
Poetry:

The Language of Love in Tale of Genji

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This article examines the poetic love presented by waka poetry in the Tale of Genji. Waka poetry comprises the thematic frame of Tale of Genji. It is the language of love. Through observation of metaphors in the waka poems in this article, we can grasp the essence of the poetics of love in the Genji. Unlike the colors of any heroes' and heroines' love in other literary works, Genji's love is poetic multi-color, which makes him a mythopoetic romantic hero in Japanese culture. Love in Heian aristocracy is sketched as consisting of an elaborate code of courtship which is very strict in its rules of communion by poetry. Love is a romantic adventure without compromise and bondage of morality. The love adventure of Genji and other heroes involves not only aesthetic Bildung and political struggle but also poetic production and metaphorical transformation. The acceptance of the lover's poetic courtship creates an artistic and romantic air to the relations between men and women. Love and desire are accompanied by a ritual of elegance, grace and a refined cult of poetic beauty.

There are 795 poems (waka) in the Genji. They are used in the world of the Genji as a medium of interpersonal communication, as a means to express individual emotions and feelings, as an artistic narrative to poeticize the romance and as an artistic form to explore the internal life of the characters.¹ Nearly 80 percent (624) of these 795 poems are exchanges (zotoka), 107 are solo recitals and 64 are occasional poems.²

Lynne Miyake describes waka poetry as a complex of three poetic technique: kakekotoba (pivot words that function on several levels with several meanings), engo (word associations that call up shared cultural images and meanings), and honkadōri (the incorporation of the words or situation of a well-known poem into the meaning of the poem at hand).³ Because of such devices, the waka requires that the reader possess interpretive strategies and collaborate both in the production and completion of the poem.⁴ The response from the reader, however, is both canonical and imaginative. The waka is an oral as well as written art form.⁵ Recited orally, the waka often serves as a shared moment between lovers, and as a prelude to a romantic tryst, as a display of communication and literary skill.

Waka poetry pervades every aspect of life—from courtship to court ritual to artistic enjoyment; and because of these functions, the waka is rapidly incorporated into the Heian prose narrative.⁶ Closer reading of the waka poem makes it evident that they contribute not only to the beauty of style but also to the creation of a lyrical mode of narration. The multi-meaning and dual functioning of many words in the waka create a density of allusions and puns which rarely exist in English poetry. The waka is an exchange between a man and a

woman.⁷ The delineation of persona and identity in the waka is so flexible that, in the thirty-one syllables, a reader can inhabit the fictional worlds of both poet and lover. In the *Genji*, the reader performs the lines and becomes the part of Genji or Ukifune. The waka persona is an experiencer or a witness of an event or an emotion; it is a non-gendered voice which remains fluid and shifting.⁸ The *Genji*, composed largely of waka, creates a detailed, virtual world in which the reader can identify with fictive personas and partake of their experiences.

In regard to specific literary influences on the poetic love theme in the *Genji*, it is common to mention its indebtedness to Chang Hen Ge (A Song of Unending Sorrow), the famous long poem written by the great Chinese poet Bai Juyi that was much admired in Heian Japan. The poem describes how the Chinese Emperor Xuan Zong's passionate love for the incomparably beautiful Yang Guifei endangered the state and caused a rebellion during which she was executed by soldiers and finally found in the afterworld.⁹ Murasaki Shikibu alludes to this poem at the opening of the novel: "in China just such an unreasoning passion had been the undoing of an emperor and had spread turmoil throughout the land."¹⁰ In the *Genji*'s world of physical separation it is surprising to see such great emphasis placed on letter writing as a means of bridging the gap between the lovers. The lovers' communication is explicitly tied to the practice of poetic creation. Additionally, for the hero and heroine, poetry is the only form of non-hierarchical language available since women are not allowed to use the official (male) language. And as two lovers are often in precisely such a difficult situation, poetry becomes the language of love.¹¹ The hero and the heroine must learn the skill of writing poetry and the dedicated control over emotional expression that signifies the primary quality of a cultivated man and woman. Thus, writing poetry becomes a way of verifying one's very existence, and the ability to express oneself in poetry becomes the basic part of being desirable for both man and woman. The separation between a man and a woman itself is inviting and productive of desire; hence, the poetry that brings union is ever so popular.¹² Narration often proceeds in the form of ritualized repartee, an exchange of poems that stands for a cultivated form of courtship. And given the rule that physical distance must be maintained between the lovers, the medium is to a large extent written poetry to be written as the hand-carried letter as the means. The letter is a sign of presence and by that token the physical substitute; its form becomes a fetish. The letter must say the truth, for otherwise communication would become impossible.¹³ The poetic letter in the *Genji* is to be privileged over presence itself.

The poems in the form of dialogue make up three-quarters of all poetry in the *Genji* and act as the norm, a media that is an integral element of the tie between poetry and narration. They express the characters' intense feelings and passion, define their personalities, illuminate their thoughts and express their inexplicable love and desire through metaphors. The poems "emphasize themes within a narrative progression and clarify relationships."

According to Roland Barthes, the *Genji* is more an "empire of signs" than of symbols, "for the depth is on the surface and the 'self' is masked or emptied into the gesture—a gesture so refined and sensitive as to transform the world into poetry."¹⁴ *Genji*'s world is an aesthetic realm in which the mundane desire and poetic love are transformed into a delicate literary form. The transcendent sacred realm presents in aesthetic ritual is a poetic drama beyond the bounds of morality. The poetic world of love has its own distinctive marks. The glimmering surfaces often express and evoke a particular poetic moment signifying love as an art and motion. The moment of gentle sadness and longing echoes through the moonlight and the

ocean breeze like in this scene in the “Akashi” chapter:

On a quiet moonlit night when the sea stretched off into the distance under a cloudless sky, he (Genji) almost felt he was looking at the familiar *waters* of his own *garden*. Overcome with longing, he was like a solitary, nameless wanderer. “Awaji, distant foam,” he whispered to himself:

“Awaji: in your name is all my sadness,
And clear you stand in the *light of the moon* tonight.”

He took out the seven-stringed koto, long neglected, which he had brought from the city and spread a train of sad thoughts through the house as he plucked out a few tentative notes. He exhausted all his skills on “The Wide Barrow,” and the sound reached the house in the hills on a sighing of wind and waves. Sensitive young ladies heard it and were moved. Lowly rustics, though they could not have identified the music, were lured out into the sea winds.¹⁵

It is an aesthetic of the subtle, inviting and seductive moment, an aesthetic of sentiment and feeling, communication and courtship.¹⁶ Music, “moonlit” and “waters” “under cloudless sky” transform the narrative into a poetic world in which Genji expresses his sentiment and emotions through the epithoric metaphors. The “cloudless sky” over Awaji reflects the “familiar waters” of his own “garden” where his beautiful ladies live in. The “Waters” act as a mirror of Genji’s love, and they arouse amorous feelings in him. It is here in Awaji he later meets Akashi and falls in love with her.

Characteristic of the nature of the amorous hero during his trying years away from the capital, Genji sends an affectionate signal to the talented and attractive Akashi whom he has discovered during his visit to the Akashi priest. When curtain strings brush against her thirteen-stringed koto, Genji sees the young woman playing the instrument at her leisure; he is aroused and addresses a poem to her:

Mutsugoto o	Would there were one	
katari awasen	with whom to exchange	
hito mo gana	intimate whispers:	
uki yo no yume mo	then might I	
nakaba samu ya to.	begin to awaken	
	from this dreary world’s dream.	(2: 246; S 263)
Akeno yo ni	How can my heart,	
yagate madoeru	which wanders	
kokoro ni wa	in never-ending night,	
izure o yume to	recognize dreams	
wakite tataran.	and speak of them to you?	(2: 247; S 263)

Akashi responds with a poem in a barely audible whisper. Although she reveals her heart wandering in the world of night, her poem signals anticipation. Like the laurel poet Daiyu in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, Akashi is the finest woman poet in the Genji. She expresses in this poem a delicate sense of moment, the wavering motion of her love, as she “wanders” on the brink of yielding to Genji’s wooing. However, in contrast to Genji’s sheer amorous remark, Akashi’s tone reveals the complex of her basic instinct of a young woman and her social awareness of a provincial governor’s daughter being courted by prince Genji who could change her life forever in a few moments.¹⁷ The exchanging “dream” metaphor in both Genji’s and Akashi’s poems reflects distinctive sense and meanings. Genji’s dream is the reflection of his “dreary” trying life, and he is longing for relief from the emotional world, while Akashi, whose “heart” “wanders in never ending night,” is dreaming of love, but hardly tells her virginal longing to any man, like Genji. However, her questioning response is

captivating and reveals her orange-color love—like cow, twilight and fruit, productive, tender and mature. Akashi is the counterpart of Baochai whose color of love is parallel to hers.

The “sky” and “clouds” are popular metaphors in the poems (as appeared in Ukifune’s poem) in the *Genji*. They symbolize a sense of time shared by the lovers in their most sentimental or romantic moment, and space where the lovers meet, enjoying their happiness or sharing their grief together. The sky and clouds constantly remind Genji of his love for his beloved women both alive and dead. The following poem of Genji is written after his beloved Ugao’s death, expressing Genji’s painful feeling for the passing of her life:

Mishi hito no	She I knew and loved	
keburi o kumo to	now like smoke rises to the clouds	
nagamureba	where I gaze in yearning,	
yube no sora mo	so that the sky as evening falls	
mutsumajiki kana.	also holds dear tints of loss.	(1: 167; S 175; A 71)

The “clouds” and the “sky” in this poem express Genji’s blue-color love, which is different from his green-color love for Akashi in *Awaji*. In *Awaji*, Genji’s green-color affection for Akashi is romantic and impulsive, but his feeling for Ugao is melancholy and incessant; Ugao is gone like the falling evening-flower (ugao in Japanese) but her love and spirit still exist like the “clouds” in the “sky,” arousing Genji’s inevitable languishing and “yearning” for her. The “evening” is associated with the evening-flower, and the “falls” symbolize her passing away. Ugao’s figure and her white color are transformed into the “dear tints” as the incarnation of the white evening-flower blossoming at night in Genji’s dream.

By conveying love and desire through symbolic understatement and metaphorical images, *waka* transforms the lover’s erotic pursuit into an elegant episode. If we view Genji’s courtship of the young Murasaki in our social and moral perspectives, it becomes a forceful possessing of a young girl, but when we perceive through Heian cultural milieu, the social perspectives and the poetic communication, all of which serve to bridge the gap between Genji and the young Murasaki, Genji’s pursuit of the young girl creates a poetic highlight of the romance. However, Genji’s passion for the young Murasaki is virtually a substitution for his attachment to Fujitsubo, which has been revealed in several of his poems. In the first day of his acquaintance with the child named Murasaki, Genji recites the following poem to express his longing for both Murasaki and Fujitsubo.

Te ni tsumite	When shall I pluck	
itsushika mo min	and hold in my hand	
murasaki no	the young field plant	
ne ni kayoikeru	whose roots	
nobe no wakakusa.	of the lavender?	(1: 314; S 102)

This poem, according to Norma Field, achieves the “transubstantiation of niece into aunt, of copy into original, or metonymy into metaphor.”¹⁸ Murasaki is the niece of Fujitsubo, and she bears a great resemblance of her aunt. The young Murasaki (lavender) arouses Genji’s desire to possess (“pluck and hold”) her as the substitution for Fujitsubo. The color of murasaki (purple) is indicated by the depth of the hue, and its significant ranges (the colors signified by the Heian court) from taboo to intimacy and affinity. This symbolism is seen in the exchanging poems of the Reizei Emperor and Tamakazura. For Genji, the color of murasaki evokes the hue of Fujitsubo since “fuji” is wisteria. Just as the hue of the wisteria is mixed in

murasaki, Fujitsubo exists in Murasaki, and they complement each other.¹⁹ Through the implications of the purple color which represents phoenix, goddess, dawn and mermaid, the lavender (as Murasaki) here suggests the expectation of dawn, and the wisteria (as Fujitsubo) indicates the tantalizing mermaid beyond reach. The purple color serves Genji as a dichotomy of his erotic desire for Murasaki and spiritual longing for Fujitsubo.

Ne wa minedo	Though I haven't seen its roots	
aware tozo omou	dear to me is this plant,	
Musashino no	kin to the one in Musashino,	
tsuyu wakewaburu	the one I cannot visit,	
kusa no yukari o.	so thick is the dew.	(1: 330; S 110)

Here Genji is thinking of separating the ten-year-old girl from her nurse; his erotic consciousness is signified by the pun in the first line “ne” (roots) and “neru” (sleep). The “one in Musashino” is Fujitsubo whom Genji “cannot visit” because she is his stepmother and she cannot accept his ‘folly’ passion which could destroy the future of their son, the Reize Emperor. The metaphor “dew” in the last line implies the tearful gap between Genji and Fujitsubo. The “thick” “dew,” which in the original line means uncrossable dews, suggests the Chinese mythopoetic image of the milky way, which separates the lovers Cowboy and Sewing-girl forever. Like the milky way, the uncrossable “kusa” (grass) wrapped by the thick dew has separated Genji and Fujitsubo ever since their last secret meeting.

The young “plant” (wakakusa) “usually sprouts two leaves in the beginning, hence its budding is an epithet husband and wife, or for a couple’s first night together.”²⁰ Murasaki is metaphorized by Genji as the virginal plant that will grow from its “roots” “kin to the one” Genji “cannot visit,” and she will become the perfect substitution for Fujitsubo. The “roots” are a provocative metaphor of desire, yet they sail (transform) Genji across the milky way to the virgin land of Murasaki and from there to his perpetual harbor (like “roots”) of Fujitsubo.

However, in spite of her role as the substitution for Fujitsubo, what distinguishes Murasaki from all of Genji’s beloved women is that she is literally a child when she appears in Genji’s orbit. Despite his dedication, Genji’s intention is undeniably erotic from the beginning. Genji is never more tender, fervent and poetic than he is with Murasaki. In contrast to Baochai’s substituted marriage to Baoyu who is attached to Daiyu, Murasaki is the shadow of Fujitsubo. Both Murasaki Shikibu and Cao Xueqing use a dream metaphor to reveal their heroes’ inner world. As the counterpart of Daiyu who appears in Baoyu’s dream declaring her vanished expectation, Fujitsubo appears in Genji’s dream charging him with betrayal of their secret. Genji is wakened up by Murasaki from his moaning sleep and composes this poem to express his sorrow:

Tokete nenu	A lonely awakening	
nezame sabishiki	from uneasy sleep	
fuyu no yoni	on this winter’s night:	
musubohoretsuru	how brief my dream	
yume no mijikasa.	so sadly formed.	(2: 485; S 359)

The “dream” metaphor appearing in this poem mirrors Genji’s psychological complex of guilt and remorse as well as longing for Fujitsubo. When Genji becomes mature, he feels guilt for his early fateful meeting with his stepmother Fujitsubo in her house, where he restlessly has an affair with her, which results in having their son born as his father’s son who becomes the

future Reize Emperor. Genji has felt remorse ever since his father's death for this sinful transgression, however, he cannot overcome his attachment to Fujitsubo, which is revealed in his dreaming of her and his longing for staying with her longer ("how brief my dream"). His attachment to Fujitsubo is no longer a romantic love but a "sadly" longing for the image of a perfect woman.

The dream metaphor has different implications and different nuances in each individual. This distinction is seen in the earlier exchange poems of Genji and Fujitsubo. Genji writes this poem to Fujitsubo after their fateful meeting to express his desire and fulfillment:

Mite mo mata	So rare the nights
au yo mare naru	of meeting
yume no uchi ni	that I would lose
yagate magiruru	myself
waga mi to mo gana.	in this night's dream.

In contrast, Fujitsubo responds to Genji's amorous feelings with a devastating sorrow:

Yogatari ni	They would talk about me still,	
hito ya tsutaen	were I to dissolve	
tagui naku	this self,	
uki mi o samenu	incomparably wretched,	
yume ni nashite mo.	in a never-ending dream.	(1: 306; S 98)

Genji and Fujitsubo's relationship is repeatedly linked to dreams as is that of Daiyu and Baoyu. The two dreams here are a metaphor for Genji's and Fujitsubo's inner world, and they are the spirit possession and wish fulfillment for both Genji and Fujitsubo. The dreams reflect the psychological as well as the fictional reality reflected by the interaction in their fateful meeting. For Genji, the dream is a realm where he can meet Fujitsubo and love her without anxiety, threat, and destruction; his passion, sentiment and desire are flowing together in his dream, the fathomless ocean for his romantic voyage. Genji's dream is youthful and self-indulgent and it provides a substitute for romantic experience that cannot be obtained in reality. Dream is the magic world in which he embodies his illusion, explores his desire and extends his love. However, for Fujitsubo, the dream is a retreat from the public gossip and an escape from threats by both the Emperor and her political rivals, who wish to prevent her from securing her son's future throne. Although Fujitsubo, like every woman in the court, can hardly resist the most handsome, talented and romantic prince Genji; between the choice of love and duty, she chooses the later.²¹ Her dream, contrary to Genji's, is a "never-ending" nightmare, a dark harbor and a desolate transformation, since she is made "incomparably wretched" by the complex of love, duty and reputation.

Upon Murasaki's death, Genji feels so despairing that he tells Akashi of his intention to take vows. But Akashi suggests that he should wait until his grandchildren grow up and their positions are assured. During his conversation, Genji thinks of spending the night with Akashi, but he finally changes his mind, thinking it is better to take his leave. He sends her a poem the following morning:

Naku naku mo	Crying, oh crying
kaerinishi kana	like the wild geese
kari no yo wa	I made my way home;
izuko mo tsui no	but this passing world

toko yo naranu ni. holds no resting place eternal. (4: 522; S 728)

The wild geese fly back to their dwelling just as the weeping Genji leaves Akashi for his own lonely bed. The poem depends on a pun on “toko yo,” which means the eternal or other world, and “toko” meaning bed. The “wild geese” symbolize the changing of the world and the eventual separation. Genji’s beloved women leave him like the vanishing geese, dying one after another; hence, he cannot keep them from flying to the “eternal” world and his marital bed from change. The “geese” not only symbolize the changing of the world, eventual separation and Genji’s passing women, but represent Genji himself who is “crying like the wild geese” heading home but who “holds no resting place.”²² Geese are popular image in classical Chinese poetry and Japanese waka because they are seasonal migrating birds. Although Genji’s garden world (the Rokujo Garden), like the beautiful habitat of the geese, is populated by his floral women, when the deadly winter comes they wither away, and Genji, too will follow them. He is “crying” not merely for his loneliness and unfulfilled desire but for his keen empathy with nature, his *mono no aware*.

Akashi’s reply to Genji’s languishing indicates her sympathy as well as her loneliness. Paradoxically, while Murasaki is alive, the jealous Akashi is able to see Genji from time to time, but now she is left alone without such visits. She tells Genji:

Kari ga ishi	Since the water has dried	
nawashiro mizu no	from the field of seedling rice	
taeshi yori	where the wild goose stayed	
utsurishi hana no	I never see the reflection	
kage o dani mizu.	of the flower once mirrored there.	(4: 522; S 728)

Here Genji is the wild goose whose image is mirrored by the water like the reflected flower. Murasaki is the water upon which the flower image appears. Genji as the wild goose is beyond intimate interaction, coming and going but hardly staying; as flower he attracts her but is stoic. Murasaki is the one who makes Genji visible and vital. Like the Divine Flower Tendent Baoyu, who enjoys his earthly life with the beautiful girls of the Grand View Garden, Genji gathers his beloved women at Rokujo Garden and enjoys their incomparable and individual beauty.²³ There is a split in Akashi’s poem between the first three lines and the last two. Beyond her perceptions of Murasaki’s indispensable association with “water,” as Baochai perceives Daiyu, Akashi still feels that Genji’s presence is magical and captivating like the flower.

Genji is not simply a libertine, but a man of deep emotion and poetic sentiment; Above all, he is a passionate lover who discovers forbidden and hidden love. He pursues women because he is truly interested in love, beauty, and poetic sensitivity, for these elements are neglected in his early marriage. Like Isabel’s suitor Goodwood, Genji is an ardent pursuer. Undaunted by his earlier failure in courting Utsusemi, Genji secretly revisits her residence and enters her chamber with the aid of Utsusemi’s young brother. However, to his surprise, Utsusemi eludes him once again. In his disappointment, Genji composes the following soliloquy:

Utsusemi no	At the base of the tree,
Mi o kaetekeru	Where the locust
Ko no moto ni	Transformed itself,
Nao hitogara no	The empty shell

Natsukashiki kana. Still brings fond memories. (1: 203; S 55; H 65)

This poem reflects Genji's keen ability to envision his longing through nature, and his mono no aware (a traditional Japanese sentiment, especially for nature) is transformed into a romantic moment of transient love. Haruo Hirane suggests the "shell" left by the "locust" (utsusemi, empty locust in Japanese) "on the tree trunk after molting represents the robe left behind by Utsusemi in her haste. The shell of the locust, an insect noted for its brief life, also symbolizes the illusory and elusive nature of love."²⁴ Although Utsusemi has fled away from Genji's clutches, she, too, is disappointed. After reprimanding her brother for acting as Genji's mediator, she "reads Genji's poem and realizes that, were she not the wife of a provincial governor, she might be happy now."²⁵ To express her anguish for wasting love, lonely like the locust, she recites this poem by Lady Ise:

Utsusemi no	Secret tears wet my sleeves	
Ha ni ohu tsuyu no	Like the dew that settles	
Kogakurete	On the wings of a locust	
Shinobishinobi ni	Hidden in the shadow	
Nururu sode kana.	Of the trees.	(1: 205; S 56; H 65)

In contrast to Genji's sentiment for the elusive locust, Utsusemi sees herself as the incarnation of the locust, wet with "secret tears," living in loneliness and ephemerality. Love for Genji is romantic, but for Utsusemi love is embedded in grief; she is overshadowed by her marriage like the locust shadowed in the tree. Marriage becomes a bird cage for her; although she is protected by the cage, she wants to fly into the sky enjoying the freedom. However, she has only the wings of the locust and cannot fly out of the trees that both protect and cage her like the shadow.

Genji and Utsusemi fuse the poetic sense of evanescence symbolized by the locust and the dew, and with more sentimental and emotional perception of the change of nature, they transform their feelings of love and death into an elegant and poetic moment.

As the language of love, waka poetry bridges not only the gender gap between man and woman but also the social gap between different classes. This effect is exemplified by the love poem written by Genji and Fujitsubo's son, the Reizei Emperor. The concept of the colors of love is conceived and expressed by the Reizei Emperor in his poem to Tamakazura:

Nadote kaku	Why did I stain	
hai aigataki	my heart	
murasaki o	with thoughts of you	
kokoro ni fukaku	so resistant,	
omoisomeiten.	O purple-clad one.	(3: 377; S 505)

Purple, the color of goddess, phoenix and dawn, is royal and poetic. The "purple" here signifies the Reizei Emperor's poetic affection for Tamakazura, and it symbolizes the Emperor's love. The original word "hai," meaning ashes, is used as a mordant in dyeing fabrics purple, and the depth of the hue varies with the reaction of the dye to the mordant. The Emperor uses "hai aigataki" (literally meaning difficult to combine with ashes) to reveal his feelings of being titillated by Tamakazura,²⁶ who is the "purple" mermaid in the sea beyond the Emperor's reach. The poem suggests metaphorically the popular codes of the purple color which acts as a substitute for the Emperor's colorful longing for an ordinary woman.

Like Genji and his friend and rival Tonochujo who both have a love affair with the

elusive and charming Ugao, their grandchildren Niou and Kaoru become rivals for the elusive and the most romantic woman Ukifune. More tenacious and aggressive than Kaoru, Niou manages to trace Ukifune to Uji. After peering in on Ukifune, Niou cannot resist meeting her though he does not know her identity, as Genji pursues Ugao without any knowledge of her. On their first morning together, Niou is driven by his lust and indulges Ukifune to have ablutions first rather than waiting as every woman does who follows the norms. The following month Niou makes the second visit to Uji to see Ukifune. Before reaching the shore, he pauses at an island in the middle of the river. There Niou expresses his bitter-sweet longing for Ukifune through the metaphor of the orange trees on the island:

Toshi henu tomo	Though the years pass	
kawaran mono ka	how can it change,	
tachibana no	the heart	
kojima no saki ni	that plight its troth at the point	
chigiru kokoro wa.	on Mandarin Orange Isle?	(6: 142; S 991; H 275)

The mandarin orange as a metaphor for unchanging love inspires the Kokinshu poem that resonates with Genji's poetic affection for Ugao:

Satsuki matsu	May-awaiting,	
hana tachibana no	the mandarin orange blossom	
ka o kageba	bears in its scent	
mukashi no hito no	fragrance from the sleeves	
sode no ka zo suru.	of one bygone.	(KKS 139; H 275)

The mandarin "orange blossom" is endowed with the sweet fragrance of romance. The "scent" of the orange blossom arouses Genji's passion for Ugao; her charm, her elusive figure and her hidden identity all become the mystery for Genji's romantic adventure. And just like Yugao, even while she surrendered to Genji, Ukifune responds to Niou in the poem revealing her identity as the "drifting boat," which is her name:

Tachibana no	Though the color of the Isle	
kojima no iro wa	of the Mandarin Orange	
kawaraji o	may not change,	
kono ukifune zo	unknowable is the destiny	
yukue shirarenu.	of this drifting boat.	(6: 142; S 991; H 275)

Here Ukifune uses her name the "drifting boat" as a metaphor for her insecurity, her instability and her destiny—the "unknowable" world. In the Heian period, women, like boats ridden by men, are the subject of men's desire; they are only acted upon, and they must learn to control their emotions and passion. The "drifting boat" is like the migrating "geese" in Genji's poem; it symbolizes the changing world and foretells the lovers' separation.²⁷ Niou and Ukifune are the most erotic lovers in the *Genji*. The narrator points to Ukifune's disheveled hair and notes that they "play and cavort" (6: 147; S 994) all day long in a manner shameful to behold. Niou finds Ukifune freshly seductive because he never sees a woman so exposed as Ukifune. Unlike Kaoru, who expresses his longing by transforming his beloved woman into mythopoetic icon through poetry, Niou envisions his desire through the beauty of Ukifune's physical aura.

Kaoru is a poetic and sentimental lover; his "heart" is often shadowed by "dark" cloud, thus, the "rain" brings him only weariness, while thinking about his beloved, he feels blue.

This is Kaoru's message to Ukifune, signaling his longing for her in the "unending rain":

Mizu masaru	In that village of Uji	
ochi no satobito	where the waters rise	
ika naran	I wonder how you are,	
harenu nagame ni	when in unending rain	
kakikurasu koro.	both heart and sky grow dark.	(6: 141; S 975; H 256)

In contrast to the blue "rain" of Kaoru, the "rain" in Ukifune's poem symbolizes all of her passion and romantic spirit. Like the poetic Daiyu who expresses her affection for Baoyu only in symbolic and metaphorical ways, Ukifune conveys her passion and sentiment through poetry with more sensual and feminine images. In her last poem to Kaoru, Ukifune signals her passion with "rain" and "sleeves" metaphors which are more evocative and symbolic than the "rain" in Kaoru's poem.

Tsurezure to	Since my kin,	
mi o shiru ame no	the dreary rain,	
oyamaneba	will not pause for a moment,	
sade sae itodo	even my sleeves	
mikasa masarite.	are flooding over.	(6: 152; S 996; H 288)

Rain is a natural element in the creation of human lives; it bears the poetic implications of both physical and spiritual love. Rain, like the tears and fluids of nature, represents the tears and fluids of human beings. The tear is the physical formation of passion, emotion and feelings. When Ukifune feels the "rain will not pause for a moment" on her "kin," she wants Kaoru to feel that her passion and desire are "flooding over," and she is as wet as a flower in the rain. The "sleeves" are a typical image of woman's physical presentation in the Heian period, and a man is easily aroused by only catching a glance of a woman's beautiful sleeve.²⁸ Here Ukifune displays her sleeves to signal her longing for love.

Ukifune depicts her passion for Kaoru extensively through "rain," "sleeves" and "flooding," however, her love for Niou is intensively erotic in the more striking "rain" and "peak" metaphors:

Kakikurashi	Why not make myself,	
haresenu mine no	passing rootless	
amagumo ni	through the world,	
ukite yo o furu	like the dark rain clouds	
mi to mo nasaba ya.	on the peak that never clears.	(6: 125; S 996; H 288)

Although the same "rain" metaphor in the above two poems, the former, "rain" of her passion, is merely "flooding over" her sleeves; however, the later becomes the "rain clouds" which signify both her passion and her physical aura hovering over the "peak," a phallic image. Implicit in Ukifune's poems is the word "mi," meaning self being, or simply "I," but always with a strong sense of the body. Ukifune's "mi" (body) appears in both poems and represents to different degrees the eroticism of the most amorous heroine in the *Genji*.²⁹ Ukifune's color of love is green, like peacock, rain, grass and tree, representing the idealistic, romantic and impulsive. To be (to be sexual in a psychoanalytic sense) herself identified as the "drifting boat" is an important part of her romantic characteristics, and to be expressive (like a peacock showing its beautiful fan) of her poetic and feminine impulse is part of her liberal persona. Like the poetic Daiyu and romantic Isabel, Ukifune transforms her green-color love into

poetry and wanders in her emotional world as a “drifting boat” in the tearful rain of nature.

Rain, waters and peaks are prevalent metaphors in the poems of Niou, Kaoru and Ukifune in a love triangle. However, each poet individualizes these metaphors in his/her own way, which is seen in Ukifune’s distinctive implications of the “rain” in her poems to Kaoru and Niou. The “peak” in Niou’s poem also produces different metaphorical meanings from that of Ukifune:

Mine no yuki	Trampling through	
migiwa no kori	the snowy peaks	
fumiwakete	and the ice at water’s edge	
kimi ni zo madou	I do not lose my way	
michi wa madowazu.	though I lose myself in you.	(6: 147; S 955; H 147)

For Niou, the “peaks” imply the different latitudes of his emotional world; no matter what season it is, the “snowy” winter or rainy summer, he is always traveling in the world of love with these different latitudes.³⁰ Unlike Kaoru, who is overshadowed by the passionate summer rain, Niou is always passionate, even in the winter season. Niou is an aggressive and romantic lover, whereas Kaoru is a sentimental and stoic lover. Niou’s love is red color, like sun, fire and heart, emotional, erotic and apollonian, while Kaoru’s love is purple color, like phoenix and dawn, royal (he is dedicated to Ukifune) and poetic. In his poem (above) to Ukifune, when the “waters rise,” he wonders “how” Ukifune is, and in the following poem to her, when “waves crossed over,” he still “did not even know” but just “thought only that you would yet wait”:

Nami koyoru	I did not even know	
koro tomo shirazu	the time the waves crossed over	
Sue no Matsu	Sue no Matsu;	
matsuran to nomi	I thought only that	
omoikeru kana.	you would still wait.	(6: 142; S 935; H 142)

The different colors of love of Niou and Kaoru are revealed further both in their mono no aware (feelings evoked by nature) in their poems written both on their journey to Uji to see their beloved women. When Kaoru comes into the mountains, thick mists flow in blurring his path, and as he braves his way through the dense trees, a stormy wind blows dew shattering from leaves, and he is thoroughly soaked and chilling. Unused to such secret journeys, he feels somewhat tearful:

Yamaoroshi ni	From leaves that cannot	
taenu konoha no	hold the mountain storm	
tsuyu yori mo	the dewdrops fall	
Ayanaku moroki	yet more delicately fall	
Waga namida kana.	my tears.	(6: 135; S 879)

Like the rain and waters metaphors, the “dewdrops” and “tears” in this poem symbolize Kaoru’s emotional complex of love. Although he does not know what makes him weep, the poem itself tells his implicit feelings about love. Tears are the best way to release and express one’s inexplicable feelings and emotions. When the poetic Kaoru falls in love, he feels somewhat lost in himself just like the falling “dewdrops,” because love for him is an identification of oneself in the other. The “mountain storm” signals the deep emotional vortex in Kaoru, and he senses from the sudden change of nature the power of love which stimulates

his tears, because of his poetic *mono no aware* (sentiment).

Flare and flower are the two main poetic metaphors which highlight the love theme in the *Genji*. The flare metaphor has its antecedent in *Kokinshu*. The following poem from *Kokinshu* describes the secret desire burning inside the lover's heart with sorrow and tears:

Kagaribi ni	Why does this body,	
Aranu wagami no	Which is not a fisherman's flare,	
Nazo mo kaku	Burn like this,	
Namida no kawa ni	Even as it floats	
Ukite moyuramu.	On a river of tears?	(No. 529–530; H 98)

In his poem to Tamakazura, Genji uses the flare metaphor to express his burning passion that flows away like unremitting smoke:

Kagaribi ni	The smoke of passion	
Tachisou koi no	that rises	
Keburi koso	from the flares	
Yo ni wa taesenu	is a flame	
Hono o narikere.	that never ceases.	(3: 249; S 455)

The “flares” are the lights of Genji's passion; they are employed by the Heian intellectual lovers in their *waka* as a popular symbol of desire because they bear the symbolic associations, like a necklace, with love as the string threading the pearl-like metaphors: flares associated with flame, flame associated with light, light with night, night with dream, dream with longing, longing with imagination and fantasy, fantasy with disillusion, disillusion with smoke, smoke with flame, and flame with flares. Each of these metaphors bears different poetic connotations of love, and all these connotations associate with the metaphorical meanings and sense of flares. Thus, the flares symbolize the burning desire like flame, the dazzling passion like light, the darkness and mystery of love like night, the realm of interaction like dream, the sorrow and delight of longing, the colors and miracle of imagination and fantasy, and the despair of disillusion like smoke. Though the Flares chapter is short, the metaphor of the dim pine flares burning in the autumn evening creates unexpected effects of poetic over tones. The flares also reflect the matured sexuality of Genji—though burning, frustrated and disappointed with the father-cum-lover relationship with Tamakazura, he is no longer acting restlessly and forcefully as he did with Fujitsubo. Genji's color of love has changed from his youthful red-color love (like sun and fire, emotional, destructive, erotic and Apollonian) to black-and-brown (like night and horse, creative, transcendental, heterogeneous, passionate and paternal). Unlike Murasaki, who is still a child and has little choice but to submit to the hero, Tamakazura realizes that, though she is indebted and attracted to Genji, she does not want to succumb to his advance. Between Genji and other suitors, she finally chooses the latter and gets married to Higekuro to start her new life.

Flowers are major metaphorical images in the *Genji*. Many heroines are named after flowers, as Ugao is the evening flower, Fujitsubo the wisteria, Murasaki the lavender, Tamakazura the hibiscus, even the heroes are named with floral terms, as Niou is the scent and Kaoru the fragrance. Genji's pursuit of Ugao always associates with his fantasy about and relish for the evening flower in which he finds the elusive, fragile and transient natures of the flower in Ugao (the Ugao metaphor is analyzed substantially in part 3 of Chapter 1). In the *Genji*, love is perceived as an organic part of beauty of both human beings and flowers, and

the human beauty is always identified with flowers. Thus, seeing either women or flowers becomes a form of possession. When Yugiri (Genji's son) is called by Genji after the typhoon to inspect the Rokujo Garden (Rokujo-in), he finds his father's beauties privately kept in the Garden. As he sees these women, Yugiri starts imagining them as different flowers—Murasaki is the wild cherry blossom, Tamakazura the kerria, the Akashi daughter the wisteria.³¹

In the *Genji*, according to Richard Bowring, flowers are connected to states of mind. Genji creates for each of his women in the Rokujo Garden a floral name based on his artistic tastes, his predilection to the women's persona and their sexual appeals to him, which is seen in his most beloved Murasaki who is named after his most favorite flower.³² Flowers in the *Genji* not only represent a women's beauty and persona perceived by men but also stand as metaphors signifying different colors of love and erotic transformations. Genji's affection for his women is multi-color love, different from the antithetical black-and-white love of Baoyu. His colors of love are individualized as green love for Fujitsubo, (idealistic, romantic, impulsive symbolized by peacock, rain and tree), black love for Ugao, (creative, mystic, transcendental symbolized by owl, night, dream and death), orange love for Akashi, (productive, tender, mature symbolized by cow, twilight, fruit), brown love for Murasaki, (heterogeneous, aggressive, passionate and paternal symbolized by horse, pyramid and mountain), red love for Tamakazura, (emotional, erotic, Apollonian symbolized by lion, sun, fire and heart). Genji identifies his different colors of love with flowers: brown love with red lotus as Murasaki, orange love with cherry blossom as Akashi, and red love with kerria as Tamakazura.

The heros in the *Genji* transform not only their aesthetics of love but erotic desire into flowers, since flowers are objects that can act as substitutes. Yugiri's envisioning of the women in the Rokujo Garden as different flowers expresses not merely his aesthetic view about women but his libidinous consciousness about them, because the flowers are undoubtedly linked to their ultimate unavailability. Thus, it is, for Yugiri, the only way of imagining the potent sexuality of the women as of the flowers, which is in much the same way that the creation of the Rokujo Garden³³ is Genji's objectification of both his aesthetic and erotic love.

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