Kanoko Okamoto and Foreign Literature

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Kanoko Okamoto (1889-1939) was a very unique novelist not belonging to any school in the history of modern Japanese literature. Therefore, she is apt to be regarded as a writer whose writings are in what might be called an isolated sphere independent in its influence by any other novelists to say nothing of the foreign writers, contemporary or historic. She intently pursued her own image in her fictitious world. But in her case also, like many of her contemporaries, she too seemed unable to totally escape the impact of the foreign literature and was influenced more or less by it, as it was the time of influx of western civilization, and we are easily convinced of this when we look at her lifetime of fifty years. For example, she grew up with Shōsen Ohnuki, her elder brother, whom she loved and respected most of all her brothers and sisters, and learned from him much about foreign literature; she took lessons in European literature given by Kochō Baba, once a week during the year she graduated from Atomi High School. She lived about two and a half years as the wife of Ippei Okamoto, Japan’s most popular cartoonist at that time. Accordingly, the fact that her novels do not show any trace of direct influence of foreign literature except those overtly explained by herself as adapted stories is in itself the very evidence that Kanoko’s works are so much the more unique and original.

In her case, the foreign literature which mainly influenced her, includes those of the East and the West. Literature of the East in this case is no other than Buddhist narratives in India which became her flesh and blood through Buddhism she believed in and often offered her material for her stories. And that of the West includes literature and philosophy of such countries as Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the Nordic countries. There is really no end to the list of those European men of letters whom she elucidated or referred to in her many collections of essays and letters, having interest, familiarity, or respect towards them. Among them are the following writers: Shakespeare
Then, how did she accept the ideas of these writers, and what kind of literature became hers as a result of their influence? In one word, she took them as nutriment, and fusing them with the Mahâyâna Buddhism created an unprecedented literature of 'life', just as Fusao Hayashi\(^4\) says, 'She has reached the height which no other Japanese writers have ever attained to this day, uniting both culture of the East and the West at a very subtle point called Japan.'\(^5\) Thus, the influence of foreign literature, though strong upon her, is wholly absorbed into her own thoughts or sensibility, and apparently leaves no trace of it. In this sense, it is rather difficult to trace the influence of foreign literature in her writings, but it is also true that when we read her works very carefully, we can detect in them faint as it may be but their unmistakable telltale marks. For example, in her "A Summernight's Dream" (1937) we can see the framework of Shakespeare's drama with the title of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (written 1596--1600); "Night's Talk" (1940) seems to me her adaptation of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" (1599--1600). Regarding D.H. Lawrence whom she loved and respected most of all, her unfettered description of erotic love and electric interchange of emotion between lovers seen everywhere in her writings are evidently that which she has garnered from his works. As an individual work taken so to say and written after his model, we can name "The Fox" (1938). It is also possible to see some relation between "The Divince Comedy" (1307--1321) by Dante and her "The Divine Comedy of Flesh" (1937), and that between Hauptmann's "Lonely People" (1891) and her "Presently in May" (1938). Moreover, "River" (1937) reminds me of one of the Greek myths. As for her adapted stories from Buddhist narratives or sutras, almost every work is explained as such by the author herself. The typical stories in this category are "Kishimo's Love" (1929?), "Ananda and the Sorceress's Daughter" (1928), "The Sutra of One Hundred Discourses" (1938?) and "A Stupid Man and His Wife" (1938?), etc. In the following paragraphs, taking two stories from either side as examples, I have tried to examine the way she creates her stories.
modelling them after literary works of other lands.

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According to Ippei Okamoto, her "A Summernight's Dream" was written while under the inspiration of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" produced by Rinehart, which she went to see three times when this picture came to Japan. It is not known whether this intense interest of hers was due to her yearning for her days in England or due to the influence of Miss Maga, her companion in her London days, or due to her sincere excitement and sympathy with the picture. But Shakespeare's plot in which fairies group together at midnight to dance in the forest by moonlight and with the aid of the magic herb the wily old manipulations by the king of the fairies to bring together the young Athenian lovers quite suite her taste in its lightness, sweetness, magnificence and romantic atmosphere.

But "A Summernight's Dream" seems to have no trace of the original play at first reading; understandably, the author herself said to her husband upon its completion, 'I have written quite a different story.' "I am of a nature which produces quite a different thing from the influence or the inspiration I get." What Kanoko tells us in this short story is as follows.

Saiko, the heroine of the story, is dearly loved by two men — her brother, Yaichirō Soga, and her betrothed, Yūkichi Shizuma, spending her days with her brother in his house and at other times in the company of her fiancé. These two men, friends of old standing, have arranged her affiance together, not wishing to share her with any other than themselves. But Saiko is a little more than irritated by being unable to receive a more profound feeling from the two, other than their kind but fatherly love towards her. She likes to prowl in the neighborhood of her brother's house sometimes at night, and one evening she makes the acquaintance of a young man called Makise, who is a student of architectural history and also her brother's friend. Makise invites her to his beautiful garden, which pleases her so much that she comes to visit him there seven or eight times during her stay of twenty days.

On the night before she goes back to her future husband, Makise is disposed to tell her about his thoughts on love in his garden. He says that he considers as an ideal love a kind of love in which a man and a woman understand each other so completely that they can exchange their
love simply by blowing a whistle between their two healthy, energetic bodies without even touching each other, rather than a passionate love in which two people's spirits and bodies melt away through sensual joy. On the eve before her wedding, Saiko tells her betrothed about her experience in Makise's garden, Yūkichi tells her to keep it in her memory and ruminate over it now and then, this being such a beautiful experience. Shortly after this, she hears from her brother that Makise has gone to excavate ruins of some ancient architecture. Of course she cannot but realize that this involves for him a very dangerous work.

Thus, though these two works apparently seem to be 'quite a different story', upon careful examination we can see that it was written modelled after Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in spite of the fact that Kanoko wrote it in her own particular way. For example, the first and the last scenes in Shakespeare's play are set in Theseus's palace and the other scenes mainly with the fairies in the wood several miles from Athens; likewise the important scenes in Kanoko's story are laid in Makise's garden, and the first and the last scenes respectively in her brother's and in her husband's home, and as in the original play the curtain rises upon an advance notice of marriage between Theseus and Hippolyte and descends upon their wedding ceremony, so Kanoko's story tells us at its opening about Saiko's forthcoming marriage and closes upon her marriage having taken place. Contemplating this, it is most likely that Makise's garden where the summer grass grows thick is modelled after the Athenian forest, and Saiko's habit to take a midnight walk alone is likened somewhat to the four Athenians, Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia and Helena wandering into the dark forest in pursuit of one another amidst the entanglement of sweet but harassing love. Moreover, Makise's inquiring if Saiko is not sleepy at this time of the night just as when she was a little girl reminds us of the four Athenians' conversation before they sleep in the woods. And a cup of pomegranate syrup which Makise invites her to drink can be construed as a substitute for the juice of 'the herb of love-in-idleness' which Oberon, the fairy-king, lays upon Titania's eyelids. Considering these scenes, one can also easily sense the parallelism in the two characters, Oberon and Makise, the young student lover clad in his sportshirt permeating from his presence 'the healthy raw freshness of a half-man, half-animal';? the unconscious image of Oberon, the King fairy.

Therefore, as Oberon in the Shakespeare's play brings an amicable
settlement to a complicated problem of love to the four young Athenians, so Saiko's dates with Makise help to awaken her love towards her betrothed without incurring his jealousy or anger towards her escapade. While Oberon regards it the best solution of love to unite a pair of lovers so that every love be requited, likewise Makise conveys his ideal love to Saiko.

Thus, the world Kanoko depicts in her short story is quite different from that in Shakespeare's play, although she writes her story upon the latter's framework. As everyone knows, the characters in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" consist of three classes, namely, the aristocracy of ancient Greece, the lower class of the same country including weavers, carpenters, joiners, tinkers, tailors, bellow menders, and the group of fairies, while in Kanoko's story, they are extremely few, that is, Saiko and the three men around her and her nurse. The class she writes about is naturally the middle class which she belongs to. If we believe that Shakespeare's intention in his play does not lie in characterization nor in description of lovers' psychology—joy or conflict of love,—but in the creation of a romantic atmosphere brought about by the introduction of fairies, what Kanoko seeks in her story may well be this dreamlike atmosphere.

However, what alienates her story far from the original play is her way of treating her characters and the conception of her ideal love which she expostulates through Makise's words. Kanoko's works are often said to be the novels of self-deification or those of narcissism, and these remarks show that Kanoko could not free herself from this attachment within herself till the end of her life. Such being the case, it is self-evident that what she writes differs greatly from Shakespeare's play, as it is now the accepted opinion concerning Shakespeare that one of the greatest characteristics of his drama is that of his detachment and the impersonality of the play. The key to Kanoko's fiction-writing seems to me to lie in these eyes of hers which kept on gazing at herself through her life.

Therefore, it is no wonder that Saiko spends her life being loved by two men who reminds us of Kanoko's brother, Shôsen, and her husband, Ippei. And this is the reason why in Kanoko's story there exists no rivalry of love between these men contrary to the original work, and far from that they are united by the closest understanding as to her future. Moreover, as Ippei shared his house with Kanoko's other lovers showing his unlimited love and tolerance towards her, Saiko's two protec-
tors not only give her tacit permission to meet her new boy-friend in his garden like "the sea of grass" late at night, but even highly estimate her experience. Besides, the nurse whom Saiko is deeply attached to must be the portrait of Kanoko's own nurse who is said to have given the author her early education on Japanese literature and Chinese writing.

Lastly, the ideal love about which Makise advocates at their parting, namely, love between an ancient Pan and a Nymph, can be said to be what the nihilistic art-student seeks after in "The Sun on the Height" (1938), and also what O-tsuya and Haruo Ichijinan yearn for in "Life and Vagrancy" (1939). What is more, one of Kanoko's legendary anecdotes says that she and her husband kept this kind of relationship after the hellish agony of their married life caused by Ippei's dissipation, although its authenticity is still the object of ardent discussion. Furthermore, the friendship between Saiko and Makise shows us the idea of 'Egeria' which Kanoko is said to preach every now and then. Kanoko thinks that a woman can be a 'woman of eternal youth' to a certain man unlike a simple lover nor a friend, and can give him the vital influence and inspiration through her sagaciousness or her beauty. It is probably needless to say that in this case Saiko acts as Makise's 'Egeria'.

However, Makise urges her to kneel by the edge of the pond, and seeing their reflections on the surface, laughs, 'After all, we are a man and a woman, ha ha ha ha.' In this act of his, I think, the author's acute grief at her being a mortal is strongly expressed. 'A sense of something creeping towards Saiko' at this moment probably signifies uneasiness, despair, and sorrow inseparable from human beings and unknown to a Pan and a Nymph. For, in reality, O-tsuya fails to attain her ideal love, because she can not but succomb to Akio's urge and ends in committing adultery, and also in the case of the author, she too falls far short of this ideal love considering from her several love affairs recounted in her biography.

To conclude we can say this: as a woman who has incessantly been torn by both joy and pain in love for fifty years of her life, and also as a woman who has been 'oppressed again and again by her physical weakness or by the disciplinarian system of an old family, though she is by nature far more passionate than others,' Kanoko must have come to consider the world of the love of fairies as an ideal at the end of her many distracting afflictions. But because this ideal love cannot be realized in this world, she has probably endeavored to write about it under the
disguise of a midsummer night's dream.

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The state of this ideal love is depicted under the Buddhist aspect in "The Fox" written by Kanoko Okamoto.

According to the chronological history of D.H. Lawrence, he began to write his novelette called "The Fox" (1923) in 1918 and finished writing it in 1919. In Japan, the translation of this novel by Toyozō Miyanishi was published in 1933 from Gyūzandō Publishing Company, and two years later, another version by Hideo Takagi was published in the 10th volume of "Complete Works of D.H. Lawrence" issued by the Mikasa Publishing Company. On the other hand, Kanoko is supposed to have written "The Fox" in 1938; so it is quite likely that she read Lawrence's work in its original language or its translation. First of all, the fact that the title of her short story is the same as Lawrence's novel can be interpreted as her open and naive way of telling us that this is the adaptation of Lawrence's work, considering that in the case of "A Summer Night's Dream" she subtracted only one prefix 'mid-' from the original play. Secondly, the similarity in its theme and pattern is another factor to show us the close relations between those two stories. For both stories are based on a triangular love affair formed by two people of the same sex and the intruder of the opposite sex, and in either case a fox is introduced as a medium to create a sentiment of love between them.

The intruder in Lawrence's novelette is one Henry Grenfel of about twenty years old and a soldier on leave looking for his grandfather. At the Bailey Farm, he intrudes upon Jill Bandford and Nellie March, both nearly thirty. While he is staying at this farm availing himself of their kindness, he is attracted by the figure of the boyish Nellie at work, to whom he proposes marriage later. On the other hand, there is the absent-minded Nellie, who has become incessantly absorbed with the beautiful fox which she supposedly was to shoot, for it had caused great damage to their fowl. But this captivating animal which Nellie met in the woods one August evening so captured her with its charm that she began to lose all sense of distinction and began creating an illusion in the things around her. Finally she begins to see that illusion in Henry Grenfel. Jill, who is now favorably disposed towards Henry, becomes angry at the knowledge of his proposal of marriage to Nellie, and plans to
keep them apart at every possible opportunity.

One day, while the two women are quarrelling about him, Henry goes out with his gun and kills the fox. Presently, having arranged the date of his wedding to Nellie for Christmas day, he returns to his camp. But on his receiving a letter from his fiancée telling him of her determination to break off their engagement, he goes back to the Farm by bicycle and kills Jill Banford by letting fall the fir tree which he is felling. However, though they get married as they have planned, Nellie begins to suffer frantically from the gaping void she finds in everything and everywhere, and gradually loses all hope for their future. Henry, on the other hand, tries to nullify her painful consciousness and strives to possess her wholly but in vain, and vaguely hopes that once they leave England, she might find peace in her new surroundings.

Compared with this, Kanoko’s short story is very Japanese and Buddhist in its spirit. Kanoko, reversing the pattern, creates a plot in which O-kan, a woman-thief, intrudes upon two samurais. It is very interesting to know that Lawrence depicts a man loved by two women and Kanoko on the contrary describes a woman between two men. This is probably because both the authors were rather self-centered people. In “The Fox” written by Kanoko, O-kan addresses herself to Monya Suzukake, a young rônin (masterless samurai), and his friend, Jūro Futami, while they are resting at a tea booth near the shrine of the goddess of children in winter. She says that she is a fox in the form of a woman and asks them to help rescue her husband who is caught by a hunter and a ransom in the amount of ten ryō is needful. Suzukake gives her a ready consent and in return asks her to keep company with him one night over a cup of sake warming themselves at a kotatsu. A few days later, at dead of night, O-kan visits him at his temporary residence, and confesses that she is not a fox but an ordinary woman, nor has she any husband. She says that she loves him. But Suzukake answers that he does not want to love her as just another woman, because ordinary love is destined to be broken, but is quite willing to pass the night with her if she is a fox in a woman’s disguise. The point of attraction is its unsubstantial beauty. Thus being forced to pretend to be a fox, she takes his hand, when Futami intrudes upon them and tells his friend that the woman before him is none other than the notorious woman-thief and that the ransom he paid was a fraud. But Suzukake insists that she is a fox, and says that if the fox who has just
run away is still around there, she should yelp like a fox in evidence of her identity. Hearing this, O-kan yelps like a fox in the bush subduing her sobbing with the sleeve of her kimono.

Thus in the triangular relations of these two stories, one of the two friends tries to be united with the intruder of the opposite sex through love and the remaining one tries to hinder this new relation. And in both stories the fox plays an essential part to shift these relations. However, the difference in the meaning of the fox as a symbolic figure in each story shows clearly each writer's peculiarity. In Lawrence's novel, the fox becomes for Nellie 'a settled effect in her spirit, a state permanently established, not continuous, but always recurring' from the moment her eyes meet those of the fox in the dusk. I think this fox symbolizes 'the unconscious' to her which Lawrence maintains. To put it simply, this unconscious is not the mental state without consciousness, nor Freud's unconscious, but a kind of primitive consciousness or conception of life in which the subject and the object are united together instinctively as one without the slightest distance between them. In other words, this is the so-called primitive state of mind closely linked with nature and conceived to be on the very opposite of civilization, abstractive thought, and science, which Lawrence abhors. Accordingly, Nellie's hallucination that she sees an image of the fox in the person of Henry can be interpreted as her unconscious yearning for this kind of primitive unity with him. But because Henry has shot the beautiful animal and Nellie now has nothing to rely upon, she comes to feel indefinable anxiety, and instead of giving herself completely to her man without any reserve and accepting 'the submergence which his new love put upon her', she feels responsible for the well-being of the world and wants to see, to know, and to understand everything. According to Lawrence, a woman is nearer to the life of universe than a man is, so Nellie has only to place herself at her husband's disposal and become one with him united in this universal life and be happy, but she will not acknowledge this.

Thus in this novelette Lawrence writes about his unique conception of life and about the ideal relation between man and woman by describing the situation in which the characters fail to attain this ideal state of life. I think that this is the real meaning of the death of the fox.

As compared with this dynamic, western, characteristic thought, that of Kanoko's is very static, oriental and Buddhistic, as I have said
before. 'Life' as portrayed by Kanoko is not the limited biological life of man and animal, but 'a kind of power itself which keeps the living alive and is the very reason why life is life' and 'that which exists anywhere anytime without being intercepted by time, nor separated by space'\(^{14}\). These words are rather ambiguous and can not be easily understood. But this life seems to bear a certain similarity to the universal life Lawrence speaks of. She says that this life can be taken out from 'nature' and 'man' through the Buddhistic sagacity in ourselves, and like Lawrence says that this life can be got in touch with through a woman's life because she is more primitive and sensitive to the revelation of the 'life' latent in all things in the universe.

Therefore, while the love Lawrence describes is very real, substantial and humane, the love between O-kan and Suzukake seems to be ephemeral and unreal, but can be said in its essence to transcend the former love. This is really what Suzukake means when he says, 'Love rewarded is love to be broken. Just because I hate this kind of love, I lead a bachelor's life warming myself at a kotatsu and nibbling sweet potatoes alone. If you say you are a fox in the form of a waman, I would like to spend a night with you appreciating its unsubstantial beauty.'\(^{15}\)

When Futami tells him of O-kan's fraudulence, he also says, without being surprised, 'I meant to buy a beautiful dream with ten gold ryo.'\(^{16}\). This is not a fantastic, whimsical attitude towards love but an admirable view of life which he has attained as a result of long, acute affliction concerning love. For that reason, Suzukake and O-kan try to stake everything on the beautiful dream of a single night; while the lovers in Lawrence's story try to solidify their love through a social system called marriage. Therefore, while we feel some bitterness and irritation at their fate in Lawrence's story, we feel a kind of beauty in O-kan's love towards Suzukake because it surpasses self-consciousness, responsibility, shame, and all else, and cannot but sense a kind of sereneness in Suzukake's love because it is not bound by any earthly troubles.

Here Kanoko is not persisting in the ideal love between fairies which cannot be attained by mortality, nor lamenting over the difference between and ideal and reality, but tries to accept everything as it is from a broader view-point. In other words, in Suzukake's state of mind where he prefers to appreciate the unsubstantial beauty of the fox is the Buddhist conception that everything in this world is vain, that
there is no existence which has a solid, permanent, and invariable quality, and that nothing can be firmly owned by us human beings. Moreover, his propensity to regard every love requited as love to be broken and regard his folly of being robbed of money by fraud as his fortune to be able to buy a beautiful dream with ten gold ryô, shows the Mahâyâna way of thinking, that is, a view to regard everything as nil first of all, and then to ascertain everything from quite a different point of view, and thus to appreciate and enjoy positively every nil in this world.

Thus modelling after Lawrence’s powerful and manly novel, Kanoko has created a world very Japanese and Buddhistic. If we can say that Lawrence’s work coming out of the puritanical tradition of the west is based on a broad, socialistic viewpoint, Kanoko’s story puts the importance on the salvation of an individual from earthly agony, rather than propagating Buddhism.

In this sense, the following two contes retold from the Buddhist narratives show her way of thinking more concretely and explicitly.

As everybody knows, when she came to be known as a novelist at forty-six years of age, she was already famous as a Buddhist philosopher, and was very busy with her writing, broadcasting and giving lectures on this subject. And needless to say that her own tormented married life led her to her faith in Buddha. But Buddhism she believed in was not of a specific sect but a combined doctrine of all main sects. Naturally, the Buddhist idea she expounds is the large-minded Mahâyâna, and the backbone which supports this faith is ‘Affliction vis Bodhi (the supreme enlightenment or salvation)’. Thus, her interpretation of Buddha’s teachings and her way of adaptation are freer and more bold-faced than anybody’s.

She is often said to be a ‘writer of love’, and this is clearly shown in the prologue to her second collection of tankas with the title “Agony of Love” (1918). It says, ‘Love is in itself an agony. When we go forward, we are easily caught in a complicated mesh of love and when we retire, we are unbearably lonely. I am by nature a woman of passion, but my heart is so timid and weak to dare to seek love positively that I am incessantly wounded by this agony of love. If you peruse this “Agony of Love” which I have written with my head down intently gazing at myself, you’ll come to know involuntarily a woman’s lamenta-
tion over love.' As she says here, her life was truly the one penetrated by joy and agony of love; so it is no wonder that love is one of the greatest themes of her works.

Now, many of her adapted stories from Buddhist narratives were written comparatively early in life. This is probably because she was a Buddhist philosopher before being known in the world as a novelist. Among those adapted stories, there are two series of love, which are, "Kishimo's Love" and "Ananda and the Sorceress's Daughter". The former depicts the love between man and woman, and the latter that between mother and children.

"Ananda and the Sorceress’s Daughter" was written in 1928, and was performed in December 1934 at the Tokyo Theater. Kanoko only noted that she adapted this play from a sutra, so we are not sure from which sutra she took this story. However, it must have been written either from "The Sutra of Matôka", "The Sutra of Matônyo", "The Shuryô-gon-gyô", or "The Sutra of the Six Things in a Human Body concerning Matônyo's Awakening". These sutras are all alike and tell a story as follows.

Ananda, Buddha's disciple, comes to be loved by a maid of the Sendara class (the lowest class) who happened to give him a cup of water at a well, while on his journey as a begging priest. Desiring to be married to him, she asks her mother, a sorceress, to use her sorcery to draw him to her. Thus Ananda is drawn involuntarily to their sinister house by the sorceress's magic power; so he prays again and again to his Master to extricate himself from this danger. Hearing this intent prayer from above, Buddha pities him and takes him back to their monastery.

Next day, the maid searches for Ananda and catching him on his visit to Srâvasti castle town, refuses to be separated from him. Poor Ananda, being unable to do otherwise, returns to the monastery as a shameful figure followed by a woman. This time, too, as Ananda ardently appeals to him, Buddha teaches her and leads her to become a nun. Presently, this maid now called Matônyo experiences great enlightenment and enters into a truly pious life.

From this plot, Kanoko made up a play not at all short consisting of ten scenes, freely interpreting its theme, changing some parts and adding what she thought suitable. As compared with the contents of the sutra, the parts which seem to be different from the original work
are as follows.

She inserts a new scene after the first scene at the well. In this scene, Ananda distributes rice-cakes to the poor, and when the maid of the Sendara class comes to him among others, he finds that two rice-cakes are stuck together and cannot be separated; so he gives them to the maid. Seeing this, the people shout angrily that he is partial to her. Here the author also introduces a heathen sophist, who inculcates in her mind an idea that these two rice-cakes stuck together symbolize her future, in that she will be married to him. Again the circumstance in which the sorceress gives her consent to draw the monk to their house by her evil force has shown to us the author's unique thought. For the daughter badgers her mother to do just as she asks her to do, saying, 'Please be my true mother with your whole heart', though she usually hates her mother's sorcery, until the sorceress's motherhood agrees in spite of herself. Kanoko also adds an esthetic scene in which an aged witch tries to make a twin-statue of love by binding Ananda and her daughter together with a snake-like cord made from hairs. Between these scenes at the sorceress's house and those at the monastery, the author inserts a conversational scene in the heavens in which various heavenly kings and guardians as well as Mokkenren compare Ananda's beauty with that of Buddha; another scene is of a battle between the gods as well as celestial kings and an acursed gang of celestial beings; a morning scene in the monastery where priests in black and nuns in white are taking their breakfast together. A scene of arrest which the author creates is well written. In this scene, stout monks try to arrest Ananda on a charge of violation of the Buddhist commandments, and Buddha grants them his permission on condition that they should win against Ananda. This is conducted through zen dialogue, but they are defeated. In the last part, the author adds a scene in which Ananda and Nun Matôka meet each other three years later, and talk about love—the central theme of the play.

In Kanoko's play, the maid is led to enlightenment through the medium of her beloved Ananda because of her great love for him, whereas in the original sutra she is led to her awakening through Buddha's direct teachings. The contents of Buddha's sermon are again considerably different in these two works meaning Kanoko's and the sutra. Thus when we enumerate what are not in the original work, we will find they amount to about two-thirds of her story. This shows that Kanoko's
artistic mind makes a precarious compromise with her religious one.

Then, why did she dare to add these new scenes to her play and change the original plot here and there? The author is saying in her postscript of this play that she received the hint about the distribution of rice-cakes from the anecdotes of High Priest Daitō of the zen sect and the arresting scene from the zen dialogue and that these scenes are necessary to develop the rhythm of a play. But I for one feel that what she really intends to write about in this play is love.

As she says, the main object of this play must be the study of purification-process of love, and its theme the following phrases of Buddha, ‘As those who stumble upon earth will stand up supporting themselves upon earth, so those who stumble upon love will be led into enlightenment supporting themselves upon love. Have you not been one of them?’ These words are not only the theme of this story but also the keynote of almost all her novels.

Then how is she describing the purification-process of love? Firstly, she seems to express the birth of secular love in the two rice-cakes stuck together. In other words, one of these two cakes symbolizes Ananda’s susceptible personality and the other the maid’s deep affection for him. The former can be interpreted as ‘the cause’ in Buddhist sense, the latter ‘the affinity’, and ‘the result’ which is the product of these two must be sin, which, in this story, is the maid’s attitude of wanting to satisfy her own sensuous desire, cursing the monk and going against the ethical laws given by Buddha.

Next, it is Buddha’s teachings which sublates this secular love into a higher one. In the original sutra, Buddha preaches to the maid about the six things latent in human beings, just as the title “The Sutra of the Six Things in a Human Body” shows. These six things in a human body are eyes, nose, mouth, ears, body and lochia. In opposition to the maid’s declaration that she loves Ananda’s eyes, nose, mouth, ears, voice, and pace, Buddha says that all human beings are unclean, because there are tears in the eyes, suivel in the nose, saliva in the mouth, wax in the ears, and ordure in the body. He also says that a married couple produce a child from their lochia, and that when their child dies, they bemoan over his death. He asks then, ‘What is the good of doing this?’

As compared with this, Kanoko’s Buddha does not teach his maid in that way. He says that the relation between ignorance and enlighten-
ment being like that between the shadows of night and morning, when ignorance recedes, enlightenment increases automatically by itself; so the realization of life itself is just like this. He also says that as ignorance prevents us from seeing all things as they are, we have to try to expel ignorance and selfish desire, and recognize the correct value of both our spirit and body in order to appreciate them appropriately. Here is no unnaturalness, nor unreasonableness, nor abruptness. When the time comes, just as night turns into morning, the actual world as well as we ourselves begin to appear in our new aspects through the change in the lens of recognition of our minds. Therefore, the maid, yearning for Ananda, comes to be awakened and to feel the light from Buddha shining into her heart, just through the change in her lens called Ananda. This is probably the reason why the author puts the maid of Sendara class in the center of her play, not caring at all to overstep the frame of the sutra, and why she intends to write about her changing process which is caused not by Buddha's direct teachings but by seeing the change in the man she loves.

The scene of Ananda's arrest also shows her broad-minded interpretation of Buddhist principle, for she permits the rope drawn by ten priests to break into pieces on its own accord, when Ananda says, 'What is rope? What are we ourselves?' This is probably because the author has shed her unlimited love and sympathy upon Ananda who has sinned but repenting it, has been enlightened through love, rather than upon the continent monks who do not know how to love, though they strictly observe the Buddhist commandments.

Thus, in her works, the sin and anguish are not what should be repelled but rather they are something which should be welcomed; so when Ananda is awakened from her unconscious state caused by overwhelming shame, he says as follows: 'Anguish, anguish, come here now. Come right up to me. Do you think I still hate you as much as my enemies? That is a great mistake. He who has opened my eyes is no other than you, anguish, do you understand? Sin, you are the very person who has taken the trouble to draw me into this affliction. After all, you are all my benefactors.'

In "Kishimo's Love" Kishimo, the heroine of the story, also comes to be awakened through her sin and affliction. The original work of this
Once a yaksha (demon) called Sata lived in the mountain near the royal palace of Magadha Country with his daughter and son. He was on such good terms with Hanshara, another yaksha living in the north of this country, that they arranged for their daughter and son to be married in order to continue this good relationship between the two families.

After Sata's death, his daughter, Kanki, was happily married to Hanshara's son, Hanshika, but presently Kanki begins to express her fervent desire to eat children in that castle town, upon which her husband strongly remonstrates her against fulfillment of her desire. But after she gave birth to five hundred children, having acquired many allies she becomes bold in her evil desires and listens to no one's remonstrances. And going to the castle town, she begins to kidnap and eat children there. On the other hand, all the mothers in the castle town who have lost their children are in great despair, and finally, coming to their wit's end, go to Buddha to ask him to help get their children back for them. Buddha in his great compassion goes to Kanki's house and takes her youngest son, Aiji, to his monastery. People mouth these words that she is no longer Kanki (meaning joy), but Kishimo (meaning ogress-mother). Kishimo, looking for her child frantically but in vain, comes at last to Buddha's monastery, and upon his admonition repents her sin and has her child returned vowing to do good to all the people there. Buddha tells his disciples that Kanki is an incarnation of a cowherd's wife and explains her evil as the result of her wicked vow; that is, when she was a cowman's wife and pregnant, forgetting her own condition, she danced much upon the urging of five hundred inhabitants of the castle town, and as the result of this escapade she has had a miscarriage. Vowing vengence upon the castle town for the death of her child, she offered five hundred mangos to a wondering monk, certain that one day when she was reborn in that castle town, she would eat up their children.

As compared with this story, Kanoko has omitted the circumstances in which Kishimo comes to kidnap and eat children, and also the cause or the karma of her evil doing, that is, the details of her previous life; so she begins her conte with the description of Kishimo as she eats the children. In this part, she describes Kishimo's impulse to eat children as 'the work of assimilation of tyrannical love'. That is, the vigorous
but pliant image of children arouses her sensuous love and lust towards them; when she lovingly kisses one of these children on the cheek or on the top of his nose, a strange blood in her vein flows backward and centers at the roots of her teeth; so she involuntarily bites into the soft cheeks and being irritated by her desire to appease the fear of the crying child and by her wish to possess the beloved object all to herself, she succumbs to eating him up. Here, the Buddhist conception of karma and transfiguration is replaced by a woman's abnormal impulse to love, namely, the act of her carnal satisfaction. And the motherhood which is indisputably regarded as a kind of sublime, sacred thing is described here as a kind of love which includes not only carnal passion but a tinge of sadistic cruelty.

Love as written in this work reveals features of erotic love rather than motherly love towards children. This kind of love cannot find satisfaction in the ordinary display of loving, feeling these gestures to be no more than lukewarm and certainly not adequate as an expression to convey her love (erotic) in its true aspect, the ultimate outcome being that the lover must destroy its object of love as in the case of Kishimo in order to monopolize it. But this is a psychology of love too instinctive to be called 'love'.

When Buddha hides Kishimo's youngest son, Bingara, she joins the group of mothers who wander about wailing over the loss of their children, and at this very moment Kishimo as a woman is transformed into Kishimo as a mother. Having lamented her fill and being exhausted both physically and mentally she appears before Buddha having no other course left to her.

Again Buddha's sermon to her and the process of Kishimo's repentance are different from the original sutra. For example, Buddha in the sutra admonishes her from the view of 'quantity' saying that 'Why did you steal and eat the others' only child, when you grieve so much over the loss of your one child from among so many as five hundred?'; while Kanoko's Buddha puts himself in Kishimo's place and teaches her to look at her own mind. First of all, he makes her think of the difference between love towards her own children and that towards the others' children; so she says, 'The others' children are like fruits on branches in another place, so I can be a bird who goes there to peck them, yielding to a beautiful temptation without any reserve. But my children are the branches and knots of my own trunk....As they are too much a part
of myself, they cannot drive me into such a beautiful dream as in the case of others’ children.\textsuperscript{30)}

Next, Buddha teaches her how to take an objective view of herself from the view-point of ‘quality’, saying, ‘Kishimo, mind your heart-rending sorrow that you feel now and regard it from some distance as that of all the mothers who have lost their children.’ Being helped by these words of Buddha, she comes to be able to see her own state vividly as that of every mother.

And she repents and apologizes like a mad being oppressed by the greatness of her sin, and proposes to offer her ten children (here Kanoko reduces five hundred children in the sutra to ten in deference to the reality of her story) to be disposed of by all the lamenting mothers. But Buddha coldly refuses to return her child to her, because Kishimo has not yet freed herself from the idea of regarding her children as her private property.

Upon this refusal Kishimo realizes for the first time that to receive her child from the hands of Buddha she must stand without reservation on the side of all inclusive motherhood making no distinction between her own children and the children of others. And the taking and the receiving of a child can be concluded only in the form of a trust.

The realization brings home to her how to take an objective view of both herself and her children, and at this moment her being as a demon or a beast is destroyed, destined to be reborn as a human being gifted with divinity. In other words, what Kanoko intends to write about in this conte is not a simple cause or karma nor sin and its restitution, but Kishimo’s transfiguration from a woman of instinct into an eternal deity as the result of the change in her cognition of herself and the world around her. Here again, the sin and affliction help her rebirth into ‘Ur-mutter’ which Kanoko often refers to, that is, ‘the eternal motherhood’. It can also be said that Kanoko is describing in this story ‘love’ in its dialectical development.

This dialectic development of love, or the sublation of two opposite concepts is the basic pattern of Kanoko’s works and at the same time the process of Buddhist thinking. It is so with “Ananda and the Sorceress’s Daughter”. For example, the sorceress’s daughter’s love is in its secularity right in opposite to the world of commandments embodied by the monks who try to arrest Ananda. And if the latter is the disciplinants of the spiritual world, the former is the representative of
Thus, the eternal love which Ananda and the maid are both led to attain by the direction of Buddha is the love which includes both spirit and flesh, secularity and piety, yet transcending these two opposite factors. I think, this is the very reason why the rope drawn by the monks is broken into pieces in front of Ananda who has already succeeded in embodying this love.

The 'life' on which Kanoko puts great importance has also the same character. Concerning it she says the following;21) 'life' has three pairs of eyes, that is, the eyes of 'equality', those of 'difference' and those of 'reconciliation'; when we see with the eyes of 'equality', all things seem to us to be of the same color, because we are seeing through the tears of 'benevolent intelligence'. When we see with the eyes of difference, everything seems to be isolated, because the light in the eyes which can withhold 'merciful sagacity' gives them each individual light as well as shade; and finally when we see through the eyes of 'reconciliation' everything seems to be of a color and yet at the same time distinguished in its hue from the rest, because the eyes of 'truth' are serenely clear.

Moreover, if we inquire further into these three pairs of eyes, the author says, we come to realize that they are just different phases of a single pair of eyes, and that this single pair of eyes come to be seen as the three pairs of eyes at the same time from a different point of view.

To say in other words, these three pairs of eyes are in themselves the eyes of 'reconciliation'. If we apply this to an artist's case, these three pairs of eyes are each in their turn those of 'actual feeling', 'dream' and 'expression'. Therefore, just as the eyes of 'reconciliation' have the characteristics of three different pairs of eyes though they are in themselves only one and view all things in one color yet see them characterized by each different color, 'motherhood' and 'love' described in these two stories are the new beings which are made up of the two opposite factors, and yet retain at the same time the characteristics of each constituent. These two contradictory elements never lose their original features, although they are sublated into a new existence of higher level.

The true intention of this dialectic thought is to take in 'secularity' and 'evil', snare and all, and use them to purify one's own life far from going wrong because of them. This broad-minded tolerance and magnanimity is Kanoko's main thought, as well as the main idea of the Buddhist proposition, 'Affliction vis Bodhi' which she often refers to. The love of the fairies in "Summer Night's Dream" and the love of
unsubstantial beauty which Suzukake in "The Fox" tries to acquire
have something in common with this Māhayāna love.

If we borrow the author's own words, the magnificently brilliant
flower of her literature comes out where 'the actual feeling' which she
experienced in her tormented married life and 'the dream' which is a
Buddhist ideal are fused together and sublated into a new being. In
this sense, her literature is 'expression' and 'life' in itself, and at the
same time the beautiful fictional world born from the sublation of her
own experience and the influence of foreign literature.

Note:

1) Shōsen Ohnuki — pseudonym of Yukinosuke Ohnuki (1887–1912), translator of Turgenev's "Smoke" into Japanese and good friend to Junichirō Tanizaki.
4) Fusao Hayashi — Japanese critic.
5) "Bungakkai (The Literary World)" June 1938 p. 158
7) Ibid. p. 270
8) Ibid. p. 269
9) Ibid. p. 272
10) Ibid. p. 272
13) Ibid. p. 154
16) Ibid. p. 293
17) Ibid. p. 474
18) Ibid. p. 466
20) Ibid. pp. 59–60