.   Kazue teaches Makiko what she needs to learn in order to become

a good sister, but Makiko also teaches something important to Kazue. That is, to accept

another's kindness and solicitude.   By receiving, Kazue is finally able to give back to

Makiko.

In comparison to the friendship between Kazue and Makiko, Yôko and Makiko's

relationship is based upon the power relationship by which Yôko in effect "owns" Makiko.

Before the birthday party, Yôko writes in her diary, "M.Y. My biggest interest right now is to

conquer her completely. I will work hard and surely succeed" (Yoshiya 27). For Yôko,

Makiko is just a target of her desire to get everything she wishes. In other words, Yôko's

target for an S relationship happens to be Makiko because Makiko is the first person to

have rejected her. In order to fully utilize her charm as a beautiful girl, then, Yôko brings

Makiko into her own world and dresses her in male costumes to make Makiko play a

masculine role for Yôko. After Yoko first dresses Makiko in a Western outfit which make

her look like one of the male-role actresses of Takarazuka, she says, "Wow, you look like a

beautiful boy! Have a look at yourself!" (Yoshiya 43).[23]

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[23] Here, Yôko speaks in a typical *teyodawa kotoba*. Original quote in written as follows.
「まあ、思ったよりもっと綺麗な美少年に見えてよ！それご覧なさい！」

After that, Yôko shows Makiko to other people as though proudly displaying her own dress-up doll. While embarrassed about that, Makiko also feels as though she has found another side of herself. Makiko's attitude here indicates that she is able to play both male and female roles, on account of her androgynous features. By interacting with Yôko, Makiko is enabled to play a male role. Yôko's attitude toward Makiko continues the same way until Makiko chooses Kazue. For example, Yôko takes Makiko to the clothing store to order Western clothing for her. Yôko brings Makiko a new possibility to play a role of a beautiful boy, like a Takarazuka star. In other words, the S romance Yôko brings to Makiko is based on a heteronormative understanding of a couple despite their physical sex.

When discussing heterosexual relationships as compared to homosexual ones, Saitô Kimiko says that they are different in terms of the roles each person plays in her article "Desires in Subtext: Gender, Fandom, and Women's Male-Male Homoerotic Parodies in Contemporary Japan." She states, "the clear role divisions formulate two different viewpoints of the subject and object of love" (Saitô 185). It is possible to apply her argument in the case of Yôko and Makiko since their relationship creates the distinction between the subject and the object of love. Yôko becomes the subject of love and makes Makiko into her object of love by cross-dressing Makiko. In other words, heterosexualization of the S relationship with Makiko is a way for Yôko to "conquer her," showing her power over Makiko. But as Makiko explains Yôko's charm as a "drug" to forget her essential sadness, the world Yôko creates is, after all, a mere fantasy for Makiko (Yoshiya 149).

Then what of the friendship between Kazue and Makiko? As I explained earlier, Kazue teaches Makiko to love others with a kind heart while Makiko teaches her to accept

other's feelings. It is thus possible to argue that their friendship is predicated upon an equal relationship, in which Makiko and Kazue help each other to overcome their problems. The key characteristic of these two girls' friendship is that they both learn from each other. And most importantly, they are both attracted to each other because of they are both in a similar situation when they are to love their siblings as an older sister. While they face the struggles because of their gender, they do not try to play a role of a male child both in their families and the relationship between Makiko and Kazue themselves.   In other words, neither Makiko nor Kazue tries to play a male role in order to sustain their friendship. Their identity as a girl and sister play an important role to connect the two, and through their friendship, they learn to find a better way to live their lives as a sister and a girl. Therefore, their attitude toward each other suggests that female-female friendships they try to pursue are something that each person can stand up on their own without becoming the other person's object of desire.

Comparing Makiko's relationship to Yoko with the one she has with Kazue, I suggest that Yoshiya portrays ideal female-female relationship as something not based upon the the binary between the subject and object of love as Saitô suggests (Saitô 185). In other words, I argue that *Wasurenagusa* is a story for female readers to learn to cultivate themselves as young women and create an equal relationship which help them overcome their struggles they have. This story suggests that female-female relationships develop not because of the superficial tricks but by searching within. It is also important to note that matching of an S couple is not based on binaries such as subject and object, male and female, and controlling and controlled.

Rejecting Male Authority, Welcoming Ideal Men

One thing that is important to mention here is the rejection of male authority in *shôjo* fiction such as *Wasurenagusa* as well as in the actual *shôjo* community. In the magazine community, Uchiyama and some other artists were male, but those male editors and artists followed the communication manner which girls practiced. Rather than taking the initiative or making rules for girls to follow, they served rather as facilitators. Interestingly enough, other male figures who would threaten the harmony created by girls were rejected from the community. For example, Uchiyama noted that *Shôjo no tomo* would not accept letters submitted by boys in the 1916 issue (Imada 162). Compared to the other magazines such as *Nisshô posuto*, a *shônen* magazine from the same time, it was highly uncommon to prevent a given gender from participating.   In fact, it is apparent that some girls participated in the community of *Nisshô posuto* from the fact that some readers use girly pen names and languages.

In the same sense that *Shôjo no tomo* avoided the interference of male critics and readers, female friends' circles that appear in Yoshiya's early novels also have a tendency for authoritative male figures are either absent or rejected. In the case of *Wasurenagusa*, Makiko's father is portrayed as a very conservative man and Makiko feels rebellious towards him. In stories such as *Flower Tales*, the whole community existssolely for girls. In other words, *Flower Tales* essentially excludes males. While Yoshiya rejects male authority , she portrays androgynous male characters as "ideal men." Yoshiya's version of "ideal men" includes the little brother in *Wasurenagusa*, who has a sensitive understanding of art and music. Also, a male protagonist in *Atakake no Hitobito* with a developmental disability is

described as an innocent, gentle person who looks at the female character's kind heart under her appearance and social role.

Then, what can be understood from the elimination of male authority figures? And what about the case for Yoshiya's definition of ideal man? By excluding men in her story, what becomes possible to explore? And what is gained by such a move? One way of understanding this is by arguing that girls tried to protect themselves from being interfered with by those who may oppose their way of establishing their selfhood and an equal relationship with their S partners. As I mentioned earlier, the heteronormative relationship Yoko seeks with Makiko does not last long. By ending the story with the coupling of Makiko and Kazue, I argue that Yoshiya highlights the fragility of relationships based on hierarchy and unequal power relations. Though Makiko finally gets over Yôko to pursue her friendship with Kazue, Makiko's weakness allows her to repeatedly fall for Yôko. When Makiko cannot stand up against Yôko, she calls herself "a weak child" and feels sad and embarrassed (Yoshiya 149). Here, Yoshiya underscores the contradiction between what Makiko thinks and actually does. In the process of development where she is placed in between different positions such as daughter, sister and a female student, Makiko is portrayed as an adolescent girl who is vulnerable enough to fall for what she does not wish to. In the same way, Makiko feels rebellious against her father, but does not speak out against him or do anything to make the situation better because she believes that her father is the ultimate authority within her family (Yoshiya 69). By portraying Makiko as a girl who contradicts herself, I argue that Yoshiya depicts the sensitive stage of adolescent girls who do not have power to shake off what is easier and attractive even though they know they do not want to.

Actually, Makiko's feelings toward her father are a mixture of sadness and anger for not being loved as she is. Yoshiya writes,

Her professor father looked at his son as a reliable successor of his job as a

professor, but for Makiko, it seemed as though he saw her as "excessive," someone

not worth considering because she was a girl.

Because Makiko fully understood his feelings, she could not approach him

directly. The only thing she could do was to become defiant and glare at him with a

cold expression.

There is this one unhappy girl who is not loved by her father and who cannot

love him back. Only her mother was pleased by her success in school. For her

father, who elevated men and denigrated women [*danson johi*], her life at the girls'

school meant nothing. (Yoshiya 22)[24]

Her father's attitude makes Makiko feel as though she is not worth anything, and she is

secretly hurt when she throws a cold look at her father. By explaining what is behind

Makiko's reaction to her father, Yoshiya makes it possible to highlight the vulnerability of

teenage girls like Makiko. In the case of *Wasurenagusa*, Yoshiya does not exactly demonize

the father; rather, she depicts how he transforms into a more gentle and understanding

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[24] In the original version, the quote goes as follows.

　父の博士には男の子は頼もしい自分の後継学者として眼中にあるが、長女の牧子は女の子なるが故に、どうでもよいよけいな子のような感じを持っているらしかった。

　牧子はその父の気持がよくわかっているので、自分もまた父に少しも甘えていけず、むしろ白い眼を父に向けて、反抗し勝ちの娘となってゆくのを、どうしようもなかった。

　父に愛されず、又自分も父を愛し得ぬ不幸な娘がそこに一人あった。牧子の成績のいいのを喜ぶのは母だけだった。男尊女卑者の父には要するに女の子の学校のことなど、どうでもよかったのである。

person after his wife's death. But this also suggests that Makiko's father has to turn into

an "ideal man" in order for girls like Makiko to find a better future. Here I argue that

Yoshiya has presented a veiled critique of male hegemony in Japanese society—perhaps

calling on men to rethink their authoritarian privileges and biases.

While men with authoritative power are eliminated, "ideal men" are welcomed in

the *shôjo* community as well as the world of *shôjo* novels. Komashaku states that the

pursuit of "ideal men" is the biggest theme of Yoshiya's novels along with the female

friendship. Komashaku argues that "ideal men" do not exist in reality.   Instead of

despairing over that, however, Komashaku argues that Yoshiya instead depicts men who

are outside of the category of "normal men," such as a man with a developmental disability

and a subordinate little brother (Komashaku 197-198). Though it is not quite accurate to

say they do not exist in real life, insofar as people like Uchiyama and Nakahara actually

served for girls as "ideal men," I agree that they are placed outside the category of "normal

men."

Why, then, did girls need those "ideal men" while they pursued equal relationships

without playing into the male-female binary? I argue that it is possible to apply Judith

Butler's notion of the intelligibility of genders to point out that *shôjo* needed the

imprimatur of "ideal men" in order to make their identity as *shôjo* intelligible.

Butler explains "intelligible" genders as those which institute and maintain relations

of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice, and desire. Butler says,

> Inasmuch as "identity" is assured through the stabilizing concepts of sex, gender,
>
> and sexuality, the very notion of "the person" is called into question by the cultural
>
> emergence of those "incoherent" or "discontinuous" gendered beings who appear to

be persons but who fail to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility

by which persons are defined. (Butler *Gender Trouble* 17)

In other words, certain kinds of identities cannot exist as "intelligible" without following

coherent and expected gender norms, which are based on the oppositions between

"feminine" and "masculine." Reflecting on the feminine characteristics of *shôjo*, for

example, Imada argues that girls needed to act feminine and naïve in order to get approval

from their male authority figures—in this case, the chief editor Uchiyama, who served as

their patriarchal guardian. Imada says,

> This chief editor Uchiyama Motoi, who is an adult male, holds power over those who
>
> are juvenile and female. But at the same time, he is a person who can protect them
>
> since he understood them quite well. Therefore, their relationship can never be
>
> equal. The 'girls' are always reminded that they are [subservient] children and
>
> female vis a vis "the other," who is totally different from themselves. Based upon
>
> such a binary, or in order to gain the necessary protection from him, [girls would]
>
> appeal to him that they are girls and are different from himself. In other words, they
>
> were required to behave in a childish and 'girly' manner and use the language to
>
> show how different they are from Uchiyama himself. (Imada 148)[25]

Ironically enough, the community of *shôjo* engaged in egalitarian relationships is made

possible with the approval of the opposite gender—namely, Uchiyama Motoi and other

male artists. In other words, girls were able to engage in equal homosocial relationships

because of Uchiyama, the dominant "other" in their world.   Such a juxtaposition of

egalitarian community and hierarchy is one significant characteristic of the *shôjo*

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[25] Translated by the author

community. The same juxtaposition is seen in the story of *Wasurenagusa*, with the existence of Makiko's father, who later becomes an "ideal man."

This juxtaposition also tells us about the contradiction of homosociality and homoeroticism of girls in this community. In Butler's argument, one's sexuality is also made intelligible with the existence of the opposite sex. Does that mean that girls' homosocial friendships without any sexual activity are accepted with the help of Uchiyama, a person of the opposite sex? Shamoon states that homosexual acts or desires did not necessarily indicate a homosexual identity through the 1920s and 1930s (Shamoon 34). Shamoon also notes, "Whereas American feminist scholars such as [Pat] Robertson equate female homosexuality with rebellion against the patriarchy, recent studies of girls' culture by Imada Erika, Inagaki Kyōko, and Watanabe Shūko all treat homosocial and homosexual elements of girls' culture as normative, not subversive" (Shamoon 35) By comparing the case of *shôjo* with male-male homosociality, it is possible to understand that such a contradiction of gender and sexuality of *shôjo* lies in the issue of modernization.

Homosocial Friendship and Modern Love Ideology

In *Two-Timing Modernity: Homosocial Narrative in Modern Japanese Fiction*, Keith Vincent talks about male-male relationships in twentieth century Japan. He brings the idea of a "two-timing" quality of Japanese sexual modernity by reading the novels in between the categories of homosocial and the homoerotic. Vincent explains the meaning of "two-timing modernity" as follows:

By Japan's "two-timing modernity" I mean the way in which male-male sexuality

was both relegated to and simultaneously preserved within the past, both on the

level of national history and on the level of the individual. Thus, while it was true

that by the early twentieth century in Japan the influences of European sexology and

"enlightened" modernization had colluded to pathologize and condemn male-male

sexuality, it was also true that its full disqualification was prevented by the

persistent and relatively recent memory of a cultural tradition of male-male love,

celebrated in literature and in full collusion with the premodern patriarchy.

(Vincent 24)

While *nanshoku* [male love] or *shudō* [the 'way of boys'], which flourished in the Edo

period, faded away with the advent of Meiji modernity, it still remained as memories that

evoked a certain sense of nostalgia. When Western sexology came to Japan and began to be

studied, people accepted the notion of heterosexual love [*ren'ai*] as the ideal relationship

for men and women. At that time, heterosexual love was considered   to help one gain

modern self-identity.[26] With the opening to Western-style romantic love, Japan began

accepting heteronormativity as a way to go about achieving a modern society. As Vincent

mentions, male-male love evokes the nostalgia of the past of the individual, in the period of

adolescence under a society moving toward modernization. In modern society, engaging in

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[26] Suzuki says, "Since the mid-nineteenth century, love had been viewed as a Western ideal
with which to measure individual and national advancements. This is not to say that in
Japan there were no expressions of physical and emotional attachment in human
relationships prior to its opening to the West, but this new understanding of love,
associated with Christianity, was a radical departure from the Confucian ideals of
traditional Japanese society. Heterosexual romantic love in particular quickly became
valued, in secular terms, as a necessary experience for the modern Japanese self." (Suzuki
3)

a male-male relationship was not considered manly and was thus something to be avoided.

Not only that, the structure of male-male sexuality was associated with the "feudal" past,

which conflicts with the notion of progress that modern society valued (Vincent 34). Thus,

as the modern literature after Meiji praised heterosexual romance more, male-male love

became the production of the past.

In the Edo period, literary narrative usually focused on stories of amorous heroes,

which depicted the exterior landscape of the characters rather than the interior description

of an individual psyche. After the Meiji period and beyond, however, the novel was

elevated from a commercialized entertainment to a "civilized" genre, which changed the

subject of sex from the matter of action to discourse (Vincent 17). Instead of expressing the

act of male-male love, modern Japanese literature used the narrative discourse of

homosocial relationship to establish the connection between men. Thus, while the

narrative structure and discourse of modern Japanese are modern, and follow the

heteronormative path which symbolizes modernization, they also reify the past by

instantiating male-male love in a different way: homosocial relationships of men. Novels

which depict heterosexual romance are modern, moving toward the future at the same

time they connote the notion of the past by expressing male-male love through homosocial

relationships. This is how Vincent explains the "two-timing" quality of modern Japanese

literature.

What, then, can be said about relationships between women? In *Becoming Modern

Women*, Michiko Suzuki introduces the term "modern love ideology" to refer to love that

consists of both spiritual and sexual love of women. In addition, she includes the notion

that love is intrinsic to female self-development and the discovery of a woman's true self

(Suzuki 13). Suzuki states that during the Meiji and Taishō periods, people began

discussing the platonic relationship between two adolescent women. Suzuki explains how

female love was considered at the time of modernization as follows:

> This ideal process was conceptualized as an evolutionary trajectory. The girl would
>
> first experience "innocent" same-sex love romance; then, as she matured, she would
>
> move on to "real" (heterosexual) love, to be consummated in a love-based marriage;
>
> finally, she would become a mother and attain maternal love, the highest love of all.
>
> (Suzuki 3)

According to modern sexology, it was normal and ideal for girls to experience same-sex

love in a platonic way. As they grew older, they began to experience both the sexual and

spiritual aspects of love as heterosexual love. Through the process of love [*ai* or *ren'ai*],

women were able to cultivate their interiority to attain true selfhood [*jiga*]. Thus, the idea

of love was critical in the articulation of the process of modernization for women, although

it is not of course the only means they perceived. Therefore, female-female love was

associated with modernization, in contrast to male-male love, and it conveyed the sense

that love would awaken women's inner self and would evolve endlessly into the future.[27]

At the same time, however, women were under the heteronormative discourse

where the "present" modern Japan followed. While adolescent female-female love was

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[27]Suzuki introduces and explains Hiratsuka Raichō's idea of women's development. She
says, "Hiratsuka describes 'the women of today' as barely sentient beings 'just newly
awakened from a state . . . of infancy,' who need to 'move forward' resolutely with 'an
attitude that focuses on the self' (shugateki taidô). She comments that she does not think
the insistence on the 'self ' should always be the ultimate goal for a woman's journey
forward, but she is convinced that for now it is a crucial stage in life and a step that must be
taken for 'becoming a true person' (hontô no mono ni naru koto). Although 'men' (danshi)
are considered 'human beings' (hito), 'women' (onna) are still considered inferior. It is thus
of the utmost importance for women to achieve true personhood" (Suzuki 5).

more or less accepted by society as a natural growth process, the understanding of it was entirely based on heteronormative discourse. In other words, same-sex love between young women was thought to be the rehearsal of "real" heterosexual love. As Suzuki says, "The young virgin was typically seen as a sexual tabula rasa, without desire until first incited by a man" (Suzuki 26). Female-female love in youth was expected to be strictly platonic and pure. As mentioned earlier, modern love ideology entails the fusion of both spiritual and sexual love. In that sense, female-female love could not be a completed form of love by itself. Thus, girls were expected to enter into heterosexual normality once they stepped into adulthood.

Because same-sex love was explained and understood only in terms of the human developmental process, highlighting youth as a transitional state before entering full maturity, practice of this kind of love among adults was considered to be abnormal. Female-female relationships among adult women which involve sexual practice were called *ome*, and thought to be practiced by so-called "inverts" [*seiteki tentōsha*] who possessed an "inverted" masculine nature. Because these cross-gendered masculine female "inverts" were a threat to social stability, which was based on the dominant male nature, this *ome* relationship was a taboo.[28]   In short, adolescent female-female love was part of the developmental continuum, which is in a way the same as male-male love.

However, women's same-sex relationships were carried over even after they started to have sexual relations with men. Suzuki states, "Just as male-male love in literature is often articulated through homosociality, female same-sex love can be expressed as an

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[28] Suzuki states, "adult same-sex love was considered an un- natural deviation from the proper trajectory of maturity, a failure to enter correctly into heterosexual normality (Suzuki 2009: 27)."

intense friendship that endures despite (or because of) experiences of marriage and motherhood" (Suzuki 60). That is to say, female-female love changes its form into intimate friendship after the transition of the developmental continuum. The system of heterosexual love itself was a product of modernization, allowing both men and women to develop their true self. And within such a discourse, women followed the heteronormative present to "modern love ideology" by consummating their sexual relationship with a man. And those women who engaged in heterosexual relationships continued their same-sex love as a homosocial relationship to fill what was missing for them in their marital relationship.

In that sense, I argue that women's practice of homosocial relationships indicates the difficulty of achieving both spiritual and sexual love with one male partner. It is possible to understand that the very notion of heterosexual relationship was not yet developed to the point where both men and women were equal partners as female-female love indicates for each other and heterosexual love still separated men and women as the subject and the object of love. In that sense, women's practice of same-sex love or friendship fulfilled the hopes and desires of women who were not able to feel completed under the "present" heteronormative ideology. Therefore, it is possible to think that there is what Vincent calls a "two-timing" quality within it as well, but the structural pattern of two-timingness is very different from the male-male relationship. How, then, is it represented and what can be understood from that discourse?

Because female-female love fulfills the notion of spiritual love which cannot be completed solely through a heterosexual relationship, I suggest that homosocial relationships of women connote the sense of a desired future for women. In order to

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explain how their desired future is not equal to the predictable future, I would like to

introduce what José Esteban Muñoz has to say about queer utopianism. In *Cruising Utopia*,

Muñoz states that queerness is utopian and is a structuring and educated mode of desiring

that allows one to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present (Muñoz 1). He also

states that queerness is something which is "not yet here" in the present world but at the

same time, people can glimpse it through various forms of queer performances and

aesthetics. Muñoz explains,

> Queerness's time is a stepping out of the linearity of straight time. Straight time is a
>
> self-naturalizing temporality. Straight time's "presentness" needs to be
>
> phenomenologically questioned, and this is the fundamental value of a queer
>
> utopian hermeneutics. Queerness's ecstatic and horizontal temporality is a path and
>
> a movement to a greater openness to the world. (Muñoz 25)

According to Muñoz, straight time tells us that there is no future but the here and now of

our everyday life, and the only futurity people promise is that of the outcome of

heterosexual reproduction. Heterosexual relationships are considered to be "natural" from

the standpoint where sexual relations between men and women are for the purpose of

reproduction. I suggest that Muñoz refers to straight time both as heterosexual

straightness and the straight course of time. Thus, straight time is naturalized by

heteronormativity and is a temporality without future unless there is the possibility of

reproduction. But the 'present' that heteronormative society provides is not enough for

queer people, who do not feel the privilege of normative tastes and "rational" expectation.

That is why queerness is, and has to be a form of utopia in order to fulfill desires that are

not-yet-here; queer people are able to 'enact' the utopian future through their queer performances.

In this sense, queerness's time is stepping out of time as Muñoz argues, but it does not reject heteronormative discourse either. It is a future enmeshed in the present. Because platonic female-female love is queer both in terms of same-sex relationship and its rejection of sexuality, the kind of desired future women pursued through same-sex romance or friendship is a utopian future for them.

In her novels, Yoshiya made same-sex love into something essential for female growth and self-completion; She skillfully reinvented anatomy of sexology and understanding of modern love ideology. Suzuki comments on Yoshiya Nobuko and her works as follows:

> Yoshiya Nobuko inserted same-sex love into the ideal course of female maturity, reworking sexological and early feminist notions about this love. While writing in different literary genres—girls' fiction, pure-literature, and popular literature for women—she underscored same-sex love as an important part of modern female identity. (Suzuki 147)

While Yoshiya highlights the manifestation of spirituality and innocence through her early works such as *Flower Tales* [*Hana Monogatari*], she also refuses the idea that the practice of adolescent same-sex love is an inferior version of heterosexual love. As Suzuki explains, Yoshiya defended same-sex love by saying that it is part of a broader notion of love, a virtue she calls "Evolution Power" using the exact word in English (Suzuki 37). Thus, female-female relationships in Yoshiya's works are her portrayal of the ideal way women can achieve their modern female identity. Even after her writing shifted from *shōjo shōsetsu*

into popular literature for adult women, she focused on female friendship rather than married life and heterosexual romance. Her later works use adult female characters who are typically married, and therefore, she does not represent same-sex love as something alternative to heterosexuality or just a transitional stage for young women. By describing the same-sex relationships as friendship, she successfully integrates the idea of same-sex love as a complementation of heterosexual love.

Therefore, contradiction of sexuality in the *shôjo* community can be understood not as two layers of the "two-timing" quality of past and future. One of the two-timing quality is the contradiction between a modern but transitional homosociality versus "good wife wise mother," which represents "premodern" and goes on to dominate women's lives. Another is the two-timingness of the present represented by the "good wife wise mother" ideology versus the "modern love ideology" practice through the heterosexual or homosocial friendships. Girls' female-female relationships are thus considered to be a transitional phase unique to female adolescence, but at the same time they represent a continuum which complements their adulthood.

Is it therefore possible to understand that all women, not only girls, can be *shôjo* because their friendships continue after their marriage? Who, then, are *shôjo* and what kind of girls are they? What is the identity of *shôjo*, and what makes them unique compared to other female figures like adult women? I would like to define what makes *shôjo* a *shôjo* by comparing the image of *shôjo* with other types of women emerged in the time period.

Shôjo as Female Adolescent

One thing worth mentioning here is the correlation of the emergence of *shôjo* with the emergence of the 'Modern Girl' [*modan gāru*] in the 1920s. In fact, some *shôjo* characters were depicted much like the Modern Girl and vice versa in different forms of media. For example, Inagaki says that the fashionable bobbed hair style, the trademark of the Modern Girl, also became popular among school girls. According to Inagaki, most of the girls in one of the Tokyo public girls' schools sported the bobbed hairstyle by the 1930s (Inagaki 138). Yôko in *Wasurenagusa*, for example, also has characteristics common to the Modern Girl. Also, in films such as *Japanese Girls at the Harbor* (1933) by Shimizu Hiroshi, heroines are sometimes portrayed as school girls who practice *shôjo* culture at one point and then later become 'modern girls.' Moreover, girls' magazines used drawings and paintings of *shôjo* whose appearance closely resembled the image of the Modern Girl.[29] As mentioned in the previous section, *shôjo* were defined by their age and social status as school girls. Moreover, the sexuality of *shôjo* was limited to platonic romances between girls and *shôjo* did not practice heterosexual romance. In that sense, the Modern Girl image was very different from *shôjo* as the Modern Girl was, according to Silverberg, made emblematic of female eroticism (Silverberg 51). Though there are such differences between *shôjo* and the Modern Girl, however, these two images still overlap with each other in some ways. One significant overlap between the two images is that both identities transcend many forms of binaries such as male and female, traditional and modern, and passive and active.

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[29] One of the most popular artists of shôjo, Nakahara Jun'ichi (1913-1983), mostly painted girls in Western clothing with short hair. These girls are often looking away without smiling, indicating that they are not interested in those who look at them. [yes] Not only that, Nakahara portray the girls as though they are Western women, with long legs and arms and broad shoulders (Imada 2007: 74-75).

How, then, are we to define the Modern Girl? Silverberg explains the Modern Girl as a "glittering, decadent, middle-class consumer who, through her clothing, smoking and drinking, flaunts tradition in the urban play ground" (Silverberg 51). The Modern Girl is often depicted as a woman who appears on the street in Western clothing and shops in districts like the Ginza with her female friends or male counterpart, the 'Modern Boy.' However, there were not many actual women who fit the image of the Modern Girl depicted above. For example, when Kon Wajirô (1888 – 1973), a professor of architecture at Waseda University, studied the demographics of pedestrians in Ginza in 1925, he found that 99 percent of women he saw were wearing traditional Japanese clothing (Sato 49). This study suggests how actual women who lived at that time were rarely like the Modern Girl described in media.

Where was the Modern Girl, then? Regarding the identity of the Modern Girl, Miriam Silberberg argues that she is the Japanese cultural heroine of the era rather than an embodiment of the actual beliefs or practices of the young women of that era (Silverberg 51). Barbara Sato points out that the Modern Girl was not a representation of "real women" but the represented possibilities for what all women could become (Sato 49). Therefore, it is more plausible to understand the image of the Modern Girl as a created identity through media, regardless of how actual women perceived such an image.

One prominent characteristic of the Modern Girl is the ambivalence of juxtapositions such as gender and nationality. According to Silverberg, the Modern Girl was someone who liberated herself from traditional gender roles and gained the freedom to walk alongside men, even though she was not a strong political advocate for women's rights (Silverberg 69). The Modern Girl's gestures and behaviors looked as though she was moving closer to

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men even though she was questionably female after all, with her hyper-sexualized body with her bare legs and tight fitted clothes. Also, Silverburg introduces one critic Kishida Ryûsei who argues that the Modern Girl was considered Japanese, Europeanized, and Cosmopolitan at the same time. For her part, Silverberg concludes that the Modern Girl was a multivalent symbol. She states,

> Why was she both Japanese *and* Western, intellectual *and* worker, deviant *and* admirable? This code-switching within the discourse raises such queries. One answer is suggested by Natalie Davis in "Women on Top," where she argues that the "truly woman" in early-modern Europe, who whored, tricked, and traded, served both to reinforce the social structure and to incite women to militant action in public and private. The culturally constructed figure of the Japanese Modern Girl certainly did both. Like the disorderly women on top, the Modern Girl as multivalent symbol questioned relations of order and subordination and at the same time, through her cultural gender play and promiscuity, served "to explore the character of sexuality" and of gender while also suggesting that order be preserved. (Silverberg 69)

The so-called multivalence of the Modern Girl thus lies in the context in which she was able to code-switch between binaries such as gender and cultural identity.

As I explained earlier, the Modern Girl archetype was originally something created through the media rather than the representation of the actual women. Regarding the issue of the formation of Modern Girl identity, however, Hideaki Fujiki points out that the Modern Girl was not merely a male fantasy but more like the self-defined image of women. Fujiki also argues that the Modern Girl identity was actually not homogeneous or singular

(Fujiki 3). That is to say, the identity of the Modern Girl connotes a diverse styles of women rather than creating a singular image of a woman whom people called the Modern Girl.

Fujiki then makes a connection between the Modern Girl and Clara Bow as an example of how American movie stars were understood as models of the Modern Girl. Bow is an American movie star who was popular in Japan and eventually became the symbol of the Modern Girl. Her images appeared in many forms of media such as magazines and newspapers. She was portrayed in film as seductive and dynamic, which evoked a certain level of anxiety for the male spectator who expected women to be passive, but at the same time, her movements looked comical and adorable, suggesting that she was harmless (Fujiki 6). Also, even though she manipulated men to get what she wanted, spectators can see that she was not a bad girl by the way she stood up for her friend, a single mother who almost had her baby taken away. Bow thus played female figures who were ambivalent and she evoked new sensibility and prevailing sentiments at the same time (Fujiki 7). Analyzing the image of Bow in the films as well as Japanese critics' reactions toward her, Fujiki argues that the circulation of Clara Bow's images strongly affected Japanese society in a very complex way, which went beyond the idea of binary oppositions. He explains,

> In effect, the circulation of Clara Bow's images affected Japanese society by opening up the fluidity and diversity of people's identities, while inducing the criticism and administrative cautions that tried to reduce them to a rather monolithic meaning. While film stars are likely to be seen as a cultural trivia, the American star became a significant force to transform the socio-cultural sphere in Japan during the latter half of the twenties. (Fujiki 15)

In the process of introducing American stars like Clara Bow into Japanese society, questions of nationality, gender, class, and aesthetics were raised among critics at that time. People reacted differently to those issues which was brought by Bow, and their discussions created new dynamics of the understanding of Bow as well as the Japanese society. As a result, American stars made a significant impact on the formation of the Modern Girl image.

If American movie stars such as Clara Bow affected the construction of the image of the Modern Girl, then, how did these actresses influence Americans?   And what distinctions could be made between the case of Japan and America? And is the archetypical image of American young women in any way overlapping with *shôjo* and the Modern Girl? What can be understood about *shôjo* through those different female images?

In America, adolescent girls also became consumers of mass media and gave rise to the stereotypical image of "the movie-struck girl."   The movie-struck girl was referred to in the print media as a white, unmarried female film fan in her teens and early twenties, who is either employed or still attending high school (Anselmo-Sequeira 1). Considering that the Modern Girl and *shôjo* were separated from each other based on age and social role, the movie-struck girl can be thought of as their American equivalent.   They spanned the late teens into the early twenties; some were working women while others were students. One similar aspect of the movie-struck girl and the image of *shôjo* is that the movie-struck girl was depicted as immature, vulnerable and sentimental. At the same time, however, they were also understood as a sexual figures seeking heterosexual romance, unlike the *shôjo* (Anselmo-Sequeira 13). What, then, makes the movie-struck girls appear

so sentimental? And what about the case of sexuality? How are *shôjo* and movie-struck

girls different?

Diana Anselmo-Sequeira argues that the characteristics of movie-struck girls are

similar to the theorized image of female adolescent (Anselmo-Sequeira 2-3). According to

Anselmo-Sequeira, the invention of female adolescence contributed to the expanded

visibility of young females within early twentieth century American culture (Anselmo-

Sequeira 4-5). She explains the emergence of female adolescence as follows,

> In 1904 American psychologist G. Stanley Hall first defined adolescence as a
>
> transformative life stage taking place between fourteen and twenty-four years of
>
> age. Although both white males and females underwent this biological moratorium,
>
> Hall proposed that "pubescence lasts longer [and] is more unsettling . . . in the life of
>
> the girl than the boy. She is a more generic being . . . [who] loves to have her feelings
>
> stirred because emotionality is her life. She is impressionable, but her sentiments
>
> are fugitive." Profoundly emotional, volatile, and "vulnerable to scores of fads," the
>
> adolescent girl outlined by Hall closely resembled the screen-struck girl publicized
>
> by the popular press. I propose that such a likeness is hardly a coincidence.
>
> (Anselmo-Sequeira 3)

Here, Anselmo-Sequeira introduces the psychology of female adolescence to explain the

characteristics [and proliferation] of movie-struck girls created by film magazines and

newspapers. This suggests how adolescent girls were understood by society at that time.

Hall's argument here is also similar to the way *shôjo* were understood by male critics in

Japan. That is, the *shôjo* cohort were considered to be very sentimental and vulnerable, and

lacking an understanding of the world outside the school environment and magazine

community (Imada 170). At the same time, however, *shôjo* belonged to communities within the Girls' schools as well as in connection with *shôjo* magazines, and they retained their identity as *shôjo* until they graduated to the outside world.

What, then, about the movie-struck girls? Compared to the *shôjo* situation, the development of the image of movie-struck girl was not fully supported by anyone who would understand them fully. In other words, they did not get a protection from becoming subordinate in the larger society. And it is possible to argue that the whole environment American girls were given within the magazine community resulted in an outcome that was very distinct from *shôjo*. In order to understand the social significance of American female adolescents who participated in the film magazine communities, it is important to briefly introduce the transition of the respectability of films as well as the transition of film audience in terms of social class and gender.

In the process of the growth of theaters and cinema culture between 1908 and 1915, American film theaters endeavored to acquire middle-class female patrons in order to change the impression of cinema as vulgar spectacle to a more socially-acceptable activity for all ages and genders. Shelly Stamp explains that this is because middle-class women had the qualities that tradesmen thought would fit for motion pictures: social propriety, refined manners, and impeccable taste (Stamp 6). In other words, middle-class women were given the opportunity and encouragement to see motion pictures in order for theaters to gain better reputation as a refined form of entertainment through patronage by women, and hense to increase their income.

However, growing female patronage did not give the film industry a smooth transition to gain what they wanted. Rather, those female patrons added complexity to

cinema and cinema-going. Given the mobility and freedom to go to the movies, female

patrons began to develop their own culture of movie-going. . They began going to the

movies to intentionally show themselves off and watched movies to mirror themselves into

the movie stars on screen. Eventually, they began to emulate the look and style of movie

actresses, and many aspired to appear on screen , modeling themselves after Mary Pickford

and other stars. Thus, the archetype of the movie-struck girl was created (Anselmo-

Sequiera 20).

Like the young female magazine readers in Japan, the American adolescent girls also

eagerly adopted the image of movie-struck girl and manifest themselves to turn into one;

They sent letters to the popular press, giving themselves pen names such as "Would-Be-

Movie-Girl," and sometimes corresponded with the negative stereotype of movie-struck

girls to defend themselves (Anselmo-Sequeira 20). Anselmo-Sequiera argues that those

girls adapted this created identity passively at first, but then they began to actively engage

in developing this imagined identity. She states,

> [A]lthough at first glance such vocal self-identity as a screen-struck girl may suggest
>
> a passive, careless absorption of widely available and ready-made identities, I
>
> propose that, actually girls' willing adherence to legible representations of
>
> feminized movie fandom can be interpreted as stemming from a rather levelheaded
>
> desire to actively participate in a new film culture, a flourishing milieu that by 1915
>
> was portrayed as socially enhancing, economically compensating, and emotionally
>
> satisfying all the young females who—as fans, consumers, and actors—partook in
>
> this fledgling bounty. (Anselmo-Sequeira 22)

Not only did those girls adapt the image of the screen-struck girl as their own identity; they also participated in the magazine community and developed their own identity after the name "movie-struck girl" was given. As I discussed earlier, their vitality to make the active move on the given identity is something also seen in the development of *shôjo*. Unlike the *shôjo* community, however, the magazine community for the movie-struck girls was not made especially for them. Rather, the major fan publications in which girls participated were for all film fans, not limited to a young female audience. In other words, those female fans did not have a community created solely for them akin to the *shôjo* magazines or have a patron like Uchiyama Motoi to encourage them to develop their selfhood and autonomy through interacting with the magazine community. Here, Butler's notion of "heterosexualization of desire" can be applied to understand what significance the lack of approval from the opposite gender had for the movie-struck girl.

Unlike *shôjo*, the movie-struck girl was typically pictured as a sexual being who eagerly entered the world of cinema to look for a romantic adventure. The typical image was a girl who harbored a delusional fantasy of transforming herself from an entirely ordinary girl into a celebrity. In fact, there were many girls in the mid-1910s who traveled all the way to Los Angeles and wait outside the movie studios in the hope of finding work as "extras" (Stamp 332). Most were apparently seeking some adventure and romance rather than earnest employment (Anselmo-Sequeira 13). Anselmo-Sequeira argues that the movie-struck girl figure became seen as threatening to destroy the existing social expectations for women because she represented a prototype of burgeoning female agency and professional drive tinted with erotic self-awareness and conscious self-worth (Anselmo-Sequeira 10). In other words, the movie-struck girl saw movie actresses as self-

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confident and engaged in romantic encounters with male actors on the screen, and she

began to act like one. However, those girls' desire for the stardom and romance that

stardom would afford eventuated in the sorry circumstance whereby they slaved away as

extras in an abusive and exploitative environment, and many were the victims of sexual

violence.

In the end, media reports claimed that those female fans were not just immature

and "movie-struck," but also narcissistic—and even mad—having confused the screen with

the mirror (Stamp 37). I agree with Stamp that movie-struck girls' fantasy for heterosexual

romance and adventure was the result of their total identification with the image of the

screen actress. As the Modern Girl adopted Hollywood movie stars as her ideal image,

those American female fans also created themselves in the image of their favorite movie

stars. In the process of doing so, however, they needed to "perform" their identity and

make it a coherent one through the approval of the opposite gender as well as the larger

society that supported and sustained a code of gender norms.

Comparing the case of the movie-struck girl with *shôjo*, then, it is possible to say that

the existence of Uchiyama Motoi and other male figures who participated in the *shôjo*

magazine community provided girls the security and approval to stay as *shôjo* while they

remained in that community. While Uchiyama did not play a role to complement girls' in a

sexual way, he provided a safe environment for them to cultivate their inner self through

female-female friendship. By successfully creating such a community for girls, which

would last longer than the transitional period of adolescence, *shôjo* were able to develop

themselves along the lines of Suzuki's notion of "modern love ideology" after they married.

As opposed to the case of movie-struck girls, who went outside the magazine community to

look for heterosexual romance in order to become "intelligible," the community created for *shôjo* was indeed significant in a way that girls were able to develop their gender identity as *shôjo* without becoming the object of sexual desires.

Collective Identity of *Shôjo*: *Otome Kyôdôtai*

What, then, was so significant about this community created in *Shôjo no Tomo*? What are its characteristics and qualities? As I explained earlier, their ambivalent and ambiguous identity is one significant aspect of *shôjo* culture as well as other adolescent girl categories such as the movie-struck girl and the Modern Girl. According to Irigaray, "women" comprise the sex which is not "one" (Irigaray 23-26). Using her notion of the sex of women, Butler argues that women are not one but multiple. Butler says,

> Women are the "sex" which is not "one." Within a language pervasively masculinist, a phallogocentric language, women constitute the *unpresentable*. In other words, women represent sex that cannot be thought, a linguistic absence and opacity. Within a language that rests on univocal signification, the female sex constitutes the unconstrainable and undesignatable. In this sense, women are the sex which is not "one," but multiple. In opposition to Beauvoir, for whom women are designated as the Other, Irigaray argues that both the subject and the Other are masculine mainstays of a closed phallogocentric signifying economy that achieves its totalizing goal through the exclusion of the feminine altogether. (Butler *Gender Trouble* 9)

This argument by Butler can be applied to the image of *shôjo* when it comes to the ambiguity of gender and sexuality. As I argued earlier, *shôjo* connotes the notion of present

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and utopian future embodied within themselves. Not only that, the ambiguous nature of their sexuality is never revealed, unlike other categories such as the Modern Girl and the movie-struck girl. In that sense, *shôjo* falls within Butler's explanation of women. Here, Butler takes Irigaray's argument that the idea of separating the subject with the Other is itself the product of masculinity. This also explains why the *shôjo* community rejected male authority and other male readers in order to create a space where girls can establish their friendship without the notion of power relationships or the existence of the object of love. Finally, Butler states that women constitute the sex which is not "one," but rather multiple. By understanding the *shôjo* community as fostering a female sexual identity that is multiple, it is possible to conceive of the *shôjo* community as itself embodying the identity of women belonging to an ideal community not interrupted or impinged upon by male prerogatives and power.

Is *shôjo*, then, the product of a transitional adolescent phase that young women experience and eventually outgrow? With regard to this question, I suggest that Yoshiya Nobuko answers it by introducing married women to her novel while they continue to engage in a close female friendship. Yoshiya portrays married women to show that women can continue their female ties even after marriage, so that their *shôjo* identity survives the termination of their adolescence. But what of actual readers who adopted the *shôjo* identity as their own? Similarly, how is it possible to say if *shôjo* is the identity of the real women? In recognition of the collective identity *shôjo* possessed, many scholars argue for its significance.

After analyzing readers' columns in girls' magazines, Kawamura Kunimitsu designates the *shôjo* community as well as the collective *shôjo* identity as 'Otome Kyôdôtai' [girls'

community with a shared fate]. Kawamura understands *Otome Kyôdôtai* as a rebellion against a male-dominant society, but he points out the vulnerability of a community structured as   an imagined community and not a collectivity of actual women. He concludes that *Otome Kyôdôtai* was initially conceived of as a real community but subsequently rejected by the patriarchal society, which forced its *ryôsai kenbo* agenda on women (Kawamura 304-306). Honda notes that the community creates for *shôjo* a vast open space place where girls can freely relinquish their 'real' identities and circumstances. Honda calls the community 'Otome Gensô Kyôdôtai' [Girls' imagined community with a shared fate] and argues that adolescent girls were placed into the stage of their life where they cannot go anywhere else to set themselves free. Instead, the school system was tasked with inculcating the "good wife wise mother" dictum, which itself did not provide any clear strategy since they could not know whom they were going to marry or if they would have children (Honda 167-168).

In contrast to Kawamura and Honda, Inagaki has a more optimistic view regarding the community. Inagaki argues that girls' in the pre-war period wished value the present life as *shôjo* than the possible future they would have after they grow up. And their dreams did not necessarily end with their marriage. She states that their schoolgirl culture persisted as another layer of reality after their marriage, not just as a nostalgic longing for the past (Inagaki 79). To support her argument, Inagaki introduces several women who used to be readers of *Shôjo no tomo*. According to Inagaki, women who used to be *shôjo* continued their friendship through letters and phone calls as well as occasional gatherings such as school reunions and theater-going. When they met, they would share memories of their girlhood and reinforce their friendship by retelling stories and thereby add new meanings

and memories. Through the reconstruction and 'updating' of memories, Inagaki argues

that the *shôjo* identity continued to exist and evolve. (Inagaki 83). They also shared their

feelings and emotions they had toward those memories and that brought them closer to

strengthen their bonds (Inagaki 92). By interacting with women over eighty who maintain

the quality of *shôjo* in the way they behave, Inagaki states that their culture of *shôjo*

continued within themselves as a "code" to decode "the reality." In other words, those

women who used to be *shôjo* inherited the culture of the *shôjo* community by looking at

"the real world" through the lens of *shôjo* (Inagaki 117).

    It was not simply the case that the *shôjo* community continued within the readers

themselves; their culture was handed down to later generations as well. When discussing

with Inagaki their motivation to study *shôjo* culture, Honda remarks that her mother, who

belonged to the generation of Yoshiya's *Flower Tales*, secretly collected Yoshiya's novels

and small ornaments like perfume bottles to show her during the war. Honda says that her

mother did so because she was sorry for her having to experience the austeries of war.

(Kan 24-25).

    Shamoon, for her part, notes that Suga Atsuko, a Japanese essayist and scholar of Italian

literature, recalled her past memories and mentioned how important *Shôjo no Tomo* was

for her as a girl in the difficult war years of the early 1940s. In view of those instances

where the *shôjo* community lived in girls' hearts even after their communication via the

magazine ended, it is possible to say that the community of *shôjo* is not merely an

'imagined' community, but rather something that actually connected girls together and that

remained with them long thereafter.

As Muñoz argues, certain performances of queer citizenship contain what he calls an anticipatory illumination of a queer world, a sign of an actually existing queer reality within a heterosexual present (Muñoz 49). While queer or other forms of minority are easily distorted by a public whose attitudes have been molded by a dominant and authoritarian ideology, their performance makes it possible to insist on their subject status as world-historical entity. By shedding light on the actual practice of Japanese *shôjo* in Taishô and early Shôwa and analyzing their queer nature, I argue that it is possible to understand the performativity of *shôjo* as a strategy to achieve their "modern love ideology" and queer utopia. And that has not entailed a rejection of the existing heteronormative ideology. Rather, they pursued their desired future by finding an alternative way to practice 'queer' while still remaining within the heteronormative society.

Recalling the 'incomprehensible' nature of Japanese *shôjo* I mentioned in the introduction, I conclude by suggesting that the essential quality of *shôjo* or Japanese girls concerns their strategic performance to realize their vision of a utopian future, be it through conscious intent or otherwise.

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