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- The *Shōto Shōto* Short Story of the Japanese Writers Hoshi Shinichi, Akagawa Jirō and Atōda Takashi: Artistic Method, Genre, Traditions and Innovations
..... KHRONOPULO Liala 1
- El curioso caso de la traducción de Armando Armando Palacio Valdés en la revista literaria *Akai Tori*: Análisis comparativo del texto original y la traducción partiendo de las coordenadas socio – históricas del momento
..... FERREIRO POSSE Dámaso 24
- A Comparative study on the Philosophy of Education and the related issues, in two educational classics: "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" (John Locke) and "An Encouragement of Learning" (Fukuzawa Yukichi)
..... NGUYEN Thi Phuong Hao 45
- New trends in China's International Cultural Exchange (8) – For the study, inheritance, dissemination and exchange of intangible cultural heritage
..... LIN Zuoping 69
- Textual Value of "Nihon-shiki" ZHANG Xuan 76
- Interpreting the Linguistic Features of Japanese News Headlines
..... LI Aihua, CUI Zhong 84

The *Shōto Shōto* Short Story of the Japanese Writers
 Hoshi Shinichi, Akagawa Jirō and Atōda Takashi:
 Artistic Method, Genre, Traditions and Innovations

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Abstract: This article explores the extra-short Japanese story, which has a special name, *Shōto Shōto* (from English 'short short'), the prerequisites of the emergence of *Shōto Shōto* short story in Japanese literature, its origination and formation. Basing on the works of the three most popular *Shōto Shōto* Japanese writers - Hoshi Shinichi, Atōda Takashi and Akagawa Jirō - I analyze the artistic devices used in such stories, the characteristic features of the extra-short stories in the Japanese literature of the last four decades, and examine them from a comparative perspective. The aim of this research is to examine the following specific features of the contemporary Japanese extra-short story: namely, its typical characters, genres which use this form, its traditions and innovations, the ways in which it reflects the problems of modern society.

Keywords: Japanese literature, Hoshi Shinichi, Akagawa Jirō, Atōda Takashi, *Shōto Shōto*.

1. The Origin and the prerequisites of the emergence of *Shōto Shōto* in Japanese literature

Short prosaic and poetic forms are traditional in Japanese artistic culture; therefore, in the context of Japanese literature one can distinguish several original minor genre forms known both in Japan and all over the world. The most popular poetical forms are *tanka* (literally 'short song') consisting of 31 syllables, and haiku formed on the basis of *tanka*. They determined the specific features of poetics: the succinctness of expression, the strict canons governing the use of metaphors and allusions; a hint, the subtext based on image associations and word-play; a fleeting mood full of understatement [Boronina 1978: 233-237]. These features became traditional both for poetical forms and the entire Japanese culture.

It is hard to imagine Japanese literature as well as art in general without such an artistic device as *yojō* (literally 'excessive feeling') which is usually understood as unexpressed emotions designed to arouse an emotional response, to stir imagination. To achieve *yojō* special techniques were used in *tanka* and *zuihitsu*: *kugiri* – a pause; *taigen dome* – finishing the last line not with a predicate as is common in the Japanese language but with a non-conjugated part of speech (most often a noun or a pronoun). These devices, as will be shown below, are used by writers of modern *Shōto Shōto* stories.

From the point of view of the substantive side of the *Shōto Shōto* direction under

consideration significantly interesting is the kind of prosaic literature that appeared in the 14th-17th centuries. These were *otogibanashi* (literally ‘stories-fairytales’) – short stories some of which were of folklore origin with fairytale plots (that is why in much later time the word *otogibanashi* acquires the meaning ‘a fairytale’) while others borrowed their plots from Japanese classical literature, Buddhistic legends, and Chinese sources and were probably composed by semiprofessional storytellers. In the 16th century many of these stories, there being about three hundred of them, were partly written down, partly published xylographically, sometimes with a great number of illustrations so that the text seemed as captions to them. In this form they were named *otogizōshi* (literally ‘entertaining stories’). As the origins of fantasy literature where *Shōto Shōto* stories can be identified lie in the mythogenic folk-poetic consciousness that created national mythologies, fairytales, heroic epic, legends, and tales, one may logically suppose that *Shōto Shōto* writers might have been oriented to the genre of *otogizōshi*. These stories are optimistic; they depict the life of citizens with humor while the characters’ adventures almost always have a happy end.

Later examples of the minor prosaic form in Japanese literature can be found in the creative work of the Japanese writer Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892-1927), a master of short stories, the author of over half a hundred novelettes, miniatures of a fairytale and fantasy as well as of religious and historical character, with frequent references to the images of the world and Japanese folklore. Akutagawa manages to create vivid images with a laconic language often describing his characters and situations with humor and irony.

Also well-known is the cycle of ten short stories by the famous Japanese writer Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) *Yume jūya* (‘Ten Nights of Dreams’). Every story is a philosophical novelette, a fantastic vision, a dream which, being something larger than just a play of the subconscious or imagination, enables the character to look into the past, the future or inside oneself.

An undisputed specimen of the minor prosaic form were the short stories by Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972) published as a collection entitled ‘Palm-of-the-Hand Stories’. It is these stories that may be presumed to be the starting point in considering the history of the Japanese short-short story from the formal side. Kawabata Yasunari created *Tanagokoro no shōsetsu* (‘Palm-of-the-Hand Stories’) during the forty years in the course of his literary activities. The first cycle of stories came out in 1926. On the whole Kawabata Yasunari wrote over 120 miniatures from two to ten pages long. The stories are quite diverse both in the subject matter and style: some stories are autobiographical, others are of the genre

of mystic stories, still others are close to folklore, or they remind of historical novelettes or plotless sketches arousing the reader's peculiar mood and feeling.

In some of the minor prosaic and poetic forms that became traditional for Japanese literature one can trace a profound influence of Zen Buddhism that served as the basis for certain artistic devices that became integral components of the Japanese artistic tradition in general. As Suzuki Daisetsu, a Japanese theoretician of Zen, said: 'You do not need to write a huge poem of a hundred lines to let out the feeling that emerges when you look into the abyss. But when the feelings reach the pinnacle, we fall silent... And seventeen syllables may be too many. A Zen artist can express his feelings with two-three words or two-three strokes of the brush. If he expresses them too fully, there will be no place for a hint left while the hint contains all the mystery of Japanese art'¹⁾. The emergence of the short-short story – *Shōto Shōto* – in Japanese literature marked a new period of development of Japanese microprose.

2. Origination and formation of *Shōto Shōto*

Let us trace how the short-short story appeared and developed in Japan.

It should be noted that this growing popularity of the short-short story has been recently observed not only in Japan but all over the world. This is caused by the process of miniaturization of prosaic genres that is noted in the contemporary literature of many countries. The reasons for the genre transformation include the influence of a classical miniature and its qualities attractive to writers, such as small volume, succinctness of artistic tools with the integrity and completeness of expression. Some other reasons for the passion for minimalism can also be pointed out: this is the background presence of 'electronic' prose and poetry in the literary space as a consequence of the global impact of Internet literature and 'clip' consciousness of the present author who is mostly concerned with the way of achieving brevity, showiness, impressiveness of the plot moves and lexis, external expression, paradox play.

The emergence of the short-short story is related with the dashing pace of life of modern Japan that gave rise to the need for laconic literary works with a thrilling plot capable of capturing the reader and holding his or her attention for a short time at least. We may also notice the writers' attempt in *Shōto Shōto* to 'awaken' the reader and to make him think about the complexity of the world at least for a second.

In its form *Shōto Shōto* is a short-short story less than a usual Japanese short story

tampen shōsetsu. There is no definite notion of the exact size of a prosaic text for it to be considered a short-short story. In the English-language tradition the volume of a text is usually determined by the number of words and short-short stories are usually considered to be texts of 200 to 1,500 words while Japanese literature lacks the common point of view regarding the volume of a literary work. Some Japanese researchers consider the size of such stories to be from four to fourteen pages while others name the range of eight-ten pages². Atoda Takashi who writes such stories and is involved in selection of the best stories in *Shōto Shōto* competitions says that their size should not exceed twenty pages (a page is 400 Japanese characters - kanji) although some stories may have one page or ten lines or even five lines³. Irrespective of the size a *Shōto Shōto* is a completed literary work. They are often 'a story' in the literal sense as the main hero is the storyteller himself, which creates an illusion of an oral narration.

With regard to the plot a *Shōto Shōto* most often refers to the genres of science fiction, fantasy or detective although the genre boundaries have recently expanded. As a short-short story is distinguished for its increased semantic fullness and symbology, there are often stories that have some parabolic content; besides, most stories have an ironic and satirical shade, which brings them close to fables.

Let us trace what Japan has borrowed from European literatures.

The opening of Japan in 1867 entailed formation of new Japanese literature, one of its main processes being the process of borrowing of literary forms, styles and genres from literatures of European countries. In this period the Japanese discovered both European technical achievements and the aesthetic value of its artistic culture. The national one-sidedness increasingly seemed to have no prospects. Japanese literature has assimilated different aesthetic movements and trends of the West and, thus, the autonomy of Japanese culture and the idea of a special way of its development were gradually abandoned. The problem of the synthesis of cultures became a major one in the Japanese literary thought. It is the diversity of aesthetic ideas of the West and the East that promoted mutual attraction.

Big shifts also occurred in the hierarchy of literary kinds and genres. Poetry that had dominated in Japanese literature for centuries was challenged by prose reflecting the diversity of the surrounding world; prose took the dominant position in the Japanese literature of the new time.

It is from western literature that the prosaic form of *konto* (from French 'conte' – a novelette, fairytale or story) emerged in Japan. This term means: 1) a witty prosaic work of

a satirical kind; 2) a short story⁴⁾. Such stories became popular in the 1920s. The first person to introduce this form in Japan was Okada Saburo, a Japanese writer who made such stories fashionable having returned from France in 1923. In the second half of the twentieth century the *konto* form became popular in Japan, it was staged in theaters. The *konto* form that had an entertaining character may have served as the basis for creation of the contemporary short-short story.

The origin of short-short stories in English-language literature from where the 'short-short' term had been borrowed may be related to the American *The Cosmopolitan* magazine which started publishing a series of short-short stories in the 1920s. At the request of the editor, Somerset Maugham (1874-1965) wrote a series of short stories of a convenient size to be published in the magazine. Such stories were later named 'cosmopolitans' and later appeared in a separate collection – *Cosmopolitans – Very Short Stories*, 1936, which was a collection of elegant witty stories-anecdotes. This literary form was soon adopted by other magazines and newspapers, and thus the form of a short-short story became widely spread. At first such stories were named *a short story*. Then this appellation has been transformed into *short short*.

To designate the supershort story Japanese literature has borrowed the English term of *short-short* which is transliterated as *Shōto Shōto* in the Japanese. The *Shōto Shōto* was first introduced by the Japanese writer Tsuzuki Michio (1929-2003) who has familiarized the Japanese reader with stories by American writers⁵⁾. Hoshi Shinichi, however, had started writing such short-short stories long before the emergence of the *Shōto Shōto* notion in Japan while the writer's *Shōto Shōto* have their own specific features absolutely different from the western specimens.

The question of the origin of *Shōto Shōto* stories in Japanese literature appears to be still open. Quite remarkable is the fact that both the French *conte* form and the American short short form originated approximately at the same time in different countries, which is indicative of the prerequisites for appearance of a new form of artistic perception of the reality by that time. Proceeding from the opinions of Japanese literary critics we suppose that Japanese *Shōto Shōto* stories have emerged on the basis of imitation of the French *konto* form; however, they developed along a particular course characteristic of Japanese traditional culture while the term designating the new type of stories was later borrowed from American literature. Let us trace which specific features were inherent in *Shōto Shōto* stories and how the trend of the short-short story developed in Japanese literature.

3. Genre and artistic identity of *Shōto Shōto* in the creative activity of Hoshi Shinichi

The Japanese writer Hoshi Shinichi (1926-1997) is the best known writer of the genre of ‘supershort fantasy prose’ in Japan, the first president of the Club of Japanese Fantasy Writers. Hoshi published over a thousand short stories characterized by a fantasy plot, unexpected turn of events and unpredicted end, which, as Hoshi himself noted in the conclusion of the collection of stories by the writers whose works won the *Shōto Shōto* competition, are the essential conditions of the genre of supershort fantasy prose⁶. Such stories are not more than six-seven pages of special paper *genkō yōshi* for manuscripts (which is 2,400 – 2,800 kanji) in size.

Japanese researchers divide Hoshi’s stories into science fiction, fairy (with a fairytale plot) and stories-episodes (often with a detective plot)⁷. In Hoshi’s ironic stories one can often trace a tendency to moralize like in fables. The stories are distinguished by simplicity of narration: Hoshi is in a constant dialogue with the reader contriving his works in such a way as to make the idea of a particular story absolutely clear. Hoshi’s style is supremely simple: his stories practically lack rare kanji, long sentences, verbose descriptions or speculations. Moreover, striving to make his stories always relevant and understandable for any reader Hoshi refuses mentioning the epoch, as well as the political, economic or social situation in the country; he also avoids naming the places where the events take place confining himself, if required, to letters of the Latin alphabet. The characters of most of his stories have the names of Mr. F, Mr. N, Mr. K. One of the characteristics of Hoshi’s style is the use of the device having a centuries-long history – the device of *taigen dome* which was discussed above. The *taigen* forms in the Japanese language include non-conjugated parts of speech: nouns, numerals, pronouns. The verb in a Japanese sentence always stands at the end; therefore, the listener or reader are kept in suspense, so as to understand the essence of what has been said or written. When *taigen dome* is used, the sentence ends with a non-conjugated part of speech (with Hoshi it is most often a noun). This device is sometimes used in the speech of the main characters, often in that of the author’s. The use of *taigen dome* makes the sentence more compact while the uncommon structure (omission of the verb at the end of the sentence) makes it possible to better remember the subject and underscore the principal plotlines. However, such a text is not at all easier to perceive. The reader seems to stumble over such a sentence and thus stops reading ‘in a relaxed manner’ being compelled to concentrate and double his or her attention. For example, in the story ‘*Yūkai*’ (‘Kidnapping’): ‘*Aite wa heizen to shita koe*’⁸) – ‘Companion Imperturbably Said’, literally:

‘Companion Imperturbable Voice’. Using the *taigen dome* device in this sentence Hoshi draws the reader’s attention to the bold and self-assertive behavior of the robber.

One of the best known collections of Hoshi’s writings first published in 1971 – ‘*Bokko-chan*’⁹⁾ – contains fifty stories written in the genre of ‘supershort fantasy prose’. The stories of this collection can be divided into fantasy proper (where the characters travel into space, meet aliens, magicians, otherworldly beings, etc. – these are the plots of most stories) and pseudo-fantasy stories where nothing unusual happens, but the situation shown through the eyes of the characters does look unusual: for example, in the story *Aru kenkyū* (‘One Research’) an ancient man tries to strike fire – an experiment presented as dangerously innovative; the story *Nazo no seinen* (‘Enigmatic Young Man’) tells about an ordinary employee who generously does good to people at the expense of the state (to be more precise, at the expense of the charged taxes) and for that reason people start considering him a magician and a wonder worker. All the stories of the collection are united by the fact that they are an artistically acted out anecdote with regard to the reader: an unexpected end transmits the reader to another time period different from the supposed one (‘One Research’, stories about space travels) or into a situation different from the expected one (the ‘enigmatic young man’ turns out to be just a common employee of a public institution; in the story *Oikoshi* (‘The Overtaking’) the ghost of the perished beloved whom the hero seemed to see turns out to be just a mannequin, its creation by the artist having been inspired by her image). Thus, the world in Hoshi’s stories ‘turns upside down’ in front of the reader’s eyes: the expected things do not happen and the polarities change places. The reader’s ideas both about the situation and the characters ‘capsizes’; Hoshi’s device of ‘deceiving’ the reader, as will be demonstrated below, touches upon the traditional ideas of good and evil, and both the reader and the characters appear to be deceived, - the latter, however, not through the fatal turn of events but through their own fault.

The characters of Hoshi’s stories can be divided into three principal categories: 1) common people (employees of companies, etc.) getting into fantastic circumstances; 2) inventors, scientists; 3) aliens. Common people meet magicians or otherworldly forces, their images with inherent qualities borrowed from Japanese folklore or world mythology like in novelettes by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke – jinns, evil spirits, angels, devils, water spirits, mermaids, forest spirits, etc. (*Akuma* ‘Evil Spirit’, *Kagami* ‘Mirror’); they hallucinate or dream fantasies which they confuse with reality (*Fuminshō* ‘Insomnia’, *Yokubō-no shiro* ‘The Dream Palace’); they get hold of items imbued with the magic force or, if the action takes

place in future, items from the future (*Aiyō no tokei* 'Favorite Watch', *Kata no ue no hisho* 'Secretary on the Shoulder'). Scientists (or amateurs) invent unusual drugs or mechanisms ('*Bokko-chan*', *Henna kusuri* 'Strange Drug'), with evil-doers often entrenching on their inventions (*Higai* 'The Damage', *Nusunda shorui* 'The Stolen Documents', *Yūkai* 'The Kidnapping', *Derakkusuna kinko* 'The Deluxe Safe'). The invention often does harm to its creator if it was created with sordid motives: Bokko-chan beauty-robot made by the owner of the bar to attract visitors and to increase profits poisons everybody, including the owner, through a fatal contingency; 'the strange drug' causing a false cold to create a greater credibility effect, if one needs to refuse to go to work under a plausible excuse, leads to the situation when the inventor really felt bad and his friend did not believe him thinking that the inventor was just experimenting with the drug. In the same way the stolen thing becomes a punishment for the robber: in the story 'The Stolen Documents' the thief prepares a wonder drug according to the instructions stolen from the professor and decided to test it on himself, but the drug appeared to have a side-effect: it woke conscience; in the story 'The Kidnapping' the scientist lays out explosive-laden robot-babies round the city to identify and destroy kidnappers in this way; 'the deluxe safe' appears to be just an empty room to trap and catch thieves, which brings profits to the owner of the safe.

In most cases aliens are kind donators for earth-dwellers who appear not to need their gifts: for example, in the story *Omiyage* ('The Souvenir') they give the yet uninhabited planet a precious receptacle of all secrets of the good deeds, of the preservation of peace on the Earth, etc. which people are to find with time. But progress is counter-productive: the carefully preserved treasure trove of the good is not to be found by anybody and is destroyed as a result of nuclear tests. In the story *Yakusoku* ('Promise') children ask the residents of an extraterrestrial civilization whom they met and became friends with to do so that they would never look like adults. But the time on the aliens' planet passes differently from that of the Earth's and when they return to the Earth they find out that the children have already grown up and no longer need clear conscience and human decency – they reject this gift. The characters of the story *Purezento* ('The Gift') send a kind robot to the Earth which is to soften the earth-dwellers and convince them to stop nuclear weapons tests; however, the frightened earth-dwellers stop the tests not out of kindness but only because being used to judging by themselves they perceived the gift as a military threat on the part of the alien civilization.

It is not the meeting itself with the otherworldly or magic forces that appears to be

ruinous for the man but it is the result of facing one's own vices revealed by this meeting. For example, in the story *Kagami* ('The Mirror') a man lured a devilkin out of a mirror by means of black magic, and when the latter refuses to work miracles the man puts it to severe tortures. Eventually the hero and his wife get so used to daily working their frustration for their failures off on the helpless little devil torturing and tormenting it that when it runs away, they put each other to death unable to suppress their anger. In the story *Akuma* ('The Evil Spirit') the jinn out of the bottle caught by a man fishing on a lake in winter meekly fulfills the man's selfish desires; the man ignores any warnings demanding immeasurable sums of money, and eventually the ice breaks under the weight of the gold coins. Thus, it is the man's greed rather than the jinn that proves to be 'the evil spirit'. In the story *Raihōsha* ('The Alien') within the framework of 'Round the Vastness of the Universe' reality shows aliens send a robot with an integrated camera to different planets to learn the folkways of the local population; when meeting the envoy the earthlings are at their worst – they come out as people whose interests are concentrated only on material welfare and sex.

The principle of the all-round evil launched by the man and shown in Hoshi's stories leave the question open of whether there is the future for the mankind. For example, the characters of the story *Ōi detekōi* ('Hey, Come Out!'), the residents of a village, throw nuclear wastes, garbage and stones into a pit unsuspecting of the fact that this mysterious hole leads into the future, to their descendants¹⁰. People never doubt destroying each other: in the story *Hōi* ('The Siege') the hero is attacked; the attacker says that he has nothing against the man but he was commissioned to kill him by the man who was not brave enough to do it. While searching for the paymaster the hero finds out that a lot of people who did not have the heart to commit a crime relegated killing him to one another. The man rushes about in vain attempts to find what evil he has done and to whom, and who has organized the contract killing. In the end it seems to him that all the people in the world have ganged up against him, that all people are his enemies. Having fallen afoul of one person, the man takes the vengeance on the whole world where everybody at least wanted, if not tried, to destroy the character.

The virtue and unselfishness in the contemporary world are punishable: for example, 'the enigmatic young man' who tried to dispose of taxes by rights and to help the population was considered insane in the public institution where he worked and was placed into an asylum. Thus, Hoshi's hero is a personality with an embedded mechanism of self-destruction; even if the mechanism does not go off on the pages of the story, it is like 'a time bomb'. For

example, the hero of the story *Oikoshi* ('The Overtaking') who has been long tormented by pangs of conscience because of the suicide of his former girlfriend who committed suicide after he had left her, sees her ghost in a car driving by and the ghost is reaching out towards him; the man crashes into a lamp post without finding out that 'the ghost' was just a mannequin. In other equally well-known collections by Hoshi¹¹⁾ similar inventions – magic safes, robots, miracle-working drugs, etc. – are shown in most different situations but they always serve one purpose: to reveal the dark side of human nature. The world shown upside down on the pages of the stories of the 'Bokko-chan' collection and other collections of Hoshi's stories is overturned not by fantasy creatures, as one could expect, and is changed not by witchery and magic rites but by the man himself who reverses the laws of the good and moral in front of the reader's eyes without a help of any otherworldly force. Meetings with miraculous creatures and magic objects just serve to unveil the worst human qualities. According to Hoshi, the man is his own enemy whose actions inevitably lead to lifetime retribution for the evil done, for avaricious actions and vicious thoughts. In this respect the fantasy works by Hoshi prove to be fantasy in form only. The man set to self-destruction is his own enemy but not the judge; he is too weak to be capable of drawing conclusions and improving, even more so of changing the surrounding world; but his incorrect behavior always entails the inevitable retribution.

4. The *Shōto Shōto* collections by Akagawa Jirō

Akagawa Jirō (born in 1948) is well-known in contemporary Japan for his novels and stories in the genre of detective and adventure stories. It should be noted that Akagawa has continued and expanded the traditions of Hoshi's short-short story but he has broken away from the science fiction genre choosing other genres to implement the same *Shōto Shōto* form, its canons and ideas realized by Hoshi. Stories about miracles, meetings of common people with something or somebody unusual is what we see in *otogizōshi*, and this is what was practiced by Hoshi who gave a new life to the short story in Japanese literature already in the second half of the twentieth century. In Akagawa a short-short story also acquires another subject matter: this is not just fantasy, mystics and miracles any more but, to a considerable extent, the life of citizens presented as an anecdote, brief love stories, sketches from everyday life of common people: female secretaries, trade companies employees, etc. In the stories of '*Sampomichi*'¹²⁾ ('The Walk') short prose collection by Akagawa (27 short stories of not more than 10 pages each), the borderline between the

reality and the imagined world of the characters appears to be blurred: while day-dreaming Akagawa's character is taken captive by his imagination which can both amuse the dreamer and teach him something as well as destroy him. The works of imagination is the uniting motif of the 'The Walk' collection. In Hoshi's stories the hero is usually cheated by the evil spirit, a wizard, inventor, miracle-working drug, etc. while Akagawa's characters get obsessed by their own imagination which, like a fantasy creature or aliens in Hoshi's stories, eventually take them for a ride and confuse them, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, help the characters to become aware of themselves and the real state of affairs. Similarly to the miraculous creatures and magic objects in Hoshi's stories the imagination in Akagawa's short stories performs the function of a teacher, tutor and punisher when it becomes a reality setting the dreamer free and showing him the real state of things. For example, in the story '*Waga ko-no sakubun*' ('The Composition of My Child') a girl visualizes an image of a kind old man who spends his spare time with her and is good fun (the worried mother finds out that the unknown 'kind old man' is the girl's father, which makes the parents change their way of living and pay more time to their daughter. In the '*Tabetai*' ('I Want to Eat Up') story the girl who has heard an earful from the relatives making unkind remarks about her uncle is sure that he has killed his young wife and buried her remains in the garden; the investigation shows that the uncle is a caring husband and father, which makes both the heroine and other relatives change their attitude to him. The characters of the '*Jūhassai no hanayome*' ('Eighteen-year-old Bride') story, an ordinary family, learn that late in his life their long widowed father, father-in-law and grandfather announced his engagement with an 18-year-old girl. They gossip about her profit motives, legacy hunting, etc. until it becomes clear that the bride is actually 72 years old but her birthday is on February 29, so she has managed to celebrate it 18 times only; hence, the kind old woman started proudly calling herself 'eighteen-year-old'.

In a number of stories the imagination plays the role of 'the punisher' when it grows and drives people crazy: this is, for example, the '*Shinnyū shain*' ('The New Worker') story where the main hero carried away by the pictures drawn by his imagination jumps out of the window (which is a punishment for his cruel treatment of junior employees and abuse of people – a similar idea of Karmic retribution was typical of the first *otogizōshi*, short stories of the Late Middle Ages).

In the stories where the characters are businesswomen and businessmen Akagawa shows the life of a contemporary employee who gets in all kinds of situations; these stories

are often mystic and detective. Koike, the hero of the detective story *Uwasa* ('The Gossip') does not come to work for the first time in twenty years, and so his coworkers first suppose that he has died and then set a rumor about his suicide about the department. People always easily believe bad things and think little about being inattentive to one another while the whole story has turned up due to the fault of a new secretary from the personnel department who has just lost Koike's holiday application. Taking advantage of the situation, the secretary who was in a close relationship with the employee appointed to Koike's position, calls the 'buried' employee from his holiday under a false pretence, kills him to vacate the position for her lover and plots everything as if Koike himself had jumped off the roof after learning that nobody was worried about him. Thus, in some cases other people's fantasies bring death to the object of the fantasies like in the *Uwasa* ('The Gossip') story.

Although nothing fantastic or mystic usually happens in the stories, it is the imagination with which the writer endues his characters that becomes a fantastic assumption intrinsic in science fiction. The device of 'deceiving the reader' typical of Hoshi's short stories is also present in Akagawa: like the hero the reader takes the flight of imagination of the latter for reality and up to the very end of the story is inclined to think that the events imagined by the characters take place in the reality. The 'deceit' becomes clear only due to the unexpected end which usually incorporates the main idea of the story.

The above mentioned stories show that Akagawa manages to place quite a complicated plotline into the space of a short-short story. This is achieved by means of lacunas which are used by Akagawa much more often than by Hoshi. For example, in *Uwasa* 'The Gossip' story the writer does not show the secretary pushing Koike off the roof – this fragment of the text is omitted and is designated by a spacing in the text. The reader himself is to reconstruct the connection between the secretary's phrase 'Let's go to the roof' addressed to Koike and the next phrase of the policeman 'A suicide?' after the spacing¹³). This device is called *kugiri* – a pause; as was said at the beginning, it was primarily used in *tanka* to achieve *yojō* ('excessive feeling'). This device is revived in many Akagawa's short-short stories while it is practically not available in Hoshi's stories. But, as has been demonstrated above, Hoshi often resorts to the *taigen dome* device, which is much less characteristic of Akagawa's creative activity.

Akagawa uses characters from fairytales and legends in very few *Shōto Shōto* (for example, 'The Stranger in the Mirror', a story about vampires); this is more typical of Hoshi's short stories. Thus, Akagawa appears to be closer to Natsume's novelette while

Hoshi – to Akutagawa’s novelette; the former like Natsume in the cycle of the *Yume jūya* (‘Ten Nights of Dreams’) approaches the blurred borderline between the reality and fantasy where truth can be found; the latter like Akutagawa in his semifairy historical novelettes depicts the contemporary world and its vices by means of mythological characters.

Thus, although the short-short stories of Akagawa depart from the themes in the creative works of Hoshi, they certainly refer to the *Shōto Shōto* trend with its distinguishing features: the unusual idea, completed structure and unexpected ending. Akagawa does not imitate his predecessor in everything. Firstly, he does not avoid mentioning the names and places; on the contrary, he uses as many details as possible to define the characters in his stories. Secondly, he shows the fantastic component differently: Akagawa practically does not introduce any fantastic creatures capable of showing the contemporary world in a better aspect but recurses to the imagination of the characters themselves as an element of fantasy. In the stories of Hoshi we notice the tendency to moralize characteristic of fables while in Akagawa we do not see any obvious conclusions. However, the two writers are united by the fact that in short-sized stories they both succeed in showing human vices and depicting the problems of the contemporary world.

The device of ‘deceiving the reader’ characteristic of Hoshi’s short stories is also present in the works of Akagawa: like his hero the reader accepts the flight of imagination of the latter as reality. As has been said above, the meetings with miraculous creatures or magic objects in Hoshi’s works just serve to identify the worst human qualities. According to Hoshi, the man is his own enemy whose actions inevitably lead to a lifetime retribution for the evil done, for avaricious actions and vicious thoughts. This idea of ‘self-punishment’ was picked up by Akagawa. It is interesting to note that the idea of simplicity of the style (not complex kanji, grammar structures and phrases, etc. are supposed) which was realized by Hoshi in his short-short stories is not so very important for Akagawa although his stories are easy to read and Akagawa deliberately strives for this easiness. As written by Hoshi in the foreword¹⁴⁾ to Akagawa’s *Katte ni shaberu onna*¹⁵⁾ (‘The Talkative Woman’) *Shōto Shōto* collection published in 1986, readers enjoy easy reading but slick fiction often lacks depth – a drawback which Akagawa’s short-short prose is free from. Analyzing the writer’s work at a *Shōto Shōto* text and the way the reader perceives the result of his work Hoshi emphasizes: the easier it is for the reader to read, the harder it was for the writer to write *Shōto Shōto*, the more work was done.

In 1986 another collection of Akagawa’s short stories – *Odoru otoko*¹⁶⁾ (‘The

Dancing Man') – was published; in it most stories do not exceed four-five pages while in the *Katte ni shaberu onna* ('The Talkative Woman') collection the average size of a story is 12 pages. It is almost impossible to find a fairytale or a fantasy among the stories of *Odoru otoko* ('The Dancing Man') collection – the genres that prevailed in the *Shōto Shōto* by Hoshi; most stories of this collection are detective stories with elements of black humor, grotesque, and irony. It is this genre that became most popular having assumed the *Shōto Shōto* form after the death of Hoshi Shinichi in the works of both Akagawa Jirō and another famous follower of Hoshi – Atōda Takashi, to be discussed later on. However, other elements of *Shōto Shōto* – such as a twist of the plot and an unpredictable ending – are still there.

For example, in the *Isan* ('The Legacy') story of the *Odoru otoko* ('The Dancing Man') collection by Akagawa the hero was so proud and independent that he did not want 'to prostrate' himself before his superiors to obtain leave; as a result he worked himself into an extremely nervous and physical exhaustion and started killing his relatives one after another when he wanted to have some rest because in such cases the employee in whose family there was a disaster was entitled to a certain number of legitimate days-off (the closer the relationship of the victim, the more days off were given). This story satirizes both the proverbial workaholicism of the Japanese and the traditional fear and awe of the superior reduced to an absurdity and grotesquely presented: it was easier for the hero to kill his relatives than to ask the superior for help; the pride is also presented in a grotesque manner: transformed into pridefulness it drives the man crazy when he becomes dangerous both for himself and his relatives. The story *Ishi no tsuyoi otoko* ('The Man with Strong Will') is also a detective story dedicated to the topic of pride and independence worthy of a samurai but causing death of the hero: the wife was well aware of her husband's adherence to the principles and his extreme stubbornness and let him die of starvation in the house full of fish products which he could not eat because she knew that his pride would never let him ask for some other food.

The stories of the *Odoru otoko* ('The Dancing Man') collection also contain strong elements of a parable and a fable. Most stories are presented as anecdotal evidences told by a man to his friend in a bar during a conversation over a glass of alcohol. Certain situations in the life of one man make the other man remember some incident from the life of his acquaintances or acquaintances' acquaintances, and the story is often instructive. Some stories have direct allusions to well-known fables; for example, *Usagi to kame* ('The Hare and the Turtle') tells about a young employee of a company who has made a bet

with an elderly employee that he would conclude more agreements during the day because he worked faster and more efficiently. Like in the fable, the careless 'hare' relaxed being confident of his strength while the cunning and clever 'turtle' won the bet.

The stories written in the genre of mystic realism in Akagawa's short-short works are not so frequent, and the mystic element is always used so as to reveal a psychological problem to the maximum. For example, the *Odoru otoko* ('The Dancing Man') story is about a man who was obviously murdered by the dolls whom he had tortured imagining that they were his offenders, and the dolls finally took their revenge on him. He did not let off his real feelings, suppressed his discontent with the unfair attitude to him of his colleagues and relatives and eventually became a puppet of his suppressed fears and grievances enabling first people and then dolls to manipulate himself. In this story the dolls are the suppressed complexes, fears and grievances which eventually became unable to find a way out, start 'toying with you' and are capable of destroying the man who no longer has any power over them.

Many stories combine a comedy and a tragedy making one muse about the problems of the contemporary society. The grotesque element is also strong in them. For example, in the *Bakageta ikikata* ('The Silly Way of Living') story two girl students are in fact a reflection of each other: they have the same name – Hiroko, they were born on the same day; they have the same hobbies, desires, and tastes. The girls are inseparable; they perceive themselves as one whole without separating the life of one Hiroko from the other; they are proud of that; they want always to be identical in everything and in their opinion they find a good way to achieve that aim: to imitate one and the same young celebrity. The girls decide to follow 'the standard of success' of a movie star and choose the young actress Yamanaka Chie for that. They start copying her life to the last detail and finally decide to go on the same diet as practiced by Yamanaka, which within two years results in the death of one Hiroko of anorexia. Blindly following their model in everything the girls failed to consider one difference between them: the weight of one of them hardly exceeded the critical mass being thirty five kilograms only while the other weighed seventy kilograms and the weight loss did not do any tangible harm to her health. Only at the cost of such a terrible loss the surviving girl understands that every person is unique and living with a careful eye to another person whether this person is a celebrity and idol of many people or your friend means destroying one's own life and future.

The plot of many stories of the *Odoru otoko* ('The Dancing Man') collection is

built on a word-play: this play of consonances, various kinds of homonyms, homophones especially, similar kanji, etc. was especially popular in Japanese short poetic forms – *tanka* and *haiku*, as mentioned in the very beginning. For example, in the *Shinjū* ('The Double Suicide') story the chief offers the hero to marry his daughter promising him career promotion and financial help. The man decides to take advantage of this chance to make his way in life. He does not know how to tell his present girlfriend about it and persuades her up to drown themselves together; he deceives her, however, and comes out. But writhing with pangs of conscience, like the hero in Hoshi's *Oikoshi* ('The Overtaking') story whose beloved committed suicide the man reads the kanji incorrectly, and in a harmless note on the front door he recognizes a threat from the deceased girl who has returned from the afterlife to revenge herself. Being shocked he steps back from the door and finds himself on the roadway where he is knocked down by a truck. Thus, like in Hoshi's *Oikoshi* ('The Overtaking') story that we have discussed above the situation that is not actually a mystic one looks mystic in the eyes of the hero, and the perpetrator of the tragedy punishes himself. In the *Rettsu shokkingu* ('Let's Shock') story the man learns that a stress has a most detrimental effect on the health of people with heart problems and tries to drive his wife who has a weak heart and has become repulsive to him to a heart attack by means of silly jokes and hoaxes now and then making her think that he has died: for example, he calls her allegedly from the site of a car accident and then suddenly appears in front of her like a ghost shocking the woman, etc. The wife does get worse every day, and the man rejoices that he will be soon able to live happily with his mistress when suddenly his mistress shares her suspicion with him that the wife has exposed them. Soon the wife utters some insignificant phrases about the impact of different factors on one's health; the man interprets them wrongly and commits a suicide thinking that she is hinting that she is going to denounce him to the police. Thus, the idea of self-punishment in Akagawa's stories is also present in the *Sampomichi* ('The Walk') collection as well as in the *Odoru otoko* ('The Dancing Man') collection and is, as we have seen, a key idea of Hoshi. A poor student from the *Kaigai ryokō* ('The Travel Abroad') written in Akagawa's favorite genre of an ironic detective story tries to steal money for internship in England from quite a medium-income old woman. During the investigation the man confesses that passing her house he overheard the old woman's conversation with somebody. She said that she was going to travel to England by ship because she was afraid of traveling by and that she was going to ride horses there, etc. The student concluded that the woman had a lot of money because going to England by ship was more expensive than

going by airplane. The student was mistaken: thinking about England only he heard the word ENGLAND and responded to it immediately forgetting that England was usually called *IGIRISU* in Japan. Eventually it turns out that he has interpreted the woman's conversation in the wrong way from the beginning to the end and the woman promised her grandson over the telephone to take him to the 'ENGLAND' entertainment park and for a boat trip, to a merry-go-round with horses, etc. The wrong interpretation of something said, seen or written, often against the background of expected punishment for the evil done, having been the basis of some short stories both by Akagawa and other writers of short-short stories, always has a psychological root cause: a person will see and hear only what he or she wants and, vice versa what he or she is frantically afraid of seeing and hearing, often paying for the lack of attention with his own destroyed destiny.

5. Experiments with *Shōto Shōto* of Atōda Takashi

Atōda Takashi (born in 1935) is a well-known Japanese writer mainly working in the genre of mystic realism. Atōda has written action-packed or comic short-short stories continuing the traditions of Hoshi Shinichi, a number of mystic thrillers, and a series of essays. In addition, after the death of Hoshi since the late 1990s Atōda has headed the annual All-Japan Literary Competition for authors of short-short stories, with collections of the best works published according to the results of the competition; Atōda has been the permanent chief editor of these collections for the recent 20 years. He calls himself the author of a usual story; nevertheless, he has already published four popular collections of *Shōto Shōto*: the *Kimyōna hirusagari*¹⁷⁾ ('The Strange Day'), the *Taberareta otoko*¹⁸⁾ ('The Eaten Man'), the *Saigo-no messēji*¹⁹⁾ ('The Last Message'), the *Neko no jiken*²⁰⁾ ('The Cat Case'). Atōda's element of mystics is much stronger than that in Akagawa's short stories; the characters often meet otherworldly forces: devils, ghosts of the dead people, drowned people, mermaids; the action may be presented in the form of a fairytale with a plot taking place in a magic kingdom or in the form of a sort of a fable. The mystics may quite unexpectedly emerge in the life of the characters far from witchcraft and the world of magic: for example, in the *Kazoku no fūkei*²¹⁾ ('The Family Portrait') story the mother and her son wish to continue living together after the son's wedding despite his wife's protests. This feeling is so strong that the mother commissions a painting showing herself and her son with the daughter-in-law sitting together at the dinner table; her passionate dream comes true for the second time, too, and all three of them are drawn into the painting where they become inseparable.

The fantastic situation reminds one that some ardent wish may come true but it makes one think whether this is for the better if after getting what one wishes one may lose everything else. However, as distinguished from Hoshi's stories, not all *Shōto Shōto* of Atōda carry a philosophical idea; some mystic stories are entertaining horror stories, their plots coming from legends or town folklore. It is interesting that the *Kami* ('The Hair') horror story from the *Kimyōna hirusagari* ('The Strange Day') collection reveals an obvious allusion to the short stories "The Overtaking" by Hoshi and "The Double Suicide" by Akagawa about women who committed suicide because of their unhappy love. However, in Atōda's story the woman is not a victim but a culprit: she knew that she was terminally ill but did not tell her beloved about that and persuaded him to commit suicide allegedly because of the impossibility of being together (their families were against their marriage). The man happens to avoid death through drowning but he still experiences pangs of guilt that he survived; and twenty years later the dead woman comes up for her beloved from the sea bottom as a vindictive ghost, entangles him with her fair long hair, and fulfills her plan to deliver him to the afterlife.

The mystic thriller, as well as ironic detective and psychological detective stories are the favorite genres of Atōda's short stories. Atōda's characters are trade company employees, office workers, housewives, students; they unwittingly go beyond the limits of the common world and find themselves in transcendental reality, in the grip of myths and fairytales, often on the verge of insanity as the boundaries between reality and imagination are quite conventional and it is not clear which is more illusory: their everyday life or the mystical experience. In this respect Atōda's creative works approach the creative works of Akagawa for whom imagination was one of the main plots of his short-short stories. Imagination and reality have a blurred borderline in Atōda's stories. The hero can often hardly understand where the imagination and where the real life is. Dream, imagination, and hypnosis reveal the true nature of the people, their relations and events in Atōda's stories. For example, the *Totemo ii kimochi*²²⁾ ('The Very Nice Sensation') story from the 'The Cat Case' collection tells about two twin-brothers who grew separately from each other but one of them could feel the same emotions and sometimes the physical sensations of the other. When one of the twins dies, the brother starts feeling some new, unearthly bliss and concludes that his brother is in the Paradise and, hence, there is life after death. In *Saimin ryōhō*²³⁾ ('The Hypnotherapy') story from the 'The Eaten Man' collection the borderline between the reality and the imagination disappears through hypnosis: the husband brings

his modest young wife that cannot venture upon intimacy with him to the psychotherapist. Trying to overcome the long-standing fear of intimacy with a man that had developed after she was attacked by a maniac in her youth the wife agrees to undergo hypnosis. In the end she kills her husband after having lost her virginity and feels relief: her real nature has come out and she starts killing men feeling happier and happier every time. In *Uoza no onna*²⁴ ('The Pisces Woman') from 'The Strange Day' collection a sterile man gradually starts going mad hearing constant assurances of his young wife that they will still have a child, 'a big-eyed boy'. The imagination of the man whose psyche is already broken after the death of his first wife in a car accident increasingly often brings up to his mind an ugly "big-eyed" creature with a thousand little eyes that will become his son, and the man goes out of his mind. *Kōfuku no kamisama*²⁵ ('The God of Happiness') story from the 'The Strange Day' collection is interesting with regard to the correlation between imagination and reality. The main heroine suddenly learns that many years ago she was saved and got a chance of a new life only due to a gossip: her one-night lover believed a rumor that she was a prostitute hired by mafia and gave her a large amount of money which was enough to start a new life. The gossip that suddenly changed a human life became a source of the plot in Akagawa's story "The Gossip" discussed above.

It is interesting to note that Atōda unites his short stories into collections by one topic: for example, in many stories of the *Taberareta otoko* ('The Eaten Man') collection the man falls victim to women's cunning or double game and sometimes to his own silliness or carelessness while the stories of the *Saigo no messēji* ('The Last Message') collection generally recount the last meeting, farewell letter, perished hope, eternal parting. Thus, one can find parallels between the short stories of this collection and the *Tanagokoro no shōsetsu* ('Palm-of-the-Hand Stories') by Kawabata Yasunari; most stories of this cycle may be referred to as lyrical miniatures presenting various life situations which correlate to the categories of 'death', 'love', 'destiny'. For example, in the *Nitamono fūfu*²⁶ ('The husband and The Wife Are a Pair') the children, waiting for their parents to return home, talk about what the father and the mother told each of them before leaving. The reader reconstructs the picture of the events: the spouses whose relations had long been deplorable left the house on the same day to start a new life, each of them being convinced that the other would stay and take care of the children. The little children are left absolutely alone and in danger of starvation. In the *Saikai*²⁷ ('Met Again') story a young man N. who has failed his exams to a medical university promises his friend who has been admitted to the university that they

will still meet there in the medical department. This seems unfeasible because the next year N. fails again; however, his vow that they will still meet in the laboratory proves feasible: coming to a regular class to study dissection the friend once finds the dead N. lying on the dissection bench. Unexpected ending and the deceit of the reader is again here: the last paragraph is written in the way so that the reader could not understand that N. is dead and his body is lying on the table for dissection. ‘N... That very N. was in the room... We met again... A kind of... He was smiling, as always... That was our first dissection class. “So, let’s begin”, said the teacher and bowed’²⁸⁾.

Like with Akagawa, a number of Atōda’s stories are built on a word-play, on the wrong interpretation of something heard, said or written, which, as distinguished from analogous stories by Akagawa, more often brings the hero to a comical rather than a tragic end; these stories paint a very convincing portrait of the characters and their psychology. An example is *Hōshin*²⁹⁾ (‘The Absent-Mindedness’) story from the ‘The Last Message’ collection where the heroes – the company director and his secretary – are delayed at work and each of them thinks about one’s own problems: she thinks that she will be thirty in some years and all her friends are already married except her; he thinks about the deadline of delivery of the reports, about the company’s problems, and the working plans. The director has been working so hard that he does not even remember the date. The director’s question suddenly interrupts the girl’s thoughts; in Japanese it sounds as ‘Twenty nine already?’ (‘Mō nijūkyū da yo na’). A figure may denote both a calendar date and the age in the Japanese language; the director is not sure about the date (‘twenty ninth’) and is anxious, but the hurt Keiko interprets it quite differently according to her own bitter thoughts and responds aggrievedly: ‘No! (I am yet) just twenty eight! Now, Sir!’ (‘*Īe. Mada nijūhachi desu. Hidoi wa. Kachō-san*’)³⁰⁾. The misunderstanding grows deeper: from the girl’s answer the director might not have understood what she meant, and he might have thought that she is responding him about the date (‘twenty eighth’). *Chīzu no okurimono*³¹⁾ (‘The Cheese for a Gift’) story from the “The Strange Day” collection describes the emotions of the grandmother who sent village cheese instead of fruits and vegetables to her grandchildren in the city and received a letter in response where her grandchildren also promise her to send cheese. The old woman wonders why the grandchildren are so impolite and eats her heart out: they may have not liked her present; why they decided to send her the same thing knowing that she is not very fond of cheese – until she gets a parcel with photos in which her grandchildren are smiling broadly as if saying ‘*Chīzu!*’ (English ‘cheese!’).

6. Conclusion

The issue of the origins of *Shōto Shōto* stories in Japanese literature has not been completely resolved. There are grounds to suppose that the *Shōto Shōto* form may have borrowed traditions from the French *conte* form or the American *short short* form which have emerged at approximately the same time. Basing on the opinions of Japanese literary critics one may suppose that Japanese *Shōto Shōto* stories might have emerged on the basis of imitation of the French *konto* form but developed along a particular course characteristic of Japanese traditional culture, and the name was later borrowed from American literature to designate a new type of stories.

There is no clear notion regarding the size of *Shōto Shōto*: it can be a story one or two sentences long or a story of more than ten pages. The mandatory principles, i.e. an original idea, a completed plot, an unexpected ending, were used in Japanese literature by Japanese writer Hoshi Shinichi, the founder of this trend in Japan. He mostly worked in the genres of science fiction, detective and fantasy stories. Many of his stories show a disposition to moralize, which can be correlated with the genre of a fable while many stories have fairytales motifs, which can be compared with the Japanese genre of *otogizōshi*. Simple and short-short stories of Hoshi Shinichi where the characters meet aliens, evil spirits, invent magic drugs appear fantastic only in form; as a matter of fact they expose human vices: greed, meanness, silliness, laziness, falseness, etc.

Following Hoshi Shinichi Akagawa Jirō and Atōda Takashi continued writing *Shōto Shōto* stories extending the traditional set of topics. Their stories are about everyday life and life values. These writers do not always rely on the principles promulgated in the works of Hoshi. Only Hoshi strictly observed the rule of the lack of particularities in people's names and geographical terms, etc.; his stories are characterized by little connection with some particular reality thus proving relevant for any time.

With a rare exception Akagawa does not introduce anything externally fantastic into his story but endows his characters with imagination which becomes an element of fantasy. In Atōda's stories the mystic element is much stronger. In Hoshi's stories we see the tendency towards moralizing typical of fables while in the Akagawa and the Atōda works we seldom see obvious conclusions. All the three writers use grotesque technique skillfully combining tragedy and comedy in their stories. Besides, Hoshi, Akagawa and Atōda are united by the fact that in short stories all of them manage to show human vices and raise the problems of the contemporary world. It should be noted that the fairytale, folklore and

fantasy motifs are much more often the source of the plots in the short stories of Hoshi than in those of Akagawa and Atōda who prefer focusing on the contemporary society and contemporary people.

Today the Japanese short-short story is very diverse. It lacks any restrictions with regard to its plot or contents, it may be different in size and uses various means, the main one being satire, to show the people of the contemporary world. This is why despite different fantastic assumptions used by writers of such stories *Shōto Shōto* are interesting and relevant.

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Notes:

- 1) Grigorieva T. P. (1979), *Japanese Artistic Tradition*, p. 208.
- 2) Satō Chie, Murai Hajime, and Tokosumi Akifumi (2009), "Bungaku sakuhin no tokuchōteki goi to gainen kategori no chūshō. Hoshi Shinichi no *Shōto Shōto* no keiryō bunseki", p. 132.

- 3) Atōda Takashi (2001) “*Atogaki to sempyō*”, p. 217.
- 4) Nihongo daijiten (1989), p. 740.
- 5) Matsushima Sayuri (2003), “Hoshi Shinichi and the Space-Age Fable”, p. 99.
- 6) Hoshi Shinichi (1985), “*Sempyō*”, pp. 297-323.
- 7) Satō Chie, Murai Hajime, and Tokosumi Akifumi (2009), “*Bungaku sakuhin no tokuchōteki goi to gainen kategorī no chūshō. Hoshi Shinichi no Shōto Shōto no keiryō bunseki*”, p. 132.
- 8) Hoshi Shinichi (2008), *Bokko-chan*, p. 136.
- 9) See: Hoshi Shinichi (2008), *Bokko-chan*.
- 10) About nuclear energy and the end of the world in Hoshi’s *Shōto Shōto* see: Maruge Miki (2012), “*Waraenai watashitachi o warau. Genshiryoku to sekai no owari o megutte - Hoshi Shinichi no Shōto Shōto*”, pp. 109-121.
- 11) See, for example: Hoshi Shinichi (2005), *Enu shi no yūenchi*; Hoshi, (2008), *Kimagure robotto*.
- 12) See: Akagawa Jirō (2002), *Sampomichi*.
- 13) Akagawa Jirō (2002), *Sampomichi*, p. 173.
- 14) Hoshi Shinichi (1986), “*Sakusha to dokusha*”, p. 222.
- 15) See: Akagawa Jirō (1986), *Katte ni shaberu onna*.
- 16) See: Akagawa Jirō (1986), *Odoru otoko*.
- 17) See: Atōda Takashi (1996), *Kimyōna hirusagari*.
- 18) See: Atōda Takashi (2008), *Taberareta otoko*.
- 19) See: Atōda Takashi (2009), *Saigo no messēji*.
- 20) See: Atōda Takashi (2010), *Neko no jiken*.
- 21) Atōda Takashi (2010), *Neko no jiken*, pp. 227-230.
- 22) Atōda Takashi (2010), *Neko no jiken*, pp. 196-199.
- 23) Atōda Takashi (2008), *Taberareta otoko*, pp. 53-57.
- 24) Atōda Takashi (1996), *Kimyōna hirusagari*, pp. 69-77.
- 25) Atōda Takashi (1996), *Kimyōna hirusagari*, pp. 210-219.
- 26) Atōda Takashi (2009), *Saigo no messēji*, pp. 25-27.
- 27) Atōda Takashi (2009), *Saigo no messēji*, pp. 66-70.
- 28) Atōda Takashi (2009), *Saigo no messēji*, pp. 69-70.
- 29) Atōda Takashi (2009), *Saigo no messēji*, pp. 58-60.
- 30) Atōda Takashi (2009), *Saigo no messēji*, p. 60.
- 31) Atōda Takashi (1996), *Kimyōna hirusagari*, pp. 66-68.