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 3

Meiji youth literature and historical exemplars

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Meiji government devised a national curriculum with clear ideological underpinnings in the 1890s. Commercial publishers and authors in this same decennium discovered the new genre of youth literature. These Meiji period explorations into the genre of youth literature have been characterized negatively as overtly didactic and unable to overcome premodern plots and language, exemplified by Iwaya Sazanami's early work *Koganemaru* こがね丸 (1891).[1] Although the instrumental (and propagandistic) qualities of Meiji youth literature have been noted[2], it is ironically still considered rather inconsequential in the field of Japanese literature. This chapter aims to re-assess the role of premodern material in both the development of youth literature in Japan and the creation of historical exemplars for young citizens. Carol Gluck observes that by the 1890s, the Edo period was perceived of as the inverse of civilization, yet also provided 'usable national parts' in the narrative of the modern Meiji state.[3] Children's literature was an attractive genre for treasuring Edo period traditions, as it was modern and educational, yet the idea of a child audience allowed for some naiveté.

I will examine the early development of the genre of youth literature in Japan through the lens of Juri Lotman's (1922-1993) model of the semiosphere and argue that Edo period texts circulating in 'creative memory' played a crucial role in the conversion to this new literary category. In other words, I will consider the relationship between early modern popular texts and the concept of youth literature (as it existed in the nineteenth century) as a process of creating new meaning. A prerequisite for this interpretation is that 'children's literature' is taken as texts that were explicitly published under this banner, rather than adopting Karatani Kōjin's view that 'children's literature' could not precede 'literature'.[4]

[1] Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*; Koyama-Siebert, 'Kinder- und Jugendliteratur in Japan'.
[2] Henry, 'Japanese Children's Literature as Allegory of Empire'.
[3] Gluck, 'The Invention of Edo', 266.
[4] Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, 117.

Most texts produced for children in the past and present are primarily didactic and consist of what adults imagine as appropriate for children.[5]

Youth magazines and book series of the late nineteenth century contain many representations of ideal citizens in the form of biographies of historical figures, based on war tales and warrior legends. Youth magazines moreover contain theoretical discussions of citizenship and the purpose of the literary genre itself. Introducing the new genre as a form of 'home education', authors and publishers initially followed the ideals propagated in the Imperial Rescript on Education. Youth literature thus being framed within a discourse on nation and elementary education, consequently also provided a way for critical citizens to interrogate and contest these concepts.

This chapter first introduces Juri Lotman's theory on the semiosphere and cultural memory. Next, I will discuss the ideological tendency of youth magazines in the 1890s, with a focus on the influential Tokyo-based publishing house Hakubunkan 博文館, and the relationship with educational policies. I will then examine the way in which youth magazines and book series revisited premodern warrior legends and war tales, and perceptions of the new genre and its audience. The last two sections of this chapter focus on the visions of Hakubunkan's star author Iwaya Sazanami 巌谷小波 (pseud. Iwaya Sueo 巌谷季雄, 1870-1933) and his adaptations of warrior legends for primary school aged children. Iwaya complained that moralism and 'narrow-minded nationalism', imparted at home and in schools, resulted in unpromising citizens. In his book series *Nippon mukashibanashi* 日本昔話 (1894-96) and *Nippon otogibanashi* 日本お伽噺 (1896-99) he made extensive use of popular warrior legends. Both titles can be translated as 'Japanese folktales' or 'Japanese fairy tales'. In these adaptations he developed his ideals while shaping historical generals into exemplary boys who display *wanpaku* 腕白 (spirited) dispositions. I will analyse two volumes from the above-mentioned book series, namely *Ushiwakamaru* 牛若丸 (1894) and *Hiyoshimaru* 日吉丸 (1898), that respectively introduce Minamoto Yoshitsune and Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

[5] Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult*, 150–55.

1. Meiji youth literature: the semiosphere and cultural memory

Histories of modern Japanese youth literature generally describe the rise of the modern genre in three stages: a) the introduction of translated works from the West in the early Meiji period, followed by b) the creation of a nationalistic literature for young citizens in the 1890s, culminating in c) a 'child-centered' literature, represented by for example Ogawa Mimei's *Akai fune* 赤い船 ('The Red Ship', 1911) and Suzuki Miekichi's magazine *Akai tori* 赤い鳥 ('Red Bird', 1918-1936). This linear narrative broadly reflects the political developments from *bunmei kaika* to nationalism to Taishō democracy. In English-language research, the youth literature of this period has been taken up in historical research on the creation of imperial subjects.[6] Yet no book-length history of Japanese children's literature exists in the English language, nor is youth literature (nationalistic or otherwise) addressed in for example the *Cambridge History of Japanese Literature* (2016).

The small number of articles that take up Meiji and/or Taishō period works for children give significant weight to Karatani Kōjin's book chapter about the 'discovery of the child'.[7] To recapitulate Karatani's views, 'children's literature' only appeared in the Taishō period, *after* Japanese authors had mastered the concept and style of modern literature for adults.[8] 'Real' children's literature would reflect a concept of the child based on Romanticism and psychology and would have rejected Edo period concepts and literary styles as well as nationalistic tendencies. Karatani is mainly interested in the concept of childhood in relation to the discovery that children have a different 'interiority' from adults. However, he does not adequately represent the relationship of Meiji youth literature with Edo period popular literature, and his concept of 'children's literature' is limited to works that are held in esteem for their literary quality. Yoko Koyama-Siebert, who traces the history of Japanese children's literature by focusing on changing terms for this genre, similarly paints a bleak picture of the youth literature produced in the Meiji period, that appears to be moralizing and unoriginal in contrast to progressive movements in the Taishō period.[9] However, children's literature scholar Perry Nodelman argues that modern youth literature 'has more in common with popular literature for adults than with quality

[6] E.g., Henry, 'Japanese Children's Literature as Allegory of Empire'; Carter, 'A Study of Japanese Children's Magazines 1888-1949'; Karlin, 'Narratives of Heroism in Meiji Japan'.
[7] E.g., Wakabayashi, 'Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh'; Piel, 'Loyal Dogs and Meiji Boys'.
[8] Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*.
[9] Koyama-Siebert, 'Kinder- und Jugendliteratur in Japan'.

literature for adults'.[10] A new interpretation of Meiji youth literature might start with letting go of linear narratives and the preoccupation with 'good' children's literature.

Juri Lotman's model of the semiosphere provides an alternative way of understanding the development of children's literature as a new genre in the Meiji period, and his theory of cultural memory yields insight into the way in which warrior legends played a role in this process. The semiosphere is a mechanism in which 'communicative processes and the creation of new information' take place, outside of which semiosis, or making meaning, cannot exist.[11] Inherent in the semiosphere and its sub-systems are peripheries in which external communications translate into the semiosphere's internal language and in which texts are re-assessed in the light of the new concepts.[12] The introduction of Western youth literature into the Japanese cultural sphere and consequent shifts in literary categories can also be understood as semiotic processes. These processes in the periphery of the semiosphere can be conceived of as interrelated, but also at variance with, processes in other strata, for example in education or literature aimed at adults.

In her book chapter 'Children's Literature as a Cultural Code', Maria Nikolajeva proposes to apply Lotman's theory of the semiosphere to the historical development of Western children's literature. She considers children's literature a 'succession of changing cultural codes … different from those in adult or mainstream literature'.[13] At the same time these codes converge and diverge throughout history. A book initially written for adults can for example become part of children's literature or vice versa. Most importantly, 'the code shift *within* children's literature implies that central phenomena become at length supplanted by borderline phenomena'.[14] For example, in the 1980s, following the publication of Astrid Lindgren's *The Brothers Lionheart* (1973) the 'imaginative code' shifted from periphery to center, while the 'socially engaged code' that occupied the central zone in the previous decennia shifted to the periphery. Lindgren's book might therefore be termed a 'bifurcation point' that changed the history of the genre in an unpredictable way.[15]

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[10] Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult*, 155. Nodelman argues that what binds the various definitions of children's literature in the past and present, by literary authors as well as scholars, is that it is a literature that adults 'imagine for them [children] to read and enjoy and benefit from'. Nodelman, 154. This should also be distinguished from what children actually read or want to read (although preferences can be nurtured).

[11] Lotman, 'On the Semiosphere', 207–8.

[12] Lotman, 210.

[13] Nikolajeva, 'Children's Literature as a Cultural Code', 39.

[14] Nikolajeva, 39.

[15] Nikolajeva, 45.

Developments in Japanese youth literature might be explained in similar ways: Iwaya Sazanami's most famous work *Koganemaru* or Ogawa Mimei's *Akai fune* did not supplant previous codes of (youth) literature immediately or entirely. Therefore, they can more adequately be conceptualized as 'bifurcation points'. Nikolajeva does not apply Lotman's theory to the appearance of youth literature as a literary category in Europe or elsewhere, but an important question here is how Western youth literature as a yet unknown concept shifted from periphery to center in the semiospheres of Japanese literature and culture.

Lotman's lesser-known theory of cultural memory will here provide the main tools for analysis of the use of premodern texts and codes in the semiotic process. The semiosphere is essentially a model of constant text generation, and cultural memory has an active role in the creation of new texts. Lotman distinguishes between 'informative memory' and 'creative memory', although in practice these are not strictly separated. 'Informative memory' develops in a linear way: the 'active' text (in technology for example) is the result of the latest knowledge. 'Creative memory' rather refers to 'an entire cluster of texts [that] turns out to be potentially active' and resists time, in that it 'preserves the past as an inhabitant of the present'.[16] This type of memory applies for example to art (in the wide sense). Lotman conceptualizes cultural memory not as 'a storehouse but as a mechanism for its regeneration'.[17] This is a conceptual difference with Aleida Assmann's notion of the 'archive'.[18] Within the process of creative memory, early modern popular culture is tied to perpetual updating of texts, triggered by contact with other texts.

The productivity of meaning generation depends on the extent of the semiotic shift that occurs.[19] When there is a massive influx into a culture of texts that are structured very differently from the receiving culture, as happened in Japan during the Meiji period, and the internal tradition of a culture has no adequate codes for deciphering them, a rift opens between cultural memory and its mechanisms of text generation. In other words, Lotman considers history not a succession of periods, but a dialogical model in which periods alternate between destabilization and rapid development, or 'explosion'.[20] Such an 'explosion' is preceded by a period of reception. This was also the case for Western youth

[16] Lotman, 'Memory in a Culturological Perspective', 134–35.
[17] Lotman, 'Cultural Memory', 143.
[18] Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', 99.
[19] Lotman, 'Memory in a Culturological Perspective', 136.
[20] Semenenko, *The Texture of Culture*, 66.

literature in the early Meiji period, that was mainly introduced in the form of translation. The 1890s saw a very rapid and productive phase in the generation of texts that translated internal texts and codes to those of the new genre.

Judy Wakabayashi argues that translated youth literature from the West 'paved the way for the production of the first original works of modern Japanese children's literature'.[21] This included for example various Meiji period translations of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), works by Jonathan Swift, Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tales (1835-1837) and fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm (first published in 1912), *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885-6). Citing Torigoe Shin, Wakabayashi points out that in the period 1868-1890 two-thirds of the published texts for children consisted of translated works.[22] The edited volume in which Torigoe's work appears places the appearance of original works of children's literature (*sōsaku jidōbungaku* 創作児童文学) in the early 1890s.[23] This decennium saw the birth of multiple youth magazines and book series.[24] Yet based on the observations of Karatani and Joan Ericson, Wakabayashi places the appearance of 'original works' in the Taishō period, resulting in a seemingly long period of translation-oriented practices.[25] She for example refers to Iwaya's translations of foreign folktales and fairy tales in the book series *Sekai otogibanashi* 世界お伽噺 ('Fairytales of the World', 1909-1910), but not to his original stories in youth magazines and the series *Nippon mukashibanashi* and *Nippon otogibanashi* published the 1890s, which reflect major conceptual and linguistic innovations in the field of youth literature. Translation of Western youth literature after 1890 existed side-by-side with the creation of original works based on Western concepts.[26] Therefore, I would argue with Wakabayashi that translation played an important role in the creation of a Japanese youth literature, yet the period in which creation replaced reception as a main activity should be pushed back with about two decennia to the 1890s.

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[21] Wakabayashi, 'Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh', 227.
[22] Wakabayashi, 233; Torigoe, 'Nihon Kindai Jidobungakushi No Kiten', 3–5.
[23] Torigoe, *Hajimete Manabu Nihon Jidōbungakushi*, 72. Tsuzukihashi also considers the birth of youth literature to lie in this period, but employs the term 'proto-original writing' (*jun sōsaku* 純創作). Tsuzukihashi, *Jidōbungaku No Tanjō*, 80.
[24] Meiji youth magazines are for example discussed at length by Tsuzukihashi Tatsuo, and Katsuo Kin'ya addresses book series with historical themes. (Tsuzukihashi, *Jidōbungaku No Tanjō*., Katsuo, *Reimeiki no rekishi jidō bungaku*.) In the English language, a recent article by Ruselle Maede addresses the representation of scientific subjects in the youth magazine *Shōnen-en* 少年園 (1888-1895), which varied from the governments' tendency to de-emphasize these subjects in this period. Meade, 'Juvenile Science and the Japanese Nation'.
[25] See Joan E. Ericson's introductory chapter in Ohta, *A Rainbow in the Desert*.
[26] Japanese translation practices hardly seem to lag behind developments in Europe: Wakabayashi points out that Japanese was the first language that *Peter Rabbit* (1902) was translated into (in 1906). Continental Europe still had to follow, let alone declare Beatrix Potter's work 'children's classics'.

If one acknowledges the inventive and original qualities of translation, it can also be argued that the subjectivity of the child was discovered already in Wakamatsu Shizuko's translation of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (*Shōkōshi* 小公子, 1890-2), some twenty years before Taishō era authors elevated the child's interiority to a central concept in children's literature in conjunction with the discovery of their own 'inner child'. Melek Ortabasi argues that Shizuko's 'painstaking (re)creation of the intersubjectivity shared by mother and child' would defend such a stance.[27] The marginalization of Shizuko's efforts might be related not only to the fact that *Shōkōshi* was a faithful (foreignizing) translation, but it was by contemporary (male) critics also recognized as 'feminine'. In the same year that *Shōkōshi* commenced serialization in the women's magazine *Jogaku zasshi* 女学雑誌, there appeared an adaptation of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* for a young male audience by Shūko Ryōshi (*Neikeiji* 寧馨児 'An Extraordinary Child', 1890).[28] This adaptation transfers the story to a Japanese setting and highlighted the political and social themes in Burnett's novel, that confirmed the readers' 'standing as middle- and upper-class boys … who will become active in Meiji society at large'.[29] This matter was the more pressing one to Meiji authors who wrote for boys, and who moreover dominated the market.

As has been discussed in chapter one, folktales and warrior legends were a popular theme in *kusazōshi* aimed at children. For the generation that grew up in the early Meiji period, and their (grand)parents who grew up in the Edo period, warrior legends belonged to the reading and listening experiences of their youth.[30] Iwaya Sazanami relied on such printed sources and his memory for his adaptations, according to his 'message to the young reader' in *Momotarō* 桃太郎 ('Peach Boy', 1894).[31] As discussed in chapter one, in the 1880s, *kusazōshi* innovated at a technological level by replacing woodblock printing with copperplate printing. Many of these books introduce the (legendary) lives of famous generals, in support of the increasing militarization. About twenty different copperplate printed *ichidaiki* 一代記 (biographies) about Yoshitsune alone were printed between 1884 and 1891, after which this type of book abruptly disappeared. These *kusazōshi* are based on early modern iconographies, but also include preoccupations (the military power of Japan)

[27] Melek, 'Brave Dogs and Little Lords', 207.
[28] Shūko Ryōshi 蠡湖漁史 was a pen name for Yamagata Iso'o 山縣五十雄 (1869–1959).
[29] Melek, 'Brave Dogs and Little Lords', 199.
[30] Katō, 'Kanotō Nichiroku Ni Tsuite', 275–77.
[31] Iwaya, *Nippon Mukashibanashi*, 13.

and terms that originate in the Meiji period, as discussed in chapter one. Such *kusazōshi* do however not reflect new insights into the nature of children, or into the codes of Western youth literature.

The literary sphere in whose periphery Western youth literature appeared had its own logic and concept of originality. Authors like Iwaya Sazanami had grown up in the context of kabuki, ukiyo-e, public storytelling, and other forms of popular performance and print. The art historian Yamanashi Toshio describes the correlation between these different media as a 'cycle' that is structured by the concepts of *sekai* (the dramatic world consisting of well-known events, legends, and characters), *shukō* (the plot of a new text) and *kata* (conventions and patterns specific to the medium).[32] If a new text fitted within the patterns of expectation, it could be understood and appreciated, independent from historical time or truth. This 'cycle' can be said to resemble a semiosphere, to which the codes of youth literature were foreign. Yet this cycle also offered material that could help to translate the new codes. Lotman argues that 'symbols' 'carry over text, plotlines, and other semiotic formations from one cultural stratum to another', which has a unifying function.[33] According to Aleksei Semenenko the symbol can be a person or literary character, such as Hamlet, who 'has come to function as a conventional sign, the meaning of which can vary in time and which is subject to continual change'.[34] Such symbols have certain stable features that cause them to not disintegrate. This also applies to the protagonists of Japanese premodern warrior legends. The representation of Yoshitsune depends on context, yet most representations include the semantic field of the underdog or tragic hero (not unlike Hamlet), and a selection of icons or plots associated with Yoshitsune. (For example, the warrior monk Benkei as antithesis.) The concept of *sekai* entailed moreover a deliberate technique that led to a rich body of symbols that continued to exert a unifying function in the Meiji period.

By 1890, various Japanese publishers and authors clearly saw a connection between youth literature and citizenship, which led to the creation of magazines and book series explicitly marketed as Japanese youth literature. Next to classics such as *Alice in Wonderland*, nineteenth century youth literature from the West consisted of fairy tales, fables, historical fiction and (imperial) adventure stories with didactic purposes. This genre never ceased to

[32] Yamanashi, *Egakareta Rekishi*, 131–33.
[33] Lotman, 'The Symbol in the System of Culture', 163.
[34] Semenenko, *The Texture of Culture*, 105.

be a vehicle for didactic messages and identity formation, often 'national' in nature yet more skilfully presented. The *Harry Potter* series, for example, can be read as a narrative about an exemplary hero who represents traditional ideals of English masculinity, against a background of the popular topos of protecting the English 'tolerance and liberty' against foreign rule.[35] Meiji period authors were certainly not mistaken that youth literature was an ingredient of 'nation', where it could play a role in the formation of a national identity and the upbringing of young citizens by appealing to their imagination. They found inspiration and commonalities in Japanese types of popular literature, such as war tales and *kusazōshi*.

2. Youth magazines and the young citizen

Most Meiji period youth literature was published in youth magazines, yet remarkably little attention has been given to their contents. From a contemporary perspective, (good) youth literature is first and foremost associated with the book. (*Koganemaru* answers to that expectation, especially if one ignores that it is part of a series.) The first youth magazines with texts written specifically for teenagers appeared in the late 1880s, with the explicit aim of contributing to the education and socialization of the nation's youth in the extracurricular realm.[36] This idea was taken over from German, English, and American youth magazines. Leading the way was *Shōnen-en* 少年園 (Youth's Garden, 1888-1895), that pictured this extracurricular realm as a garden in which the reader would engage in 'wholesome and edifying pursuits'.[37] The magazine was an initiative of, and edited by Yamagata Teizaburō 山県悌三郎 (1859-1940), a teacher and textbook author for the Ministry for Education. *Shōnen-en* filled its 'gardens' with essays, texts related to school subjects (*gakuen* 学園), literature (*bun'en* 文園), games and sports, discussions of news items, and letters by readers. *Shōnen-en* had illustrated covers, and included *kuchi-e* 口絵 (frontispieces) in full color. Taking inspiration from British magazines, Yamagata stressed the acquisition of scientific knowledge. His aim was to make teenage boys enthusiastic about a career in science for the prosperity of the nation, as well as build their character through imaginary tales about

[35] Koehler, 'Harry Potter - National Hero and National Heroic Epic'.
[36] Based on reader's submissions, Tsuzukihashi argues that the readership of *Shōnen-en* consisted of students of the higher primary school and middle school (12-18), while female letter-writers were presumably students of the *kōtō jogakkō* 高等女学校 (Women's Higher School). However, hardly any content was explicitly aimed at girls or written by female authors.
[37] Meade, 'Juvenile Science and the Japanese Nation', 117. The neologism *katei* 家庭 (family, home) also makes use of the 'garden' metaphor, which originates in the definition of the family as a space for extracurricular education, starting in the 1870s. Galan, 'Home vs. School vs. Work', 276–77.

heroic outdoor adventures such as mountaineering. Other youth magazines for teenagers followed in quick succession, such as Hakubunkan's *Nippon no shōnen* 日本之少年 ('Youth of Japan', 1889-1894).

The first magazine aimed at elementary school students appeared in 1889 with *Shōkokumin* 小国民 ('Little Citizen'). *Shōkokumin* mainly imagined the 'little citizen' as an imperial subject. More so than *Shōnen-en* this magazine stressed moral education and especially filial piety.[38] The Imperial Rescript on Education, reprinted and translated into more accessible Japanese in the twenty-fourth volume (November 1890), can be seen as a confirmation of an already existing tendency. In the editorial to the first issue, signed by the publisher Gakureikan 学齢館, the young reader is addressed as *osanaki kokumin* 幼き国民 (young citizen) and *daini no nihonkokumin* 第二の日本国民 (second citizens of Japan).[39] The contents pertain to deal with 'everything you do not learn in school' on a continuum with school subjects, such as knowledge about nature, the history of various countries, and stories about filial exemplars and loyal warriors. To fulfil its role as a *nagusami* 慰み (diversion) even better, the magazine also included 'fun' travel stories, riddles, games, and pictures. The eye is indeed drawn to the *kuchi-e* on the opposite page, a lithography of two tigers. Above all, the editorial concludes, the new magazine aims to instill a love for the nation.

This love for the nation is initially expressed through eulogizing the ancient origins of the imperial line and the imperial subjects, as well as the beauty of Japan's nature and customs, while betraying insecurity about Japan's territory and martial power. In the third volume, for example, (September 1889), a Japanese boy called Akitsu Tōtarō, an English boy called White Race, and a Chinese boy called Uu Eison converse about the greatness of their respective countries.[40] Challenged by the obnoxious White Race, the Chinese boy argues that the Chinese territory and the population is large, the country is rich in produce, and the teachings are correct. The English boy boasts about the splendor of London, the number of battle ships, the size of its imperium, and points out that China has no Christian teachings. The Japanese boy retorts that there are more important things than battle ships, territory, and teachings. He considers Japan to be the greatest country, because there is no other

[38] Tsuzukihashi, *Jidōbungaku No Tanjō*, 65–66.
[39] Tsuzukihashi, 63.
[40] Akitsu 秋津 is an ancient name for Japan. Uu Eison 虞裔孫, or 'Descendant of Yu', presumably refers to Emperor Shun of Yu 舜虞. All issues of *Shōkokumin* referred to in this thesis can be found in the facsimile edition Kami and Ueda, *Shōkokumin Fukkokuban*.

country and people in the world that goes back 2500 years in a direct line. Moreover, as proven by the number of visitors from the West, the climate and landscape are unsurpassed. The other boys admit defeat.

The publishing house Hakubunkan unscrupulously copied the concepts and layout of *Shōkokumin* in its magazine *Yōnen zasshi* 幼年雑誌 ('Magazine for Youth', 1890-1894). Hakubunkan was founded in 1887 by the businessman Ōhashi Sahei 大橋佐平 (1836-1901) and published magazines and affordable popular book series for both adults and young readers. Ōhashi boasted that he did more for education than the Ministry of Education itself.[41] Hakubunkan conceptualized and targeted a similar audience of 'nationalized' youths as *Shōkokumin*, addressed as *yōnen* 幼年 or *shōnen* 少年. In the late nineteenth century these terms referred to both boys and girls, yet the latter are far less frequently represented and addressed. The audience thus seems to have been pictured as predominantly male, with female readers in a secondary position (consisting of siblings for example). Ōhashi hired a diverse group of authors: educators, scholars of Japanese literature and history, men with a background in law, politics, or the military, and pioneering young authors such as Iwaya Sazanami. According to Tsuzukihashi Tatsuo, *Yōnen zasshi* differentiated itself from comparable magazines by its focus on literature, written by authors who gradually made name.[42] In 1895, Hakubukan fused *Yōnen zasshi*, *Nihon no shōnen* and a third youth magazine, resulting in *Shōnen sekai* 少年世界 ('Youth's World', 1895-1933). Iwaya Sazanami was appointed editor-in-chief. The magazine contained essays and stories of varying difficulty and thus addressed multiple family members rather than an individual child, thereby presumably increasing the affordability and length of subscriptions.[43]

Yōnen zasshi contained many essays on citizenship, both instructions for the future on such matters as conscription and taxes as well as texts on the proper dispositions of young people. In the first volume of *Yōnen zasshi* (January 1891), the text of the Imperial Rescript on Education is printed and is followed first by an explanation that stresses the centrality of the Emperor and then short essays on the concepts of *kuni* 国 ('the country'), *kimi* 君 ('the Emperor') and *tami* 民 ('the people').[44] An essay in the third volume titled 'Guidelines for Youth' (*Yōnen no kokoroe* 幼年の心得) by Naitō Chisō 内藤耻叟 (1827-1903), army lecturer

[41] Richter, 'Entrepreneurship and Culture', 594.
[42] Ōsaka kokusai jidōbungakukan, *NJBD*, 2:625.
[43] In the 1890s, one volume of *Shōnen sekai* cost five *sen*.
[44] All issues of *Yōnen zasshi* referred to in this thesis can be found in the facsimile edition Ueda, *Yōnen Zasshi Fukkokuban*.

and professor of history at the Imperial University, gives three central guidelines for youth: 1) be filial to your parents and ancestors, 2) revere the Emperor, and 3) worship the *kami* that were present when the Emperor's ancestors created the country.[45] The author impresses upon the reader that a country existing since the time of the gods (that is, Japan) is unique in the world, which was also presented as a token of cultural superiority in *Shōkokumin*.

As stated earlier, the young citizen is repeatedly gendered male. A writing assignment in *Yōnen zasshi* asks, 'what is a boy?' (*danshi to wa ikan* 男子トハ如何). The winning submission (1891, 1:23), written by a pupil from a higher primary school (*kōtō shōgakkō* 高等小学校), echoes Naitō's message. To the journal's satisfaction, this pupil interprets the question in a national context: a boy must study hard, make a success in life, be loyal to the emperor, filial to his parents, and let his success be of use to the whole nation. Moreover, he must let 'the great name of the nation reverberate in foreign countries'.[46] The successive magazine *Shōnen sekai* is rife with this latter sentiment, under influence of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). According to a circular argument in the essay 'Boys of Great Japan' (*Dainipponkoku danji* 大日本国男児) (1895, 1:24), the best way to serve the country is to work for the navy, although one can also advance trade for which is needed 'maritime authority'.[47] The essay 'Japanese Boys' (*Nippon danji* 日本男児) (1895, 1:5) moreover states that 'courage and loyalty are what defines a Japanese boy'. One should 'be resolved and study hard' but also be 'independent and adventurous', as is exemplified in such books as *Robinson Crusoe* and Japanese legends as *Ōeyama* and *Kachikachi mountain*.[48] The initial reverence for the Rescript changed into an indirect critique on the more 'passive' (male) citizen promoted in government education.[49]

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[45] Naitō, 'Yōnen No Kokoroe'.

[46] Quoted in Tsuzukihashi, *Jidōbungaku No Tanjō*, 124–25.

[47] Matsui, 'Dainipponkoku Danji'. All issues of *Shōnen sekai* referred to in this thesis can be found in the facsimile edition *Shōnen Sekai Fukkokuban*.

[48] No author is indicated, but Iwaya often wrote in this rubric (*ronsetsu*). The author argues that Japanese boys already from a young age know warrior legends and folktales by heart and calls these stories a 'textbook'. The legend of Oeyama tells how Minamoto Yorimitsu (or Raikō) together with his four retainers beat the monster Shutendōji. The folktale *Kachikachi mountain* tells of a hare's successful revenge on a deceiving tanuki.

[49] Jason Karlin in his study of hero novels for teenage boys in the late Meiji period argues that the protagonists bring change and can be read as a critique on the perceived chaos and weakness in Japanese politics. He connects this interpretation of heroes to the translation of Thomas Carlyle's *Upon Heroes and the Heroic in History* by Yamaji Aizan in 1898 (Karlin, 'Narratives of Heroism in Meiji Japan'.). History along the lines of 'Great Men' however already filtered into Meiji youth magazines much earlier through translations of Western sources that applied this theory. The adventurousness proposed for boys in *Shōnen sekai* does not criticize Japanese politics, but indirectly questions government education.

3. Historical exemplars in Meiji youth magazines and book series of the 1890s

'Imaginaries', such as stories and songs about national heroes, played a large role in the shaping of children's dispositions at schools during the Taishō and early Shōwa periods.[50] The invention of such an approach must be sought in the late nineteenth century. A canon of national heroes took shape in textbooks, but creative minds had far more freedom and space to develop imaginaries in the commercial realm of 'home education'. In Britain and the United States, historical novels specifically written for children appeared in the mid-nineteenth century, where they were considered educational (as an adjunct to the school subject of history) as well as entertaining.[51] Likewise in Japan, authors tried to combine the educational with pleasure.

As discussed in the second chapter, national history was mainly taught from the fifth year of elementary school or the *kōtō shōgakkō*. Therefore, this subject would be associated with children (mainly boys) in their early teens, i.e., the audience of *Yōnen zasshi* and *Shōkokumin*. What stands out is that the magazines, while paying homage to the Rescript, more so than textbooks paid attention to *risshi* (ambition) and *shusse* (success in life) as well as a martial disposition. Both *Yōnen zasshi* and *Shōkokumin* featured a number of (serialized) narratives about historical warriors, who provided an imaginary world of military power, and a shared samurai past. The large output of such texts not merely reflects a militaristic zest, but also a feverish effort to unify premodern texts (part of the identity of both authors and parents) with the foreign codes of citizenship and Western literary categories. Through stories from history, connections were moreover crafted between (the development of) children and the national past. I will discuss representations of warriors in youth magazines and place them in the context of theoretical reflections on this theme by essayists in the same medium. I will then address book series with historical themes and analyse two adaptations of the war tale *Gikeiki*. In the last section, I will address the (far less frequent) representation of female historical characters.

[50] Cave, 'Story, Song, and Ceremony', 10.
[51] Groot, *The Historical Novel*, 88.

3.1 Historical exemplars in youth magazines

In the first issue of *Yōnen zasshi* (January 1891) the theoretical explanation of the Rescript was followed by short narratives about Katō Kiyomasa, who showed wise judgement during the attacks on Korea, the Confucian scholar Minagawa Kien 皆川淇園 (1735-1807), who studied so hard that the tatami under his seat crumbled away, and the merchant Shiobara Tasuke (1743-1816), who lived frugally and worked day and night to restore the family fortunes. In the second issue, *Yōnen zasshi* moreover announced a total of thirty biographies about 'great loyal and heroic men' (*dai chūyū* 大忠雄) such as Kusunoki Masashige, 'great scholars' (*dai gakusha* 大学者) such as Sugawara Michizane, and 'great politicians' (*dai jigyōka* 大事業家) such as Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. National (martial) heroes continued to be introduced and revisited in series such as *Nihon buyū kagami* 日本武勇鑑 ('Mirror of Japanese Martiality'). *Shōkokumin* from the start featured various stories about historical warriors, including an adaptation of *Gikeiki*, which will be discussed in the next section. From 1892, the editors took over *Yōnen zasshi*'s format in for example *Nihon jūhachi buyūden* 日本十八武勇伝 ('Eighteen Biographies of Japanese Heroes') and *Hōnchō go shōgun den* 本朝五将軍伝 ('Biographies of the Five Generals of Our Country').[52]

An essay in the eighth issue of *Yōnen zasshi* titled 'Historical Thought' (*Rekishi shisō* 歴史思想), presumably aimed at adult co-readers, theorizes upon this chosen path and argues that stories about national history (or more concretely, heroes) are directly related to a disposition of loyalty and patriotism.[53] As stated in chapter two, 'loyalty and patriotism' quickly became the over-arching interpretation of the Rescript.[54] In quasi-educational jargon, the author states that politics, law, economy, religion, and literature are not suitable for the 'community of children' (*yōnen shakai* 幼年社会), and that one should rather focus on the development (*hattatsu* 発達) of an awareness of Japanese history, that represents 'customs and manners unparalleled in the world'. In this way, patriotism is taught from a young age so that it 'permeates feelings and the brain'. An 1892 essay titled 'Become a Hero' (*Gōketsu to nare* 豪傑となれ) however urges readers to not merely worship but also to try and become a

[52] The first consists of heroic generals from the Genpei War (Minamoto Yoshiie, Tametomo, Kiso Yoshinaka), Nanbokuchō period (e.g., Nawa Nagatoshi, Ōta Dōkan) and Sengoku period (e.g., Kiyomasa, Takeda Shingen, Uesugi Kenshin). For the latter series Takahashi selected Minamoto Yoritomo, Ashikaga Takauji, Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu.

[53] *Yōnen zasshi* 1:8 (1891), 11-13.

[54] Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 124.

hero, which means one has to put effort in one's studies and be determined, like the exemplars from history.[55]

The question of how to 'become' a hero asked for an explanation of the way in which such people spent their youth. A text titled 'Ushiwakamaru's disposition' (*Ushiwakamaru no kishitsu* 牛若丸の気質) in the ninth issue of *Shōkokumin* (1890) asks: 'Any small child knows that Yoshitsune was a strong person, but why did he become like this?'. Before encountering this question, the reader would have marvelled at the *kuchi-e* (fig. 3.1), that depicts Ushiwakamaru in a red garment in the woods, the very first colour lithography in the history of youth magazines.[56] The reader is taken to Kurama temple, where the protagonist has discovered his ancestry and starts preparing himself for his future task.

> Ushiwakamaru decided to correct the disgrace that befell his ancestors, and to become a soldier (*gunjin* 軍人) rather than a monk. From now on, he put all his effort in martial practice, and training himself especially in war strategy and sword fighting, he became very skilled. As he was a disciple at a mountain temple, he had no comforts. His kimono was thin, and there must have been times that he suffered from the cold and felt hungry. As he endured strong winds, severe rain, extreme heat, deep frost, and innumerable hardships, Ushiwakamaru's body became as strong as a rock. The descent from the cliff and attack on Hiyodorigoe, his braving of the waves and his fighting in the battle of Dannoura: that firm and tough disposition (*kishitsu* 気質) like a fierce god was all a consequence of the practice at Kurama mountain during his childhood. … If you are born a boy, whether your birthplace is some remote place or not, and you do not have the spirit to try and surprise people with great deeds and prepare yourself to this end, it is useless to have been born as a human.[57]

Counting on the pre-existing popularity of Yoshitsune among its audience, *Shōkokumin* employed Ushiwakamaru as an exemplar of *risshin shusse* and determination, which is posited as an obligatory disposition for men.[58] The narrative stresses that a determined

[55] *Yōnen zasshi* 1:24 (1892), The term *gōketsu* not only refers to martial heroes but includes famous scholars, inventors, and politicians.
[56] Suzuki, 'Meiji-Ki No Jidōshōnenzasshi', 46.
[57] *Ushiwakamaru no kishitsu* 牛若丸の気質 ('Ushiwakamaru's disposition') in *Shōkokumin* 1:9 (1890), 3-4. Author not indicated.
[58] A similar disposition of determination is ascribed to the Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan in the previous issue (1890, 2:8). This story centres on the concept of *isshin* 一心, meaning putting one's whole heart in some endeavour. This is illustrated with an anecdote about how Razan continued studying while a fire raged in the neighbourhood. (The reader must understand he was not ignoring the fire purposely but was fully absorbed in his studies.)

disposition should be attained in childhood, through hard work. The views of this author not only reflect the educational goal of *shusse*, but also concur with the views of the historian Yamaji Aizan 山路愛山 (1864-1917). Aizan promoted the idea that Japanese boys need to take as an example 'Great Men' from history and considered materialism to stand in the way of character-building and achieving greatness.[59] The premodern Ushiwakamaru legends circulating in the collective memory thus formed the framework for a new message.

Fig. 3.1 "*Ushiwakamaru kishitsu tanren no zu* ('Ushiwakamaru toughening himself'), *kuchi-e* in *Shōkokumin* vol. 1:9, 1890

According to Lotman, the updating of texts naturally leads to a shift 'in the elements considered significant and insignificant within the text'.[60] The *tengu*, canonically associated with the Sōjōgatani episode, do not appear in either the text or the *kuchi-e* of 'Ushiwakamaru's dispostion'. First, the reader must understand that Yoshitsune's martial powers are entirely the result of his own efforts. Second, such stories would presumably be too 'childish' and unscientific for the audience. In *Yōnen zasshi*, the *tengu* and Benkei only appear in a less serious type of text, in the rubric *asobi no niwa* 遊の庭 ('playground'). In this rubric, Tsuboyasu Isai 坪谷水哉 (1862-1949) turns the episode of Ushiwakamaru's sword fighting practice into a parable that warns against pride (1891, 1:3). The bird-like *tengu* with their 'prominent nose' (*hana ga takai* 鼻が高い) are a metaphor for pride, yet in this story they dig holes for their beaks so they can kneel and bow properly for Yoshitsune. The same author moreover wrote an informative text about Benkei (1891, 1:8). Benkei's handwriting is said to have been excellent and his letters were represented in the textbooks of *terakoya* pupils. Both texts are illustrated with the canonical iconographies of Sōjōgatani and Gojō bridge, the first and last time that they appear in *Yōnen zasshi*. The famous warriors seen in *Shōkokumin* and *Yōnen zasshi* in their

[59] Karlin, 'Narratives of Heroism in Meiji Japan', 52.
[60] Lotman, 'Memory in a Culturological Perspective', 136.

turn also had an expiration date. *Nippon no Shōnen*, whose audience consisted of adolescents, only sporadically featured *kuchi-e* related to warrior legends, presumably because readers would consider these 'childish'.[61] Ushiwakamaru came to be associated with the fairy tale realm of the reader's little brother.

The trope of the fall-out between Yoshitsune and Yoritomo retained its educational value, yet with a different interpretation. The editors invited readers to think about the moral behaviour of historical characters, as the Herbartian teaching manuals discussed in chapter two also advised. In his study of war tales in *Nihon no shōnen*, Suzuki Akira shows how these assignments give the teenage readers an opportunity to discuss what it means to live under the laws of a modern nation.[62] One reader for example considers Yoshitsune to be a citizen (*kokumin*) who did not follow Yoritomo's laws (*hōritsu* 法律), while another reader passionately argues that Yoshitsune was an exceptional hero, who indeed made a mistake, but as Yoritomo led a violent 'revolution' (like Napoleon and Caesar), he was the real criminal (*zainin* 罪人). Yet another reader argues that it was wartime, in which regular law does not apply. A reader's letter (1890, 2:15) on this theme in *Shōkokumin* however stays closer to the premodern concern about proper behaviour in the Confucian sense. Like the second discussant above, this reader seems well-acquainted with the *hōgan biiki* sentiment and considers Yoshitsune a hero (*eiyū* 英雄) who was treated unfairly. He compares Yoritomo to a bird with one wing, or a carriage with one wheel instead of two. In other words, Yoritomo and Yoshitsune should have worked together 'without suspicion and with brotherly affection' (*gishin naku kyōdai sō shitashimi* 疑心ナク兄弟相親シミ) to the benefit of the Minamoto reign. This reader thus promotes the Confucian virtue of brotherly affection, that *Shōkokumin* saw gladly represented, and would some months later also appear in the Rescript.

Ushiwakamaru legends thus already belonged to the cultural knowledge of boys in their early teens and initially offered convenient material for representing a modern yet recognizably Japanese exemplar for boys. This approach was however not immediately applied to the more weighty protagonists from the history textbooks, such as Hideyoshi. The narrative about the 'great politician' Hideyoshi (1891, 1:4) in *Yōnen zasshi* describes Hideyoshi as a hero who rectified the 'chaos' (*midare* 乱れ) in the emperor's realm. The

[61] Suzuki, 'Meiji-Ki No Jidōshōnenzasshi', 44.
[62] Suzuki, 67–68.

dense prose focuses on highlights from Hideyoshi's adult life, political history, and themes of loyalty. In 1893 however, Takahashi Taika 高橋太華 (1863-1947) in the earlier mentioned series *Hōnchō go shōgun den* in *Shōkokumin* (1893, 5:7) for the first time introduces the young Hideyoshi (Hiyoshimaru), as a 'very smart boy' who plays mock battles with his peers instead of preparing to become a monk. Hiyoshimaru would moreover have taken to task the village bully, which shows that he stands up for himself and others. Although Iwaya would take the idea much further, it was Takahashi who pioneered in focusing on the (exemplary) youth of Japanese historical figures.

Several years later, Yoda Gakkai 依田学海 (1834-1909) also introduced Hideyoshi's youth in a serialized narrative in *Shōnen sekai*.[63] (A favourite of the young Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, as we may recall.[64]) Hideyoshi's mother has seen a dream that predicts the new-born's *risshin shusse*, and therefore his parents, mere farmers, decide to send their child to a temple to become a priest. Hiyoshimaru shows himself to be a smart boy, but instead of memorizing sutra's he listens to tales about 'martiality and ambition' (*budō kōmyō* 武道功名) and thinks:

> Becoming a monk is the same as becoming a beggar. Even if I would wear a beautiful sash and robe, would that count as success in life (*risshin shusse*)? What's more, would a boy wish to rot away in a mountain temple? No, I must become an apprentice in a samurai family. I will make a real success of my life. Who wants to become a beggar anyway?[65]

Gakkai convincingly brings out the determined character of the teenage protagonist with this thought/speech block. As Hiyoshimaru expects the monks will not let him go easily, he runs amok and steals other people's fruit till he is sent home. After several failed apprenticeships in farming and merchant families, he lands an apprenticeship with the samurai Matsushita Yukitsuna. The remainder of the narrative focuses on Hideyoshi's adult life.

In contrast to history textbooks, Takahashi and Gakkai give a fairly detailed description of Hideyoshi's childhood. Both authors write about Hiyoshimaru's

[63] Yoda, 'Toyotomi Taikō: Daiichi'.
[64] Tanizaki, *Childhood Years*, 225.
[65] Yoda, 'Toyotomi Taikō: Daiichi', 12.

troublemaking, but do not make use of the popular premodern episodes about the smashed Amida statue, or the querulous encounter with Koroku on Yahagi bridge. Gakkai even explicitly rejects the contents of *Ehon taikōki* in his introduction and argues that Hoan's *Taikōki* is the only historically correct source. However, considering that the story is for children, he 'somewhat embellished' it. In Gakkai's version, Hiyoshimaru engages in a 'generic' sort of mischief (stealing fruit) instead of vandalizing a buddha statue. An accompanying illustration has no connection to the canonical iconography either and shows Hiyoshimaru sitting in a tree. Instead of introducing the auspicious dream as a sign of heavenly support and Hiyoshimaru's exceptionality, the dream unambiguously refers to *risshin shusse*, while the parents and Hiyoshimaru take action to make the dream come true. There is however a generational gap: whereas the parents understand the importance of *shusse*, they do not understand that *real* success should take place in the 'public' political or military realm.

In Takahashi's texts, not only Hideyoshi, but also Tokugawa Ieyasu is said to have engaged in war play as a child (*Shōkokumin* 1893, 5:8). In the nineteenth century West, historical (adventure) stories were considered to provide children with content for their play.[66] This idea is represented very early in *Shōkokumin*, that introduces the Battle of Minatogawa (1336) as a mock battle between boys (1889, 1:5). (This is the battle in which Kusunoki Masashige met his death.) In her study of childhood and militarism in modern Japan, Sabine Frühstück observes that by inciting children to play war (i.e., soldier or nurse), a desire to support and engage in war as adults was developed.[67] At the same time however, the will of adults to wage war was presented as innate and inevitable by arguing that children have a 'natural inclination' to engage in war-play. Frühstück does not address imaginative historical settings, but these might be considered on a continuum with contemporary settings. Such ideas are fortified by representations of historical exemplars who purportedly also played mock battles as boys. Whereas the illustration of the Battle of Minatogawa shows children in an unconvincingly large landscape (fig. 3.2), a later *kuchi-e* by Tomioka Eisen (1864-1905) in *Yōnen zasshi* (1892, 2:8) is much closer to the representation of the boisterous children seen in early modern print (fig. 3.3). 'Young Kusunoki' (Masatsura)

[66] Groot, *The Historical Novel*, 88–89.
[67] Frühstück, *Playing War*.

is here depicted as the leader in a battle between a small group of boys. This scene was revisited in the Taishō period picture magazine *Yōnen gahō* (1912, 7:1).

Fig. 3.2 *Shōkokumin*, vol. 1:5 (1889), p. 13

The young citizen, national ethics, and national history/legend were tightly woven together. During the late nineteenth century in the West, several new scientific disciplines contributed to the 'management of the child for national progress', and the idea of children going through 'advancements' became entwined with the idea of the development of nations from primitive to advanced.[68] The Hakubukan publication *E-iri yōnen rekishi* 絵入幼年歴史 ('Illustrated History for/of the Child', 1893) reflects this concern with monitoring and measuring progress, as well as the conceptual entwinement of the child and history. This booklet by Sakashita Kametarō 坂下亀太郎 (?-?), who also contributed to *Yōnen zasshi*, introduces national myth and history but also serves as a journal in which parents and teachers can take notes about the progress of a child from birth to primary school graduation. In the preface, the author refers to the Rescript and the need to instil in children diligence and courage (*kinben giyū* 勤勉義勇) as well as the national customs and national spirit (*kokufū kunitama* 国風国魂).[69] To this end, the main text lists the important dates that a citizen should know, such as the Festival of Origins (*genshisai* 元始祭), the death day of Kusunoki Masatsura and Yoritomo, but also the introduction of compulsory education from age six to fourteen, and the birthday of the

Fig. 3.3 Tomioka Eisen, *kuchi-e* in *Yōnen zasshi* vol. 2:8, 1892

[68] Millei and Imre, 'Introduction', 4–5.
[69] Sakashita, *E-Iri Yōnen Rekishi*, 1–2.

explorer Henry Morton Stanley.[70] Pages aimed for the report on the child who says his first words, takes his first steps, or eats with chopsticks for the first time, alternate with short texts and images that define him as an imperial subject, a future soldier, and an inca rnation of an 'ambitious' Ushiwakamaru (fig. 3.4). Even the wind that holds up his kite should be understood as the *kamikaze* 神風, that would have wrecked the enemy ships during the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century (fig. 3.5). *E-iri yōnen rekishi* invites the mother *or* father to write the record but pictures a 'wise mother' overseeing the homework of her children (fig. 3.6). The frontispieces of early modern collections of *ōrai* were decorated with cranes and other lucky symbols, where they indicated that literacy contributes to the prosperity of the household (*ie*). Here however, the image of a crane and her chicks in front of the rising sun symbolizes the modern family (*katei* 家庭), who contributes to the prosperity of the nation.

Fig. 3.4 Artist unknown, *E-iri yōnen rekishi*, 1893. Private collection

Fig. 3.5 *E-iri yōnen rekishi*, 1893. Private collection

Fig. 3.6 *E-iri yōnen rekishi*, 1893. Private collection

[70] Sakashita, 29–30.

3.2 Exemplary women

As the reader of youth magazines in the 1890s was by default imagined as male, it comes as no surprise that exemplary women appeared only sporadically in *Yōnen zasshi* and *Shōkokumin*. In the second volume of *Yōnen zasshi* appears a short story about Hideyoshi's wife that teaches that one should not judge a potential husband on his looks (who in her case purportedly resembled a monkey). Another story in this volume retells how Kusunoki Masashige's wife taught their son Masatsura to loyally serve the interests of the clan, instead of committing suicide upon hearing of his father's death in battle. Like in the textbooks, they are both (nameless) wives and mothers.

Girls only started to be explicitly addressed in *Shōnen sekai*, that from the eighteenth to twenty-fourth issue featured a rubric for girls (*shōjoran* 少女欄). Most stories in this rubric through themes from everyday life (and not history) teach virtues such as honesty, compassion, and frugality.[71] The first story, written by Wakamatsu Shizuko 若松賤子 (1864-1896) deals with caring for the sick. Other themes include sewing and a girl's orphanage. Although the rubric was short-lived, *Shōnen sekai* continued to introduce narratives aimed at girls, indicated as *shōjo shōsetsu* 少女小説 (girl's novel) or *shōjo dan* 少女談 (girl's conversation). Women from history also appeared in *Shōnen sekai*, yet these biographies were presented as a 'historical narrative' rather than the biography of a woman, so as not to estrange male readers. Komatsu Satoko counts twenty-one biographies of women in *Shōnen sekai* between 1895 and 1908, including female poets, authors, nurses, teachers, filial daughters, brave girls, foreign queens, and the mothers of a generals.[72] The highest valued virtue in these women was intelligence, expressed in studiousness and an exceptional talent in one of the arts, as well as a more practical wisdom, that was needed in a *ryōsai kenbo*. The biographies furthermore promoted affection, filial piety, chastity, and loyalty. Courage was also valued, but always in combination with one or more other feminine virtues.

Murasaki Shikibu in one of these narratives (*Shōnen sekai* 1898, 4:25) serves as an exemplar for girls but also as a launch pad for the author's critique on the Meiji elite and influential women in particular. As in the textbooks, Murasaki Shikibu is first introduced as an exemplar of intelligence, modesty, and kindness. Whereas textbooks conspicuously did not refer to her physical appearance, this text (like premodern *retsujoden*) stresses that she

[71] Tsuzukihashi, *Jidōbungaku No Tanjō*, 219–23.
[72] Komatsu, 'Shōnen Sekai Ni Keisai Sareta Josei No Denki Kenkyū'.

was very beautiful. The author (Miyagino Kohagi 宮城野小萩, ?-?) praises Murasaki Shikibu's literary work in flowery words, but severely criticizes the cultural and social context in which she lived. He accuses Heian period men, engrossed in poetry, music, and moon-viewing parties, of 'turning the court into some sort of playground', and surely, they would 'like the Chinese' have run away at the sound of a cannon.[73] With those in exemplary positions behaving despicably, it was not an age in which *gōketsu* 豪傑 (heroes) could appear, he concludes. The author ties these observations together by arguing that despite her depraved surroundings, Murasaki Shikibu protected her beauty and purity, and wrote the *Genji* as a discreet caution against the improper behaviour of men and women at court in those times.

Publicly active educated women with patrons among the Meiji political elite were a regular target of ridicule and slander in the media. One of these was the poet and advocate of women's higher education Shimoda Utako 下田歌子 (1854-1936). In 1898, the same year as the above story about Murasaki Shikibu, Shimoda wrote two serialized stories for *Shōnen sekai* about the Edo period physician Nonaka En 野中婉 (1661-1726) and Kasuga no Tsubone under the heading *Honchō fujo risshi hen* 本朝婦女立志編 ('Ambitious Women of Our Country'). Shimoda supported the *ryōsai kenbo* ideology, a conviction that might have some roots in her Confucian education, but was primarily based on her experiences in Britain and modern notions of the nation.[74] Shimoda writes that she aims to present girls with an exemplar of 'meritorious deeds and honour'.[75] Her historical *kenbo* are courageous: as a young mother Kasuga no Tsubone killed two robbers who tried to attack her family in hiding. In contrast to Shimoda's version, *Kasuga no Tsubone* 春日局 (Kishigami Shikken, 1899) from the Hakubunkan book series *Shōnen tokuhon* 少年読本 rather focuses on the historical events and male characters around her.[76] Shimoda's *Honchō fujo risshi hen* was clearly designed as a feminine counterpart to the series about 'ambitious' male heroes, but was discontinued after two biographies.

[73] The sneer towards the Chinese is a habit repeatedly seen in *Shōnen sekai* (and other media). According to Hasegawa Ushio, the feeling of superiority over Asian neighbours (and the inferiority complex vis-à-vis the West) was a constant presence ever since the Meiji restoration, rather than a reflection of a remarkably imperialistic agenda of specific authors. Hasegawa, 'Nashonarizumu to Jidōbungaku', 79.
[74] Johnson, 'Meiji Women's Educators as Public Intellectuals', 74.
[75] Komatsu, 'Shōnen Sekai Ni Keisai Sareta Josei No Denki Kenkyū', 29.
[76] Komatsu, 30.

Some *retsujo* were rediscovered as paragons of loyalty and sacrifice. The Hakubunkan history series *Katei kyōiku rekishi tokuhon* 家庭教育歴史読本 ('History Reading-book for Home Education', 1891-92) introduces in volume four the sacrifices of Kesa gozen and Hosokawa Tadaoki's 細川忠興 (1563-1646) wife, victim of the struggle between the Toyotomi and Tokugawa clans. This volume furthermore contains a story about Shizuka gozen titled *Tsurugaoka* 鶴が岡. Shizuka is left behind in Yoshino after a dramatic farewell with Yoshitsune and eventually ends up a captive of Yoritomo. Being asked to perform for the latter at the Tsurugaoka Hachimangū shrine in Kamakura, she defiantly cites the famous poem that speaks of her devotion to the fugitive Yoshitsune. This scene is illustrated with a colorful fold-out picture based on the early modern iconography of Shizuka's dance (fig. 3.7), which was the triumphant highlight of her otherwise tragic story, as also depicted for example in premodern guidebooks that lead the traveler through Kamakura. Shizuka is described with words such as chaste, loyal, and intelligent. She eventually becomes a nun and dies at age twenty.

Fig. 3.7 Matsumoto Fūko, illustration in *Katei kyōiku rekishi tokuhon* 4, 1891. Private collection

Shimoda, however, criticized the tendency to dish up to children the 'dramatic stories of women who take revenge for their parents or husband or commit suicide'.[77] These merely move the reader to tears, 'a stimulus comparable to wasabi on a piece of sashimi'. She considers such dramatic stories inappropriate for children, as they are in the spring of their lives and full of hope, which should not be stifled with 'winter scenery'. Her opinion is similar to Iwaya, who deems sentimental stories detrimental to the development of children (see section 5). He does however not seem to share her interest in historical women as progressive role models for girls. In *Nippon otogibanashi*, 'Kusunoki Masatsura's mother' and Tokiwa gozen play a supporting role as wise mothers. The third volume, *Tamatori* 玉取 ('The tale of the tide-jewels', 1897), moreover beautifies the courageous (lethal) sacrifice a female diver makes for her son's advancement in the world as a samurai. Dramatic accounts of women's sacrifices continued to have appeal in war-time Japan, as they exemplified how also women could 'offer oneself courageously to the state' (*giyūkō ni hōji* 義勇公に奉じ) in line with the Rescript.[78]

Various categories of heroines thus appeared in the male-dominated youth literature of the 1890s: women who excelled in the literary realm, women who displayed an exceptionally moving degree of loyalty and sacrifice, and 'good wives and wise mothers' who might be admired for their courage. In the early twentieth century, the interest in a courageous disposition hypothetically also inspired authors and illustrators to direct attention to premodern female martial icons. For example, the 1913 board game *Nihon meifu sugoroku* 日本名婦双六 ('Famous Women of Japan *sugoroku*'), a New Year's present from the magazine *Fujin sekai* 婦人世界 ('Women's World'), includes apart from authors, poets and paragons of loyalty and sacrifice also two martial exemplars (namely, Tomoe gozen and Hangaku) (see fig. 4.15). Girl's magazines of the early twentieth century, such as *Shōjo sekai* 少女世界 ('Girl's World') and *Shōjo kurabu* 少女倶楽部 ('Girl's Club') might yield more insight into the representation of women from history/legend for a female audience.

[77] *Shōnen sekai*, 4:8 (1898), p. 72.

[78] For example, in the 1936 children's book *Rekishi monogatari: Shizuka gozen* 歴史物語－静御前 (an extra of the girl's magazine *Shōjo kurabu*) the central theme is her loyalty to her courageous husband Yoshitsune and her heroic suffering in the face of various trials, including the murder of her infant son, Yoshitsune's heir. The author invites the teenage reader to take Shizuka as an example, who 'as a Japanese woman did not fall apart despite her sorrows'.

3.3 War tales as youth literature: two biographies of Yoshitsune

Hakubunkan not only published various youth magazines, but in the 1890s also dominated the market of youth literature in book form. Entire series were devoted to national history and historical characters, but also the volumes that followed *Koganemaru* in the *Shōnen bungaku* series were partly historical narratives. The authors adapted and took inspiration from war tales and historical records and rewrote them for a teenage audience. Such adaptations in serialized youth literature are often overlooked as a form re-appreciation of war tales that fits within modern categories of literature.[79] I will in this section examine two biographies of Yoshitsune for children by Takahashi Taika (that appeared in *Shōkokumin*) and Ōwada Takeki 大和田健樹 (1857-1910) in the Hakubunkan series *Nippon rekishitan* 日本歴史譚 ('Japanese History Tales'). This series, aimed at children in the upper primary school, was immensely successful and most volumes went through at least seventeen reprints till 1923.[80]

The first and very influential book series for youths devoted to national history was Hakubunkan's twelve-volume *Katei kyōiku rekishi tokuhon* 家庭教育歴史読本 ('History Reading-book for Home Education', 1891-92) by Ochiai Naobumi 落合直文 (1861-1903) and Ikebe Yoshikata 池辺義象 (1861-1923). The narratives draw upon episodes from *Taiheiki, Genpei jōsuiki,* and other war tales. The first volume opens with a calligraphic representation of the Rescript. In the preface, the authors state that the aim of the series is to raise in children (*yōnen*) a loyal disposition through historical examples. Moreover, by adapting the narrative, embellishing the language, and adding pictures, it aims to appeal to the readers, 'so they will remember the [historical] truth better'.[81] The embellishments take the form of intensely dramatic descriptions of glorious moments and the death of young warriors. The focus on loyal sacrifice, lavishly ornated with cherry blossoms (fig. 3.8) and the repeated use of the word *aware* 哀れ (sorrow), would prove to be an inspiration for other authors as well as propaganda makers during the Pacific War.

[79] *Inventing the Classics : Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* addresses war tales in the Meiji school curriculum and literature for adults, but not youth literature. Shirane and Suzuki, *Inventing the Classics*.
[80] Katsuo, *Reimeiki no rekishi jidō bungaku*, 185.
[81] Katsuo, 39–40.

Between 1896 and 1899 Hakubunkan published Ōwada Takeki's twenty-four-volume *Nippon rekishitan*, that chronicles the mythical origin of Japan and the deeds of famous generals.[82] Ōwada simplified rather than embellished the language of the war tales. He not merely chronicled the protagonists' life but took his role as an 'educator' seriously by introducing the main historical events along the way. The sixth volume of *Nippon rekishitan*, titled *Kurō hangan* 九郎判官 (1897), introduces Yoshitsune and is based on sections from *Gikeiki* and *Heike monogatari*.[83] Historical narratives explicitly written for young citizens were thus adaptations of (sections from) war tales that presumed a comparatively high level of literacy: only in the late 1890s Iwaya would successfully 'modernize' premodern warrior legends for children in the lower primary school.

Fig. 3.8 Cover of *Katei kyōiku rekishi tokuhon* vol. 1, 1891. Private collection

Ōwada's text is clearly influenced by Takahashi Taika's *Kurō hangan Yoshitsune* 九郎判官義経, that was the first longer serialized narrative in *Shōkokumin*.[84] It was placed at the end of the magazine as a *furoku* 付録 (extra) and printed in a comparatively large script with glosses to facilitate a leisurely read. Takahashi explicitly states that it was his aim to focus on Yoshitsune's youth (*yōji no arisama* 幼時の有様) in his afterword. He adapted a number of sections from the first half of *Gikeiki* (book one to four), and moreover leaves out the sections on Benkei's youth, thereby more firmly shaping the narrative into a biography of Yoshitsune. Ōwada's approach is similar, yet following the Ushiwakamaru episodes, he introduces various famous scenes from *Heike monogatari* in line with his aim of writing a history of Japan, and he closes with the Ataka episode from *Gikeiki*. In the 1890s, *Gikeiki* was

[82] According to Namekawa Michio and Katsuo Kin'ya, the issues after the first might have been written by a ghost-writer, identified as Ōwada's student Fukushima Shirō 福島四郎 (1874-1945). I follow the Japanese children's literature research, including Katsuo, in continuing to refer to the author as Ōwada. See Katsuo, 186–87.
[83] *Hangan* or *hōgan* means 'lieutenant', and Yoshitsune took the name Kurō ('ninth son') when coming of age. *Gikeiki* explains that even though he was the eighth son of Yoshitomo, the name Hachirō was already taken by his famous uncle Chinzei Hachirō (Minamoto Tametomo, 1139-1170).
[84] *Shōkokumin* 1:2-8 (1891).

not yet widely seen as a classic of Japanese literature. Takahashi must have made use of a woodblock printed version of *Gikeiki*, as it was only printed in movable type for the first time in October 1891.[85] This reprint published by the *Kosho hozonkai* 古書保存会 ('Society for the Preservation of Old Books') was in the next year followed by an annotated version published by Kinkōdō 金港堂.[86] Upon comparison, the source text of both transcriptions seems to be the same and was presumably the best available premodern woodblock printed edition at that point, and therefore I here cite from the 1891 transcription.

Both Takahashi and Ōwada left out all digressions into Chinese or Japanese lore (*koji* 古事) and Buddhist contemplations seen in *Gikeiki*. Presumably, these would distract the reader from the narrative, nor are they relevant to the new ideological message. Both authors introduce the Sōjōgatani episode, which *Gikeiki* describes as follows:

> Far back on Kurama Mountain there was a place called Sōjō valley. In the past, people had come to pay respect to the wonder-working Divinity of Kibune. Learned monks had visited to practice devotions, and Buddhist bells had sounded incessantly. As a priest was installed, the boom of the *kagura* drums [a form of entertainment for the gods] never ceased to echo awesomely, but the miraculous powers of the buddhas and *kami* weakened in the degenerate climate of a later day. The abandoned buildings were now the abode of *tengu*, and weird apparitions shrieked after the western sun had set. Therefore, visitors were frightened away, and no one stayed for a pious retreat.[87]
>
> くらまのおくにそうじやうが谷(たに)といふ所あり。むかしはいかなる人のあがめ奉りけん。きふねの明神(みやうじん)とてれいげんしゆしやうにわたらせ給ひける。ちゑある上人もおこなひけり。れいのこゑもをこたらず。神主(かんぬし)も有けるが。御神楽(かくら)のつゝみの音(をと)もたへず。あらたにわたらせ給ひしか共。世すゑにならば仏(をはと)のはうべんも。神(かみ)のげんとくもをとらせ給ひて。人すみあらしひと

[85] As mentioned in an e-mail to me from Suzuki Akira (June 2021).

[86] Whereas the 1891 movable-type version of *Gikeiki* is largely written in *kana*, reflecting the woodblock printed source, in the preface of the 1892 version it is pointed out that this leads to unclarities, and therefore the editors replaced many words with Chinese characters (with glosses). Transcriptions for academic use that were published in the second half of the twentieth century are based on source texts that are thought to be closer to an 'original', such as the manuscript of *Gikeiki* known as the Tanaka-bon, transcribed in the *Koten bungaku zenshū* series. (This is also the version that has been translated into English by Helen McCullough.) These however stand further from the editions that were read in the Meiji period.

[87] Serizawa, *Gikeiki*, 12–13. Although the general meaning does not differ significantly, in this 1891 version parts of sentences are missing that are present in the Tanaka-bon (see Kajihara, *Gikeiki*, 30–31.). I have adapted McCulloughs translation (McCullough, *Yoshitsune*, 74–75.) here, to more literally reflect the 1891 edition of *Gikeiki*.

へに天狗のすみかとなりて。夕日西にかたふけはものゝけおめきさけぶ。されば参りよる人をも取なやます間。さんろうする人もなかりけり。[88]

Takahashi and Ōwada (in respective order) adapted this description as follows:

[Ushiwakamaru] heard that far back on Kurama Mountain there was a place called Sōjō valley, and a wonder-working shrine called Kibune Myōjin, where cedars and cypress trees grew sublimely, where it was dark even at noon, and where no one stayed for a pious retreat ...
鞍馬の奥に僧正谷といふ所あり、貴船明神とて、霊験ある社のある所にして、杉檜神々と生茂り、昼猶暗く、参籠する人もなしと聞く…[89]

Far back on Kurama Mountain there was a place called Sōjō valley. Ancient pines and old cedars were lined up impressively. If one went over to the next valley, there was a shrine called Kibune Myōjin.
鞍馬の山奥に僧正が谷といふ所あり。老松古杉いと神々しく立ち並び。谷一つ向に越ゆれば。貴船明神といふ社あり。[90]

Both authors try to create the atmosphere of a deep forest rather than the eeriness of the abandoned temple, that symbolizes *mappō* 末法, the age of the decline of the Buddhist law. The belief that one was living in the latter days was especially strong in the Kamakura period (1192-1333), whereas these Meiji period authors lived in an age of new beginnings, in which Buddhism was moreover identified as a 'foreign' religion. Both authors identify the temple as a Shinto shrine rather than a Buddhist temple. The authors also replaced various words with Chinese characters (and glosses) where the woodblock-printed source text would use only *kana*: young citizens are clearly expected to have, or reach, higher levels of *kanji* literacy than earlier audiences.

Next, all three versions relate that Ushiwakamaru was studying during the daytime but went to Sōjō valley at night. Whereas *Gikeiki* describes the splendid corselet he wears (a gift from the abbot) and the vows he makes to the god of war Hachiman, both Takahashi

[88] The strange reading of *hotoke* 仏 seems to be a mistake by the printer.
[89] Takahashi Taika, *Shōkokumin* 3:2 (1891-1-18), *furoku* p. 8.
[90] Ōwada, *Kurō Hangan Yoshitsune*, 8–9.

and Ōwada focus on the description of the sword-fighting practice. In *Gikeiki,* the scene is described as follows:

> He [Ushiwakamaru] would pretend that the surrounding bushes and trees were various members of the Heike clan. Of two towering trees, he dubbed one Kiyomori. Taking his sword, he slashed away at it with all his might. Then he would draw objects resembling *gitchō* balls from his pocket (*futokoro*), suspend them from branches, and call one of them Shigemori's head and another Kiyomori's head. At daybreak he would return to his quarters and lie down with a robe [the bedcover] pulled over his head.[91]
>
> 四方の草木をば平家の一るいと名つけ。大木二本ありけるを一本をは清盛と名づけ。太刀をぬきてさん/＼にきり。ふところよりきつちやうの玉のやうなるものを取いたし。木のえだにかけ。一つをはしげもりがくびと名つけ。一つをは清盛がくびとてかけられけるが。かくて暁にもなれば。我かたにかへりきぬひきかづきてふし給ふ。

Takahashi adapted this into:

> He [Ushiwakamaru] would pretend that the surrounding bushes and trees were various members of the Heike clan. Two towering trees he dubbed Kiyomori and Shigemori. Taking his sword, he slashed away at them with all his might. Then he would draw two clay balls from his pocket (*futokoro*), suspend them from branches, and call one of them Shigemori's head and the other Kiyomori's head. Yelling 'I will overthrow the Heike with my sword', he moreover ran along steep mountain roads, rolled over heavy stones, waved around with his sword, and climbed to treetops; he devoted the entire night to toughening his body. At daybreak he would return to his room and as he quietly lay down pulling a robe over his head, and for some time nobody realized what he was doing.
>
> 四方の草木を平家の一類と名つけ、大木二本あるを、一本を清盛と名つけ、一本を重盛と名つけ、太刀を抜いてさん/＼に斬りつけ、懐より土の玉二を取出し、それを木の枝に懸け、一を重盛が首と名つけ、一つを清盛が首と名つけ、我が刀にて平家を滅したりと叫び、更に険しき山路を馳せ、重き石を顛し、或は太刀を振り、或は樹の梢に攀ぢ上り、一夜身体の

[91] McCullough explains that *gitchō* balls are 'wooden balls shaped like tops and hit by a special kind of mallet (*gitchō*) in a game played during the New Year season'. McCullough, *Yoshitsune*, 75.

鍛錬(たんれん)に心(こゝろ)を委(ゆだ)ね、暁方(あかつきがた)に至(いた)りて、我(わ)が屋(しつ)に帰(かへ)り、衣引(きぬひつ)かつぎて密(ひそか)に伏(ふ)し居(を)れば、暫(しばら)くの間(あひだ)は誰(たれ)も知るものなかりき。

Takahashi embellishes Ushiwakamaru's austerities but takes over literally the part about trees and balls that function as the Heike enemies (with some simplifications in grammatical elements and nouns). Ōwada took over the scene exactly as described in *Gikeiki*, and only replaced the *gitchō* balls with the simpler *mari* 鞠 (ball). Many other authors would take over this scene, that showcases Ushiwakamaru's martiality and has a closeness to play. This scene is followed by Ushiwakamaru's courageous fights with the thief Yuri no Tarō (Kumasaka Chōhan in *kusazōshi*) and Benkei. The battle with Benkei takes place on Gojō bridge in both adaptations, even though *Gikeiki* describes that it takes place in front of the nearby Kiyomizudera. The popular tradition and the author's awareness of the reader's familiarity with this scene thus wins from *Gikeiki*.

The second half of *Gikeiki* focuses on Yoshitsune's flight to the north, during which he gradually became more passive. Takahashi however wraps up with various highlights from Yoshitsune's active years and pays hardly any attention to the fugitive years, in line with his idea to focus on Yoshitsune's youth.[92] (The last paragraph relates that Yoshitsune died in the end.) Ōwada side-tracks from *Gikeiki* at the same point, but in line with his aim of writing a history of Japan, introduces the highlights of the Genpei War as they appear in *Heike monogatari*. Ōwada introduces not only episodes that relate to Yoshitsune, but also the death of the young warrior Taira no Atsumori 平敦盛 (1169-1184), and Nasu no Yoichi's iconic shooting of the fan.[93] In various instances, he gives the title of a noh play for further reference. Where cultural knowledge collides with historical knowledge, Ōwada also resorts to this technique, as in his comment 'Stories that say that Ushiwaka practiced sword-fighting with *tengu* and so on, and *yōkyoku* 謡曲 [the vocal music of a noh play] such as *Kurama tengu* 鞍馬天狗 were created in order to make this episode more interesting'.[94] Thereby the reader

[92] In a dense last installment Takahashi introduces the Battle of Uji (1184) and the iconic race between the commanders Kajiwara Kagesue and Sasaki Takatsuna to first cross the river, a popular theme in warrior prints. He furthermore introduces Yoshitsune's quarrel with Kajiwara about the 'reverse oars', and Yoshitsune's miraculous 'jump over eight ships'. Benkei is depicted reading the Kanjinchō even though this is not referred to in the text. The hero (*eiyū*) Yoshitsune finally comes to a sorrowful (*aware*) end. In his afterword, Takahashi debunks the Genghis Khan legend, that is apparently also circulating among children.

[93] These episodes are described in *Heike monogatari*. The Minamoto were challenged to shoot a fan from a Taira boat during the battle of Yashima, which the brilliant archer Nasu no Yoichi brought to a successful end.

[94] Ōwada, *Kurō Hangan Yoshitsune*, 8–9. Takahashi refrains from mentioning *tengu*.

is a step ahead of the 'little children' in the lower primary school for whom the *tengu* are part of the story world (at least in Iwaya's version, as we will see). The author returns to Yoshitsune in a descriptive paragraph about Kajiwara's slander, the Koshigoe letter (that is however not cited), and Yoshitsune's flight to the north, followed by Shizuka's story and the Ataka episode.

The *hōgan biiki* sentiment that is associated with Yoshitsune presupposes that the audience roots for the underdog, yet the pathos here seems different from what Ivan Morris also called the 'nobility of failure'. Rather, Ōwada repeatedly creates pathos around sacrifice and the death of the young warrior, clearly inspired by the earlier *Katei kyōiku rekishi tokuhon*. The quintessential example is given in the paragraphs on Atsumori, but also described is how Satō Tadanobu 佐藤忠信 (1161-1186) died 'nobly' on the battlefield, while his brother Tsugunobu 継信 (1158-1185) followed him in death by loyally giving his life for his lord during the chase in Yoshino. In the latter part of the book, Ōwada tries to move the reader by describing Shizuka's tragic fate. We hardly see how Yoshitsune in the meantime gradually became a passive victim. In the last paragraph, Yoshitsune and Benkei commit suicide while the castle in Koromogawa is being attacked, and Ōwada concludes: 'hearing about the tragic fate of heroes (*eiyū matsuro no awaresa* 英雄末路のあはれさ), who would not be saddened?'. The reader is however also given the choice to believe in 'a certain story' that Yoshitsune became Genghis Khan, and in that capacity conquered Mongolia and China and made Europe tremble.

Takahashi's text is initially not illustrated, but later features a mix of canonical and non-canonical images (artist unknown). Ōwada's text on the other hand contains seven illustrations based on canonical iconographies by ukiyo-e artist Tsutsui Toshimine 筒井年峰 (1863-1934), a student of Tsukioka Yoshitoshi 月岡芳年 (1839-1892). These consist of Tokiwa and her

Fig. 3.9 Tsutsui Toshimine, in *Nippon rekishitan* vol. 6, *Kurō hangan*, 1897. Private collection

Fig. 3.10 Tsutsui Toshimine, in *Kurō hangan*, 1897. Private collection

children in the snow, the fight with the thief Yuri no Tarō, the battle on Gojō bridge (fig. 3.9), the descent from the cliff (fig. 3.10), Nasu no Yoichi shooting the fan, Shizuka performing her dance, and Benkei reading the Kanjinchō. The multicolour cover shows Yoshitsune 'jumping over eight ships' (fig. 3.11). The artist did not need to read the text in order to produce the illustrations, and their effectiveness was already proven. Not only the iconographies, but also the combination of text and image retain characteristics of *kusazōshi* and the borders are ornate versions of those seen in woodblock printed books. At the same time, the printing technique (movable type), paper, and size (*kikuhan* 菊版, about 22 x 15 cm) is distinctly modern.[95]

According to David Bialock, premodern popular traditions of consuming war tales were in the 1890s still 'a category difficult to assimilate to the newly imported western

[95] The most practical way to combine movable type with images was to use a form of relief printing for the latter as well. However, as wood was not as durable as metal, from the second decennium of the Meiji period stereotype printing and electrotype printing (both a form of relief printing from metal plates) replaced woodblock printing. The monochrome illustrated pages of Hakubukan's *Shōnen bungaku* and many other series from this time were printed with this method. Electrotype copies could be made from woodblock engravings. Kōsokabe, 'Kindai Ni Okeru Shuppan, Ryūtsū to Ehon, Ezasshi', 93–94.

Fig. 3.11 Tsutsui Toshimine, cover image of *Kurō hangan*, 1897. Private collection

genres of novel, drama and epic poem' for men engaged in modern classical scholarship, while modern authors began to turn to such works as *Heike monogatari* for inspiration only during the early twentieth century.[96] However, clearly a semantic common ground was already found between warrior legends and the western genre of youth literature much earlier. The adaptations show that the concept of youth literature was not merely a derivative of adult literature. Even though the original text was not yet recognized as an 'epic' or 'classic', youth literature had its own methods of legitimization in the context of the modern nation. The adaptations aimed to teach national history and exemplary dispositions to young citizens. In this way, 'active' texts that resisted scholarly redefinition shifted to the new category of youth literature, that represented a stage of development (rather than the fixed state of banality of the common folk) and a project of national importance.

4. Literary language and perceptions of the young audience

In both Ōwada's and Takahashi's texts, sections, and sentences from *Gikeiki* can be easily identified, as the authors chose to write in the same literary style. When authors started to address an audience of modern primary- and middle school students, they faced a problem: should they adopt the hitherto established literary style (*bungotai* 文語体) or the newly emerged *genbun itchi* 言文一致 ('synthesis of writing and speech')? The answers are closely related to perceptions of the audience and genre. The biographies and book series discussed so far were largely written in *bungotai*, that was in the 1890s considered appropriate for 'heroic tales' for an audience of boys in their early teens.[97] History textbooks and lessons with historical themes in *kokugo* textbooks for the middle and higher grades of primary school were also written in *bungotai*.[98] Premodern works such as Bakin's *Hakkenden* and war

[96] Bialock, 'Nation and Epic', 168–69.
[97] Piel, 'Loyal Dogs and Meiji Boys', 217.
[98] Into the 1930s, the government readers introduced lessons written in *bungotai* from year four, while primary school students in the 1890s might encounter this type of language even earlier, depending on the textbook they used. Students thus learned to read different types of written language, as also existed in the 'real world'.

tales were still read by educated teenage boys. The narrative about the 'great politician' Hideyoshi in *Yōnen zasshi* (1891, 1:4) is thus written in *bungotai*. This also counts for the other texts about Hideyoshi, and the two adaptations of *Gikeiki*.[99] In compensation, less proficient readers were guided by *furigana,* that gave the reading of every character apart from the most basic ones.

Texts with historical themes that were not primarily identified as history/literature, as well as many texts with non-historical themes were written in *genbun itchi*. This new style reflected the spoken language from the Tokyo area and would develop into the standard written language as it is known today. *Genbun itchi* made the texts more accessible, but also placed them lower in the hierarchy of literary texts. This applies for example to the texts that were an addendum to the *kuchi-e*, and *Yōnen zasshi*'s rubric *asobi no niwa*. The choice between *genbun itchi* and *bungotai* not only depended on content but also on age and gender. In *Shōnen sekai*, texts for the younger segment of readers and girls (placed at the beginning) were written in *genbun itchi*, while sections aimed at older readers were predominantly written in *bungotai*.

A polemic between Iwaya and his critical friend Hori Shizan 堀紫山 (1863-1940) in 1891 brings to light that especially texts with historical themes resisted conversion to *genbun itchi*.[100] Perceiving *Koganemaru* as a heroic tale, Iwaya chose to write in *bungotai* and adopted the rhythm of Bakin's texts. Shizan however believed that *genbun itchi* would be more accessible for children. Iwaya answered that if *genbun itchi* is written merely with the aim of being easier to read, the language would become vulgar and eventually become uninteresting to the reader. Sentences in *genbun itchi* in his opinion were just 'going on and on' and therefore this new style was 'most useful for expressing an author's thoughts (*shisō* 思想)' and appropriate for 'a certain kind of novel'.[101] Iwaya furthermore stated that 'what is now understood as *genbun itchi* is vastly different from *rakugo* 落語 (comic storytelling) and *kōdan* 講談 (public storytelling) transcriptions (*sokki* 速記); it is a writing style based on ordinary spoken language and therefore it does not do [for *Koganemaru*].'[102] In other words, a heroic tale should have a certain rhythm, or literary and dramatic effect for which *genbun itchi* as known to Iwaya in 1891 did not suffice.

[99] Takahashi and Ōwada wrote in *bungotai* but simplified sentence patterns and auxiliary verbs.
[100] The letters appeared in the Yomiuri Shinbun and Reproduced in Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 333–37.
[101] See Piel, 'Loyal Dogs and Meiji Boys', 227; Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 334–35.
[102] Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 335.

The above discussion foreshadowed new ideas: according to Katsuo Kin'ya, Iwaya took inspiration from *kōdan* in his *Nippon otogibanashi*.[103] In fact, the author of the earlier mentioned essay 'Historical Thought' (1891) in *Yōnen zasshi* considered orally told warrior legends excellent material for stirring up patriotic feelings in children *as they are*. He strongly advises a daily portion of *kōdan* while implying that the 'community of children' is compatible with this entertainment from the 'lower class' (*katō shakai* 下等社会). Most important is that 'feelings' are stirred, and apparently he considers children to have a popular taste. According to Katsuo, the audience of *kōdan* was pulled into the story through 'vivid descriptions of the scene, and by making listeners root for one of the protagonists'.[104] The language of *kōdan* was rhythmical and contained exclamations, thereby making history entertaining and 'present'. Katsuo gives several examples of the use of onomatopoeia, exclamations, and colourful sketches of the situation in Iwaya's *Nippon otogibanashi* (written in *genbun itchi*) that aim to make the reader present in the moment.

An important point was the representation of speech, which reflects the protagonists' (heroic) character in a direct way. In 1896, the literary critic Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遥 (1859-1935) gave a public lecture about youth literature, of which a summary was published in *Shōnen sekai*.[105] In the first part, he argued that books for children should a) teach knowledge, b) trigger the interest of children in many different things, and c) build character. This will not happen if they are bored by lengthy historical descriptions and estranged from the protagonists by unrealistic speech, as most *tokuhon* 読本 (reading books) according to him tend to do. Shōyō clearly associated the category of *tokuhon* with Hakubunkan's book series with historical themes, as his later examples consisted of Yamato Takeru and Kusunoki Masatsura. Shōyō cited from Iwaya's work as the primary example of 'natural speech' in texts for children. The use of the respectful *haha ue* 母上 (mother) and *gozaimasu* ございます for example, he considered unnatural and cold if spoken by a boy to his mother. Iwaya's use of *okka-san* おッかさん he considered an example of how it should

[103] Katsuo, *Reimeiki no rekishi jidō bungaku*, 257–62.
[104] Katsuo, 258. In the Taishō period, written *kōdan* for an audience of children (so-called *shōnen kōdan*) became very popular and appeared in the magazine *Shōnen kurabu* 少年倶楽部 ('Youth Club'). This apparently developed from *sokki* published as part of the Tachikawa bunko 立川文庫 from 1911. Although not specifically aimed at children, these booklets were very popular among *detchi* and other boys from the working class (Ōsaka kokusai jidōbungakukan, *NJBD*, 2:417.). See also Koyama-Siebert, 'Kinder- und Jugendliteratur in Japan', 426–27.
[105] *Shōnen sekai*, 2:20 (1896), pp. 33-35.

be done.[106] Shōyō not only proposed to work on the representation of natural speech, but also on perspective and pace. The author of *tokuhon* should for example try to better convey the sadness and desperation that the eleven-year-old Kusunoki Masatsura felt when he heard his father was killed, and the way his mother argued with him when she realised that he planned to kill himself. Two years later, Iwaya himself would take up this scene in his *Sakurai no eki* 桜井駅 (vol. 16 of *Nippon otogibanashi*, 1898). The text is fully written in *genbun itchi* and contains the exclamations and representation of rising emotions that Katsuo associates with the way in which *kōdan* performers try to pull the audience into the story. Shōyō would probably have been pleased with the representations of stuttering, crying, and shouting in the scene of Masatsura's attempted suicide.

> While running towards him [Masatsura's mother] called 'Masatsura! What are you doing?', and quickly took the short sword from his hands. Masatsura started crying loudly again.
> 'P… please mother, give it back to me!'
> 'No, I will do no such thing! Never! …'
> 「これ正行！なにをするのです？」と云いながら飛びついて、突然短刀を取り上げますと、正行は又わッと泣き出しまして、「ど、どうか阿母さま、それをかしてください！」「いいえ成りません！成りません！…」[107]

Iwaya settled on *okkasama* 阿母さま and a fairly polite register, presumably because the protagonists are not the average contemporary mother and son. (Shōyō does not address historicizing language.) Masatsura's crying is represented with the onomatopoeia *waa* わッ.

Neither the premodern nor modern literary styles presented an easy fix and prompted the most devoted authors to think of written language for children as different from language directed at adults. Their choices also depended on considerations of subject, age, and gender. From simplified *bungotai* (Takahashi, Iwaya's early work, Ōwada) to retellings

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[106] The representation of the 'realistic speech' of children in fact already appeared in Wakamatsu Shizuko's translation of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (*Shōkōshi* 小公子, 1890-2). *Shōkōshi* was a faithful translation of the original and appeared in the women's magazine *Jogaku zasshi* 女学雑誌, to be enjoyed by the female readers and their children. Shōyō and other contemporary critics perceived the text (written in *genbun itchi*) as inherently feminine, an idea mainly based on the gender of the translator. Melek, 'Brave Dogs and Little Lords', 199; Melek, 203. Even though *Shōkōshi* contains many examples of convincing childlike diction, Iwaya's work can be disassociated from femininity and foreignness and might therefore have been more readily acceptable to Shōyō and his audience.

[107] Iwaya, *Hiyoshimaru*, 1898, 30–32. A detailed analysis of the language in Iwaya's work can be found in Fujimoto, *Sazanami Otogibanashi No Rinkaku*.

in a *kōdan*-influenced form of simplified *genbun-itchi* (Iwaya), premodern war tales and warrior legends did not 'inhibit' but guided the concept of youth literature towards the centre of the semiosphere. This development is completely overlooked if *Koganemaru* is taken as representative of Meiji youth literature. As authors widened their scope to younger children, the appropriateness of the language and modes of address became increasingly important. They needed to technically follow the stages of primary school education, and ideally be more inventive and engaging. A professional identity gave authors confidence to shape not only the language but also the character of the protagonists according to their own ideals, sometimes at variance with the government. The following paragraphs will focus on Iwaya Sazanami's ideals for young (by default male) citizens and how these are represented in his adaptations of popular warrior legends for children in the lower primary school.

5. Iwaya Sazanami on young citizens and the concept of youth literature

'The timidity of Japanese children is beyond comparison', Iwaya complained in 1899.[108] Iwaya, who had established himself as an author of youth literature during the preceding years under the wings of Hakubunkan, envisioned a Japan that would broaden its horizon and give up its 'passive disposition of an island nation'. According to Iwaya, the timidity of boys was caused by the curbing in schools and at home of their spirited nature. Instead, they should - at least at home - have more freedom and be provided with stories that stimulate their imagination.

The very first Japanese terms for youth literature are generally credited to Iwaya. In 1891, in the introductory remarks of *Koganemaru* he proposed to use the word *shōnen bungaku* 少年文学 as an equivalent to the German *Jugendschrift* or English 'juvenile literature'. Hakubunkan consolidated the term by using it as the title of the new book series that *Koganemaru* was the first installment of.[109] Iwaya also popularized the term *otogibanashi* お伽噺 to refer to fairytales or stories for young children. This term appeared for the first time in the table of contents of the magazine *Nippon no shōnen* (1891, 3:2), where it classifies a story by Iwaya's hand.[110] The prefix *otogi-* harks back to a body of popular tales circulating in oral, visual, and textual media since the Muromachi period (1336-1573) that came to be

[108] *Katei to jidō* (1898), reprinted in Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 350–55.
[109] *Shōnen bungaku* is now an obsolete term. The term *jidō bungaku* 児童文学 has been employed instead since the 1960s. For a discussion of these and various other terms, see Koyama-Siebert, 'Kinder- und Jugendliteratur in Japan'..
[110] Ōsaka kokusai jidōbungakukan, *NJBD*, 2:334.

referred to as *otogizōshi* 御伽草子 in the eighteenth century. Children were among the audience of such books, but not exclusively. According to Namekawa Michio in *Nihon jidōbungaku daijiten*, the use of the prefix *otogi-* to refer to texts written specifically for children was a modern appropriation of the term, and the combination with *hanashi* (story) a Meiji period invention.[111] However, *Hiyoshimaru tanjōki* 日吉丸誕生記 (1867), a *kusazōshi* that I have discussed in chapter one, employs this term in the preface, where it clearly already refers to a story for children.[112] Iwaya's interest in this type of premodern material (as voiced in the preface of his *Momotarō*) hypothetically also led to opportunities to encounter such terms as *otogibanashi*, maybe even in this particular work on Hiyoshimaru. It is however also quite possible that the term was less uncommon in oral communication.

Iwaya based his ideas about *otogibanashi* initially on Western fairy tales. The standard biographies of Iwaya tell of his encounter with a collection of *Märchen* by Franz Otto Spamer (1820-1886), sent by his brother who studied in Germany. Fairy-tale-like as the 'chance encounter' might sound, Iwaya in his youth also read translations of Arabian Nights, Aesop's Fables, and works by Jules Verne.[113] As a teenager, Iwaya was a student at the German school in Tokyo (Doitsugaku kyōkai gakkō, established in 1883), that would prepare him for a career in medicine, in the footsteps of his father. However, he rather used the knowledge gained of foreign languages to broaden his horizon in literature. According to his diaries, he was an avid reader of both Western and Japanese literature and frequented the theater where traditional plays such as *Chūshingura* 忠臣蔵 ('The Treasury of Loyal Retainers') and *Hashi Benkei* 橋弁慶 ('Benkei on the Bridge') were on the program.[114] He was a member of the literary coterie Ken'yūsha, and well-connected in Meiji intellectual circles.

Iwaya was not only inspired by the contents and structure of fairy tales but also discovered in German *Märchen* a remedy to the dismal state in which he considered Japan's youth and the nation to be. In the essay *Meruhen ni tsuite* メルヘンに就いて ('About Märchen', 1898), Iwaya reacted to a critical article written by poet and scholar of Japanese literature Takeshima Hagoromo 武島羽衣 (1872-1967), who considered Iwaya's stories insufficiently didactic and full of 'bizarre ideas'.[115] Could Iwaya not just devote himself to

[111] Ōsaka kokusai jidōbungakukan, 2:334.
[112] The author of *Hiyoshimaru tanjōki* states that he described for children (*kodomogata ni* 幼童衆に) the old battles in the vein of an old woman's *otogibanashi* (*otogibanashi no rōbashin* お伽噺の老婆心).
[113] Katō, 'Kanotō Nichiroku Ni Tsuite', 276.
[114] Katō, 'Kanotō Nichiroku Ni Tsuite'.
[115] Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 344–46.

the themes of patriotism and loyalty? Iwaya answered that it is not his role to impart *chūkun aikoku* and *kokkateki kannen* 国家的観念 ('a sense of nation').[116] There was already a suitable form of literature that conveys these notions, namely textbooks. Even though Iwaya admitted that ethics such as *chūkō jingi* 忠孝仁義 ('loyalty and filial piety, humanity and justice') sometimes play a role in his stories, his main aim was to emulate the essence of *Märchen*, which exists in the *absence* of symbolism or a clear didactic message.

Iwaya believed that lecturing children about what they must or must not do, does more harm than good. In the essay *Katei to jidō* 家庭と児童 ('The Family and the Child', 1899) Iwaya observed that too many families ('if they can be called a family') raise children in old-fashioned ways.[117] He complained that Japanese children are cowardly and unspontaneous, which is 'unchildlike' (*jidōrashikunai* 児童らしくない) and will result in twisted, timid adults. Forbidding rowdy play will turn a boy into a 'weak, feminine person' (*kayowai memeshii ningen* かよわい女々しい人間). If forced to listen to sentimental stories children will become nervous, tearful adults, not capable of doing anything great. Rather than rules and reproaches, Iwaya argued, one should give children more freedom and stimulate their imagination through stories.

Iwaya aimed to create more *wanpaku* 腕白 or 'spirited' dispositions. From a negative viewpoint, the word *wanpaku-mono* 腕白者 might refer to a 'brat'. However, like the 'spirited' or 'strong-willed' children discussed in present-day parenting manuals, for Iwaya the concept not only involved impulsivity and disobedience but also great potential.[118] In the essay *Meruhen ni tsuite* he stated: 'whereas fathers and older brothers want children to be obedient, I try to make them *wanpaku*, and whereas schools want to make them smart, I turn them into fools (*baka* 馬鹿)'.[119] By offering Japanese children imaginations that stress the martial (*shōbu* 尚武) and adventurous (*bōken* 冒険), Iwaya wanted to get rid of the 'islanders' disposition' (*shimajin konjō* 島人根性) and create 'boys of a seafaring nation' (*kaikoku shōnen* 海国少年). Children's stories did not have to be adventures on a grand scale, but of a nature that matches the worldview of young children and may to such critics as Takeshima Hagoromo seem like 'bizarre nonsense'. In *Katei to jidō*, Iwaya made a connection between

[116] These are the only concrete concepts that specify 'didactic' in this essay, even though *kyōkunteki* has a broader meaning.
[117] Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 351.
[118] As with the English 'spirited child', *wanpaku-mono* might also be read as a euphemism. Akutagawa Ryūnosuke seems to satirize Iwaya's ideals in his parody of *Momotarō* (1924): The old couple that raises Momotarō tries to get rid of this insufferable *wanpaku-mono* by giving him immediately everything he needs for his quest of conquering demon island.
[119] Kan, *Nihon jidō bungaku taikei 1*, 345–46.

Columbus' 'discovery' of America and the 'imaginations' (*kūsō* 空想) he hypothetically enjoyed as a young child, such as flying in the air or walking on water. The example must show that the imagination of Western children has been stimulated in the right way, which develops into a willingness to embark on an adventure in the real world when they are adults. Iwaya discovered in literary texts from the West (such as fairy tales) the root of the great deeds and expansionism of Western men, a root that should be planted in Japan as well.

Iwaya continued to make the same points after a two-year sojourn in Berlin (between 1900 and 1902), although fused with new vocabulary and a grander view of the relationship between *otogibanashi* and nation. In *Shōnenbungaku ni tsuite* 少年文学に就て ('About Youth Literature', 1904), he argues that the national character of a given nation is reflected in its *otogibanashi*. In other words, the strengths and weaknesses of a nation depend on the nature of the *otogibanashi* told to the nation's children.[120] He argues that in case of rewriting, retelling or inventing *otogibanashi*, one should appropriate the stories to current times in such a way that they offer 'indirect teachings' (*kansetsu kyōkun* 間接教訓). In 1915, Iwaya published *Momotarō-shugi no kyōiku* 桃太郎主義の教育 ('Education according to the Momotarō-principle'), a work from which he drew freely during his public storytelling and lectures in Japan and its colonies from 1916 onwards. The concept of *Momotarō-shugi* clearly originates in what Iwaya termed *wanpaku-shugi* 腕白主義 ('the principle of *wanpaku*') seventeen years earlier in *Märchen ni tsuite*. Iwaya's initial retelling of *Momotarō* (1894)[121] is however only the first of forty-eight volumes (next to many *otogibanashi* for *Shōnen sekai*) in which Iwaya would develop his idea of 'teaching indirectly' martiality, adventurousness and the positive side of *wanpaku-mono*.

6. Spirited boys in Iwaya's *Nippon mukashibanashi* and *Nippon otogibanashi*

Between 1894 and 1899, at the request of Hakubunkan, Iwaya wrote two book series aimed at primary-school aged children: *Nippon mukashibanashi* and *Nippon otogibanashi*, each consisting of twenty-four volumes. Both titles can be translated as 'Japanese folktales' or 'Japanese fairy tales'. *Nippon mukashibanashi* started out as a Japanese counterpart to Western

[120] Kuwabara, *Nihon Jidō Bungaku Taikei 1: Iwaya Sazanami-Shū*, 356–59.
[121] See Henry, 'Japanese Children's Literature as Allegory of Empire'.

fairy tales. The twenty-third volume marks a pivotal moment in the series as it represents a 'fairy tale' about a historical figure, namely, Yoshitsune. *Nippon otogibanashi* expands on this idea and takes up legends and biographies of famous historical generals whose (boyhood) adventures are rewritten through the lens of Iwaya's ideals. The series was published in the same period as Ōwada's *Nippon rekishitan*, but targeted children in the lower primary school. Different from the authors who wrote for a teenage audience, Iwaya purposely selected the fantastic episodes seen in *kusazōshi* and other popular premodern print, in line with his interpretation of *Märchen*.

According to Katsuo Kin'ya's analysis of *Nippon otogibanashi*, the main characteristics of this series is the nationalistic agenda and moralistic subtext.[122] However, as discussed above, Iwaya received complaints from contemporaries about a scandalous 'lack' of *chūkun aikoku* in his texts and formulated his visions rather in opposition to nationalism. Although the favourable representations of martial heroes in *Nippon otogibanashi* are clearly written in support of militarism, 'moralistic' and *chūkun aikoku* cannot be taken as self-evident representations of shared ideals in the Meiji period. I will discuss how Iwaya reworked and developed his ideal of *wanpaku* in his *Ushiwakamaru* (1896) and *Hiyoshimaru* (1898), and how he introduced the codes of youth literature in the mechanisms of text generation.

6.1 The strong-willed, brave boy Ushiwakamaru

Ushiwakamaru, the twenty-third volume of *Nippon mukashibanashi*, focuses on three famous episodes from Yoshitsune's youth: 1) the perilous journey to the capital with his mother and brothers after his father Minamoto Yoshitomo (1123-1160) had been killed by the Heike. 2) Ushiwakamaru's battle with mythical *tengu* near Kurama temple, and 3) the battle with the warrior monk Musashibō Benkei on Gojō bridge in Kyoto. The illustrations by Toyohara Chikanobu 豊原周延 (1838-1912) reflect the premodern iconographical tradition that accompanied these episodes. In an additional episode (inspired by other war tales) Yoshitsune's older half-brother Minamoto Yoritomo (1147-1199) tests his endurance with a *yugishō* 湯起請 or 'hot water test'. This addition results in a fairy-tale-like pattern of three challenges that lead to Yoshitsune's appointment as a general and the defeat of the Heike.

[122] Katsuo, *Reimeiki no rekishi jidō bungaku*, 238–50. Katsuo cites for example from two volumes on the Sino-Japanese War, in which Iwaya stresses Japan's martial prowess and superiority over China. In the last paragraphs of *Hiyoshimaru*, Iwaya laments the fact that Hideyoshi failed to conquer Korea.

Ushiwakamaru closes with a reference to Yoshitsune's martial exploits, and a final illustration of warriors leaving for battle (fig. 3.12).

Ushiwakamaru might be characterized both by what remains and what is omitted from the early modern cycle of Yoshitsune legends. Iwaya made use of plots circulating in the popular tradition and rewrote them according to the codes of the modern genre of youth literature. Conspicuous are the absence of Yoshitsune's encounters with beautiful women, the graphic violence not uncommon to *kusazōshi*, and Yoshitsune's tragic downfall. Iwaya was criticized for introducing a 'mistress' in *Koganemaru*.[123] Apparently, he took note that sexuality does not belong in the genre of children's literature. His rewritings of warrior legends strictly follow the tendency of homosociality also seen in historical fiction and hero-novels for teenage and adult men.[124] Violence is kept to a minimum in *Ushiwakamaru*, compared to the bloody scenes in seventeenth century *musha-ehon* but also the copperplate-printed *kusazōshi* of the 1880s. Martial encounters are instead enlivened by onomatopoeia and dialogue that convey the atmosphere and the disposition of the protagonist. The legends of Yoshitsune's downfall are absent in *Ushiwakamaru*. As mentioned before, the war tale *Gikeiki* chronicles Yoshitsune's flight to Hiraizumi and ends with his ritual suicide. The *hōgan biiki* sentiment invoked by the legends surrounding Yoshitsune's flight is reflected in his increasingly passive disposition.

Fig. 3.12 Toyohara Chikanobu, in *Nippon mukashibanashi* vol. 23, *Ushiwakamaru*, 1896. Private collection

[123] Piel, 'Loyal Dogs and Meiji Boys', 214. This does however not seem to be a problem in *Katei kyōiku rekishi tokuhon* (Katsuo, *Reimeiki no rekishi jidō bungaku*, 83.) and Ōwada's *Kurō hangan*, in which Shizuka is introduced as Yoshitsune's *mekake* 妾 (mistress).
[124] Groot, *The Historical Novel*, 79; Karlin, 'Narratives of Heroism in Meiji Japan'.

The semantic field of the underdog or fugitive might however be said to play an inversed role in *Ushiwakamaru*. In the canonical noh play *Ataka* the 'passive' adult Yoshitsune is conventionally played by a child-actor, signifying his innocence and dependence on his retainers. On the other hand, *kusazōshi* dealt with these fugitive years by presenting every hurdle as a thrilling challenge that is successfully overcome by Yoshitsune and his loyal retainers. Iwaya however created a third option that incorporates both sentiments. In the first pages Ushiwakamaru is depicted as a fatherless infant crying pitifully in his mother's arms while she ('a weak-legged woman') trudges through the snow. Ushiwakamaru remains a child or junior, repeatedly perceived of by others as weaker, until he proves the opposite. The child Yoshitsune (Ushiwakamaru) thus starts his life as a fugitive, but 'overcomes' the initial setback by assertively taking his fate in his own hands.

The three challenges in *Ushiwakamaru* can be understood as 'biographical' anecdotes about Yoshitsune that idealize his character as a boy. The first display of Ushiwakamaru's character occurs during the encounter with the *tengu*:

> [Ushiwaka] read sutras, practiced *tenarai* and did his best on his studies, but as he was a naturally competitive and strong-willed child, when … [he heard about his ancestry] he passionately wished to become a splendid general and punish the Heike. … Waiting for the time when people would be asleep, he quietly escaped the temple, went to a place called Sōjo Valley and practiced sword fighting, battling the trees and rocks with the wooden sword that he brought with him.
>
> A certain night, when Ushiwaka as usual went to Sōjō valley and wielded his wooden sword, he suddenly heard a sound as if trees were snapping in a storm, upon which right in front of him there appeared the three-metre high, big-eyed and large-nosed terrible Ō'nyūdō. Ushiwaka was strong of heart and not one to give an inch (*biku to mo shimasen* びくともしません), whoever shows up. Immediately preparing his wooden sword, he asked: 'What are you?' Ō'nyūdō laughed loudly. 'I am the great *tengu* who's been living in this valley for ages.'. [125]

Ushiwakamaru willingly leaves the safety of the temple and does not run away when an unknown creature appears. Although Ushiwakamaru is a model student by daytime, he is

[125] Iwaya, *Ushiwakamaru*, 9–11.

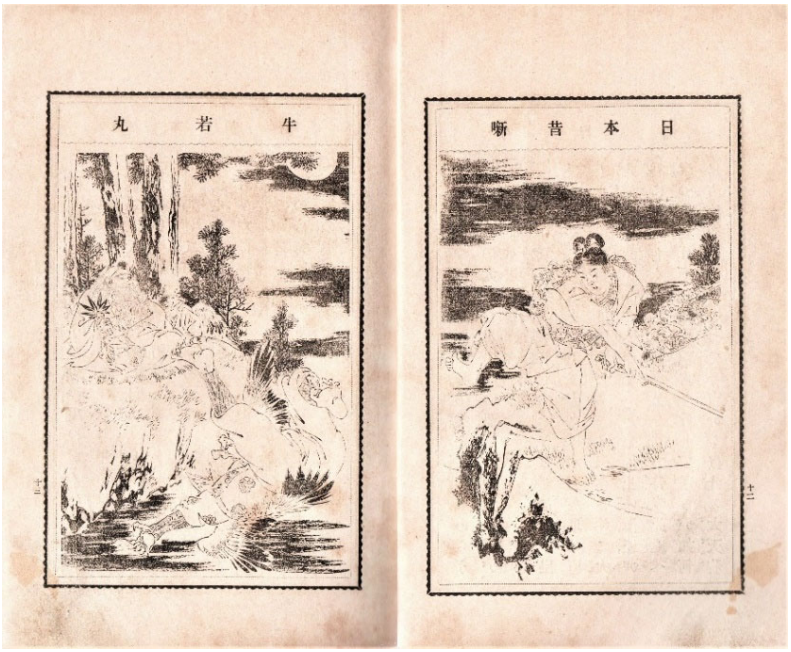

Fig. 3.13 Toyohara Chikanobu, in *Nippon mukashibanashi* vol. 23, *Ushiwakamaru*, 1896. Private collection

also described as a 'strong-willed child' (*ki no tsuyoi ko* 気の強い児), a characteristic of *wanpaku-mono* that reveals itself in his determination to become a skilled warrior. The wooden sword makes a connection to play-acting or martial arts, in which the reader himself might engage. Iwaya's version differs from Takahashi's interpretation in that he focuses on the boy's courage and the scary *tengu* rather than austerities. This episode is also singled out for an illustration (fig. 3.13), based on the early modern iconography. Both the big *tengu* and the smaller bird-like *tengu,* that Ushiwakamaru practiced with, are present.

The next scene, the fight on Gojō bridge, is a consequence of Ushiwakamaru's determination to make Benkei his helper in the quest against the Heike. Benkei at first takes it easy because his opponent is 'just a child'. This is one of the moments in which the reader is reminded of Ushiwakamaru's young age and small stature. Benkei is however beaten by his agile opponent, who then (rather childlike) sits on Benkei's back and yells 'do you surrender?' No less than four images based on the (three) different premodern iconographies of this scene stress that this is episode is the absolute highlight of the narrative: the cover of the first edition (fig. 3.14) and a monochrome illustration shows Ushiwakamaru blowing his flute, while two other illustrations show

Fig. 3.14 Toyohara Chikanobu, cover image of *Nippon mukashibanashi* vol. 23, *Ushiwakamaru*, 1896. Private collection

the battle itself and Benkei's surrender or declaration of loyalty. The episode ends with the revelation of Ushiwakamaru's identity and implies that had Benkei known the identity of the boy, he would not have raised his hand. There is thus actually no need for Ushiwakamaru to prove his superiority by fighting. In later volumes, Iwaya would present his protagonists as runaways and rejected sons who have no other choice but to fight for a (higher) place in society (as is the case for Hiyoshimaru). The last confirmation of Ushiwakamaru's strong character comes in the form of the hot water test in which he has to put his hands in boiling water, that shows his endurance to pain. The meeting is moreover a display of brotherly affection, even though according to 'adult versions' (notably *Gikeiki*), it was the misunderstanding between them that would lead to Yoshitsune's tragic downfall. Finally, Iwaya shortly describes that Yoritomo appointed Yoshitsune as a general, after which he launched a 'punitive expedition' against the Heike and brought it to a successful end.

The ending of *Ushiwakamaru* follows neither *Gikeiki* nor any other premodern pattern. *Kusazōshi* that chronicle Yoshitsune's life generally end on the positive note that Yoshitsune became the king of Ezo. This celebratory finale was partly inspired by the fact that these booklets were often given as New-Years' presents. In Iwaya's case, a more optimistic interpretation of Yoshitsune's adventures was inspired by the idea that sentimental stories are harmful for the young mind. Yet instead of introducing the well-known Ezo legend, Iwaya remarks that the rest of the story is for another time, while formulaically blaming 'a lack of paper'. Yoshitsune thus lives 'happily ever after' as a famous general, exchanging the vicissitudes of his adult life with the newly invented image of warriors leaving for battle.

6.2 Hiyoshimaru, the epitome of *wanpaku*

Like *Ushiwakamaru, Hiyoshimaru* concentrates on episodes from the protagonists' youth and exemplifies how Toyotomi Hideyoshi rose in the world from farmer's son to powerful member of the samurai. As discussed earlier, Hideyoshi in the Meiji educational context was not only praised as the pacifier of Japan, but also represented the concept of *risshin shusse*. *Hiyoshimaru* shows similarities to American nineteenth century children's books about great inventors and presidents, in which the moral character of the protagonist tends to become

obvious through 'anecdotal' adventures (myths) from childhood.[126] The moral example is more important than the facts.

Textbooks jumped from Hideyoshi's humble beginnings to his service to Oda Nobunaga in young adulthood, and his military exploits. Takahashi Taika and Yoda Gakkai paid attention to his early years but avoided the premodern legends so popular in *kusazōshi* and illustrated adaptations of *Taikōki*. Iwaya on the other hand introduces Hiyoshimaru's auspicious birth, his outcaste life in the village, and his troublemaking as a temple boy. These episodes can be traced back in print to the earlier discussed *Ehon Taikōki* ('The Illustrated Chronicles of the Regent', 1797-1802), *Ehon Toyotomi kunkōki* ('The Illustrated Chronicles of Toyotomi's Exploits', 1857-1884), the popular *jitsuroku* 実録 ('real accounts') of historical figures, and woodblock or copperplate printed *kusazōshi*. A little over half of the narrative deals with Hiyoshimaru's life up till the age of fifteen. The latter part describes his resourcefulness and devotion while serving Oda Nobunaga. Only in the last pages he takes the name Hideyoshi and becomes 'like a general' (*shōgun-rashiku narimashita* 将軍らしくなりました), which still hints at immaturity.[127]

Similar to *Ushiwakamaru*, the character of the protagonist is exhibited through several 'anecdotal' episodes. Hiyoshimaru already knows from a young age that he wants to become a great general, engages in *ikusa gokko* 戦ごっこ ('playfighting' or 'war play') and apprentices himself to several samurai of increasing status. Hiyoshimaru is described as a 'wild' child (*ki no arai ko* 気の荒い児), a mischief-maker (*itazura-mono* いたずら者), and someone who constantly resorts to violent (*ranbō*) behavior. Impetuous, unruly boys already appear in a positive light in *Nippon mukashibanashi*, for example Momotarō, the god Susano-o, Kintarō, and Lazy Tarō. Momotarō is an assertive, almost haughty teenage boy. Susano-o is called a *wanpaku* little boy, but 'certainly not a bad *kami*'.[128] Kintarō plays sumo with animals and appoints himself their leader or *gaki taishō* 餓鬼大将.[129] Kintarō's sumo-wrestling episode is not invented by Iwaya but originates in premodern representations. Iwaya however transfers sumo and play-fighting also to other representations of 'historical' warrior boys and more importantly, finds value in this behaviour in the modern context, whereas ethics textbooks do certainly not. While the biographies of Hideyoshi in magazines

[126] Hintz, 'Heroes of the Laboratory and the Workshop'.
[127] Iwaya, *Hiyoshimaru*, 1898, 46.
[128] Iwaya, *Nippon Mukashibanashi*, 204.
[129] Iwaya, 301.

had already linked war play to a martial disposition and future leadership, Iwaya's *ikusa gokko* is a representation of the boy protagonists' unrestrained (by parents and the school) boisterous nature.

One of the most engaging displays of Hiyoshimaru's character takes place during his stay at the temple.

> … one day, when Hiyoshimaru was twelve years old, he prepared offerings for the main Amida [Buddha] statue, and yelled: 'Hey, Amida, eat this food!' But how can an Amida statue made of gold eat any dishes?
> As the statue sat motionlessly, Hiyoshimaru became irritated and said: 'You lazy bum, why don't you eat the food I prepared for you? You're disrespectful!'
> He quickly fetched himself a stick and busted the head of the honourable Amida.
> 'This is fun! This is fun!' Hiyoshimaru cried, and he continued to wield the stick till the statue was shattered.. [130]

The comical scene shows not only Hiyoshimaru's unruliness, but also his 'childlike' original thinking and defiance of adult authority. The Buddhist temple makes repeated appearance in *Nippon otogibanashi* and might be read as a metaphor for the primary school, in which according to Iwaya children are only raised to be obedient and diligent.

Hiyoshimaru is kicked out of the temple, starts roaming, and on the way challenges a group of samurai that pass him while he is sleeping on Yahagi bridge in Okazaki. As discussed in chapter one, this episode originates in *Ehon Taikōki* and during the second half of the nineteenth century rapidly developed into an iconic scene associated with the young Hideyoshi. The appearance of this new iconography was connected to representations of Ushiwakamaru on Gojō bridge. This process of text generation involving 'Gojō bridge' and 'Yahagi bridge' stayed within the sphere of premodern text production. However, with the influx of new codes both episodes came to play a role in 'bridging' the rift that opened between known and new mechanisms of text generation. In Iwaya's interpretation, both 'bridges' represent a moment of victory for the young protagonist on his path towards a self-determined life. The Yahagi bridge scene appears both in an illustration and on the cover

[130] Iwaya, *Hiyoshimaru*, 1898, 8–9.

(fig. 3.15) of *Hiyoshimaru*. Like the cover of the copperplate *kusazōshi Ehon Taikōki* (1888) (see fig. 1.22) the image stresses how Hiyoshimaru challenges the adult samurai with a fierce look. Because of his 'strong character', the samurai allow Hiyoshimaru to come along. Soon however, the boy realises that this rabble will not help him on his way to become a great general. He returns to the village and is made an apprentice by his family. This also ends badly upon which the village and his parents give up on the boy.

Hiyoshimaru's unruly behavior is nowhere framed as a 'mistake' that he must overcome or for which punishment is the right reaction. Adult rejection of children's 'imaginative' actions is a repeated pattern in *Nippon otogibanashi* and causes young protagonists to take their fate in their own hands. For example, in *Kawanakajima* 川中島 (volume 10) the boy Katsuchiyo 勝千代 (Takeda Shingen 武田信玄, 1521-1573) successfully kills a tanuki who disguised itself as Katsuchiyo's wooden horse. 'Even though Katsuchiyo was an admirable boy', the author observes, 'his father was rough and stupid'.[131] The eleven-year-old Katsuchiyo leaves the home and becomes a warrior. The misunderstanding is on the side of the father who represents the controlling and moralistic parenting that Iwaya attacks in his essays. Iwaya's protagonists thus seem to reject the premodern *ie* (household) system, but do not have a modern *katei* (family) to support them either. They find companions and mentors on their way.

Fig. 15 Komine Tai'u, cover image of *Nippon otogibanashi* vol. 18, *Hiyoshimaru*, 1898. Private collection

There are two representations of understanding adults in *Hiyoshimaru*, consisting of an old lady and Oda Nobunaga. A lonesome old lady living on the outskirts of the village feeds Hiyoshimaru. The boy promises: 'Grandma, you are so very nice. When I rule the world, I will multiply this rice grain ten thousand times and give it back to you'.[132]

[131] Iwaya, *Hiyoshimaru*, 1897, 10.
[132] Iwaya, *Hiyoshimaru*, 1898, 25.

Hiyoshimaru feels inclined to show filiality to this surrogate grandmother, which proves that supporting *wanpaku* boys is not a waste of time. Hiyoshimaru becomes less impulsive but even more determined as he grows up. As an older teenager, he comes to understand that the study of war strategy is important and chooses to be loyal to the lord who recognizes his talents, Oda Nobunaga. He even practices self-control when belittled by Nobunaga's retainers, who are jealous of the favors that Nobunaga bestows upon the young man. He promises to himself he will turn the bullies into his own retainers in due time. An important trait of *wanpaku-mono* is thus their unruliness and their persistence in doing things their own way, including choosing someone more 'worthy' of their loyalty. As proven by history, this disposition brought Hiyoshimaru to the top echelons of a martially minded national community.

Conclusion

This chapter has proposed to consider the appropriation of Edo period material in children's literature in the 1890s as an essential process of transformation. In Juri Lotman's spatial model of culture, or semiosphere, texts and codes enter through the periphery, or peripheries of sub-systems where new texts are generated in a process Lotman termed 'creative memory'. War tales and warrior legends provided the material through which the codes of youth literature from the West could be explored and take a local shape. The success of the semiosis between Edo period texts circulating in cultural memory and the codes of nineteenth century youth literature from the West lies in the potential of the new text as a national narrative and model of citizenship.

Initially, Japanese authors in the new commercial realm of youth literature expanded upon the ideal of a diligent, filial, rather passive citizen stipulated in The Imperial Rescript on Education and disseminated in primary schools. They admonished the young (male) readers of comparatively privileged families to be determined and make a success of their life. The (imminent) First Sino-Japanese War opened a window to imagining Japan as a powerful military nation, and its young citizens as its seeds. Heroes from the past were remolded and lined up (literally serialized) to satisfy patriotic enthusiasm. Historical fiction is 'born with a vested interest in creating a nation's history in order to create a common

identity'.[133] Historical fiction for children often plays a supplementary role to history textbooks, that represent the 'collective autobiography' of the nation.[134] Yet the genre can also constitute variants to curriculum and dominant narratives of citizenship.[135] As O'Sullivan observes, youth literature thus not only aimed to socialize children but had 'a key function (…) also in the maintenance of selfhood for the adults who produce, disseminate, and co-read the texts'.[136]

Initially, biographies of historical heroes for youths were partial adaptations of war tales and historical biographies aimed at adults, and being explicitly classified as youth literature, can be considered a form of re-appreciation of war tales that fits in modern categories of literature that precedes the classification of war tales as 'epic' or 'classical literature'. Authors like Takahashi discovered the exemplary nature of the youth of Japanese martial heroes and tried to appeal to the imagination and feelings of children. The duties of women were mainly addressed through the present rather than the past. Yet the realm of youth literature also offered opportunities for dramatization of premodern legends about female loyalty, sacrifice, and courage. The insight that the effectivity and the existence of youth literature as a legitimate modern genre also depended on language, led Iwaya Sazanami to experiment with *genbun itchi* and apply this also to his historical protagonists. Like in history education, historical biographies and other narratives focused on a new generation of boys and are most concerned with male 'selfhood'.

Adaptations of warrior legends that accumulated during the Edo period in such genres as *kusazōshi* found common ground in fairy tales and literature for young children. Iwaya's *otogibanashi* on historical generals were a result of semiosis between texts and codes originating in Edo period popular culture (plays, prints and books), and foreign texts and codes of Western youth literature, and specifically fairy tales. Iwaya reframed and highlighted images and episodes that fitted into his understanding of this new genre and its audience. The dynamics of this semiosis naturally led to a shift 'in the elements considered significant and insignificant within the text'.[137] The conventions of *otogibanashi* caused part of the habitual episodes in *kusazōshi* to be eliminated, for example those related to sexuality.

[133] Skyggebjerg, 'God, King and Country', 30.
[134] Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', 101.
[135] Parlevliet, 'Bring up the Children', 475.
[136] O'Sullivan, 'Imagology Meets Children's Literature', 6.
[137] Lotman, 'Memory in a Culturological Perspective', 136.

Other elements were carried over yet changed appearance, such as the semantic field of the underdog/child in Yoshitsune legend. Whereas in *Gikeiki*, Yoshitsune challenged Benkei after his *genpuku*, and textbooks did not make Ushiwakamaru's age explicit, Iwaya repeatedly identified him as a child.

The reactions of Iwaya's young protagonists to their social surroundings and a range of challenges reveal a *wanpaku* or 'spirited' disposition. This concept did not hatch simply from (abstract) ideological principles, but crystallized in the process of creative memory, here reflected in a concrete succession of literary experiments. Iwaya used this (developing) 'code' to re-assess a number of popular warrior legends, while also creating a basis for his expert opinion on youth literature. *Wanpaku* was thus a code appearing from, and instrumental in, the phasing out of structures of premodern text generation and the shaping of the new semiosphere of Meiji youth literature. This was an urgent project in the 1890s, as the cohesion of culture depended both on the availability of 'active' premodern texts and the adequateness of the mechanisms of text generation.