Memory, modernity and children's literature in Japan: premodern warriors as national icons in nineteenth and twentieth century literature and curriculum

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Chapter 2

Historical exemplars in Meiji and Taishō period elementary education

As argued by Philippe Ariès, the spread of schooling in the European modern period strongly influenced the conceptual separation of children from adults.[1] Karatani Kōjin points out that in Japan, *compulsory* education, that is, a centralized system and curriculum orchestrated by the state, led to a notion of children as young (or future) citizens to be raised as members of a national community.[2] The new Meiji government introduced compulsory education in 1872, only four years after the Meiji restoration. Early studies that address the transition from Edo period educational practices to the Meiji school system mostly focus on political and ideological discourses within the government, building on an interpretation of the Meiji restoration as orchestrated from above.[3] In this interpretation a widespread familiarity with basic literacy education in the late Edo period connects to a comparatively smooth implementation of the new school system. In more recent studies of Meiji education, the perspective shifted from the government to reactions and initiatives within society and interaction between different layers. These show that many facets of the modern elementary school were experienced as very different from Edo period practices.[4] In her study of ideology in the Meiji period, Carol Gluck shows that many 'ideologues' who were not related to the government were intensely involved in public debates. These also included pedagogues, teachers and others who discussed notions about the education of the new nation's youth.[5]

Theoretical frameworks for studying nation and nationalism point out that compulsory education plays an important role in the 'creation' of citizens and a national identity, for example by teaching the designated national language, history, arts, national

[1] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*.
[2] Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*.
[3] E.g., Passin, *Society and Education in Japan*; Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*; Nagai, 'Westernization and Japanization'., but also Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education*.
[4] E.g., Platt, *Burning and Building*; Marshall, *Learning to Be Modern*.
[5] Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*. See especially her chapter on civil morality, pp. 102-156.

symbols, and social mores.[6] Little attention is however paid to the relationship between nationalism (or ideology) and pedagogy. In the 1890s, Herbartianism became the main pedagogy endorsed by the Japanese Ministry of Education. However, studies that address the ideological content of Meiji period textbooks hardly pay attention to Herbartian pedagogy.[7] They refer to the influence of the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890) and militarism, whereby the developments seem particular to Japan. Herbartianism originated in Germany and was in the late nineteenth century recognized as a helpful tool in nation-building by various states, including Britain, France, and the United States. Herbartian education made use of imaginative narratives about historical figures, that must arouse in children an interest not only in the national past, but also in the moral behaviour that they represented.

The material for creating exemplary historical characters in modern Japanese textbooks was found in premodern warrior legends. This was not only a project undertaken for the sake of the next generation, but also an interpretative exercise of the Rescript and provided a compelling reason for developing coherent narrations of the nation and its citizens. The same material was available to private publishers and authors. Educational ideologies moreover form the basis for a literary genre specifically designed for children.[8] Meiji youth literature, and especially historical fiction, might appear as an adjunct to state education. However, I consider elementary education a party that youth literature negotiated with, in the contest over models of citizenship for children. (Obviously these realms are not fenced off, as literary authors were involved in writing textbooks for the government, but they were then subject to the policies of the Ministry of Education.)

This chapter will focus on the way in which the Rescript, pedagogy and premodern warrior legends came together and were forged into state-sanctioned narratives about exemplary historical heroes for elementary school students. First, I will discuss the formation of the school system in the Meiji period, and the newfound ideological underpinnings according to the Imperial Rescript in the 1890s. Next, I will examine the theories and methods of Herbartianism for the elementary school, and how the concepts

[6] e.g., Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*.; Smith, *National Identity*; Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.
[7] Fridell, 'Government Ethics Textbooks in Late Meiji Japan'; Tsurumi, 'Meiji Primary School Language and Ethics Textbooks'; Takezawa, 'Translating and Transforming "Race"'.
[8] Shavit, 'The Historical Model of the Development of Children's Literature'.

from the Rescript and the Herbartian ways of teaching ethics and history were applied in Japanese textbooks. I will focus on *kokugo* 国語 (national language) readers, history textbooks, and ethics textbooks, in which historical exemplars most regularly appear. Last, through three case studies focusing on Minamoto Yoshitsune, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Murasaki Shikibu, I will ask how premodern histories and legends were re-interpreted in modern textbooks for elementary school students. What elements of the premodern legends are used? What is the role of images? Which dispositions and actions are stressed or de-emphasized, and how do these differ between genders?

1. The Meiji state and the school system

Following the Meiji restoration in 1868, the new government established two laws fundamental to the nation-state: namely, compulsory education and conscription. In 1872, a centralized education system was introduced with the Fundamental Code on Education (*Gakusei* 学制). Primary schooling became compulsory for all children. The Fundamental Code on Education bore similarities to the Conscription Law (*Chōheirei* 徴兵令, 1873) in that it ordered the entire Japanese population to mobilize for a collective endeavour.

In the early Meiji period, scholars and statesmen studied Western educational systems on their missions in Europe and America. The Ministry of Education (Monbushō 文部省) was created in 1871 with the aim of educational reform. For the Fundamental Code on Education, the Ministry was mainly inspired by France. The French system drew all aspects of education under a centralized authority (the University of France) and was easier to adopt than pluralistic systems.[9] The Japanese Ministry of Education put itself at the top of an education-pyramid: eight universities, 256 middle schools and 53.760 primary schools. They created a total of 210 primary-school districts that replaced the administrational unit of the village.[10] There were however also many minor provisions that were based on the systems in other Western countries, such as Germany, The Netherlands, England, and America. The Fundamental Code on Education was more progressive than the French system in its egalitarian ideals, stating (in the Preamble) that 'every man should pursue learning' and 'a guardian who fails to send a young child, whether a boy or a girl, to primary school shall be

[9] Nagai, 'Westernization and Japanization', 38.
[10] Platt, *Burning and Building*, 134.

deemed negligent of his duty'.[11] According to the Regulations for Primary Education (*Shōgaku kyōrei* 小学教則, 1872) all Japanese children were to have eight years of compulsory education, and attend from age six till thirteen.

The Fundamental Code on Education sought to replace existing education practices rather than complement them. The government not only abolished Edo period school arrangements, but also fledgling local initiatives towards building new schools and administrations.[12] Brian Platt challenges the idea that *terakoya* education readied the population for the implementation of the modern school system, as the new system was perceived of as very different and led to significant protest. The idea of having one's children schooled outside the home, or paying a teacher, was not the problem: there was indeed widespread familiarity with elementary schooling (even if it was not for everybody), as well as village elite willing to contribute financially to local schools.[13] Protests against the new school system rather followed from outrage over a multitude of administrative and social changes.[14] Apart from the laws on education and conscription, new tax laws were introduced in 1873, as well as many other reforms, such as the abolition of the *burakumin* 部落民 status, and the adoption of the Gregorian calendar.[15] During uprisings in the years 1872 and 1873 new schools were burned and other institutions or homes associated with the new Meiji government were also targeted. Nagai Michio argues that the Code was unsuccessful due to a lack of government funds and cultural differences with the contents of 'traditional' Confucian education.[16] According to Platt, this was however only part of the problem. In a second wave of protest in 1877-78, village elite challenged the discrepancy between local funding and central control. These (somewhat more deliberate) protests show that the concept of *national* education was considered intrusive and unnatural.

The government did not have the financial means to implement the proposed system and heavily depended on local funds.[17] It had however other ways to practice control over

[11] Passin, *Society and Education in Japan*, 209–11.
[12] During and after the Restauration years, enthusiasts with or without connections to the early Meiji government had already started their own new schools and administrations. In Kyoto for example, municipal authorities adopted in 1869 a centralized system that included sixty-four elementary school districts. The schools were subsidized by the city government and wealthy families. Platt, *Burning and Building*, 112.
[13] Platt, 193–95.
[14] Platt, 186–87.
[15] So-called *burakumin* (litt. 'hamlet people') were severely stigmatized outcasts, living in ghettos and hamlets, with occupations considered to be 'defiled', such as butcher, tanner, or executioner.
[16] Nagai 1971, 57–60.
[17] Government funds for elementary schools were 12,6 percent of school income sources in 1873, and dropped to 5,5 percent in 1879, the year the Fundamental Code on Education was replaced for a new Code. Major income sources consisted of local

schools, such as fact-gathering and school inspection. Information was gathered by school district administrators, a local office that provided a link between central government and the schools. This observant eye in its turn also led to self-regulation. Another powerful way of control was the marginalization of Edo period practices and the creation of a new, abstract concept of 'school'.[18] The government delegitimized the practices of pre-Meiji teachers by using disparaging language and forced those who wished to teach to adhere (at least superficially) to the new definition of 'teacher'. For teaching or re-opening a school, one needed a license. In the application, one had to use the new concepts, language and categories set out by the government. Applicants who failed to phrase the request in the proper terms were rejected.

National policy was refined by many forms of 'feedback'. In the 1870s the government could count on a number of local leaders who were genuinely committed to implementing and negotiating national education. The lower authorities and normal schools took upon them the task of standardizing pedagogical techniques, class schedules and teaching materials. Negative responses from society were impeding the implementation of educational policies, but also taking the implementation of education into new directions. In his case-study of educational reform in Nagano prefecture, Platt shows that the boundaries of the rules were tested with the government's own weapons. Using pragmatic language or the format of a 'question', many proposals from schools or local leaders were accepted by the Nagano prefectural office.[19] In a request for tuition waivers for example, people of the area were pictured as unable to grasp the meaning of and 'civilization' and 'enlightenment' (*bunmei kaika* 文明開化). These magic words of modernity were used to mollify the government into a compromise. When a particular community did not agree to a school consolidation, because of problems with wealthy families who preferred the master-pupil relationship, or unrest about unnatural community boundaries (which was formerly the village, in which the school had a social role), it might be argued that young children were not able to walk the distance towards the licensed elementary school. In effect the Fundamental Code on Education 'represented an effort not merely to create new laws and institutions (…) but to redefine the notion of "school" and to displace and marginalize

district funds and contributions (30 to 43 percent in the above-mentioned period). Rubinger, 'Education: From One Room to One System', 216.

[18] Platt, *Burning and Building*, 136.

[19] Platt, 166–68.

existing definitions'.[20] The two decennia following the promulgation of the Code was a period of negotiation, slowly evolving into wider acceptance of the necessity of the new school system, as well as a clearer definition of the curriculum and practices.

In 1879, the initial plans and designs were overhauled in the Education Law (*Kyōiku rei* 教育令), that decentralized the system along American lines. It tried to correct the weak points of the Fundamental Code on Education and emphasised local autonomy, pluralism, and freedom.[21] Rather than the result of genuine enthusiasm about the American education system, the new Education Law was the result of power struggles and compromises.[22] The resulting document left so much to local initiatives and interpretations that it never worked, and some areas (notably Tokyo) saw a drop in school attendance during the early 1880s.[23]

The General Outline of Elementary School Regulations (*Shōgakkō kyōsoku kōryō* 小学校教則綱領, 1881) divided primary school into three phases: the lower and middle divisions (both three years) and a higher division spanning two years.[24] A child was introduced to five different subjects during the lower years: writing (*shūji* 習字), reading (*dokusho* 読書), arithmetic (*sanjutsu* 算術), and ethics (*shūshin* 修身). Geography (*chiri* 地理) and history (*rekishi* 歴史) were added in the fourth year. All students were obliged to do twenty minutes physical exercise a day. It was moreover advised to offer sewing and needlework classes (in addition to the general curriculum) for girls, which was for some parents an incentive to also send their daughters to school.[25] From 1886, Education Minister Mori Arinori (1847-1889) introduced various revisions. The primary school was brought back to two phases: the compulsory four-year 'ordinary' elementary school (*jinjō shōgakkō* 尋常小学校), followed by the four-year 'higher' elementary school (*kōtō shōgakkō* 高等小学校) aimed at entrance to secondary education. The Law on Primary Schools (*Shōgakkō rei* 小学校令, 1886) stipulated that caretakers send a child to school for eight years, from the age of six till fourteen.[26] In this law, the Ministry of Education also took more control over the curriculum: only government-approved textbooks could be used and only subjects outlined by the

[20] Platt, 132.
[21] Nagai, 'Westernization and Japanization', 61.
[22] Nagai, 61–68.
[23] Rubinger, 'Education: From One Room to One System', 213. In some (rural) prefectures with initially a very low attendance, the rates however rose steadily.
[24] *Hōrei zensho Meiji 14 nen*, 814–18.
[25] Piel, 'The Ideology of the Child in Japan', 102–3.
[26] Monbushō 文部省, *Gakusei Hyakunen Shi: Shiryōhen*.
http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/others/detail/1318011.htm (accessed Jan. 18, 2022)

government were to be taught. Reading and writing were grouped under the subject *kokugo* 国語 (national language).

In practice, by 1890, the national average school registration was only around 50%. Christian Galan points out that actual attendance was often limited to young children: by 1902, only seventy-two children out of a hundred completed six years of schooling.[27] Patterns of attendance in some 1880s Nagano schools resembled Edo period agricultural rhythms, in which children would disappear from school from late spring to midsummer, and attendance dropped during harvest time.[28] According to Platt, the Meiji period school system was therefore only 'national' in terms of its structure. The number of girls registered in schools moreover constantly lagged with twenty to thirty percent behind the boys till the turn of the century. Yet by 1905, elementary school registration topped 90% with only a small difference between urban and rural areas, while the girls had (almost) caught up with the boys.[29] Apart from addressing practical challenges (such as child labour and lack of funds), the government had from the early 1890s made a more convincing case for the new system by defining its ideological principles.

2. The Imperial Rescript on Education

In 1879, the Imperial Court issued the Great Principles for Education (*Kyōgaku taishi* 教学大旨), written by the Confucian scholar Motoda Eifu 元田永孚 (1818-1891). Motoda opposed 'Westernization' in schools and pressed for a return to Confucian virtues of 'benevolence, justice, loyalty, and filial piety' (*jingi chūkō* 仁義忠孝). Furthermore, elementary education should focus on moral education and the family occupations (such as agriculture or trade) of the children involved rather than filling their heads with 'high-sounding ideas'. They are thus not to use education for transcending social boundaries, or even geographical boundaries. (They should ideally stay in or return to their villages and make themselves of use.) In line with the ideas of Kaibara Ekiken and other Neo-Confucian educators, Motoda argued that Confucian virtues need to be cultivated from an early age before it is too late. If education would be grounded foremost in Confucian morality (and only secondary in technical knowledge), Motoda argued, Japan would be able to show itself 'proudly

[27] Galan, 'Home vs. School vs. Work', 282.
[28] Platt, *Burning and Building*, 252–54.
[29] Rubinger, 'Education: From One Room to One System', 214.

throughout the world as a nation of independent spirit'.[30] He thus proposed Confucian morality as a national ethic. The subject of ethics and moral education was however not limited to Confucian and traditionalist circles. Both progressive educators and middle-class elite participated in a discourse on morality, although the origins for their views might be found in the West with Herbart's pedagogy (discussed in more detail below) or Victorian moralism.[31]

The Imperial Rescript on Education (*Kyōiku ni kansuru chokugo* 教育ニ関スル勅語, 1890), proved to be a more successful moral guide for education and the nation. The Rescript presented Confucian values in such a way that they were interpreted as a national or universal morality. It instructed citizens to be of service to the Imperial state and construed the Emperor as the source of moral virtue.[32] The main authors of the Rescript were Motoda Eifu and the politician Inoue Kowashi 井上毅 (1844-1895), who worked meticulously towards a text in which men of varying backgrounds would see mirrored their own ideas. Although its introduction was less momentous than the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution (in the same year), the Rescript was lifted to an exalted position through exegesis and ritualization. The popular 'Explanation of the Rescript' (*Chokugo engi* 勅語衍義) by Inoue Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1855-1944) sold four million copies and served as an ethics textbook for middle schools and normal schools.[33] Inoue identified 'patriotism' (*aikoku* 愛国) as the main meaning of the text even though this word did not appear in the original. The Rescript became widely associated with this sentiment. The Rescript called for a 'spirit of sacrifice' to the state, that was needed during an undefined emergency that might arise (*ittan kankyū areba giyūkō ni hōji* 一旦緩急アレハ義勇公ニ奉シ). By stirring up fear for the preying

[30] De Bary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. 2, Pt. 2*, 97.
[31] Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 110–11.
[32] The full text of the Rescript in translation, is as follows: 'Know ye, Our subjects: Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may thus attain to the same virtue. The 30th day of the 10th month of the 23rd year of Meiji.' (As cited in Gluck, 121.)
[33] Monbushō 文部省, *Gakusei Hyakunen Shi*.
http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/others/detail/1317610.htm (accessed Jan. 18, 2022)

Western powers, Inoue stressed the necessity of such a spirit of sacrifice.[34] Many commentaries did not merely deal with education but used the Rescript to reflect on (nationalist) ideologies and the *kokutai* 国体 ('national essence'). According to Gluck, 595 book-length commentaries, hundreds of directives from the Ministry for teachers, and countless other printed texts appeared, as well as orally delivered commentaries.[35]

The translation of the Rescript's abstractions into images and narratives aimed at children can also be considered a form of commentary. The outlines of this practice were given in educational directives. The Fundamental Regulations for Primary School Education (*Shōgakkō kyōikusoku taikō* 小学校教則大綱, 1891) states, for example, that the cultivation of moral character (*dōtoku kyōiku* 道徳教育) is the most important role of national education (*kokumin kyōiku* 国民教育). Accordingly, a subject such as Japanese history should not only teach the names of emperors, the military past and the origin of Japanese culture, but the Law also instructs: 'if possible make use of pictures etc., so that it will be easier for the children to imagine the contemporary circumstances, and as to the speech and behaviour etc. of [historical] characters, take these up as moral lessons and compare them to proverbs etc., and use these to [learn the students to] discriminate between right and wrong.'[36]

The regulation not only bears the stamp of the Rescript, but also Herbartian pedagogy, without which national ethics would have been too abstract for the intended audience. In most studies of the history of Japanese education the promulgation of the Rescript symbolizes a break. Elementary education after 1890 gets significantly less attention, as the government in these years is considered to merely have consolidated the central administration and ideological course.[37] Several articles on the contents of moral education show that following its promulgation, the ethics of the Rescript were reworked in the government textbooks (*kokutei kyōkasho* 国定教科書) and represented by narratives and

[34] Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 130.
[35] Gluck, 127.
[36] *Hōrei Zensho : Meiji 24 Nen*, 348.
[37] Benjamin Duke argues that the Rescript brought to an end 'the first two decades of modern education in Japan, characterized by the struggles between modernizers and the traditionalists' after which 'the modern school system of Japan finally achieved a sustainable balance'. (Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education*, 369.) Duke's sense of closure follows from a focus on the government and a (rather outdated) dichotomy of modernizers and traditionalists. Byron Marshall's (1994) chapter on the early twentieth century focuses on student and teacher activism, i.e., on higher education. Brian Platt in *Burning and Building* also takes 1890 as the final year of his investigation, yet for him this year does not mark the moment that the ideological course of the next five decennia was set in stone. Rather, his study of the first two decennia of the Meiji period shows how an 'institutional and discursive framework' that produced a new definition of 'school' came into existence. Platt, *Burning and Building*, 262.

songs about historical exemplars.[38] The connection between the government and the elementary school textbooks is however only explained by referring to ideology (the Rescript, a conservative political climate, militarism in the early twentieth century), while pedagogy is not mentioned or associated with progressive, opposing ideals. Gluck points out that in Meiji educational discourse, connections were made between the Rescript and Herbart's *sittliche Bildung* (moral education) on a theoretical level.[39] The stress on moral character and the development of appealing narratives of exemplary heroes in textbooks should be seen in the context of both the Rescript and Herbartian pedagogy.

3. Herbartian pedagogy

Following the introduction of compulsory education in 1872, the Ministry of Education aimed to replace Edo period educational practices with Western pedagogical methods. During the 1870s and 1880s, the government pioneered with what pedagogues at the Tokyo Normal School and elsewhere termed *kaihatsu-shugi* 開発主義 ('developmental education').[40] The new pedagogy served the ideal of civilization and enlightenment (*bunmei kaika* 文明開化), aimed at bringing Japan at the same level as Western nations. The famous educator Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤諭吉 (1835-1901) is hailed for his egalitarian ideas and a new approach to curriculum that included reading translated versions of Western books. However, as Mark Lincicome points out, the nation's children first needed to learn to read, before they could access the written representations of *bunmei kaika*.[41] New educational methods for primary schools were introduced by American pedagogues invited to Japan, and through Japanese translations and adaptations of teaching manuals.

Developmental education stressed the cultivation of 'the unique, innate abilities of every child… according to the child's individual learning level and capacity'.[42] The theoretical roots of the new approaches to education can be found in European Romanticism and Enlightenment, with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Swiss educator Johann Heinrich

[38] Tsurumi, 'Meiji Primary School Language and Ethics Textbooks'; Fridell, 'Government Ethics Textbooks in Late Meiji Japan'; Cave, 'Story, Song, and Ceremony'. The first three government textbooks for ethics and *kokugo* appeared in 1903, 1910, and 1918. *Kokugo* textbooks were not all replaced at the same time: volumes for higher grades were published shortly before the publication of volume one of a new textbook.
[39] Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 110; Gluck, 127.
[40] Lincicome, *Principle, Praxis, and the Politics of Educational Reform in Meiji Japan*, 3. *Kaihatsu-shugi*, that Lincicome translated as 'developmental education' was thus a term applied to a body of progressive pedagogical ideas.
[41] Lincicome, 22.
[42] Lincicome, 3.

Pestalozzi (1746-1827), and his student Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852). The Japanese proponents of developmental education challenged the traditional methods that stressed memorization, recitation, and discipline, by claiming that every child is by nature unique, autonomous, and inquisitive. Learning had to be individualized and child centred. Although *terakoya* education had also consisted of individual guidance from a teacher, these new theories had close affinity with the emerging discipline of psychology and were occupied with the way that educational guidance should connect to the mental development of children. During the 1880s, the theme of moral education started to receive more attention at the Tokyo Normal School as well as in publications on pedagogy. In fact, Pestalozzi argued that the state could benefit from (a humanistic version of) moral education. An important point is however that he did not grant the state the right to define the contents.[43]

The Meiji state however granted itself full rights and even outlined how ethics should be imparted. In the early 1890s, following the introduction of the Rescript, the government shifted focus to Herbartianism, a pedagogy that had its roots in the theories of the German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841). Herbart stressed the role of education in preparing children for their role in society; education was the way to become a proper citizen. 'Herbartianism', as developed by Herbart's followers, emphasised the development of moral character, which connected to the interest of the government in raising good citizens.[44] From the late 1880s, the work of Herbart and prolific Herbartians such as Gustav Lindner (1828-1887) and Tuiskon Ziller (1817-1882) were introduced in translation, and discussed in the prolific pedagogical journal *Kyōiku jiron* 教育時論 (Educational Review). Emile Hausknecht (1853-1927), who taught at the Tokyo Imperial University from 1887 to 1890, is credited with bringing Herbartianism to Japan, but he was mainly occupied with the middle school.[45] Ziller and his student Wilhelm Rein (1847-1929) developed a practical pedagogy for the elementary school based on Herbart's theory, which was disseminated in Japan, but also in Poland, Britain, and the US in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[46] Both education theorists stressed the aspect of cultivating moral character in Herbart's theory and considered history and literature the core of the curriculum as it gives

[43] Lincicome, 67.
[44] Lincicome, 198–99.
[45] Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education*, 338–45.
[46] Majorek, 'The Interpretation of Herbartian Pedagogics in the 19th Century Polish Teacher Training Seminars'; Yeandle, *Citizenship, Nation, Empire*; Dunkel, 'Herbartianism Comes to America'.

the opportunity to discuss human behaviour. For young children, Ziller advised to introduce Grimm's fairy tales in year one, *Robinson Crusoe* in year two, the Thüringer Sagen in year three, the Niebelungenlied in year four, and history from year five (starting from Henry I, Otto I, and Charlemange).[47]

In this same vein, the Japanese pedagogue Morioka Tsunezō 森岡常蔵 (1871-1944) stated that 'all school subjects pivot around the subject of history' in his influential manual *Shōgaku kyōjuhō* 小學教授法 (1899).[48] He credits this idea to Ziller. From 1899 to 1903, Morioka studied in Germany under Rein and upon his return started to work for the Ministry of Education. According to Morioka in his manual, history is important because it teaches about humanity (*jindō* 人道), society (*shakai* 社会), and ethics (*dōtoku* 道徳).[49] The aim of history lessons is according to Morioka to 'impart the essentials of the national polity, and to cultivate [in students] the principles for Japanese citizens', as also outlined in the government directions.[50] He recapitulates this view many times, while giving a major role to historical figures in the teaching of history.

> First one should introduce the history of the nation. Because they [the students] feel strongly about characters from national history and have heard their names in daily life, they will be very enthusiastic when you take these up. Moreover, as our entire history is furnished with exemplary characters, national history is the best expedient to preserve the character of the citizens, and furthermore, national history is best suited to demonstrate the communal spirit (*kyōdō seishin* 共同精神) and cultivate a love for the nation.[51]

The subject of national history was only mandatory after four years of elementary schooling. Morioka states however that history classes are closely related to *kokugo* and ethics classes.[52]

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[47] De Garmo, *Herbart and the Herbartians*, 119–20. Ziller proposed to teach these next to Bible stories (from year three), that were already part of the German school curriculum.
[48] Morioka, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 226.
[49] Morioka, 230.
[50] Morioka, 231.
[51] Morioka, 232.
[52] Morioka, 67. History was officially taught from the first grade of higher primary school, which in 1907 became the fifth grade of the lower primary school. According to the *Shōgakkōrei shikō kisoku* 小学校令施行規則 (1900), ethics classes should be taught two hours a week, while *kokugo* classes build up from ten to fifteen over the course of four years, together covering between 57% and 63% of the official curriculum. Four hours were spent on physical education, and five to six on mathematics. Ethics textbooks from the late 1890s onwards are adapted to the literacy levels in each grade (i.e., they start with only pictures and then simple stories written in *kana*). Monbushō 文部省, *Gakusei Hyakunen Shi*. https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/others/detail/1317623.htm (accessed Jan. 18, 2022)

Ethics classes for young children should (according to the Herbartians, Morioka stresses) start with *mukashibanashi* and fables, which will provide examples of ethical behaviour while appealing to the imagination (*sōzō* 想像) of the students.[53] According to Morioka, *mukashibanashi* naturally reflect the 'spirit of the people' (*kokuminteki seishitsu* 国民的性質). A teacher should next introduce legends about martial heroes (*yūshi monogatari* 勇士物語), especially if they can be related to (local) shrines, such as Sugawara Michizane, Wake no Kiyomaru 和気清麻呂 (733-799), and Kusunoki Masashige 楠木正成 (1294-1336).[54] Ziller's fairy tale stage was thus translated to *mukashibanashi*, and the German *Sagen* were conflated with warrior tales. According to Morioka, a teacher should furthermore discuss 'model citizens' (*kokumin no gihyō* 国民の儀表) such as the scholars Nakae Tōju and Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730-1801), and prepare lessons related to national holidays and days of remembrance. Another contemporary Herbartian teaching manual (1902) by Ōto Eikichi 大戸栄吉 (?-?), head of the primary school attached to the Tokyo Normal School, points out that readers and ethics lessons prepare children for history lessons right from the first grade, as they introduce *mukashibanashi*, heroic tales (*buyūdan* 武勇談), tales from history, as well as lessons related to geography which provides important context.[55] Ōto also proposes to familiarize children with school songs with historical themes.[56] In the revised edition (1908), he explains that the aim of these preparations is to cultivate *rekishiteki kannen* 歴史的観念 (historical consciousness) and an interest (*kyōmi* 興味) in the origins of the nation.[57]

Making connections to pre-existing knowledge, experiences and feelings concurs with the first step in the Herbartian lesson stages (*Formalstufen*) standardized by Ziller and Rein: preparation (*yobi* 予備), presentation (*teiji* 指示), association (*hikaku* 比較), generalization (*sōkatsu* 総括), and application (*ōyō* 応用).[58] Morioka specifies these steps for a history lesson, followed by a concrete example of a lesson about Kusunoki Masashige, famous for his loyalty to the emperor.[59] The general nature of 'preparation' has been described above. The

[53] 'The Herbartians' seems to refer again especially to Ziller and Rein. The American education theorist Charles De Garmo (1849-1934) stresses the importance of history and literature in Ziller's pedagogy, 'the one narrating the actual progress of the race, the other picturing ethical conflict in imaginative forms'. De Garmo, *Herbart and the Herbartians*, 118–19.
[54] Morioka, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 66–67.
[55] Ōto, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 171.
[56] Ōto, 173.
[57] Ōto, *Kaitei Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 161.
[58] This was later often brought back to *yobi*, *teiji* and *ōyō*. Yoshida, 'A Study of the Method of History Education in the First Half of the (1872～1903) Meiji Period', 134. Variations exist of Herbartian lesson plans in Japan and elsewhere, which also depends on the age of the students.
[59] Morioka, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 247–51.

lesson plan for Masashige proposes to refer to earlier ethics lessons on Kusunoki, or loyal retainers (*chūshin gishi* 忠臣義士) whom the children already know. Then, the teacher conjures up a photograph of Kusunoki's tomb and reads the epitaph aloud: 'Alas! The tomb of the loyal Kusunoki' (*Aa - chūshin nanshi no haka* 嗚呼忠臣楠子之墓).[60] The teacher then copies this text in a large script on the blackboard and proposes to find out more about Kusunoki.

Teiji or 'presentation' should consist of a lesson delivered orally, in an 'enthusiastic, lively manner' while making use of maps, the blackboard, and pictures.[61] One should not only discuss the historical facts, but also the decisions and behaviour of the historical figure(s) and the moral lessons these contain. The same counts for the moral lessons that might be drawn from a historical period. As to the lesson on Kusunoki, the teacher introduces the historical context and main events and asks several questions of which the last one should be 'What kind of person do you think Kusunoki was?' The steps of *hikaku* and *sōtatsu* consist of comparisons with other figures (in the case of Kusunoki these might be Michizane or Wake no Kiyomaro) to draw out the moral lessons, and a summary of the lesson. The last step, of *ōyō* or application, can take various forms, but should reflect on the ethics (*kyōkun* 教訓) that were central to the lesson. Applied to Kusunoki, older children might be given a reading assignment, while younger children might be asked to write something about a picture of 'the parting at Sakurai' referring to the final meeting between Masashige and his son Kusunoki Masatsura 楠木正行 (1326–1348) (fig. 2.1), described in *Taiheiki*.[62] Morioka argues that history

Fig. 2.1 *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon*, vol. 6., 1887. Private collection

[60] This *haka* 墓 (tomb) refers to the monument erected in 1692 by Tokugawa Mitsukuni (1628-1701) at the precincts of the Minatogawa shrine in Kobe.
[61] Morioka, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 243–44.
[62] The 'parting at Sakurai' (*Sakurai no wakare* 桜井の別れ) refers to the last farewell between Kusunoki and his son Masatsura before the Battle of Minatogawa (1336), as ordered by the Emperor, even though he knew they would be defeated. The motif finds its origin in a painting by Kanō Tan'yū (1602-1674), commissioned by a member of Tokugawa Mitsukuni's circles, where the icon signified Confucian moral values. The premodern iconography became one of the foremost symbols of loyalty to the Emperor. See Maeda, 'From Feudal Hero to National Icon'.

textbooks are too dry especially for younger children, and being closely related to literature, too difficult to incite enthusiasm. Ōto is also critical of history textbooks and argues that a good textbook should consist of appropriate examples, delivered in a simple, lively writing style, and should now and then introduce a poem.[63]

Ōto makes explicit that the aim of history education is not only the teaching of morals but also to cultivate *rekishiteki kannen* or 'historical consciousness'. This neologism is in all probability related to the German term *Geschichtsbewusstsein*, that originated in nineteenth century philosophy and anthropology and in this context referred to a collective historical identity. The concept is close to *kokkateki kannen* 国家的観念 ('national consciousness'), a term often employed by late Meiji period ideologues who wanted to foster a sense of nation among the populace.[64] In this context, 'learning from history' does not involve a critical interrogation of the past: the ideal answers to the questions asked during the lessons are set in stone (literally in Kusunoki Masashige's monument). The main point is according to Morioka that students understand the virtue of 'loyalty and patriotism' (*chūkō aikoku* 忠孝愛国), of which the examples can be found in history.[65] The Rescript (repeatedly mentioned in the section on teaching *shūshin*) defines the ethics that students should ultimately internalize.

The lesson on Kusunoki began with bringing together individual experiences (i.e., storytelling by caretakers or pictures encountered outside school) and communal experiences (i.e., the ethics lesson in an earlier grade) after which the teacher introduced a photograph of a monument. Elaborating upon Halbwach's theory, Jeffrey Olick argues that collective memory consists of mnemonic products (such as images, stories, and statues) and mnemonic practices (such as commemoration and representation) which are simultaneously individual and social.[66] As a mnemonic product, the photograph of Masashige's tomb is multi-layered: the monument signifies a connection to the remote past and an area that has no physical connection to most students. The monument is represented by a photograph. The epitaph adds another layer. Like the poetry mentioned by Ōto, emblematic texts would (ideally) elicit an emotional response or at least have higher chances of being remembered. They could be tapped into on various occasions: for example, general Nogi Maresuke 乃木希

[63] Ōto, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 178.
[64] Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 21–25.
[65] Morioka, *Shōgaku Kyōjuhō*, 247.
[66] Jeffrey, 'From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products', 158.

典 (1849-1912) was after his ritual suicide commemorated by invoking Masashige's epitaph (*Aa – chūshin Nogi taishō* 嗚呼忠臣乃木大将) in the title of a song and in youth magazines. The iconic image of the 'parting at Sakurai' is yet another mnemonic product, etched into the mind through the mnemonic practice of a writing assignment through which the teacher could check if the individual interpretations concurred with the aim of the lesson.

Representations of historical exemplars could potentially work against the interests of the state, which led to a careful consideration of the characteristics that should be stressed or de-emphasized. Peter Yeandle's study on British history education (1870-1930) and Herbartian influences shows that, like in Japan, it was deemed important to introduce heroes and heroines that elicited an emotional response and thereby stimulated the internalization of the exemplary disposition.[67] The need of the British government was not to 'promote patriotism per se, but 'enlightened patriotism' – that is, the desire to serve one's own country with pride, not pomp, and with full awareness of why the nation was great, rather than with blind and unthinking adulation. The predicament, however, was that the majority of these stories were about extra-ordinary characters.'[68] In other words, the efforts must be directed towards the collective rather than individual fame. British textbooks and readers employed two methods to steer children towards the 'right' interpretation: first, besides famous characters, they introduced 'ordinary' figures who represented civic virtues like loyalty, endurance, compassion etc. Second, in the biographies of famous heroes, they stressed how the hero was supported by other people.[69] These methods were also applied in Japanese textbooks and readers. In Japan, another common method was to state that the achievements of the hero(in) pleased the Emperor (or Empress). Yeandle does not discuss commercial historical fiction for children as a separate or competing field, but as chapter three will show, at least in Japan there was a tension between state education and the commercial realm, in which representations of extra-ordinary figures emphasized different characteristics.

Although Herbartianism became a leading pedagogy in the early twentieth century, the government's ideas about the purpose of education were not uncontested. Proponents of so-called *jiyū kyōiku* 自由教育 ('liberal education') and other progressive forms of education

[67] Yeandle, *Citizenship, Nation, Empire*, 56–57.
[68] Yeandle, 123.
[69] Yeandle, 124–25.

established societies and private schools that challenged the authoritarian, bureaucratic approach as well as the nationalistic visions of the Ministry of Education. They saw education as a way to empower individuals to learn and grow independently, and while some groups had a national orientation, others focused on world citizenship.[70] In the scholarly literature, Herbartianism has often been formulated in opposition to progressive pedagogy. However, Herbartianism appeared in Germany from a nineteenth century discourse occupied not only with moral education but also psychology. It shared with developmental education the idea to build on previous knowledge, to make use of the 'imagination' (*sōzō*) and the gradual development of a child's capacity to understand various 'concepts' (*kannen*). Textbooks show that rather than being suddenly hijacked by Herbartianism, small yet significant shifts occurred that changed the orientation of the curriculum towards national ethics.

4. Elementary school textbooks

The canonization of exemplary historical heroes and the development of these narratives in textbooks took mainly place in the 1890s under influence of the Rescript and Herbartian pedagogy. In the early Meiji period, the production of textbooks was largely left to private initiatives, and Japanese children who attended primary school would encounter a mix of modern textbooks and *ōraimono*. However, during the 1880s, the government gradually took control of the production of textbooks. From 1881, schools needed to report the textbooks they were using, and from 1886, only books authorized by the Ministry of Education were allowed. A series of scandals concerning bribery by publishers helped to pass a mandate in 1903, that stated that the Ministry of Education would henceforth commission and publish all elementary school textbooks for the main subjects (ethics, reading, history and geography).[71] By then however, many pedagogues and creative minds, including literary authors, had made useful contributions. This section will focus on *kokugo* readers, history textbooks and ethics, the subjects that were in the previous section identified as central to the orchestrated effort of teaching citizenship through historical exemplars.

[70] Rothstein, 'Seeds for Change', 59–61. A shared goal of the groups and individuals discussed by Rothstein was to direct schooling away from a nation-building project towards child-centred education and more autonomy for teachers and parents. These debates also played in other nation-states at the time. Rothstein argues that although most ideals did not come to fruition on a national scale in the pre-war period, the Taishō period discourse formed the roots of the post-war reforms.
[71] Marshall, *Learning to Be Modern*, 84–85.

The first new textbooks were 'updated versions' of early modern *ōraimono*, that widened their scope to the *sekai* 世界 (world), such as Fukuzawa Yukichi's *Sekai kuni zukushi* 世界国尽 ('Countries of the World', 1869) and Hashizume Kan'ichi's *Sekai shōbai ōrai* 世界商売往来 ('Merchant's Primer of the World', 1871). Both authors had studied in the United States. *Sekai kuni zukushi* introduces the continents and countries and its people. It is based on Western interpretations of hierarchies of civilization (*bunmei* 文明) and 'race' (*jinshu* 人種) and implies that the reader should take the most 'civilized' countries an example.[72] As was customary in *ōraimono*, the main text is presented as a calligraphy. *Sekai shōbai ōrai*, that introduces kanji-compounds that refer to Western objects (such as objects related to ships and the army, furniture, cutlery, clothing, tools, crops, and animals), interspersed with small illustrations. The *kashiragaki* consists of a wordlist in English. Early Meiji *ōraimono* (as we might still call them) thus contained knowledge about the West and the worldviews in which they are embedded, yet in form and didactic approach they stood in the Edo period.

The textbooks of the 1870s included translations of Western works and re-iterations of Japanese instructional texts published in movable type. A famous example of the first is Samuel Smile's *Self Help* (1867, translated as *Seikoku risshihen* 西国立志編 in 1871) that introduced exemplary men who elevated themselves through ambition (*risshi* 立志).[73] Such translations co-existed with texts that re-introduced premodern paragons. For example, *Kinsei kōshiden* 近世孝子伝 (1875) introduced exemplars of filial piety (including Tomematsu, the filial boy discussed in chapter one), and *Honchō retsujoden* 本朝列女伝 (1875) revisited the early modern canon of virtuous women. In 1873 and 1874, the Ministry of Education introduced two versions of the *Shōgaku tokuhon* 小学読本 ('Primary School Reader'). The 1873 textbook is based on direct translations of texts from the American *School and Family Series* (1860) by Marcius Willson (1813-1905), but the 1874 version was more eclectic and introduced practical and scientific knowledge befitting the goal of *bunmei kaika* as well as stories about Japanese historical figures and Confucian morality.[74] With help of specialists from the Tokyo Normal School, the Ministry also refashioned the earliest stage of literacy education based on Western models. *Shōkaku nyūmon* 小学入門 ('Elementary School Primer', 1874) introduces *kana* charts, numbers and words in which the *kana* appear, combined with

[72] Takezawa, 'Translating and Transforming "Race"', 10–11.
[73] Tsurumi, 'Meiji Primary School Language and Ethics Textbooks', 249.
[74] Tsurumi, 251. Both textbooks consist of five volumes.

illustrations.[75] The latter part introduces Chinese characters grouped by theme, that are consequently applied in short stories. As Lincicome observes, insight into 'developmental' didactics is however limited, as the vocabulary in the stories does not build on or reinforce the vocabulary introduced in earlier parts, nor are they accompanied by illustrations.[76]

The quality of readers improved in the mid-1880s, several of which were rooted in developmental education. The primer *Yomikata nyūmon* 読方入門 ('Introduction to Reading', 1884) focuses on objects, daily surroundings, nature, and animals, while introducing easy concepts first and more difficult ones later. This book bears the stamp of Isawa Shūji 伊澤修二 (1851-1917), head of Tokyo Normal School and chief editor of the textbook compilation bureau from 1885. Isawa was adamant that textbooks should be of higher quality and argued that their production should not be left to the people, but to a group of professionals in their subject, editors, and experienced teachers.[77] Under Isawa's leadership, the compilation bureau revised its primer and created the follow-up textbook *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon* 尋常小学読本 ('Reader for the Ordinary Elementary School', 1887) for the first four years of elementary school. This textbook was revolutionary in that it did not merely teach the national language, but also invited children to develop their mental faculties and use their imagination. To this end, the lessons introduced subjects close to the experience of children, such as play, school and simplified *mukashibanashi* and fables, gradually incorporating more difficult themes such as science, geography, and history.

The choice to include *mukashibanashi* and fables initially met with critique. In his defense, Isawa stated that first, these stories connected to the imagination (*sōzōryoku* 想像力) and early stage of development (*hattatsu* 発達) of children; they would both enjoy and learn from the morality in these stories.[78] Second, such popular tales were even in the West translated and seen as 'literary masterpieces'. The illustrations in the textbook were criticized for their crudeness in form. This was according to Isawa because 'these readers are rather young and lack acute powers of discrimination, their concepts (*kannen* 観念) do not extend beyond general forms'.[79] The opinion of children on these pictures was in fact

[75] The *hiragana* chart in *Shōgaku nyūmon* singles out one *kana* for each sound in large print but introduces variants in smaller print and applies these in the stories. The Ministry of Education officially standardized the use of *kana* (in which a one *kana* corresponds to one sound) in 1900, in the *Shōgakkōrei shikōkisoku* 小学校令施行規則 ('Enforcement Regulations of the Law on Primary Schools'). *Hōrei zensho : Meiji 33 nen*, 264.
[76] Lincicome, *Principle, Praxis, and the Politics of Educational Reform in Meiji Japan*, 207–8.
[77] Lincicome, 213.
[78] Lincicome, 216.
[79] Lincicome, 217.

consulted. Although here defended from the standpoint of developmental education, Herbartians would fully agree that folktales speak to the imagination of children and are useful for moral education. The sixth volume moreover includes an adaptation of *Robinson Crusoe*, exactly as Ziller prescribed. It was preceded, and followed, by two lessons about Kusunoki Masashige and Masatsura.[80] Ōto and Morioka would surely have approved of the way in which these lessons introduce an image of 'the parting at Sakurai' and invoke the famous epitaph that eulogizes Masashige's loyalty. Isawa's own opinions about the aim of (moral) education reveal a sliding scale. In 1882, he had claimed that the aim of primary education was the cultivation of the complete human being, but in he 1886 argued that the aim of primary school education was to create one great national family.[81]

Another reader published in this year, *Nihon tokuhon* 日本読本 (1887), does not introduce *mukashibanashi*, but theorizes on the connection between folktales and stories from history. A lesson titled *mukashibanashi* 昔話シ explains that *mukashibanashi* are still known because they are written down and in every generation told to young children.[82] (The reader is supposed to have already outgrown this stage.) 'Afterwards', the author states, 'you will read about history and learn many extremely old stories'. The aim is obviously to prepare children for the next two lessons, that introduce Kusunoki Masashige, his unnamed wife, and their son Masatsura. Yoshitsune, Sugawara Michizane, Takeda Shingen 武田信玄 (1521-1573) and Uesugi Kenshin 上杉謙信 (1530-1578) follow in volume five. Yoshitsune is mentioned again in volume six, as a famous general in a lesson titled *Nihonkoku no mukashibanashi* 日本国ノ昔話シ ('A *mukashibanashi* of Japan').[83] *Nihon tokuhon* thus explicitly connects *mukashibanashi* or 'tales of old' to national history, with the aim of facilitating an understanding of the latter concept.

Following the promulgation of the Rescript, insights from developmental education were adapted to fit the goals of nation-building and the creation of a national identity. 'Repertoires of shared values, symbols and traditions' that must 'provide a social bond between individuals and classes'[84] were built up right from the first primer. *Yomikaki nyūmon* 読書入門 (1886) had taught *katakana* by introducing short words with pictures: the first four

[80] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 5*, 139–44.
[81] Lincicome, *Principle, Praxis, and the Politics of Educational Reform in Meiji Japan*, 219.
[82] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 5*, 383. The reader is considered to be between ten and twelve years old and the primary audience of *mukashibanashi* four to five years younger.
[83] Kaigo, 429.
[84] Smith, *National Identity*, 16.

words are *hato* (pigeon) (fig. 2.2), *hana* (flower), *tori* (bird) and *kiri* (gimlet). This approach lends itself well for the introduction of various symbols of nation. *Teikoku tokuhon* 帝国読本 ('Imperial Reader', 1893) for example introduces respectively *hata* (flag), *hana* (flower), *take* (bamboo), and *tako* (kite).[85] *Jinjō kokugo tokuhon* 尋常国語読本 ('National Language Reader for the Lower Elementary School', 1900) starts with *hana*, *hata*, *tako* and *koma* (spinning top) (fig. 2.3).[86] The illustrations explain that the flag is the national flag and flowers refer in this latter textbook to cherry-blossoms. These symbols are inserted in a context of animals, nature, and toys, that modern pedagogy identified as close to the experiences and mental development of young children. 'Flag' and 'kite' moreover form a natural pair combined on one page. In the government textbook of 1903, *hata* also appears in the first volume in a lesson describing two boys who are marching around, while carrying a flag (the national flag, according to the picture) and blowing a trumpet (*rappa*). In volume two, the more precise word *kokki* 国旗 ('national flag') is taught in the context of New Year's celebrations, that involves putting out the flag in every house and playing with kites (boys) and sticking flowers in your hair (girls).[87] Thus, symbols of the nation appeared from the beginning in textbooks, and connections were made between toys (kite, toy trumpet), symbolic objects (flag, trumpet) and ceremonial elements (national holiday,

Fig. 2.2 *Yomikaki nyūmon,* 1886 (1895 reprint). NDL

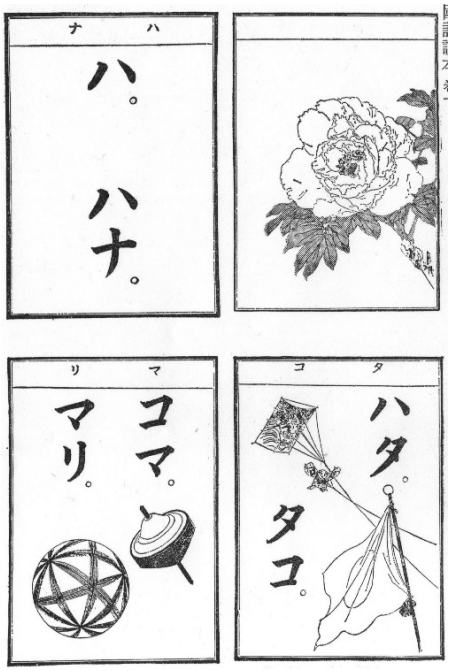

Fig. 2.3 *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon*, vol. 1, 1900 (as reproduced in NKT 6)

[85] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 437–38.
[86] *Kokugo tokuhon* 国語読本 ('National Language Reader', 1900) by Tsubouchi Shōyō opens with *tori* (bird), *hato* (pigeon), *hata* (flag), *tako* (kite). The 1910 government textbook *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon* opens with *hata* (flag), *tako* (kite), *koma* (spinning top), and *hato* (pigeon).
[87] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 411.

marching soldiers) in order to create a collective identity, with different symbols and activities associated with boys (soldiers, kite, active play) and girls (flowers, decoration).

As stated before, under influence of the Rescript and Herbartianism, ethics became an overarching theme in the elementary school curriculum. This was preceded by a deep distrust on the side of the government for the available ethics textbooks in the 1880s. In 1881 the Ministry of Education had banned several textbooks based on Western ethics, and in 1885 it banned ethics textbooks altogether. Teachers were to deliver the lessons orally. In the 1890s, ethics textbooks were re-introduced, finding a beacon in the Rescript, and seeking a connection with the subjects of *kokugo* and history. Ethics textbooks celebrated loyalty and filial piety, reinforced by such qualities as 'modesty, trust, affection, decorum and courage'.[88] The contents of *kokugo* readers had more variation, but also introduced many lessons dealing with social and national ethics. In the preface to *Kōtō shōgaku shin tokuhon* 高等小学新読本 ('New Reader for the Upper Primary School', 1892), the author Nishimura Shōzaburō 西村正三郎 (1861-1896) argues that as the first lesson makes the deepest impression on a child, the opening lessons of each volume deal with moral education and national education. He furthermore argues that 'a variety of different methods must be used to teach the same thing'.[89] Patricia Tsurumi observes that there was also still place for the earlier Meiji period ideal of *risshin shusse*. (This applies for example to the representation of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in ethics textbooks as will be discussed in more detail later.) This leads Tsurumi to argue that moral education in the Meiji period was less intense and more varied than is often assumed. She does however not recognize the Herbartian didactic scheme involving *mukashibanashi*, fables, myths, and warrior legends. Following Isawa Shūji's example, *mukashibanashi* appeared in several new *kokugo* readers, as a preparation for lessons that introduced historical warriors and other cultural icons. These representations in readers connected to the contents of ethics textbooks and history textbooks used in the higher grades, that structured their lessons around exemplary figures.

The government started to produce ethics textbooks in 1903. Fridell observes that the first government ethics textbook was not as heavily influenced by the Rescript as the later government readers: the stories on morality predominantly focus on personal and social

[88] Tsurumi, 'Meiji Primary School Language and Ethics Textbooks', 257.
[89] Lincicome, *Principle, Praxis, and the Politics of Educational Reform in Meiji Japan*, 227.

ethics.[90] However, the 1910 version stresses national and family ethics (*kokumin dōtoku* 国民道徳). The 1910 ethics textbook (that was a blueprint for the consequent editions till 1945) repeatedly employs the terms 'loyalty and patriotism' or *chūkun aikoku* to describe the feelings of historical heroes (such as Kusunoki Masashige) and the spirit of the nation in general (during the Russo-Japanese War, for example). The lessons conceptualize filial piety towards parents as one and the same as loyalty to the emperor, the father of the nation-family.[91] Stress on Shinto beliefs makes the emperor and the nation sacred. Ethics readers were now also developed for the lower grades, leading from pictures and simple stories about civilized behaviour to narratives of historical exemplars and explanations about the various duties of citizens as outlined in the Rescript.

The connection between history and moral instruction was already made in government directions in the early 1880s, but this only became a structural and integrated approach in the 1890s. In 1881, national history became an official elementary school subject. The General Outline of Elementary School Regulations (*Shōgakkō kyōsoku kōryō* 小学校教則綱領, 1881) stipulated that the aim of history education is to make students understand 'cause and effect in history' as well as to 'cultivate a spirit of reverence for the emperor and patriotism (*son'ō aikoku* 尊王愛国)'.[92] More concretely, this should include facts about important historical moments such as 'the founding of the nation, the enthronement of Emperor Jinmu, the frugality of Emperor Nintoku, the reign of Emperors Daigo and Murakami, the rise and fall of the Minamoto and the Heike, the appearance of the Northern and Southern Court, the Tokugawa administration, and the restoration of imperial rule'. The regulation moreover states that by studying the deeds of historical persons, students will learn about morality and the customs of the historical period. However, history textbooks of the 1880s (as they appear in *Nihon kyōkasho taikei*) still presented history along the reigns of Emperors, as had been the custom in the previous decennium.

Markedly different is the 1892 *Teikoku shōshi* 帝国小史 ('Short History of the Empire'), in which every chapter focuses on a famous historical character: emperors, warriors or otherwise. The deeds of these men (and one woman, namely Murasaki Shikibu) form the structure through which national history is retold and national ethics are represented. In

[90] Fridell, 'Government Ethics Textbooks in Late Meiji Japan', 827.
[91] Fridell, 831.
[92] *Hōrei zensho Meiji 14 nen*, 817.

other words, the contents of each lesson consist of biographical elements, important events and actions, supporting figures, and a moral message.[93] This focus on important historical persons became the standard for other elementary school history textbooks in the 1890s, as well as the government textbooks in the early twentieth century. Also the subject of singing (*shōka* 唱歌), that became required in 1907, followed in the footsteps of the history and language textbooks by incorporating songs about national heroes, with the object of shaping dispositions and feelings.[94]

5. Historical exemplars in textbooks

In this section, I examine how premodern histories and legends were re-interpreted in modern textbooks for elementary school students in the subjects of *kokugo*, history and ethics. I will focus on the representation of Minamoto Yoshitsune, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Murasaki Shikibu. I will ask which narrative and visual elements of premodern legends were taken over, and how the interpretations developed during the Meiji period. Which dispositions and actions are stressed or de-emphasized, and how do these differ between genders?

5.1 Minamoto Yoshitsune

Initially, Meiji period textbook makers showed little interest in Yoshitsune. He for example does not appear in the concise history textbook *Shiryaku* 史略 (1872). In *Nihon ryakushi* 日本略史 (1875) he is merely mentioned as a general who was instrumental in the defeat of the Heike.[95] As mentioned before, the 1874 reader *Shōgaku tokuhon* also includes stories about famous warriors. The selection is however strikingly different from the canon that developed in the 1890s and would have a lasting influence on government textbooks. Yoshitsune, but also such figures as Yamato Takeru 日本武尊 (leg. 72-114) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, are not taken up, whereas half of the characters that do appear, such as Shizuka gozen and several warriors from *Taiheiki*, are absent in later textbooks. Famous warriors were thus not dismissed, and already recognized as being useful in the early Meiji period

[93] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 19*, 742.
[94] Cave, 'Story, Song, and Ceremony', 14.
[95] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 18*, 138.

educational sphere. However, the formation of a more robust canon of national heroes took place in the late 1880s and 1890s, and this is also when Yoshitsune is taken up again.

In the 1880s, makers of history textbooks started to revisit the premodern legends about Yoshitsune, following the government's exhortations about the aim of history lessons, in which 'the rise and fall of the Minamoto and the Heike' were specifically mentioned. *Shinpen Nihon ryakushi* 新編日本略史 ('New Outline of Japanese History', 1881), for example, touches upon Ushiwakamaru's youth at Kurama temple, how he was guided by a local man called Washiō at Ichi-no-tani, how Kajiwara caused Yoritomo to distrust his half-brother, Yoshitsune's flight to Ōshū, and his suicide or alleged survival.[96] *Shōgaku kokushi kiji honmatsu* 小学国史記事本末 ('Essential Accounts of the National History for Elementary Studies', 1883) gives a similar biographical account, in a chapter dramatically titled 'Yoritomo murders his own flesh and blood'.[97] Students are clearly invited to condemn Yoritomo's character. The 1888 textbook *Shōgakkōyō rekishi* 小学校用歴史 ('History for the Elementary School') describes Yoshitsune's military exploits in some detail, including the theory that he conquered Ezo, Dattan (Tartary) and China, and became Genghis Khan.[98] Two separate blocks describe Yoshitsune's teenage years and the battle of Yashima. Whereas the earlier two textbooks are not illustrated, *Shōgakkōyō rekishi* introduces a picture of the brilliant archer Nasu no Yoichi 那須与一 (?-?) on his horse galloping into the sea, and a young Yoshitsune holding an audience, presumably during his first visit to Ōshū. The textbooks do not significantly differ from early modern interpretations, nor do they select episodes that would specifically appeal to a young audience.

In the early 1890s, history textbooks started to be structured along the lines of exemplary historical figures, who were to serve as moral exemplars. Yoshitsune appears in various textbooks in a lesson titled 'Yoshitsune and Yoritomo'. In *Teikoku shōshi* 帝国小史 ('A Short History of the Empire', 1893), we first encounter the filial Tokiwa gozen, as she comes to her mother's rescue when the 'immoral' Kiyomori holds her captive.[99] The lesson states that Yoshitsune was called Ushiwakamaru as a child, who already in Kurama was full of determination (*kokorozashi surudoku* 志するどく) to beat the Heike. After being united with Yoritomo, Yoshitsune with an Imperial fiat beat Kiso Yoshinaka who 'caused even more

[96] Kaigo, 377–82.
[97] Kaigo, 552–53.
[98] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 19*, 50–54.
[99] Kaigo, 202–4.

chaos than the Heike'. Following a description of Yoshitsune's successful battles, the lesson relates that he 'did not even get a reward [from Yoritomo]' and fled to Ōshū. Yoshitsune's persecution and death are considered entirely the fault of Yoritomo's distrustful and jealous nature. The *hōgan biiki* sentiment resounds in the observation that this is all 'very tragic and pitiable' (*makoto ni aware nasakenaki* 誠にあはれなさけなき). One of the illustrations paradoxically shows the peaceful first encounter between the two brothers, stressing the virtue of brotherly love. A panoramic image shows the sea battle of Dan-no-ura. *Shōgakkōyō Nihon rekishi* 小学校用日本歴史 ('Japanese History for the Elementary School', 1894) shows a portrait of Yoritomo but the text is partial to Yoshitsune, who had a 'white complexion' and small, elegant stature, yet was fearless (*daitan futeki* 大胆不敵) in the battles against the Heike.[100] It was also his 'courage and popularity' that made Yoritomo jealous and believe Kajiwara's slander. Purportedly Yoshitsune made himself scarce so 'the Emperor's lands would not be disturbed'. Both textbooks introduce the alternative end in which Yoshitsune became the leader of the Ainu and went to China, followed by the observation that Yoritomo established the Kamakura Bakufu. Thus, the lessons consist not merely of positive moral exemplars but introduce various characters and plots from the cycle of Yoshitsune legends that offer a starting point for discussing ethical behaviour and the course of national history.

In consequent history textbooks, descriptions of Yoshitsune became more straightforward. Presumably, these textbooks, like the British history readers discussed by Peter Yeandle (see section 3), tried to avoid an interpretation that would lead to adulation. The title of the lessons mention Yoritomo alone, and while crediting his younger brother for the battles he won, the textbooks take care not to sound too enthusiastic about his boldness. In *Shinsen teikoku shidan* 新選帝国史談 ('Newly Selected Historical Stories of the Empire', 1898) for example, Yoshitsune appears matter-of-factly as a key figure in the battles of the Genpei War, while serving under Yoritomo.[101] The persecution by his own brother however continued to weigh on the minds of some textbook authors. *Shōgaku kokushi* 小学国史 ('National History for Elementary Studies', 1900) explains that Yoritomo 'killed his dear younger brother Yoshitsune and … his younger brother Noriyori … and many meritorious retainers' and therefore, 'the Genji reign became very weak and continued only for three

[100] Kaigo, 251–52.
[101] Kaigo, 296.

generations'.[102] Such a forced explanation is however counter-productive in a narrative of national historical development. The government reader *Shōgaku Nihon rekishi* 小学日本歴史 ('Japanese History for Elementary Studies') of 1903 and the revised edition of 1911 drop the theme of Yoritomo's flaws entirely in the interest of the narrative of national progression and the exemplary nature of his character (and not Yoshitsune's). Yoritomo is introduced as the man who established the warrior government that would continue for seven hundred years, and although it is mentioned that he came to dislike Yoshitsune, we only learn that the latter decamped and died in Michinoku.[103] In the revised textbook of 1911, Yoritomo is then further embellished as an exemplary leader who founded a stable military government (*buke no seiji* 武家の政治). He also promoted 'simplicity and frugality' (*shisso ken'yaku* 質素倹約) as well as 'martially oriented pastimes' and 'the way of the warrior' (*bushidō* 武士道).[104]

Legends about Yoshitsune and his function as an exemplar developed differently in *kokugo* readers. Here, war tales and popular legends had a lasting influence, inviting children to imagine the past already in the earlier grades before history classes became part of their schedule. *Nihon tokuhon* 日本読本 (1887) introduces Yoshitsune's biography, yet different from history textbooks opts for an open end. The chapter 'Yoshitsune' in the fifth volume relates: 'Minamoto Yoshitsune was the younger brother of Yoritomo, and a famous soldier (*gunjin* 軍人). When Yoshitsune was young, his father fought with Taira Kiyomori and was killed … receiving the name Ushiwakamaru, Yoshitsune was made an acolyte at the Kurama mountain temple in Kyoto.'[105] A dramatic description of the three famous battles follows. The last paragraph tells of the establishment of the Kamakura Bakufu, and how the court held Yoshitsune's brave deeds in high esteem. However, Yoritomo mistrusted and disfavoured his brother. And so, it came to be that Yoshitsune, 'unparalleled in wisdom and courage, had no place to go in entire Japan, and, chocking back his tears, left the capital'. The author then terminates the narrative, and remarks that the reader will surely hear the rest of the story another time. Yoshitsune is mentioned again (as a successful general) in a later chapter about the Genpei War.

[102] Kaigo, 344.
[103] Kaigo, 459.
[104] Kaigo, 514. The attribution of specific ethics to cultural heroes will be discussed in the next paragraph on the representation of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.
[105] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 5*, 399–400.

Various readers introduce Yoshitsune's martial exploits based on popular sections in *Heike monogatari*. In *Shōgaku chūtōka tokuhon* 小学中等科読本 (1885) for the middle elementary school (years four to six), Yoshitsune appears in two lessons that describe the 'reverse oars' dispute with Kajiwara and the descent from Hiyodorigoe during the battle of Ichi-no-tani. In contrast to the Edo period didactic message about slander and good judgement, what one might learn from the first-mentioned lesson is that Yoshitsune and the men who decide to follow him in the frontal attack were brave, while Kajiwara was a coward for proposing a tactic with a possibility for retreat.[106] The lesson describing the battle of Ichi-no-tani equally consists of a highlight from *Heike monogatari*.[107] *Teikoku tokuhon* (1893) also introduces this episode and makes explicit that the adaptation is based on *Heike monogatari*.[108] The lesson also appears in various readers, structurally illustrated with an image of the steep cliff, based on the premodern iconography (fig. 2.4).

Fig. 2.4 *Kokugo tokuhon*, vol. 4, 1900 (as reproduced in NKT 6)

The Hiyodorigoe episode is described vividly in Tsubouchi Shōyō's *Kokugo tokuhon* 国語読本 ('National Language Reader', 1900).

> Because the Genji general Yoshitsune was a very smart man, one night, he climbed the mountain behind the [Heike] castle with his soldiers (*heishi* 兵士). The area was called Hiyodorigoe and as it was a steep place, people and horses did normally not pass here. Therefore, those in the castle were careless and had not prepared a defence on the backside. Yoshitsune rejoiced, and saying 'Everybody, follow me!', whipped his horse and raced down the cliff, as steep as a folding screen. Encouraged, the others followed in one pack, launched the attack, set fire to the back of the castle, and beat the Heike. [The Heike] fled to the western sea and were eventually overthrown.[109]

[106] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 4*, 577–378.
[107] Kaigo, 419–20.
[108] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 5*, 542.
[109] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 238–39.

Shōyō's description of Hiyodorigoe introduces Yoshitsune as a smart and (we can infer) brave leader. Yet he would not have conquered the Heike without his 'soldiers'. The second government reader in a similar narrative also describes how the 'soldiers' followed Yoshitsune and describes how Benkei and a character based on Washiō (the local guide) contributed to the mission. Like British history readers, the lessons do not focus solely on the hero but presents his deeds for the nation as a joined effort.

Long before this lesson, students would already have encountered Yoshitsune as a boy in an earlier grade. In the footsteps of the innovative *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon* (1887), several readers from the 1890s not only took up the folktale *Momotarō*, but also the battle between Ushiwakamaru and Benkei on Gojō bridge.[110] Both Momotarō and Ushiwakamaru became gradually associated with an audience of beginning readers. *Jinjō shōgaku tokusho kyōhon* 尋常小学読書教本 ('Reading Textbook for the Lower Elementary School', 1894) introduces the battle between Ushiwakamaru and Benkei in the third reader.

> Ushiwakamaru was a very strong person who devoted himself to the practice of martial arts since childhood. One night, when he crossed Gojō bridge, a big monk called Benkei attacked him with his *naginata*. Ushiwakamaru was young and small, but because he was very skilled in martial arts, he drew his sword and countered without fear. Benkei at first made light [of his adversary] and merely returned the blows, but he gradually grew tired, in the end lost the battle, and surrendered. From that moment till his death, Benkei became Ushiwakamaru's cherished retainer. The Minamoto no Yoshitsune mentioned later, is this Ushiwakamaru.[111]

The text makes explicit what early modern popular representations also stressed: Ushiwakamaru is, like the reader, still young and small, but he is brave. The differences in size are emphasized in the illustration, that is based on the iconography of a giant Benkei charging at Ushiwakamaru, while the latter jumps lightly into the air (fig. 2.5). The virtue of loyalty is not spelled out but might be introduced by a teacher in the context of the 'cherished retainer' Benkei.

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[110] To my knowledge, the first reader in which a lesson about Ushiwakamaru on Gojō bridge appeared was *Teikoku tokuhon* (1893).
[111] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 5*, 715.

Tsubouchi Shōyō in his *Kokugo tokuhon* places *Ushiwakamaru* in the second reader. He actively connects text and illustration and invites the young reader to construct the story. The illustration again shows Ushiwakamaru and Benkei fighting on Gojo bridge (fig. 2.6). The text reads: 'This is Gojō bridge. Ushiwaka and Benkei are fighting on the bridge. Ushiwaka threw a fan with the *hinomaru*. Look at Benkei's sour face! Who do you think will win?'[112] Although adults might have had similar talks with children before the 1890s, the conversational style represents a progressive didactic perspective of a child's agency in constructing the narrative. The way in which the legends were adapted in early twentieth century readers to engage a young audience is clearly related to the development of modern children's literature in the 1890s. The consequence of a more skilful appeal to the imagination, is that stories about historical heroes and the values they represent would in all probability be more effective than earlier attempts. The narrative techniques introduced by Shōyō were also adopted in the government readers.

Fig. 2.5 *Jinjō shōgaku tokusho kyōhon*, vol 3, 1894. Hiroshima University Library

Fig. 2.6 *Kokugo tokuhon* vol. 2, 1900 (as reproduced in NKT 6)

Enthusiasm for the 'brave boy' Ushiwakamaru was further encouraged with songs. Peter Cave places the internalization of national ideologies especially with types of practices (song, story, performance) that appeal to the imagination and emotions of children.[113] For example, the song *Ushiwakamaru* in the textbook *Yōnen shōka* 幼年唱歌 ('Songs for Children', 1901) is written in the first person, inviting the child to 'be' Ushiwakamaru. '[My] dad vanished during the rainy season in Owari, [my] mother was taken by the Heike, [my] brother was sent to Izu, and I (*onore*) alone [went to] Kurama

[112] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 215.
[113] Cave, 'Story, Song, and Ceremony', 10.

mountain.'[114] The first half of the song deals with Ushiwakamaru legends and the second half lists the successes of the adult 'Yoshitsune Genkurō'. The textbook instructs to sing 'vigorously' (*isamashiku* 勇マシク) in the fashion of a war song (*gunkatai* 軍歌体). The frontispiece of the volume in which the song appears shows Ushiwakamaru and Benkei on Gojō bridge. Another song titled 'Ushiwakamaru', that is still known as a nursery song, appears in the first government song book *Jinjō shōgaku shōka* 尋常小学唱歌 ('Songs for the Lower Elementary School', 1911).[115] This song focuses on the battle at Gojō bridge, between Ushiwakamaru who is 'fast like a swallow' and the *oni* 鬼 (ogre) Benkei. In the tracks of the 1910 government reader, 'Ushiwakamaru' is aimed at first graders, while a later volume for the third grade introduces another cheerful song titled 'Hiyodorigoe'.[116]

Ushiwakamaru in readers and school songs can be compared to the fictional warrior boy Momotarō, as they are both part of a realm of fairy tales and represent 'brave boys'. In Shōyō's *Kokugo tokuhon* for example, Momotarō is described as growing up a strong boy who sets out 'courageously' (*isamashiku*) towards the demon island, where he successfully beats the *oni* general.[117] Klaus Antoni in his study of the propagandistic uses of this tale observes that the 1937 government reader seamlessly connects fairy-tales like *Momotarō* with the 'fuzzy realm' of myth and legend, and stories about Shinto mythology, emperors, and national heroes, culminating in the figure of Yamato Takeru.[118] (Also Yamato Takeru was canonized in the textbooks of the 1890s.) Antoni focuses on imperialist ideology in adaptations of the *Momotarō* tale. He points out the analogy with legends about Japanese cultural heroes who conquered foreign lands, such as Tametomo (Ryūkyū), Yoshitsune (Ezo) and Yamato Takeru (various 'barbaric' people beyond the frontier). This leads him to argue that: '… a direct line of tradition leads from Yamato Takeru by way of Yoshitsune and Tametomo directly to Momotarō.'[119] Antoni does however not discuss the actual representation of Yoshitsune in government readers, where Yoshitsune as Ushiwakamaru can rather be placed *with* Momotarō in the realm of fairy tales. Different from Momotarō, he

[114] *Kyōka tekiyō Yōnen shōka nihen gekan* 教科適用幼年唱歌二編下巻, pp. 20-21. Reproduced in Ezaki, *Ongaku Kiso Kenkyū Bunkenshū 18*.
[115] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 25*, 291.
[116] Kaigo, 307. In the 1910 reader, Hiyodorigoe appears in volume five, used in the first semester of the third grade.
[117] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 222–23.
[118] Antoni, 'Momotaro (the Peach Boy) and the Spirit of Japan', 161.
[119] Antoni, 179.

has moreover the convenient inherent quality of 'having grown up to be' a famous historical general who will re-appear at a later point.

In conclusion, the exemplary nature of Yoshitsune in textbooks largely lies in his manifestation as the brave boy Ushiwakamaru. In history textbooks, the meritorious general Yoshitsune was gradually separated from legend, premodern literary tropes and (feudal) ethics. Focus then shifted from Yoshitsune to Yoritomo, in favour of a logical historical narrative and a positive interpretation of the founder of the Kamakura shogunate. In readers, the fictional Gojō bridge episode became a fixture following the re-appreciation of *mukashibanashi* as educational material, teaching young children that even if you are small, you can be brave. Most readers re-introduce Yoshitsune in a later lesson that represents a highlight from the *Heike*, notably the descent from Hiyodorigoe. These lessons introduced a brave (and smart) leader, loyally followed by his 'soldiers', and (in the second government reader) other helpers. Clearly no virtues were associated with Yoshitsune (or were dreamed up) that earned him a place in ethics textbooks. The illustrations that went with the lessons were dictated by the premodern visual canon. Illustrations of Gojō bridge aimed to appeal to children's imagination, an expedient means not unknown in the early modern period, but in the late nineteenth century widely implemented based on new insights from psychology and pedagogy.

5.2 Toyotomi Hideyoshi

In chapter one I have discussed how Hideyoshi, like Yoshitsune, was provided with various legends about his younger years, whose formation in the popular imagination took place mainly in the nineteenth century. The focal episodes were Hideyoshi's auspicious birth, his misbehaviour at the temple where he was supposed to study, his encounter with Koroku (Hachisuka) Masakatsu on Yahagi bridge, his apprenticeship to Matsushita Yukitsune, and his service to Oda Nobunaga. The encounter on Yahagi bridge developed into an iconography associated with the young Hideyoshi (Hiyoshimaru) in late Edo and early Meiji *kusazōshi* and prints. Hideyoshi's lowly beginnings would in textbooks continue to be the point of departure for a message about *shusse* or 'rising in the world'. His bad attitude as a boy was however not considered a textbook example.

During the 1880s and 1890s, modern textbooks found the exemplary elements of Hideyoshi's life in his successful ascendance from farmer to the most powerful man in Japan (apart from the emperor), his loyalty to Oda Nobunaga, and his military successes. *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon* (1887), for example, describes how Hideyoshi was born in a humble farming household in Owari province.[120] As the legend goes, his monkey-like face earned him the nickname Sarunosuke. At age twenty, he met Matsushita Yukitsuna on a bridge, who, impressed by the young man's intelligence, accepted him as a servant. Yukitsuna has been conflated with Koroku, who was the original (maybe too boorish) antagonist in the encounter on the bridge. This lesson contains a picture of the Yahagi bridge episode (fig. 2.7). In popular interpretations introduced in chapter one, the child Hiyoshimaru was sitting down in the middle of the bridge and blocking the road, yet in this illustration 'Sarunosuke' stands upright as if having a proper conversation. As will be discussed in the next chapter, in Iwaya Sazanami's version (*Hiyoshimaru*, 1897) the thirteen-year-old Hiyoshimaru refuses to move aside and picks a quarrel with the equally unpolished Koroku. It is in fact rare that it is taken up at all: textbooks after 1887 do not touch upon this episode. The next lesson in *Jinjō shōgaku tokuhon* stresses Hideyoshi's upright personality and his loyalty (*chūgi* 忠義) to Oda Nobunaga. To the dismay of the other (higher born) retainers, Nobunaga later appointed him as a commander. A third lesson introduces how Hideyoshi came to power and sums up: 'Hideyoshi was descended from lowly people, but in the end ruled the realm and became chief councillor (*kanpaku daijō daijin* 関白太政大臣), and as he later also attacked Korea, one should say he is the greatest hero of all times'. In Hideyoshi's biography were thus united the ideals of *risshin shusse*, loyalty, and military zeal.

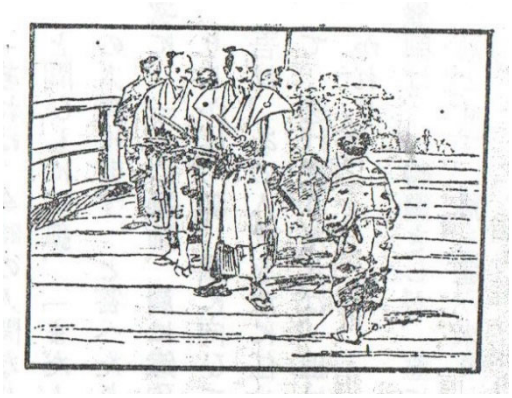

Fig. 2.7 *Shōgaku tokuhon,* vol. 7, 1887 (as reproduced in NKT 5)

Following the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), the invasions of Korea, launched by Hideyoshi between 1592 and 1598, were re-invented as a success for the Japanese nation. The first government reader *Jinjō shōgakkō tokuhon* (1903) focuses on Hideyoshi's battles, said to have been successfully fought by his 'soldiers' (*heitai* 兵隊), which again reflects the

[120] Hideyoshi is described in two lessons in volume seven. Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 5*, 149–51.

tendency in textbooks and youth literature to present historical battles as a joined effort by the Japanese nation.[121] The text insinuates moreover that the brave soldiers would have annexed Korea if Hideyoshi had not fallen ill and died. The second government reader (1910) gets straight to the point, by stating that the lesson will be about 'the Toyotomi Hideyoshi who led the attack on Korea'.[122] The didactic message about *shusse* still plays a role: the reader must know that he was once a poor yet determined little boy called Hiyoshimaru, and examples are given of how Hideyoshi as a young adult worked hard and served Oda Nobunaga loyally. The invasions of Korea are said to have led to China's offer to recognize Hideyoshi as the 'king of Japan'. Upon hearing of this plan, Hideyoshi flew into a rage, as 'Japan already has an Emperor', and began his second invasion of Korea. The government history textbooks of 1903 and 1911 equally present the invasions of Korea as a successful action, executed by 'our army' (*waga gun* わが軍), if it were not for China's break of the peace negotiations and the outrageous idea of entering Hideyoshi in their records as the 'king of Japan'.[123] As the latter issue is being left unexplained, it is clearly the teachers' turn to ask why any good Japanese citizen would experience this as a grave insult. Hideyoshi in the two government readers and history textbooks thus represents a paragon of *shusse* and loyalty, while providing the nation with an 'almost successful' precedent for the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910-1945).

Ethics textbooks find in Hideyoshi moreover an exemplar of diligence. Initially, ethics textbooks that explored the nation's historical figures as moral exemplars introduced only a single episode about Hideyoshi. In *Shōgaku shūshin kun* 小学修身訓 (1892) for example, Hideyoshi is staged as a supportive friend for Araki Murashige (discussed in more detail below), and a lesson in *Shōgaku shūshinsho* 小学修身書 (1892) focuses on Hideyoshi's 'imperial success' in Korea.[124] *Shūshin kyōten* 修身教典 (1900) on the other hand devotes several lessons to Hideyoshi, that reflect various virtues associated with the Imperial Rescript on Education. This textbook introduces on the first page of its two volumes the Rescript, followed by twenty-five lessons largely consisting of narratives about historical

[121] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 470–71. *Heitai* 兵隊 is according to *Nihon kokugo daijiten* a nineteenth-century term, mainly employed after the Meiji Restoration to describe soldiers or troops.
[122] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 7*, 97–99.
[123] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 19*, 475–77; Kaigo, 534–36.
[124] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 2*, 359–60; Kaigo, 511–12.

exemplars.[125] Hideyoshi's biography is narrated in five chapters, that according to the titles represent self-cultivation (*rishi* 立志), diligence (*seikin* 精勤), friendship (*kōyū* 交友), loyalty to the Emperor (*kin'ō* 勤王) and ambition (*taishi* 大志).[126]

The chapter on self-cultivation narrates how the young Hideyoshi heard other villagers talk about the 'turbulent times' which made him decide to spend his life in a 'useful' way by taking up weapons. After working shortly for Matsushita, the twenty-three-year-old Hideyoshi humbly asked the more powerful Oda Nobunaga to accept his service. Nobunaga, amused by Hideyoshi's monkey-like face, agreed. The chapter on diligence introduces how Hideyoshi became Nobunaga's sandal-bearer and was always stand-by:

> On a very cold winter morning … when Oda Nobunaga woke up to go out earlier than normal … our lord (*kō* 公) [Hideyoshi] immediately came forward and humbly presented himself. When Nobunaga asked, 'are you the only one here?', our lord answered, 'as your departure is earlier than normal, they have not come yet'. 'But why are you here?', Nobunaga asked, and our lord respectfully answered, 'I wake up an hour before [your departure] every morning … so as never to be late'. Upon hearing this, Nobunaga commented 'how curious that on such a cold morning, you came out all on your own', to which our lord said, 'I think painful tasks are supposed to make me grow, and therefore they cease to be hard. This body belongs to my lord, it is not my own … your praise makes me feel ashamed.'[127]

The invented conversation between lord and servant (a future lord) makes the reader a witness of Hideyoshi's diligence and loyalty, and privy to the thoughts that motivate him. The chapter on companionship describes how Hideyoshi supported Araki Murashige 荒木村重 (1535-1586, a general and later daimyo under Oda Nobunaga) after the latter was slandered by Akechi Mitsuhide. This earned him also Murashige's friendship. This episode is followed by a short reflective chapter that teaches that making friends (*hōyū* 朋友) is very important, and that this reciprocal relationship leads to happiness. This idea is then

[125] The two volumes both open with a chapter about an emperor, respectively Nintoku (leg. 290-399) and Tenji (626-672). In book one are furthermore taken up Ninomiya Sontoku, Murasaki Shikibu, the Confucian educator Hosoi Heishū 細井平洲 (1728-1801), a probably invented Edo period woman called Kawase Haruko, and Benjamin Franklin. The second volume introduces Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Nakae Tōju, the poetess and lady-in-waiting Atsuko Saisho 税所敦子 (1825-1900), and Christopher Columbus. Both books contain several lessons of a more abstract nature, such as chapters on loyalty and the duties of citizens.

[126] Fukyūsha henshūsho 普及者編輯所, *Shūshin Kyōten: Kōtō Shōgakkōyō* 2, 5–22.

[127] Fukyūsha henshūsho 普及者編輯所, 9–11.

connected to the broader concept of 'loyalty' or 'honour' (*shingi* 信義) that applies not only to friends but to any relationship. The textbook thus both exemplifies and explains the meaning of the words *hōyū wo ai shinji* 朋友相信シ ('as friends be true') from the Rescript.

The next lesson gives several examples of Hideyoshi's loyalty and respect for the Emperor. After being appointed *kanpaku* 関白 by the Emperor, he (re)built the Ise shrine, the imperial palace in Kyoto and re-installed important ceremonies. Ignoring the actual power struggles, authority is thus simply bestowed upon Hideyoshi by the Emperor. Finally, in the lesson on 'ambition', we learn that Nobunaga ordered Hideyoshi to bring the Chūgoku region under his control, take it as a reward, and attack Kyūshū. However, Hideyoshi refused the present and instead proposed to give it to the Emperor's attendants. This refusal is in line with the shame he felt for being thanked for a natural service to his master Oda Nobunaga. Hideyoshi then voiced his 'longstanding desire' to merge Korea and China with Japan. The author observes that this 'grand mentality' (*yūdai naru seishin* 雄大なる精神) indeed led to an attack on Korea, that was brought to its knees, and also China 'was shaken to its very foundations'. The lesson concludes with the observation that Hideyoshi was a hero (*eiketsu* 英傑) unmatched in the past and present. The illustration does not show a military hero, but the portrait of the ruler (fig. 2.8) based on a famous painting by Kanō Mitsunobu 狩野光信 (1565–1608). Thus Hideyoshi's biography represents the determination and diligence needed for leading a fruitful life, loyalty (*chū* 忠) and friendship (*hōyū* 朋友). These virtues are mentioned in the Rescript. Also stressed, but not mentioned in the Rescript, are ambition and heroism. These latter traits are however carefully placed in the context of services to the nation and loyalty to the Emperor.

Fig. 2.8 *Shūshin kyōten*, vol 2., 1900 (1902 reprint). Private collection

The Ministry of Education gradually de-emphasized the aspect of *risshin shusse* in Hideyoshi's biography. In the first government ethics textbook *Shōgaku shūshinsho* 小学修身書 (1903), the example of friendship with Murashige is missing, but otherwise Hideyoshi represents the same virtues as in *Shūshin kyōten*: 'make a success in life' (*mi wo tateyo* 身を立

てよ), 'be diligent in your professional duties' (*shokumu ni benrei seyo* 職務に勉励せよ), 'respect the Imperial Court' (*kōshitsu wo tattobe* 皇室をたっとべ), and recommended is also 'an enterprising disposition' (*shinshu no kishō* 進取の気象). The last lesson is, like the chapter on ambition in *Shūshin kyōten*, exemplified by Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea. However, the second ethics textbook (1910) drops this last lesson. Instead, we learn about the invasions of Korea from the perspective of Hideyoshi's general Katō Kiyomasa 加藤清正 (1562-1611), representing benevolence, courage, loyalty, honesty, and vigilance. Even though the young Hideyoshi is said to have been 'determined', the idea of becoming a powerful leader (and hero) through *shusse* fades into the background.

That the Ministry despite its interest in iconic generals aimed for a more passive citizen is confirmed by the lesson 'Good Japanese' (*Yoi Nihonjin* よい日本人) in the second government ethics textbook.[128] A good Japanese citizen 'has a loyal heart, is filial to his parents, affectionate towards his siblings, respects his teachers, is nice to his friends, and on good terms with his neighbours.' Other virtues of importance are honesty, modesty, tolerance, cooperation, keeping to the rules, knowing what is yours and what is not, acting in the interest of the public good, being well-mannered, studying well, taking care of your health, orderliness, cultivating courage, patience, and frugality. 'Cultivating courage' (*yūki wo yashinai* ゆうきをやしなひ) is only a slight variation in a list of predominantly passive characteristics. Thus, even though ethics textbooks use martial exemplars from the past, much of this material is interpreted in terms of loyalty. The Ministry was, like the British government, probably aware that exemplars of ambition and heroism could lead to dispositions that run counter to the interest of the state. Jason Karlin shows that authors and publishers in the commercial realm were well aware of the possibilities. He argues that narratives about masculine heroes engaging in 'bold action' in early twentieth-century magazines for teenagers such as *Bōken sekai* 冒険世界 ('Adventure World') formed a critique on the late Meiji government that was considered 'elite' and 'corrupted'.[129]

Hideyoshi thus became a recurring symbol of determination and loyalty in the three subjects of reading, history, and ethics. The popular fascination with (young) Hideyoshi's unruly behaviour and associated iconographies would after the cleansed version of 'Yahagi bridge' not find continuation in textbooks. His service as a sandal-bearer to Oda Nobunaga

[128] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 3*, 83.
[129] Karlin, 'Narratives of Heroism in Meiji Japan'.

on the other hand provided a fine example of loyalty – a disposition he also showed towards the emperor. Hideyoshi is furthermore depicted as someone who, despite his humble beginnings, due to his determination and diligence became a successful or heroic man. (This latter sentiment was however tempered in the 1910s.) Ethics textbooks as well as history textbooks celebrated Hideyoshi's attack on Korea and recognized this as the virtue of 'ambition', while at the same time the invasions provided a metaphor or 'precedent' for the government's contemporary designs on Korea. Ambition and *shusse* originated in the early Meiji ideal of *risshin shusse*. This 'individualistic' sentiment was in the later Meiji period however conceptualized as a service to the nation.

5.3 Murasaki Shikibu

In the late 1880s and 1890s, many male historical figures were re-assessed, rewritten, and enshrined in the national canon taught at elementary schools. In the previous chapter, I have shortly discussed Murasaki Shikibu's virtues as they appeared in biographies of exemplary women (*retsujoden* 列女伝). These representations highlighted her beauty, intelligence, loyalty to her late husband, and devoutness. She was also praised as a historian (by placing the Genji alongside Japanese and Chinese classical histories) and represented as the founding mother of a lineage of female literati. Paradoxically, as Naito Satoko observes, the praise did not follow from the substance of her work.[130] This also applies to the textbook representations discussed here.

In modern textbooks Murasaki Shikibu initially appeared as the main representative of a category of female literati, endowed with virtues such as diligence and modesty. However, this was superseded by the ideal of *ryōsai kenbo* 良妻賢母 ('good wife, wise mother'). The development of the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal took place in the period 1890-1910, coinciding with the introduction and application of the Rescript and Herbartian education. Koyama Shizuko argues that contrary to what is often assumed, premodern Confucian ideals were very different from this new ideal, in which women's roles as mothers involved in *katei kyōiku* 家庭教育 (home education) was the central tenet.[131] Murasaki Shikibu became an exemplar of childhood diligence and a mother who properly instructed her daughter(s). This is representative of the way in which the achievements of women (even if they could be

[130] Naito, 'Beyond The Tale of Genji', 77.
[131] Koyama, *Ryōsai Kenbo*.

conceptualized as a contribution to national language or literature) were rendered largely irrelevant in the elementary school curriculum based on gendered views of citizen's roles.

Murasaki Shikibu was in the early Meiji period not singled out as a prominent female exemplar. The selections in the textbooks focus on dramatic episodes of loyalty and/or chastity, that were well-established in the popular imagination. The 1874 reader *Shōgaku tokuhon* takes up Koshikibu no naishi, Shizuka Gozen, Kesa Gozen, and Kusunoki Masatsura's mother. These women also appear in the ethics textbook *Honchō retsujoden* 本朝列女伝 (1875), that introduces in two volumes a selection of eighteen biographies. Koshikibu no naishi 小式部内侍 (?-1025) is introduced as an excellent poet from a young age, unfairly accused of always being corrected by her famous mother Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部 (976-1030). A cited *waka* by Koshikibu's hand is connected to an anecdote about her chastity. According to this anecdote, the poet Fujiwara no Sadanori was making advances, but upon hearing Koshikibu's poem he was lost for words and quickly made himself scarce. The text concludes by praising Koshikibu's diligent study since childhood. Like Koshikibu, Shizuka employs poetry to convey her feelings. The main anecdote in Shizuka's biography is her dance in front of Yoritomo, during which she bravely cited two *waka* that speak of her sadness to be separated from the fugitive Yoshitsune. Kesa Gozen, like Koshikibu, must deal with the problem of inappropriate advances but solves it differently. She asks the man who tried to compromise her to kill her husband, then takes her husband's place in the dark and has herself beheaded instead. Kusunoki Masatsura's mother caught her eleven-year-old son preparing to follow his father in death (an act of loyalty also known as *junshi* 殉死), but she managed to redirect the energies of the boy towards future loyalty and sacrifice in battle.

Of the above four *retsujo*, only Kusunoki Masatsura's mother would continue to appear in late Meiji period textbooks, which can be explained by the fact that the role of wise mother (*kenbo*) was considered more important than being a good wife (*ryōsai*). Koyama Shizuko observes that the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal that started to appear in the late nineteenth century shows similarities to premodern Confucian ideals (such as chastity), but this impression of continuity is misleading. The *ryōsai kenbo* ideal placed the educational goals for women in the context of the nation rather than the *ie* (household).[132] It integrated girls in the educational system and the nation as future mothers who provide their children with

[132] Koyama, 49.

'home education' (*katei kyōiku* 家庭教育). This rendered the dramatic narratives of Koshikibu, Shizuka and Kesa gozen apparently less relevant than the wise advice that Kusunoki Masatsura's mother gave her son.

Murasaki Shikibu surfaces just before the rise of the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal, as a talented and learned woman. In *Shōgakkōyō Nihon rekishi* 小学校用日本歴史 (1888), that introduces history as a series of events, Murasaki Shikibu appears as the first figure in a chapter that elaborates on the 'appearance of many talented women' (*saijo no haishutsu* 才女の輩出) in the Heian period.[133] After introducing the names of her father and husband in the fashion of premodern *retsujoden*, the text relates how from a young age she was an excellent student. Growing up, she composed many *waka* and studied both Chinese and Japanese books, which resulted in a post as lady-in-waiting and teacher to the Empress. *Genji monogatari* is praised as a work that satirizes contemporary society, but it is also 'said to be an account of the reigns of Emperors Daigo, Suzaku and Murakami'. Moreover, the language is prized as exquisite and reflecting the human emotions very well. The paragraph concludes with the remark that Murasaki passed her talents on to her daughter, who was also a *kenjoshi* 賢女子 (intelligent girl). The image shows Murasaki sitting at a desk in an embroidered multi-layered robe in the process of copying a text onto a scroll (fig. 2.9). The room gives a refined impression and behind her are various objects stacked on a shelf, including scrolls. A veranda and trees are visible from the window. The scene is based on the premodern iconography of Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera working on the *Genji*. The textbook promotes diligent study and pays homage to both the literary and historical value of Murasaki Shikibu's work (although the contents remain vague, as in the premodern *retsujoden*), as well as her importance as a teacher of the next generation.

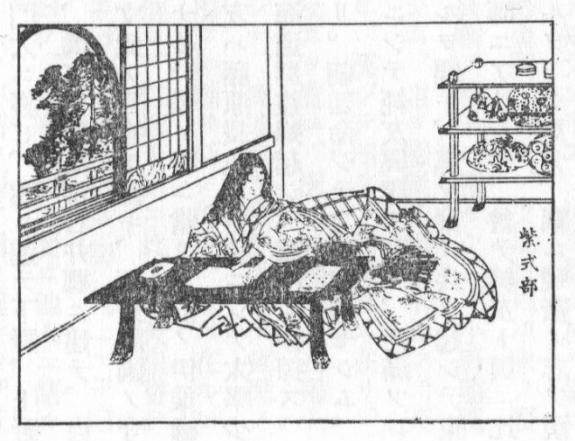

Fig. 2.9 *Shōgakkōyō Nihonrekishi*, vol. 1, 1888 (as reproduced in NKT 19)

Several history textbooks of the 1890s similarly laud Murasaki Shikibu's talents and connect her work to a 'native' literary tradition. In these textbooks Murasaki Shikibu

[133] The other women introduced are: Sei Shōnagon, Akazome Emon, Izumi Shikibu, Koshikibu no naishi, and Ise no Taifu.

becomes the sole representative of Heian literati women. *Teikoku shōshi* 帝国小史 ('Short History of the Empire', 1892) states:

> A hundred years after Michizane, there was a person called Murasaki Shikibu. She was the daughter of Fujiwara Tametoki and the most talented and learned woman (*saigaku no onna* 才学の女) of all times. From a young age, she liked reading books, and when listening to people reading aloud, she would immediately memorize [the text]. Moreover, studying next to her brother from his books … she would sometimes correct his mistakes in reading and so on. Before long, she read Japanese and Chinese books, composed poetry, and wrote prose. … Murasaki Shikibu served the Empress and taught her poetry and prose. Afterwards she moreover wrote a novel called *Genji monogatari*. As both the plot and the composition are interesting, till today scholars fondly read the novel as a model of *wabun*.[134]

Also *Shōgakkōyō Nihon rekishi* 小学校用日本歴史 ('History of Japan for the Elementary School', 1893) stresses the remarkable talent she showed as a girl and introduces the *Genji* as a model of *wabun* 和文 (Japanese text). This textbook in the opening paragraph moreover explicitly frames Murasaki Shikibu as the main representative of a 'female' specialization in native literary writing styles: 'Conventionally, everything was written in *kanbun* 漢文 [Sinitic text], but after the development of *kana*, an increasing number of people wrote the Japanese language in a style called *wabun*. Especially women specialized in *wabun* and *waka*, and of all the talented women excelling [in these types of writing] during the reign of emperor Ichijō, Murasaki Shikibu was the most brilliant.'[135]

Fig. 2.10 *Teikoku shōshi*, vol. 1, 1892 (as reproduced in NKT 19)

The illustration in *Teikoku shōshi* (fig. 2.10) stresses Murasaki Shikibu's diligent study. The image shows a young Murasaki Shikibu in a plain (or simplified) robe copying a text on a large piece of paper. She is studying at night by candlelight and closed in by screens. It was the habit of exemplary children to 'study day and night', the

[134] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 19*, 198.
[135] Kaigo, 246.

archetype being Ninomiya Kinjirō 二宮金次郎 (1787-1856).[136] Such stories are also part of the textbook biographies of famous male scholars. *Jinjō kokugo tokuhon* (1900) relates that Arai Hakuseki as a boy studied late at night, barely finding enough light to see the characters.[137] When almost falling asleep, he threw cold water over himself (as described in Hakuseki's memoirs – see chapter 1.3). *Shōgakkōyō Nihon rekishi* contains an illustration based on the portrait of Murasaki Shikibu that is displayed at Ishiyamadera and attributed to Kanō Takanobu (fig. 2.11, see also fig. 1.25). The icon is associated with the Buddhist veneration of Murasaki Shikibu, yet such sentiments are absent in the text.[138]

Fig. 2.11 *Shōgakkōyō Nihonrekishi*, vol. 1. 1893 (as reproduced in NKT 19)

Both textbooks stress however that Murasaki Shikibu was next to (or despite) her talents very modest and chaste. *Teikoku shōshi*, that called her 'talented and learned' (*saigaku*), later describes her also as 'intelligent and virtuous' (*saitoku* 才徳), following the observation that she did not remarry after the death of her husband. *Shōgakkōyō Nihon rekishi* describes Murasaki Shikibu as 'gentle and modest' (*nyūwa kenson* 柔和謙遜) and claims that she 'in public acted as if she did not even know the meaning of the character *ichi* 一'. Intelligence is thus praised, but women should hide erudition. The ethics textbook *Shūshin kyōten* (1900) makes this disposition the focal point and introduces Murasaki Shikibu as an example of 'intelligence and virtue' (*saitoku* 才徳) and 'modesty' (*kenjō* 謙譲).[139] In the latter chapter, Murasaki Shikibu as a lady-in-waiting and revered teacher to the Empress, is confronted with jealous peers but remains unpretentious and does not fight with the other women. The *Genji* is said to have been compared to *Nihongi* 日本紀 ('Chronicles of Japan', 8th century) by Emperor Ichijō. Despite this praise, Murasaki Shikibu remained modest, the lesson recapitulates.

[136] This agricultural reformer became a textbook paragon of a boy who educated himself despite the challenges of poverty. Descriptions of Ninomiya textbooks (and elsewhere) are accompanied by an illustration of the boy with a book in his hands and a bundle of firewood on his back.
[137] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 40.
[138] See chapter two in Carpenter et al., *The tale of Genji*.
[139] Fukyūsha henshūsho 普及者編輯所, *Shūshin Kyōten: Kōtō Shōgakkōyō 1*, 41–46.

Fig. 2.12 *Shūshin kyōten*, vol 1, 1900 (1902 reprint). Private collection

According to the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal, girls should study as diligently as boys in elementary school, yet the goal was to enable them to guide the education of their future children at home. Moreover, several textbooks render Murasaki Shikibu's interest in *gakumon* (i.e., advanced study) anomalous for someone of her gender. According to *Shōgakkōyō Nihon rekishi* and *Shūshin kyōten*, her father would have lamented the fact that she is not a boy. *Shūshin kyōten* reiterates the story that Murasaki Shikibu's first steps towards becoming a famous scholar (*gakusha* 学者) were made by memorizing her brother's lessons, which her father Tametoki thought 'very cute'. In the illustration, the brother is seated behind a desk, while his little sister Murasaki Shikibu sits next to him (fig. 2.12). Elsewhere in the textbook, the young Nakae Tōju is shown studying by lamplight in similar fashion as Ushiwakamaru in fig. 1.16. Murasaki Shikibu is however depicted as an observer. This good sister does not correct her brother like in the history textbooks. The chapter furthermore relates that as an adult, she nursed her severely ill husband Fujiwara Nobutaka 'day and night' (i.e., she was a good wife). After his death, she did not remarry and 'devoted herself to educating her children with much pleasure' (i.e., she was a good mother). *Shūshin kyōten* thus does identify Murasaki Shikibu as a famous scholar, but she must also be a cute little sister and *ryōsai kenbo* to be an exemplar for 'regular' girls.

The reproducibility of Murasaki Shikibu's biography becomes apparent in the second volume of *Shūshin kyōten*, that takes up Saisho Atsuko 税所敦子 (1825-1900), a Meiji period poet and lady-in-waiting.[140] Rather than her poetry, what the reader learns about Saisho is a mix of earlier discussed themes and virtues: her childhood was devoted to diligent study, she had a terminally ill husband whom she nursed day and night, she was a loyal widow, she had a difficult mother-in-law whom she filially cared for, she educated her (adopted)

[140] Fukyūsha henshūsho 普及者編輯所, *Shūshin Kyōten: Kōtō Shōgakkōyō* 2, 58–68.

daughters, she was frugal, and she served the Emperor loyally.[141] The textbook tries to please multiple parties by cramming in all available national and feminine ethics.

A more concise approach towards gendered expectations appears in the 1910 government ethics textbook, that lists the different duties (*tsutome* 務) of male and female citizens. A lesson in volume six teaches:

> … boys will become master of the household and go out working when they grow up, while girls become a wife and care for the family. … Both boys and girls should be morally upright, but boys need to be firm of character and decisive (*gōki kadan* 剛毅果断), while girls need to be gentle and modest (*onwa teishuku* 温和貞淑). … Women are physically weaker, so men need to take care of them. However, people who think that women are lesser than men are very mistaken. Boys and girls are both masters of the universe (*banbutsu no chō* 万物の長), only their duties are different. Girls take care of the family at home, where they strive for peace and harmony, which is ultimately the place where the good customs of the country are cultivated. The fate of the country (*kokka no seisui* 国家の盛衰) … depends on the way in which mothers raise their children.[142]

This outline concurs with Koyama's observation that the role of the mother was more important than that of wife. Still, the latter is a prerequisite for the first, and naturalized already in elementary school textbooks through the representation of historical characters.

The elementary school ethics textbooks of 1910 and 1918 introduce Kasuga no Tsubone 春日局 (1579-1643), Hideyoshi's wife, Kusunoki Masatsura's mother, and Wake no Kiyomaru's sister Hiromushi (only 1910). In the 1918 textbook are furthermore introduced Mōri Yoshinari's wife and Yoshida Shōin's 吉田松陰 (1830-1859) mother Takiko. In an uncanny resemblance to Margaret Atwood's female protagonist Ofglen in *The Handmaid's Tale*, some lessons do not name the female protagonist in any other way than 'wife of'. 'Mōri Yoshinari's wife' is the protagonist in a lesson about 'staying calm' in case of an emergency

[141] The themes of frugality and filial piety did not appear in Murasaki Shikibu's biography but are introduced in two lessons about an invented Edo-period woman called Kawase Haruko.

[142] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 3*, 121.. *Seisui* (or *jōsui*) in the context of premodern war tales would refer to the (inevitable) rise and fall of warrior clans. The rise or fall of the nation here depends on the virtues of its citizens, an ideal originating in the European Enlightenment. The expression *banbutsu no chō* has been explained in an earlier lesson, as the human capacity to accumulate knowledge and cultivate moral judgement, which makes them master of everything in the world (Kaigo, 94.). The remarks about equality must also be seen in the context of the previous lesson, that has explained the duty of male citizens to defend the country (*kokka bōei* 国家防衛).

(a fire).[143] The story nametags her husband Mōri Yoshinari 森可成 (1523-1570), a retainer of Oda Nobunaga. Assuming that this relationship is monogamous, students might quickly identify her as the mother of Mōri Ranmaru 森蘭丸 (1565-1582), a very popular hero who appeared in children's media. Also Hideyoshi's wife in a story about 'thankfulness' is merely referred to as *fujin* 夫人, even though the author takes pains to explain how Hideyoshi's name was originally Tōkichirō.[144] Both stories do not seem to have precedent in premodern legends. Kasuga no Tsubone (1579-1643) is known as a politically powerful woman, yet the lesson here merely consists of an anecdote about her 'behaving according to the rules'.[145]

In the early twentieth century, Murasaki Shikibu was not introduced in history or ethics textbooks, but instead appears in the *kokugo* readers of 1903 and 1910. Both readers stress Murasaki Shikibu's intelligence and diligent study as a child, relate how she was selected as a lady-in-waiting to the Empress, and received praise from the Emperor for *Genji monogatari*.[146] The lessons then quickly put a lid on any pride or adulation that could form in the reader's head: Murasaki Shikibu remained modest. An extra warning is given to girls: both textbooks cite her loving father Tametoki saying 'it is a pity that you are not a boy' while tousling her hair. Although the lessons don't introduce Murasaki Shikibu's nursing of her gravely ill husband, they do stress that the young widow devoted herself to the upbringing of their two daughters, like a good mother. The reader of 1918 introduces Sei Shōnagon in the same lesson.[147] This paragraph is based on a famous episode from her *Makura no sōshi* 枕草子 ('The Pillow Book') in which the Empress alludes to a poem by Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846) and Sei Shōnagon correctly interprets that she wishes to see the snow. The illustration shows Sei Shōnagon lifting the blinds without hesitation. Murasaki Shikibu is shown sitting at her writing desk, her brush hovering above an empty piece of paper, as in the earlier mentioned iconography of Ishiyamadera. In the 1918 reader, they both do not appear. A new addition is however the story of Yamato Takeru's wife Tachibana hime, who jumped into the sea during a sea storm to pacify the wrathful sea gods and thereby saved the life of her husband.

[143] Kaigo, *NKT Kindai Hen 3*, 148–49.
[144] Kaigo, 105–6.
[145] Kaigo, 77–78.
[146] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 6*, 553.
[147] Kaigo, *NKT kindai hen 7*, 173.

Thus, compared to warrior legends, only a very small selection of premodern *retsujoden* and associated iconographies were adapted to fit the goals of modern education. Female literati were (cautiously) discovered as historically significant, and Murasaki Shikibu was identified as the most brilliant representative. Apart from being intelligent, modest, and chaste, she was represented as a 'diligent student' and 'educating mother' according to the (*ryōsai*) *kenbo* ideal, that formulated the education of girls as a preparation for good motherhood. From the perspective of the historical canon however, this modernized Murasaki Shikibu might be considered a 'mistress' rather than a mother. Her place in the history curriculum is among the few 'women worthies in a male-driven narrative'.[148] Judith Bennett argues that history textbooks (past and present) are the natural genre of 'master narratives' build around 'politics, high culture, and elite men, telling a tale of steady progress'. If the presence of women is acknowledged, the master (the author) 'prefers women who empower, inspire, or amuse him' and he keeps this 'mistress on the side, safely tucked away from the manly business of real life'.[149] The Murasaki Shikibu selected and told by the male textbook authors in the late Meiji period was not merely a dutifully selected ethics example nor a 'compensatory' figure (feminist critique on the canon not having appeared yet). The studious young girl amuses and gets a fatherly pat on the head, while her work in the 'native' literary tradition empowers and inspires. The repeated remark 'if only you were a boy' implies that the aim is not to empower or inspire girls to go beyond 'diligent study'. The shift from history textbooks to *kokugo* readers in the early twentieth century moreover kept her out of the way of politics and the narrative of steady progress.

Conclusion

The Rescript, Herbartianism and premodern warrior legends were available to any party with an interest in instructing young citizens. These parties can be roughly divided in the state and ideologues not employed by the government, whose ideals converged and diverged on various issues. The state made use of the channel of elementary education (textbooks, classes), while ideologues expressed themselves in the print media (youth literature). This chapter has focused on the interpretation of warrior legends and historical characters by the state.

[148] Bennett, *History Matters*, 132.
[149] Bennett, 133–34.

Compulsory elementary education grew from a hardly accepted law in 1872 to a systematic, theoretically substantiated, and naturalized practice in the early twentieth century. The acceptance of the school system involved a new way of thinking, namely elementary education as a natural part of a citizen's life, whose contents are largely determined by the state. The Imperial Rescript on Education has long been recognized as a watershed in the history of Japanese education. It formulated the ideological underpinnings of the elementary school and symbolizes a shift to a curriculum that stressed moral education with the aim of creating loyal citizens.

The focus on moral education and citizenship should however not be credited to the Rescript alone, or to unique developments in Japan. At the end of the nineteenth century, Herbartian pedagogy, that stressed the moral education of young citizens, spread from Germany to various other nation-states. Herbartian pedagogues advised to make use of the imagination of children to impart ethics and a national consciousness. Folktales and tales about historical heroes would reflect not only morals but also nationally defined customs, culture, and history. Japanese counterparts were found in *mukashibanashi* and warrior legends.

Early Meiji period textbooks initially took over some premodern narratives and visual representations next to translations of Western texts and knowledge. However, warrior legends were given true relevance as modern expedients in the 1890s, when they were re-assessed in the light of their suitability as ethics exemplars. In the mid-Meiji period, the Ministry of Education as well as private educators and authors for the first time tried to re-create these premodern narratives based on concepts also fairly new to themselves. These texts for an audience of young children therefore had an even more powerful role than the theoretical exegesis of the Rescript. They selected and invented the symbols and narratives that would create an emotional connection to the abstract concept of the nation.

The government's main thoughts about the ideal citizen are reflected in the moral exemplars of Yoshitsune, Hideyoshi and Murasaki Shikibu. The lessons made use of episodes from premodern narratives and visual representations, selected for their suitability, and adapted to represent the desired dispositions. The two male exemplars represented courage, loyalty, and ambition in various degrees. Yoshitsune/Ushiwakamaru legends and iconographies found a place in *kokugo* readers, offering an 'imaginative' example of courage

to young children. Hideyoshi on the other hand was in history and ethics textbooks recognized for his political role, loyalty, expansionism, and extraordinary social ascendance. Although Hideyoshi's humble beginnings were structurally mentioned to highlight his determination and ambition, legends that memorialized Hiyoshimaru's unruliness were clearly unappealing to the government. Determination in childhood was to be expressed through diligent study. Murasaki Shikibu's intelligence and diligent study served as an example for both boys and girls. However, for the latter the aim was to become a 'wise mother' (*kenbo*), which made women with famous sons arguably more suitable exemplars. Like Yoshitsune, Murasaki Shikibu was shifted to *kokugo* readers in the early twentieth century, in which her literary pursuits were honed without weaving her into the structure of national history. An episodic, non-linear approach similarly separated Yoshitsune from structures of cause and effect and rendered his (as well as Yoritomo's) character unambiguous.

The textbooks' shifting interpretations of exemplary historical figures bring to light the delicate balance between national heroes and the kind of citizen that the state wanted to create in the long term through elementary schooling. The exemplary nature of cultural icons was to be understood in such a way that they did not become an alternative object of worship to the Emperor or an alternative to a docile, loyal form of citizenship. However, by grooming a pantheon of national heroes, the Ministry also gave commercial publishers and authors a means to contest the government's interpretations of citizenship.