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*OCHIKOBORE SEISHUN SHŌSETSU:*  
THE PORTRAYAL OF TEENAGE REBELLION IN  
JAPANESE ADOLESCENT LITERATURE

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Asian Studies, School of Cultures, Languages and Linguistics at the University of Auckland, 2016.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis draws on American scholarship on Juvenile Delinquent literature to propose and elaborate a new literary category of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*, thereby identifying a significant sub-genre of adolescent fiction in Japan, which has received scant attention from Japanese academia. It traces the evolution of this sub-genre from its origins in autobiography through the serialised mystery novels of writers such as Ishida Ira and Kaneshiro Kazuki to more recent manifestations in the fantasy fiction of *ranobe* and *ketai shōsetsu*. Features of this evolution which are explored include: the rise and fall of didacticism and social critique as dominant tropes; the central role of the reader as vicarious participant in this subculture; the shifting generational attitudes towards a rebellious youth culture derived from 1950s America, first enacted in Japan in the 1970s, which became a trope of the popular cultural mainstream in the 1980s and 1990s and a dated throw-back in the 2000s. The thesis shows how, while the forms and modes of writing may change and diversify, the key elements of power relations, rebellion, the ‘good bad boy’ trope, didacticism and escapism remain and define the genre. Clear parameters for the identification and analysis of this subgenre are presented, which not only draw on the work of scholars of American adolescent literature, but develop this scholarship further, to move away from the rigid conventions of bounded categorisation towards the consideration of a gradient scale, using a range of tropic markers.

This thesis opens up a new strand of critical discourse on the representation of Japanese rebellious youth culture, specifically in fiction, which complements and enhances the existing discourses which focus on manga, anime and film. It confronts head-on the confusion around the plethora of terms deployed to indicate various manifestations of rebellious youth culture in Japanese, and sets out a clear elucidation of the significance of each, exploring their significance in the separate spheres of the publishing markets and academia. It also confronts the dismissive attitudes in mainstream academia towards popular fiction, reclaiming the term *shōtsetsu* and all that it represents for this body of fiction.

In its comparative approach, it maps the parallels and divergences in the developmental relationship between rebellious youth culture in the USA and in Japan, and shows how the influence of socio-cultural and market conditions on the development of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* in Japan has clear resonances with its American antecedents.



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## CHAPTER 1

### *OCHIKOBORE SEISHUN SHŌSETSU: DEFINING JUVENILE DELIQUENT NOVELS IN JAPANESE ADOLESCENT LITERATURE*

#### Introduction

In the 1980s, Japanese adolescents began to express teenage angst and frustration through fashion styles. Items such as black leather jackets, jeans, rock 'n' roll music, fast cars and motorcycles became symbols of teenage rebellion. The rise of Japanese rebellious youth culture led to the emergence of tales of teenage rebellion in popular media, such as *manga* (comic books or graphic novels) and film where rebellious teens were portrayed as reckless but appealing heroes with a heart of gold. The portrayal of charismatic rebels in *manga*, anime and film flourished in the 1980s and became formulaic to such an extent that a pattern begins to emerge in narrative style, character types and tropes. However, tales of teenage rebellion and their charismatic protagonists do not emerge in adolescent novels until nearly a decade later. Despite the temporal lag, rebellious teen heroes have become one of the most recognisable types of teenage protagonist and tales of teenage rebellion have become a distinct sub-category of adolescent novels in Japanese adolescent literature.

One of the earliest scholars to pay attention to Japanese rebellious youth culture was sociologist Satō Ikuya who, in the 1980s, conducted extensive research on rebellious youth culture based on both field work and an analysis of the portrayal of rebels in the popular media.<sup>1</sup> Yet, rebellious youth culture remained relatively unexplored until the late 2000s, when Nanba Kōji, Igarashi Tarō, and Saitō Tamaki revived the discussion. As a sociologist, Nanba categorises rebellious teens as distinct social group and documents the emergence of Japanese rebellious youth culture in the early 1970s, as well as its evolutionary development from the 1980s to the 2000s. With a background in architecture, Igarashi brings together critics and scholars from various fields ranging from fashion to psychology to

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<sup>1</sup> Satō Ikuya 佐藤郁哉, *Bōsōzoku no Esunogurafi: Mōdo no Hanran to Bunka no Jyubaku* 暴走族のエスノグラフィー:モードの叛乱と文化の呪縛 [Ethnography of Bōsōzoku: Revolt of the Mode and Spellbinding Culture] (Tōkyō: Shin'yōsha, 1984).

demonstrate how teenage rebellion became a form of art in popular culture during the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Saitō, who is a psychologist, also focuses on popular culture and conducts psychoanalysis of various rebellious teen icons from the 1980s such as rock musicians and fictional characters from popular media. Led by these prominent scholars, the study of rebellious youth culture has grown exponentially, especially in the last few years. Yet, this scholarship continues to focus on popular culture such as fashion trends and the portrayal of rebellious teens in *manga* and film, while tales of teenage rebellion in the adolescent novel remain unexplored. This thesis aims to address this neglect and contribute to current scholarship on Japanese rebellious youth culture by expanding the discussion to include adolescent fiction.

In fact, contemporary adolescent fiction itself is very much neglected within the academic discourse on Japanese literature. In the 1980s, Japanese adolescent fiction flourished as the youth market emerged and grew but Japanese scholars such as Torigoe Shin and Honda Kazuko interpret this as a diversification of children's literature (*jidō bungaku*) rather than the emergence of a separate adolescent literature. Torigoe and Honda recognise the emergence in the 1980s of such tropes such as “sex, suicide, runaways, and divorce”, which had previously been taboo in children's literature.<sup>3</sup> Torigoe categorises works with these themes as *mondai shōsetsu* (problem novels) by borrowing terminology from American scholarship.<sup>4</sup> Scholars like Nogami Akira have pointed out the problem of considering adolescent novels as a sub-category within *jidō bungaku* but discussion of Japanese adolescent literature remains under the larger frame of *jidō bungaku*. The separation of adolescent literature from *jidō bungaku* is long overdue and this thesis attempts to initiate such a development by categorising fictional tales of teenage rebellion as adolescent literature and separate from the conventions of *jidō bungaku*.

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<sup>2</sup> Igarashi Tarō 五十嵐太郎, *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* ヤンキー文化論序説 [An Introduction to Yankī Culture Studies] (Tōkyō: Kawade Shobō, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Torigoe Shin 鳥越信, *Hajimete Manabu Jidōbungakushi* はじめて学ぶ児童文学史 [History of Children's Literature for Beginners] (Tokyo: Minerva Shobō, 2001), 332-333.

<sup>4</sup> Torigoe draws a parallel between Japanese and British children's literature when examining *mondai shōsetsu*, but the term problem novel was created in order to distinguish works like S.E. Hinton's *Outsiders* (1967) and Paul Zindel's *The Pigman* (1968) in American scholarship.



As suggested above, Japanese scholars of adolescent novels under the *jidō bungaku* framework tend to compensate for the lack of an academic subfield in which to work by incorporating concepts and terminology from American or British scholarship where adolescent literature and children's literature are distinguished. By contrast, this thesis will take a systematically comparative approach by using American scholarship to supplement the Japanese scholarship in order to construct an analytical frame to consider systematically the development of the portrayal of teenage rebellion in Japanese adolescent literature.

It will also take a comparative approach in an exploration of the emergence of rebellious youth culture in both the Japanese and American contexts in order to explore the socio-cultural conditions that produce this particular type of adolescent literature. As the dominant post-war cultural superpower, American popular culture was (and still is) widely distributed around the globe, including in Japan. For instance, scholars such as Saitō note the way that Japanese youth in the 1980s borrowed extensively from American youth culture and how iconic American rebels, such as Holden Caulfield and James Dean, films like *The Wild One*, and greaser fashion from the 1950s, became the epitome of rebellious youth culture in Japan three decades later.<sup>5</sup> Such cultural borrowing foregrounds how narratives of American rebellious youth culture had a significant impact in the emergence of its Japanese counterpart. The most significant way in which I draw on the American scholarship is in its articulation of the term 'juvenile delinquent' (abbreviated as JD) as an umbrella term for rebellious youth culture. In the discussion below I elaborate on how I incorporate the term and the ideas associated with it into my own analytical framework.

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<sup>5</sup> Ōyama Masahiko 大山昌彦, "Ibarakiken A-shi ni Okeru 'Fifutūzu Fasshon' no Shōhi to Hen'yō: Sabukaruchāteki Sutairu no Rōkaruka/Rōkarazudoka" 茨城県 A 市における「フィフティーズ・ファッション」の消費と変容: サブカルチャー的スタイルのローカル化/ローカライズ化 [Consumption and the Transformation of 'the Fifties Fashion' in City A, Ibaraki Prefecture: Subcultural Styles of Locals and Localised], in *Gurōbarizēshon to Bunka Hen'yō: Ongaku, Fasshon, Rōdō kara Miru Sekai* グローバリゼーションと文化変容—音楽、ファッション、労働からみる世界 [Globalisation and Transformation of Culture: World Viewed from Music, Fashion, and Labour], ed. Endō Kaoru 遠藤薫 (Tōkyō: Sekaishisōsha, 2007), 216-221.

In contrast to the situation in Japan, American scholarship on American juvenile delinquent culture is abundant, but, interestingly, scholars of literature rarely incorporate the term ‘juvenile delinquent’ in their work, unlike those in cultural studies or media studies. Yet, whilst there is a significant gap in terms of the study of adolescent literature in Japan, the abundance of scholarship on American adolescent literature means that JD novels are being discussed under various categories such as problem novels, young adult novels or coming-of-age novels. By considering the American context as the pioneering comparator, the contributing conditions that produce rebellious youth narrative can be identified, as the appearance of juvenile delinquent narrative in both U.S. and Japan is not a separate or isolated phenomenon. This comparative approach will highlight the importance of socio-cultural conditions, as I will show how, in both cultural contexts, the juvenile delinquent novel emerges from a combination of rebellious youth culture in the ‘streets’ and its glamorisation in the media. . The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections, which explore juvenile delinquency as a social phenomenon, a cultural phenomenon and a literary phenomenon, in order to understand both the origin and the development of a rebellious youth narrative in adolescent literature.

### **Defining terms**

American sociologists Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin define juvenile delinquency as “a behaviour that violates basic norms of society, and when officially known, it evokes a judgement by the agents of criminal justice that such norms have been violated.”<sup>6</sup> Under the legal context, there are three types of behaviour that “violates basic norms of society,” namely property crimes, violent crimes and status offences. Unlike the first two types of criminal activity, status offences are activities that are considered ‘illegal’ only when committed by minors, such as smoking, drinking alcohol or truancy. On the face of it, the statutory definition of juvenile delinquency seems stable but as Ruth Shonle Cavan points out, it is open to different interpretations and definition can be as problematic as in any other context.<sup>7</sup> For

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<sup>6</sup> Richard A. Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin, *Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Ruth Shonle Cavan, *Juvenile Delinquency: Development, Treatment, Control* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1962), 21.

example, the 1950s was a period when the concept of the ‘teenager’ first emerged in American society and with the rapid increase of the adolescent population, the term juvenile delinquency was redefined. The moral panic over deviant youth in the 1950s led to seemingly harmless behaviour such as ‘riding one’s bicycle on the footpath’ being categorised as incorrigible behaviour, and as Rose Giallombardo observes, the term juvenile delinquency in the 1950s encompassed almost any type of youthful behaviour.<sup>8</sup> For example, in addition to the official list of delinquent behaviour outlined by the status offences, society also considered non-criminal behaviour such as listening to rock ‘n’ roll music and wearing blue jeans as signs of juvenile delinquency.

While society went through moral panic over teenagers in general and not just those considered as juvenile delinquents, sociological discourse focused on what Fine defines as “troubled teenagers,” such as gangs and the more serious offenders.<sup>9</sup> The focus of academic attention on the more deviant juvenile delinquents continues to this day, and sociologists like Terrie Moffitt have created a sub-category of “life-course-persistent offenders” to refer to juvenile criminals as distinct from the rebellious but non-criminal youth.<sup>10</sup> Exploration of such academic discourse suggests that the majority of scholars tend to use the statutory definitions to define delinquency, and thus focus on the more serious offenders like the street gangs rather than the anti-social rebels; but the need to construct sub categories also suggests that the single term juvenile delinquency encompasses multiple meanings and is often applied in an indiscriminating fashion.

If sociological discourse uses the term juvenile delinquency to refer to young law-breakers and trouble makers, it is used in the context of popular culture to categorise a body of literature that glamorised teenage rebellion. The term was abbreviated as JD to categorise novels, and ‘juvies’ to refer to films. In this newly emerging literature, fictional characters such as Holden Caulfield from J.D. Salinger’s *The*

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<sup>8</sup> Rose Giallombardo, *Juvenile Delinquency: A Book of Readings* (New York, Wiley: 1972), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Benjamin Fine, *1,000,000 Delinquents* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1955), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Terrie Moffitt, “Adolescence-limited and Life-course-persistent Antisocial Behaviour: A Developmental Taxonomy,” *Psychological Review* 100, no.4 (2003): 674-701, doi: 10.1037/0033-295X.100.4.674.

*Catcher in the Rye* (1951), Hollywood actors James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* (1951) and Marlon Brando in *The Wild One* (1953) epitomised ‘juvenile delinquency’ in American popular culture. These charismatic icons were rebellious heroes who stood up against the conformism of mainstream society, rather than teenage thugs, illustrating that the definition of juvenile delinquent in this context is not based on the statutory definition as in the sociological discourse.

In the American context a single generalised term is used in various contexts, and sub categories are created for greater clarification. The term that is often used as an equivalent for the English term ‘juvenile delinquent’ in Japanese language is *furyō*, and it is perhaps the most similar, in terms of its usage, as it is often used as an umbrella term for rebellious youth and used in multiple contexts. However, in the Japanese context there is no need to create numerous sub-categories in academic discourse as in English, because there are multiple terms in addition to *furyō*, to distinguish the difference between the more serious juvenile criminals from mischievous but relatively harmless rebels. In Japanese, when they need to be distinguished, the term *furyō* is often used to refer to rebellious youth in general while the alternative term *hikō* (also translated as juvenile delinquent) is used to specify the more serious offenders, or the life-course-persistent offenders.<sup>11</sup>

Usage outside the legal context further emphasises their different connotations. The contributing authors to *Furyō Dokuhon (Collection of Delinquent Stories, 2008)*, such as Asada Jirō and Kaidō Ryūichirō, compare *furyō* to *hikō* to argue that unlike *hikō*, *furyō* are *not* criminals.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, it seems more accurate to translate *hikō* as juvenile criminals and *furyō* as juvenile delinquents. *Furyō* is used to refer to a wider range of behaviour that includes deviant but non-criminal behaviour that

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<sup>11</sup> The use of different *kanji* also suggests a subtle difference between the two terms; *furyō* (不良) can be understood as ‘no good’ while *hikō* (非行) as ‘acting bad.’ This thesis will not delve further into the origins of these two terms as these terms predate the emergence of rebellious youth culture.

<sup>12</sup> Asada Jirō 浅田次郎, “Furyō no Seishin” 不良の精神 [Spirit of the Rebel], in *Furyō Dokuhon*, 不良読本 [The Rebel Handbook], ed. Imai Hidemi 今井秀美 (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2008), 8-9. Kaidō Ryūichirō 海道龍一郎, “Zeroshiki: Kizudarake no Tenshi” 零式: 傷だらけの天使 [Episode Zero: Wounded Angel], in *Furyō Dokuhon*, 不良読本 [The Rebel Handbook], ed. Imai Hidemi 今井秀美 (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2008), 566.

incorporates anti-social attitudes. For example, the refusal to conform within group environments such as schools is considered problematic *furyō* behaviour especially because in Japanese society, conformity is valued over individuality and group harmony is considered as a crucial part of maintaining social order. For example, David Crystal notes that scholars have often characterised Japanese society as “collectivistic” due to a tendency to emphasise obedience, encourage interdependent relationships amongst the in-group members, and prioritise group goals over personal and individual.<sup>13</sup> Thus adolescents who are obedient and compliant are considered “good” while those who challenge conformity or exhibit individualistic behaviours are considered egocentric, aggressive and punished for disrupting group harmony.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, poor academic performance is also considered as part of *furyō* behaviour. Kitao Norihiko and Kajita Ei’ichi (1984) argue that from the late 1970s, the values of parents and teachers in Japan changed in such a way that academic performance became one of the most important ways to determine whether a teenager was good or bad.<sup>15</sup>



*Evolutionary Theory of Juvenile Delinquents* by Nanba Kōji (left) and *An Introduction to Yankee Studies* edited by Igarashi Tarō (right).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> David Crystal, “Concepts of Deviance and Disturbance in Children and Adolescents: A Comparison between the United States and Japan.” *International Journal of Psychology* 35, no.5 (2000): 208.

<sup>14</sup> Takao Murase, “Sunao: A Central Value in Japanese Psychotherapy.” In *Cultural Conceptions of Mental Health and Therapy*, eds. Anthony Marsella and Geoffrey White (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1982). Merry White and Robert Levine, “What is an *Iiko* (good child)?” In *Child Development and Education in Japan*, eds. Harold Stevenson, Hiroshi Azuma, and Kenji Hakuta (New York: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1986) cited in David Crystal, “Concepts of Deviance in Children and Adolescents: The Case of Japan.” *Deviant Behavior* 15, no.2 (1994): 245.

<sup>15</sup> Kitao Norihiko 北尾倫彦 and Kajita Ei’ichi 梶田叡一, *Ochikobore, Ochikoboshi* おちこぼれ、おちこぼし [Dropouts, Dropped Outs] (Tōkyō: Yūbikaku Sensho, 1984) cited in *ibid.*, 246.

<sup>16</sup> The images of book covers incorporated throughout this thesis derive from Amazon.co.jp unless specified otherwise.

In addition to the term *furyō*, *yankī* is perhaps the most frequently used term in the discourse of Japanese juvenile delinquent youth. These two terms are often used interchangeably by scholars, as is best illustrated by Nanba's book title, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi* (Evolutionary Theory of Yankī: Why Rebellious Cultures are Persistent) which contains both terms. On the other hand, Igarashi's book cover only contains the term *yankī* which he seems to have standardised as the term of choice in his study of Japanese juvenile delinquents and rebellious youth culture. However, throughout the book, Igarashi uses the term *furyō* in a similar manner to Nanba, as do most of the contributors to *An Introduction to Yankī Studies*. In fact, Nagae Akira, who contributed a chapter titled “*Yankī-teki Naru Mono*” (Things That Are *Yankī-ish*)” to Igarashi's book uses the word *yankī* throughout the text and asserts from the beginning that he will not distinguish *furyō*, *yankī* and even *bōsōzoku* (motorcycle gang) as his main aim is to give a general overview of Japanese rebellious youth culture and explore things that are *yankī-ish*<sup>17</sup> Such usage by scholars seems to suggest that the terms *furyō* and *yankī* are synonymous.

Yet the two terms are not identical; one of the more obvious differences between them is that *yankī* is a colloquial word for *furyō* that emerged in the 1980s. As Nagae points out from his own personal experience, before the 1980s, the term *yankī* had been used to refer to the Americans.<sup>18</sup> The origin of the word *yankī* is debated to this day with some arguing that it derives from the English term “Yankee” (meaning Americans), because Japanese youth of the 1980s imitated the “Yankee” (American) fashion; while others argue that it comes from the dialect that Japanese delinquents used, in which they ended sentences with “~yanke.”<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, most scholars seem to agree that the term emerged in the 1980s.

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<sup>17</sup> Nagae Akira 永江朗, “Yankīteki Naru Mono: Sono Kigen to Mentariti” ヤンキー的なるモノ:その起源とメンタリテイ [Yankī-ish Things: Its Origin and Mentality], in *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* ヤンキー文化論序説 [An Introduction to Yankī Culture Studies], ed. Igarashi Tarō 五十嵐太郎 (Tōkyō: Kawade Shobō, 2009), 34.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Nanba Kōji 難波功士, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi* ヤンキー進化論:不良文化はなぜ強い [Evolutionary Theory of Yankī: Why Rebellious Cultures are Persistent] (Tōkyō: Kōbunsha Shinsho, 2009), 6.

At the time of the emergence of the term *yankī*, Japanese delinquents had begun to develop their own distinct fashion, language and behaviour. An examination of *furyō* culture before the 1980s suggests that the *yankī* also borrowed extensively from the anti-school culture of the *tsuppari* (another term that can be translated as juvenile delinquent), which emerged in the late 1970s. This indicates that the *yankī* culture did not emerge suddenly from a cultural vacuum in the 1980s but rather is an evolved form of rebellious youth culture. The term *tsuppari* derives from the verb *tsupparu* (to be defiant) and was used to describe rebellious and trouble making students from the late 1970s. Endō Natsuki, author and self-proclaimed former *tsuppari*, differentiates *tsuppari* and *yankī* by defining the former as school culture, and the latter as consumer culture<sup>20</sup> The difference between these two terms will become more evident once the socio-cultural contexts that saw the emergence of these two types of rebellious youth culture are taken into account, but the more immediate difference is that while the term *tsuppari* refers specifically to the rebel culture of the 1970s, the term *yankī* has become somewhat generic, to the extent that some scholars are using it interchangeably with the term *furyō*.

It seems that the wide-spread usage of the term *yankī*, once it began to be used to refer to the dominant mode of rebellious youth culture in the 1980s, has expanded its meaning. This is illustrated by Nanba Kōji's usage of the term *yankī*. Nanba categorises post-1980s deviant youth culture such as the *karāgyangu* (the colour gang is a distinct gang culture that incorporated American hip-hop and street culture in the late 1990s) as “neo-*yankī*”<sup>21</sup> and “*kōgi no yankī*” (*yankī* in a broader sense).<sup>22</sup> In addition to categorising the more contemporary culture as *yankī*, Nanba applies the term retrospectively and suggests that the pre-1980s cultures, such as *tsuppari*, are also part of *yankī* culture. Such wide ranging usage of the term *yankī*, illustrates how it has become an umbrella term for rebellious youth culture. Nanba even compares *yankī* to Western juvenile delinquent trends such as British Lad culture.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Endō Natsuki (writer) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

<sup>21</sup> Nanba Kōji, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi*, 191-195.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-78.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

On the other hand, scholars such as Isobe Ryō (another contributor to Igarashi's book) argue that *yankī* too has become an out-dated term by pointing out that it is being used to refer to *inaka no furyō* (rural juvenile delinquents) by contemporary youth.<sup>24</sup> Such an observation suggests that, despite being used as a generic term in the majority of the scholarship, the images and meanings attached to *yankī* is more specific. The fact that the *yankī* is now considered *dasai* (out-dated) among urban Japanese youth suggests that the image of the 1980s is still strongly attached to the word *yankī*. In areas like Tokyo, new trends of rebellious culture such as *Shibuya-kei* (Shibuya type)<sup>25</sup>, and *Oraora-kei* (Oraora type)<sup>26</sup> have replaced the *yankī* culture. Studies by scholars like Isobe and Hayamizu Kenrō suggest that even though *yankī* has become outmoded in Tokyo, it has continued in the regions, especially in the rural areas, as a form of regional culture—competing against the urban youth culture, such as *Shibuya-kei*, that originates from Tokyo. However, these recent trends in rebellious youth culture are still associated with a notion of ‘strangeness.’ This is in marked contrast to the multiplicity of images or meanings attached to *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* which have undergone years of cultural reimagining in popular culture.

In addition to terms like *tsuppari* and *yankī*, *bōsōzoku* (motorcycle gang) is another period-specific term which emerged in the 1980s and is sometimes translated as ‘kamikaze bikers’, or ‘speed tribe’ in English.<sup>27</sup> Though *bōsōzoku* is very much part of the *yankī* culture of the 1980s, it is not often used as an umbrella term like *furyō* and *yankī* as it refers specifically to youth that were members of a gang, and not all *furyō*, *yankī* or *tsuppari* owned a bike or belonged in gang. However, this exploration of these terms demonstrates how the lines between them are blurred by the fact that sometimes these categories can overlap, as one could be *yankī*, *furyō* and *bōsōzoku* all at the same time. The fact is

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<sup>24</sup> Isobe Ryō 磯辺涼, “Yankī to Hippy Hoppu: Souruzoku kara B-Bōi e to Tsuzuku Mō Hitotsu no Yankī no Rekishi” ヤンキーとヒップホップ:ソウル族からBボーイへと続くもうひとつのヤンキーの歴史[Yankī and Hip Hop: History of Another Yankī: From Soul Tribe to B-Boys], in *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* ヤンキー文化論序説 [An Introduction to Yankī Culture Studies], ed. Igarashi Tarō 五十嵐太郎 (Tōkyō: Kawade Shobō, 2009), 107.

<sup>25</sup> *Shibuya-kei* refers to teenagers with a distinct fashion such as bleached hair, and fake tan. It is believed that the trend originated from Shibuya which is considered as a mecca for Japanese youth.

<sup>26</sup> *Ora-ora kei* is the most recent delinquent style which combines *yankī* with hip-hop style. However, unlike *yankī* culture which dictated a certain code of behaviour, *ora-ora kei* is primarily a fashion trend without, as yet, a distinct language or code of behaviour.

<sup>27</sup> Steven E. Alford and Suzanne Ferriss, *Motorcycle* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 72.



*yankī*, *furyō* and *bōsōzoku* altogether make up the rebellious youth culture of the 1980s. Thus, the majority of scholars such as Igarashi and Nanba do not differentiate between *tsuppari*, *yankī*, *furyō* or even *bōsōzoku* as the purpose of their study was to conduct an overview of Japanese juvenile delinquent culture.

Such usage reveals the limits of using the term *furyō* as an umbrella term, as it has strong links to the rebellious youth cultures of the 1980s, at least in the context of popular culture. Using *furyō* as a generic over-arching term and *yankī*, *tsuppari* and *bōsōzoku* as sub-sets of juvenile delinquency is a possibility. However, further exploration of the term *furyō* indicates how this term too carries specific meanings. For example, Hirota Teruyuki, a sociologist who studies youth culture, claims in an article titled “*Furyō ga Kieta*” (Disappearing Delinquents)<sup>28</sup> that *furyō* have disappeared from contemporary Japanese society. His reference to the juvenile delinquent *manga*, *Cromartie High School* by Nonaka Eiji which depicts rebellious characters in the *tsuppari* and *yankī* fashion of the 1980s, suggests that Hirota is referring to a particular type of rebellious teenager, rather than in a general sense, despite using the more generic term *furyō* instead of *tsuppari* or *yankī*. This highlights the limits of using *furyō* as an umbrella term as its usage in popular culture seems only to extend to the rebellious youth culture of the 1980s. Further exploration of the usage of these terms in literature, such as in memoirs by former delinquents, indicates that there is a generational difference. Members of the older generation, such as Endō Kazuki, prefer to use the terms *furyō* or *tsuppari* and Endō refuses to categorise himself and his friends as *yankī*;<sup>29</sup> while members of the younger generation tend to use the term *yankī*. An example is Yūji (1987) who uses the term *furyō* or *yankī* but not *tsuppari* in his autobiography.<sup>30</sup> Thus, different images and emotions are prompted by these various terms according to the era in which one experienced rebellious youth culture.

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<sup>28</sup> Hirota Teruyuki 広田照幸, Introduction to *Wakamono bunka wo dō miruka* 若者文化をどうみるか [What to Make of Youth Culture], ed. Hirota Teruyuki (Tokyo: Advantage Server, 2008), 31.

<sup>29</sup> Endō Natsuki (author) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Yūji ユージ, *Mamī ga Boku o Koroshi ni Yattekeru: Yankī Serebu* マミーが僕をころしにやってくる : ヤンキーセレブ [Mummy's Coming to Kill Me: The Celebrity Rebel] (Tokyo: Hinode Shuppan, 2011).

In addition to such generational differences, there is also a gender differentiation in Japanese terminology. Although the terms *furyō* and *yankī* are gender neutral, they have become gender specific terms because they are usually used to refer to boys, and are understood as the abbreviation of the compound words *furyō shōnen* or *yankī shōnen* (both translated as juvenile delinquent boys.) When referring specifically to female delinquents, the word *shōjo* (girls) is specifically added to these terms. However in the 1980s, when delinquent culture thrived, gender specific terms such as *sukeban* (term for female *tsuppari*, or delinquent girls) and *redīsu* (English term ‘ladies’ borrowed to refer to a female motorcycle gang member) emerged. These gender specific terms and the social groups associated with them indicate how rebellious youth culture, at least in the Japanese context, is a very gender-specified space. The term *sukeban* was used to categorise rebellious and violent girls who engaged in anti-school behaviour and activities; while *redīsu* were either the girlfriends of *bōsōzoku* members or members of the female only motorcycle gangs (or both).<sup>31</sup>

Such gender separation has continued to this day, as illustrated by the emergence of the term *gyaru* (from the English gal) which was used to refer to the newly emerging rebellious girl culture in the mid-1990s. This was followed by the appearance of its male counterpart, *gyaruo* in the late 1990s.<sup>32</sup> Initially, the terms for rebellious girls in the 1980s had followed the establishment of terms for boys; for example *redīsu* followed the emergence of *bōsōzoku*, and *sukeban* was used after *tsuppari*. This is an expression of the way that, in the 1980s, juvenile delinquent culture was dominated by boys, but there is a shift by the 1990s when the girls seem to dominate, as illustrated by the rise of *gyaru* culture followed by *gyaruo*.

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<sup>31</sup> Endō Natsuki (author) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Hayamizu Kenrō, 速水健朗, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi* ケータイ小説的: “再ヤンキー化”時代の少女たち [Mobile Phone Novels: The Girls of “Yankī” Culture Revival Era] (Tōkyō: Hara Shobō, 2010), 3. Honda Tōru 本田透, *Naze Kētai Shōsetsu wa Urerunoka* なぜケータイ小説は売れるのか [Why Mobile Phone Novel Sell] (Tōkyō: Softbank Shinsho, 2008), 6.

The existence of these multiple Japanese terms for rebellious teens is a major reason why I have chosen a different term, *ochikobore* (dropout) to describe the juvenile delinquent fiction which is the focus of this study. *Ochikobore* is a more generic term in comparison to *yankī*, *bōsōzoku*, and even the seemingly generic *furyō*, which have meanings and images associated with them that refer to specific types of rebellious youth. The term, *ochikobore* is another term for ‘rebellious youth’ in Japanese that is sometimes used by sociologists. For example, Satō describes *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* as marginalised teens and refers to them as *ochikobore*,<sup>33</sup> while scholars like Kitao and Kajita focus more on education and use *ochikobore* to refer to academically unsuccessful youths. The use of the term *ochikobore* outside the academic sphere remains relatively free from meanings or images that could anchor it to a specific time or culture, and as tales of teenage rebellion in adolescent literature continue to evolve, the term used to categorise it needs to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate continual change. Nevertheless, *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* evoke the types of rebellious youth culture that emerged in the 1980s, in which the tales of teenage rebellion in Japanese adolescent literature have their origin. It is thus necessary to explore them before analysing their representation in Japanese adolescent literature.

## **Juvenile delinquency as a social phenomenon**

### **The emergence of the teenager**

In the United States, the increasing use of the term ‘teenager’ from the 1940s through to the 1950s marked the rise of “a new breed of affluent, young consumers who prioritized fun, leisure and the fulfilment of personal desires.”<sup>34</sup> Juvenile delinquent culture emerged with the appearance of hedonistic adolescents in the 1950s. The Second World War had a vast impact on all aspects of society, well beyond the world of politics. It had a particularly significant effect on adolescents. During the war,

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<sup>33</sup> Satō Ikuya 佐藤郁哉, *Bōsōzoku no Esunogurafi: Mōdo no Hanran to Bunka no Jyubaku* 暴走族のエスノグラフィー:モードの叛乱と文化の呪縛 [Ethnography of Bōsōzoku: Revolt of the Mode and Spellbinding Culture] (1984), 198.

<sup>34</sup> Bill Osgerby, “A Caste, a Culture, a Market’: Youth, Marketing, and Lifestyle in Postwar America,” in *Growing up Postmodern: Neoliberalism and the War on the Young*, ed. Ronald Strickland (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 18.

parents had been largely absent from home; fathers were away fighting and mothers were away working. Cultural theorist Michael Barson and author Steven Heller argue that parental absence during the war had given American youth a taste of freedom; and once the war was over and parents returned to the domestic sphere, the adolescents were reluctant to relinquish their freedom and reacted by undermining and defying parental authority.<sup>35</sup>

Housewife: My husband was two hours late getting home the other night. Oh, my God, I thought, *the teenagers* have got him.<sup>36</sup>

As the above punch line from a popular 1950s joke illustrates, teenagers in general had been considered as delinquents ever since the term ‘teenager’ first emerged in the 1940s. As early as 1943, the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover (1895-1972) had warned America that it was “in deadly peril. A creeping rot of moral disintegration is eating into our nation.”<sup>37</sup> By ‘moral disintegration’, Hoover was referring to the newly emerging youth population of America that seemed violent and hedonistic. The statistics and data presented in the newsreel “Youth in Crisis” (1943), produced as part of the *March of Time* series, also depicted how adolescents had become dangerously subversive and uncontrollable and projected the escalation of juvenile crime rates in the years to come.<sup>38</sup> The film blamed the lack of paternal authority, the loss of familial stability and social unrest during wartime as the cause of these subversive, reckless and out-of-control adolescents. The statistics and data presented in the film suggested that the juvenile crime rate had reached an alarming level; from January to July 1943, 58.5% of burglaries, 32.2% of rape cases, and 18.8% of prostitution crimes were committed by those under the age of 21.<sup>39</sup> The film warned the audience that, having experienced the conditions of wartime, the younger generation would grow up mentally scarred and would be

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<sup>35</sup> Michael Barson and Steven Heller, *Teenage Confidential: An Illustrated History of the American Teen* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998), 44.

<sup>36</sup> Geoff Mungham and Geoff Pearson, *Working Class Youth Culture* (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), 18.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Barson and Steven Heller, *Teenage Confidential: An Illustrated History of the American Teen*, 41.

<sup>38</sup> *Youth in Crisis*, directed by Louis De Rochemont (1943; 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox) cited in James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 29.

<sup>39</sup> James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, 29.

“quick to absorb the new spirit of violence and recklessness.”<sup>40</sup> Robert Lindner, a prominent psychologist and author of *Rebel without a Cause: The Hypnoanalysis of a Criminal Psychopath* (1944) went as far as to describe juvenile delinquency as “madness” and claimed that it was spreading across the nation like an epidemic.<sup>41</sup>

In order to deal with such an epidemic of youth delinquency, communities throughout the nation provided clubs and canteens so that young people could socialise under adult supervision, and schools and parents implemented various rules such as curfews and dress codes to contain what they perceived as delinquent behaviour.<sup>42</sup> Society’s concern with delinquency continued throughout the 1950s such that the term ‘teenager’ became synonymous with juvenile delinquency. As noted in *The New Yorker* (1958), “the first association that most adults have with the word ‘teenager’ is ‘juvenile delinquent’.”<sup>43</sup> Magazine article titles from the 1950s such as “Shame of America,” (1955)<sup>44</sup> “Are Teenagers Taking Over?” and “Are You Afraid of Your Teenager?” further reflect national anxiety.<sup>45</sup> According to Gilbert, delinquency became a recurrent topic in the media in the 1950s, ranging from newspapers, magazines, films and books.<sup>46</sup> Although the media had been producing texts on juvenile delinquency since the 1940s, the number of texts surged in the 1950s, reflecting the increasing public concern.<sup>47</sup>

This concern gradually became a moral panic in the early 1950s as the youth population had reached its highest ever point in American history.<sup>48</sup> Hoover claimed that “[t]he first wave in this flood tide of new citizens born between 1940 and 1950 has just this year reached the ‘teen-age’, the period in which

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<sup>40</sup> Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America’s Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, 29.

<sup>41</sup> J. Ronald Oakley, *God’s Country: America in the Fifties* (New York: Dembner Books, 1986), 270.

<sup>42</sup> Lucy Rollin, *Twentieth-Century Teen Culture by the Decades: A Reference Guide* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 150.

<sup>43</sup> An article from *The New Yorker* (1958) cited in Simon Frith, *Facing the Music: A Pantheon Guide to Popular Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), 144.

<sup>44</sup> Richard Clendenen, “The Shame of America,” *Evening Post* 227 (January 8, 1955) cited in James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America’s Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, 227.

<sup>45</sup> “Are Teenagers Taking Over?” and “Are You Afraid of Your Teenager?” were both printed in *Cosmopolitan* and cited in Lee Borrie, “Wild Ones: Containment Culture and 1950s Youth Rebellion,” (PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 2007), 7.

<sup>46</sup> James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America’s Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, 65.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-64.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

some of them will inevitably incline toward juvenile delinquency and, later, a full-fledged criminal career.”<sup>49</sup> As James Gilbert points out, the increased media coverage of juvenile crimes in the 1950s did indeed give society the impression that many of the adolescents were indeed inclined towards violence and crime. .<sup>50</sup>

However, as Gilbert argues, contrary to such media hype and social attention, the actual rate of juvenile delinquency in the 1950s was lower than that of the wartime or the 1960s.<sup>51</sup> Yet, in the 1950s, it was considered as a major social problem that required urgent attention, so much so that it was considered a national threat along with Communism.<sup>52</sup> Gilbert suggests that the hysteria over juvenile delinquency in the 1950s was the result of broader anxiety over post-war social and cultural change.<sup>53</sup> A film scholar Peter Biskind reverses the argument, suggesting that the rising “autonomous youth culture” was the post-war social and cultural change that caused the wide-spread anxiety over juvenile delinquency.<sup>54</sup>

Japanese society also went through a vast transformation during the post-war years and adolescence was reshaped by various post-war political reforms. For example, the education reform of 1947 extended compulsory education by making middle school (3 years) mandatory; this meant that middle school education was no longer the privilege of the wealthy.<sup>55</sup> Previous to this reform, children from less privileged backgrounds experienced a shorter period of childhood as they joined adults in the workforce after their sixth year of education in primary school. This education reform can be seen as the catalyst for the establishment of adolescents in Japanese society, as adolescence became a normative life stage for the majority of the population, not just for the privileged few.

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<sup>49</sup> Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, 72.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-64.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas Doherty, *Teenagers and Teenpics: the Juvenilisation of American Movies in the 1950s* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 51.

<sup>53</sup> James Gilbert *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, 77.

<sup>54</sup> Peter Biskind, *Seeing is Believing: How Hollywood Taught Us to Stop Worrying and Love the Fifties* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 197.

<sup>55</sup> David Richard Ambaras. *Bad Boys: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 194.

In 1945, the prime minister's office established a Council of Youth Problem Countermeasures (*Seishōnen Mondai Taisaku Kyōgikai*) to combat juvenile delinquency at the national level.<sup>56</sup> However, unlike in the United States, the problem of wayward youth was overshadowed by more pressing matters such as the need for political stability, and social and economic recovery in the immediate post-war period. During this national recovery phase, it was widely believed that the main cause of juvenile delinquency was poverty; therefore, rebuilding the economy was considered more urgent than directly combating the problem of *furyō*.<sup>57</sup>

Although juvenile delinquency was not considered as an immediate concern, measures were taken against juvenile delinquency as, in addition to the Council, the U.S. Occupation officials implemented the Juvenile law (*shōnenhō*) in 1948.<sup>58</sup> Similar to the status offences in the American context, the implementation of this new law rigidly regulated the behaviours of youth. Non-criminal activities such as hanging around bars, pachinko parlours and game centres, associating with “dangerous” friends, watching pornographic movies or videos, consuming alcohol, smoking and truancy were legally identified as delinquent activities (*furyō kōi*) and punishable under the law.<sup>59</sup>

In addition to such regulations and reforms, the Japanese school authorities also played a significant role, if not a greater role than the government, in combating the spread of *furyō*, as the student population continued to increase. For example, post-war middle school teachers enforced strict routines and dress codes under the so-called “daily life guidance.”<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, after school, teachers patrolled what were identified as “hot spots” that attracted *furyō* students, such as amusement centres in order to catch wayward students.<sup>61</sup> Unlike American schools, Japanese schools exerted considerable power over students' lives through daily guidance and strict school regulations. David Ambaras, the

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<sup>56</sup> This council was later re-named the Youth Problems Deliberative Council (*Seishōnen Mondai Shingikai*) in 1966 and continued to coordinate juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

<sup>57</sup> Ambaras, *Bad Boys: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan*, 196.

<sup>58</sup> Foljanty-Jost, *Juvenile Delinquency in Japan: Recognising the “Crisis”* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 5.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Ambaras, *Bad Boys: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan*, 194.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

historian and author of *Bad Youth: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan* (2006) observes that this post-war daily guidance regime resembles that of the Meiji period's Student Oversight Departments, as well as the wartime factory youth schools.<sup>62</sup> This suggests that the pre-war and wartime policing of youth behaviour had changed little despite the post-war reform of the Japanese education system.

Scholars studying Japanese youth, such as Thomas Rohlen and Merry White, have noted that Japanese youth experience far more rigorous policing by their parents and school authorities compared to American youth, and they suggest that this is perhaps because Japanese society considers teenagers as '*kodomo*' (children), further implying that there is less difference in the treatment of children and teenagers.<sup>63</sup> During the 1980s, the student population peaked as more families were able to send their offspring to high school. This increase in the adolescent population during the 1980s coincides with society's moral panic over youth problems in Japan. This resonates with the US experience in the 1950s when the baby boomer generation reached adolescence and youth problems became a national concern. In Japan, juvenile delinquency only became a major national concern in the 1980s, when Japanese society had achieved socio-economic stability. This level of concern was reflected in the sharp increase in the number of publications on juvenile delinquency.<sup>64</sup> Similar to the American experience, Japanese society's fear of violent and reckless youth in the 1980s was partially media-driven rather than based on solid facts. For example, scholars note that, despite the recurrent media reports of reckless and violent adolescent behaviour in the 1980s, the actual data collected by the government illustrates that there were twice as many police records of youth involved in "simple assault" (physical

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<sup>62</sup> When middle school was first established, school authorities developed strict regulations governing every aspect of student life and student oversight departments were created by teachers to reinforce the regulations. Saitō Toshihiko 齊藤利彦, *Kyōsō to Kanri no Gakkōshi: Meiji Kōki Chūgakkō Kyōiku no Tenkai* 競争と管理の学校史: 明治後期中学校教育の展開 [School History of Competition and Management: Development of Education in Late Meiji Schools], (Tōkyō: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1995), 173-96, 203-237. During the wartime, Japanese factories incorporated Nazi regime's regimented apprentice training and labour management was replaced by the factory schools whereby the young workers were "guided" by managers in every aspect of life. Ambaras. *Bad Boys: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan*, 174.

<sup>63</sup> Thomas Rohlen, *Japan's High School*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 195. Merry White, *The Material Child: Coming of Age in Japan and America* (University of California Press, 1994), 11.

<sup>64</sup> Annette Erbe, "Youth in Crisis: Public Perceptions and Discourse on Deviance and Juvenile Problem Behaviour in Japan," in *Juvenile Delinquency in Japan Reconsidering the 'Crisis,'* ed. Gesine Foljanty-Jost (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 54-55.



injury, act of violence, blackmail and threatening behaviour) in the 1960s.<sup>65</sup> This discrepancy between the actual rate of juvenile delinquency and media coverage strongly indicates the vital role that the media played in creating and amplifying moral panic in both contexts.

### **Economic prosperity**

In addition to the media, economic prosperity also played a vital role; as educational sociologist Tokuoka Hideo points out, it seems that Japanese society was only able to “afford” to worry about social issues like juvenile delinquency once social stability was achieved.<sup>66</sup> His statement was made with reference to Japanese society in the 1980s but it can also be applied to the American context, as American society prospered in the immediate post-war period and was thus able to worry about juvenile delinquents much earlier than war torn Japanese. Wini Breines sums up the complacent assumptions of the era:

“[T]here was a pleased consensus that America was the richest and most successful nation on earth, a nation where all citizens could anticipate living the good life. That good life was defined by a well-equipped house in the suburbs, a new car or two, a good white collar-job for the husband, well-adjusted and successful children taken care of by a full-time wife and mother. Leisure time and consumer goods constituted its centrepieces; abundance was its context.”<sup>67</sup>

However, scholars like Wini Breines and Joel Foreman argue that beneath this image of peace and wealth, American society in the 1950s was also a time of conflict and struggle. The problem of rebellious youth is part of “the other side” of seemingly harmonious and successful America. Yet, the popular belief at the time was that post-war economic prosperity had indeed brought peace, wealth and stability throughout the nation and into every household.<sup>68</sup> While scholars have argued that such

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<sup>65</sup> Hōmūshō Sōgō Hōmu Sōgō Kenkyūsho 法務省総合法務総務研究所[Ministry of Justice Research Institute], *Hanzai Hakusho* 犯罪白書[White Paper on Crime], (Tōkyō: Ōkura Shō Insatsukyoku, 1998), 493.

<sup>66</sup> Tokuoka cited in Erbe, “Youth in Crisis: Public Perceptions and Discourse on Deviance and Juvenile Problem Behaviour in Japan,” 52-53.

<sup>67</sup> Wini Breines, “Postwar White Girls’ Dark Others,” in *The Other Fifties: Interrogating Midcentury American Icons*, ed. Joel Foreman (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 55.

<sup>68</sup> However such simplistic portrayal of the 1950s was overturned by scholars like Peter Biskind as academic discourse progressed. Biskind was one of the scholars to argue that the 1950s was “an era of conflict and contradiction, an era in

success was limited mostly to middle-class white Americans, the post-war economic success was so overwhelming that it had created the illusion that “all citizens” were enjoying the success of the American economy.<sup>69</sup>

Although the increase in the adolescent population from 10 million to 15 million was largely due to wartime demographic trends, the post-war expansion in education solidified adolescents as a distinct social group, as more families were able to afford to give their offspring further education. Bill Osgerby points out that approximately 40% of high school graduates continued on to tertiary education in the 1950s.<sup>70</sup> This increase in the student population revived the campus culture that had first emerged in the 1920s, but had weaned during wartime when youth were inclined towards fulltime employment rather than higher education.<sup>71</sup>

Similarly, the Japanese student population reached its peak in the 1980s when the Japanese economy flourished. Economic prosperity had brought social stability, and as a result, more students were able to continue beyond the nine years of compulsory education. By the 1980s, the number of students continuing to high school education had reached its highest ever figure of 95%.<sup>72</sup> This meant that secondary and tertiary education had become the norm in Japanese society and was no longer a privilege for the wealthy minority. This extended the period of adolescence by several years, as many Japanese youth opted for further education instead of employment.<sup>73</sup>

In both contexts, with economic prosperity as the backdrop, adolescence became a normative life stage for the majority of the population; and, in order to control this rising number of adolescents, the adults policed and restricted adolescent behaviour. The ways in which the youth were policed in these two

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which a complex set of ideologies contended for public allegiance.” Biskind, *Seeing is Believing: How Hollywood Taught Us to Stop Worrying and Love the Fifties*, 4.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Osgerby, “‘A Caste, a Culture, a Market’: Youth, Marketing, and Lifestyle in Postwar America,” 18.

<sup>71</sup> Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 122.

<sup>72</sup> Ambaras, *Bad Boys: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan*, 194.

<sup>73</sup> Erbe, “Youth in Crisis: Public Perceptions and Discourse on Deviance and Juvenile Problem Behaviour in Japan,” 55.

contexts are similar in general terms, but at the same time, the contrasting ways the school authorities acted shows that there were significant differences between the two contexts. For example, Japanese schools had more power and influence over their students. In the 1980s, Japanese students spent longer hours at school as well as being subject to stricter surveillance of their behaviour under the "daily guidance" system. Rohlen, who studied Japanese high schools in the late 1970s and early 1980s, notes that Japanese students spent an average of 36 hours per week in school, leaving only Saturday evenings and Sundays completely free for leisure activities.<sup>74</sup> He goes on to hypothesise that the rate of juvenile delinquency in Japanese schools was significantly lower than that of U.S., since students had fewer opportunities to engage in delinquent activities. Such an argument is based on the assumption that delinquency only occurs outside the school, and Rohlen does indeed add that the delinquency occurred "largely in the city."<sup>75</sup> Yet, if we examine the behaviour of Japanese youth, such as that of the *tsuppari* and *yankī*, it is clear that the "school" can be the ground for rebellion as much as the "city."

For instance, the daily guidance was considered as a "preventative measure" against the spread of deviant behaviour amongst the student population.<sup>76</sup> The Japanese regulation of school uniforms and general appearance, exemplifies the different levels of "guidance" that Japanese and American students were subjected to. As Chisaki Toyama-Bialke points out, it seems that Japanese teachers considered slackness as a sign of deviancy, so that such transgressions as a missing name-tag, uniforms of the wrong length, or the wrong colour headband (for girls) were punished.<sup>77</sup> Such strict policing and scrutinising of students turned the school authorities into a major antagonist for rebellious Japanese youth. Therefore, in the Japanese context, the school is more than just the backdrop but rather a crucial element that shapes rebellious youth culture. The first phase of rebellion for the majority of the Japanese youth began with violating school rules, including the regulations surrounding uniforms.

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<sup>74</sup> Rohlen, *Japan's High School*, 294-295.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 294.

<sup>76</sup> Chisaki Toyama-Bialke, "The "Japanese Triangle" for Preventing Adolescent Delinquency: Strength and Weakness of the Family-School-Adolescent Relationship from a Comparative Perspective," in *Juvenile Delinquency in Japan Reconsidering the 'Crisis'*, ed. Gesine Foljanty-Jost (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 26.

<sup>77</sup> Toyama-Bialke, "The "Japanese Triangle" for Preventing Adolescent Delinquency: Strength and Weakness of the Family-School-Adolescent Relationship from a Comparative Perspective," 26.

Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter argue that any kind of uniform serves a dual function.<sup>78</sup> The foremost function of a uniform is to establish a group membership and to distinguish members from non-members; the second function is the imposition of group conformity.<sup>79</sup> Heath and Potter argue that the violation of the uniform has become one of the most powerful symbols of adolescent rebellion in contemporary society.<sup>80</sup> This can be well applied to the Japanese context where, firstly, the customisation of the school uniform became the first step of rebellion for wayward students developing their own style and culture, and secondly, the customisation of uniforms in *tsuppari*, *furyō* and *yankī* style eventually became one of the prototypical images of teenage rebellion in Japan.

Initially, in Japan, it was assumed that once socio-economic stability was achieved, the rate of juvenile crimes would drop. In fact, the number of juvenile criminals living in poverty in 1983 was only 13.7%, compared to 72.3% in 1955.<sup>81</sup> The decrease in legal transgression among impoverished youth is striking; however, the hypothesis that poverty was the main cause of deviant behaviour was quashed as the 1980s saw the emergence of the anti-school *yankī* culture and the notorious *bōsōzoku*. The rise of new types of deviant youth culture highlights the fact that juvenile delinquency is not class-based behaviour. As scholars such as Ambaras and Yonekawa Shigenobu observe, “juvenile delinquency”<sup>82</sup> or *furyō kōi* (deviant behaviour) seemed to occur regardless of class, as indicated by the increase in the number of youth offenders from average middle class families during the 1980s.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter, *The Rebel Sells: How the counterculture became consumer culture* (Chichester: Capstone, 2005), 170.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Yonekawa Shigenobu, “Youth Deviant Behaviour, Conflict, and Later Consequences: Comparison of Working and Middle Class Communities in Japan” in *Juvenile Delinquency in Japan Reconsidering the ‘Crisis,’* ed. Gesine Foljanty-Jost (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 116.

<sup>82</sup> Although Ambaras does not specify whether he was referring to criminal or rebellious behaviour, (which further illustrates the problem of using only one term to discuss a wide ranging behaviour) his focus had been on legislation and official records of juvenile crimes thus he presumably meant youth offenders.

<sup>83</sup> Ambaras, *Bad Boys: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan*, 196. Yonekawa, “Youth Deviant Behaviour, Conflict, and Later Consequences: Comparison of Working and Middle Class Communities in Japan,” 116.

Dick Hebdige argues that the economy plays a crucial role in the construction of youth, and the emergence of adolescents is “intimately bound up with the creation of the youth market.” He further states that it is financial power that gives adolescents a space to “construct [their] own identities untouched by the soiled and compromised imaginaries of the parent culture.”<sup>84</sup> Instead of decreasing the rate of delinquency, economic prosperity generated a new breed of juvenile delinquents, hedonistic youths who had access to various commodities ranging from leather jackets to motorcycles and this very pattern of consumption became part of the performance of rebellious identity by Japanese adolescents in the 1980s. This is reminiscent of the pattern of behaviour evident in the American context, where the increasing consumer power of adolescents in the 1950s redefined juvenile delinquency as a commodity-based identity.

### **Youth market and youth culture**

The combination of an increasing adolescent population and economic prosperity in 1950s America had created a youth market, as various industries tried to profit from what the cultural critic Dwight Macdonald has called “free money”:

“Free from all claims except the possessors’ whim...Some teenagers actually have more free money to spend than their parents, who must meet all kinds of fixed obligations, among them the support (and the allowances) of the teenagers in question.”<sup>85</sup>

In post-war American society, the number of youth in fulltime employment dropped but youth consumption was sustained by the flourishing economy, through financial support from parents or part-time employment. It was estimated that the average weekly income of the American teen in 1958 had risen to ten dollars.<sup>86</sup> Macdonald further estimated that the 17 million American teens would have spent

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<sup>84</sup> Dick Hebdige, “Posing...Threats, Striking...Poses: Youth, Surveillance, and Display,” *SubStance* 11, no.4 (1982): 78, accessed March 14, 2013. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3684181>.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>86</sup> Osgerby, “‘A Caste, a Culture, a Market’: Youth, Marketing, and Lifestyle in Postwar America,” 18-19.

a total of 9.5 billion dollars by the end of 1958.<sup>87</sup> The vast scale and hedonistic traits of teenage consumption was a recurrent topic of comment throughout the 1950s.

If sociologists and the government considered the rising number of adolescents as a national threat, various industries saw youth as an opportunity for profit. . Eugene Gilbert, who at the age of 19 established a commercial research agency called Gil-Bert Teen Age Services in 1945, was one of the first to realise the economic potential of the youth market. This agency specialised in researching the consumer patterns of American youth, and advised various companies on how to market to the adolescents. Since the teenage market was “quite unlike marketing to any other portion of the total market” his agency provided a “deep insight into their habits, ideas and thoughts.”<sup>88</sup> During the 1950s, the agency became a multi-million dollar business, reflecting the rise of youth as a major consumer power in the American economy.

As various industries attempted to profit from this growing market, the image of adolescents became increasingly bound up with the idea of consumerism. For example, early teenagers were labelled as the Coca-Cola generation, a class-less youth defined by the consumer product they consumed.<sup>89</sup> Macdonald went as far as to claim that “the teenage market – and, in fact, the very notion of the teenager - has been created by the business men who exploit it.”<sup>90</sup> However, others like Steven Miles counter such arguments by pointing out that the relationship between American teenagers and the market was “mutually exploitative:”

The proposition that young people actively engage with the mass media and to a degree forge it in their own image is a sound one, but only ever partially realised. Ultimately, the parameters within which young people are able to do so, are set down for them by a mass media that is inevitably constructed first and foremost on the need to sell magazines, programmes and what is essentially a consumerist way of life.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Dwight Macdonald, “Profiles: A Caste, A Culture, A Market,” *New Yorker* 34 (November 22, 1958): 73.

<sup>88</sup> Eugene Gilbert, *Advertising and Marketing to Young People* (Pleasantville, NY: Printers’ Ink Books, 1957), 52.

<sup>89</sup> Mungham and Pearson, *Working Class Youth Culture*, 15.

<sup>90</sup> Macdonald, “Profiles: A Caste, A Culture, A Market,” 58.

<sup>91</sup> Steven Miles, *Youth Lifestyles in a Changing World* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), 85.

Although not as pessimistic as Macdonald, Miles also highlights the exploitation of teenage consumers by pointing out that the youth may have the choice to select ‘culture’ but their choice is inevitably influenced by the mass media which is used extensively by the various industries to sell their product. For example, in 1956, Hires Root Beer used a portion of its 3 million dollar promotions budget to pay popular high school girls to ask for Hires soft drinks when out on dates.<sup>92</sup> Such manipulation of the market was further developed by Gilbert, who incorporated Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld’s study of “opinion leaders,” and argued that the best strategy in teenage marketing was to sell the products to the popular students. He claimed that they were the opinion leaders among youth and that their approval counted “far more than what Mom and Dad approve at home.”<sup>93</sup> Such a notion echoes David Riesman’s theory of the “other-directed society” from *The Lonely Crowd* (1950). Riesman argues that every society exerts pressure to conform but American society was shifting towards what he categorises as an other-directed society, in which individuals respond to conformist pressure from contemporary influences such as friends, acquaintances and the mass media, as opposed to inner-directed societies where pressure comes from parents or elders and in the form of tradition.<sup>94</sup>

As the productivity of the U.S. surpassed other war-torn nations and production increased, mass production methods such as the assembly line and scientific management were prioritised while the individual was devalued and sacrificed in order to maximise production and profit.<sup>95</sup> Such enforcement of conformity was seen in all areas of post-war American society in the face of the perceived Communist threat, but it can also be interpreted as an attempt to maintain economic prosperity. The former editor of the *Fortune* magazine, William H. Whyte Jr, made such an observation in *The*

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<sup>92</sup> Osgerby, “‘A Caste, a Culture, a Market’: Youth, Marketing, and Lifestyle in Postwar America,” 21.

<sup>93</sup> “Catching the Consumers at a Critical Age,” *Business Week*, 26 Oct. 1957 cited in Doherty, *Teenagers and Teenpics: Juvenilisation of American Movies*, 42.

<sup>94</sup> Riesman argued that societies passed through three stages, tradition-direction, inner-direction and other-direction. The pressure to conform stemmed from tradition and ritual in tradition-direction societies, while it stemmed from parents and elders in the inner-direction societies and acquaintances and mass media in the other-direction societies. He went on to argue that inner-directed people channel their energy towards production, whereas other-directed people channel theirs towards consumption.

<sup>95</sup> Andrew J. Dunar, *America in the Fifties*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 189.

*Organization Man* (1956), arguing that American society was shifting towards corporate culture where the bureaucrats demanded conformity, not just at the workplace but also within the home.<sup>96</sup> With the prospect of a Communist attack, this was the time when belonging to a group was of utmost importance and the easiest and most obvious way to demonstrate one's conformity to the group was through consumption. Under such circumstances, the pressure to belong affected purchasing decisions as people sought to blend into the crowd.

The emergence of youth culture in the 1950s challenged dominant conformist ideologies such as family oriented together-ness. The rise of the youth market and the vast consumer power of teenagers seemed to indicate the weakening of parental influence and the "family's cohesive power."<sup>97</sup> Thus, teenagers and youth culture were considered as a threat to American society. One of the most vocal critics of youth culture was Fredric Wertham, a psychiatrist and the author of *Seduction of the Innocent: the Influence of Comic Books on Today's Youth* (1954). Although his main target was the comic book industry for corrupting young minds, Wertham repeatedly claimed that the consumption of popular culture, in general, caused anti-social and deviant behaviour. Although there was no credible scientific basis to his argument, his publications led to public outrage against the comic book industry and led to the comic book burning incidents of 1948.<sup>98</sup> These incidents in the late 1940s can be interpreted as a prelude to the nationwide concern over youth culture and the moral panic over juvenile delinquency in the 1950s, when participation in youth culture was added to the long list of delinquent activities by concerned parents who believed that popular culture was the cause of deviant behaviour.

Despite parental outrage over popular culture, the production and consumption of popular culture in the 1950s was unstoppable. Although not *all* youth culture was about rebellion, in the 1950s it was in its initial stage of separating itself from both children's culture and adult-centred culture. Before

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<sup>96</sup> Whyte used the increasing church membership in suburban areas as an evidence of people seeking "belonging-ness" and "togetherness." William H. Whyte Jr, *The Organization Man* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 46-59.

<sup>97</sup> Osgerby, "A Caste, a Culture, a Market': Youth, Marketing, and Lifestyle in Postwar America," 23.

<sup>98</sup> David Hajdu, *The Ten-cent Plague: the Great Comic-book Scare and How it Changed America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), 116-117.



adolescents gained consumer power, entertainment for youth was controlled by adults; for example, adolescent characters portrayed in the media were dominated by the polite and cheerful “Kleen Teens” (as dubbed by Barson and Heller) which can be seen as a projection of society’s ideal youth. The Kleen Teens had dominated the American media in the 1930s but by the 1950s they were gradually replaced by the more rebellious youth, or, as Miriam Linna, a pulp fiction author described, “the black leather barbarians.”<sup>99</sup> The flourishing youth culture of the 1950s indicates how the sheer economic power of teenagers (and those exploiting their disposable income) overrode parental protest.

The combination of an increasing adolescent population and economic prosperity in the 1980s in Japan also saw the emergence of a “mutually exploitative” relationship between the youth and the market, as well as a shift towards an other-directed society. As in 1950s American society, consumption became one of the ways in which individuals performed their group affiliation and ensured membership within the group in 1980s Japan. Scholars like Maniwa Mitsuyuki (1990) have described the Japanese school and workplace environment as “closed social systems” where the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion generate fierce competition amongst group members to conform to the norms of the group.<sup>100</sup> The technological advances in the post-war period meant that commodification and consumerism in 1980s Japan were more extreme than in 1950s America. The newly emerging hedonistic youth living in an increasingly capitalist environment, and their obsession over “brands” and various consumer goods, is best illustrated by Tanaka Yasuo’s Akutagawa prize nominated and best-selling novel *Nantonaku, Kurisutaru* (*Somehow, Crystal*, 1980). In the postscript published in its Kawade publisher’s edition (1983), the author questions the unchanging portrayal of adolescents in the Japanese novel despite the vast socio-economic changes that had taken place in the post-war years, and states that he was waiting

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<sup>99</sup> Miriam Linna quoted in Joel Foreman, “The Opening of America: Meaningful Differences in 1950s Television,” in *The Other Fifties: Interrogating Midcentury American Icons*, 50.

<sup>100</sup> Maniwa Mitsuyuki 間庭充幸, *Nihonteki Shudan no Shakaigaku* 日本的集団の社会学 [The Sociology of Japanese Groups] (Tōkyō: Kawadeshobō, 1991) cited in Davi S. Crystal, “Concepts of Deviance in Children and Adolescents: The Case of Japan” *Deviant Behaviour* 15, no.3 (1994): 251.

for something “different.”<sup>101</sup> Although the author does not specify what he was waiting for, or how the youth of the 1980s were different to the previous generation, the foremost difference between the ‘outdated’ (according to Tanaka) portrayals of youth and his own is their living conditions, especially their consumption-based life styles. The economic miracle of the 1980s meant that the youth were not only surrounded by a vast quantity of consumer goods but they also had the consumer power to enjoy them. Following the publication of this novel, its title was used to label the newly emerging brand-obsessed youth consumers and the *kurisutaru zoku* (the Crystal tribe) became a social phenomenon in the 1980s.

Tanaka’s novel is so full of brand-names and trendy shops that it is often described by critics as the combination of a fashion catalogue and a town guide for trend-conscious youth consumers; it contained over 400 footnotes explaining various shops and goods that the characters indulge in throughout the narrative. As Saito Minako points out, despite the supplementary information in the footnotes, these brand names and shops made no sense unless the reader had prior knowledge. Tanaka simply listed brands and goods without further depiction so that the consumer goods listed in *Nantonaku, Kurisutaru* serve as codes that could only be deciphered by adolescent readers with knowledge of popular brands and places.<sup>102</sup> Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood argue that the consumed product functions as a “weapon of exclusion” for adolescents,<sup>103</sup> meaning that the consumption and display of such goods not only shows the individual’s group affiliation but, at the same time, is also used to exclude non-members. Indeed, the consumer goods listed throughout *Nantonaku Kurisutaru* can be read as codes because they are precisely the “weapons of exclusion” for the *kurisutaru-zoku*. It is an example of youth culture attempting to distinguish itself not just from adult culture but also from other sub-cultural groups that emerged throughout the 1980s.

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<sup>101</sup> Tanaka Yasuo 田中康夫, *Nantonaku, Kurisutaru* なんとなく、クリスタル [Somehow Crystal] (Tōkyō: Kawade Bunkō, 1983).

<sup>102</sup> Saito Minako 齊藤美奈子, *Bungakuteki shōhinguaku* 文学的商品学 [Commodification in Literature] (Tōkyō: Kinokuniya Shōten, 2004), 18-19.

<sup>103</sup> Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards and Anthropology of Consumption* (London: Allen Lane, 1979), 85.

The economic prosperity of the 1980s had given Japanese youth a space and the means to establish their own culture and the growing economy led to the thriving of youth sub-culture within the larger frame of youth culture - which Fujimura Masayuki interprets as “intra-generational diversification” (*sedainai saika*)<sup>104</sup> For example, *takenoko-zoku* (the Bamboo Shoot tribe) was just one of such sub-cultures to emerge in the 1980s; they dressed up in extravagant costumes and danced in the streets or parks in popular areas such as Harajuku.<sup>105</sup> Each of these ‘tribes’ and youth sub-groups had their distinct fashion and activities, and likewise, for both *tsuppari* and *yankī*, their customisation of school uniforms and the pompadour hair style, borrowed from the 1950s American greaser style, became the crucial elements in performing their identity. Therefore, as Hebdige argued, consumption was an expressive medium for adolescents whereby being in possession of certain goods separated group members from non-group members.<sup>106</sup>

Consuming various products became a way for the youth to not only separate their culture from adult culture but also to differentiate between different youth groups, and thus consumption became the crux of youth identity. This meant that Japanese youth of the 1980s were subject to exploitation by the various industries that sought to profit from their ‘free money’ just as the American teens had been in the 1950s. Alissa Quart claims that adolescents are the “victims of the contemporary luxury economy” and that the marketers prey on the fragile “half-formed” identities of youth.<sup>107</sup> Exploitation or not, the intricate relationship between the teenage population and the youth market shows that youth identity had become a consumer identity. Hebdige elaborates that the youth had converted themselves to “objects” by using consumer goods as “boundary markers” and a “means of articulating identity and difference.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Fujimura Masayuki cited in Ōyama Masahiko 大山昌彦, “Ibarakiken A-shi ni Okeru ‘Fifutūzu Fasshon’ no Shōhi to Hen’yō: Sabukaruchāteki Sutairu no Rōkaruka/Rōkaraizudoka,” 219.

<sup>105</sup> Onden Omotesandō Shōtengai 穩田表参道商店会 [Onden Omotesandō Shopping District Association], *Harajuku 1995* 原宿 1995 [Harajuku 1995] (Tokyo: Com-Pro, 1994), 52.

<sup>106</sup> Hebdige, “Posing...Threats, Striking...Poses: Youth, Surveillance, and Display,” 78.

<sup>107</sup> Douglas and Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards and Anthropology of Consumption*, 85. Heath and Potter, *The Rebel Sells: How the counterculture became consumer culture*, 222.

<sup>108</sup> Hebdige, “Posing...Threats, Striking...Poses: Youth, Surveillance, and Display,” 78.

## **Juvenile delinquency as a cultural phenomenon**

### **Rebellion through fashion and consumption**

Whether it was empowerment or exploitation (perhaps both), rebellious youth constructed and performed their ‘delinquent’ identity through distinct fashion, language and behaviour. Fashion in particular has attracted academic attention, as the images of “black leather barbarians” in the U.S. and the *yankī* with their customised uniforms and distinct hair styles in Japan have become the epitome of teenage rebellion in popular culture. The greaser or rock ‘n’ roll style in 1950s America, and the *yankī* fashion in 1980s Japan were originally part of the performance of delinquent identity, whereby elements that transgressed society’s idea of ideal youth were deliberately incorporated. However, when these styles were used in popular culture to portray charismatic and rebellious heroes, they became a mainstream trend; and once they became a ‘trend’ they were soon vulnerable to replacement by the next trend. Although the delinquent fashions of 1950s America and 1980s Japan was eventually discarded by adolescents, the image of American youth in blue jeans and a black leather jacket with a pompadour hairstyle or Japanese youth in *yankī* fashion is associated with teenage rebellion in both contexts to this day, through their recurrent portrayal in popular culture.

### **Uniform of rebellion: the dress code of juvenile delinquents**

In America, the emergence of independent youth culture in the 1950s meant that there were new dress codes for adolescents and the media played a vital role in spreading the new fashion style. There were two main styles for youth: the “preppy” and conservative Ivy League look, and the cool greaser look. This division of style reflects what was left of class distinction amongst American teens; but either way, the adolescents rejected outfits that “mimicked” adult fashion and attempted to construct their own style.<sup>109</sup> While the Ivy League style was the “elite” style adopted by the middle class boys, who were able to attend college and had a prospect of obtaining a white collar job once they enter adulthood;

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<sup>109</sup> William H. Young and Nancy K. Young, *The 1950s: American Popular Culture Through History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2004), 88.

those without such economic privilege opted for the greaser look. The greaser fashion consisted of black leather jackets, tight-fitting jeans, tight white or black T-shirts, with a cigarette packet stored in a rolled-up T-shirt sleeve; their footwear of choice was laced-up shoes with pointed toes or motorcycle boots.<sup>110</sup> The greaser style was finished off with a D.A. (“duck arse”) or pompadour hairstyle, styled with an extensive amount of hair oil or pomade, hence the term ‘greasers.’ Unlike the boys, the girls were more reluctant to go greaser – only the more rebellious girls adopted this style, which consisted of heavy makeup, a padded bra and tight fitting clothes. However, these girls were in the minority as most girls adopted a more formal and socially acceptable style of clothing following, for example, Audrey Hepburn’s simple style.<sup>111</sup> This reflects how juvenile delinquent culture was originally dominated by the boys as will become more evident in the discussion of literary representation to follow.

The American juvenile delinquent fashion of the 1950s also illustrates how colour itself can have a rebellious and deviant meaning. For instance, those who belonged in a gang would sport jackets with their gang names on the back or wear particular colour combinations for identification. The colour pink was also worn by the boys to represent “a kind of freedom from rigid categories of male and female, of middle class and other class.”<sup>112</sup> According to William Graebner, the popular colour combination at the time was pink, a colour of innocence and girlishness, and the black of “male malevolence” which did not belong together; and he interprets this as a statement of defiance against white, middle class dominance by working class youth.<sup>113</sup>

For both boys and girls, the greaser style was more than a fashion choice; it generated an air of lawlessness, and served as a statement of rebellion. Previous to the 1950s, jeans had been associated with low paid labourers, and the greased hairstyle with Italian and Hispanic minorities. There was also extensive borrowing from the African American communities, especially from musicians. As Rollin

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<sup>110</sup> Rollin, *Twentieth-Century Teen Culture by the Decades: A Reference Guide*, 171.

<sup>111</sup> Young and Young, *The 1950s: American Popular Culture Through History*, 90.

<sup>112</sup> Rollin, *Twentieth-Century Teen Culture by the Decades: A Reference Guide*, 171.

<sup>113</sup> William Graebner, *Coming of Age in Buffalo: Youth and Authority in the Postwar Era* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 74.

points out, these rebellious styles were considered as a direct challenge to authority, especially in high schools, since adults perceived such fashion as a sign of juvenile delinquency.<sup>114</sup> Graebner also notes that adults launched a “Dress Right” campaign, a program intended to bring homogeneity and conformity to school grounds.<sup>115</sup> Under the campaign, the boys were required to wear ties or sweaters and jackets, or sports shirts and “standard” trousers, while for the girls, jeans were discouraged.<sup>116</sup> Despite such action, the rebellious JD fashion became the new trendy look for mainstream teenagers and it is best illustrated by the mainstreaming of the D.A. hairstyle. The popularity of Elvis Presley had led to fan girls incorporating the D.A. hairstyle that eventually, even the middle-class teens (presumably non-delinquent) had adopted the somewhat “watered down version” of the trademark JD hairstyle; its name was even modified to “ducktail” so that even the “nice girls” could wear them too.<sup>117</sup> The mainstreaming of JD fashion during the 1950s suggests that American youth in general had begun to challenge the prevailing middle class values of their parents. The choice of fashion, to go fully greaser or opt for its watered down version, reflects an individual’s degree of rebelliousness. Either way, JD fashion was used by teenagers as tools of resistance and rebellion against their parents and society in general.<sup>118</sup>

If the American teens of the 1950s expressed their rebellion through the incorporation of ethnic minority or lower class culture, Japanese teens of the 1980s were less politically motivated and their expression of rebellion tended to represent their angst against the school system; customising their school uniforms became their main mode of resistance. The origin of such anti-school rebellion can be traced back to the *tsuppari* culture which emerged in the late 1970s. As documented by Endō Natsuki in *Tokyo Furyō Shōnen Densetsu (The Legend of Tokyo Juvenile Delinquents, 2010)*, the *tsuppari*

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<sup>114</sup> Young and Young, *The 1950s: American Popular Culture Through History*, 90.

<sup>115</sup> William Graebner, *Coming of Age in Buffalo: Youth and Authority in the Postwar Era*, 99-103.

<sup>116</sup> Rollin, *Twentieth-Century Teen Culture by the Decades: A Reference Guide*, 172.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>118</sup> Borrie, “Wild Ones: Containment Culture and 1950s Youth Rebellion,” 42.

customised their uniforms into a militaristic style and took immense pride in them.<sup>119</sup> Changes to the length of the jacket and the width of the pants were made to the regulation *gakuran* uniform (traditional Japanese school uniform jacket for boys), and the *tsuppari*-look was completed by embroidery in red or orange thread often bearing such phrases as ‘the Great Empire of Japan.’ The rising sun flag and reference to the Empire were a popular motif among *tsuppari* and later, among *bōsōzoku* as well. Narumi Hiroshi who studies delinquent fashion argues that the right-wing motif was borrowed, not out of allegiance to a right-wing political organisation or to the Emperor, but simply because these images were threatening. He compares *tsuppari* culture to the adoption of the Nazi swastika by British punks for its shock-value rather than with any ideological intent.<sup>120</sup>

According to Endō, the custom of uniform alteration was passed down from the upperclassmen *tsuppari* to freshmen *tsuppari* in the form of a “tradition” during the late 1970s and he further states that they were the “uniform of *tsuppari*” rather than a fashion trend or a political statement.<sup>121</sup> The same can be said of the *sukeban* who customised their school uniforms and wore their skirts at ankle-length and dyed their hair. This can be seen as a deliberate response to the mini-skirt which was the popular trend among mainstream girls at the time. Both *sukeban* and *tsuppari* fashion reaffirmed group membership and excluded non-members to the extent that the incorporation of their style by those who were not *sukeban* or *tsuppari* was punished. Throughout the late 1970s and the 1980s, incidents like *chapatsu-gari* (hunting of the ‘brown hair’) were frequently reported.<sup>122</sup> Such attitudes highlight the way that, by defying the conformist regulation uniform, *tsuppari* and *sukeban* were simply conforming to a different set of rules. This is the dilemma countercultures like rebellious youth culture face, as in

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<sup>119</sup> Endō Natsuki 遠藤夏輝, *Tōkyō Furyō Shōnen Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu* 東京不良少年伝説: C R S 連合誕生の真実 [The Legend of Tokyo Rebels: The Truth Behind the Birth of CRS Union] (Tōkyō: Mirion Shuppan, 2010), 68-71.

<sup>120</sup> Narumi Hiroshi 成実弘至, “Yankī Fasshon: Kajōsa no Nakano Sōzōsei” ヤンキー・ファッション: 過剰さの中の創造性 [Yankī Fashion: Creativity within Extravagancy], in *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* ヤンキー文化論序説 [An Introduction to Yankī Culture Studies], ed. Igarashi Tarō 五十嵐太郎 (Tōkyō: Kawade Shobō, 2009), 80-81.

<sup>121</sup> Endō Natsuki (writer) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

<sup>122</sup> *Sukeban* or *tsuppari* considered dyed or bleached hair as their own distinct style to the extent that they went on a “hunt” to punish non-*sukeban* or non-*tsuppari* with dyed or bleached hair. Nanba, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi*, 63.

their effort to resist conformity they too end up being conformists.

Delinquency is an identity that individuals construct and perform through a specific style that, at the same time, creates an ‘us-and-them’ binary that is maintained by the code.<sup>123</sup> In the Japanese context, this code went beyond dress. Endō explains that the style of behaviour of earlier *tsuppari*, such as the way a cigarette was lit or the way they walked, in addition to the tradition of uniform customisation, was passed down.<sup>124</sup> They also began to develop their own distinct vocabulary which is documented in Endō’s book, *The Legend of Tokyo Delinquents* (2010). The fashion, language and behaviour of *tsuppari* eventually became the prototypical style of the rebellious teenager, and although *tsuppari* themselves did not think of their style as a fashion trend, it became just that by the 1980s as *tsuppari* slowly transformed from counterculture to mainstream culture. This transformation is marked by the popular song titled “Tsuppari High School Rock’n roll [sic]” released in 1981 by Japanese rock band Yokohama Ginbae. The band borrowed the greaser fashion including black leather jackets, blue jeans and the D.A hairstyle to create their own signature style and played a part in spreading the greaser look in the 1980s. For Japanese rebellious youth, subverting school regulations had been the primary “expressive medium” that separated them from the non-delinquents as seen in the tradition of *tsuppari* and *sukeban*. However, throughout the 1980s, they also began to develop their own style of fashion outside the school in order to set themselves apart from other sub-cultural groups on the streets, such as the Bamboo Shoot Tribe, and in this way, the *yankī* style emerges.

Study of *yankī* fashion shows that, in the first instance, there was extensive borrowing of styles from the U.S. as cheaper imports were made available for consumption in 1980s Japan due to its economic

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<sup>123</sup> The concept of performative identity is borrowed from Judith Butler’s work on gender which is widely incorporated and cited beyond the study of gender. Butler argues that identities are carefully constructed and performed. For further reference to performativity, see Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory.” *Theatre Journal* 40, no.4 (1988): 519-531.

<sup>124</sup> Endō, *Tōkyō Furyō Shōnen Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu*, 71.



growth.<sup>125</sup> The styles that had the most impact and influence on rebellious youth in Japan were the JD styles from 1950s America and the greaser fashion in particular.<sup>126</sup> This coincided with a mass revival of 1950s American youth culture on a global scale that targeted the generation who had been adolescents in the 1950s.<sup>127</sup> However, when these nostalgic commodities reached Japan, they attracted adolescent consumers who had not experienced the juvenile delinquent culture of the 1950s but recognised its rebelliousness and were widely incorporated by Japanese youth trying to perform their rebellious identity.<sup>128</sup>

In addition to the *yankī* culture, *bōsōzoku* also emerged in the 1980s, as hedonistic youth engaged in street racing and reckless gang activities around town. Unlike *tsuppari* or *yankī*, *bōsōzoku* were organised gangs, therefore their uniforms were embellished with the gang name and other symbols. As recorded by Endō, the earlier *bōsōzoku* members did not have a uniform and they wore *yankī* style clothing, making the distinction between *bōsōzoku* members and regular *yankī* difficult as they both incorporated the greaser style.<sup>129</sup> In addition to American greaser fashion, eventually *bōsōzoku* created their own distinct style with *tokkōfuku*, which was a customisation of the kamikaze fighter uniform; as pictured in the image below, the militaristic right-wing elements are strong in this style.

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<sup>125</sup> Ōyama Masahiko 大山昌彦, “Ibarakiken A-shi ni Okeru ‘Fifutīzu Fasshon’ no Shōhi to Hen’yō: Sabukaruchāteki Sutairu no Rōkaruka/Rōkaraizudoka,” 221.

<sup>126</sup> Endō, *Tōkyō Furyō Shōnen Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu*, 13.

<sup>127</sup> Ōyama Masahiko 大山昌彦, “Ibarakiken A-shi ni Okeru ‘Fifutīzu Fasshon’ no Shōhi to Hen’yō: Sabukaruchāteki Sutairu no Rōkaruka/Rōkaraizudoka,” 216.

<sup>128</sup> Narumi “*Yankī Fasshon, Kajōsa no Nakano Sōzōsa*,” 80-81.

<sup>129</sup> Endō, *Tōkyō Furyō Shōnen Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu*, 72.



Image of *bōsōzoku* wearing their *tokkōfuku* taken by Iwahashi Ken'ichirō<sup>130</sup>

During the 1980s, these threatening images of teenage rebellion began to appear in the media, through popular rock bands such as Yokohama Ginbae and Carol, as well as via the portrayal of rebellious heroes wearing customised school uniforms and *tokkōfuku* in *manga* and films. This mainstreaming of rebellious youth culture in the media transformed the threatening rebellious style into simply another fashionable trend.

The mainstreaming of Japanese rebellious youth culture reached new heights when kittens dressed in *yankī*, *furyō* and *bōsōzoku* fashions called *Nameneko* began trending. This character merchandise was created by Tsuda Satoru and it transformed the image of troublesome and threatening teenagers and bikers into 'cute' collectables. At the height of its popularity, there were over 500 items of *Nameneko* merchandise. They were even exported to the U.S. under the name Perlorian Cats, but were dressed in costumes that were more familiar to American consumers as the culturally-specific fashions of *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* would have been lost in translation.<sup>131</sup> The popularity of *Nameneko* in Japan was so phenomenal that Saito Tamaki even goes as far as to claim that this character is the symbol of *yankī*.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Iwahashi Ken'ichirō 岩橋健一郎, "Tokkōfuku no Moji" 特攻服の文字 [The Letters on Tokkōfuku], *Iwahashi Ken'ichirō Kōshiki Burogu* 岩橋健一郎公式ブログ [Iwahashi Ken'ichirō Official Blog], Accessed June 20, 2015, <http://10chin.net/archives/434568.html>.

<sup>131</sup> Tsuda Satoru, "When and how successful were they?" *Nameneko*, accessed November 5, 2013, <http://www.nameneko.com/jp/nameneko/02.html>.

<sup>132</sup> Saitō Tamaki 齊藤環, "Yankī Bunka to 'Kyaraktā'" ヤンキー文化と「キャラクター」 [Yankī Culture and the 'Character'], in *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* ヤンキー文化論序説 [An Introduction to Yankī Culture Studies], ed. Igarashi Tarō 五十嵐太郎 (Tōkyō: Kawade Shobō, 2009), 23.

Rather than arguing that these ‘cute’ kittens are the symbol of *yankī*, the phenomenon can be understood as the pinnacle of *yankī* mainstreaming; which at the same time signifies the decline of *yankī* as it was no longer about rebellion or resistance, but about trending and consumption. Such a shift in meaning (or the loss of meaning) recalls the mainstreaming of the ‘duck’s arse’ hairstyle of 1950s American rebels which became a trendy duck-tail hairstyle for ‘nice’ girls. According to Heath and Potter, this transformation from ‘threatening’ to ‘cute’ is the predictable and inevitable fate of counterculture in an age of capitalism.<sup>133</sup>

### **The emergence of the delinquent hero in popular culture**

If the mainstreaming of JD in the U.S and *yankī* style in Japan transformed the image of teenage rebellion into one of consumption and fashion trends, the deployment of such styles in the visual media to portray a charismatic hero glorified ‘delinquency’ into a rebellion for freedom. In the American context, juvies (JD films) played a crucial role in the emergence and development of juvenile delinquent narrative in the 1950s, while in the 1980s Japanese context it was the *furyō manga* that contributed to the development of rebellious teenage narrative.

In the 1950s, the American film industry was struggling to compete against the newly emerging media of television and began to use sensational topics to attract a wider audience. For the film industry in the 1950s, juvenile delinquency was a timely sensation, and more importantly, the film producers recognised that juvenile delinquency was a theme that attracted adolescent audiences, whose estimated 9.5 billion dollar disposable income had become a significant part of the market in most industries.<sup>134</sup> Film producers mixed and matched elements that would attract the attention of adolescent audiences such as gang violence, sex, drag racing and rock ‘n’ roll. According to Thomas Doherty, juvenile delinquent films were canonised by the success of two films, *Blackboard Jungle* (1955) and *Rebel*

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<sup>133</sup> Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter, *Nation of Rebels: Why Counterculture Became Consumer Culture*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 4, 13-15.

<sup>134</sup> Macdonald, “Profiles: A Caste, A Culture, A Market,” 73.

*without a Cause* (1955) which spawned countless others throughout the 1950s.<sup>135</sup>

The popularity of these juvies was perhaps encouraged by the suspicion adults had towards popular culture. The viewing of these films sometimes led to criminal behaviour; for example, in Memphis, Tennessee, a group of teenage girls burned down a barn in excitement after watching *Blackboard Jungle*.<sup>136</sup> Such incidents seemed to confirm Wertham's view that popular culture was indeed responsible for spreading juvenile delinquency. Contrary to the adults' distrust of rebellious characters on film, many among the adolescent audience admired them and sometimes imitated their behaviour.<sup>137</sup> The enthusiasm youth showed towards juvies and rebels on screen is well illustrated by the reaction of an adolescent audience for *Blackboard Jungle*, who, according to Leerom Medovoi, cheered when the film's protagonist (a teacher) was brutally attacked by the students.<sup>138</sup>

Such contrasting reactions to the film, *Blackboard Jungle*, between adult and adolescent audiences highlight how popular culture deepened the generational divide between American youth and their parents' generation. For the adolescent audience, the film was about rebellious youth challenging authority and conformity, whereas adult audiences saw the film as a valiant fight against juvenile delinquency and an attempt to re-establish authority- personified by the white, male teacher.<sup>139</sup> The barn-burning incident was not a completely isolated event, as similar incidents were reported throughout the U.S. Despite the parental uproar and demands for a ban on the film, it was never banned.<sup>140</sup>

The juvies glorified teenage rebellion and, as Medovoi explains, "the teen rebel appeared as a juvenile version of the Hollywood gangster, casting the antagonism of cop and robber in specifically

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<sup>135</sup> Doherty, *Teenagers and Teenpics: the Juvenilisation of American Movies in the 1950s*, 39.

<sup>136</sup> Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 138.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 140-150.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

generationally terms.”<sup>141</sup> The increasing prevalence of the delinquent hero in films led to the development of what Lindner categorised as the “positive rebel”- a delinquent hero with morals.<sup>142</sup> Medovoi argues that the earlier portrayal of adolescents in Hollywood film had been too simplistic; youth were either portrayed as young thugs who required adult guidance and spiritual redemption, as depicted in the *Dead End Kids* film series (1938~1939), or as relatively untroubled non-delinquent upper-middle class youth, or the Kleen Teens in the *Andy Hardy* films (1937~1958).<sup>143</sup>

However, throughout the 1950s, the portrayal of teenagers, especially that of a delinquent hero in films, began to develop complexity. Unlike the earlier Hollywood heroes who showed no vulnerability, the new hero projected emotional vulnerability, inner isolation, and eroticised sensitivity.<sup>144</sup> He was labelled by society as a delinquent due to his rebellious ways that sometimes transgressed legal boundaries, yet at the same time he occasionally showed a firm sense of right and wrong which set him apart from villainous characters. The glorification of rebellious heroes in the juvies indicates that what Leslie Fiedler has identified as the “good bad boy” hero in American literature was also emerging on the screen. Hollywood actors like James Dean and Marlon Brando, who played the charismatic good bad boys in these films, not only spread the greaser fashion to a mainstream audience, but they also contributed towards the glamorisation of teenage rebellion.

If films like *Rebel without a Cause* and *Blackboard Jungle* were responsible for the popularity of juvenile delinquent narrative in 1950s American popular culture, it was the 1980s *manga* that played a crucial role in the emergence of the good bad boy narrative in the Japanese context. The fictional portrayal of *tsuppari*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* as good bad boys in Japanese popular culture first emerged in what is categorised as *furyō manga*. Kiuchi Kazuhito’s *Bī Bappu Hai Sukūru (Be-Bop High School, 1983-2003)* and Yoshida Satoshi’s *Shonan Bakusō Zoku (Shonan Speed Tribe, 1982~1988)* are

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<sup>141</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 137.

<sup>142</sup> Lindner’s work on the minds of juvenile delinquents *Rebel without a Cause: The Hypnoanalysis of a Criminal Psychopath* (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1944) gave title to James Dean’s film *Rebel Without a Cause*.

<sup>143</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 170.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

considered as the quintessential texts which are often cited as the origin of the *furyō* genre. The plots of these *manga* revolve around a group of deviant students, who spend their high school years rebelling against school and society. Endō goes as far as to claim that the emergence of *tsuppari*, *yankī*, or *bōsōzoku* protagonists marked the emergence of a new type of adolescent hero in Japanese popular culture. Like the Hollywood actors in the popular juvies of the 1950s, these *manga* characters spread the rebellious fashion to mainstream readers in the 1980s.



*Be-Bop High School* by Kiuchi Kazuhiro (left), *Shōnan Speed Tribe* by Yoshida Satoshi (right)

Both *Be-Bop High School* and *Shōnan Speed Tribe* portray rebellious boys as ‘good bad boys’ who were mischievous and rebellious but had a strong sense of right and wrong; for example, they disobeyed school rules, but never engaged in the more serious criminal activities. The success of these two *manga* spawned countless other *manga* such that *furyō* and *yankī* eventually became a sub-category within the *manga* categorisation. The success of these two *manga* also led to extensive ‘media-mix’ (*mediamikkusu*) or adaptation into other genres and merchandising, exemplifying the vigorous commodification drive of the 1980s. For example, *Be-Bop* was especially phenomenal and its adaptation all-encompassing; in addition to the usual film and V-cine (Direct-to-video film), there were even *Be-bop pachinko* machines. In its original form, in the weekly or monthly *shōnen manga* (boys’ manga), it had specific target consumers, but the extensive adaptation into various media, especially

into film, meant that the text was able to reach a wider audience, which extended well beyond *manga* readers.

An indication of the popularity of the rebellious teenage hero can be seen in the way such portrayals began to emerge even in the *shōjo manga* (girls' comics). If *Be-Bop* and *Speed Tribe* are the quintessential *furyō manga* for boys, *Hot Road* (1986) by Tsumugi Taku can be considered as the quintessential *furyō manga* for girls, as it was one of the earliest and most successful girl-meets-rebel teen romances that incorporated a *bōsōzoku* element. The success of Tsumugi's work paved the way for the emergence of what is now considered as a cliché in *shōjo manga*, in which an ordinary high school heroine falls in love with a rebellious male character. In both *shōnen* and *shōjo manga*, the rebellious boys are portrayed as good bad boys who are morally "good" and "pure," regardless of being an outcast or dropout in the eyes of society.



*Crows* by Takahashi Hiroshi (left), *Jojo's Bizarre Adventures* by Araki Hirohiko (centre), *Badass Rumble* by Playstation (right)

The portrayal of good bad boys in the *tsuppari*, *yankī*, or *bōsōzoku* style in contemporary popular media such as *manga*, film and even computer games, continues to this day, as is illustrated by popular works such as the *Crows* series (1990~1998) by Takahashi Hiroshi, *Jojo's Bizarre Adventures: Part IV Diamond is Unbreakable* series (1992~1995) by Araki Hirohiko, and the *Badass Rumble* (2005~2012)

Playstation game series. The popularity of this trope is evident not simply in its continued publication and production, but in the extensive range of media in which it appears. The association of the word *furyō* with these images of rebellious teenagers from the 1980s in popular culture is recurrent and so strong that the term excludes the more contemporary cultures such as the colour gang or *Shibuya-kei*. This is a significant reason why the term *furyō* is not suitable as an equivalent term for the American 'JD' in categorising the novelistic form, as its signification is too focused on this specific era.

### **The rise of the rebellious teenage hero in adolescent literature**

#### **JD novels in American literature**

The popularity of teenage rebellion as a trope is as evident in American novels as it is in films. If James Dean and Marlon Brando were the iconic on-screen rebellious heroes, Holden Caulfield from J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) became the iconic good bad boy of American literature in the 1950s. For the film production companies, incorporating teenage rebellion had been a strategy to attract adolescent viewers, and in a similar fashion, the publishing companies also seized the opportunity to draw in adolescent readers by publishing what they understood as appealing tropes and genres. For example, the Ace Books publishing company, founded in 1952, specialised in paperback publications and produced a series of adolescent novels ranging from horror, crime, fantasy, science fiction and the newly emerging JD novels. These novels cost only 25 to 35 cents and were published in high quantities - the mass production and consumption culture of the 1950s had spread to the production of literature.





The Ace Books like these were considered as throwaway paperbacks in the 1950s, but they are now considered collectable vintage art.

Prior to the 1950s, paperbacks had been used to provide “intelligent books” at an affordable price.<sup>145</sup> A fundamental difference emerged between paperback production before and after the 1950s, as the focus shifted from intellectual to entertainment texts. Initially, the paperbacks were the re-prints of existing literature, but this changed when Gold Medal Books, an American publishing company published original works in the paperback form.<sup>146</sup> The success of Gold Medal Books was replicated by other companies like Ace Books that focused on entertainment fiction which, as a result, reshaped the production and consumption of American novels.

Although *The Catcher in the Rye* is often considered as the quintessential American juvenile delinquent novel, it was originally published for adult readers. Thus, Barson and Heller argue that Irving Shulman’s *The Amboy Dukes* (1947) is the first juvenile delinquent novel as it specifically targets adolescent readers and its success in the late 1940s “gave birth to an entire genre of JD fiction.”<sup>147</sup> According to Barson and Heller, over 2 million copies of *The Amboy Dukes* were sold and by 1950 the publishers were frantically producing similar texts as economical paperback novels, which led to the emergence of a new breed of writers who specialised in narratives of adolescent rebellion such as Hal

<sup>145</sup> Anne Trubeck, “How the Paperback Novel Changed Popular Literature,” Smithsonian.com, accessed May 14, 2014, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/how-the-paperback-novel-changed-popular-literature-11893941/?no-ist>

<sup>146</sup> Bill Crider, “Paperback Originals,” in *Paperback Quarterly* 1, no.1 (Spring, 1978): 3-5.

<sup>147</sup> Barson and Heller, *Teenage Confidential: An Illustrated History of the American Teen*, 47.

Ellson, Edward De Roo, Vin Packet and Wenzel Brown. This marked the emergence of JD as a sub-category of American adolescent fiction.

In order to produce original stories en masse and appeal to wider audiences, the publishing companies hired pulp fiction writers for the stories and pulp fiction artists for the paperback covers.<sup>148</sup> These novels were often labelled as ‘throwaways’ since mass production demanded quantity rather than quality, and they were considered simply as a form of entertainment for children, similar to comic books. Therefore, it is not surprising that many academics and critics in the 1950s considered the publication of paperback novels as a sign of the deteriorating quality of American literature. According to Medovoi, concerned academics and critics were frustrated at their loss of control over American literature in favour of the very publishers who were exploiting American literature through juvenilisation and massification and profiting by deforming it.<sup>149</sup> Macdonald was one such critic who singled out *The Cather in the Rye* as the major culprit, accusing it of “shamelessly” juvenilising American literature.<sup>150</sup> George Steiner, another critic, made a similar accusation by claiming that Salinger and his followers was the assembly line that turned American literature into a product of Fordist culture, and that Salinger was a ‘prostitute’ to his readers.<sup>151</sup>

It is ironic that the novel’s protagonist, Holden, was blamed because throughout the narrative, he questions and challenges the massification of American society; he laments the mass culture by criticising both his brother who worked in Hollywood “making lots of dough” and works by commercial writers as “dumb magazine stories.”<sup>152</sup> In fact, Salinger’s supporters countered Macdonald and Steiner by arguing that the mass distribution of *The Catcher* had in fact spread the denunciation of

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<sup>148</sup> Mark Moran, *Warman’s Antiques & Collectibles 2012 Price Guide* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2011), 130.

<sup>149</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 80-83.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>151</sup> George Steiner, “The Salinger Industry,” in *Studies in J.D. Salinger: Reviews, Essays, and Critiques of The Catcher in the Rye*, eds. Marvin Laser and Norman Fruman (New York: Odyssey Press, 1963), 116.

<sup>152</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 84.

massified literature through its protagonist.<sup>153</sup> They point out that Salinger encouraged readers to question the mass consumption and production that defined the 1950s through Holden. He is a delinquent who dropped out of school, angry at a world that is full of “phonies.” It is this rebellion against mainstream society that had captivated the adolescent readership.

As one youth from the 1950s, who claimed to know at least ten “Holden Caulfields at ITT”, explained, “every boy who reads *The Catcher* thinks he’s just like Holden.”<sup>154</sup> Although *The Catcher* was not published as an adolescent novel, many American adolescents identified with the frustrated teenage hero, so much so that Holden’s voice became the voice of American youth in the 1950s according to Robert Gutwillig, in a way that was reminiscent of the significance of Scott Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise* (1920) to the American college generation in the 1920s.<sup>155</sup> American novelist Dan Wakefield makes a similar statement in his celebratory essay “In Search of Love” claiming that the young readers of the 1950s found “in Holden Caulfield and to a lesser extent in James Dean, an expression of their own most fundamental attitudes.”<sup>156</sup> More importantly, Wakefield draws a direct parallel between Holden and James Dean, who had risen to fame through his film roles as a charismatic rebel.

In addition to the parallel in the actual contents, a link can also be found in the production of JD narrative in film and novels. Irving Shulman who wrote *Amboy Dukes* also wrote the script for *Rebel without a Cause* (1955), the film that defined Dean’s stardom. Such links illustrate the way that the JD novel emerged and developed within the larger frame of popular culture rather than solely within the confines of print narrative, and beyond the control of the academics and critics. JD is a sub-category created by the publishers and the readers consuming them, and understanding it as a commercial category to an extent explains why many scholars are reluctant to recognise it as a literary category,

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<sup>153</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 84.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>155</sup> Robert Gutwillig, “Everybody’s Caught The Catcher in the Rye,” in *Studies in J.D. Salinger: Reviews, Essays, and Critiques of the Catcher in the Rye and Other Fiction*, eds. Marvin Laser and Norman Fruman (New York: Odyssey Press, 1963), 1.

<sup>156</sup> Dan Wakefield, “Salinger and the Search for Love,” in *Salinger: A Critical and Personal Portrait*, Henry Grunwald, ed. (New York: Pocket Books, 1963) quoted in Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 72.

and incorporate ‘throwaway’ novels like *The Amboy Dukes* within the discourse of teenage rebellion in American adolescent literature.

### Theorising American JD fictions

*The Catcher’s* eventual inclusion in the discourse of American literature can be attributed to scholars like R.W.B. Lewis, who argued that Holden Caulfield was more than a fictional representation of disillusioned youth or the *storm and stress* that characterised adolescence. For Lewis, Holden was an “American Adam” – a personification of nation that challenged the ancestral “old world” and led the free “new world.”<sup>157</sup> Through such analysis, Holden’s agitation towards the “phonies” was interpreted as a commentary against conformist mainstream society and a fight for cultural freedom, and this struggle was accorded literary merit.

Under such analysis, Salinger’s protagonist was linked to other American Adams from classical texts such as Huckleberry Finn, and this seemed to validate the status of *The Catcher* as worthy scholarly material.<sup>158</sup> One critic, Charles Kaplan goes as far as to argue that “Huck Finn and Holden Caulfield are true blood-brothers” and that the two novels “deal obliquely and poetically with a major theme in American life, past and present – the right of the nonconformist to assert his non-conformity.”<sup>159</sup> The characterisation of Holden Caulfield as an American Adam elevates *The Catcher’s* literary status from a ‘throwaway’ JD novel to an exemplar of “Great American literature.”<sup>160</sup>

This line between high and popular literature continues to exist in the contemporary discourse of American literature, as paperback JD novels such as *The Amboy Dukes* continue to be largely ignored by scholars and *The Catcher* continues to be the central text in the discourse of American adolescent literature. Through decades of academic discourse, *The Catcher* has become a classic American novel,

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<sup>157</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 63-64.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>159</sup> Charles Kaplan, “Holden and Huck: The Odysseys of Youth,” *College English* 18 (November 1956), 80.

<sup>160</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 74-75.

and numerous contemporary adolescent novels are declared as a new version of this quintessential text. For example, Bret Easton Ellis' *Less Than Zero* (1985) is described as "an updated *Catcher in the Rye*," while two novels by Douglas Coupland, *Generation X* (1991) and *Shampoo Planet* (1993) are both praised as "*The Catcher in the Rye* of our times." Such linkage to the American classic is so abundant that it is no longer a standard just for male teenage rebellion but for any type of teenage struggle. David Leavitt's novel *The Lost Language of the Cranes* (1986) has been dubbed as the "gay *Catcher in the Rye*" and Blake Nelson's *Girl* (1994) as a "female *Catcher in the Rye* for the 'Grunge' generation."<sup>161</sup> The over-referencing of *The Catcher* both by scholars and the publishers, to authenticate the literary merit of contemporary novels by likening them to Salinger's classic novel, illustrates the extent to which it has become a ubiquitous reference in the discourse of American adolescent literature. Stephen Chobosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (1999) is promoted as "a coming-of-age tale in the tradition of *The Catcher in the Rye*" by the publishers,<sup>162</sup> yet the protagonist of Chobosky's novel cannot be considered as an American Adam since he does not display the anger and frustration towards society that had characterised that of *The Catcher*. It seems that the reference to this quintessential American novel has become a mere claim to literary quality, rather than affirming the link between the respective protagonists or contents.

Despite the elevated status of Salinger's novel as one of the greats of American literature, it did not pave way for the development of academic discourse on JD novels; further, the division of high and popular literature seems to remain, as illustrated not just by the lack of academic attention paid to novels like *The Amboy Dukes* but also in the choice of terms used (or not used) in academic discourse. Examination of 1950s American popular culture suggests that the term JD is a commercial category that emerged outside the academic sphere. This origin can be seen as one of the reasons why its usage

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<sup>161</sup> Kirk Cumutt, "Teenage Wasteland: Coming-of-Age Novels in the 1980s and 1990s," *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 43, no.1 (Fall, 2001): 93.

<sup>162</sup> Stephen Chbosky, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (New York: Pocket Books, 1999).

in academic discourse is almost non-existent. However, JD novels are being discussed under various different categories such as problem, young adult, and coming-of-age novels.

According to Peter Hollindale, the category of the 'problem novel' was created in order to distinguish novels like S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* (1967) from other adolescent novels.<sup>163</sup> Sheila Egoff explains that the 'problem' is the fundamental register for defining this sub-category of adolescent literature - authors present the problem but do not provide the readers with a solution; she argues that "cool, anecdotal explications are the *raison d'être* of problem novels."<sup>164</sup> In an attempt to clarify the category, Egoff divides the problems dealt with in this sub-category of adolescent fiction into two types, familial problems, which she describes as the "normal problems of family life – sibling rivalry, moving, adjusting to step father", and social problems, that include more delinquent behaviour such as "drugs, alcoholism, abortion, or sexual experimentation."<sup>165</sup> The need to draw boundaries and clarify the types of problems illustrates how inclusive the term 'problem' is, and how it could essentially include any 'problem' experienced during adolescence. As Dinah Stevenson points out, the category has become a "black hole" of meaning that engulfs anything that deals with a 'problem.'<sup>166</sup> In a further effort to clarify the category, Egoff identifies patterns in narrative, language, theme and setting of problem novels:

The narrative is almost always in the first person and its confessional tone is rigorously self-centred.

The vocabulary is limited and the observations are restricted by the pretence that an "ordinary" child is the narrator.

Sentences and paragraphs are short. Locutions are colloquial and the language is flat, without nuance, and often emotionally numb.

There is an obligatory inclusion of expletives.

Sex is discussed openly.

The setting is urban, usually in New York City, New Jersey or California.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Peter Hollindale, "The Adolescent Novel of Ideas," *Children's Literature in Education* 26, no.1 (1995): 84.

<sup>164</sup> Sheila A. Egoff, *Thursday's Child: Trends and Patterns in Contemporary Children's Literature* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1981), 68.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Dinah Stevenson, "Young Adult Fiction: An Editor's Viewpoint," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 9, no.2 (1984): 87.

<sup>167</sup> Egoff, *Thursday's Child: Trends and Patterns in Contemporary Children's Literature*, 68.

This list further highlights the problem of categorising literature, as most of the criteria Egoff has identified can actually be considered as recurrent traits in the vast majority of adolescent novels rather than the distinct characteristics of problem novels. For example, the use of first person narrative, colloquial language and sex, are common traits of the wider category of adolescent literature. Yet, at the same time, a detailed description of language style as “flat, without nuance, and often emotionally numb,” inclusion of expletives and limiting the setting to New York, New Jersey, and California seems too prescriptive. Using such rigid criteria to categorise problem novels could exclude even *The Catcher*, the novel that Egoff considered as the quintessential problem novel, as Holden Caulfield’s narrative is far from being emotionally numb. In order to make such criteria work when theorising a sub-category of literature, without being too inclusive or prescriptive, the category needs to be understood as a gradient scale. These criteria can be used as markers to measure the degree of problem novels, rather than as a set of definitive conditions.

Although not included in the above list, Egoff also identifies the importance of the power struggle between the protagonist and their parents, by using Judy Blume’s novel *Where Are You God? It’s Me Margaret* (1970) as an example. She points out that, in problem novels, the parents are often the source of the problem.<sup>168</sup> A similar observation is made in the discourse of young adult novels where the relationship with the parents is identified as the crucial element.<sup>169</sup> For example, all the texts that Egoff cites as problem novels can also be categorised as young adult novels. Thus it seems that the ‘problem’ presented in the novel is the only compulsory element and the remaining recurrent traits represent tendencies that can be found in the over-arching category of adolescent literature.

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<sup>168</sup> Egoff, *Thursday’s Child: Trends and Patterns in Contemporary Children’s Literature*, 68.

<sup>169</sup> Roberta Seelinger Trites, *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000), xii.

The second category under which JD novels are discussed is the ‘young adult’ category, which is often used as an alternative term for adolescent novels. Whereas the problem novel is a sub-category within the broad category of adolescent fiction, young adult literature is categorised to distinguish it both from children’s literature and adult literature. Under the young adult category, there are various sub-categories, but Roberta Seelinger Trites attempts to theorise the wider category and instead divides young adult literature into two types, *bildungsroman* and *entwicklungsroman*.

Rather than creating new terms, Trites borrows these somewhat archaic terms from 18<sup>th</sup> Century German literature. Trites redefines these two terms as follows: *bildungsroman* refers to young adult novels where the protagonist matures by the end of narrative, while the *entwicklungsroman* is used to refer to cases where the protagonist fails to reach adulthood. She argues that by using these two terms, we “can pay more attention to the relationship between power and growth that shapes adolescent literature.”<sup>170</sup> If the ‘problem’ was the main register for defining the problem novel, the issue of power and the transition from adolescent to adult, now become the genre-defining registers. Since JD novels are included within this young adult category, the registers that Trites identified can also be considered as compulsory for JD.

A third category under which JD novels are discussed is the ‘coming-of-age’ novel which is another alternative term for adolescent novel. Evidently, the issues of power and growth are the main registers for coming-of-age novels. If Trite’s discussion of young adult literature focused on identifying the different types within the larger category of young adult novels, Curnutt’s discussion of coming-of-age novels focuses on the generational difference and compares the coming-of-age novels from the 1950s to the 1990s. Rather than categorising coming-of-age as a fixed category, Curnutt analyses the shifting trend in the coming-of-age narrative. He observes that despite the constant reference to *The Catcher* by the publishers, the coming-of-age has shifted from the Holden-esque narrative of teenage

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<sup>170</sup> Trites, *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*, 10-13.



disillusionment and anguish of the 1950s to the “emotionally numb” narrative of the 1980s. Jason Cohen and Michael Krugman, the authors of *Generation Ecch!: The Backlash Starts Here* (1994) considers this shift in narrative tone as a deterioration of literary merit. However, Curnutt argues that the coming-of-age novels of the 1980s and 1990s have become the “portraits of solipsism, blankness and reticence.”<sup>171</sup> Curnutt illustrates how coming-of-age novels continue to evolve and, in doing so, he highlights the importance of understanding the surrounding socio-cultural contexts when theorising adolescent literature.

Thomas Doherty identifies a similar change in the American films, noting that the parents of the 1980s were “more likely to be condemned for being self-centred, weak, and uncertain than for being overbearing, intrusive, or present.”<sup>172</sup> Doherty’s observation in the film studies illustrates how the traits seen in films can also be evident in novels, emphasising the fact that coming-of-age novels exist within the larger frame of popular culture. By incorporating Doherty’s analysis of American films, Curnutt is locating coming-of-age novels within the larger frame of popular culture. Such analysis further highlights how the adolescent novels in general are fluid and sensitive not only to the youth culture but to the socio-cultural surroundings that constantly reshape the youth identity.

Although the terminology used in this scholarship varies, the scholars of all these sub-categories agree that *The Catcher* is the quintessential reference work for problem novels/young adult novels/coming-of-age novels. Thus the problem lies not with these varying terms but with the way literature is categorised. Whether it is the various problems youth experience or power and growth, these registers are multi-referential. In response, the scholars attempted to control the category by dividing it up and establishing boundaries; the problem novel was categorised according to the type of problem, and the young adult novel according to the process of maturity reached by the end of the narrative. If the register is too broad, the category becomes too inclusive but at the same time, attempts to control this

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<sup>171</sup> Curnutt, “Teenage Wasteland: Coming-of-Age Novels in the 1980s and 1990s,” 93.

<sup>172</sup> Doherty, *Teenagers and Teenpics: the Juvenilisation of American Movies in the 1950s*, 237.

result in an infinite multiplication of narrow and rigid sub-categories. In the discourse of children's literature, Marcus Crouch questions children's literature as a literary category and comes to the conclusion that it was created for commercial purposes, arguing that categories themselves are "kept alive by the human instinct for classification and categorisation."<sup>173</sup> Crouch's dilemma over categorisation resonates with this survey of approaches to adolescent literature. As he points out, categorisation may seem futile, but it is one of the required tools in understanding literature; thus it is problematic, but necessary at the same time. The process of categorisation implies that the boundaries are drawn to both include and exclude, but the fact that *The Catcher* is referred to as the quintessential problem/young adult/coming-of-age novel illustrates how these categories often overlap.

Even though the use of JD as a category in academic literary discourse seems rare, the discussion above demonstrates that the categories need to be flexible. The JD novel is a commercial category and is being used by the publishing industry to categorise texts about juvenile delinquency. Such a definition seems too simplistic but it identifies the most crucial element that makes it distinctive. Yet, as discussion of juvenile delinquency in the social context illustrates, behaviours that are considered delinquent are in fact quite broad, ranging from legal transgression to rebellious attitudes that could be considered the 'storm and stress' of youth rather than delinquency. In addition, the performance of teenage rebellion also changes over time. As Curnutt illustrates in his analysis of coming-of-age novels, these adolescent novels continue to evolve over time, and thus the category needs to accommodate such changes.

Setting aside the areas of overlap in the various approaches discussed above, the elements that are distinctively JD need to be identified. Borrowing Egoff's method of categorisation, but with less rigidity, the recurrent pattern within JD novels can be identified as follows:

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<sup>173</sup> Marcus Crouch, *The Nesbit Tradition: The Children's Novel in England* (London: Benn, 1972), 7.

The protagonist is labelled by the society as ‘juvenile delinquent’ or troubled teen. Rebellion against the authority and power struggle is either the central trope or if not then it is the crucial backdrop to the plot. The protagonist must be ‘good bad boy’ and in doing so glorifies the teenage rebellion.

The above criteria are vital markers that set JD writing apart from other sub-categories of adolescent fiction. I also argue that the act of categorisation should be understood as producing a gradient scale which measures the extent to which the features listed above are present, rather than producing a dichotomy of JD and non-JD fiction. There are texts which may be easily and strongly categorised as a JD novel and then there are those with weaker JD elements that could be categorised as JD but also lean towards other sub-categories such as the problem novel. For example, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* could be considered a JD novel since the protagonist and his friends are delinquent outcasts who engage in various deviant activities, but at the same time, sexual abuse and discrimination against homosexuality are the focal element of the narrative, making it a typical problem novel. In such a case, the ‘problem’ element is stronger than the JD element, as rebellion is somewhat overshadowed by the familial and social problems that the protagonist of the novel faces.

The second marker for the JD novel, ‘rebellion’ can also be seen as a criterion for adolescent novels in general, rather than the distinctive element for a JD novel, but not all teenagers go through a rebellious phase of storm and stress. The rebellion becomes distinctively JD when it occurs in conjunction with the first criterion. In JD novels, rebellion against authority is more than standing up to one’s parents or speaking against the mainstream; rather, it is performed through minor legal transgression such as smoking, truancy or running away, or in confrontational conflict with parents or other manifestations of authority.

The concept of the ‘good bad boy’ deriving from Fiedler’s analysis of American literature is the third and the most vital marker for the JD novel, as it induces readers’ empathy towards the delinquent hero. The portrayal of a defiant youth as a good bad boy is crucial as it is only when the ‘good’ elements

evoke empathy among the readers, that the ‘bad’ can be glorified. It is the element that keeps the protagonist from becoming a juvenile criminal; there may be a certain degree of legal transgression through smoking or running away, but being a good bad boy means that the character will not transgress too much.

This theorisation of the good bad boy is so crucial a factor in understanding the JD novel as one of its central functions is to offer readers a vicarious experience of glorified teenage rebellion. As Frank A. Salamone points out, the majority of teenage readers admired the fictional rebels but most did not take part in the delinquent activities that these fictional characters engaged in. He hypothesises that most readers are content with the vicarious experience of mischief and rebellion since acting out rebellion in ‘real’ life has consequences. In other words, by reading JD novels, they are able to vicariously enjoy the thrills of rebellion without giving up the “good life” that comes with being an obedient youth.<sup>174</sup> Such an observation highlights the way in which the glorification and vicarious experience of rebellion lies the crux of the JD novel, as it is what attracts readers to this particular type of adolescent literature.

### **Defining *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu***

In contrast to the American context, where JD novels are discussed under various overlapping categories, the use of *furyō*, *yankī* or any other terms to categorise tales of teenage rebellion in Japanese literature is startlingly absent. This is to a great extent due to the lack of scholarship on the adolescent novels per se, but it is also because scholarship on Japanese literature tends to focus on *junbungaku* (pure or high literature) in preference to *taishūbungaku* (mass or popular literature). These two literary categories are extremely polarising; they emerged in the 1920s and were refined over subsequent decades.<sup>175</sup> Matthew Strecher, who traces the origin and development of both *junbungaku* and *taishūbungaku*, explains how the *bundan* (often referred to as the literary guild, an exclusive circle of

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<sup>174</sup> Frank A. Salamone, *Popular Culture in the Fifties* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001), 27.

<sup>175</sup> Matthew Strecher, “Purely Mass or Massively Pure? The Division Between ‘Pure’ and ‘Mass’ Literature,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 51, no.3 (1996): 360.

influential writers and critics dedicated to the “ideal of pure literature”<sup>176</sup> and academia define *junbungaku* as artistic prose that embraces realism, and *taishūbungaku* as popular fiction with mass appeal.<sup>177</sup>

From the 1920s onwards, the boundary between high and popular literature has been challenged, but has, nevertheless, been continuously maintained through the combined efforts of the *bundan* and academia as well as via the mechanisms of the two prestigious literary awards, the Akutagawa prize for high literature and the Naoki prize for popular literature. In 1991, a prominent literary historian Konishi Jin’ichi remarked how *taishūbungaku* had not only surpassed *junbungaku* in quantity but also had developed in terms of quality, so that the boundary between ‘popular’ and ‘pure’ had become increasingly ambiguous; he further predicted that this boundary would eventually diminish so that there would only be “novels [*shōsetsu*]” by the twenty-first century.<sup>178</sup> It is too early to confirm (or dismiss) Konishi’s prediction but Numano Mitsuyoshi, another literary scholar, has commented similarly, arguing that the ‘popular’ and the ‘pure’ in contemporary Japanese literature seem to be converging.<sup>179</sup> However, as illustrated by Numao’s own genealogical study of *taishūbungaku* and Strecher’s documentation of how the boundary needed constant maintenance, such concerns are not new. Neither has the boundary between ‘popular’ and ‘pure’ ever been articulated in anything other than an uncertain manner. For example *junbungaku* writers like Mishima Yukio also published “entertainment novels that fit within the domain of popular literature”, and, more recently, the emergence of writers who seem to fit into neither category such as Murakami Haruki or Yoshimoto Banana continue to challenge the boundary.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Strecher, “Purely Mass or Massively Pure? The Division Between ‘Pure’ and ‘Mass’ Literature,” 357.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 363, 371.

<sup>178</sup> Konishi Jin’ichi 小西甚一, *Nihon Bungeishi* 日本文藝史 [History of Japanese Literature], vol.5 (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1991), 824.

<sup>179</sup> Numano Mitsuyoshi, “Toward a New Age of World Literature: The Boundary of Contemporary Japanese Literature and Its Shifts in the Global Context,” *Renikusa* 1 (March 2009): 196.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

Numano suggests that the accessible style and entertaining plot structures of *taishūbungaku* attract mass readers and are thus mass produced, but insists that *taishūbungaku* lacks ‘sophistication,’ a trait which he considers as being more associated with *junbungaku*. This implies that Murakami and Yoshimoto are too sophisticated to be labelled *taishūbungaku*.<sup>181</sup> Thus it seems that the emergence of writers such as these has not led to the development or expansion of *taishūbungaku* scholarship but, instead, some of them, especially Murakami, are given honorary *junbungaku* status and texts deemed worthy of academic analysis are discussed outside the framework of *taishūbungaku*. Strecher notes that in the mid-1990s, a handful of scholars such as John Treat and Chieko Irie Mulhern began to address the problematic of *taishūbungaku*, but even they do not discuss writers of ‘lower’ status than Murakami or Yoshimoto.<sup>182</sup> Alternatively, *taishūbungaku* is discussed in terms of writing such as *gesaku* (popular writing) from the late Edo period, or newspaper serials and popular fiction from the Meiji and Taishō periods such that contemporary Naoki prize winning novels or adolescent novels are rarely included in the existing discourse of *taishūbungaku*.

While *junbungaku* research is extensive, its “antithesis”<sup>183</sup> *taishūbungaku* remains neglected to the extent that the term *shōsetsu* seems to have become exclusive to *junbungaku* as a term for a higher form of literary art. For example, some literary scholars are reluctant to use the term *shōsetsu* to refer to the more recent forms of adolescent fiction such as *kētai shōsetsu* (mobile phone novel.)<sup>184</sup> Similarly, *raito noberu* or *ranobe* (translated as ‘light novel’) which is defined as light *manga*-like reading for

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<sup>181</sup> Numano, “Toward a New Age of World Literature: The Boundary of Contemporary Japanese Literature and Its Shifts in the Global Context,” 196-197.

<sup>182</sup> Matthew C. Strecher, “Purely Mass or Massively Pure? The Division Between ‘Pure’ and ‘Mass’ Literature,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 51, no.3 (Autumn 1996): 358. John Whittier Treat, “Symposium on Contemporary Japanese Popular Culture: Introduction,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 19, no.2 (Summer 1993): 289-293. Chieko Irie Mulhern, “Japanese Harlequin Romances as Transcultural Woman’s Fiction,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 48, no.1 (1989): 50-70.

<sup>183</sup> Edward Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 184.

<sup>184</sup> *Kētai shōsetsu* is a type of digital fiction specific to Japanese literature where writers use mobile phone to write and initially share their writings online. The popular works are then published in book form but large majority of *kētai shōsetsu* writers are amateur writings. Since its emergence in the 2000s, it has attracted the attention of journalists such as Hayamizu Kenrō, and scholars from cultural studies and sociology such as Larissa Hjorth but literary scholars are reluctant to treat *kētai shōsetsu* as literary phenomenon. Discourse on *kētai shōsetsu* will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

teenage boys<sup>185</sup> is grouped together with *kētai shōsetsu* and other visual media such as *manga* and excluded from serious literary discourse.

An alternative term for popular fiction in Japanese literature is *entātēmento shōsetsu* (entertainment fiction), a term mostly used by critics and publishers outside the academia to refer to popular fictional forms such as mystery, romance, and fantasy, as well as adolescent novels, which the majority of literary scholars continue to dismiss as entertainment. Both *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu* are considered as types of entertainment novels for adolescent readers, but despite being called *noberu* (novel) or *shōsetsu* they are not included in the discourse of Japanese literature. Strecher notes how stigmatised popular fiction is in studies of literature (in both the Japanese and Western contexts), by pointing out how scholars taking on the task of exploring popular fiction begin by either apologising or defending their position to emphasise that their research is not “trivial.”<sup>186</sup> John Treat claims that what is trivial “is the lingering view of popular culture” and insists that, contrary to majority academic opinion, studies of popular literature provides valuable insight into the “fundamental workings of a society” and is by no means trivial.<sup>187</sup> As both Treat and Strecher point out, the distinction between high and popular literature, as well as a preference for high literature amongst academics are evident in both the Japanese and American contexts. In fact, John Cawelti, one of the most prominent scholars of popular fiction, argues that popular fiction constitutes “artistic and cultural phenomena of tremendous importance” but due to its association with entertainment and escape, it is ignored by literary scholars and “left to the “mercy of sociologists, psychologists, and analysts of mass culture.”<sup>188</sup> Although Cawelti is referring specifically to American literature, his statement can also be applied to the Japanese context as discussion of entertainment novels within the discourse of Japanese literature is also rare, and such

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<sup>185</sup> Naitō Mariko 内藤麻里子 and Ishida Kanta 石田汗太, “Wakamono ga Shiji Suru ‘Katsujī’ o Miru: ‘Ketai Shosetsu’ ‘Raito Noberu’ no Jitsujō” 若者が支持する「活字」を見る：「ケータイ小説」と「ライトノベル」の実情 [Examining ‘Print Narrative’ Read by Youth: Facts about ‘Mobile Phone Novels’ and ‘Light Novels’], *Shinbun Kenkyū* 新聞研究 2, no. 689 (2008): 64-65.

<sup>186</sup> Strecher, “Purely Mass or Massively Pure? The Division Between ‘Pure’ and ‘Mass’ Literature,” 359.

<sup>187</sup> Treat, “Symposium on Contemporary Japanese Popular Culture: Introduction,” 289.

<sup>188</sup> John Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: For mula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 1.

works similarly draw academic attention from non-literary fields such as cultural studies and sociology. This thesis approaches contemporary popular fiction such as entertainment novels, *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu* as literary phenomena and in so doing seeks to reclaim the term *shōsetsu* and bring the discussion of Japanese popular literature up to date.

Similar to *shōsetsu*, the use of the term *seishun* (often translated as youth, adolescence or coming-of-age in English) in literary discourse also has a very particular referentiality. In 1989, Mitsui Takayuki, who categorises Yoshimoto Banana's works as *seishun shōsetsu* (adolescent novel), commented that the paucity of scholarship on *seishun shōsetsu* made him wonder whether such a category actually existed within the discourse of Japanese literature.<sup>189</sup> Nearly two and a half decades later, his statement still resonates as the term *seishun* is only used in academic terms to refer to the superfluous man novels of the Meiji period, while the majority of novels that are marketed by the publishers and recognised by readers as *seishun shōsetsu* remain largely unexplored. There are two literary prizes awarded to *seishun shōsetsu*: the Botchan Literature Prize (*Botchan Bungaku Shō*) awarded by Matsuyama City's Botchan Literature Committee and the Yasei Jidai Seishun Literature Prize (*Yasei Jidai Seishun Bungaku Shō*) awarded by the cultural magazine *Yasei Jidai* (Wild Age).<sup>190</sup>



Poster for *Botchan* Literary Prize (left), *Yasei Jidai Seishun* Literature Prize (right)

<sup>189</sup> Mitsui Takayuki 三井貴之 and Washida Koyata 鷲田小彌太, *Yoshimoto Banana Shinwa* 吉本ばなな神話 [Yoshimoto Banana Mythology] (Tōkyō: Seikyūsha 1989), 9.

<sup>190</sup> Natsume Sōseki's *Botchan* (1906) was set in Matsumae City.



Exactly what kind of novel comes under the category of *seishun* is not specified by these awards. According to its official website, the Botchan Literature Prize is awarded to an innovative *seishun shōsetsu* while in the above poster, Yasei Jidai claims that Paul from the Bible, Nietzsche, Murasaki Shikibu, Anne Frank, Dostoyevsky, Shakespeare and Dazai Ozamu, were all *seishun bungaku* writers, and dramatically adds that “even you [the contributors]” can be a *seishun shōsetsu* writer. These blatant attempts to link *seishun* with *junbungaku* do little to clarify the definition of *seishun shōsetsu*. In 2014, the Botchan Literature Prize was awarded to Kiri Ringo’s *Twinkle Twinkle Run (Kira Kira Hashiru)* which is a story about pre-teens preparing for a 400m relay run in a national athletics championship. The recognition of this story as *seishun shōsetsu* raises the problem of defining exactly when adolescence starts, but more importantly, it shows that tropes such as “effort” and “dreams,” as identified by Tomita Hidenori from cultural studies, seem to function as the defining elements of *seishun* narrative in popular culture.<sup>191</sup> Furthermore, the majority of texts marketed and distributed as *seishun shōsetsu* are those depicting a wide range of adolescent experiences such as rebellion, romance, and other coming-of-age tropes, not simply the experiences of a young writer’s search for identity or the meaning of life as depicted in the superfluous man novels from the Meiji period. Not only does this highlight a lack of clear understanding of the term but it also foregrounds the discrepancy between what academics and readers understand by the term *seishun shōsetsu*. While the focus on *junbungaku* in Japanese scholarship has narrowed down the meaning of *seishun shōsetsu*, its usage outside academia suggests that it often refers to adolescent novels written by popular fiction writers like Ishida or Kaneshiro.

As has been discussed, and in contrast to the Japanese context, American scholarship on adolescent literature is extensive, but despite the longer history and availability of scholarship, its definition of

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<sup>191</sup> Tomita Hidenori 富田英典, “Kōki Seinenki no Media Senryaku to Sabukaruchā” 後期青年期のメディア戦略とサブカルチャー [Media Strategy and Subculture of Post-Adolescence], *Kyōiku Shakaigaku Kenkyū* 教育社会学研究 76 (2005): 83.

adolescent literature<sup>192</sup> is also ambiguous. Scholars like Ruth Cline and William McBride argue that the lack of definite boundaries between childhood, adolescence, and adulthood causes such uncertainty.<sup>193</sup> As a result, the definition of adolescent literature has always been flexible and loosely defined. Richard Flynn argues that the boundaries between children's literature and adolescent literature, as well as those between adolescent literature and adult literature are often policed by adults who feel the need not only to implement but to fix the border.<sup>194</sup>

Whether the age range is specified or not, the general understanding within American scholarship is that adolescent literature is literature for adolescents and thus the next question is its purpose. There are two different schools of thought in this regard. Firstly, there are those who argue that adolescent literature is literature written for adolescents, and secondly, there are those who argue that adolescent literature is the literature preferred by adolescent readers. The scholars who define adolescent literature as works specifically written for adolescent readers claim that the moral development of young minds is its primary purpose by arguing that the real life issues depicted, such as religion, family and death, shape the values of the works' young readers.<sup>195</sup> By contrast, the latter define adolescent literature as works read by adolescents outside of school, putting more significance on entertainment rather than educational elements.<sup>196</sup>

Yet, Margaret A. Johnson's work, which compares works recommended by the authorities (teachers and librarians) and works that are willingly read by adolescents in the U.S., indicates that these two sometimes overlap. Johnson shows that recommended readings also depict so-called "taboo subjects" such as teenage pregnancy, drugs, and homosexuality, blurring the line between recommended texts

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<sup>192</sup> Some scholars use alternative terms such as Young Adult, or Coming-of-Age that adds further confusion. In order to avoid such confusion, this thesis will use the term adolescent literature as an over-arching term that refers to literature for, about, and by the adolescents.

<sup>193</sup> Ruth Cline and William McBride, *A Guide to Literature for Young Adults* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1983), 3.

<sup>194</sup> Richard Flynn, "Boundary Issues" *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 33, no.2 (Summer, 2008): 117.

<sup>195</sup> Cline and McBride, *A Guide to Literature for Young Adults*, 12.

<sup>196</sup> Kenneth L. Donelson and Alleen Pace Nilsen, *Literature for Today's Young Adults* (Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2005).

and preferred texts.<sup>197</sup> She goes on to argue that these taboo topics “help adolescents cope with and adjust to the real world.” While she foregrounds the overlapping of recommended and preferred texts, she also seems to lean towards the idea that adolescent literature should be more than just entertainment and it should, first and foremost, educate young readers. On the other hand, Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad, and Carrie Hintz, argue that American adolescent literature is often a balance between pleasure and instruction – *dolce et utile*.<sup>198</sup> This thesis will show that this is also the case in Japanese adolescent fiction, as writers like Ishida and Kaneshiro incorporate various social issues both to inform and educate their readers while entertaining them at the same time. It will further argue that an adolescent novel should be understood not as one or the other, but that each text contains different levels of pleasure and instruction.

In addition to the lack of Japanese scholarship on adolescent literature in general, it appears that terms such as *furyō* and *yankī* are rarely used even as the commercial categories for adolescent novels. This is in distinct contradistinction to their frequent use in the categorisation of *manga*. On the Japanese online forum *OK Wave*, one user asks fellow users for recommendations for “*furyō manga* or novels [*shōsetsu*]”. Numerous *manga* recommendations are offered but not one novel is recommended.<sup>199</sup> Such online interaction gives us a glimpse of how *furyō* has been established as a distinct category in *manga* but it is yet to emerge in as a category for fiction. In fact, Endō Natsuki’s novel *Harajuku Blue Sky Heaven* published in 2012 was the first novel to be marketed as a “*furyō novel*” by the publishers, but since *furyō* is yet to emerge as a distinct commercial category, distributors such as Amazon.com Inc categorise it simply as *seishun shōsetsu*.<sup>200</sup> Readers are made aware of its *furyō* content by the cover art

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<sup>197</sup> Margaret A Johnson, “Common Aspects of Recommended Young Adult Literature: An Historical perspective,” *Yearbook of the American Reading Forum* (1993): 81, [http://americanreadingforum.com/yearbooks/93\\_yearbook/pdf/09\\_johnson.pdf](http://americanreadingforum.com/yearbooks/93_yearbook/pdf/09_johnson.pdf), accessed July 18, 2009.

<sup>198</sup> Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad, and Carrie Hintz, *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 5.

<sup>199</sup> “Furyō Manga/Shōsetsu,” 不良マンガ・小説 [Juvenile Delinquent Manga/Novel], *OK Wave*, accessed August 19, 2012, <http://okwave.jp/qa/q2799987.html>.

<sup>200</sup> Endō (writer) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

and the supplementary description, as illustrated by the way *Harajuku Blue Sky Heaven* is presented on the Japanese Amazon.com website



Betrayal by trusted friends, a feud between the gang members. The crisis of disbandment behind the scenes. A dark shadow stalks Sakura. Can Pippi resolve the chain of events that is turning out to be the biggest challenge of his life?

The adolescent novel [*seishun shōsetsu*] based on the legendary bikers [*bōsōzoku*] the *Cools*.

(BOOKS database)

The image of bikers in American JD-inspired style and the reference to the bikers are more than sufficient to indicate the *furyō* elements of the novel. Endō's novel exemplifies the limitations of '*furyō*' as a literary category, as it illustrates how the images of *tsuppari*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* culture have been attached to the term. For example, contemporary narratives of teenage rebellion, such as Ishida Ira's *Ikebukuro West Gate Park* series (2001-2012) or Kaneshiro Kazuki's *Zombies* series (2001-2005), despite being tales of teenage rebellion and their protagonists referred to as *furyō* within the texts, are not labelled as '*furyō*' by the publishers or distributors as the following descriptions from the BOOK database reveal.

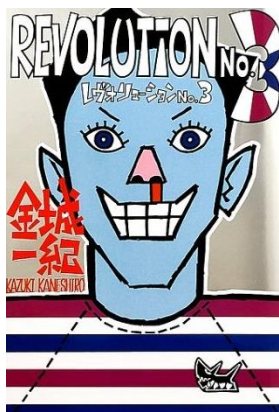


A boy is stabbed, a girl disappears, and gangs fight each other. The “new beat” of an adolescent mystery novel that brilliantly depicts today’s street culture.

Winner of the *Ōru yomimono suiri shōsetsu* New Face Prize.

(BOOKS database)

Ishida’s novel depicts the more recent, colour gangs in his novel, and Makoto, the protagonist is not depicted in the typical ‘*furyō*’ fashion; he seems like an ordinary teenager but he is an *ochikobore* (dropout) in the eyes of society, since he is a *furītā* (freeter)<sup>201</sup> and affiliates with members of the colour gang. The term *ochikobore* is occasionally used to label rebellious youth in popular culture, as seen in the following description of Kaneshiro’s *Zombies* series. .



We are the year 3 high school ‘dropouts’ [*ochikobore*]. Our weapons are money, penis, brain, biceps, and determination.

The long-awaited Naoki Prize winning novel by Kaneshiro Kazuki.

(BOOKS database)

If Ishida’s novel depicts the more contemporary counterculture, Kaneshiro’s depiction of teenage rebellion can be considered as a highly idealised version, as he strips away the consumerism and conformity that had reduced rebellion to a fashion trend. Thus, in the absence of more recognisable

<sup>201</sup> *Furītā* is Japanese word for adults (excluding housewives and students) without full-time employment.

*furyō* elements or *tsuppari* fashion style, both the publishers and the distributors present the *Zombies* series as tales of *ochikobore* rather than *furyō*.

Similarly, terms such as *furyō* or *yankī* are absent in the marketing of Narita Ryōgo's *Durarara!!* series, which is a *ranobe* series that combines urban fantasy and tales of teenage rebellion as illustrated by the following description in BOOKS database.



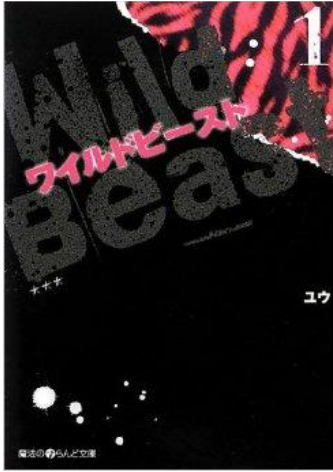
A boy dreaming of adventure, hooligans eager to stir up trouble, a stalking geek, a young man playing at being an informant, a back-alley doctor specialising in weird patients, a high school student charmed by a demon and a “head-less (dullahan) rider” dressed in black. Stories of the weird and the strange in Ikebukuro, Tokyo are far from ‘normal’ but even twisted souls can fall in love.

(BOOKS database)

The eclectic list of characters in the above description suggests that the series is about a group of misfits or *ochikobore*. The reference to rebellious youth cultures is absent in the short description but within the series, Narita depicts colour gangs, *bōsōzoku* culture, and teenage rebellion.

On the other hand, *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* elements are so evident in certain types of *kētai shōsetsu* that some consider them as a revival of *yankī* culture.<sup>202</sup> For example, the *kētai shōsetsu* the *Wild Beast* series by Yū is marketed as a romance between the heroine and a *bōsōzoku* gang leader.

<sup>202</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 111.



Tired of life, second year high school student Ayaka attempts to “sleep” by diving into a busy street. There she encounters Ryūki, the leader of the motorcycle gang [*bōsōzoku*] Wild Beast who reigns over its 1500 members, the man who is called Wild Beast himself, and the mysterious Mikage. Ayaka who had given up on life has second chance. The long-awaited publication of the legendary series which was a huge hit and long running best-seller as chosen by [*kētai shōsetsu*] readers.

(BOOKS database)

Despite setting the series in contemporary Japan, Yū uses old-school rebellious youth culture, namely, *bōsōzoku* in her girl-meets-rebel teen romance instead of the more contemporary counterculture.

Exploring the way tales of teenage rebellion in Japanese adolescent novels, ranging from entertainment novels to *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, are marketed and distributed both underscores the extent to which *furyō* is restrictive, as images of old school rebellious youth culture are attached to the term, and that *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* have become old-fashioned or outmoded by the more recent types of rebellious youth culture. Despite this, they remain relevant in the contemporary performance of rebellious youth identity. These are the reasons why I have appropriated the term *ochikobore* to identify the genre *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*, and to propose it as the Japanese term for juvenile delinquent fiction.

The exploration of tales of teenage rebellion, ranging from Ishida and Kaneshiro’s serialised entertainment novels to *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, in this thesis will reveal the evolution of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*, in which, while the forms or modes of writing may change and diversify, key elements such as power, rebellion, didacticism and escapism remain and define the genre.

The American scholarship on JD novels and adolescent novels in general not only indicates the importance of the surrounding socio-cultural context but it particularly highlights the need to understand categorisation as a gradient scale, and to use the various criteria as a register for measurement rather than for rigid inclusion and exclusion. Thus, the extent to which a work can be considered as *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* should be measured. . The common trait that is evident in *ochikobore seishun* narrative is that the protagonist is labelled and discriminated by mainstream society for his/her rejection of conformity. As in American JD novels, rebellion against authority and ‘good bad boy’ narrative are crucial elements in the *ochikobore seishun* novel.

Despite the similarity in criteria or socio-cultural backdrop, a significant difference between the American and Japanese contexts is the timing of the emergence of *ochikobore seishun* fiction. JD novels emerged amidst the flourishing rebellious youth culture of the 1950s, while there is a temporal gap in Japan between the emergence of rebellious youth culture in the 1980s and the emergence of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* in the late 1990s. The rigorous commodification of *furyō* culture in the entertainment industry during the 1980s led to the emergence of distinct sub-categories of *manga* and film, but it did not lead to the emergence of *furyō* novels, as is documented by scholars like Nanba and Nagae Akira.<sup>203</sup> Instead, tales of teenage rebellion in Japanese literature have their roots in autobiographical writings of former *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* members. The autobiographical writings of rebellious youth will be examined in the following chapter, prior to exploring the further evolutionary development of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* through works by Ishida, Kaneshiro, Narita and Yū.

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<sup>203</sup> Nagae, “Yankīteki Naru Mono: Sono Kigen to Mentaritī,” 47.



## CHAPTER 2

### THE PORTRAYAL OF REBELLIOUS YOUTH IN JAPANESE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING

In this chapter, I will show how the fictional portrayal of rebellious youth as ‘good bad boys’ in contemporary Japanese adolescent novels first emerges in autobiographical writings by former *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī*. Thus, I situate such autobiographical writing as the preliminary step in the genesis of *ochikobore seishun* fiction. These self-referential narratives of youth rebellion performed through distinct sub-cultures, which I categorise as *kōsei* (rehabilitation) autobiographical writings, developed prior to the appearance of fictional stories of rebellion in Japanese adolescent literature. I will argue that, since its emergence in the mid-1970s, the autobiographical story of teenage rebellion and the eventual transition from reckless rebel into responsible adult has developed into a distinct paradigm.

The narratives based on the authors’ youth rebellion and rehabilitation has resonance with American JD fiction, as discussed in the previous chapter. In the American context, JD fiction thrived in the 1950s, as part of the emerging rebellious youth cultures, alongside the juvies and the greaser fashion trends; whereas in the Japanese context, while the fictional portrayal of rebellious youth such as *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī* in *shōsetsu* (fiction) was rare, the representation of rebellious youth culture flourished in visual media, as illustrated by the success of the *furyō* manga, *Be-Bop High School* (1983-2003)<sup>204</sup> and magazines such as *Teen’s Road*, which specifically targeted *furyō* and *bōsōzoku* readers throughout the 1980s. Where the trajectories of the two cultures diverge is that *ochikobore seishun* fiction does not emerge in the 1980s when the fictional portrayal of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, or *yankī* was abundant in other forms of the media.

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<sup>204</sup> *Be-Bop High School* was adapted into six films which were released in the short period between 1986 and 1988, all directed by Nasu Hiroyuki.

The commodification of these rebellious teen cultures in the 1980s marked the mainstreaming of what had initially been a counterculture that challenged the mainstream culture. Yet, the portrayal of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī* in fiction remained absent throughout the decade. Nagae Akira argues that this lack was due to the publishing industry believing that the market for such representation was limited to the rebellious youth themselves.<sup>205</sup> According to Nagae, this belief is attributed to the ‘anti-book’ attitudes of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī* who considered books as the “tools of the enemy (school)” and the bookstore as enemy territory, and only read visual texts such as *manga* or magazines.<sup>206</sup> Indeed, such perceptions by the publishers in the 1980s do seem to have contributed to the lack of fictional representation of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī* in non-visual texts such as novels.

The first text to challenge the notion that the tales of youth rebellion lacked the potential for success was *Oretachi Niwa Doyō Shika Nai* (*We Only Have Saturdays*, 1975), a *shuki* (memoir) written by the legendary *bōsōzoku* leader, Urita Yoshiharu (b.1955) of the *Gokuaku* (Villainy) and the *Burakku Enperā* (Black Emperor) gangs, in which he documents his *bōsōzoku* activities. Published in the mid-1970s, it predates the mainstreaming of *bōsōzoku* culture and thus, the documentation of *bōsōzoku* culture in Urita’s work was informative to readers and gave them the alternative perspective of the newly emergent rebellious teenagers of the 1970s. Endō Natsuki considers Urita’s work as the text that triggered the subsequent surge of publications about rebellious youth culture, as it was followed by photo books and reportage that depicted it more sympathetically than the news media.<sup>207</sup> Despite inspiring journalists and documentary film makers, Urita’s *shuki* failed to initiate a trend, and remains the only example of *kōsei* autobiographical writing published during the 1970s – the period that lead up to the mainstreaming of Japanese rebellious youth cultures in the 1980s. I categorise Urita’s work as

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<sup>205</sup> Nagae Akira 永江朗, “Yankīteki Naru Mono: Sono Kigen to Mentariti” ヤンキー的なるモノ:その起源とメンタリテイ [Yankī-ish Things: Its Origin and Mentality ], in *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* ヤンキー文化論序説 [An Introduction to Yankī Culture Studies], ed. Igarashi Tarō 五十嵐太郎 (Tōkyō: Kawade Shobō, 2009) , 47-48.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Endō Natsuki 遠藤夏輝, *Tōkyō Furyō Shōnen Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu* 東京不良少年伝説: C R S 連合誕生の真実 [The Legend of Tokyo Rebels: the Truth of the CRS Union] (Tōkyō: Mirion Shuppan, 2010), 249.

the first stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing as it was published at a time when the majority of the public knew very little about the newly emerging *bōsōzoku* culture.

Autobiographical works by former rebellious youth re-emerge in the 1990s, when *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī* culture began to decline as the dominant form of rebellion. I argue that these works constitute a second stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing, as, unlike the first stage, they are published post-1980s and despite a similar temporal setting as the first stage, the narratives in the second stage works are more influenced by nostalgia and the image of rebellious teenagers that had been created in popular culture. One of the earliest examples of second stage writing is a *jidenteki shōsetsu* (autobiographical novel) by the former *furyō*, Nakaba Ri'ichi (b.1959) titled *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai* (*Kishiwada Boys Gang*, 1994) which tells its teenage protagonist's tale of rebellion in the mid-1970s when *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, or *yankī* cultures were beginning to emerge.

Unlike *We Only Have Saturdays*, the success of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* generated similar works and the trend continued throughout the 2000s such that a distinct pattern within *kōsei* autobiographical writing begins to emerge.<sup>208</sup> The continuation of the trend is illustrated by more recent examples of *kōsei* autobiographical writing such as *Drop* (2006) by Japanese comedian Shinagawa Hiroshi (b.1972). Set in the 1980s, Shinagawa also focuses on his high school years when he became a *furyō* and, similar to *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, it is set in the period when *furyō* culture flourished. One of the similarities in the approach of these works is that they were published years later when the *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* cultures had become an out-dated mode of rebellion on the streets. However, since images of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, or *yankī* culture had continued in the popular media, they were recognisable to the majority of readers. Even those without the direct experience of having lived through the period portrayed were able to recognise the various cultures of rebellion through their consumption of popular media such as *manga* or film that used images of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, or *yankī* to depict rebellious youth.

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<sup>208</sup> The publication of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* (1994) was later followed by five more volumes under the title, *Kishiwada Boys Gang*. The series was also adapted into five films between the periods of 1996 to 2000.

The continuing trend of *kōsei* autobiographical writing in the 2000s resulted in the emergence of works by a younger generation of writers whose teenage rebellion is set in either the 1990s or the 2000s, when *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, or *yankī* culture had in fact been replaced by the newly emerging modes of teenage rebellion. The most recent publication of *kōsei* autobiographical writing is a *jiden* (autobiography) titled *Mamī ga Boku o Koroshini Yattekuru: Yankī Serebu (Mummy is Coming to Kill Me: The Celebrity Rebel*, 2011) by Japanese actor Yūji. He tells the story of his transformation from a bullied, lonely child into a rebellious teenager, and eventually into a mature and responsible adult. I categorise works like *The Celebrity Rebel* as the third stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing since its temporal setting is no longer the 1970s or the 1980s like the works from the earlier two stages; however, similar to the second stage, third stage works are also heavily influenced by the familiar portrayal of the rebellious teenager perpetuated by contemporary popular culture. For example, Yūji identifies himself as a former *yankī* but the image of *yankī* he constructs in his work differs from the earlier stages of *kōsei* autobiography, as what he labels as *yankī* in fact reflects more recent rebellious trends such as *Shibuya-kei* (Shibuya type) or *gyaruo* (Gal Boys) of the late 1990s and 2000s which is categorised as *neo-yankī* by scholars like Nanba.<sup>209</sup>

These stories of rebellion by former *bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, and *yankī* (including *neo-yankī*) are published and categorised by the industry as *shuki*, *jiden*, or *jidenteki shōsetsu*. An examination of these terms and the theories surrounding them will be followed by an extended textual analysis of the works. The online *Daijisen* dictionary defines *shuki* as self-referential writing based on the writer's experience or thoughts, *jiden* as a self-written biography, and *jidenteki shōsetsu* as fiction based on the author's own life experience. These terms are used interchangeably even by academics, *shuki* is generally translated as memoir, *jiden* as autobiography and *jidenteki shōsetsu* as autobiographical fiction. However, tracing the origin of both the Japanese terms and their English equivalents has a bearing on how the texts under

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<sup>209</sup> Nanba Koji For discussion of *Shibuya-kei* and *gyaruo* refer to Chapter 1 (p9-10, 12-13).

discussion in this chapter are understood. Therefore the first step in understanding *kōsei* autobiographical writings is to understand the terms *jiden*, *shuki* and *jidenteki shōsetsu* to identify why and how the antecedents of *ochikobore seishun* fiction emerged from self-referential writing.

### Defining different modes of autobiographical writing

It soon becomes apparent that Japanese critical scholarship on autobiography is largely dominated by the study of *shishōsetsu* (I-novel) and to a lesser extent *jiden*, while other modes of autobiographical writing are rarely discussed.<sup>210</sup> For example Saeki Shōichi, who is one of the few scholars to study *jiden*, noted in 1974 that there was a substantial lack of academic interest in *jiden* and little seems to have changed since then, as in his study of 2009, Yasuda Toshiro relies heavily on Saeki's works that were published in the 1970s. Both Saeki and Yasuda trace the origin of *jiden* back to the late Meiji period, when Western autobiographies such as Benjamin Franklin's autobiography and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* were translated into Japanese.<sup>211</sup> Yasuda further argues that the translation of these canonical Western autobiographies in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century not only led to the emergence of the term *jiden* but that it shaped the development of autobiographical writing in Japan.<sup>212</sup> The Western influence in *jiden* is best illustrated by the comment Ishikawa Mikiaki made in his introductory piece for *Fukuo Jiden* (1899) where he claims to have urged Fukuzawa, the author of *Fukuo Jiden*, to follow the examples of prominent Western figures who were "writing their own

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<sup>210</sup> *Shishōsetsu* (I-novel) is an autobiographical narrative in confessional tone by the writers of *junbungaku* (high literature) that emerged when Naturalism was incorporated into Japanese literature during the Meiji period. Unlike *jiden*, *shishōsetsu* writers attempt to portray a realistic world by anchoring the narrative to their own lives. Since I-novels refer strictly to texts written by *junbungaku* writers, a discussion of I-novels will not be a focus of this thesis. Rather attention is given to other forms of Japanese autobiographical writing such as *jiden* and *jibunshi*. This reflects the important distinction that the autobiographical writings examined in this thesis are entertainment writings that are part of popular literary culture and have a very different readership from that of I-novels. Refer to Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) for further discussion of this particular mode of autobiographical writing.

<sup>211</sup> Yasuda Toshiro 安田敏朗. "Jiden o Megutte: Oboegaki" 自伝をめぐって：おぼえがき [About Autobiographies: Memorandum], *Gengoshakai* 言語社会 03 (2009): 149, accessed March 24, 2014, <http://hdl.handle.net/10086/18272>.

<sup>212</sup> For example, the publication of *jiden* such as Fukuzawa Yukichi's *Fukuo Jiden* (1899), and Shibusawa Ei'ichi's *Amayogatari* [Tales of a Rainy Night] (1900) were published soon after canonical Western autobiographies were translated into Japanese.

biographies” (*mizukara denki o shirusu*) and publish *jiden*.<sup>213</sup> In fact, Yasuda considers Ishikawa’s description of Western autobiography as a ‘self-written biography’ as the origin of the term *jiden* since the two Kanji (*ji* meaning self and *den* meaning record) used in the said phrase are combined to create the Japanese term.<sup>214</sup>

Both Yasuda and Saeki consider *jiden* as the product of Western influence, and it seems that many scholars share this view as the majority of Japanese academics continue to use Western scholarship to understand *jiden* and in some cases, even the texts they choose are Western examples — as illustrated by Hirose Eriko who explores Western autobiographical criticism and Western autobiographical writings using the Japanese term *jiden*.<sup>215</sup> Also, academics often use the term *jiden* without clarifying what they mean by it and it is often used interchangeably with the English term ‘autobiography’. Such usage is problematic because autobiography has ceased to be the generic term for self-referential writing, yet Japanese scholars continue to use *jiden* as an umbrella term for autobiographical writing without clarifying the parameters of the genre.

Another Japanese mode of autobiographical writing which is also translated as autobiography is *jibunshi* (self-history) which became hugely popular in the 1970s. Nakazato Fumio, the leading scholar of *jibunshi* defines it simply as a “history of one’s self” and describes it as functioning in various modes including journals, photo books, collections of essays, and even multimedia presentations.<sup>216</sup> He further claims that *jiden* is the most typical sub-category of *jibunshi*.<sup>217</sup> However, scholars such as Gerald Figal differentiate *jibunshi* from *jiden* by defining it as a “genre of amateur historiography”

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<sup>213</sup> Yasuda, “Jiden o Megutte,” 155.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Hirose Eriko 広沢絵里子, “‘Jiden’ to ‘Jidenteki’: Jidenkenkyūron ni Okeru ‘Chosha’ no Mondai ni Tsuite” 「自伝」と「自伝的」-自伝研究理論における「著者」の問題について [Autobiography and Autobiographical: The Problem of ‘Author’ in Autobiographical Criticism], *Meiji daigaku kyōyōronshū* 356 明治大学教養論集 (2002): 53-66, accessed March 24, 2014, <http://hdl.handle.net/10291/5166>.

<sup>216</sup> Gerald Figal, “How to Jibunshi: Making and Marketing Self-Histories of Shōwa among the Masses in Postwar Japan,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, no.4 (1996): 903, doi:10.2307/2646525.

<sup>217</sup> Nakazato Fumio 中里富美雄, *Jibunshi Nyūmon* 自分史入門 [Introduction to History of Self] (Tōkyō: Tōsho sensho, 1991), 64-97.

despite admitting that there is a genealogical link between these two modes of self-referential writings.<sup>218</sup>

Examination of both *jiden* and *jibunshi* criticism reveals that the two modes are rarely discussed in the same context, which suggests that Japanese scholars tend to focus on one mode rather than explore autobiographical narrative in general. Furthermore, the lack of scholarship on *shuki* or *jidenteki shōsetsu* also illustrates how narrowly focused Japanese autobiography criticism is. Due to this gap of scholarship and the lack of a historiography of criticism on autobiographical writings other than *shishōsetsu* or *jiden*, this thesis will use the work of prominent life-writing scholars, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, to elucidate the different modes of autobiographical writing.

In *Reading Autobiography* (2001) Smith and Watson point out that autobiography is a term that has become canonical in the West and one that is widely used to refer to self-referential writing. In their text, they provide a historiography of autobiographical criticism by tracing its origin to the eighteenth-century and exploring its development through to the twentieth-century. They point out that postmodern and postcolonial readings have reshaped understanding of practice such that the term autobiography no longer refers to a generic category of self-referential writing but a specific mode of writing by the privileged white male, as previously ignored subjects and modes have been incorporated into the discourse.<sup>219</sup> Such a shift in understanding has not expanded beyond the academic sphere so the publishing industry and non-academic readers continue to use autobiography as a generic term. Citing James Olney, Smith and Watson show that the first wave of criticism was triggered in the late nineteenth-century by three contributing phenomena: the increasing publication of autobiographical writings, increasing academic attention towards autobiographical narratives, and the influence of the

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<sup>218</sup> Figal “How to Jibunshi: Making and Marketing Self-Histories of Shōwa among the Masses in Postwar Japan,” 903.

<sup>219</sup> Sidonie Smith and Julie Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 1-4.

German historian, Weillhelm Dilthey.<sup>220</sup> Dilthey considered autobiographical writing as historical documents and defined it as “the highest and the most instructive form in which [an] understanding of life comes before us.”<sup>221</sup> The positioning of autobiography as a ‘higher’ form of writing excluded other forms of self-referential writing such as journals or letters that were personal. Furthermore, a definition by the German philologist, Georg Misch, that autobiography is “the description (*graphia*) of an individual human life (*bios*) by the individual himself (*autos*)”<sup>222</sup> further limited the scope of criticism; the use of male pronouns indicates that women’s works were excluded from autobiographical criticism from the very beginning. Misch further defined autobiography as follows:

Though essentially representations of individual personalities, autobiographies are bound always to be representative of their period, within a range that will vary with the intensity of the authors’ participation in contemporary life and with the sphere in which they moved.<sup>223</sup>

Like Dilthey, Misch considered the historically significant or representative male who contributed to society as the appropriate subject of autobiography.<sup>224</sup> This further separates autobiography from popular culture and elevates it to a higher cultural plane, as Misch emphasised the elite status of the subject, going as far as to claim that the autobiography of a ‘great man’ was an achievement not just for the individual but for civilised society, and the modern nation-state.<sup>225</sup> Smith and Watson also show how autobiographical criticism was very much focused on Western or white subjects, which is one of the reasons why use of the terms autobiography and *jiden* becomes problematic.

Understanding autobiography as representative writing by ‘great white men’ excludes a vast range of modes, such as letters, journals, and memoirs, as well as ranges of subjects.<sup>226</sup> The memoir in particular was marginalised by the critics despite it predating autobiography; for example, Misch considers

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<sup>220</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 194.

<sup>221</sup> Weillhelm Dilthey, *Pattern and Meaning in History: W.Dilthey’s Thoughts on History and Society*, ed. H.P.Rickman (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), 85-86.

<sup>222</sup> Georg Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, trans. Ernest W. Dickes (London: Routledge & Paul, 1950), 5.

<sup>223</sup> Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 12.

<sup>224</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 195.

<sup>225</sup> Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 97.

<sup>226</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 196.



memoir as “pre-writing” or a “dress rehearsal” for autobiography.<sup>227</sup> Julie Rak further stresses that memoir was excluded from autobiographical criticism primarily because the subject of the memoir did not fit the ‘great white men’ criteria that were demanded by those theorising autobiography.<sup>228</sup> She points out how Mish uses words like “merely” “only” and “minor” to emphasise the inferiority of memoir in comparison to autobiography to illustrate the position of memoir in this criticism.<sup>229</sup>

The difference between autobiography and memoir, other than the status of the form or the writer, is the way the ‘self’ is depicted. Lee Quinby argues that “whereas autobiography promotes an ‘I’ that shares with confessional discourse an assumed interiority and an ethical mandate to examine that interiority, memoirs promote an ‘I’ that is explicitly constituted in the reports of the utterances and proceedings of others.”<sup>230</sup> Smith and Watson, who classify memoir as a minor genre within the range of autobiographical writing, take a similar approach to Quinby, and argue that the difference between autobiography and memoir is the exteriority of the subject.<sup>231</sup>

The understanding of autobiography as self-referential writing by historically significant male figures and memoir as supplementary to autobiography continued to shape autobiographical criticism through to the mid twentieth-century, as critics continued to build their theories around a handful of autobiographies considered as “landmarks” such as works by Saint Augustine, Benvenuto Cellini, Jean-Jacque Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Henry David Thoreau. Along with these canonical texts, the theorisation of Dilthey and Misch continued to be influential, and ‘the great white man,’ or “Augustinian selfhood” according to Bruss, became the normative autobiographical subject. However, a critical shift occurs, as noted by scholars like James Olney and

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<sup>227</sup> Mish, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 97.

<sup>228</sup> Julie Rak, “Are Memoirs Autobiography? A Consideration of Genre and Public Identity,” *GENRE* 37, no. 3/4 (2004) 484-486.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 487-488.

<sup>230</sup> Lee Quinby “The Subject of Memoirs: The Women Warrior’s Technology of Ideographic Selfhood,” in *De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women’s Autobiography*, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 299.

<sup>231</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 198.

William Spengemann. Olney refers to the publication of Georges Gusdorf's article "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography" (1956), and Spengemann to Francis R. Hart's essay "Notes for an Anatomy of Modern Autobiography" (1969). Both consider these works as the turning point in autobiographical criticism in which both Gusdorf and Hart began to apply "rigorous critical analysis" to autobiographical narrative, and to question the *autos* (self).<sup>232</sup>

As Smith and Watson point out, the first wave critics had focused on the *bios* (life), when studying autobiography so that the status of the author as a historically significant figure had assured the 'authenticity' of the text. Olney points out that such emphasis on transparency and representativeness in autobiography criticism meant that:

"there was nothing problematical about the *autos*, no agonising questions of identity, self-definition, self-existence, or self-deprivation – at least none the reader need attend to – and therefore the fact that the individual was himself narrating the story of himself had no troubling philosophical, psychological, literary, or historical implication."<sup>233</sup>

By contrast, the second wave critics questioned the autobiographical subject as they were more conscious of the constructed 'self' and of autobiographical writing as a constructed narrative. Smith and Watson note that the certainty in both the 'self' and 'truth' upheld by the first wave critics gradually became uncertain throughout the twentieth-century as scholars began to question self and truth and approached autobiographical writing as "art" rather than "history."<sup>234</sup> For example, Gusdorf argued that autobiography is an act of "reconstructing the unity of a life across time" that functioned for the author as "a second reading of experience, and it is truer than the first because it adds to experience itself consciousness of it."<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 200.

<sup>233</sup> James Olney, *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 20.

<sup>234</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 200-202.

<sup>235</sup> Georges Gusdorf, "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography," quoted in James Olney, *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, 37-38.

Although autobiographical criticism shifted from understanding autobiography as a “transcription of the past”<sup>236</sup> to a construction of the self, the persistent influence of the first wave critics can be seen in the work of Gusdorf and Hart as they continue to define autobiography as “Western” and ‘great white men’ as the normative subject.<sup>237</sup> Furthermore, the marginalisation of memoir continues, as illustrated by the way Gusdorf dismissed memoir as propaganda or the egotistical act of public men that lacks objectivity and interiority.<sup>238</sup> According to Smith and Watson, the perpetuating influence of the first wave critics continued to obscure the extensive range of self-referential narratives such as those by women, as well as “ex-slaves, apprentices and tradespeople, adventurers, criminals and tricksters, saints and mystics, immigrants.”<sup>239</sup> However, such exclusion of subjects resulted in the diversification of autobiographical modes as marginalised subjects sought other ways to tell their story. For example, Helen Buss, who studies memoirs written by women, argues that memoirs have allowed those excluded from autobiography, especially women, to engage in self-referential writing.<sup>240</sup>

It was the third wave of criticism in the 1970s through to the 1980s that challenged the previous understanding of autobiography by incorporating poststructuralist, postmodernist, postcolonial, and feminist readings. Smith and Watson argue that third wave critics considered that “[a] true self can never be discovered, unmasked, or revealed because its core is a *mise en abîme*, an infinite regress.”<sup>241</sup> Such incorporation of contemporary literary theory led to an understanding of autobiography as a performance of identity rather than a mere chronology of life experience. For example, in *Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre* (1976) Elizabeth Bruss argues that

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<sup>236</sup> Philip Holden, *Autobiography and Decolonization: Modernity, Masculinity, and the Nation-state* (Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 39.

<sup>237</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 203.

<sup>238</sup> Gusdorf, “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,” 36.

<sup>239</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 203.

<sup>240</sup> Helen Buss, *Repossessing the World: Reading Memoirs by Contemporary Women* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002), 12-13.

<sup>241</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 206.

autobiography “is a personal performance, an action that exemplifies the character of the agent responsible for that action and how it is performed.”<sup>242</sup>

If Bruss considered autobiographical writing as a performance or an act, Philippe Lejeune interpreted it as a contract. Lejeune argued that autobiographical writing is “a pact” or a contract between the narrator and the reader that “supposes that there is identity of name between the author (such as he figures, by his name, on the cover), the narrator of the story, and the character who is being talked about.”<sup>243</sup> He further adds that autobiographical writing is a “mode of reading as much as it is a type of writing” and his understanding of the text-reader relationship as a contract foregrounds the role readers play in autobiographical writing.<sup>244</sup> For Lejeune, the name or the “contract of identity that is sealed by the proper name” is crucial as it explicitly declares to readers that the author and the narrated “I” share identity and that the text is autobiographical.<sup>245</sup>

However, many critics have challenged such emphasis on the “proper name,” arguing that it is “yet another oversimplification weighted in favour of the privileged.”<sup>246</sup> As Lauren Rusk points out, the question of one’s name can be complicated for women, as it could change according to their marital status, or they may feel the need to use a masculine or gender-neutral pseudonym.<sup>247</sup> Leigh Gilmore suggests that Lejeune’s understanding of the authorial name suggest that the autobiographical subject is based on a coherent, unified, and stable self.<sup>248</sup> Feminist readings of self-referential narrative have suggested that writing an autobiographical text is an act – a performance of identity; and since identity is not coherent, unified nor stable, thus the autobiographical subject is complex, fragmented and fluid, and the linking by name of the narrator and the author only enacts authenticity if the reader allows it to.

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<sup>242</sup> Elizabeth Bruss, “Eye for I: Making and Unmaking Autobiography in Film,” in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 300.

<sup>243</sup> Philippe Lejeune, “The Autobiographical Contract” in *French Literary Theory Today*, ed. Tzvetan Todorov (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 12.

<sup>244</sup> The influence of the first wave critics seems to linger even in the third wave criticism as Lejeune continues to assume that autobiographical subject is male.

<sup>245</sup> Lejeune, “The Autobiographical Contract,” 19-20.

<sup>246</sup> Lauren Rusk, *The Life Writing of Otherness: Woolf, Baldwin, Kingston, and Winterson* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 9.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2001), 77.

Such an approach suggests that the author can only claim ‘authenticity’ when the readers are able to endorse it.

Lejeune further defines autobiography as a “retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his [sic] own experience, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality” and he further applies an absolute condition in an attempt to clarify the boundary between autobiography and fiction. Ever since the second wave critics, such as Gusdorf, first began to read autobiographical writing as constructed narrative, distinguishing it from fiction became crucial and it continues to be the crux of the discourse with the third wave critics like Lejeune. In addition to the name, he argued that the “vital statistics” or the biological facts of the author that can be verified such as date of birth, home town, and place of education link the identity of the author and the protagonist, separating the autobiographical writing from fiction.<sup>249</sup> These vital statistics function as a link between the text and the author and readers should be able to verify the information outside the given text.

However, as Smith and Watson point out, autobiographical writing shares the features ascribed to fiction such as plot, dialogue, setting, and characterisation, making it difficult to fix the boundary between them;<sup>250</sup> while Paul de Man likens the attempt to distinguish autobiography from fiction as being “caught in a revolving door.”<sup>251</sup> In fact, Smith and Watson argue that autobiographical writing has never been a “unified form nor is it distinct from literary modes of either fiction or nonfiction.”<sup>252</sup> Their argument illustrates that fictionalisation in autobiographical writing is inevitable since it is a constructed narrative.

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<sup>249</sup> Lejeune, “The Autobiographical Contract,” 12.

<sup>250</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 7, 9.

<sup>251</sup> Paul de Man, “Autobiography as De-Facement,” *Modern Language Notes* 94, no.5 (1979): 921.

<sup>252</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 127.

Smith and Watson further argue that the autobiographical narrative is an act of remembering, and thus ‘authenticity’ in autobiography is impossible since memory is a subjective form of evidence.<sup>253</sup> The unreliability of human memory is best illustrated by psychologists like Daniel Schacter, who examines various cases of false memory or fabrication of memory. He argues that memories are “records of how we have experienced events, not replicas of the events themselves” so there can never be a completely authentic recollection of past events.<sup>254</sup> Thus, any mode of autobiographical writing, ranging from memoir to autobiographical novel, is constructed from the fragments of memories or an interpretation of the past; they are neither solid nor stable, since the reinterpretation of past experience can never be fully recovered or reliable.<sup>255</sup> The difference between autobiographical text and fiction is not the veracity of the text but rather, authors being able to claim ‘authenticity’ through the ‘autobiographical pact.’

Rather than attempting to define autobiographical writing by distinguishing it from fiction, considering them as the two ends of a spectrum allows us to avoid de Man’s scenario of being caught in a ‘revolving door.’ The degree of ‘autobiographicality’ can be measured by using Lejeune’s ‘vital statistics’ as markers along the gradient scale, the more links to the author the readers are able to recognise in the text, the stronger the author’s claims to the perceived ‘authenticity’ of his or her text. Originally, Lejeune had set these criteria specifically for ‘autobiography’ (or representative autobiographies of ‘great white men’ to be precise) but they can be applied to a wider range of self-referential writing. If there is a strong link between the author and the text, it sits towards the autobiographical end of spectrum, while works with more fictionalisation slide towards fiction.

Third wave criticism illustrated the problem of using ‘autobiography’ as a generic term as it refers specifically to representative works by ‘great white man’ and as a result, the term “life writing” is used

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<sup>253</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 6.

<sup>254</sup> Daniel Schacter, *Searching for Memory: The Brain, the Mind, and the Past* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 6.

<sup>255</sup> Smith and Watson *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 16.

as the new generic term amongst contemporary scholars. As Rak points out, there is still critical disagreement in defining this new term, but in general it is used as an umbrella term for autobiographical writing as it can refer to both public and private self-referential writings, thereby including previously neglected modes of writings such as memoir, letters and journals.<sup>256</sup> However, the use of the term ‘life writing’ is limited to the academic sphere, and as a result, the discrepancy between the academic and non-academic understanding of autobiographical writing has widened. For example, George Fetherling’s observations of how non-academic readers understand memoir illustrates the lack of a unified definition for any mode of autobiographical writing. Fetherling claims that “people may not agree what a memoir is but they know one when they see it and they create a demand, which writers and publishers rush to satisfy.”<sup>257</sup> A similar observation can be made of autobiography as Smith and Watson point out, “in contemporary parlance, *autobiography* and *memoir* are used interchangeably,”<sup>258</sup> which illustrates how in the non-academic sphere, autobiographical writing continues to be understood as ‘non-fiction’ – an antithesis of fiction; and readers continue to demand the ‘truth’ from life writing, especially from those categorised as autobiography or memoir by the publishers.

The three waves of autobiographical criticism have been acknowledged in Japanese scholarship. For example, Morimoto Atsuo uses the term “*raifu raitingu*” (life writing) to point out the diversity of subjects and modes in the field of autobiographical studies in 2007.<sup>259</sup> However, he continues to use *jiden* as a generic term for self-referential writing despite noting that *jiden* first emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the translation of Rousseau’s *Confessions* in Japanese and that “*jiden* in this sense has a relatively short history.”<sup>260</sup> Since he also mentions autobiographies of “nobodies” and self-referential writings in the form of an online blog in his discussion of *jiden*, it is clear that he considers works like

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<sup>256</sup> Rak, “Are Memoirs Autobiography? A Consideration of Genre and Public Identity,” 306.

<sup>257</sup> George Fetherling, *The Vintage Books of Canadian Memoirs* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2001), vii.

<sup>258</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, 198.

<sup>259</sup> Morimoto Atsuo 森本淳生, “Kaidai” 解題 [Explanatory Notes], *Gengoshakai* 言語社会 3 (2007) 6, accessed March 24 2014, <http://hdl.handle.net/10086/18265>.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

*Confessions* as one mode of autobiographical writing, but the continuing use of the term *jiden* as an umbrella term suggests that the more recent third wave of criticism lacked the impact on the understanding of *jiden* that it has had on autobiography in the Western context. Furthermore, despite the incorporation of ideas from the work of scholars such as Lejeune and de Man, and the understanding of autobiographical writings as a constructed narrative by scholars such as Morimoto and Hirose,<sup>261</sup> Japanese academics continue to focus on representative autobiographies by the privileged male. An exception is Noboru Tomonari who explores autobiographical writings by merchants, political activists and post-war working mothers but such research in Japanese autobiographical criticism remains rare.

Third wave criticism is particularly crucial in studying *kōsei* autobiographical writings as the traditional understanding of *jiden* only focus on those with power and privilege, whilst the writers of *kōsei* autobiographical works explored in this chapter are those who had been ostracised by society for their refusal and failure to conform to society's expectations during their adolescence. The occupations of the authors explored in this chapter vary. Urita's occupation after publication is unknown, Nakaba is an author, and Shinagawa and Yūji are Japanese celebrities (comedian and actor) and so they either were or have become public figures through the publication of their tales of rebellion and rehabilitation. However, none of them can be considered as historically or politically significant figures and their works are marketed and read as entertainment. The lack of academic interest in *kōsei* autobiographical writings mirrors that in *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*, thus the pattern of neglect or reluctance to include entertainment or popular texts within the discourse of Japanese literature becomes more evident. Perhaps the tendency for Japanese academics to prefer high (and what is perceived as serious) literature as opposed to popular literature, which was discussed in the previous chapter, has also prevented Japanese autobiographical criticism from progressing beyond a consideration of representative autobiography.

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<sup>261</sup> Hirose "‘Jiden’ to ‘Jidenteki’: Jidenkenkyūiron ni Okeru ‘Chōsha’ no Mondai ni Tsuite," 53-66.



## The first stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing

### Urita Yoshiharu's *We Only Have Saturdays* (1975)

The publication in 1975 of a *shuki* by Urita, who was the leader of the legendary *bōsōzoku* teams *Gokuaku* (Villainy) and the *Burakku Enperā* (Black Emperor), can be considered as the origin point of *kōsei* autobiographical writing, as it was the first self-referential work written by a former teenager who performed his identity through one of the newly emerging rebellious youth cultures. The writing focuses on the author's life from 1974 to 1975, and he documented not only his own experiences but also the *bōsōzoku* culture in general by observing other *bōsōzoku* members or teams. The link between the author and the narrated "I" is made explicit and the claim to 'authenticity' is made throughout the text that it sits towards the autobiographical end of the scale.

According to Lejeune, the shared name is a crucial part of the autobiography contract, but the complexity of naming noted by many scholars is demonstrated in *We Only Have Saturdays*, where the author uses a different name for the narrator-protagonist. Throughout the narrative, the narrator-protagonist is mostly referred to as Endō. In fact, the authorial name is only mentioned once in a dialogue between the narrator-protagonist and a police officer, in the earlier part of the *shuki*. When the officer asks, Endō explains that he has two surnames as a result of his parents' divorce; the one that he goes by (Endō) and another one (Urita) which is on his birth certificate.<sup>262</sup> The use of a name other than the authorial name in this text highlights the way that a name can be unstable, even for male writers. At the same time, it also demonstrates the complexity of the autobiographical subject, as the use of two names foregrounds the fragmentation of identity. The author's choice to use his mother's surname over his father's in his daily life (and narrative) seems to symbolise the relationship between the narrator-protagonist and his parents, as he maintains a good relationship with his mother throughout the text, illustrated by his recurrent statements of admiration and love for her, while his father is absent from the

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<sup>262</sup> Urita Yoshiharu 瓜田吉寿, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai* 俺たちには土曜しかない [We Only Have Saturdays] (Tokyo: Futami Shobō, 1975), 25.

text. Yet, the author chose to publish under the name he rarely used in his private life, which can be interpreted as an attempt to separate the private self and the public self (even though the private self is given public exposure through his writing). Furthermore, despite the relatively short temporal gap between the events documented in *We Only Have Saturdays* and the time of writing, the difference between the narrating 'I' and the narrated 'I' is highlighted by the use of these two names as Urita (authorial name) symbolises the narrating 'I' while Endō (the name the narrator-protagonist chooses to go by) the narrated 'I.' Such a separation suggests the fragmentation of self in autobiographical writing but is not emphasised as there is little temporal distance between the events narrated and the time of publication. The fragmentation of self in the narrative will become more evident with later works where there is a greater temporal gap.

The link between the identity of the author and the narrator-protagonist in *We Only Have Saturdays* is made explicit through his biological facts, or 'vital statistics' to use Lejeune's phrase, and the fact that his reputation as a charismatic *bōsōzoku* predated the publication of his *shuki*. For readers who were familiar with the *bōsōzoku* culture, Urita's name, his team names and his account of famous incidents would have been sufficient to convince them of the 'authenticity' of the text. However, since Urita was not a public figure outside *bōsōzoku* culture, mainstream readers lacked the means to verify the vital statistics presented throughout the narrative. The brief author information provided on the very last page by the publishers would have been one of the only resources available to such readers. It is stated in the author information that after graduating from Okubo Middle School, Urita worked at the shipping company, Tokai Kisen Co. Ltd; it further states that after sailing for a year, he left the ship and started working as a waiter at various clubs in the Ginza district before he found a job at the independent film company, Gendai Eizo.<sup>263</sup> These biographical details of the author provided by the publishers are in fact a repetition of the information given by the author in his *shuki*, which can be interpreted as the publisher's attempt to emphasise or guarantee the 'authenticity' of the text to readers.

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<sup>263</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*.

By supplying readers with the means to confirm vital statistics outside the text, they are also claiming that the work is ‘authentic’ and in doing so they are urging readers to accept the autobiographical pact, despite the fact that these details are derived from the text itself.

In addition to the information about the author that can be verified outside the given text, *We Only Have Saturdays* uses cultural references to link the text to a ‘real world’ that readers would recognise. For example, the narrator-protagonist claims that he and his friends were fans of Sakurada Junko and Yamaguchi Momoe, two very popular idols at the time.<sup>264</sup> These references to the popular culture that was enjoyed by contemporary teenagers portray the protagonist and his friends as ordinary teenagers.

Yet, at the same time, some references to mainstream popular culture, especially fashion trends, are used to separate the narrator-protagonist and his *bōsōzoku* friends from other non-*bōsōzoku* teenagers. On numerous occasions, the narrator-protagonist shows animosity towards youth wearing trendy clothes, as in the following passage:

At approximately one hour past midnight, an asshole clad in a maxi-coat and suit, flirting with a woman dressed like a fashion model walked in. These guys dressed in imported merchandise from head-to-toe made me want to lash out at them.<sup>265</sup>

The hostility the narrator-protagonist shows towards these maxi-coat- and suit-wearing youth who consume imported goods, and frequent the Roppongi area can be interpreted as his rejection of mainstream conformity, which seems to be a crucial part of constructing and performing the *bōsōzoku* identity. Fashion trends, unlike idols or film titles, are a vital part of identity performance in real life as they are used to mark the group identity to separate them from the non-*bōsōzoku* youth, and hence references to such cultural items become a crucial tool in depicting a *bōsōzoku* in writing. One of the

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<sup>264</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

few types of clothing associated with *bōsōzoku* is *tokkōfuku*,<sup>266</sup> which Urita mentions when recounting his days as the leader of Villainy. However, when Urita joins Black Emperor, the *tokkōfuku* is no longer their uniform. The lack of description in terms of *bōsōzoku* fashion throughout *We Only Have Saturdays* and the photos of *bōsōzoku* members wearing various different styles in the photos provided in his *shuki*, seem to suggest that there was no distinct *bōsōzoku* dress code in the mid-1970s. This is verified by the observations made by scholars studying the *bōsōzoku* culture, such as Narumi Hiroshi, who argue that the *bōsōzoku* culture was in an early stage of development in the mid-1970s, that no specific fashion style had yet emerged and that the *tokkōfuku* only became the dress code of the *bōsōzoku* in the 1980s.<sup>267</sup>

In the absence of a standard *bōsōzoku* dress code, the protagonist and the other *bōsōzoku* members use items such as flags and bumper stickers displaying their team logo to perform their group identity throughout the text. They fly their flag as they ride, and give stickers to those who have travelled from outside Tokyo as a way of including them in their team. The narrator-protagonist claims that society accuses them of mimicking Yakuza and organising themselves into a Yakuza-like organization with regional branches, but in fact, he explains that handing out stickers and the recipients agreeing to put them on their bikes was all there was to these so-called regional branches.<sup>268</sup> He explains that the exchange of stickers was about befriending them rather than recruiting them.

These cultural items specific to the *bōsōzoku* culture, which are referred to throughout the text, by the narrator-protagonist were a crucial part of performing the *bōsōzoku* identity as illustrated in *We Only Have Saturdays*. Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood's study of youth culture argues that these items function as "weapons of exclusion" within the youth culture as teenagers use them not only to express

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<sup>266</sup> For further analysis of *bōsōzoku* activities and the *tokkōfuku* uniform, see Chapter 1 (p34-35).

<sup>267</sup> Narumi Hiroshi 成実弘至, "Yankī Fasshon to Kajōsa no Naka no Sōzōsei" ヤンキーファッションと過剰さの中の創造性 [Yankī Fashion: Creativity within Extravagancy] in *Yankī Bunkaron Josetsu* [An Introduction to Yankī Studies], ed. Igarashi Tarō (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2009), 80-81.

<sup>268</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa doyō shika nai*, 72-73.

their group membership but to exclude the non-members.<sup>269</sup> In *We Only Have Saturdays*, these weapons of exclusion are used not only to depict how the *bōsōzoku* identities were performed, but at the same time they anchor the narrative to the ‘real world’ as the majority of readers at the time would have seen these items either on the streets or in the news media.

Despite recognising the *bōsōzoku* flags or stickers, mainstream society’s understanding of the *bōsōzoku* culture would have been limited and biased at the time of publication, since *bōsōzoku* were predominantly portrayed as a social menace in the news media ever since they first emerged in the early 1970s. According to Endō Natsuki, the term *bōsōzoku* was first used by journalists in 1972 when they reported a large scale riot by the motorcycle gangs in the Toyama prefecture,<sup>270</sup> while Sato Ikuya, one of the first scholars to study this rebellious youth culture, argues that the *bōsōzoku* era began in 1974, by which time the term *bōsōzoku* had become widespread. As the news media continued to report the violent antics of the *bōsōzoku*, society’s concern grew and the police crackdown intensified, partly in order to calm public opinion. Such portrayal increased the visibility of *bōsōzoku* in Japanese society and their notorious reputation spread nationwide.<sup>271</sup> The result of negative stereotyping is best illustrated by the way Nagae Akira remembers fearing them in the late 1970s:

At the time, there were plenty of negative rumours about the *bōsōzoku*. Stories were told of how so-and-so was ambushed by the *bōsōzoku* while he was driving along minding his own business, or how so-and-so was attacked and his girlfriend raped while they were out on a date. We contemplated and discussed what to do in the event of encountering them. At the time, they represented the ultimate ‘evil.’<sup>272</sup>

Such fears, based on rumours, rather than direct experience, were widespread in the 1970s and illustrate how the public perception of *bōsōzoku* during this period was greatly influenced by negative news

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<sup>269</sup> Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (London: Allen Lane, 1979), 85.

<sup>270</sup> Endō Natsuki 遠藤夏輝, *Tōkyō Furyō Shōnen Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu* 東京不良少年伝説: C R S 連合誕生の真実 [The Legend of Tokyo Rebels: The Truth Behind the Birth of CRS Union] (Tōkyō: Mirion Shuppan, 2010), 107.

<sup>271</sup> For further sociological analysis of *bōsōzoku* culture, see Satō Ikuya’s works.

<sup>272</sup> Nagae, “Yankiteki Narumono: Sono Kigen to Mentaritī,” 32.

reports. An exploration of the social context of *We Only Have Saturday* suggests that there would have been two different types of readers: those like Nagae who feared the *bōsōzoku* and would have been unfamiliar with their culture and others like Endō Natsuki, who knew more about the *bōsōzoku* culture and idolised Urita and the Black Emperor. According to Endō, many rebellious youth read *We Only Have Saturdays* so they could learn from this legendary *bōsōzoku* leader and treated the work like a bible.<sup>273</sup> For readers who only knew *bōsōzoku* as ‘evil’ or a social menace, Urita’s *shuki* would have provided an alternative image or understanding of *bōsōzoku* as fun-loving but misunderstood youth, while for the rebellious teenagers like Endō, it would have provided them with an idealised image of *bōsōzoku* and their code-of-conduct.

Whether the reader was a mainstream reader who knew little of *bōsōzoku*, and whose views were influenced by media reporting, or an aspiring *bōsōzoku* member, Urita’s *shuki* would have been informative and authoritative, as the documentation of *bōsōzoku* culture came not from a random *bōsōzoku* member but from one of the key figures that shaped the development of Japanese motorcycle gang culture in the 1970s. Endō remembers that in the 1970s, “even seeing Urita from afar would entitle one to brag about it for at least a year” and many rebellious teens rushed to the bookstore to purchase his *shuki*.<sup>274</sup> He further argues that Urita’s reputation as a legendary *bōsōzoku* leader gave him the ‘authority’ to narrate and be the voice of *bōsōzoku*.<sup>275</sup>

The authority-in-detail of Urita’s work is illustrated by the way he informs readers that there are two types of *bōsōzoku* and categorises those who ride in order to attract female attention as the “skirt-chasers” (*nanpa*), while those who ride just for the sake of the thrill and the brawl are the “toughies” (*kōha*).<sup>276</sup> Urita claims to be the latter, as he describes how his earlier team *Gokuaku*, became known as one of the toughest *bōsōzoku* groups in Tokyo. Further variation within the *bōsōzoku* culture is revealed

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<sup>273</sup> Endō, *Tokyo Furyō Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu*, 249.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 45.

when the narrator-protagonist describes Black Emperor, which had a ‘no-brawling’ policy and claimed riding as their main gang activity.<sup>277</sup> By using the first person mode, the author directly addresses the readers and reveals information that the majority of the non-*bōsōzoku* readers would have been unaware of, such as the no-brawling policy or the diversity within the *bōsōzoku*. The account of such policy can be interpreted as the author’s attempt to depict the *bōsōzoku* as fun-loving, thrill-seeking teenagers and to show that not all *bōsōzoku* groups were as bad as they were portrayed in the news media. At the same time, Urita’s text would have educated the aspiring *bōsōzoku* that being a *bōsōzoku* was not about transgressing the law, but about having fun, and that there was such a thing as a code-of-conduct.

The author’s emphasis on the positive traits of the narrator-protagonist is evident throughout the text. For example, Urita claims that, like the Black Emperor’s ‘no brawling’ policy, Villainy, while notorious for their brawling, also had their own strict ‘no drugs’ policy. He claimed that members who failed to comply with the group’s policy were immediately excluded.<sup>278</sup>

Pants transformed completely when he joined our team. He used to sniff paint thinner all the time and never listened to his parents or the teachers. So eventually, he was kicked out of school and home. He became a runaway and hung around Shinjuku city. That’s where I found him, took him back to my apartment and took care of him for two months.<sup>279</sup>

The account of these policies can be interpreted as the author’s portrayal to a sceptical readership of the moral standards some *bōsōzoku* members had in order to counter the perception that all of them were criminals. Not only does the narrator-protagonist provide shelter and food but he manages to rehabilitate a drug addict. It is further explained that Pants’ desire to join Villainy and their strict anti-drugs rule helped him kick his drug habit. Throughout the narrative, Urita continues to emphasise the ‘good’ side not just of himself but of his friends. For example, despite being labelled by society as *ochikobore* (drop-outs), the *bōsōzoku* characters in Urita’s *shuki* are depicted as hard-working, decent

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<sup>277</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 71-72.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-57.

youth. The narrator-protagonist explains that most of his team mates worked hard throughout the week to pay for their bike or car, some even went to school, so that Saturdays were their only day of freedom:

Saturdays were the only time during the week that we could really live. The frustration that built up during the week was crushing our senses and if we didn't let it out once a week our bodies felt like bursting into million pieces. We endured it throughout the week by looking forward to that one day. [...] We were crazy for speed.<sup>280</sup>

Such emphasis on their thrill for speed, and the love of riding can be interpreted as part of the positive strategy of portrayal of *bōsōzoku* —as thrill-seeking youth, instead of a group of young criminals. The narrative shows an awareness of such negative stereotyping by referring to some of the negative rumours throughout the text. For example, the narrator-protagonist claims that the rumours of *bōsōzoku* raping girls at parties and holding sex parties were ridiculous, arguing that the majority of his *bōsōzoku* friends were in fact virgins who were shy and sexually inexperienced. He further states that they preferred to fool around in large groups, regardless of gender, rather than being alone in a room with a girl.<sup>281</sup> This direct strategy of slating rumours strongly suggests that the author was attempting to overturn the negative stereotyping by challenging these rumours. By using a mode of writing that allowed him to claim 'authenticity' would have had an impact on the non-academic readers who accepted his words at face-value.

The author also depicts how the *bōsōzoku* are ostracised and discriminated against by society, through their antagonistic relationship with the police who treat them unfairly. For example, when the narrator-protagonist stopped two junior members from mugging someone and returned the money they had stolen to the victim, he finds himself arrested the next day on suspicion of orchestrating the mugging:

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<sup>280</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 20-21.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, 112-113.



I found out from the police officer that the junior members had gone back to the victim and took the money I had returned him earlier. So the victim had reported the incident. The strange thing was that I was made to be the main perpetrator.

“You gave the orders, right? You mugged him, and on top of that you used someone younger to do your dirty work. You really are a cowardly bastard aren’t you? Don’t you feel ashamed of yourself?”<sup>282</sup>

Such an incident not only illustrates the narrator-protagonist’s *bōsōzoku* code of ethics but it also illustrates how they were singled out by the police for just being *bōsōzoku*, rather than because of their actions. Throughout the text, the narrator-protagonist is accused of crimes he did not commit, beaten, taken into custody and kept in a cell overnight despite being a minor, and even denied his basic rights.<sup>283</sup> These accounts of unfair treatment by the law enforcement authorities, together with the narrator-protagonist’s own portrayal of himself as an honest youth with a moral compass offers a thorough critique of the police and it can be interpreted as the author urging readers to question the way society labels and discriminates against those who refuse to conform. Depicting the narrator-protagonist as a misunderstood but moral rebel is crucial as without such a positive portrayal, readers will not be able to empathise with him, or be intrigued by Urita’s *shuki*. The work confounds their assumptions that it will only confirm what they already know, by showing how the *bōsōzoku* are far from being a group of reckless thugs. Therefore, the portrayal of his implementation of various ethical policies, the rehabilitation of Pants, and the unfair arrest, are all part of constructing the narrator-protagonist as what Leslie Fiedler categorises as a “good bad boy.”<sup>284</sup>

As noted by scholars such as Sato Ikuya, the majority of the *bōsōzoku* members did not perform well academically and as a result, they were stigmatised as dropouts (*ochikobore*). Their antics such as drinking, smoking, partying, joy-riding, which were considered illegal activities under the Japanese juvenile law (*shōnenhō*), intensified society’s discrimination towards *bōsōzoku* but these activities are downplayed in *We Only Have Saturdays*, as the narrator-protagonist claims that they were just having

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<sup>282</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 102-103.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, 20, 23, 25,26, 28, 102.

<sup>284</sup> Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Criterion Books, 1960).

‘fun.’ Furthermore, the riots or brawling that the narrator-protagonist is involved in are referred to as a ‘battle’ or ‘war’ between gang members and it is emphasised by the narrator-protagonist that no harm came to the public. In doing so, the author separates the battles of *bōsōzoku* from a senseless act of violence against an innocent bystander by a thug. The narrator-protagonist claims that their team uniform was a *tokkōfuku* that had their team name *Gokuaku* sewn in and that it represented their notoriousness. Although he uses the term “notorious” to describe his team, he shows immense pride in both his team and his uniform, as illustrated in the following passage:

By then Villainy had become a synonym for ‘going berserk’ in the Shinjuku area. After years of undefeated street fights, the dark navy *tokkōfuku* was dripping with dignity.<sup>285</sup>

Such imagery suggests that the author occasionally interprets ‘bad’ as being powerful, rather than being criminal. Throughout the text, the narrator-protagonist is depicted as knowing the difference between right and wrong, as he is against mugging or drugs, but at the same time he portrays himself as a fierce street fighter who is not afraid to inflict violence on another *bōsōzoku* member. The narrator-protagonist’s fights or battles with other *bōsōzoku* teams are about displaying his power as *bōsōzoku* and an exhibition of his masculinity, even though such actions may be considered as a social threat by society at large. Such depictions of *bōsōzoku* as honourable and strong youth glorify the *bōsōzoku* culture. In this respect they resemble the way yakuza were glorified and depicted as heroic and moral protagonists in the *ninkyō eiga* (chivalry films), such as *Brutal Tales of Chivalry* (1965) directed by Saeki Kiyoshi (1914-2002),<sup>286</sup> which is a sub-genre of films that flourished in the 1960s.

In order to portray himself and his friends as good bad boys, the narrator-protagonist both emphasises the positive traits, and at the same time omits or downplays the more negative aspects of being a *bōsōzoku*, such as the fights or riots that he participates in, or the transgression of the Juvenile Law by

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<sup>285</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 74.

<sup>286</sup> The term *ninkyō eiga* is used to categorise Yakuza films which were popular in the 1960s. Unlike later yakuza films such as *Battle without Honour and Humanity* (1973), it depicted the Yakuza as an honourable and moral man who lived and died by *giri* (duty/loyalty) and *ninjo* (humanity). For more on Yakuza films see Mark Schilling, *The Yakuza Movie Book: A Guide to Japanese Gangster Films* (Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 2003).

drinking or smoking. Such selective omission is one of the features of autobiographical writing used by critics to argue that ‘authenticity’ is impossible to achieve in self-referential narrative, as the author chooses to include or omit (intentionally or unintentionally) parts of their past. As Smith and Watson point out, autobiographical writings are based on memory and human memories are unreliable as they can be forgotten or even manipulated. What is presented to readers as an ‘authentic’ account in autobiographical writing is in fact constructed from fragments of memories and manipulated by the author’s ulterior motives. In Urita’s case, overturning the reader’s perception can be considered as his motive in manipulating the way the *bōsōzoku* are presented in the text.

Another feature that reveals that *We Only Have Saturdays* is a constructed narrative is characterisation. In addition to the ‘good bad boy’ characterisation of the narrator-protagonist and his fun-loving and loyal *bōsōzoku* friends, Urita depicts his mother and girlfriends as loving and supportive characters that he needs to protect or care for. The narrator-protagonist’s relationships with these sympathetic female characters that do not judge or discriminate against him reveal and emphasise his positive side, as he is portrayed as a good son and a good boyfriend. For example, when he withdraws the money he earned while working at the shipping company to purchase a car, he points out that he left some money for his mother.<sup>287</sup> His affection towards his mother is again illustrated when he explains why he refused the high school basketball scholarship he was offered, because he did not want to financially burden her.<sup>288</sup> The mother is depicted as a strong, independent single mother, who teaches her son to be honest, and accepts her son without judging him for his *bōsōzoku* activities. The protagonist maintains a positive relationship with his mother throughout the narrative but there is no parental authority exerted by her as he is not under her direct care since he makes his own living, and because she is not against him being a *bōsōzoku*.

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<sup>287</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 123.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

With the lack of parental authority due to the physical absence of his father and an understanding mother, a male role model steps in to guide the protagonist towards adulthood. Throughout the text, the protagonist encounters numerous police officers and the majority of them are depicted as being arrogant, condescending and judgemental towards him. The exception is one detective who is the only police officer to be mentioned by name in the narrative. Detective Mita advises him to grow up, settle down and be a good son and a boyfriend. After meeting Mita, the narrator-protagonist contemplates ending his *bōsōzoku* activities in order to marry his girlfriend and provide stability in her life.<sup>289</sup> The protagonist explains that he listened and considered Mita's advice because he was the only adult other than his mother to show him kindness and who did not discriminate against him because he was a *bōsōzoku*.<sup>290</sup> This type of male figure, who guides the narrator-protagonist on life in the absence of a biological father, in combination with sympathetic female characters and loyal friends become a pattern in later *kōsei* autobiographical writing.

The publication of *We Only Have Saturdays* was followed by a succession of works that portrayed the *bōsōzoku* as good bad boys, which suggests that Urita's work was instrumental in changing the way *bōsōzoku* were portrayed, especially in the popular media. Through the authority of his intimate knowledge of *bōsōzoku* culture, the author is able to portray members of Black Emperor as good bad boys- misunderstood but good-at-heart rebels, and impact the reader's perception. The fact that such portrayal is the result of constructed narrative is hidden from non-academic readers who are blinded by their belief that the autobiographical writings are the antithesis of fiction and are therefore based on 'truth.' In this way Urita is able to overturn the negative stereotyping.

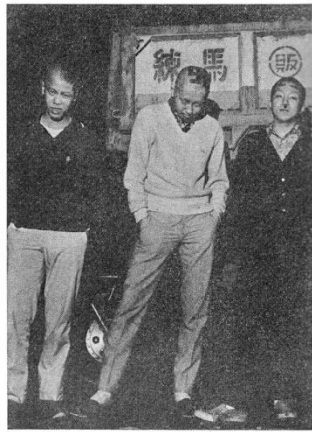
In his *shuki*, Urita mentions a cameraman who followed the *bōsōzoku* teams around "24/7, taking pictures of [us] like a madman" and his works were included in *We Only Have Saturdays*.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 195.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.



Images from *We Only Have Saturdays* (1975). Photographer not credited.

As noted by Endō and Nanba, Urita's work is considered by those studying the *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* culture as a pioneering work that triggered a wave of works that portrayed these rebellious youth in a positive light.<sup>292</sup> Contrary to the news media that continued to focus on the criminal activities of these youth, especially the *bōsōzoku*, these newly emerging texts in the forms of photo books, collections of interviews and documentary films depicted them as fun-loving youth. In fact, a film director, Ishi'i Teruo, who spent some time researching *bōsōzoku* culture by interviewing Urita and his friends, wrote in praise of the *bōsōzoku* and described them in a commentary on Urita's *shuki* as follows:

Society considers them [*bōsōzoku*] as a threat and condemns them. Unlike the pseudo-intellectual far-leftist youth, who kill innocent people with bombs while valuing their own lives, *bōsōzoku* are real men.<sup>293</sup>

Similar attitudes towards *bōsōzoku* that contradicted the negative portrayal in the news media can be further seen in the works of documentary film maker Yanagimachi Mitsuo (b.1945) who produced a documentary about Black Emperor in 1976. The film documented the *bōsōzoku* members' everyday

<sup>292</sup> Nanba Kōji 難波功士, *YankīShinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi* ヤンキー進化論:不良文化はなぜ強い [Evolutionary Theory of Yankī: Why Rebellious Cultures are Persistent] (Tōkyō: Kōbunsha Shinsho, 2009), 62. Endō, *Tokyo Furyō Densetsu: CRS Rengō Tanjō no Shinjitsu*, 249.

<sup>293</sup> Ishi'i Teruo 石井照男 “Seishun o Bakuhatsu Saseru Junjō Yarōtachi 青春を爆発させる純情野郎たち” [Pure Thugs Venting Youthful Energy] in Urita, *Oretachi niwa Doyō Shika Nai*, 202.

lives, including riding around town, being questioned by the police officers, being scolded by parents, and just having fun. The documentary depicted *bōsōzoku* as thrill-seeking youth who were enjoying themselves, which reinforced the positive portrayal initiated by Urita and further contradicted the negative depiction by the news media. The positive portrayal of *bōsōzoku* culture continued throughout the 1970s as illustrated by Kitagawa Akira's photo book *Bōsōrettoō '80 (The Island of Speed Tribes '80, 1979)* which was based on his interviews with various *bōsōzoku* groups.



Images: *Explosion! Motorcycle Gang* (1975) directed by Ishi'i Teruo (left), *The Classroom of Terror* (1976) directed by Okamoto Akihisa (centre), *The Runaway Season* (1976) Ishi'i Teruo (right)

Such attention was a catalyst for the emergence of positive portrayals of rebellious youth culture in other media such as film. One of the earliest films to feature *bōsōzoku* was Ishi'i's *Bakuhatsu! Bōsōzoku (Explosion! Motorcycle Gang, 1975)* which was about a fictional *bōsōzoku* group Black Panther, but actual *bōsōzoku* gangs, including members of Black Emperor made cameo appearances throughout the film, giving it an 'authentic' feel.<sup>294</sup> The following year, more *bōsōzoku* films were produced such as Okamoto Akihisa's *Bōryoku Kyōshitsu (The Classroom of Terror, 1976)*, and Ishi'i's second *bōsōzoku*-themed film *Bōsō no Kisetsu (The Runaway Season, 1976)*. Similarly to *Bakuhatsu! Bōsōzoku*, members of the actual *bōsōzoku* group, *Kūrusu (Cools)* made an appearance in *Bōryoku kyōshitsu*. Film makers such as Ishi'i and Okamoto not only increased the exposure of actual *bōsōzoku*

<sup>294</sup> Nanba, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi*, 61-62.  
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groups, but by portraying them as charismatic heroes, rather than ‘evil’ hooligans, they glorified teenage rebellion and glamorised the *bōsōzoku* culture.

The glorification of *bōsōzoku* culture in the popular media was soon followed by a similar approach to *furyō* and *yankī* culture as they too were depicted as good bad boys in creative works such as *manga* and film. Such portrayal became a mainstream trend in the 1980s; and this depiction of a misunderstood but good-at-heart rebel in popular culture continued throughout the 1990s, so that the images of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* went hand in hand with the good bad boy character. For example, Araki Hirohiko (b.1960) uses the *furyō* hair style and fashion styles to depict a charismatic protagonist with “a heart of gold” for the fourth instalment of his long running *manga* series *JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure: Part 4 Diamond is Unbreakable* (1992~1996).<sup>295</sup>



Images: *Jojo’s Bizarre Adventure: Part 4 Diamond is Unbreakable* vol.1 (left) and vol.3 (right)

Although the character design is somewhat exaggerated, as illustrated by the ridiculously overdone pompadour hair style and similarly overdone uniform customisation, readers would recognise the pompadour and *nagaran* (customised long school uniform jacket) as the *furyō* style. Araki notes that such a fashion choice for the protagonist was met with criticism at the time (early 1990s), as he recalls

<sup>295</sup> Araki Hirohiko 荒木飛呂彦, *Jojo no Kimyō na Bouken Part 4 Daiyamondo wa Kudakenai* ジョジョの奇妙な冒険 Part4 ダイヤモンドは砕けない [JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure: Part 4 Diamond is Unbreakable] , vol.12 (2004) 290.

his editor wondering if anyone would be wearing the out-dated *furyō* fashion in 1999.<sup>296</sup> However, in the 1990s, the fictional portrayal of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* characters as charismatic and moral rebels was trending, especially in the boys' *manga* and films.

### The second stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing

#### Nakaba Ri'ichi's *Kishiwada Boys Gang* (1994) and Shinagawa Hiroshi's *Drop* (2006)

Despite the abundant portrayal of good bad boys in visual media, particularly *manga* and film, it remained rare in autobiographical writing despite the publication of *We only have Saturdays*. The publication of Nakaba's *jidenteki shōsetsu* (autobiographical novel), which was based on his experience as a *furyō* twenty years earlier in the 1970s, marked the re-emergence of *kōsei* autobiographical writing, and the appearance of works like Shinagawa's *Drop* indicates a continuing trend in the 2000s. One of the most significant differences between the first and the second stage is the temporal gap between the setting of the text and the time of publication — *Kishiwada Boys Gang* is set in the 1970s and *Drop* in the 1980s and both works were published approximately two decades later. This temporal gap divides the readership into two types, those who have experienced the time depicted in the text, and those who have not. The readers who have lived through the period will recognise the setting and the cultural references made throughout the text, while the younger generation who lack direct experience, will recognise them as the result of what Arjun Appadurai categorises as “imagined nostalgia.”<sup>297</sup> Appadurai argues that a sense of nostalgia, which stems from experience, can also be created by consumption.<sup>298</sup> The recurrent fictional portrayal of the *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* culture in the popular media creates this imagined nostalgia amongst the younger generation so that, even without having lived through the period referred to, they are able to recognise the rebellious youth cultures of the late 1970s and the 1980s. Therefore, in second stage writings, the authors rely heavily on the cultural references and portrayals that readers would recognise as what they believe to be ‘authentic’

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<sup>296</sup> As predicted by the editor this fashion trend did indeed disappear and was replaced by newer trends.

<sup>297</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 77.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*



*bōsōzoku*, *furyō*, or *yankī*, reinforcing the positive portrayal of the teenage rebel in the *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* style that was recurrent in contemporary popular media.

The mode of autobiographical writing chosen by both Nakaba and Shinagawa, *jidenteki shōsetsu* (autobiographical novel), foregrounds the complexity of categorising autobiographical texts, as the authors openly admit to fictionalising their life stories by presenting their work as *shōsetsu* rather than *jiden* or *shuki*. At the same time, unlike other fictional texts, these works are often read as autobiographical texts and readers demand ‘authenticity.’ For example, both texts are marketed by the publishers as autobiographical novels but when they are shelved at the bookshops or libraries, there seems to be a discrepancy as some retailers categorise them as fiction, while others treat them as non-fiction. The authors’ reactions to the categorisation of their work also vary, further indicating the ambiguity of the genre boundary between fiction and non-fiction, as well as the question of where *jidenteki shōsetsu* belong. For example, Nakaba protested that his work had been categorised as non-fiction instead of fiction by the local bookshop,<sup>299</sup> while Shinagawa emphasised the ‘autobiographical’ element of his novel, despite its categorisation as fiction by retailers such as Amazon.jp.<sup>300</sup> The ambiguity of categorising *jidenteki shōsetsu* and the lack of consistency between authors, publishers, retailers, and even some academics, highlight how academic understanding of autobiographical writing as constructed narrative has not spread beyond the academic sphere, so that non-academic readers continue to demand ‘authenticity’ even from *jidenteki shōsetsu*.

Like any other type of autobiographical text, the link between the author and the text in *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* is made using the author’s name and vital statistics; however, unlike the *jiden* or *shuki* where often the authorial name seals the ‘autobiographical pact’ and as a consequence, categorisation by publishers and retailers as non-fiction is more likely, *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*

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<sup>299</sup> Nakaba Ri’ichi 中場利一, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai* 岸和田少年愚連隊 [Kishiwada Boys Gang] (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2010).

<sup>300</sup> Shinagawa Hiroshi 品川ヒロシ, “Shinagawa Burogu” 品川ブログ [Shinagawa Blog], accessed October 11, 2013, <http://shinagawa.laff.jp/blog/cat3027896/>.

use non-authorial names for their protagonists. However, the names are related to the author and this strongly suggests that there is a link between the author and the protagonist. For example, Nakaba's protagonist is introduced to readers as Chunba, which is revealed as the author's own nickname outside the narrative in the 'Afterword' added in the recent edition of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* published in 2010.<sup>301</sup> The link between the author and the protagonist had been left somewhat ambiguous prior to this additional information as the name 'Nakaba Ri'ichi' is not used in the text. Urita had also used a different name throughout his text, but the reason for doing so was explicitly stated in the text. In *Drop*, Shinagawa uses a slightly altered name 'Shinagawa Hiroshi' for his protagonist, suggesting a strong link between the identity of the author and the protagonist, despite the fictionalised name. On numerous occasions, Shinagawa has openly claimed the 'authenticity' of his work which seems to have triggered a handful of readers to accuse the author of fraud in an online forum, *Rogusoku*.<sup>302</sup> They argued that Shinagawa had fabricated his past as a *furyō* in *Drop*, and one user even suggested that there would have been no problem if the novel had been presented by the author as 'fiction.'<sup>303</sup> Yet, Shinagawa's text sits where all autobiographical writing sits, between fact and fiction, and it is this amalgam of fact with fiction which illustrates that autobiographical narrative is not a 'true-or-false' story but an inter-subjective process between the author and the reader. However, contrary to the academic understanding of autobiographical texts, the majority of readers seem to hold on to the idea that autobiographies are based on 'truth' and such beliefs and expectations towards both the writer and the text lead to controversies as illustrated by the reaction to *Drop*.

In addition, the use of the terms *jiden* and *shōsetsu* as commercial categories by the publishing industry also gives a false impression that a text can be one or the other, and that the boundaries between the genres are fixed, when in reality, categorising such works is far more complex. Therefore when a work

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<sup>301</sup> Although deducing that Chunba is a nickname for Nakaba is not too difficult, the author's confirmation that it is indeed his nickname (to the present day) had not been confirmed in print until 2010.

<sup>302</sup> *Rogusoku* is an internet forum similar to the more well-known, and perhaps more notorious *2chan*.

<sup>303</sup> "Shinagawa Hiroshi no Mōsōjiden" 品川祐の妄想自伝 [Shinagawa Hiroshi's Imaginary Autobiography], *Rogusoku* □グ速, accessed October 12, 2013, <http://www.logsoku.com/r/cinema/1237694917/>.

is published as autobiography, but is revealed to be fictional, it causes uproar among readers who are not aware of the ultimate unreliability of an autobiographical text. The controversy over *Drop* foregrounds another readerly expectation, one that is specific to *kōsei* autobiographical writings, and that is the demand for an ‘authentic’ depiction of *furyō*. The readers questioning the veracity of Shinagawa’s work were challenging his claim of having been a *furyō*, and one internet user went as far as to use the following images as ‘evidence’ for their accusation.<sup>304</sup>



Images of Shinagawa Hiroshi aged 14 (left) and 15 (right) from *Rogusoku*

Some of the *Rogusoku* users claim that Shinagawa could not have been a *furyō* because his appearance at the time rather suggests someone who might have been bullied by the *furyō*. This seemed to justify their claims that *Drop* was a “fabricated fantasy” of a “*furyō*-wanna-be.”<sup>305</sup> Such accusations based on the above images on the *Rogusoku* forum strongly indicate that readers have their own understanding of what *furyō* should look like. Therefore, for the authors of *kōsei* autobiographical writings to claim the ‘authenticity’ of their tales of rebellion they must present a portrayal of *furyō* which accords with what the readers believe *furyō* should look or be like.<sup>306</sup>

<sup>304</sup> “Shinagawa Hiroshi no Mōsōjiden.”

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> For some authors, such as Nakaba, convincing readers was less problematic. Shinagawa’s friend Iguchi Hiroshi, who gained fame through *Drop* has now published his own autobiographical writing. Despite being depicted in Shinagawa’s work he has not been subjected to similar slander. He has commented in an interview that he remembers the events narrated in *Drop* differently. The existence of Iguchi supports the authenticity claim of Shinagawa’s work as he can be considered as one of *Drop*’s vital statistics, but at the same time, he undermines Shinagawa’s perceived ‘authenticity’ by contradicting aspects of his writing.

One of the ways in which second stage writers attempted to convince their readers was through their use of cultural references that are specific to the 1970s or the 1980s depending on the temporal setting of their work. Although Shinagawa was slated as a fraud, he also makes various references to the popular media that had been part of *furyō* culture in the 1980s. For example, his transformation into *furyō* is described as follows:

Hiroshi, the *Drop-out* (*ochikobore*) had learned to smoke, drink alcohol and dye his hair from the senior students, and after reading *Bebop High School* and *Shonan Speed Tribe* he decided to transfer to a public school because of the stupid idea that he wanted to be a delinquent (*furyō*) and to be one he had to go to a public school not a private school.<sup>307</sup>

The fact that the protagonist is influenced by the fictional depiction of *furyō* in *manga* (*Bebop High School* and *Shonan Speed Tribe*), as well as the ‘real’ *furyō* (senior students), indicates how the popular media influenced the development of Japanese rebellious youth culture and identity performance, especially in the 1980s when *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* culture became mainstream. Similarly, in *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, the narrator-protagonist makes reference to the legendary rock band Carol that had started the 1950s American greaser-inspired fashion amongst the rebellious teens in 1970s Japan.

Unlike *We Only Have Saturdays* where specific dates are given throughout the narrative, the temporal setting in both *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* is vague, no specific dates are mentioned as the narrators in both novels use their school year or age to indicate time:

The summer of Year 6, I started a part-time job at a liquor store.<sup>308</sup>  
*Kishiwada Boys Gang* (1994)

The next day, Hiroshi left Komae City with a battered face. It was his sixteenth summer.<sup>309</sup>  
*Drop* (2006)

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<sup>307</sup> Shinagawa Hiroshi 品川ヒロシ, *Doroppu* ドロップ [Drop] (Tokyo: Ritoru Moe, 2006), 5.

<sup>308</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 12.

<sup>309</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 231.

The exact date as to when these protagonists were Year 6 or sixteen is left ambiguous within the texts, but the cultural references to reading *Bebop High School* or going to a Carol concert would indicate the approximate temporal setting for readers. Nakaba also uses reference to recognisable events such as Expo '70 (*Nihon Bankoku Hakuran-kai*) held in Osaka to indicate the temporal setting without giving the specific date or year — he refers to it only as “the expo” (*hakuran-kai*).<sup>310</sup> More importantly, these cultural references evoke nostalgia for the late 1970s or the 1980s so both *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* are triggering the memories, or pseudo-memories readers have of these eras. As scholars of autobiographical writing have repeatedly argued, memories are unreliable as they can be exaggerated, changed, or even fabricated. Furthermore, the memories readers have of *furyō* culture are also influenced by the recurrent images of *furyō* in the popular media. Unlike Urita, who documented a cultural phenomenon that the majority of the readers were unfamiliar with, Nakaba and Shinagawa are depicting a well-known cultural phenomenon, thus their depiction of *furyō* characters must reaffirm what the readers are already familiar with.

This means that the readers of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* have expectations as to how the *furyō* are depicted. The cultural references to popular culture, such as the *manga* or music preferences of these protagonists are also a part of developing the familiar *furyō* characters, as the readers would recognise *Bebop High School* or Carol as being part of performing rebellious youth identity in the late 1970s or the 1980s. In addition to popular media, the references to fashion trends also become more detailed in *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* compared to *We Only Have Saturday* as seen in the following excerpts:

The uniform had to be ‘Made in England.’ With the official wool mark. And the lining. At the time, getting the lining with the prints of dragons or tigers was the mainstream. At the shops specialising in customised school uniforms, the European style tight-waisted pants, and the jackets with linings printed with dragons or tigers were the major sellers, but I really hated them. The high-collared *nagaran* (long jacket) was also trending at the time but the guys wearing it looked like someone wearing braces because of whiplash. Back then, the streets were full of them. When you called out to them from behind, they had to turn their whole body around

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<sup>310</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 7.

because the jacket was so stiff that they looked like some sort of a robot. I hated those jackets. I mean you ended up walking around looking up the sky the whole time.

So I got the cupra lining with a print of *tennyo* (heavenly maiden). I shortened the jacket and the collar was only two centimetres high. When it was done, it looked like those jackets the Beatles wore... only a bit more lose fitting.<sup>311</sup>

*Kishiwada Boys Gang* (1994)

I dabbed a bit of the cheap cologne-in-a-can that I had bought at the convenience store on my neck, put on the five-buttoned high-waisted *dokan* pants that I had recently received from my *senpai* (senior student), and changed into my favourite black turtle neck shirt. Then I put some mousse on my red hair, and using the hairdryer, did my hair in a pompadour, finishing it off with furious spraying of Daiē hairspray to harden up the hair. I also fixed my ultra-thin eyebrows with a razor, and added some slits too just for the sake of it. Lastly, to complete the look, I put on my MA-1 bomber jacket.<sup>312</sup>

*Drop* (2006)

In both these novels, the performance of *furyō* identity by the protagonists is depicted through the fashion styles they incorporate. The detailed description of each fashion item and hairstyle suggests that they had been a vital part of performing *furyō* identity at the time, and thus also crucial in the identity construction of the *furyō* protagonist. The importance of fashion is further illustrated by the following observation the narrator-protagonist of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* makes at a rock concert:

Inside the lobby, it was full of men and women whose fashion looked out of this world. The guys with long hair that had been combed back slick with pomade wore leather jackets and were puffing cigarettes.<sup>313</sup>

The Carol concert itself is not described by the narrator-protagonist which he is depicted as having looked forward to; rather than recounting the experience of watching Carol perform, his attention is focused on the concert-goers. He observes the fashion styles of the fans with some awe as he envies the “cool” style of the concert-goers, whereas the music or the experience of attending the concert is not mentioned at all. Such a focus on fashion by the narrator-protagonist seems to further underscore the important role fashion played in the identity construction of a *furyō* in this later decade when *furyō* style was the mainstream trend. Another vital function of these *furyō* fashion styles in *Kishiwada Boys*

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<sup>311</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 91-92.

<sup>312</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 165.

<sup>313</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 88.

*Gang* and *Drop* is that they reinforce the images of *furyō* that are portrayed in the popular media. The descriptions of what *nagaran* or *dokan* looks like are so detailed that even when a reader fails to recognise items by name, they can imagine what they look like (e.g. “five-buttoned high waist pants”). Such portrayal links the texts to the images of *furyō* the majority of readers would have been exposed to through their consumption of popular media.

In addition to various fashion items specific to *furyō* culture, the portrayal of a *furyō* protagonist as a good bad boy would also be an element that would be responding to readers’ expectations. Ever since the *furyō*, along with other rebellious cultures such as *bōsōzoku* and *yankī*, had become mainstream trends in the 1980s, the positive portrayal of a rebellious teenager had become popular, especially in *manga* and film. Building on Urita’s first person portrayal in *We Only Have Saturdays*, which allowed him to directly engage readers and reveal and emphasise the positive traits of the protagonist, Nakaba also uses the first person narrative, and the tale of teenage rebellion is told through the perspective of the narrator-protagonist, Chunba, revealing his positive traits. For example, when Chunba finds out about a group of karate club students mugging girls, he expresses his disapproval towards such behaviour; in so doing, the narrator-protagonist is displaying his ‘good’ side as he shows the readers that he has moral standards unlike the karate club students.<sup>314</sup>

While the first person narrative can be considered as the dominant narrative mode in *kōsei* autobiographical writing, as with all forms of life writing, other narrative modes can be used, as is illustrated by *Drop*. Shinagawa uses a third person narrative and incorporates free indirect discourse to reveal the thoughts and emotions of characters, as illustrated by the following excerpt:

“Whether he is going to be okay depends on your son,” said the P.E. teacher who was not hiding his annoyance. He was probably annoyed and wondering why one would transfer school in the middle of the important exam period in the second year of junior high.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 72-73.

<sup>315</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 5.

Readers are given what the narrator assumes is the other character's perspective, which in this case is the P.E. teacher's frustration towards the untimely transfer student. Free indirect discourse is used throughout the text and the narrative persona frequently overlaps with the protagonist, the third person narrative temporarily slipping into the first person as illustrated by the following example:

Iguchi, with a face like a boy-band member, was laughing his head off. The guy who had been run over by the moped was crouched down, violently coughing and crying.  
“See? He didn't die. People don't die from getting hit by a moped,” said Iguchi. So this is the Iguchi Tatsuya that they warned me about. If this was a *furyō manga*, he would definitely be one of the villains. Hiroshi sighed and wondered if he would be able to get along with this villain.<sup>316</sup>

As the protagonist's encounter with Iguchi, who is one of the central characters of the story, illustrates, the extradiegetic narrator briefly plays an intradiegetic role as the narrative persona overlaps with that of the protagonist. Such slippage is limited to the protagonist, which strongly indicates that the free indirect discourse is specifically used to link Shinagawa Hiroshi, the author, and Shinanogawa Hiroshi, the protagonist, reinforcing the autobiographical import of the text.

Although the narrative modes selected by Nakaba and Shinagawa are different, they both use methods that allow them to convey the protagonist's thoughts and emotions directly to readers. This directness allows a strong relationship between the protagonist and the reader to be established and is a crucial element in the success of the work. The protagonists confide their thoughts and emotions to the reader which might remain hidden if narrated in a more distant and objective narrative mode. The revelations of the protagonist's thoughts and emotions are crucial as it is this that sets them apart from the bad boys, who show no remorse or morals; this differentiation between the good-at-heart rebel protagonist and thuggish bad boys is what triggers the reader's empathy towards the protagonist. This empathy is vital as these protagonists are labelled by society within the text as dropouts who are considered a social

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<sup>316</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 12.



nuisance and subject to various types of discrimination, especially from the antagonistic adult characters, such as the teachers and the police officers. The way the protagonists of these two novels smoke, drink alcohol, skip school, and brawl shows their rebellious side but, at the same time, they are portrayed as moral rebels who oppose drug use or extreme violence. Such an amalgam of good and bad traits would be recognisable, and even expected by the majority of the readers familiar with the portrayal of rebellious teenagers as good-at-heart *furyō* in *manga* and film since the 1980s.

The element of humour also contributes to the link between *kōsei* autobiographical works like *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*, and *manga* and film. Often in these popular media, such as *Bebop High School* and *Shōnan Speed Tribe*, the humour is added to portray the characters as harmless, non-criminal youth; and similarly, Nakaba and Shinagawa also use humour to downplay the seriousness of the mischievous antics of the protagonists that could be considered by some readers as criminal behaviour. For example, Chunba and his friends often resort to bilking when they are running short of money, and such incidents are often comically narrated, as illustrated by the following passage:

“You...you...you pay for the fried noodles!!”

“Hey mister, what fried noodles?”

“Don’t be smart you bastards! Pay up while I’m smiling,” the owner’s voice deepened with anger.

“What the hell? Where’s your proof? Show us!!”

When Kotetsu challenged the owner, I still had some fried noodle in my mouth so I had kept quiet. But in spite of myself, I sneezed real loud and some of the noodles went up and shot out of my nostrils.

“There’s my proof!!” the owner pointed at the noodles hanging down from my nose, and tried to grab me by my neck.<sup>317</sup>

The comical outcome influences the way readers perceive the incident; the addition of humour allows the writer to present behaviour such as shoplifting as mischievous, rather than as criminal behaviour. In another example, the narrator-protagonist of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and his friends decide to steal a small safe, thought to be full of money, from a local bar but instead they end up with a safe full of

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<sup>317</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 36.

plastic tabs which were used to keep a record of drink orders.<sup>318</sup> If the boys had profited from this theft they would be construed as criminals, but since they end up with worthless plastic tabs, the incident can be perceived as mischievous antics rather than serious criminal behaviour. Both the fried noodle incident and the plastic tab incident in *Kishiwada Boys Gang* can be considered as criminal behaviour but the seriousness is toned down by the use of humour.

Similarly in *Drop*, the reckless antics of the protagonist and his friends are downplayed in order to portray them as mischievous boys rather than criminal youth. The boys harass and assault strangers by playing what they call the Ginseng game, where they ask a stranger to drink Ginseng tea and if he refuses they throw him a punch.<sup>319</sup> In another incident, they fill balloons with dog faeces and throw them at a random police officer. These idiotic antics are narrated comically, as they were in *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, illustrating how humour is used to depict these actions as relatively harmless pranks rather than criminal acts with sinister intentions.

These additions of humour in the narrative can also be interpreted as a glorification of the author's past by depicting it as a time of youthful freedom without responsibility. For example, while many of the antics carried out by the protagonists in both *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* are often narrated comically, they are not without consequences as both protagonists end up before the family court and are eventually expelled from high school for their violation of school regulations and juvenile law. However, such incidents are narrated without regret and with humour, suggesting that the antics of *furyō* that sometimes transgress the law or rules are depicted in the light of a 'boys-will-be-boys' attitude. The long temporal gap between the narrated events and the time of writing and publication means that the "I" that is narrating the story is no longer an irresponsible rebellious teenager but an older persona, who glorifies their youthful experiences as they recall the good-old-days. Of course, the

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<sup>318</sup> Nakaba, *Kishiwada Shōnen Gurentai*, 187-191.

<sup>319</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 217.

retrospective reassessment of one's earlier experiences is very much in the classic mode of autobiographical writing.

Another indication of the reconstruction in these narratives is the authors' use of characterisation in both *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*. In addition to the protagonists and his *furyō* friends being depicted as good bad boys, the female characters are portrayed as loving but supplementary characters that need to be comforted or protected by the protagonist as the female characters had been in *We Only Have Saturdays*. The mothers, sisters or girlfriends are often in the background and their primary function seems to be to highlight the protagonist's positive traits through their interaction with him. For example, in *Drop*, the protagonist attempts to comfort his sister after her boyfriend's death:

"You haven't eaten at all. You should."

Hide was the most important person in my sister's life. They were childhood friends who went to school together and they started dating when they were sixteen. So what could possibly cheer her up? Hiroshi thought of how sad he was, and imagined how much more his sister would be hurting. That's why he wanted to help her somehow. But if he tried, he would have to bring up Hide and remind her of her loss and make her even sadder so he didn't know what to do.

"Thank you." His sister smiled weakly, as if she had understood Hiroshi's intention.<sup>320</sup>

This interaction with Hiroshi and his sister foregrounds his positive trait as a caring brother rather than developing the sister's character; although she is older than Hiroshi, she is portrayed as someone who needs to be protected. Another female character in *Drop* is Hiroshi's mother who is depicted as lacking influence and power over her son as illustrated in the following passages:

Hiroshi's mother cried easily. Especially when Hiroshi entered junior high, she practically cried every time she saw his face. When he came home from the dorm, she cried and said "You have red hair,"

"You're using filthy language,"

"You smoked" and in the end she just cried whenever she saw his face without saying anything.<sup>321</sup>

When Hiroshi got home, his mother did not break down as she usually did but instead she just said in a tired voice,

"So you got expelled," and went into her bedroom.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 267-268.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

The mother is depicted as a weak character. Throughout the narrative, she reacts by crying or giving up on the protagonist rather than punishing him for a range of rebellious behaviour. Such portrayal provides the lack of parental control over the protagonist which allows his rebellion to take place. Although Hiroshi's relationship with his mother is not positive, he does not show any aggression or hate towards her, which could result in the readers seeing the protagonist as a bad boy rather than a good bad boy.

On the other hand, in *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, the protagonist maintains a relatively positive relationship with his mother who is portrayed as a head-strong woman, unlike the mother in *Drop*. However, like Hiroshi's mother, Chunba's mother is also powerless to stop the rebellious antics of the protagonist despite her stronger character.<sup>323</sup> The characterisation of mothers from *We Only Have Saturdays*, *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* all vary but the similarity they share is that they do not or cannot exert authority over their sons and guide them towards rehabilitation. Such a role seems to be reserved for a male character. For example, although Hiroshi cares deeply for his sister, it was his relationship with her boyfriend not his sister that became the turning point in his life through which he began to re-think his *furyō* behaviour. This is illustrated by the following conversation between the narrator and his friends following Hide's death.

“Me and Moriki decided to work at the construction company” Teru explained.

“Really? Congratulations! Work hard!” Hiroshi was really happy for Teru and Moriki. They were delinquents (*furyō*) but they were also both quite earnest so he guessed they must have been pondering about life after Hide's death, and he further supposed that finding work was their answer. It was the same with Hiroshi.<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 231.

<sup>323</sup> The portrayal of 'suffering' mothers in *kosei* autobiographical writing reflects a long tradition of depicting women in a self-sacrificing and nurturing but subservient role in Japanese literature. Such images go beyond the fictional portrayal as illustrated by the *ryōsai kenbō* (Good Wife Wise Mother) ideology to the portrayal of A-bomb survivors as “the dignified suffering mothers of Hiroshima.” See Veena Das and Arthur Kleinman *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 5. See Das and Kleinman (2001) for more on portrayal of post-war mothers in Hiroshima.

<sup>324</sup> Shinagawa, *Doroppu*, 269.

In the absence of a father, Hide becomes the role model or father-figure for Hiroshi. Throughout the text, he gives him advice about life and acts as his big brother, and even in death he guides the protagonist towards adulthood. As such, Hide plays a more central role in *Drop*. These role models are crucial in the stories of *kōsei* (rehabilitation) as without them the rehabilitation cannot take place, since most often the protagonist's maturity is triggered by his interactions with such characters.

In *We Only Have Saturdays*, the kind police detective plays this role, but a similar character is absent in *Young Thugs* for two reasons. Firstly, unlike the protagonists in *We Only Have Saturdays* or *Drop*, Chunba has a positive relationship with his alcoholic and gambling father who is depicted like a good bad 'boy' himself, and secondly, since *Kishiwada Boys Gang* was serialised, such a turning point is not reached in the first volume. These positive portrayals of one or two adult characters in these novels stand out because the majority of the adults are depicted as antagonists who enforce conformity and discriminate against the protagonists for refusing to comply.

These characters, ranging from the *furyō*'s friends, family members and role models, all function as reflector characters which enable the depiction of the protagonist as a good bad boy, who can redeem himself and become (or show the possibility of becoming) a responsible adult. This illustrates how the positive portrayal of *furyō* is constructed through his relationship to others, and by so doing it becomes not simply an autobiography of the self but also "the biography and the autobiography of the other."<sup>325</sup> Smith and Watson argue that, in autobiographical writings, the narrative is often "refracted" through the stories of others.<sup>326</sup> The *furyō* identity of the protagonists in these novels is shaped by their interactions with other good bad boys, antagonistic adults, bad boys, submissive and supportive female characters, and influential role models. This relationality is perhaps strongest in their conflict with both the antagonistic adults, who enforce conformity and threaten the freedom the protagonist enjoys,

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<sup>325</sup> Paul J. Eakin, "Relational Lives: The Story of the Story," in *True Relations: Essays on Autobiography and the Postmodern*, eds. G. Thomas Couser and Joseph Fichtelberg, (Westport: Greenwood, 1998), 70.

<sup>326</sup> Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Live Narratives*, (2001), 89.

against whom they rebel and the bad boys, who foreground the positive traits of the good bad boy protagonists. These features represent a dominant similarity that runs through the first and second stages indicating that a paradigm of *kōsei* autobiographical writing has developed.

### **The third stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing**

#### **Yūji's *The Celebrity Rebel: Mummy Is Coming to Kill Me* (2011)**

Written by the television actor, Yūji, *The Celebrity Rebel* represents the most recent publication of *kōsei* autobiographical writing to date. It is categorised and marketed by the publishers as *jiden* (autobiography), and there is a strong indication of a shared identity between the author and the narrator-protagonist, via the name and biographical details. Thus, *The Celebrity Rebel* slides back towards the autobiographical end of the spectrum and the 'authenticity' of the text is more overtly heralded than is the case with *Kishiwada Boys Gang* or *Drop*.<sup>327</sup> According to the author information provided by the publishers, Yūji's great-grandfather is a former president of the Dominican Republic, his grandfather is the Dominican Republic's Ambassador to Japan, his father is an American actor and his mother is a former Japanese model. By providing such biological information about the author, the publisher seems to be emphasising that it can be externally verified.

Another indication of the strong autobiographical element in *The Celebrity Rebel* is the first person narrative mode, allowing the readers direct access to the thoughts and emotions of the narrator-protagonist. As with the earlier works of *kōsei* autobiographical writing, the first person narrative allows the author to reveal another side of the rebel protagonist. This is illustrated in the following incident when a prank by his friends goes too far and the narrator-protagonist attempts to end it to save his female friend who is hand-cuffed and hung from a hanger rack in an empty class room:

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<sup>327</sup> Similar to Urita's *shuki*, Yūji uses photographs of himself and his family to emphasise his claim of 'authenticity' as they can be presented as visual evidence for his autobiographical narrative. Also similar to *We Only Have Saturdays*, the readers of *The Celebrity Rebel* are provided with a short introduction to the author, which can be seen as the publisher's support for the author's claim of 'authenticity.'

“It hurts! Get these off me!” Miyuki’s distressed voice rang around the classroom and it was no longer a prank as Miyuki started crying for real. Hashimoto and Kawabata were just laughing as they watched her cry.

“Hey guys, May be we should just go home and leave her like this!” Hashimoto joked, and Miyuki just cried harder.

“Come on guys. That’s enough. Get the key.” Feeling sorry for her, I decided to help her by telling the two culprits that enough is enough. But Hashimoto and Kawabata weren’t done with goofing around and started to tease me.

“Don’t spoil the fun! Oh, could it be that you like her?”

At the time, even though I was acting rebellious and tough, I was still a child. When teased like that, humiliation took over any sense of justice I had, so I shouted, “That’s not it! Do what you want then!”<sup>328</sup>

The feeble attempt by the narrator-protagonist to save Miyuki is unsuccessful and his friends continue to taunt the frightened girl, much to the dismay of the protagonist. Although this portrayal is in no way heroic, it does illustrate his unease at the escalating prank and his internal struggle during the girl’s ordeal is enough to persuade the readers that he is a ‘good bad boy’ that can make a moral judgement (even though on this occasion he is unable to act on it) and not a bad boy like Hashimoto or Kawabata, who fail to show remorse or guilt toward Miyuki.

Furthermore, this incident foregrounds how the “I” is not singular but fragmented, as the mature “I” interrupts the narrative to add insight or explain the situation that the younger “I” would not have been aware of at the time. This is reinforced by the statement that “[a]t the time, even though I was acting rebellious and tough, I was still a child.” Such a statement indicates explicitly how the mature self is interpreting the younger-self’s experience and recalling how childish he had been when he was younger, separating the narrating self and the narrated self. This mature voice in a retrospective narrative gives it ‘authority’ and again, emphasises that the protagonist’s bad behaviour is redeemable since the existence of such a voice is evidence that he has successfully rehabilitated himself and is now able to analyse his mistakes and faults. The inclusion of the mature voice is more evident in *The Celebrity Rebel*, as the focus is on depicting the narrator-protagonist’s growth, while in *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop* the focus is more on reconstructing the good-old-days when the protagonists were young and

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<sup>328</sup> Yūji ユージ, *Mamī ga Boku o Koroshi ni Yattekuru: Yankī Serebu* マミーが僕をころしにやってくる : ヤンキーセレブ [The Celebrity Rebel: Mummy is Coming to Kill Me] (Tokyo: Hinodeshuppan, 2011), 85.

free. Yūji's work seems to be more about coming to terms with his past as a 'yankī.' Compared to *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*, there is a lack of humour or light-hearted tone in the narrative, as the older-self evaluates the various antics of the younger-self and shows remorse.

Although some aspects of the writing may have reverted back to the autobiographical end of the spectrum, in terms of *kōsei* autobiographical writing, *The Celebrity Rebel* shares similarities with the second stage writings as it is also a retrospective narrative where there is approximately a decade of temporal gap between the narrated events and the time of publication. Also, like the protagonists of *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*, the protagonist of *The Celebrity Rebel* relies on the reader's knowledge of rebellious youth culture as the narrator transforms into a rebel by incorporating fashion trends that are considered 'rebellious', as seen in the following passage:

Hair dyed light brown, shaved lines along the side, shaved eyebrows, wearing silver piercing, the stand-up collar *gakuran* (school uniform) jacket and the low-rise baggy pants, and I had transformed from a quiet and serious student to a rugged rebel (*yankī*). Yesterday I had bought hair dye, a razor, and a safety pin at the drugstore. It was scary to dye my hair, shave the hairline and eyebrows, and punch a hole through my ear lobe but I didn't hesitate. So that's how Yūji the rebel completed his transformation.<sup>329</sup>

The style described here is noticeably different from that described in the works set in the earlier decades. The fashion trend which included low-rise baggy pants, and light brown hair with shaved lines is often associated with either *Shibuya-kei* or *gyaruo* that are influenced by American Hip-Hop culture.<sup>330</sup> Additionally, the lack of items such as *nagaran* or the pompadour hair style which are considered as the more traditional trends of *furyō* and *yankī*, also clearly indicate that the trend Yūji is describing as *yankī* is different to what was originally understood as the traditional *yankī* style. Readers are given an additional description of what Yūji labels as *yankī* style when the protagonist goes to the United States to stay with his father; he tells his son that his hair, beard, and training wear are 'tacky' (*dasai*). Such dialogue indicates that the contingency of the performance of *yankī* identity, which fails

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<sup>329</sup> Yūji, *Mamī ga Boku o Koroshi ni Yattekeru: Yankī Serebu*, 67.

<sup>330</sup> See Chapter 1 (p10-12).



when removed from its cultural context.<sup>331</sup> Similar to the more traditional *yankī* style which had been influenced by the American fashion of the 1950s but developed into something that was quintessentially Japanese, Japanese rebellious fashion in the 2000s was influenced by American Hip-hop style but was adapted to such an extent that in an American setting, the signification is lost and it is only seen as ‘tacky.’

Like the narrator-protagonist’s American father, the older generation who are unfamiliar with the more contemporary trends may fail to understand the narrator-protagonist’s performance of *yankī*. However, the younger audience who have experienced the period portrayed will recognise it and authenticate this newer version of rebellious fashion, while for the older generation, who may be unfamiliar with the more recent Hip-Hop influenced styles, it is the transgression of school regulations by this younger generation of rebels that confirms the rebellion that is being performed. This illustrates how the term *yankī* has become a synonym for rebellion in Japanese. Yet, if we are to be more specific, what Yūji categorises as *yankī* is in fact neo-*yankī*.<sup>332</sup> However, while documenting the neo-*yankī*, the author uses the term *yankī* despite the setting being too far removed from the *yankī* in time. It seems that the reference to *yankī* in *The Celebrity Rebel* is not to the traditional *yankī* of the 1980s, but rather to the fictional *yankī* perpetuated in popular culture. Ever since his emergence in the late 1970s, the rebellious teenage hero had been popular in *manga* and film, and the continuous production of images of *yankī*, *furyō*, and *bōsōzoku* over the years led to positive values being attached to each of these terms. Since there are no positive images or meanings attached to more recent labels in popular culture, such as *Shibuya-kei* or *gyaru*, using the term *yankī* can be considered as part of the strategy to portray the protagonist as a good bad boy, as the majority of readers would be familiar with such characterisations from their exposure to the popular media.

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<sup>331</sup> Yūji, *Mamī ga Boku o Koroshi ni Yattekeru: Yankī Serebu*, 172.

<sup>332</sup> See Chapter 1 for definition of the term (p9).

Another significant difference that sets Yūji's work apart is that the use of cultural references is minimal, in contrast to the second stage works where it is abundant. For example, the narrator-protagonist describes his friend's brother, who was considered by many younger students as a charismatic *yankī* role model, as follows:

Jirō bought a pair of Nike shoes, so I bought Nike.  
Jirō played guitar, so I started learning guitar. Jirō had graffiti all over the wall in his room, so I bought some spray paint.<sup>333</sup>

The guitar and the Nike shoes lack description and therefore do not necessarily indicate *yankī* culture (nor neo-*yankī* for that matter), and the graffiti and paint spray indicate the influence of American Hip-hop culture but again, the graffiti art by Jirō or the narrator-protagonist is not explained in detail. These cultural elements reveal very little either about Jirō's character or the type of youth culture that he was engaged in or the temporal setting; instead, it focuses on the narrator-protagonist by illustrating how much he idolised Jirō, and how he learned to perform *yankī* identity by imitating the older students who he considered as *yankī*. It is noted by scholars like Nanba that the Japanese rebellious youth culture of the late 1990s and 2000s was heavily influenced by American Hip-Hop music and contemporary American gang culture.<sup>334</sup> The Japanese youth of the 2000s borrowed from American youth culture and modified it just as earlier generations of Japanese youth had done in the 1970s with the American greaser style. Yet, in *The Celebrity Rebel*, the author does not make reference to specific music, film or *manga* that might indicate the specific period in which the text is set, or even add to the characterisation of Jirō or the narrator-protagonist since the consumption of such type of media was considered as part of performing rebellious youth identity in the previous *kōsei* autobiographical works. The few cultural references made in *The Celebrity Rebel* may indicate that what is described throughout the text is neo-*yankī* but its link with the traditional *yankī* is emphasised by the way the protagonist is portrayed as a good-at-heart rebel, reinforcing the link not only to *We Only Have*

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<sup>333</sup> Yūji, *Mamī ga Boku o Koroshi ni Yattekeru: Yankī Serebu*, 129.

<sup>334</sup> Nanba, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi*, 213-214.

*Saturdays*, *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*, but to the wider category of rebel narrative in Japanese contemporary popular culture where such characterisations of the good bad boy are associated with the *yankī* culture. For example, in addition to emphasising the ‘good’ traits of the narrator-protagonist through his thoughts and emotions, the seriousness of criminal behaviour such as drinking alcohol, trashing his mother’s apartment as well as the said assault on Miyuki are downplayed. This is achieved by not describing such events at length or in detail, as the narrative quickly shifts to focus on the narrator-protagonist’s regret or remorse, so that the depiction of his ‘bad’ behaviour is turned around and used to emphasise his ‘good’ side. This recalls the approach used by first and the second stage writers.

In addition to the characterisation of the narrator-protagonist as a good bad boy, Yūji’s depiction of his parents and other *yankī* teens also reinforces the recognisable characterisations that are perpetuated in the *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* popular media. For example, the female characters are often portrayed as damsel-in-distress types that need to be protected by the protagonist, as illustrated by the incident involving Miyuki in *The Celebrity Rebel*. Although the protagonist socialises with girls as well as boys, the overwhelming majority of his friends are male, and the very few female friends are either presented as a girlfriend or a random damsel-in-distress, and almost never as ‘equals.’ This also continues the trend recognisable in *We Only Have Saturdays*, *Kishiwada Boys Gang* and *Drop*.

By contrast, the characterisation of mothers is a little more diverse in *kōsei* autobiographical writing as illustrated by the mothers in the four texts examined in this chapter. There are single mothers, married mothers, divorced mothers, independent mothers, weak mothers, as well as those who maintain a somewhat positive relationship with their rebellious son despite his antics, and those who cannot such that the mother-son relationship deteriorates. According to the protagonist of *The Celebrity Rebel*, his mother raised him by herself in Japan after divorcing her American husband and refused any child-support by completely removing the father from their lives. As a single mother, she struggles to support

her family and according to the protagonist, the long working hours gradually drive a wedge between them. In the earlier part of the narrative, the narrator-protagonist explains that he had been very attached to his mother but their relationship became strained when she had to work long hours to support him. He mistakes this as neglect, leading to his rebellion against her. As he transforms into a *yankī*, the mother and son relationship continue to deteriorate to the extent that his mother has a mental breakdown and attempts to kill her son and commit suicide. Compared to the other three texts, the mother in *The Celebrity Rebel* plays a more significant role, since the narrative focuses on the narrator-protagonist's relationship with his mother, as explicitly suggested by the latter half of the title *Mummy Is Coming to Kill Me*. For the mothers in *We Only Have Saturdays* and *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, their sons' *bōsōzoku* or *furyō* activities do not affect the mother-and-son relationship as they maintain a positive relationship with their rebellious sons throughout the narrative; by contrast, the mother-and-son relationships in both *Drop* and *The Celebrity Rebel* deteriorate as the mothers in these two texts cannot accept their rebellious sons. Although the characterisation of these mothers may be diverse, the one trait that ties them together is that they all fail, or refuse (as in *We Only Have Saturdays* and *Kishiwada Boys Gang*), to assert parental authority over their wayward sons. However, the significant difference, between the mothers in the earlier texts and *The Celebrity Rebel*, is that in the latter text, she is not only the catalyst for his rebellion and becoming a *yankī*, but she is also instrumental in his rehabilitation. She does so by arranging a reunion between father and son later in the narrative as a last resort to turn her son's life around.

In *The Celebrity Rebel*, the narrator-protagonist's friend's brother, Jirō functions as a male role model, who guides the narrator-protagonist whose life seems to have no direction other than to cause raucous mayhem. Jirō is introduced to readers as a responsible adult in the following way:

Jirō is now a hard-working, law-abiding citizen but he used to be a famous delinquent in Higashiyamamura. He was so strong that you could stop a fight by simply mentioning his name; he was also so good-looking that heaps of girls were after him, and he was never condescending

and was kind to everyone. He was a local hero to the delinquents. He was just so awesome in every way. I wanted to be like him so I copied everything he did.

The narrator-protagonist shows strong admiration for Jirō and when he receives advice from his *yankī* hero, he considers changing his ways by finding a stable and legal employment. However, since his relationship with Jirō is not as strong as Shinanogawa Hiroshi's is with Hide in *Drop*, it fails to influence the narrator-protagonist's behaviour in a significant way. Also the narrator-protagonist reunites with his father later in the narrative after which point there is no need for a second male role model. In *The Celebrity Rebel*, the father-and-son reconciliation is depicted as a vital factor in the son's rehabilitation as by the end, the narrator-protagonist transforms into a mature adult, which is suggested by the full recovery of his relationship with his mother. Although the mother instigates this process of rehabilitation, the presence of the father is required for it to take place, again illustrating how this older male figure is essential in *kōsei* autobiographical writing. The father and son reunion in *The Celebrity Rebel* not only reinforces the importance of a father-figure in the tale of teenage rebellion, but continues a thread that runs through all three stages, making the portrayal of mothers who cannot or will not stop their sons' rebellion directly, and male figures who guide them through rehabilitation and maturity into a paradigm in *kōsei* autobiographical writing.

From the appearance of *We Only Have Saturdays* in 1975, the steady publication of tales of rebellion and rehabilitation has led to the emergence of what I identify as a distinct sub-category in Japanese autobiographical writing. Although the term *kōsei* is not used as a specific category or label by either academics or the publishing industry, there are enough examples to create such a paradigm. Smith and Watson list sixty sub-categories of autobiographical writings that range from jockography<sup>335</sup> to survivor narratives.<sup>336</sup> All these sub-categories are classified based on the subject (for example, athletes in jockography and victims/survivors in survivor narratives), tropes, as well as narrative style. In this

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<sup>335</sup> Jockography is a term coined by Bryan Curtis to refer to autobiographical writings by athletes.

<sup>336</sup> Smith and Watson define survivor narratives as autobiographical writings in which the victims of traumatising experience are remade as survivors through the act of telling their stories.

vein, the registers for identifying *kōsei* autobiographical writings are 1) the good bad boy teenage rebel as subject 2) first person or third person narrative combined with free indirect discourse, and 3) references to the recognisable rebellious youth culture.

As explored in the previous chapter, Sheila Egoff uses recurrent patterns to measure the parameters of the problem novel within the larger frame of adolescent literature. In the same way, the recurring traits of these narratives of rebellion can be considered as registers that can be used to measure the parameters of the proposed sub-category. The depiction of the rebellious protagonist as a good bad boy in *kōsei* autobiographical writings is achieved through the deployment of narrative modes, that allow readers direct access to the protagonist's thoughts and emotions, as most of the 'good' traits of the protagonist are revealed through various emotions such as guilt, remorse and the concern that he shows towards others. Such a positive portrayal is vital, as it triggers readers' empathy and affection towards the protagonist, so that his rebellious antics such as consuming alcohol, smoking, and brawling can be accepted as mischief or the expression of freedom, rather than as criminal behaviour that transgresses juvenile law. The addition of this positive side enables the depiction of the rebellious protagonist as someone who is labelled by society as *ochikobore* (drop-out) due to their refusal to conform and their anti-authoritative attitude, but at the same time, is moral and considerate and thus can be differentiated from the bad boys.

In addition to the narrative mode that reveals the positive side of the protagonists, the surrounding characters and their relationships with the protagonist also emphasise the good bad boy character. The paradigm emerges not just via the characterisation of the protagonist and his rebellious friends but also via interaction with the other characters. The female class-mate or friend is often portrayed as a weaker, damsel-in-distress type of character that needs to be protected by the protagonist.<sup>337</sup> The portrayal of mothers, while more diverse, all conform to a pattern of failure to exert parental authority and directly

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<sup>337</sup> The gender issue will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

rehabilitate their sons. The role of guiding the protagonist towards adulthood is reserved for male characters such as the father (*The Celebrity Rebel*) or in the absence of the father, there are older male adults (*We Only Have Saturdays* and *Drop*) who step in and help the protagonist become a law abiding citizen by the end of the narrative.

Fathers are often absent in *kōsei* autobiographical writing. In *We Only Have Saturdays* and *Drop*, the fathers were physically absent from the narrative, due to divorce or separation, while in *The Celebrity Rebel*, the protagonist did not have any relationship with his father due to the physical distance between them as well as his mother's determination to bring up her son on her own. However, in the later part of the narrative, the protagonist is able to forge a relationship with his father after their reunion. The introduction of the father who had been absent throughout the narrative as in *The Celebrity Rebel* is not a recurrent pattern but it emphasises the need for a male figure in the process of rehabilitation. As for *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, Chunba's tale of rebellion continues for six further volumes so maturity is not reached by the end of the first volume and thus there was no need for a male role model.

Roberta Seelinger Trites argues that conflict with parents is one of the key registers for adolescent literature, and this also seems to be the case with *kōsei* autobiographical writing. The characterisation of parents in *kōsei* autobiographical writing also strongly places these tales of rebellion in the context of family dysfunction, for all the families portrayed are dysfunctional in one way or another. The only parents who had not divorced were Chunba's in *Kishiwada Boys Gang*, but his father is violent and separation is implied at the end of the narrative. The idea that family dysfunction causes delinquency is often put forward by sociologists and education researchers,<sup>338</sup> and the recurrent portrayal of dysfunctional families in *kōsei* self-referential writing seems to support such a view. Although research

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<sup>338</sup> For example, Richard A. Mendel quotes Lawrence Steinberg who claims that "[there] is no single cause of youth violence, but when there is a common factor that cuts across different causes, it is usually some kind of family dysfunction." Richard A. Mendel, *Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works – And What Doesn't* (Washington: American Policy Forum, 2000) 14. For further discussion see Naomi E. Sevin Goldstein, Oluseyi Olubadewo, Richard E. Redding and Frances J. Lexcen, "Mental Health Disorders: The Neglected Risk Factor in Juvenile Delinquency," in *Juvenile Delinquency: Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention*, ed. Kirk Heilbrun et al. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 98.

suggests that a rebellious youth can emerge from any family, the lack of parental control that results from a dysfunctional family environment certainly makes it easier for the protagonists explored in this chapter to enjoy their freedom away from authority and conformity through *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* activities.

The paradigm that emerges in the self-referential writing of former *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* extends beyond *kōsei* autobiographical writing *per se*. The early *bōsōzoku* films and manga of the late 1970s were influenced by *We Only Have Saturdays*, especially in terms of the characterisation of the rebellious teenage heroes and the surrounding characters. In turn, second and third stage *kōsei* autobiographical writings reinforce these paradigmatic features as the authors relied heavily on the preconceived idea of what readers considered as *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* or *yankī* which often derived from their exposure to popular media where images of *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* were frequently used to depict good bad boys.

The image of the rebellious teen seems to be slowly evolving, as illustrated by the emergence of neo-*yankī* in the third stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing. Although the cultural references may have changed in the third stage, the links with previous stages of *kōsei* autobiographical writings are maintained by other recognisable registers. The writers of these *kōsei* works write in a mode where they can claim the ‘authenticity’ of their work and readers authenticate that claim, the *kōsei* autobiographical text foregrounding the idea that authenticity is little to do with truth in self-referential narrative but rather everything to do with the creation of a paradigm which is recognised, endorsed, reconfigured and repeated.



## CHAPTER 3

### THE EMERGENCE OF *OCHIKOBORE SEISHUN SHŌSETSU*

I have shown how personal accounts of teenage rebellion share patterns of characteristics to form a sub-genre, which I have termed *kōsei* autobiographical writing. This chapter will explore how this incipient patterning evolves into a more clearly identifiable formula in popular fictional form. I will argue that this *ochikobore seishun* fiction has its roots in *kōsei* autobiographical writing. Using the *Ikebukuro West Gate Park* series (1997~2014) by Ishida Ira (b.1960) and the *Zombies* series (1998~2011) by Kaneshiro Kazuki (b.1958), which I consider the two most successful and most popular serialised works of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, I will examine the distinctive formulae of this fictional genre that developed in the late 1990s, when a wave of moral panic swept through Japan over problem youth.

Moral panic was triggered by the infamous Kobe child murders, or the *Shōnen A* (Boy A) Incident of 1997. The fact that a fourteen year old teenage boy, and someone described by the media as quiet and seemingly ordinary, could commit such violent crimes shocked the Japanese public.<sup>339</sup> Scholars like Andrea Arai note that this incident became a focal point for academics studying Japanese adolescents, as their focus shifted away from wayward youth to ordinary youth who suddenly snapped.<sup>340</sup> As a consequence, relatively little attention, either academic or social, was paid to the newly emergent rebellious youth cultures such as *Shibuya-kei*, colour gangs or *chīmā* (motorcycle gangs).<sup>341</sup> These are

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<sup>339</sup> *Kōbe renzoku jidō satsujin jiken* (The Kobe child murders) occurred between 16<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 1997. Of the five victims, who were all children aged between 10 and 11 years, four were attacked (one fatally) with a hammer, and the last victim Hase Jun, an 11 year old special needs school student, was murdered and decapitated. The name of the offender was never released and he was only known as *Shōnen A* (Boy A). The publication of his identity was strictly prohibited under the Juvenile Law, but the photo and the ‘real’ name of Boy A was leaked online as noted by Takayama Fumihiko who authored the boy’s biography. Since Boy A was a minor at the time of the offending, he was released in 2005 with a new name and residency which remains a highly guarded secret to this day. Takayama Fumihiko, *Shōnen A: Jyūnana sai no shōzō* (Shinchōsha: 2001).

<sup>340</sup> Andrea Arai, “The “Wild Child” of 1990s Japan,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* volume 99, no. 4 (Fall 2000): 847, doi: 10.1215/00382876-99-4-841.

<sup>341</sup> See Chapter 1 (p9-12) for reference to these neo-*yankī* cultures.

categorised as neo-*yankī* by Nanba Koji, who sees them as updated and modified versions of the *furyō*, *yankī*, and *bōsōzoku* cultures of the 1980s.<sup>342</sup>

The media also seemed to focus on quiet teens who suddenly snap, over those labelled as delinquents, as reporting on violent crimes committed by this seemingly new breed of problem teens continued throughout the latter half of the 1990s. Such news reports were so frequent that phrases such as “*kodomo ga hen da*” (children are turning strange) and “*gakkyū hōkai*” (the collapse of class rooms) became household terms.<sup>343</sup> Hirota Teruyuki, a sociologist of education, attempted to calm the hysteria by pointing out that the Kobe child murders were not the first violent crimes committed by a minor in Japan; but this was to no avail, as an impending sense of crisis spread across the nation.<sup>344</sup> He went on to criticise what he considered a glorification of the past, out of nostalgia, by illustrating that contemporary youth were no more or less violent than those of the past since there had been numerous heinous youth crimes prior to the Kobe child murders.<sup>345</sup> Perhaps society’s panic lay in the fact that an ordinary teen was capable of such a violent act, and that, unlike the previous categories of problem youth such as *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku*, this new breed of problem youth were invisible and unpredictable. This possibly added to the fear.

While society agonised over what was believed to be the deteriorating moral health of the youth, the popular media continued to depict good-at-heart rebels using the *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* styles, whose wayward behaviour was portrayed as mischievous rather than criminal.<sup>346</sup> In addition to such portrayals of positive rebels in film and *manga*, the appearance of second stage *kōsei* autobiographical writings such as Nakaba Ri’ichi’s *Kishiwada Boys Gang* (1994) and Harada Munenori’s (b. 1959)

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<sup>342</sup> Nanba Kōji 難波 功士, *Yankī Shinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi* ヤンキー進化論:不良文化はなぜ強い [Evolutionary Theory of Yankī: Why Rebellious Cultures are Persistent] (Tōkyō: Kōbunsha Shinsho, 2009), 195.

<sup>343</sup> Arai, “The “Wild Child” of 1990s Japan,” 841.

<sup>344</sup> Hirota Teruyuki 広田 照幸, *Nihonjin no Shitsuke wa Suitaishitaka: ‘Kyōiku suru kazoku’ no yukue* 日本人のしつけは衰退したか: 「教育する家族」のゆくえ [The Decline of Japanese Discipline: The Future of “Educating Family”] (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1999), 179.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>346</sup> See Chapter 1 (39-41) and Chapter 2 (p92-95) for the examples of such positive portrayals.

*Jūnanasai datta!* (*I was Seventeen!*, 1996) also seems to have contributed towards the romanticisation of past generations of Japanese youth through their amiable and charismatic *furyō* protagonists. It seems that such positive portrayals of rebellious teenagers from a bygone era in the popular media in parallel to the recurrent reportage of amoral and violent youth not only glorified the past, but, in turn, fuelled the myth that Japanese youth were becoming ‘strange’ at the turn of the century.

The appearance of tales of rebellious heroes in adolescent fiction emerged amidst this singular combination of social hysteria over the moral health of the youth, and nostalgia for the good old days, when it seemed like even the rebellious teens were decent. Ishida Ira published a short story entitled ‘Ikebukuro West Gate Park’ in 1997, the same year as the Kobe child murders, about a rebellious teenager and a self-proclaimed hardboiled street detective, who solves murder mysteries in Ikebukuro. A year later, in 1998, Kaneshiro Kazuki published a short story entitled ‘Revolution No.3’ about a group of good-at-heart dropouts, and the same year, another author Harada Munenori, who wrote *kōsei* autobiographical writing, also published *Heisei Tom Sawyer* (*Heisei Tomu Sōyā*), a novel about an exceptionally skilled pick-pocketing teenager who uses his skills for good. The short stories by Ishida and Kaneshiro, in particular, were very popular and each author soon published a collection of short stories, *Ikebukuro West Gate Park* (1998) and *Revolution No.3* (2001) respectively. Following the success of these first volumes, both works were eventually serialised and the two writers established themselves as prominent popular fiction writers with the success of their serialised tales of teenage rebellion. Ishida, who is one of Japan’s most prolific contemporary popular fiction writers, has published eleven volumes of the *Ikebukuro West Gate Park* (*I.W.G.P*) series to date, while Kaneshiro has published four volumes of his *Zombies* series.

Both series (as well as Harada’s *Heisei Tom Sawyer*) incorporate mystery into tales of youth rebellion. Although initially, the *Zombies* series lacked the mystery element, since ‘Revolution No.3’ is about a group of boys trying to gate-crash the annual school festival held at a nearby girls’ high school,

Kaneshiro fully incorporates mystery from the second short story of the first volume onwards throughout the series. I argue that the incorporation of mystery is a key element in the evolution of *ochikobore seishun* fiction. Harada gives the following account of his inspiration for writing *Heisei Tom Sawyer*:

I snooped around Shin-Ōkubo, where I was born, and to get to know today's youth, I visited a certain high school in the city which was my editor's high school. When I saw the devastating state the school was in, I was so shocked that I was speechless. I thought, 'So this is what high school students are like now. There's got to be something more exciting after school; otherwise how can they cope with it?'<sup>347</sup>

The protagonist's skills as a pickpocket, and the mystery and adventure that unfold as a result of this ability add excitement to the story, which suggests that escapism and the vicarious experience of rebellion is amplified by the incorporation of mystery. Similarly, in both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series, the role of the detective, played by the protagonist, and the mystery that he must solve add the excitement of adventure to the narrative.

Readerly engagement, particularly with first person narrative mode, was a crucial element in *kōsei* autobiographical writing, and this continues to be so in *ochikobore seishun* fiction. On the other hand, the way writers have incorporated second person narration, as well as fractured narratives and multiple narrators indicates a continuing evolution. The second key element that will be analysed is good bad boy morality. Analysis of the protagonists and their rebellious friends in both the *I.W.G.P* and the *Zombies* series will show that much of this element has been retained from *kōsei* autobiographical writing, where the rebellious teenagers were often depicted as mischievous but decent youth, who knew right from wrong and had their own morality. However, it will be shown how the incorporation of mystery in *ochikobore seishun* fiction results in new developments of this good bad boy characteristic.

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<sup>347</sup> Harada Munenori 原田宗典, "Heisei Tomu Sōyā" 平成トムソーヤー [Heisei Tom Sawyer], *Harada Burogu* はらだブログ [Harada Blog], accessed August 24, 2006, [http://www.haramu.net/work/archives/2005/11/post\\_1.html](http://www.haramu.net/work/archives/2005/11/post_1.html).

A third key element, the use of cultural stereotypes especially that of rebellious teen heroes, shows significant development from its *kōsei* manifestation. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, rebellious youth identity was constructed and performed through old-school rebellious youth culture such as *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku*. Continuing reference to this traditional type of youth rebellion in autobiographical writing as well as popular media such as *manga* and film throughout the 1990s and 2000s has resulted in these styles being strongly associated with the good bad boy character; so much so that audiences have come to expect such character portrayal when they read about or see a *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* on page or on screen – and hence the development of the cultural stereotype.

However, since *ochikobore seishun* fiction is no longer anchored to a specific period in time such as the 1970s or 1980s, when highly recognisable forms of teenage rebellion such as *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* had been mainstream, alternative methods for depicting good bad boys emerge. Consequently, the rebellious identity of the protagonists diversifies beyond the traditional *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku*, and ranges from pickpockets, *furītā* (freeter, a part time worker), to colour gangs, which is one of the reasons why I have refrained from using *furyō* or *yankī* to label these tales of teenage rebellion. As discussed in Chapter 1, these terms are too narrow as they refer specifically to one type of teenage rebellion. While Endō Natsuki's semi-autobiographical fiction *Harajuku Blue Sky Heaven* (2012) was the first to be categorised and marketed by the publishers as *furyō shōsetsu*, the *Zombies* series is not categorised or marketed as such, despite the fact that the same term is used to describe the protagonist and his rebellious friends in the text. The difference between these two works is that Endō's protagonist performs his rebellion through what readers clearly recognise as *furyō* and *bōsōzoku* style, such as wearing the leather jacket, having a pompadour hairstyle, and riding a motorcycle with his gang, while the boys in Kaneshiro's *Zombies* do not.

Although the performance of rebellion evolves beyond the more traditional *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* culture in *ochikobore seishun* fiction, the good bad boy character is retained and similarly, the

characterisation of surrounding characters such as girls, parents, adult figures, and bad boys that have become formulaic within *kōsei* autobiographical writing is also mostly retained but simultaneously developed.

The last key element that will be explored is the setting, which shows the most development. Setting affects not only the mode of rebellion but also adds layers of social engagement to the text as it becomes more than just an entertaining story of rebellion. *Kōsei* autobiographical writing had been based on a rose-tinted portrayal of the past; the world that the protagonist belonged in was relatively safe as there was no serious crime or corruption. By contrast, in *ochikobore seishun* fiction, the world is a darker, more corrupt and dangerous place. With such a backdrop, the protagonist's rebellion becomes a symbol of the power struggle between those who are marginalised and the privileged elites of society.

Such complexity in the way these stories can be read demystifies the idea that popular fiction and adolescent fiction is simple, mass produced, cheap disposable entertainment.<sup>348</sup> Yet, as noted by scholars such as Edward Mack, Ken Gelder, and Matthew Schneider-Mayerson, popular fiction continues to be simply defined as mere entertainment or the antithesis of high literature, and is often cast aside despite immense popularity.<sup>349</sup> Likewise, Ishida and Kaneshiro are both successful contemporary popular fiction writers but are rarely discussed by academics despite their popularity and influence. Alan Goldman argues that mystery fiction in particular has been slated:

More specifically, mystery novels have been dismissed as having shallow, cardboard, stereotypical characters and little atmosphere; flat style or no style at all (especially Agatha Christie); formulaic, repetitious, or conventional plots; emotional disengagement; and moral smugness or one-dimensionality, with pat defences of the social status quo and little or no investigation or implication regarding the social causes of crime.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> Matthew Schneider-Mayerson, "Popular Fiction Studies: The Advantages of a New Field" *Studies in Popular Culture* volume 33, no.1 (Fall 2010): 22.

<sup>349</sup> Schneider-Mayerson, "Popular Fiction Studies: The Advantages of a New Field," 21.

<sup>350</sup> Alan Goldman, "The Appeal of the Mystery," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 69, no.3 (2011): 261.

Goldman adds that in some cases, such accusations may be “true of the worst members of the genre, as they are true of the worst members of any literary genre.”<sup>351</sup> But he further argues that popular literature such as mystery should not be dismissed based on its recurrent formula by comparing it to classical music where there is an extensive reliance on conventional formula. John Cawelti also points out that although development of formula or standardisation is not “valued in modern artistic ideologies” it is nevertheless the “essence of all literature.”<sup>352</sup> He argues that standardisation establishes what he calls a common ground between writers and readers, without which artistic communication is difficult.<sup>353</sup> Cawelti further argues that readers find “satisfaction and a basic emotional security” in reading familiar texts. Repeated consumption of one genre, leads to the development of familiarity and eventual expectation when reading another text of the same genre, thereby increasing the “capacity for understanding and enjoying” the work. As the readers become familiar with formula through repetition, they become accustomed to the world formulaic work creates and experience this “imaginary world without continually comparing it with our own experience.”<sup>354</sup> Therefore, familiarity is a key element in popular fiction since without it the experience of escape and relaxation is impossible.

The identification and evaluation of formula can lead to a better understanding of the literature at hand and its readership. A similar approach is taken by the scholars of adolescent literature such as Sheila Egoff, Roberta Seelinger Trites, and Kurt Curnutt as they too searched for a formula for American JD literature. Egoff in particular drew up detailed criteria, identifying patterns in narrative, characterisation, and even setting.<sup>355</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, while this approach runs the risk of being over categorical, by drawing on this approach, I will identify the key elements or registers that can be used to measure the extent to which my chosen texts can be contained within the parameters of *ochikobore*

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<sup>351</sup> Goldman, “The Appeal of the Mystery,” 261.

<sup>352</sup> John Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 8.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>355</sup> See Chapter 1 for Egoff’s criteria (p48-49).

*seishun* fiction and use them to trace the evolutionary development of *ochikobore seishun* fiction from *kōsei* autobiographical writing.

### **The role of the reader**

The role of the reader remains significant despite the shift in mode from autobiographical writing to fiction, as genre fiction is also bound by an agreement similar to the “autobiographical contract.”<sup>356</sup> In fact, that is how Jameson describes popular fiction as he argues that “genres are essentially contracts between a writer and his [sic] readers” so that when a text is categorised and marketed as mystery, readers have certain expectations towards the text in terms of plot, characterisation and even setting, and in turn writers are obligated to refer and respond to the conventional traditions of the genre.<sup>357</sup> Schneider-Mayerson also adds that even the minor, lesser known genres, such as the small town American novel or the sports novel, possess formulae which function as contracts with readers who become familiar with the paradigms of the genre.<sup>358</sup> The same can be said of *ochikobore seishun* fiction in Japanese adolescent literature where, while such a commercial category may be non-existent in the industry, an exploration of popular texts illustrates that distinctive formula for tales of teenage rebellion have indeed emerged.

The narrative mode is part of this formula and in *ochikobore seishun* fiction first person narration by the rebellious protagonist is the conventional mode. Both the *I.W.G.P* and the *Zombies* series are narrated in first person autodiegetic narration, which has its roots in *kōsei* autobiographical writing. All eleven volumes of the *I.W.G.P* series are narrated in the first person by a single narrator, Majima Makoto, who is an eighteen year old former *furyō* high school student who has become a *furitā* after graduation. While the *Zombies* series is also predominantly narrated in the first person and by autodiegetic narrator, multiple narrators are used throughout the series. *Revolution No.3* and *Revolution*

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<sup>356</sup> See Chapter 2 for discussion of Philippe Lejeune’s “autobiographical contract” (p78).

<sup>357</sup> Frederic Jameson, “Magical Narratives: Romances as Genre,” *New Literary History* 7, no.1 (1975): 135.

<sup>358</sup> Schneider-Mayerson, “Popular Fiction Studies: The Advantages of a New Field,” 29.



*No.0 (Revoryūshon No.0, 2011)* are narrated by one of the central Zombies members Minamigata; *Fly, Daddy, Fly (Furai, Dadī, Furai, 2003)* is narrated by middle-aged office worker, Suzuki; and *Speed (Supīdo, 2005)* is narrated by a sixteen year old girl, Kanako.

In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, the first person is used to cement the identification between narrator and protagonist, as well as, to build identification between the narrator and the reader, and consequently trigger the reader's empathy for the wayward and rebellious protagonist. First person narration is also the preferred and "obvious" narrative method in mystery writing according to Carl Malmgren, who further observes that mystery fiction is usually narrated in the first person by the detective or assistant (the most famous example being the Sherlock Holmes series) to create identification between the narrator and the reader and to secure their interest throughout the story.<sup>359</sup> Since mystery fiction is like a puzzle where the readers engage in what Goldman defines as an "interpretive game" of solving the mystery, identification between the reader and the narrator is crucial.<sup>360</sup> With the narrator as the prism or "the looking glass," readers vicariously experience the thrills of chasing the culprit and solving the mystery.<sup>361</sup> As Cawelti argues, first person narration engages readers without spoiling the mystery since the protagonist is "usually as befuddled as the reader until the end of the story."<sup>362</sup> This similarity in terms of narrative mode between *kōsei* autobiographical writing and mystery provides an evolutionary bridge and foregrounds the way in which mystery becomes a key element in the evolution of *ochikobore seishun* fiction.

Another part of this evolutionary bridge is the narrative persona. In mystery fiction, the narrative is also constructed in such a way that readers are encouraged to identify with the protagonist, who draws them into the interpretive game. Goldman observes that the detective hero in mystery fiction is often an

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<sup>359</sup> Carl Malmgren, "Anatomy of Murder: Mystery, Detective, and Crime Fiction," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 30, no.4 (1997): 126.

<sup>360</sup> Goldman, "The Appeal of the Mystery," 263.

<sup>361</sup> Paul Bird, "Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction as a Vehicle of Social Commentary in Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* and Walter Mosley's *Devil In A Blue Dress*," *Journal of the Faculty of Economics Kyoto Gakuen University* 京都学園大学経済学部論集 21, no.1 (2011): 107.

<sup>362</sup> Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance*, 83.

outsider, a loner without family or spouse, who has exceptional skills in reasoning or deduction, describing them as “a unique combination of Enlightenment rationalism and Romantic heroism.”<sup>363</sup> With reference to a quintessential detective such as Sherlock Holmes, he stresses the point that detective heroes are often eccentric, or far from ordinary, who are different not just from surrounding characters within the text but also from readers.<sup>364</sup> The narrator-protagonist of the *I.W.G.P* series, Makoto is a lone-wolf type character who cherishes his independence and freedom by refusing to belong to any kind of organisation or group and he also shows special skills in reasoning and deduction, making him a typical mystery detective hero. The teenage heroes of the *Zombies* series are also group of outsiders, and show exceptional skills in deduction and surveillance despite only being high school students.

According to Goldman, a crucial character trait that has become conventional is the detective hero’s morality and anti-authoritarianism. He argues that such traits are celebrated and glamorised in mystery fiction where the police are often depicted as incompetent or corrupt so that co-operative police characters such as Janet Evanovich’s Joe Morelli remain rare in conventional mystery fiction.<sup>365</sup> He notes that the detective hero often bends or breaks the law in order to stand by what they consider as the just or moral decision. For example, quintessential detectives such as Sherlock Holmes or Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot have, on numerous occasions, acted on their own sense of justice by letting the culprit go free.

In ‘Eyes under Water’ (*Mizu no Naka no Me*) from *Ikebukuro West Gate Park II: Calculator Boy* (*Ikebukuro Uesto Gēto Pāku II: Shōnen Keisūki*, 2000), when Makoto is attacked by the villain in a deserted swimming pool, rather than dragging him out of the water and reporting him to the police, Makoto decides to act on his own sense of justice and watch the culprit drown. Throughout the *I.W.G.P*

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<sup>363</sup> Goldman, “The Appeal of the Mystery,” 267.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, 270.

series, the narrator-protagonist protects and brings justice to the prostitutes, the homeless, ethnic minorities and anyone who lives on the margins of society. He often acts according to his “own concept of morality and justice”<sup>366</sup> instead of relying on “police who are the official defenders of the social status quo,”<sup>367</sup> which is how Cawelti and Goldman describe the actions of conventional detectives and their relationship with the police in mystery fiction. In ‘Dance of the Heathens’ (*Ikyōtotachi no Odori*) from *Revolution No.3*, when a villain attacks and attempts to strangle Minamigata, he decides to find the culprit himself and apprehend the man with the help of his fellow *Zombies* members, rather than reporting the incident to the police. Throughout the *Zombies* series, the narrator-protagonists take on villains with the help of the band of dropouts, rather than involving the police in their pursuit of revenge or justice. Bending the law or taking the law into their own hands is justified by the narrator-protagonist’s good bad boy character, where the rebellious protagonist’s wayward behaviour is downplayed, while more positive traits such as loyalty and morality are emphasised.<sup>368</sup>

On the other hand, a significant narrative development evident in *ochikobore seishun* fiction is the incorporation of second person narration illustrated in both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series. For example, the *I.W.G.P* series primarily uses a first person narrator, but the majority of the stories in the series open in the second person, as in the following examples:

Have you ever heard of the ghost wagon?<sup>369</sup>

If there was a red jacket and a blue jacket in front of you and you were told to choose one, which would you choose if your life depended on it?<sup>370</sup>

Do you believe in fairies?<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance*, 143.

<sup>367</sup> Goldman, “The Appeal of the Mystery,” 262.

<sup>368</sup> This will be discussed further below as it is the crux of *ochikobore seishun* fiction.

<sup>369</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku* 池袋ウエストゲートパーク [Ikebukuro West Gate Park] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 1998), 73.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>371</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Shōnen Keisūki: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku II* 少年計数機：池袋ウエストゲートパーク II [Calculator Boy: Ikebukuro West Gate Park II] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2000), 9.

Do you know what the fastest sound in the world is?<sup>372</sup>

What if the ‘yen’ we use every day was no longer worth anything as a currency? What would you do?<sup>373</sup>

Do you know what the best venture business is in this age of continuing recession?<sup>374</sup>

Don’t you think that a doll’s smile is creepy?<sup>375</sup>

You like *anime* or *manga* too, right?<sup>376</sup>

Not only do these statements in the opening chapters immediately foreground the key element or the trope of each story, such as the urban legend of the ghost wagon, colour gang conflict, fairies, rock music, currency, venture business, a doll, and popular media, the use of second person narration at the very beginning of the story creates the illusion that the narrator may be addressing the reader as there is no obvious narratee within the text.<sup>377</sup> This illusion is further strengthened by the casual tone of the narrator as if he engages in a conversation by asking the addressee what they think about these various issues and inviting readers to consider these questions.

Instalments of the *Zombies* series also open with reference to an ambiguous addressee, as in the following phrases from the very first chapters of each book:

The story that I’m about to tell you now is a tale of our little adventure.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>372</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Kotsuon: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku III* 骨音:池袋ウエストゲートパーク III [Sound of Bones: Ikebukuro West Gate Park III] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2002), 9.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>374</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Denshi no Hoshi: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku IV* 電子の星:池袋ウエストゲートパーク IV [Electronic Star: Ikebukuro West Gate Park IV] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2003), 9.

<sup>375</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Han Jisatsu Kurabu: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku V* 反自殺クラブ:池袋ウエストゲートパーク V [Anti Suicide Club: Ikebukuro West Gate Park V] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2005), 113.

<sup>376</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Hai'iro no Pītā Pan: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku VI* 灰色のピーターパン:池袋ウエストゲートパーク VI [The Grey Peter Pan: Ikebukuro West Gate Park VI] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2006), 10.

<sup>377</sup> In the original texts, “you” in these passages is absent, as personal pronouns are often omitted, but the verb conjugations make it clear that the narrator is addressing someone. (However, when translated into English, the need to add second person pronoun emerges.) As noted by Monika Fludernik, second person narration is not limited to a narration that employs the second person pronoun. She adds that in some languages, such as German or Italian, it can be in the third person, reinforcing that the requirement for second person narration is the presence of addressee. See Monika Fludernik, “Introduction: Second-Person Narrative and Related Issues,” *Style* 28, no. 3 (1994): 219.

<sup>378</sup> Kaneshiro Kazuki 金城一紀, *Revoryūshon No.3* レヴオリューション No.3 [Revolution No.3] (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2001), 10.

The story that I am about to tell you now is about the adventure I had one summer.<sup>379</sup>

I'll say this just to make sure. The story that I'm about to tell you is a story about my first ever adventure.<sup>380</sup>

These opening statements not only seem to address the reader, but by stating that they are about to narrate a “story” they directly reference oral story-telling. According to Monika Fludernik, conversational story telling is the most common type of second person fiction and it creates “an unsettling effect” by drawing the readers into the narrative so that they feel like they are sharing a “realm of existence” with the narrator-protagonist.<sup>381</sup> For example, in the *I.W.G.P* series, the narrator-protagonist invites “you” to come and see him:

If you come to Ikebukuro and find a fruit shop playing weird music, stop by and say hi. If I'm working, I'll give you a twenty per cent discount on a five-thousand-yen melon. Although, to tell you the truth, we'd still be ripping you off.<sup>382</sup>

This places readers in the intradiegetic realm that the narrator-protagonist occupies; however, they are drawn into the narrative as a listener or audience, not as characters, so they do not affect the plot of the story, but such a strategy functions to strengthen the identification between narrator and reader. In *Speed*, the female narrator-protagonist Kanako indirectly addresses the reader in the following passage:

In other words, [the girls at my school] are too serious, as well as being late-bloomers. Me? When I see a hot guy, I'd think that he's hot but that'd be it. I've never actually wanted to or even thought of going steady with someone.<sup>383</sup>

Such conversational tone in narrative strongly suggests that Kanako is addressing the reader, as if she is conversing with the reader. However, as Fludernik shows, the use of the second person narrative voice is often ambiguous in that it can function on both an intradiegetic and/or an extradiegetic level.

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<sup>379</sup> Kaneshiro Kazuki 金城一紀, *Furai, Dadī, Furai* フライ、ダディ、フライ [Fly, Daddy, Fly] (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2003), 9.

<sup>380</sup> Kaneshiro Kazuki 金城一紀, *Supīdo* スピード [Speed] (Tōkyō: Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 7.

<sup>381</sup> Fludernik, “Second Person Fiction: Narrative *You* as Address and/or Protagonist,” 232.

<sup>382</sup> Ishida, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 70.

<sup>383</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 72.

The addressee could be a generalised you, or an extra-diegetic narratee, or the actual reader, and this ambiguity of addressee in both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series become more obvious when the narration shifts from homodiegetic narration to heterodiegetic narration. For example, in the *I.W.G.P* series, the shift occurs when Makoto narrates his clients' backgrounds that the narrator-protagonist is temporarily not the actant on the story level. The shift from homodiegetic to heterodiegetic narration also occurs in the *Zombies* series, for example 'Dance of Heathens' from *Revolution No.3* begins with a "Once upon a time in a faraway land" type of narration about an outsider who was persecuted for being different. It is later revealed to the readers that this is a story Hiroshi (one of the core members of the *Zombies*) heard when he was little, from an American soldier stationed in Okinawa, and later retold to the members of the *Zombies*. This story of a "heathen" highlights the indeterminacy of both narrator and the addressee, as the opening passage initially seems as if the narrator-protagonist (Minamigata) is addressing his readers, but as the story progresses, the reader discover that it could be a young Hiroshi listening to the American soldier, or the *Zombies* listening to Hiroshi. Despite the ambiguity, the possibility of the narrator-protagonist addressing the reader allows them to identify with the narrator and as a result triggers empathy for the characters.<sup>384</sup>

Another way in which second person narration is used to evoke maximum empathy from readers is to further create the sensation that makes them wonder "Is this me, the reader? Or is this a character?" by using what Fludernik refers to as "reflectoral you."<sup>385</sup> She argues that reflectoral you allows the reader to momentarily step into the story and to feel and experience what the "you" in the text is going through; the following passage from 'Silver Cross' (*Ginjūji*) in *Ikebukuro West Gate Park II: Calculator Boy* (2000) is such an example:

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<sup>384</sup> Fludernik, "Second Person Fiction: Narrative *You* as Address and/or Protagonist," 227.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*

You are walking along the dark street when you receive a blow to the head. It's followed up with a kick and the dirty asphalt littered with cigarette stubs and empty cans is suddenly in front of your eyes. You try to scream but all you hear is the hissing sound of air escaping from your throat. You push the damp ground with your hands to pull yourself up and see the red tail light of a motorcycle disappearing around the corner. [...] Why is this happening to me? You ask. [...] If all you lost was your money then you can call yourself lucky. But, what if what you lost was something you couldn't buy with money? What would you do?<sup>386</sup>

In this story, two old men living in a nearby nursing home ask Makoto to investigate and catch a bag-snatcher because one of their friends was robbed and injured,<sup>387</sup> but the victims Makoto encounters or hears of while he is investigating are an elderly woman and a pregnant woman, suggesting that the narrator-protagonist was not referring to a particular character in the opening passage. The narrator-protagonist could be talking hypothetically about becoming the victim of a violent robbery, or indeed of his own experience, and at the same time, the text can also be read as addressing the reader as it invites them to feel and experience the fear of being mugged. This vicarious narrative experience of such a horrific incident from the victim's point-of-view is powerful. Ishida frequently uses this reflectorial you throughout the series, especially when recounting the traumatic experiences of Makoto's clients, such as tripping on drugs, being in an abusive relationship, being assaulted in the street and being discriminated against due to age, gender, employment and ethnicity.

This technique is often used in gay literature where readers are manipulated into empathetic identification prior to the revelation of the protagonist's sexual orientation so as to draw empathy even from readers who may be against homosexuality.<sup>388</sup> Fludernik argues that this technique forces readers to accept the protagonist and momentarily erase their own stance on the issue (if they are against it).<sup>389</sup> Similarly, Ishida employs such a technique to draw empathy for drug addicts, prostitutes, illegal migrants and dropouts by manipulating readers not only to identify and empathise with these marginalised people but making it difficult to withdraw empathetic identification when a character's

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<sup>386</sup> Ishida, *Shōnen Keisūki: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku II*, 119-120.

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-176.

<sup>388</sup> Fludernik, "Second Person Fiction: Narrative *You* as Address and/or Protagonist," 238.

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*

socio-cultural status is revealed. This highlights the effectiveness of second person narration in maximising empathy when presenting stories of various dropouts as it offers a way to minimise reader's marginalising stance against these ostracised groups of people. Ishida, in particular, uses the second person which ensures a maximisation of reader empathy for these characters, as well as drawing the reader into an unfamiliar situation or the surroundings of the dark side of life in Ikebukuro city.

In addition to the diversification of narrative mode, another evolutionary development in *ochikobore seishun* fiction is fractured narration and the use of multiple narrators, which is particularly evident in the *Zombies* series. Compared to the *I.W.G.P* series, which is narrated chronologically by a single narrator, the narrative in the *Zombies* series is more fractured, non-linear and multiple which allows readers more than one perspective on the *Zombies*. The series is set in the high school years (three years) of the *Zombies* members and the temporal setting of each story jumps around within this time frame as illustrated by the following chart:

Title	Publication	Temporal setting
'Revolution No.3' first published as short story and later included in <i>Revolution No.3</i>	1998	Third Year of high school (Autumn)
'Run, Boys, Run' in <i>Revolution No.3</i>	2001	Third Year of high school (Winter)
'Dance of the Heathens' in <i>Revolution No.3</i>	2001	Third Year of high school (Summer)
<i>Fly, Daddy, Fly</i>	2003	Second year of high school (Jul-Sep)
<i>Speed</i>	2005	Third Year of high school (Winter)
<i>Revolution No.0</i>	2011	First year of high school (Jun-Oct)

With the exception of short stories such as 'Revolution No.3' and 'Run, Boys, Run' included in *Revolution No.3*, the *Zombies* series does not progress chronologically as the *I.W.G.P* series does.



Furthermore, narration within each volume becomes more chronologically disrupted, as illustrated by the way the story opens in *Speed*:

An enemy I should loath is standing in front of me, right before my eyes. [...] He brandishes the weapon in his right hand in front of my face and says coldly,  
“You’re wishing that you hadn’t gotten involved in all this, aren’t you?”  
I have no regrets. But it is true that I’m wondering why this is happening.<sup>390</sup>

The narrative begins just before the climax of the story when the narrator begins to have flash backs to the events leading up to the point where she is face-to-face with the villain. Towards the end of the story, the chronology of the narrative reaches this opening point, the name of the villain is revealed and the same events are narrated in more detail as follows:

Nakagawa brandished a stun gun in front of my face and coldly said,  
“You’re wishing that you hadn’t gotten involved in all this, aren’t you?”  
I have no regrets. But it is true that I’m wondering why this is happening.<sup>391</sup>

Such usage of flashbacks and fractured chronology by Kaneshiro adds a complexity to the narrative that is not generally expected in adolescent fiction. Indeed, such trends in adolescent literature in general have been noted by scholars such as Melanie Koss and Marc Aronson, who have identified a shift from the traditional first person narration by a teenage narrator towards more multiple, fractured narratives with multiple narrators, points-of-view, and structures.<sup>392</sup>

The usage of multiple narrators within the series means that the *Zombies* members are explored from various perspectives. Minamigata, the narrator of the first and last volumes is depicted as the ‘brain’ of the *Zombies* as he comes up with the plans for their annual “revolution” (storming into the Seiwa school festival), as well as playing a key role in solving mysteries in the later volumes. He is one of the

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<sup>390</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 5.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

<sup>392</sup> Melanie Koss, “Young Adult Novels with Multiple Narrative Perspectives: The Changing Nature of YA Literature,” *The ALAN Review* 36, no.3 (2009): 1, accessed March 23 2014, <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v36n3/koss.html>.

central members and thus, the first volume is seemingly narrated from the perspective of an insider. However, as the story progresses and the narrator-protagonist reveals more about himself, readers gradually find out that he is in fact different from the other Zombies. He begins to confide in his readers. For example, when their teacher asks the class whether any one of their parents is a graduate of a top university in Japan, Minamigata stays quiet.<sup>393</sup> However, later on in the story, he reveals that he used to be an honours student before becoming a *furyō* and that his parents had in fact graduated from Waseda and Keio Universities.<sup>394</sup> In another instance, he lies about the book he is reading to his friend, as if having been an honours student and reading the summer holiday's required reading and enjoying it somehow threatens his membership of the Zombies:

“Shut up. I was up all night reading a book.”

“What were you reading?” Inoue asked. I held up the book that was lying near the pillow. It was Kawabata Yasunari's *The Dancing Girl of Izu* – The standard piece from the summer holiday reading list. I must admit, I was moved. Got problem with that?

“Gavin Lyall's *The Most Dangerous Game*.”<sup>395</sup>

Although he lies to his friend, he is seemingly truthful to readers as he discloses various secrets, and thus is depicted as a reliable narrator. Such narrative irony does not result in readers becoming suspicious of the narrator-protagonist, but on the contrary, it works towards strengthening readers' identification with Minamigata. He may have felt different from the other Zombies members but he is one of the central members of the group and he reassumes the position of narrator-protagonist in the final instalment of the series in *Revolution No.0* (2011). His close relationship with the Zombies gives readers insight to their activities and behaviours.

*Fly, Daddy, Fly* and *Speed* are narrated from the perspective of a middle aged man (Suzuki) and a high school girl (Kanako) respectively. Both Suzuki and Kanako claim to be ordinary individuals or at least they do so until they met the Zombies. However, as both narratives progress, readers discover that they

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<sup>393</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon No.3*, 22.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

too are far from ordinary as they refuse to conform to social norms. For example, Suzuki treasures his wife and 17 year old daughter and passed off his chances at promotion as he prioritises his family over his work, unlike his successful colleagues; Kanako's difference is highlighted by her refusal to carry a mobile phone, which is one of the actions that symbolises *Zombies'* non-conformity, and her questioning of strict and seemingly meaningless school regulations sets her apart from her class mates. This illustrates that even though there are multiple narrators, they are linked together by their nonconformity, which suggests that although Kaneshiro is experimenting with the formula by incorporating multiple perspectives, he does not stray too far from his formulaic narrative persona.

The use of multiple narrators also results in dramatic irony where some readers (who have read the previous volumes) know more than the narrator-protagonist, as in following passages:

I remember hearing from Haruka about some drop-outs (ochikobore) from a nearby boys' high school who try to sneak into the school festival, but the ticket system only allows Seiwa students or their families to visit the school grounds. It must be a bunch of hoodlums trying to get Seiwa girls who must be as unattainable as the stars.<sup>396</sup>

*Fly, Daddy, Fly* (2003)

"What about the school festival?" I asked.

"Nothing," said Minamigata but he seemed uncomfortable.

"Speaking of school festivals," I said as I suddenly remembered.

"I heard that a bunch of perverts try to sneak into our school festival every year and it is a real hassle keeping them out."

Everyone looked blank, except Sunshin who scratched his scar.<sup>397</sup>

*Speed* (2005)

When Suzuki mentions a group of drop-outs, prior to meeting the *Zombies*, readers who have read the first volume recognise who Suzuki is referring to, and similarly in *Speed*, when Kanako tells the *Zombies* about a group of "perverts" and is puzzled by their reaction, readers know why they are reacting that way. Furthermore, in *Speed*, Kanako, who had been attacked by university students, wonders if her own father would prioritise his daughter over his work and come and save her, an

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<sup>396</sup> Kaneshiro, *Furai, Dadī, Furai*, 7.

<sup>397</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 66.

obvious reference to Suzuki.<sup>398</sup> Further reference to *Fly, Daddy, Fly* is made when the boys tease Sunshin that he is very good at teaching people how to fight, as he had trained Suzuki for his match against Ishihara, the high school boxing champion.<sup>399</sup>

Although Suzuki and Kanako may not know what readers (who have read the previous works) know, their points-of-view as adult male and teenage girl respectively give the series new perspectives on the Zombies. For example, since Suzuki receives boxing lessons from one of the members, Sunshin, and as they train together and form a relationship, Sunshin's background as a Zainichi Korean (Korean living in Japan) is revealed and explored. Similarly Kanako's friendship with the Zombies and their honorary member Agī, reveals both how the boys are grieving and coping with the death of Hiroshi who had been like a leader to them, as well as more about Agī who had been a minor character in previous stories. Initially, when the Zombies pay Agī to be a chaperone to Kanako, he introduces himself to Kanako as Sato Ken, and she is taken back by his gentle and somewhat womanising ways. Through her relationship with Agī, his womanising side which had previously been only mentioned but not depicted in detail is revealed for the first time in the series. As their relationship gradually develops, he invites her to call him Agī like the rest of the Zombies:

“From now on, call me Agī. It's from my mum's surname Aguinaldo,” said Agī without getting out of the driver's seat.

“Aren't you going to open the door for me anymore?”

“You're one of us now. Do it yourself. Don't be a baby.”

I nodded and took off my seatbelt, feeling happy about the 'one-of-us' bit.

“If you're friends, why do you charge them money?”

“Well, friendship and all that are kinda embarrassing.” He mumbled as his cheeks turned bright red like a child. It was kind of distorted, but I understood what he meant.<sup>400</sup>

By using a range of narrators, Kaneshiro is able to discuss issues that the boys are too “embarrassed” to talk about, such as their friendship, as well as giving fresh perspectives on the boys.

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<sup>398</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 69.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

Koss and William Teale attribute trends towards the fragmentation and multiplication of narrative in adolescent literature to the ever-changing experience of information and communication technology. They argue that since the information is fed “piecemeal” the need arises to combine multiple perspectives and points-of-view in order to construct one “cohesive whole.”<sup>401</sup> As today’s teens become more adept at processing information from fragments, writers of adolescent literature seem to respond by experimenting with narrative mode and moving beyond the traditional chronological single-voiced narration. While the fractured narration evident in the *Zombies* series is not a development unique to *ochikobore seishun* fiction, as part of a broader culture of adolescent literature, it is impacted by the socio-cultural surroundings of its adolescent readers. It also highlights the fluidity of the genre which cannot be captured by rigid categorisation.

### **Good bad boy morality**

The depiction of rebellious teen heroes as good bad boys is at the heart of *ochikobore seishun* fiction. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing wayward youth are portrayed as mischievous and rebellious but moral teenagers. Their rebellion against authority figures such as parents, teachers and police is performed through behaviour and activities that society deems ‘delinquent’ under juvenile delinquent law, but their own sense of right and wrong separates them from juvenile criminals. As shown in the previous chapter, in *kōsei* autobiographical writing, wayward behaviour is downplayed while positive attributes, such as morality, are emphasised through the thoughts and emotions of the rebel narrator-protagonist.

This pattern of portrayal is reinforced in *ochikobore seishun* fiction as the wayward behaviour of the boys from both *I.W.G.P* and the *Zombies* series are downplayed while their morality is emphasised. For

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<sup>401</sup> Melanie Koss and William Teale, “What’s Happening in YA Literature? Trends in Books for Adolescents,” *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 52, no.7 (April 2009): 570, doi: 10.1598/JAAL.52.7.2.

example, references are made to Makoto and his friends drinking despite being underage (the drinking age in Japan is twenty years), and similarly, to the *Zombies* smoking cigarettes. In ‘Sunshine Street Civil War’ from the first volume of *I.W.G.P* series, Makoto goes to a bar despite being underage when his older childhood friend, who has returned to Ikebukuro as the new police superintendent, wants to discuss the escalating gang wars in Ikebukuro:

“Yeah, I can talk, if you can turn a blind eye to a bar that serves alcohol to a minor.” I couldn’t say no to the new superintendent, and besides, I didn’t think I could sleep anyways.  
“That’s undesirable but very well, just one drink, then.” Now you’re talking, police superintendent.<sup>402</sup>

While Makoto drinks with his friends, occasionally even with the police superintendent, he drinks responsibly, and his drinking does not lead to drunken antics. Similarly, in the *Zombies* series, it is briefly mentioned that the *Zombies* occasionally drink and smoke. The matter of fact way with which Makoto’s entering a bar and the *Zombies*’ smoking are treated indicates these are a regular occurrence, but reference to such behaviour by the protagonists is kept minimal. Thus their wayward behaviour recedes into the backdrop and their more positive traits and noble activities are emphasised.

In the case of the *Zombies*, who are still high school students, unlike Makoto and his friends in the *I.W.G.P* series, their rebellion is directly aimed against the school authorities. They display their dissatisfaction with the authorities in a mischievous rather than hostile manner so that they are portrayed as good bad boys rather than more criminally inclined bad boys. For example, in *Fly, Daddy, Fly*, the boys tell Suzuki that they had to attend detention during the summer holidays for hacking into the school computer system and changing the test results of all the students:

“So, about that detention...what are you being accused of?”  
Minamigata grinned at my question and answered,

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<sup>402</sup> Ishida, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 222-223.

“Well, someone hacked into the school computer system that manages test scores and changed the every single term test result to 100%. And we’re the main suspects because we’re always up to no good.”

“It’s horrible that they blame you guys for everything.”

“No, it *was* us. In fact, it was so easy that it was boring. Of all the passwords to choose, they used the principal’s birthdate. How absurd is that?”

I just shook my head in amazement. Minamigata flashed a cheeky grin. I hesitated a moment and then asked another question.

“I’ve been meaning to ask...but why are you guys helping me?”

“Because it’s fun.” Minamigata answered without hesitation and added,

“And it’s about pride.”

“Pride?”

Minamigata nodded.

“All we are bad at is answering some test sheet, and they call us dropouts [*ochikobore*]. They don’t care about who we really are. They efficiently test us, sort us according to results, label us, and gather us in one place where they try to control and manage us.” Minamigata stopped, smiled a little and continued.

“We want to show them what we’re capable of. By them, I mean those people who try to control us, and those who will control us in the future.”<sup>403</sup>

According to Minamigata, their childish prank is a challenge against society and a criticism of an education system that values academic performance over the moral development of youth. This suggests that the wayward behaviour of these boys stems from their resistance against a society that labels them as *ochikobore* based on academic performance without attempting to see or understand their positive traits. This invites readers to question the way society labels and ostracises boys like them. Furthermore, their point is made through relatively harmless and mischievous behaviour which suggests that although they rebel against society, they have a moral sense which prevents them from displaying their dissatisfaction with society through more hostile and criminal behaviour that some rebellious and angry teenagers resort to. This is what sets the good bad boys apart from the bad boys.

Similarly in the *I.W.G.P* series, Makoto’s closest friends are also *ochikobore*, who are ostracised by society. Takashi is the leader of a colour gang in Ikebukuro, and Saru (Monkey) is a member of the local Yakuza organisation. However, like the Zombies, they too display good bad boy morality. For example, in ‘Takeaway in West First Street’ from the third volume of the *I.W.G.P* series, they rescue a

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<sup>403</sup> Kaneshiro, *Furai, Dadī, Furai*, 111-112.

young mother, who works as a prostitute, and her young daughter from harassment by a different Yakuza group.

“Did you tell anyone about this?” Takashi asked in a gentle voice that I’d never heard him use before. Kaori shook her head and started crying. I guess she felt relieved after telling us. The greaseproof book cover was sodden with her tears.

“You couldn’t tell mum or anyone about this, huh? Good girl.” Takashi told Kaori who continued to cry but her tiny hands on her knees were bunched up tightly into fists. Takashi knelt down and put his hand on her shaking shoulder. Monkey looked angry and had turned to the other side. I went over to the Thirty-One Ice Cream store opposite Alta and bought a Chocolate Mint and Strawberry Cheese Double cone and gave it to Kaori.<sup>404</sup>

The compassion they show towards Kaori and her prostitute mother on such occasions, and their anger toward the Yakuza who are trying to deprive them of their livelihood, emphasise the morality of these boys. In the *I.W.G.P* series, it is this eclectic group of ostracised boys that plays the role of protector and defender of those who are helpless.

The incorporation of mystery, that adds the role of detective and protector who seeks truth and justice, develops the good bad boy morality further. Such an enhanced role amplifies the ‘good’ traits of these rebellious boys so that when they do bend the law, it is for the greater good, and occasional disregard for law is not solely out of defiance for authority and desire for freedom and thrills as it had been in *kōsei* autobiographical writing. The convention of mystery requires a moral detective whose actions relieve “anxiety by showing that justice prevails” and ultimately providing an “exciting escape from humdrum reality” for readers.<sup>405</sup> Thus, in *ochikobore seishun* fiction the good bad boys become heroes who restore the balance jeopardised by the villains.

### **Cultural stereotypes**

In contrast to the way that good bad boy morality retains much of the function and profile developed in *kōsei* autobiographical writing, the cultural stereotype of the rebellious teenager develops

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<sup>404</sup> Ishida, *Kotsuon: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku III*, 91-92.

<sup>405</sup> Goldman, “The Appeal of the Mystery,” 263.



significantly in *ochikobore seishun* fiction as the texts are no longer anchored to a specific time or cultural context. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, which was often set in the 1970s or the 1980s, the dominant form of youth rebellion by the protagonists had been that of *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* culture. Hence fashion styles or cultural references to such rebellious youth cultures had played a significant role in portraying teenage rebels. The images of *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* are still used in popular media such as film and manga to this day and are not only a highly recognisable form of teenage rebellion but also closely associated with the good bad boy character. However, as the mode of writing shifts from autobiography to fiction, writers challenge the existing cultural stereotypes by experimenting with the way teenage rebellion is represented in *ochikobore seishun* fiction.

As already discussed, unlike *yankī* or *bōsōzoku*, the term *furyō*, which had been a generic term for juvenile delinquents prior to the development of specific fashion trends and codes of behaviour that emerged in the late 1970s, is still used to refer to defiant problem students in general. In the *Zombies* series, Minamigata explains how he became a so-called *furyō* in the following passage:

I stopped buttoning up the collar of my uniform. I also started sleeping during class. My grades fell and teachers worried while my parents began to fight more frequently for some reason. [...] And one day, I realised I had become a delinquent [*furyō*]).<sup>406</sup>

Minamigata's transformation from honours student to so-called *furyō* is marked by his poor academic performance and refusal to button up his collar. Minamigata's refusal to conform and obey school authorities lead to him being labelled a *furyō* and his attitude suggests that he did not intend on becoming one and nor does he use the term to describe or introduce himself. Furthermore, he does not perform his rebellion through stereotypical *furyō* behaviour such as dying his hair, customising uniforms or engaging in school violence. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, transformation into *furyō* is deliberate as the protagonist decides to become a rebel and changes his appearances and behaviour so that he is recognised by those around him as a *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku*. Whereas, Minamigata's

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<sup>406</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon* No.3, 45.

transformation stems not from his desire to perform rebellion, but rather from him drifting away from the path society expects him to take. He explains that he just simply “wanted to sleep” during class because he was “tired” of his life and so, while his class mates studied, he slept, fell behind and eventually was labelled by society as *furyō*.<sup>407</sup> When the narrator-protagonists of the second and third volumes encounter the *Zombies* for the first time, they describe them as an ordinary looking group of boys and not as a group of *furyō*, which indicates the lack of *furyō* performance on the part of the *Zombies*. This suggests that *furyō* may be a generic reference to defiant youth when it is used as a label by society to ostracise a group of teens, but as an identity, it becomes specific as it entails a specific fashion style and behaviour. In other words, the *Zombies* may be labelled by society as *furyō* but they do not consider themselves as such and thus they do not perform the standard *furyō* behaviour.

The term used throughout the *Zombies* to describe those who have strayed from what society considers the proper path is *ochikobore*. Minamigata explains that his school, in the middle of Shinjuku, is described as a “school for drop-outs [*ochikobore*]” that has produced yakuza instead of politicians like the surrounding schools.<sup>408</sup> In the *I.W.G.P* series, terms such as *furyō* or *ochikobore* are absent as Makoto describes himself without using any labels:

My name is Majima Makoto. I graduated from the local technical high school here in Ikebukuro. Impressive, huh? You see, about a third of the students have dropped out by graduation. A detective I know from the Youth Division, Yoshioka, once told me that my school was a farm for the yakuza, where kids stole, did drugs, and brawled. Any punk who could throw an impressive punch would immediately be scouted by the yakuza. But then again, some of them were too dangerous, even for the yakuza. Like Yamai, for example.<sup>409</sup>

Since graduating high school, I haven’t done anything. I couldn’t get a proper job, and I didn’t feel like getting one anyway. Part-time work is tedious and I don’t have the motivation for it. I earn spending money by helping out at mum’s fruit shop.<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon No.3*, 45.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>409</sup> Ishida, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 9-10.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

Makoto is nineteen and his part-time work at his mother's fruit shop (he also starts writing columns for a magazine later in the series) makes him a freeter in society's eyes but he does not introduce himself as one nor does he use the term. In fact, throughout the series he frequently refers to himself as a "hard-boiled street detective" and his clients refer to him as "the trouble-shooter." Despite the lack of labelling, Makoto's wayward behaviour, such as smoking and drinking while being a minor, and his refusal to accept social expectations and find full-time employment is well described by the term *ochikobore* as it evokes images of typical rebellious youth. However, like the *Zombies*, Makoto's behaviour suggests that he is 'rebellious' but without the typical fashion styles and codes of behaviour associated with specific youth cultures such as *furyō* or *yankī* that are used to perform and portray rebellious youth identity.

Unlike Makoto, his best friends belong in groups where a specific code of dress is required. Takashi's team colour for his colour gang is red, and Saru has back tattoos and wears suits which are the standard attire expected of a Yakuza member, in a manner quite similar to the way that *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* membership imposed a distinct fashion style and code of behaviour. Although Makoto maintains a close friendship with Takashi and Saru, and there is a sense of camaraderie between the boys, he refuses invitations from both the colour gang and the Yakuza and remains free from any kind of group that could enforce conformity. This is a new development in the depiction of a rebellious hero, and Makoto stands alone, unlike the other rebellious boys in tales of youth rebellion. Makoto's portrayal in the *I.W.G.P* series resembles the hardboiled detective hero described by Raymond Chandler:

He is the hero; he is everything. He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be ... a man of honour – by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it. He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world. [...] if he is a man of honour in one thing, he is that in all things. He is a relatively poor man, or he would not be a detective at all. He is a common man or he could not go among common people.<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Raymond Chandler, *The Simple Art of Murder* (New York: Norton & Company, 1968), 533.

In other words, the detective hero is often a loner but at the same time he is one of the people. In Makoto's case, he is part of Ikebukuro's marginalised community and, as one of them, he feels the obligation to help and protect them. In this way, the mystery element is somewhat stronger in the *I.W.G.P* series than in the *Zombies* series as Makoto may stand out in terms of typical rebellious teen heroism but he is the quintessential detective hero.

However, Makoto is not just a detective hero, he is also a rebellious teenager in *ochikobore seishun* fiction and his rebellion is performed through his refusal to conform, as is also the case in *Zombies* series. Rebellion by Minamigata and the other *Zombies* members is expressed through a rejection of mainstream culture; he explains that all forty-eight of the members hated *Shibuya-kei*,<sup>412</sup> refused to carry a mobile phone, enjoy karaoke, or support the Giants baseball team.<sup>413</sup> Thus, the boys are performing their rebellion by rejecting both rebellious youth culture (Shibuya type) and mainstream youth culture (mobile phone and karaoke); while refusing to root for Tokyo's baseball team can be interpreted as a general expression of their rebellion against conformity. Yet, significantly, this non-conformity by the group is not an enforced rule within the group - Minamigata explains that their collective rejection of mobile phones, Shibuya type, karaoke, or the Giants was a coincidence.<sup>414</sup>

The *Zombies* are a group of non-conformist *ochikobore*, not just because they reject mainstream culture but because there is no enforcement of particular rules within the group, and they have dropped out not only from social expectation but also from mainstream culture. The lack of conformity is emphasised when they charge into the Seiwa school grounds in 'Revolution No.3' and Minamigata notes how everyone was wearing whatever they liked on their day of "revolution," their attire ranging

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<sup>412</sup> See Chapter 1(p10) for description of *Shibuya-kei*.

<sup>413</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon No.3*, 28.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*

from a Bruce Lee style yellow jumpsuit to jeans and a T-shirt.<sup>415</sup> The lack of conformity is further illustrated in the following passage:

“Geronimo!” Sunshin screamed as he stormed towards the guards that had formed a black line. As soon as he reached them he threw hooks right and left, and brought down two guards in the blink of an eye. The members watching erupted into what sounded like a shout for victory and one by one they marched towards the line each shouting the name of their own heroes.

“Bruce Lee!”

“John Coltrane!”

“Kurt Cobain!”

“Mike Tyson!”

“Saksaynu!”

“Tracy Rose!”

By the way, Tracy Rose is the leading actress in *Little Mermaid*, a porn video that over 95% of our students had watched.<sup>416</sup>

Although these names seem random at first glance, all these figures have either literally fought against conformity, or expressed a rejection of conformity through their arts. For example, Geronimo and Saksaynu (an Ainu chief) fought against colonisation, musicians like John Coltrane and Kurt Cobain pioneered free jazz (that challenged the limitations of bebop, hard bop and modal jazz) and grunge respectively, as well as the controversial sports star Mike Tyson and fictional porn star Tracy Rose, all challenged societal norms. This eclectic range of icons considered as personal heroes by the *Zombies*, further shows how the group are depicted as embracing diversity while idealising those who fought against the mainstream. If the *kōsei* autobiographical writings relied on cultural references to a specific type of rebellious youth culture to depict teenage rebellion, the *ochikobore seishun* writers rely on the other elements of the cultural stereotype such as poor academic performance, and wayward behaviour. More significantly, the references to fashion items or trends in both series remain minimal and do not function as part of the identity performance, as the writers focus instead on the behaviours and the marginalised position the boys are in.

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<sup>415</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon No.3*, 59.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

In addition to the rebellious protagonists who are good bad boys, there are sets of stereotypical characters that are recognisable to and expected by the readership, including damsels-in-distress and antagonistic adult figures. These conventional characters also have their roots in *kōsei* autobiographical writing. Cawelti has argued that the majority of the characters in popular fiction are formulaic, citing various cultural stereotypes ranging from “red-headed hot-tempered Irishmen” to “brilliantly analytical and eccentric detectives” which have all become formulaic as a result of recurrent usage in the genre. He further points out that these formulae are constantly evolving, citing blonde females as an example since virginal blondes have given way to a very different formula in the twentieth century literature.<sup>417</sup> Likewise, characters in these tales of teenage rebellion also show an evolutionary development as the mode of writing shifts from autobiography to fiction.

In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, young female characters are usually in the background and their main purpose in the story is to be protected or comforted. Indeed, this mode of portrayal of female characters contributed to the depiction of the protagonist as good bad boys who always came to their rescue. The female characters in both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series are also often depicted as damsels-in-distress, since they are often the clients in need of protection or help, but compared to the *kōsei* autobiographical writing there is more character development as they are depicted as more than victims. For example, in ‘Doll of Death’ from the fifth volume of the *I.W.G.P* series, a Chinese girl nicknamed Komomo (Little Peach) seeks the help of Makoto and his friends in investigating the death of her sister in a Japanese-owned doll factory in China. She is a client but at the same time she is actively involved in the case as she stands up against the Japanese corporation that ignores the human rights of the workers, and she plays a significant role in bringing changes in the way the dolls are produced.<sup>418</sup> Another example of a female client who is more than just the stereotypical damsel-in-distress is Rin, in ‘PRIDE’ from the tenth volume of the *I.W.G.P* series, who searches for a group of

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<sup>417</sup> Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture*, 5.

<sup>418</sup> Ishida, *Han Jisatsu Kurabu: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 113-162.

serial rapists only known only as B13.<sup>419</sup> She is a client, but like Komomo, she plays a significant role in apprehending the criminals.

The emergence of stronger female characters is also evident in the *Zombies* series where in the third volume of the series, the heroine (Kanako) transforms from initially being a damsel-in-distress to becoming one of the *Zombies* by the end of the story. In the beginning, she had been an obedient Seiwa private girls' high school student, who had followed the rules enforced by parents and teachers despite secretly questioning them. When she first encounters the *Zombies*, who save her from the thugs who were planning to steal her bag and rape her, she is the typical damsel-in-distress. Furthermore, she asks the *Zombies* for help in finding out the truth about her friend's death and in doing so she plays the role of a stereotypical female client, especially when she finds out that the thugs were employed by one of her dead private tutor's associates. However, as her relationship with the *Zombies* develops, she begins to change and plays a more active role in finding the truth and avenging her friend with the help of the boys. She learns boxing from Sunshin and she begins to dance ballet again, after being encouraged by the boys to pursue her passion for it, which she had given up due to school commitments. Usually, a girl dancing ballet may seem like a conformist activity, but in the Japanese context when the said girl is a high school student, it becomes non-conformist because society expects that she should be concentrating on her studies rather than wasting her time on hobbies. Agī teaches Kanako (and readers) that the *jeté* is a move invented as an expression of freedom, and a statement against class discrimination, tradition, and conformity. He further explains that this is why the protagonist in *Billy Elliot* (2000) leaps and jumps in frustration; then he asks Kanako to show him and the boys her *jeté* someday.<sup>420</sup> This request can be interpreted as a simple request to see Kanako dancing, but at the same time, since it is an expression of freedom, it can also be interpreted as a request to see her break free and rebel against conformity.

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<sup>419</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *PRIDE: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku, X PRIDE:池袋ウエストゲートパーク X [PRIDE: Ikebukuro West Gate Park X]* (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2010), 147-231.

<sup>420</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 199-200.

By the end of the story, Kanako does indeed break free as she forms her own female version of the *Zombies* and engages in various activities that challenge conformity:

The girls who felt frustrated at their current situation were gradually gathering around me. We debated a lot of things, and we got so close that we did everything together. Two weeks ago, we went to our first rock concert. We were surprised by the loudness of the sound that boomed out of the speakers but we timidly danced to the music and enjoyed ourselves. Last week, we planned and trapped a notorious serial molester who was harassing girls on the trains. There are twenty six of us at this point, but we might get more members in the future.<sup>421</sup>

The transformation of Kanako as well as Kaneshiro's decision to use a high school girl as the narrator-protagonist who plays a central role in the plot illustrates that in *ochikobore seishun* fiction, female characters are more than powerless, helpless girls. They may often be victims, but they are also survivors and fighters. This highlights how formulae that first emerged in *kōsei* autobiographical writing evolve as writers experiment.

The depiction of parents in *ochikobore seishun* fiction is strikingly similar to that in *kōsei* autobiographical writings - the fathers are absent and the mothers are either powerless or have no intention of stopping their sons' rebellious ways. In both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series, the protagonists' relationships with their parents are in the background as it is their relationship with their fellow good bad boys and clients that are central to the plot, in which parents are rarely entangled. Of the few parents that are mentioned throughout the series, the majority of them are mothers, while fathers tend to be both physically and emotionally absent. For example, Makoto and the central characters of the *Zombies* series such as Minamigata and Agī are raised by single mothers, and Kanako's father is physically present but is emotionally distant from his family. The only father to play a significant role within the story is Suzuki, the narrator-protagonist of the second volume of the *Zombies* series, but he is an exception as he is not the parent of a *Zombie* and, like Kanako, he too

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<sup>421</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 296-297.



becomes one of the *Zombies* despite the age gap. Suzuki's relationship with his daughter is the catalyst for his adventure with the *Zombies* but the father/daughter relationship recedes into the backdrop as his transformation into one of the *Zombies* and his relationship with them is foregrounded.

The majority of parent-child relationships depicted in both series are with mothers, and are comparatively positive and non-confrontational. For example, Makoto's mother in the *I.W.G.P* series, and Agī's and Kanako's mothers from the *Zombies* series are supportive of their son or daughter and understand their rebellious behaviour. Minamigata's mother is an exception as she disapproves of her son's waywardness, but like the mothers in *kōsei* autobiographical writing she is powerless to change him. Despite her disapproval, she does not actively attempt to change him so the relationship is not confrontational. By contrast, when Agī skips his high school graduation and travels to Spain to fulfil his dream of travelling around the world, his mother is supportive:

"I think he's in Spain right now. He said he's going around the world." said Agī's mum.

"When is he coming back?"

"I have no idea." she answered nonchalantly as she drank her wine.

"Aren't you worried?"

"Not at all! I'd rather have him flying off somewhere. Besides, it's exciting to think about him diving into different worlds and changing."<sup>422</sup>

Her positive attitude towards her son is very different to Minamigata's mother, who shows frustration that her son had also skipped the graduation to travel to Okinawa with the rest of the *Zombies* members. Although the two mothers' reactions to their sons are different, these two types of mothers can also be considered as somewhat formulaic in *ochikobore seishun* fiction: mothers are either supportive or unsupportive but as powerless as they had been in *kōsei* autobiographical writing.

In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, when the father is absent, another male character steps in to guide the protagonist towards adulthood by giving him support and advice. Similarly in the *I.W.G.P* series there

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<sup>422</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 293.

are supportive male figures such as the friendly cop Yoshioka, and the superintendent of the Ikebukuro police station, Rei'ichi who had been like an older-brother to Makoto when he was growing up. In the *Zombies* series, there is the eccentric biology teacher Yonekura, nicknamed Dr Moreau, and a construction worker named Mr Rambo who befriends the *Zombies*. These are minor but significant recurrent characters who give the protagonists advice on solving the mystery as well as on life in general throughout the series. Minamigata expresses his relationship with Dr Moreau as follows:

“What are you reading?”

“*On Aggression* by Konrad Lorenz.”

“Is it interesting?” I asked. Dr Moreau just nodded.

“Can I borrow it when you're done?”

He nodded again. We've known Dr Moreau, the “father” of the *Zombies*, for three years now but it was always like this. Whenever we ask for help, he would offer a helping hand without a word.<sup>423</sup>

Dr Moreau is a minor character but his significance in the series is underscored by his position as an understanding adult and an adviser throughout the series. Mr Rambo is another minor character who gives the *Zombies* advice outside of school. These male figures represent the good or understanding adults who, along with the understanding mothers, are fewer in number than the majority of the adults who tend to be antagonistic in both *I.W.G.P* and *Zombies* series. A similar trend was also noted in American adolescent fiction by scholars like Sheila Egoff and Roberta Seelinger Trites who argue that the struggle for power between the antagonistic adult and the protagonist is a crucial part of adolescent fiction.<sup>424</sup> Since there is no enforcement of parental authority in the *I.W.G.P* and the *Zombies*, as the parents are either absent or understanding, the power struggle between adults and youth is represented through the protagonists' conflict with the villainous adult characters.

The incorporation of mystery in *ochikobore seishun* fiction results in the introduction of villains, who come in either adult or teenage form. In the *I.W.G.P* series, there are about 44 villains, as there is

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<sup>423</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon* No.3, 186.

<sup>424</sup> See Chapter 1 (p50).

approximately one villain per story, and their range is diverse; there are politicians, a successful lawyer, a pharmaceutical company CEO, Yakuza members, a doctor, as well as a few teenage villains. Although not all villainous characters are adults, the overwhelming majority are wealthy, powerful but corrupt adults who lack empathy or morals. For example, in 'PRIDE,' the villain is a young and successful lawyer called Komori who has set up an organisation called "House of Pride" to assist young homeless people by providing accommodation and employment and giving them back their pride and dignity.<sup>425</sup> At face value, the House of Pride is a charitable organisation but the protagonist finds that it steals unemployment benefits from the homeless youth as well as their wages once they find a job. Komori is revealed as the mastermind behind this scheme and furthermore, as the man behind the group of serial rapists, B13.<sup>426</sup> Like Komori, the majority of adult villains in the *I.W.G.P* series are often driven by greed and show disregard for those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. As such, they function as foils to the good bad boy protagonists.

In the *Zombies*, there are a total of five villains throughout the series, the majority of whom are adults. The similarity in the two series, in terms of the portrayal of villainous characters, is illustrated by the social status of these adults. For example, there is the head of the human resource department of a major corporation in 'Dance of Heathens' who murders his wife and daughter, and was stalking and planning to kill female university students who come to his company for a job interview; there is the corrupt principal of a private high school who attempts to cover up the crimes committed by his students, and an ambitious university student who blackmails and manipulates others to commit crimes. Like the villains in the *I.W.G.P* series, these wealthy and powerful individuals are driven by their greed for power and wealth and take advantage of those who are less fortunate or disempowered.

Additionally, in the *Zombies* series, there is also a recurrent antagonistic adult character, Sarujima, also referred to as Monkey (*Mankī*). Although Sarujima is not the main villain in any of the stories, he is

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<sup>425</sup> Ishida, *PRIDE: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 151-152.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.

portrayed as one of the enemies of the *Zombies* throughout the series and is described by Minamigata as a racist and abusive physical education teacher who takes pleasure in tormenting the *Zombies*, especially Sunshin who is Korean Japanese.<sup>427</sup> Other teachers, especially those from surrounding private high schools share Sarujima's disdain for the *Zombies* and hence prohibit the boys from attending the Seiwa school festival. This conflict between the teachers and the *Zombies* represents the central power struggle between oppressive adults and teenage protagonists discussed above. Although there is no such recurrent antagonistic character in *I.W.G.P*, Makoto experiences similar discrimination from the majority of police officers who see him as a hindrance, unlike Yoshioka or Rei'ichi who understand and respect his actions. The incorporation of mystery that requires villains amplifies the power struggle between the teenage protagonists with those adults who disapprove of their wayward behaviour, thereby reinforcing the good versus evil trope of mystery fiction.

In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, bad boys are sometimes introduced as the antithesis of the good bad boy protagonists, and these bad boys develop into villains who, unlike the hero/es, have no sense of morality. The way in which teenage villains are depicted in the *I.W.G.P* and the *Zombies* series differs significantly. In *I.W.G.P* series, teenage villains like Spider who sets up an online Suicide Club to drive victims towards suicide, or Yamai who murders a high school girl, or Hiroko who asks Yamai to kill her friend out of jealousy, are all portrayed sympathetically.<sup>428</sup> Spider is manipulated by a female doctor who is treating him for severe depression, while Yamai has been physically abused by his father since childhood, and Hiroko has been sexually abused by her father who is the Vice-Director of the Ministry of Finance Banking Bureau. Unlike adult villains in the series, the narrator-protagonist shows empathy towards them despite their heinous acts, and reveals their tragic backgrounds, as if to argue that they were created by the adults that failed them, inviting readers to have sympathy. There are no such emotional stimuli or attempts to understand the adult villains.

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<sup>427</sup> The figure of the violent physical education teacher is so commonplace that it has become a cultural stereotype. It is frequently seen in *manga*, such as Takahashi Hiroshi's *Crows* (1990-1998). See Chapter 1 (p39-40).

<sup>428</sup> Spider from 'The Anti Suicide Club' in *Han Jisatsu Kurabu: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku V*, Yamai and Hiroko from 'Ikebukuro West Gate Park' in *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*.

By contrast, in the *Zombies* series there is no such difference in the portrayal of teenage as opposed to adult villains; villainous teenagers or university students are depicted as being as morally corrupt as the adults. For example, in ‘Run, Boys, Run’, students from a nearby private high school students assault the *Zombies* and steal the money they have saved up to buy forty-seven plane tickets to Okinawa; or high school boxing champion Ishihara, who is one of the villains in *Fly, Daddy, Fly*, attempts to rape a female student but later shows no remorse or guilt. Minamigata explains in ‘Run, Boys, Run’ that these bad boys from private schools are rich, spoilt and morally corrupt in ironic contrast to the *Zombies* who are labelled bad by society.<sup>429</sup> These villainous boys are the antithesis of good bad boys since they appear to be good boys, whose success is ensured by their attendance at prestigious schools, but unlike the good bad boys, they display criminal and immoral behaviour, yet often avoid censure since society believes that they are good boys. For example, instead of punishing Ishihara for his criminal behaviour and involving the police, the school authorities hastily offer a large sum of money to the victim’s parents and further implicate the victim by claiming that she should not have followed a male student into a karaoke club.<sup>430</sup>

This difference in the portrayal of teenage villains in the two series is the result of writers focusing on different tropes with their characterisation of young criminals. The *I.W.G.P* series seems to emphasise the failure of Japanese society by implying that these teenage villains became criminals as result of an abused and tragic upbringing, while the *Zombies* series focus more on the struggles between marginalised and privileged individuals by depicting elite members of society, regardless of age, as the main villains. This is not to deny that the majority of adult villains in the *I.W.G.P* series are members of the social elite, or that the failure of Japanese society is also one of the many underlying tropes in the *Zombies* series. In both cases, although the characterisation of the teenage villain may be different, the teenage villain is more than just an aggressor but forms part of a comprehensive social critique.

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<sup>429</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon No.3*, 114.

<sup>430</sup> Kaneshiro, *Furai, Dadī, Furai*, 24-28.

### The setting and mode of rebellion as constructive social criticism

In addition to villains, the incorporation of mystery in tales of rebellion has prompted developments in setting. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, the stories are often set in the author's birth place and these places tend to be depicted with fondness as *kōsei* autobiographical writing, especially from the second stage, is based on the author's nostalgia for the past. Cawelti argues that the majority of mystery fiction is set in locations that represent "the combination of corruption and glamour." Ikebukuro and Shinjuku are often chosen by writers of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, as both cities can be considered as meccas for contemporary Japanese youth, where there is excitement but also the possibility of danger, crime and corruption.

With such shifts in setting and atmosphere, the protagonist's rebellion in *ochikobore seishun* fiction becomes more than just defiance against parental and school authority, or a fight for freedom. In a somewhat darker world than the nostalgic world of *kōsei* autobiographical writing, teenage rebellion becomes a fight against society and a fight for freedom and justice; furthermore, it symbolises the struggles between the marginalised and the privileged. Cawelti notes that in hardboiled mystery fiction, the writer's political leanings often influence the depiction of evil. His examples include the right-wing Micky Spillane and his corrupt foreign diplomat villains, and the liberal Raymond Chandler ascribing evil to American materialism and greed.<sup>431</sup> Although the representation of evil may vary, the fact that the detective lives in a "corrupt, violent, and hostile" world where evil is endemic has become one of the most recognisable conventions in mystery fiction, especially in hardboiled detective fiction. In both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series, the majority of villains are powerful and 'respected' members of society, which suggests that both Ishida and Kaneshiro take a similar view of social privilege.

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<sup>431</sup> Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture*, 150.

In this corrupt and amoral world, the protagonist is virtuous, honourable and noble, and through this protagonist as a prism or looking-glass readers are shown a darker side of society. In this context the protagonist's rebellion against the world becomes constructive social criticism. In the *I.W.G.P* series, Makoto and his friends are the protectors and defenders of people exploited and ostracised by those in power; in the *Zombies* series, the *Zombies*, who are ostracised as dropouts, are the moral and noble heroes, while those who are praised by society for their academic performance or financial or political success are revealed to be the villains who take advantage of their social status and exploit those without power. This struggle between those who are marginalised and the privileged elite enacts the struggle between good and evil which is one of the crucial elements of mystery fiction.

This rebellion against society highlights various social issues; for example, both writers raise questions about a society that values academic performance over other personal development. Scholars studying the Japanese education system have often noted the immense pressure Japanese children bear throughout their childhood and adolescence to the extent that "life tends to become dominated by the need for children to succeed" in climbing what is labelled as the "escalator system."<sup>432</sup> David Crystal explains that this parental expectation has led to the change in what it means to be a good or bad student as students who perform poorly are labelled 'bad' and successful ones 'good.'<sup>433</sup> Mikiso Hane also observes how educational success determines future success in employment:

For many students, the goal of education has not been learning for the sake of learning but entry into elite schools and upward mobility in the social, economic, and political hierarchy. The ambition of some upwardly mobile middle-class parents is to get their children, especially their sons into the right kindergarten and then into the elite schools until they reach the cream of the elite universities, preferably the University of Tokyo, which virtually guarantees entry into the bureaucracy or elite private companies.<sup>434</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Kenneth G. Henshall, *Dimensions of Japanese Society: Gender, Margins and Mainstream* (England: Macmillan Press, 1999), 111.

<sup>433</sup> David S. Crystal, "Concept of Deviance in Children and Adolescents: The Case of Japan," *Deviant Behaviour* 15, no.3 (1994): 246. doi: 10.1080/01639625.1994.9967972.

<sup>434</sup> Mikiso Hane, *Eastern Phoenix: Japan Since 1945* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), 162.

The good bad boys in both series have strayed from this escalator system; Makoto's inability to find full time employment is due to his lack of enthusiasm and his rebellion against social norms but is also partly due his academic history of having graduated from a "farm for yakuza."<sup>435</sup> Similarly in the *Zombies* series, Minamigata explains that his school is only famous for producing a yakuza, and the way his school is isolated by the surrounding elite high schools illustrates how society considers poor academic performance as the ultimate failure. This fictional setting mirrors the Japanese education system that adolescent readers are part of and the way they are judged in society. By depicting these failed youth (in the eyes of society) as charismatic and righteous heroes, both Ishida and Kaneshiro are subverting the current social ideology that values academic performance while neglecting to nurture other important elements such as morality. For example in 'Dance of the Heathens' it is the *Zombies* who rescue the client from a murderer who had been stalking her, not her boyfriend, who attends a prestigious university, or the police. Similarly in the *I.W.G.P* series, Makoto and his friends, who are colour gang members and yakuza, are the ones that help the ostracised citizens of Ikebukuro such as prostitutes, drug addicts, orphans, and homeless, instead of those with power such as lawyers or the police.

Both Ishihara and Kaneshiro published the first story of their series in the late 1990s, when moral panic swept over Japanese society following the 1997 Kobe incident. Unlike previous hysteria over rebellious youth such as *furyō* or *bōsōzoku*, this time it was triggered by ordinary and often 'good' (in terms of obedience or academic performance) students who suddenly became violent without precedent or apparent reason. In their portrayal of good bad boys, both Ishida and Kaneshiro question the way society apportions value to the lives and identities of adolescents. Ishida in particular seems to suggest that problem youth of the late 1990s and 2000s are the result of society encouraging academic achievement above nurturing moral health, by depicting teenage villains such as Yamai or Hiroko who are also victims.

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<sup>435</sup> Ishida, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 9-10.



Ishida makes further commentary on the failure of Japanese society by exploring the treatment of single mothers, prostitutes, the homeless, unemployed youth and foreign workers in his *I.W.G.P* series. Throughout the series, these issues are raised when a client comes to Makoto and readers are given a glimpse of the discrimination these marginalised individuals face through the sympathetic eye of the narrator-protagonist. At times, the issues are raised bluntly in the text with Makoto expressing his own views somewhat forcefully, which results from the use of a narrative strategy that takes readers into his confidence. This is illustrated by the following passage from ‘The Fallout Mother of Senkawa’ (*Senkawa Fōru Auto Mazā*) in *Ikebukuro West Gate Park VIII: Resistance of the Non-Regulars* (2008):

There are invisible families in this world. This is a story about families that get taken down from the display and hidden from view because they are broken. They are there but no one notices, and their screams are unheard. Their pain and poverty is pushed inwards and never flows out of the family. Then one day they suddenly disappear completely from this world like the snow in spring. They disintegrate in mid-air or remain standing in decay; infinite numbers of families melt away. It’s only natural because they can’t even reach out for help. The families I’m talking about are single mother families like mine. [...] It doesn’t matter what kind of family you’re born into, aren’t kids our treasures? These kids are going to be carrying our future on their backs. So instead of building a showy airport or roads high up in the mountain, please spend that money on these kids. Please.<sup>436</sup>

The narrator-protagonist further explains how he and his mother were discriminated against and shamed by society for being a broken family, as society considers broken families as a failure. In addition to the narrator-protagonist’s own background, his encounter with Yui, a young single mother struggling to raise a three year old son without child support from the biological father or society, further foregrounds the lack of support or sympathy for families that do not fit the ideal family structure. The issue of single mothers living in poverty is one of the recurrent tropes in *I.W.G.P* series, as in the third volume, the narrator-protagonist helps out another single mother struggling to support her young daughter.

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<sup>436</sup> Ishida Ira 石田衣良, *Hiseiki Rejisutansu: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku VIII* 非正規レジスタンス:池袋ウエストゲートパーク VIII [Resistance of the Non-Regulars: Ikebukuro West Gate Park VIII] (Tōkyō: Bungeishunjū, 2008), 9-10.

In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, families are also often depicted as dysfunctional, seeming to echo society's belief that broken families cause wayward behaviour in youth. The treatment of dysfunctional families in the *I.W.G.P* series is more sophisticated, highlighting the lack of childcare, and the difficulty of finding stable employment for single parents in Japanese society. Makoto informs readers that the average annual income of a single-mother is 1.6 million yen<sup>437</sup> and that, in Japanese society, more than half of the biological fathers do not pay child support.<sup>438</sup>

The hardship single mothers suffer in Japanese society, as depicted by Ishida in the *I.W.G.P* series, is well documented by academics such as Ito Peng, Osamu Aoki, and Deborah McDowell Aoki. In the late 1990s, Ito briefly documents the changing perception and treatment of single mothers during the 1970s and the 1980s when the number of single mothers sharply increased.<sup>439</sup> Ito points out that despite the rising number of single mothers and their visibility, discrimination against them within Japanese society persisted throughout the 1990s, with the government prioritising and stressing the importance of the two-parent family structure by cutting down welfare for single mothers.<sup>440</sup> It seems that little has changed as the more recent studies published by Aoki and McDowell Aoki in 2008 (the same year Ishida published volume 8 of the *I.W.G.P* series in which he addresses the issue of single mothers) repeat Ito's observations in the late 1990s. They too note that Japanese society continues to emphasise the importance of marriage and the two-parent family structure.<sup>441</sup> Aoki and McDowell Aoki have noted that single mothers are "hidden within the mainstream population and their very existence is seldom publicly acknowledged."<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> Which converts to NZ\$18538.68 at the rate of 1 yen equalling 0.012 (According to rates from 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014).

<sup>438</sup> Ishida Ira, *Hiseiki Rejisutansu: Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku VIII*, 52-53.

<sup>439</sup> Ito Peng, "Single Mothers in Japan: Unsupported Mothers Who Work," in *Single Mothers in an International Context: Mothers or Workers*, eds. Simon Duncan and Rosalind Edwards (London: University College London, 1997), 115-116.

<sup>440</sup> Peng, "Single Mothers in Japan: Unsupported Mothers Who Work," 118.

<sup>441</sup> Aoki Osamu and Debora McDowell Aoki "Invisible Poverty in Japan: Case Studies and Realities of Single Mothers." *Journal of Poverty* 9, no. 1 (2005): 9, accessed January 21, 2014. doi: 10.1300/J134v09n01\_01.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

The issue of single mothers raised in the *I.W.G.P* series reflects these scholarly findings, and, furthermore, by using a protagonist who comes from a single parent family as the narrator-protagonist to raise awareness of the said issue adds emotion to the facts and numbers and effectively triggers readers' empathy towards single-parent families. The narrator-protagonist also uses hard numbers to convey the suffering of single mothers and although since this is fiction and his fact is not backed up by academic findings, (and there is no need to) the shocking numbers, in combination with the narrator-protagonist's emotional pleas, highlight the failure of Japanese society to readers. The message is explicit and strongly urges readers to think about the way society treats these supposedly 'broken' families. Through this series, Ishida is educating adolescent readers and reminding the adult readers, that family comes in many different forms, and, as a society, they should be more compassionate and supportive of single mothers like Yui who are trying their best to raise their children.

Another method Ishida uses to bring attention to various social issues such as acute social withdrawal; it is first mentioned in 'Excitable Boy' (*Ekusaitaburu bōi*) from *Ikebukuro West Gate Park* (1998) when a youth suffering from *hikikomori* emerges as a witness to the kidnapping of a girl which Makoto is investigating. Unlike the way issue of single parenting is presented in 'The Fallout Mother of Senkawa,' the social phenomenon of hermit-like reclusive youth is not central to the plot, as the client in this story is Makoto's friend, Saru, and the plot revolves the search for the missing girl. The issue of *hikikomori* emerges during this investigation when Makoto finds out that Kazushi, the witness of the kidnapping is one of his former classmates from junior high school who had been an honours student but has locked himself in his room for three years.<sup>443</sup> At first, Kazushi refuses to see Makoto but, after a week of persistent visits, Kazushi reluctantly opens the door and invites Makoto in. Makoto finds that Kazushi has been watching the surrounding area through his binoculars and CCTV footage from his room every twenty hours, keeping a detailed log for no apparent reason.<sup>444</sup> Although Kazushi's surveillance may seem pointless, even to Kazushi as he claims to have no idea why he does this,

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<sup>443</sup> Ishida, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 110.

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*, 116-117.

Makoto is able to track down the kidnapper thanks to Kazushi's log and, by the end of the story, Kazushi is able to come out of his room. Although he continues to watch the world and keep his log, as Makoto notes, it is a crucial step forward for Kazushi as his room is no longer a prison cell.<sup>445</sup> Kazushi becomes one of the recurrent minor characters of the series who makes an appearance whenever Makoto needs to put together a surveillance team. As with any other characters he befriends, throughout the series, who are ostracised by society, Makoto does not judge Kazushi for becoming a recluse, nor does he try to force him out of it. Instead he gives meaning to what had previously been a futile activity.

Another social issue portrayed in the two series is the question of ethnic minority. In the *I.W.G.P.S* series, Makoto encounters foreign workers of varying nationalities who are mistreated and discriminated against by Japanese society in stories such as 'The Black Hood of the Night' from *Ikebukuro West Gate Park IV: The Electronic Star* (2003) and 'The Doll of Death' from *Ikebukuro West Gate Park V: Anti-Suicide Club* (2005). While Ishida focuses more on the foreign workers living temporarily in Ikebukuro, Kaneshiro looks at the more historic ethnic minority groups such as Korean Japanese, Okinawans and Ainu. Compared to Ishida's explicit approach, the ethnic minority issues in the *Zombies* series are explored implicitly, with the exception of the Korean Japanese character Sunshin, as the background or hardships characters face may because of being of Okinawan or Ainu descent are not fully explored within the series. The Korean Japanese character Sunshin is more developed as he forms a strong relationship with the narrator-protagonist in *Fly, Daddy, Fly* and the discrimination and struggles that many Korean Japanese face is revealed, but in the rest of the series, Sunshin's ethnic background is also treated more casually as with other characters, as is illustrated by the way the main members of the *Zombies* introduce themselves in *Fly, Daddy, Fly* and *Speed*. In *Fly, Daddy, Fly*, Minamigata, who had been the first narrator-protagonist of the series, introduces the central members to the second narrator-protagonist as follows:

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<sup>445</sup> Ishida, *Ikebukuro Uesuto Gēto Pāku*, 135.

“Sorry for the late introduction. My name is Minamigata. It’s the same Minamigata as Minamigata Kumagusu. I’m a student of this school and I’m in my second year.” Minamigata held out his hand with a smile. I was startled but I shook his hand anyway.

“They are all students and my classmates” said Minamigata and he looked at the three of the boys as he let go of my hand.

“I’m Itarashiki” said the boy sitting on a pipe chair. His skin was dark, and in the middle of his round face shone two big warm eyes.

“If you think his name is strange, he’s from Okinawa.” Minamigata explained.

“I’m Kayano” said another boy sitting on a pipe chair. He had such small eyes that only the black parts were visible, and the eyebrows above the eyes were really bushy.

“Kayano is from Hokkaido” Minamigata explained again. [...]

“The one that knocked you out is Park Sunshin. Do you think that it’s an unusual name? He is Korean Japanese.”<sup>446</sup>

Except for Sunshin, the ethnic background of Itarashiki (who is mentioned by his first name Hiroshi throughout the series) and Kayano is not explicitly stated. Instead, the narrator-protagonist’s observation of the physical appearance such as skin tone and eye brow shape, leads readers to surmise the ethnic background of these characters. For example, the stereotypical image of Ainu is that they are hairy, and Okinawans are tanned and have unusual surnames. It is revealed through *Revolution No.3* that Hiroshi is in fact half African-American and half Okinawan but as for Kayano, his background as Ainu is left somewhat ambiguous. In the third volume, Kayano explains that his name is the same as Kayano Shigeru (a pioneering Ainu politician and famous Ainu activist)<sup>447</sup> to the third narrator-protagonist of the series, but he never explicitly introduces himself as being Ainu.

The casualness of Minamigata’s introduction of his friends and their strong friendship and loyalty for each other shows the equal treatment of Korean Japanese, half-African American and half- Okinawan and possibly Ainu friends within the *Zombies*, in contrast to the discrimination they experience in society at large. These issues of ethnic minority are so tangential to the main plot that some readers may fail to recognise them, which illustrates how Kaneshiro has created another layer of reading that is only recognisable to those who are already familiar with ethnic minority issues in Japan. Those who

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<sup>446</sup> Kaneshiro, *Furai, Dadī, Furai*, 54-55.

<sup>447</sup> Kaneshiro, *Supīdo*, 51.

fail to recognise this concern will be able to enjoy the story of the Zombies trying to infiltrate the Seiwa school festival or solve mysteries but they will fail to understand the underlying message that highlights racial discrimination within Japanese society. For example, those who are familiar with ethnic minority issues will recognise that naming one of the villains in *Fly, Daddy, Fly* as Ishihara is a deliberate reference to the controversial right wing politician, Ishihara Shintaro (b. 1932) who published *Seasons of the Sun* (*Taiyō no Kisetsu*, 1956). In addition to the name, the Ishihara in *Fly, Daddy, Fly* resembles the protagonist of *Seasons of the Sun*, a young boxing champion who is abusive and sells his girlfriend to his brother for money after becoming bored with her. The link between the protagonist of *Seasons of the Sun* and Ishihara becomes more obvious if the reader is familiar with Kaneshiro's own Korean Japanese background and Ishihara Shintaro's controversial comments about Korean Japanese and other ethnic minorities living in Japan.<sup>448</sup> Thus, unlike Ishida, Kaneshiro treats these issues in a much more implicit manner.

Although the two writers have different methods of presenting these social issues, they have both constructed a narrative that is more than mere entertainment by adding another layer of reading – the social critique that raises readers' awareness of these issues – to the tales of teenage rebellion that primarily provide the vicarious thrills of adventure and rebellion, and escape from mundane everyday life. They both give voice to a population that is marginalised and excluded from public acknowledgement. In doing so, not only do they raise awareness of such socio-cultural issues but also, more importantly, they educate readers to question the hegemonic mainstream that ostracises those who are different, fail or refuse to uphold societal expectations, and to show compassion towards them.

This is a significant development from *kōsei* autobiographical writing where the rebellious protagonist gradually matures and accepts social norms, and becomes part of the society that he initially rebelled

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<sup>448</sup> With relatively low number of ethnic diversity, the majority of Japanese believe that Japan is a homogenous nation and that foreigners are temporary residents and as a result, racist comments by right-wing politicians such as Ishihara often fail to attract severe criticism from the majority of the public. Reluctance to accept multiculturalism and discrimination towards minorities such as Ainu, Okinawans, and Zainichi Koreans is well documented by scholars like Sonya Ryang, Kawamura Minato, William Wetherall and George A De Vos.

against, by finding full-time employment and transforming from dropout to accepted member of society. In *ochikobore seishun* fiction, the rebellious protagonist remains as a dropout and continues to rebel against a corrupt and bigoted world. For example, although Makoto starts writing columns for a magazine at one point in the series, he does not consider it as a way of securing a full time job, nor does he express dissatisfaction with his freeter status, which suggests that he is content with being a freeter – a status that society considers as delinquent. On the other hand, the *Zombies* begin to plan for their future and their paths vary, as illustrated by the following conversation between Minamigata and Sunshin:

“I’m thinking of becoming a professional golf player” said Sunshin as he scratched his scar on his eyebrow, which was faintly glowing red.

“Is that so?”

“I’m going to be super strong and go around the world. Japan is too small.”

“I’m going to study real hard and become a doctor. And I’m going to cure Hiroshi.”

Sunshin and I looked at each other and laughed ourselves silly.<sup>449</sup>

Scholars and critics have long debated the suffocating school environment that Japanese students endure; the majority of Japanese students do not have the luxury of figuring out their dreams or passions as the *Zombies* do unless they too rebel against school and parents that demand academic achievement rather than personal development.<sup>450</sup> Often rebellion in *ochikobore seishun* fiction is not about hedonistic misbehaviour such as smoking, drinking and brawling, but rather about escaping from this suffocating school environment or the mundaneness of everyday life. Through their identification with the protagonists of these series, readers can vicariously enjoy the freedom gained through rebellion against society, but at the same time, this struggle for freedom and rebellion can also be read as social criticism.

The examination of two popular series of adolescent novels, the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series in this chapter indicates that a distinct pattern for tales of teenage rebellion has emerged, as *ochikobore*

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<sup>449</sup> Kaneshiro, *Revoryūshon No.3*, 63.

<sup>450</sup> For discussion of Japan’s stifling school environment, see p160-162.

*seishun shōsetsu* begins to take shape as a sub-category of adolescent fiction in Japanese literature. In their study of popular fiction, scholars like Cawelti and Jameson argue that the manifestation of pattern in narrative, characterisation, setting and trope represents the development of a genre specific formula. In *ochikobore seishun* fiction, first person narrative by the narrator-protagonist is the dominant style, but both Ishida and Kaneshiro incorporate second person narration which maximises reader's empathy towards the heroes that are labelled by society as *ochikobore* (dropouts).

In addition to such a narrative style, the depiction of the rebellious hero as a good bad boy, a rebel with a golden heart, further ensures the reader's empathy. The incorporation of mystery in both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series adds the role of executing justice, thereby amplifying the rebellious hero's sense of right and wrong and foregrounding his 'good' traits. The more negative traits such as smoking, drinking, or a lack of academic performance are toned down, just as they had been in the portrayal of good bad boys in *kōsei* autobiographical writing.

However, a significant difference between *kōsei* autobiographical writing and *ochikobore seishun* fiction is that the rebellious protagonist in *ochikobore seishun* fiction does not rely on *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* culture to perform their rebellion, and the focus shifts from fashion style and commodities to actions and behaviours. The contemporary setting in both the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series also introduces more recent forms of rebellious youth culture such as the colour gangs or Shibuya type, but the protagonists of both series reject either type of rebellious youth cultures, and this refusal to conform to a group or trend becomes the core part of their rebellion.

The majority of the formulae which have been identified in *ochikobore seishun* fiction, including narrative style and the portrayal of the protagonist as a good bad boy, derive from *kōsei* autobiographical writing, but at the same time, there is much development. The character types evident in *ochikobore seishun* fiction such as damsel-in-distress, bad boys, absent father, powerless mother, antagonistic adults, and male role models, are all common character tropes in *kōsei* autobiographical writing, but some of these character types are further developed in the *ochikobore seishun* narrative,



particularly the damsel-in-distress who becomes more than just a victim but a survivor and a fighter.

The change in mode of writing also results in changes of setting, as *ochikobore seishun* fiction is set in contemporary Japanese society, and rather than depicting the good old days through rose-tinted glasses, writers like Ishida and Kaneshiro depict a more grim society. In doing so, they foreground various social issues ranging from the failure of the education system to the discrimination of minorities and those living on the margins of society. Thus in *ochikobore seishun* narrative, the protagonist's rebellion becomes more than simply teenage angst, as it becomes a fight for freedom and justice.

The narrative style, character types, setting and tropes explored in this chapter represent the formula of *ochikobore seishun* fiction that developed in the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s. These are replicated over the years, but as noted by Cawelti, writers of popular fiction often challenge the boundaries and limits of the genre they are writing in by altering or adding to the existing formula. *Ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* does indeed continue to evolve as will be explored in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE EVOLUTION OF *OCHIKOBORE SEISHUN* FICTION IN

#### *RANOBE* AND *KĒTAI SHŌSETSU*

This chapter will explore the development of *ochikobore seishun* fiction throughout the 2000s, as its distinctive elements are incorporated into the two most recent forms of Japanese adolescent fiction, *ranobe* (light novel) and *kĕtai shōsetsu* (mobile phone novel). The tales of teenage rebellion in these two forms significantly modify some aspects of the *ochikobore seishun* formula, while at the same time reinforcing other aspects.<sup>451</sup> These two forms challenge the conventional understanding of *shōsetsu* (novel) since they are both entertainment writing. For instance, *ranobe* is often described as *ji manga* (translates as letter manga, meaning written manga as opposed to drawn manga) as it incorporates the visual aspects of manga by including illustrations throughout the text, as well as incorporating the language style used in manga such as onomatopoeia or specific expressions.<sup>452</sup> Similarly, *kĕtai shōsetsu* are also mostly abhorred by academics and critics, who refuse to recognise them as *shōsetsu* partly because they are predominantly written by adolescent female amateur writers and shared online via mobile phone in girls' online communities such as Magic I-land and Wild Strawberries. Those who refuse to accept it as literature point out the apparent lack of sophistication, as well as the lack of word length and abundance of onomatopoeia, as a sign of inferior writing.<sup>453</sup> By contrast, I argue that these are phenomena that reveal how writers adapt to the new platform of writing and sharing stories online through the mobile phone. The *kĕtai shōsetsu* in particular is an example of how technological advances are re-shaping how literature is produced and consumed.

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<sup>451</sup> The terms 'light novel' and 'mobile phone novel' do not exist in Western contexts, as they are both literary phenomena unique to the Japanese context. Thus, I will continue to use the Japanese terminology in the following discussion.

<sup>452</sup> Shinjō Kazuma 新城カズマ, *Raito Noberu 'Chō' Nyūmon* ライトノベル「超」入門 [The 'Great' Introduction to Light Novel] (Tōkyō: Softbank Shinsho, 2006), 33.

<sup>453</sup> Hayamizu Kenrō, 速水健朗, *Kĕtai Shōsetsuteki: "Sai Yankīka" Jidai no Shōjo tachi* ケータイ小説的: "再ヤンキー化"時代の少女たち [Mobile Phone Novels: Girls of "Yankī" Culture Revival Era] (Tōkyō: Hara Shobō, 2010), 3. Honda Tōru 本田透, *Naze Ketai Shōsetsu wa Urerunoka* なぜケータイ小説は売れるのか [Why Mobile Phone Novels Sell] (Tōkyō: Softbank Shinsho, 2008), 3.

*Ranobe* remained relatively unknown amongst mainstream readers until it diversified beyond fantasy and science fiction in the mid-2000s. Prior to its mainstreaming, *ranobe* had been very much part of *otaku* (obsessive fans of manga or anime)<sup>454</sup> culture as it was heavily influenced by RPGs (role playing games), anime, and manga. Although it emerged in the late 1970s coinciding with the emergence of Japanese rebellious youth culture, like *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku*, *ranobe* and rebellious youth culture remained separate until several decades later when Narita Ryōgo (b.1980) incorporated *ochikobore seishun* elements into his urban fantasy fiction, the *Durarara!!* series (2000-2014).<sup>455</sup> Narita is considered by critics such as Enomoto Aki as one of the most innovative *ranobe* writers.<sup>456</sup> In the *Durarara!!* series, Narita sets tales of teenage rebellion in a fictional Ikebukuro city where the colour gangs, Yakuza as well as supernatural creatures such as Dullahan (a headless horsewoman from Irish mythology) roam. There are a total of thirteen volumes under the title *Durarara!!* that were published from 2004 to 2014; and three more volumes under the title *Durarara!! SH* with a different protagonist were published between 2014 and 2015. The incorporation of *ochikobore seishun* elements in the *Durarara!!* series challenge the existing range of subject matter in *ranobe*, as the incorporation of rebellious youth culture such as colour gangs is rare. To this day, *ranobe* is largely dominated by fantasy and science fiction. In addition to colour gangs, Narita also incorporates *bōsōzoku* elements in his series so although the link to the 1980s rebellious youth culture is somewhat faint, as colour gangs are the main focus, the link is nevertheless present.

The link to 1980s rebellious youth culture is stronger in *kētai shōsetsu* where *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku*, have become frequently used elements in a girl-meets-rebel type of teen romance. The recurrent references to rebellious youth cultures in *kētai shōsetsu* have prompted Hayamizu Kenrō to interpret

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<sup>454</sup> Jonathan E. Abel and Shion Kono, the translators of Azuma Hiroki's *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals* (2009) define *otaku* as "usually male" in their teens to forties, who fanatically consume and collect manga and anime; they had been "nerdy social outcasts" in the 1970s but by 2000s had become one of Japan's major economic forces. Jonathan E. Abel, introduction to *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals*, by Azuma Hiroki, trans. Jonathan E. Abel and Shion Kono (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), xv.

<sup>455</sup> The title *Durarara!!* is a nonsensical word and thus remains unchanged when translated into English.

<sup>456</sup> Enomoto Aki 榎本秋, *Raito Noberu Bungakuron* ライトノベル文学論 [Literary Theories of Raito Noberu] (Tōkyō: NTT Shuppan, 2008), 166-167.

the phenomenon as a resurgence of *yankī* culture amongst contemporary Japanese teens. What he does not discuss is how these phenomena from male-oriented youth culture appear in the female-oriented popular culture of *kētai shōsetsu*. Thus, it is not a simple resurgence of *yankī* culture, but a borrowing by contemporary teenage girls who adapt the male oriented rebellious youth culture of the 1980s to create their own interpretation of *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* culture.

Prior to *kētai shōsetsu*, the element of romance had played a minor role in *ochikobore seishun* fiction as it focused on the rebellious hero's adventures rather than his romantic affairs. However, when *ochikobore seishun* narrative is incorporated into adolescent literature that specifically targets female readers, the element of romance then becomes central. The *Wild Beast* (2008-2009) series by Yū (b. unknown) is a typical girl-meets-rebel romance as it tells the story of an ordinary high school girl falling in love with a *bōsōzoku* leader. It was originally published online on Magic I-land in 2008, and due to popular demand, it was published in an eight volume book series in 2009, and again in 2013.

Similarly, *ranobe* also targets a specific group of readers – *otaku* readers (male), unlike the earlier *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* which did not have a specific target readership other than adolescents. The specification of the gender of the readers of both *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu* highlights how gendered the Japanese literary market is. In addition to the change in readership, these two forms of adolescent literature have their own distinctive conventions; so that when *ochikobore seishun* is incorporated into these forms, some of the *ochikobore seishun* elements established by entertainment writers like Ishida Ira, and Kaneshiro Kazuki, , undergo transformation. Using the *Durarara!!* series and the *Wild Beast* series, this chapter will examine how *ochikobore seishun* fiction continues to evolve as it is incorporated into the newer forms of *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*.

## *Ochikobore seishun shōsetsu in ranobe*

### **The conventions of *ranobe***

*Ranobe* is a distinct form of Japanese adolescent fiction which has developed its own discreet set of formulae in terms of language, narrative style, and characterisation since its emergence in the late 1970s. The majority of works cited in leading studies of *ranobe* such as *Extreme Introduction to the Light Novel (Raito Noberu Chō Nyūmon, 2006)* by Shinjō Kazuma, *Literary Theories of the Light Novel (Raito Noberu Bungaku Ron, 2008)* by Enomoto Aki and *Introductory Studies of the Light Novel (Raito Noberu Kenkyū Josetsu, 2009)* edited by Ichiyanagi Hiroataka and Kume Yoriko, portray teenage boys; which suggests that the adolescent male protagonist is the norm in *ranobe*. Kume, in particular, points out that *ranobe* primarily targets adolescent boys and attributes its origin and association with *otaku* culture as the source of *ranobe*'s male-oriented-ness.<sup>457</sup>

Often, the ordinary male protagonist in *ranobe* gradually matures and transforms into a hero through his quest or adventure. Kume notes that in recent works, there is a slight shift of trend in the portrayal of male protagonists, identifying a change from the more traditional adventurous and strong-willed hero to a quiet and somewhat introverted hero.<sup>458</sup> Whether strong-willed or introverted, the ordinary-ness remains as a crucial part of the portrayal of the protagonist, which suggests that, in addition to the gender and age, the male protagonist needs to be a regular teenage boy so that the majority of readers can find him relatable. This relatability is a key element because *ranobe* is dominated by genres such as fantasy and science fiction that presents readers with mythical creatures, unfamiliar or unrecognisable cities, universes, or time, so that an ordinary and relatable protagonist would put readers at ease and allow them to escape into the fantastical adventures of the protagonist without being overwhelmed by the strange and the unknown.

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<sup>457</sup> Kume attributes the male-oriented-ness of *ranobe* to what she considers as a tradition of gendering in Japanese popular culture that has persisted throughout the post-war era despite calls for gender equality and the abolition of gender division in education. Kume Yoriko 久米依子, "Shōnen Shōjo no Deai to sono Kansei" 少年少女の出会いとその陥穽 [The Pitfalls of Boy-meets-girl], in *Raito Noberu Kenkyū Josetsu* ライトノベル研究所説 [Introduction to Light Novel Studies], eds. Ichiyanagi Hiroataka and Kume Yoriko (Tōkyō: Seikyūsha, 2009), 159.

<sup>458</sup> Kume, "Shōnen Shōjo no Deai to sono Kansei," 162.

Fantasy and science fiction continue to dominate *ranobe*, but as noted by both Shinjō and Enomoto, in recent years, the genre has rapidly expanded to include stories about trade and finance, historical fiction and even romance, as writers combine conventional genres and themes with more unconventional ones.<sup>459</sup> Although it is difficult to determine whether genre expansion has led to *ranobe* attracting mainstream readers, or vice versa (or both), it is undeniable that *ranobe* has undergone extensive genre diversification in recent years as noted by Enomoto.<sup>460</sup> Narita's combination of urban fantasy and tales of teenage rebellion in the *Durarara!!* series is one such example.

Another element that is recurrent throughout the more recent works of *ranobe* is the focus on self, or the personalisation of the adventure or quest; for example, in fantasy or science fiction there are World type (*Sekai kei*) narratives, in which a protagonist is burdened with the fate of the universe but simultaneously struggles with coming-of-age problems. The personal struggle overshadows the impending doom but at the same time his personal growth enables him to save the world. Following the emergence of the World type in Japanese popular media ranging from manga, anime and *ranobe*, Uno Tsunehiro, a critic of youth culture, has observed the emergence of what he labels the Battle Royale type (*Batoru rowaiyaru kei*) which is described as “ruthless dog-eat-dog struggles” for universal justice and freedom for the marginalised minorities.<sup>461</sup> Miyadai Shinji argues that these Battle Royale types are an extension of the World type because although the Battle Royale type protagonist may seem like he is fighting for a greater cause, he too is focused on self as he “prioritise self over social order” and the struggle for freedom and justice is often about himself.<sup>462</sup> Despite the focus on self in these tales, the protagonist manages to save the world, or successfully fight for justice and freedom which, in a way, justifies the prioritisation of self in both the World type and the Battle Royale type narratives.

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<sup>459</sup> Shinjō, *Raito Noberu 'Chō' Nyūmon*, 67-74. Enomoto, *Raito Noberu Bungakuron*, 91-94.

<sup>460</sup> Enomoto, *Raito Noberu Bungakuron*, 91-94.

<sup>461</sup> Miyadai Shinji, "Transformation of Semantics in the History of Japanese Subcultures Since 1992," ed. Thomas Lamarre, trans. Shion Kono, *Mechademia* 6, no. 1 (2011): 247.

<sup>462</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

Miyadai sees such emphasis on self as a trend within contemporary manga and anime, but the trend is also evident in *ranobe* where such an element has become part of its conventional formula.

This focus on 'self' is also significant in the development of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, as the rebellious teenage heroes in earlier works are driven by a strong and undeniable sense of justice. It can be argued that Makoto and the Zombies also had some degree of self interest in helping their victims; for example Makoto was sometimes paid for his work, while the Zombies' motive to help those in need was to gain entry into the Seiwa High School's annual school festival as the victims had connections to the said school. However, Makoto never set the price of his service and often worked willingly for free, which suggests that he is ultimately driven by his desire to help and protect those in need. Similarly, the ultimate reason for Zombies helping the victims is out of a sense of justice. The *ochikobore seishun* heroes, up to this point, have been selfless and never prioritised self over social order, but, as *ochikobore seishun* is incorporated into *ranobe*, the formula for portraying teenage rebel hero changes as traits of the Battle Royale type begin to emerge; and ultimately rebellion is transformed from a grandiose fight for freedom and justice into a more personal struggle.

### **Conventions of *ranobe* and *ochikobore seishun* in Narita Ryōgo's *Durarara!!* series**

#### **The characterisation of the rebellious hero**

The *Durarara!!* series begins with the teenage protagonist relocating to Ikebukuro in search of the adventure and thrills that the city and its colour gang culture offer. This setting not only fulfils the requirement of urban fantasy which demands a recognisable city that is in contact with supernatural beings, but it also follows the convention of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* as Ikebukuro is one of the three mecca of Japanese youth culture where the colour gang culture thrived. The urban fantasy elements, such as mythic creatures and supernatural phenomena in the *Durarara!!* series, transform the otherwise recognisable setting of Ikebukuro into a somewhat darker, more dangerous city. The

presence of supernatural creatures amplifies the sense of danger, in addition to the usual and more familiar dangers of Ikebukuro such as the presence of colour gangs and Yakuza.

The incorporation of urban fantasy in tales of teenage rebellion further transforms the conventions of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, most noticeably in the portrayal of the rebellious teenage protagonist and his rebellion. For example, in the *Durarara!!* series, the appearance of the protagonist is depicted as follows:

Ryūgamine Mikado was a quiet looking boy, who kept his natural black hair, he didn't wear jewellery like earrings and he obediently continued to wear the full standard uniform even when the school allowed mufti.<sup>463</sup>

The typical customisation of school uniforms or the incorporation of rebellious fashion trends, such as piercings or bleached hair, that are associated with the performance of rebellious youth identity are absent in the way Mikado is initially presented. The only description of Mikado's attire throughout the series is that he is ordinary, which is confirmed by the following illustrations of him, as he is depicted with plain short black hair, wearing the full standard uniform with shirt and necktie.



Images of Mikado (left) and Masaomi (right) from the official web page for *Durarara!!* series

<sup>463</sup> Narita Ryōgo 成田良悟, *Durarara!!x3 デュラララ!!x3* [Durarara!!x3] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2006), 85-86.



Mikado's plain-ness is further accentuated when he is compared with another central character, Kida Masaomi, who performs rebellion more visibly through his hair style and fashion items. Unlike Mikado, Masaomi is described as having bleached his hair, wearing multiple silver earrings, bracelets and rings, and customising his school uniform by wearing a hoodie underneath the standard school uniform.<sup>464</sup> As Hirota Teruyuki observed in 2008, the customisation of one's school uniform and changing hairstyles had once been the core part of performing youth rebellion in the 1980s. But in recent years, dyed hair or the customisation of ones uniform has become such a mainstream trend that it no longer possesses shock value and is thus futile, in terms of performing rebellious identity.<sup>465</sup> For example, the difference between Mikado and Masaomi from the above illustrations indicates that Masaomi is more casually dressed and fashion-conscious than Mikado, rather than indicating the degree of their rebelliousness. The lack of rebellious fashion style in the *Durarara!!* series is a trait that can also be traced back to earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction such as the *I.W.G.P* series or the *Zombies* series, where the protagonists had also performed rebellion through their actions rather than through their attire. However, in addition to the lack of rebellious fashion trends in the *Durarara!!* series, there is a notable lack of rebellious behaviour as Mikado does not smoke, drink alcohol, skip school or fail at school, which had been the tell-tale signs of protagonist's rebel identity in the *I.W.G.P* and *Zombies* series.

This severe lack of recognisable rebelliousness, or its visual markers, would make Mikado a questionable hero for *ochikobore seishun* fiction had he remained plain and ordinary throughout the series. Mikado's potential as an *ochikobore seishun* hero emerges when it is revealed early on in the series (at the end of the first volume) that he is secretly the mysterious leader and the founding member of the Dollars, which is one of the most powerful colour gangs in Ikebukuro. Clearly, gang membership is one of the most recognisable types of rebellious behaviour.<sup>466</sup> In the final chapter of the first volume, it is explained that Mikado created the Dollars online from his home (away from

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<sup>464</sup> Narita, *Dyurarara!!x3*, 86.

<sup>465</sup> Hirota Teruyuki 広田照幸, introduction to *Wakamono bunka wo dō miruka* 若者文化をどうみるか [What to Make of Youth Culture], ed. Hirota Teruyuki (Tokyo: Advantage Server, 2008), 31.

<sup>466</sup> Narita Ryōgo 成田良悟, *Dyurarara!! デュラララ!!* [Durarara!!] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2004), 270-273.

Ikebukuro), and the membership grew by word-of-mouth when he spread the id and password for the members-only Dollars website; unlike other colour gangs where there is structure and rules, and a gang colour, the Dollars is a team with “no rules or conditions” and no gang colour.<sup>467</sup> By rejecting rules within the group, the Dollars avoids the ironic enforcement of conformity within rebellious youth culture that supposedly rejects conformity. Since Mikado is one of the founders and the leader, the gang’s policy against conformity reflects and emphasises Mikado’s own rebellion against conformity.

Additionally, once Mikado’s identity as the leader of the Dollars is revealed to the reader, Mikado’s increasingly active role in the Dollars throughout the series not only foregrounds his rebellious side but, more importantly, it draws out his good bad boy morality – a crucial trait of the conventional *ochikobore seishun* hero. As the leader, he begins to take responsibility for his gang’s actions, display loyalty towards his friends and trusted gang members, and also shows a strong sense of right and wrong by condemning the thuggish actions of corrupt gang members. The portrayal of Mikado as a gang member with morals, transforms him from least likely to typical rebellious teen hero. This transformation reinforces the importance of good bad boy morality in the portrayal of an *ochikobore seishun* protagonist.

By portraying Mikado as a good bad boy masquerading as an ordinary teen, Narita adds complexity to the character so that readers are able to recognise him both as an *ochikobore seishun* hero as well as a conventional *ranobe* protagonist. The embodiment of contrasting traits, ordinary and rebellious, is further accentuated by Mikado’s online activities; especially in the chat rooms where he uses the alias Tanaka Taro (Tanaka and Taro are a common surname and boy’s name in Japanese, like John Smith in English). The plain-ness of his online alias “Tanaka Taro” symbolises Mikado’s plain façade that masks his secret identity. Contrary to this online alias, his real name is somewhat unusual, as is repeatedly pointed out in the series:

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<sup>467</sup> Narita, *Dyurarara!!*, 287.

“.....um, my name is, um...Ryūgamine Mikado.”

When Yūmasaki heard the name he tilted his head as if he was puzzled. His movement was unnatural, almost like a puppet. Leaving aside the perplexed Mikado, for some reason Yūmasaki asked Karisawa whether it was a pen name.

“Why would a first year high school student use a pen name? Oh wait, for writing to radio stations and magazines, maybe?”

“Um...it’s actually my real name.”

When Mikado timidly explained in a faint voice, the eyes of both the girl and the boy widened in surprise.

“No kidding? It’s your actual name?”

“It’s so cool! I mean, it’s like from a manga character!”<sup>468</sup>

The uncommon name given to the seemingly plain protagonist is perhaps Narita’s way of hinting to readers from the very beginning that Mikado is more than just an ordinary teenage boy, before revealing his identity as a colour gang leader. Throughout the series, Mikado engages in conversations with various characters in online chat rooms as Tanaka Taro, pretending to be an ordinary student living in Ikebukuro, while on the other hand he is giving orders to his gang members via emails and text messages. This shows that Mikado maintains his ordinary façade even in an online space. This dual identity sets Mikado apart from the conventional *ochikobore seishun* hero, as he is not discriminated against or labelled as a dropout for his involvement in the colour gang activities and remains hidden from the other characters. Being judged and labelled as a dropout by society had been a significant part of the good bad boy portrayal as a misunderstood teen with a heart of gold, where his rebellious attitude partially stems from his frustration towards the society that rejects him and enforces conformity. Such angst and frustration towards society is absent in Mikado’s case, as those who might potentially label and discriminate against him for his gang activities are unaware of his identity as a colour gang leader.

In the absence of antagonistic authority, the focus shifts towards a power struggle amongst the colour gangs. In the *Durarara!!* series, there are two rival colour gangs that the Dollars are in conflict with; the Yellow Scarves and the Blue Squares. Compared to the Dollars, the Blue Squares in particular are

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<sup>468</sup> Narita *Durarara!!*, 101-102.

depicted as a notorious gang that kidnaps the girl friends of rival gang members. Blue Square members Horada and Izumi are typical bad boys who show no remorse or guilt for their violent crimes. They lack any loyalty or a sense of camaraderie within the gang and they tend to rule other members by fear and threat. The conflict between Mikado and these bad boys throughout the series also highlights the positive traits of the protagonist, as unlike the bad boys, he shows a strong sense of right and wrong.

While Mikado's portrayal in the *Durarara!!!* series may seem at a remove from 1980s rebellious youth culture, the link with traditional rebellious youth culture exists more concretely in secondary characters like Kadoda Kyōhei (one of the central members of the Dollars) and Rokujō Chikage (the leader of *bōsōzoku* team Toramaru from the Saitama region) who are depicted as good bad boys through behaviour typically associated with *bōsōzoku*; Rokujō in particular performs his rebellious identity through *bōsōzoku* instead of a colour gang or *chīmā*. Although these two characters do not dress in the 1980s *bōsōzoku* or *furyō* fashion, their character and behaviour clearly reveal that they are good bad boys – they are charismatic leaders, strong fighters, loyal, and have the strong sense of right and wrong that is required of a rebellious hero. For example, before joining the Dollars, Kadoda had been a member of the more notorious Blue Squares but when he found out that his gang had kidnapped a girlfriend of a rival gang member and assaulted her, Kadoda and his close circle of friends rescue her and ultimately leave the gang because of the incident.<sup>469</sup> He also shows a strong sense of responsibility as he worries about his friends who followed him out of the Blue Squares and into the Dollars:

He had no idea what was attracting them [his close circle of friends]. Initially, he had thought that since they had attached themselves to him, he just had to do his best to look after them and stop them from becoming too reckless. But the fact was, he couldn't even find them stable employment and everyone remained a freeter.<sup>470</sup>

Kadoda's own financial stability and his concern for his friend's employment portrays him as a responsible, reliable, and positive role model for other teenage members. Although he is not the leader

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<sup>469</sup> Narita *Dyurarara!!x3*, 265-268.

<sup>470</sup> Narita *Dyurarara!!*, 159.

of the gang, the majority of members seek advice from him, including Mikado, as he considers Kadoda as representing his ideals and thus an ideal role model for the Dollars.<sup>471</sup> Similarly, Rokujō is also depicted as a quintessential good bad boy. He leads his team to a gang war with the Dollars convinced that they were attacking Toramaru members and innocent bystanders. However, when he finds out that Mikado is the leader and that a handful of morally corrupt members of the team had triggered the gang war, Rokujō ends the conflict.<sup>472</sup> His disgust towards violence against women and non-gang members in particular, highlights his good bad boy character. These secondary characters are evidence of the continued influence of the more traditional old school rebellious youth culture. At the same time, the fact that they are secondary characters, and that they do not dress in 1980s fashion, signals both a shift of focus and the fading influence of 1980s rebellious youth culture in *ochikobore seishun* fiction.

### **The personalisation of rebellion**

In the *Durarara!!* series, Mikado's rebellion is based on his personal desire for *hinichijō* (extraordinary or exciting everyday). This marks a significant transformation of this central element of *ochikobore seishun* fiction when it is incorporated into *ranobe*. According to Alan C. Irvine, in urban fantasy “the fey characters incarnate the sublime that the disaffected human protagonists desire” and it is what draws the protagonist to the city. By “fey” Irvine is referring to an array of mythological creatures such as fairies and elves.<sup>473</sup> Although Irvine is discussing urban fantasy in English and American literature, his definition of urban fantasy is similar to the one Enomoto gives for *gendai fantajī* (modern or contemporary fantasy) in Japanese literature, which he defines as fiction set in an urban setting that incorporates mythical or supernatural elements.<sup>474</sup> Enomoto's definition suggests that he is in fact referring to a specific type of modern fantasy as he uses the urban setting as a genre-defining element. The absence of the term urban fantasy (*toshi fantajī*) in Japanese scholarship suggests that, unlike in

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<sup>471</sup> Narita Ryōgo 成田良悟, *Durarara!!x8 デュラララ!!x8* [Durarara!!x8] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2010), 146-147.

<sup>472</sup> Narita Ryōgo 成田良悟, *Durarara!!x6 デュラララ!!x6* [Durarara!!x6] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2009), 365.

<sup>473</sup> Alexander C. Irvine, “Urban Fantasy” in *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*, ed Edward James and Farah Mendelsohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 202.

<sup>474</sup> Enomoto, *Raito Noberu Bungakuron*, 104.

English or American popular literature where urban fantasy is recognised as a sub-category of modern fantasy, such specification within Japanese fantasy fiction is yet to be made. Enomoto also argues that “imports” of Western fantasy novels in the late 1970s triggered the fantasy boom and emergence of *ranobe*, suggesting that fantasy itself is a genre imported from English literature.<sup>475</sup> The link between Western and Japanese fantasy fictions is most evident in the choice of ‘fey’ characters. For example, despite being set in a Japanese city, the *Durarara!!* series incorporates Western mythological and supernatural creatures such as a Dullahan and a vampire, both of which satisfy Mikado’s desire for *hinichijō*.

At the same time, Mikado’s strong desire for *hinichijō* and his search for the sublime in Ikebukuro, initially through colour gang activities and later through his relationship with a Dullahan, is also part of a larger trend in Japanese popular culture. His relocation to Ikebukuro is an adamant rejection of *owarinaki nichijō* (never-ending everyday), a reaction to the mundane, oppressive, and never-ending everyday in the postmodern age. Japanese sociologist Ōsawa Masachi divides post-war Japan into two different eras according to its *zeitgeist*; he categorises 1945 to 1969 as “the idealistic age” (*risō no jidai*) and 1970 to 1995 as “the fictional age” (*kyokō no jidai*).<sup>476</sup> He argues that the failure of the grand narrative, as precipitated by the socio-political movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as the various post-war student activist movements like the *Anpo*<sup>477</sup> movement and *zenkyōtō or zengaku kyōtō kaigi* (All-Campus Joint Struggle League),<sup>478</sup> led to the loss of an absolute and unifying ideology, as well as the loss of a visible enemy. The failure of these political movements and ideals then led people to seek escape in imagined settings and characters in fiction during the 1970s to mid-1990s.<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> Enomoto, *Raito Noberu Bungakuron*, 13-14.

<sup>476</sup> Ōsawa Masachi cited in Motoko Tanaka, “Trends of Fiction in 2000s Japanese Pop Culture.” *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies* 14, no.2 (2014), accessed June 5, 2015, <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/ejcs/vol14/iss2/tanaka.html>.

<sup>477</sup> *Anpo* movements refer to anti-*Anpo* in other words those who were against the *nichibei anzen hoshō jōyaku* (Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan) and protested against war in 1959-60 and 1970.

<sup>478</sup> *Zenkyōtō or zengaku kyōtō kaigi* (All-Campus Joint Struggle League) movement spread nationwide and generated violent clashes between police and students from 1965 to 1969. The aim, structure and policy of the movement within each campus varied so that as a whole, *zenkyōtō* seemed to lack clear political goals. See works by Kouzu Akira (b.1944) and Kosaka Shūhei (b.1947-2007) for further detail on *zenkyōtō* movements.

<sup>479</sup> Tanaka “Trends of Fiction in 2000s Japanese Pop Culture.”

Miyadai Shinji argues that following this loss of grand narrative, people had to find ways to cope with the *owarinaki nichijō* and in *Live the Never-ending Everyday (Owarinaki Nichijō o Ikiro, 1995)*, he proposes that one must either accept and live *owarinaki nichijō*, or find structure and purpose in life through religion.<sup>480</sup> The latter path is to end the never-ending everyday and attain a bright new world.<sup>481</sup> Mikado rejects *owarinaki nichijō*, but instead of religion, he seeks the thrills of the colour gangs and escapes into the underworld of Ikebukuro.

Miyadai's two choices in coping with the *owarinaki nichijō* resemble the two traits noted in Ōsawa's analysis of Japanese society following the two apocalyptic incidents of 1995, the Kobe Earthquake and the Tokyo subway sarin attack by Aum Shinrikyō. Ōsawa argues that the earthquake revealed the destructive power of nature and the dangers of "reality" while the sarin attack exposed the danger of "super-fictive ideals" and fiction.<sup>482</sup> Ōsawa notes that following these two incidents Japanese people began either to escape the harsh "reality" or seek safety and reassurance in fiction, or escape into "most realistic reality" by seeking pain and violence through self-harm or fundamentalism and nationalistic fervour.<sup>483</sup> Those who seek safety and reassurance are those who have accepted the *owarinaki nichijō*, while those who seek pain and violence are those who seek to end it. Mikado's encounter with danger and thrills in the *Durarara!!* series offers its readers the latter type of experience, as it offers the vicarious experience of danger and excitement allowing them to escape from their own *mundane nichijō* by reading about *hinichijō* rather than seeking safety and reassurance.

The loss of a visible enemy or authority in post-war Japan is also reflected in the *Durarara!!* series as the parental and school authorities, which had been the catalyst for teenage rebellion in the earlier works, is absent. For example, Mikado relocates to Ikebukuro by himself, despite only being sixteen; in doing so, the presence of parental authority is physically removed from his life and, as a result, a

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<sup>480</sup> Miyadai Shinji 宮台真司, *Owarinaki Nichijō wo Ikiro 終わりになき日常を生きろ* [Live the Never-ending Everyday] (Tōkyō, Chikuma Bunko, 1995).

<sup>481</sup> Ibid.

<sup>482</sup> Tanaka, "Trends of Fiction in 2000s Japanese Pop Culture."

<sup>483</sup> Ōsawa Masachicited in Tanaka, "Trends of Fiction in 2000s Japanese Pop Culture."

backdrop for his pursuit of *hinichijō* is created. It is briefly noted that his parents were not supportive of his relocation because sending him to Ikebukuro would mean a financial burden.<sup>484</sup> The lack of strong objection by Mikado's parents and their complete absence, both physically and emotionally, throughout the series is what allows him to engage in the colour gang activities and pursue *hinichijō* in Ikebukuro. These is a continuation of the character tropes from earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction, such as the powerless parents, but, whereas mothers are often either accepting of their rebellious sons, or unable to stop their wayward behaviour, and fathers are often physically absent, the significant difference in the portrayal of parents in *Durarara* series is that they simply remain sidelined, in the background of protagonist's rebellion.

On the other hand, the absence of parents is taken to the extreme in *Durarara!!*, as the majority of teenage characters seem to live alone. In addition to Mikado, his two closest friends and central characters Masaomi and Anri also live alone in Ikebukuro; Masaomi's parents are not mentioned in the series and Anri's parents are deceased. In fact, parents do not play a role in the series; when Anri's best friend Mika goes missing, there is no mention of her parents worrying over her disappearance which also suggests that she too lives alone. In addition to the lack of parental authority, school authority is also absent in the *Durarara* series, indeed, there is little depiction of school life or Mikado's interaction with teachers. This contrasts with the way that parental or school authority, especially when the relationship was negative had been a major source of conflict in *ochikobore seishun* fiction. Instead the absence of a visible enemy in the *Durarara!!* series is what allows Mikado to escape the mundane *nichijō*, and find excitement in a new world – the underworld of Ikebukuro city.

The depiction of a relaxed and somewhat distant school authority contrasts markedly with *kōsei* autobiography that depicted the strictness of schools from the 1980s, where breaking the dress code had been a statement of rebellion. In the *Durarara!!* series, school uniform is optional, and bleached or

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<sup>484</sup> Narita, *Durarara!!*, 56-57.



dyed hair is left unpunished. The shift in the depiction of schools reflects the education reforms of the late 1980s, called “reduced intensity reforms” (*yutori kyōiku*), that aimed to reduce working hours and stress load. Such reforms were implemented in an effort to create a more positive learning environment and motivate and nurture students by encouraging them to search and pursue subjects that interest them rather than rigorously enforcing a standardised curriculum.<sup>485</sup> As scholars point out, such reforms were somewhat futile in relieving stress, as many parents opted to send their children to *juku* (cram school) out of anxiety as universities did not change their system in accordance with the reduced intensity reforms and continued to demand high academic performance in core subjects.<sup>486</sup> In the earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction, writers openly criticised Japan’s education system, but such social criticism is muted in the *Durarara!!* series as Mikado’s rebellion is aimed more towards his peers than at authority. For example, his insistence on wearing full standard uniform school is clearly not a rebellion against his school authority but it is a statement against his fellow peers, who are blindly following a trend by customising their school uniforms.

Moreover, Mikado does not show any resentment towards either parents or school authorities since their absence allows him the freedom to pursue *hinichijō*; Authority is no longer the source of conflict or the target of teenage rebellion for the protagonist in contrast to earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction. This extreme lack of authority, both physical and emotional, can be attributed to the incorporation of urban fantasy elements as the absence of protective parents or teachers allows the teenage heroes to embark on adventures that would otherwise be impossible. The scholars of dystopian adolescent fiction have made a similar observation by arguing that the absence of parents is part of the conditions in dystopian narrative, in both English and American literature that prompts its protagonist to go on a quest.<sup>487</sup>

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<sup>485</sup> Christopher Bjok and Ryoko Tsuneyoshi, “Education Reform in Japan: Competing Visions for the Future.” *The Phi Delta Kappan* 86, no.8 (April 2005): 619-622.

<sup>486</sup> Bjok and Tsuneyoshi, “Education Reform in Japan: Competing Visions for the Future,” 619-622.

<sup>487</sup> Katherine R. Broad, “The Dandelion in the Spring: Utopia as Romance in Suzanne Collins’s *The Hunger Games* Trilogy,” in *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers*, ed. Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad and Carrie Hintz (New York: Routledge, 2013), 128.

In the absence of antagonistic parents and teachers, the protagonists' conflict is confined to their struggles against adult villains. The majority of adult villains in the *Durarara!!* series are conventional in terms of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, since they are powerful, privileged and corrupt. Throughout the series, Makoto and the Dollars face typical adult villains like Yagiri Namie who is a senior employee of a large and powerful pharmaceutical company where her uncle is the CEO, and Yodogiri Jin'nai who is the CEO of a talent agency but also a broker of supernatural creatures in the underworld of Ikebukuro, and the nameless violent and dangerous stalker who turns out to be the son of a life insurance company's CEO. In terms of the portrayal of adult villains, Narita follows the *ochikobore seishun* convention as the majority of his villains are members of the elite who have the power and privilege that the protagonists and most of those living in Ikebukuro's underworld do not.

The protagonists' conflict with such adult villains in earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction had enacted the struggle between the marginalised and the privileged elites, enabling the protagonist's rebellion to become more than just teenage angst but a fight against injustice. Mikado's conflict with the adult villains often stems from his desire to protect his newly forged life in Ikebukuro that allows him to escape the oppressing mundaneness of life, rather than solely from a sense of justice, giving him aspects of the Battle Royale type where self is prioritised over social order. For example, in the first volume, Mikado is targeted by Yagiri Namie after he had found out that her brother had killed Mika (one of Mikado's class mate) and that she was trying to cover up her brother's crime. With help from the Dollars members, Mikado stands up to her and her henchmen, and in doing so he shows a sense of justice as he demands Yagiri's brother to pay for his crime; at the same time, he also expresses anger towards Yagiri for her selfish-ness and disregard for others.<sup>488</sup> He openly admits that his conflict with Yagiri and other villains stems from the fact that they are a threat to his ideal way of life in Ikebukuro. Thus, he is partially motivated by the more personal desire to protect his friends and the Dollars, which

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<sup>488</sup> Narita, *Dyurarara!!*, 267.

he considers as vital elements of his *hinichijō*, as well as keeping Ikebukuro as an ideal place where he can pursue adventure and excitement, rather than solely by sense of justice or rebellion against conformist society.

Additionally, the personalisation of teenage rebellion in the *Durarara!!* series means that social criticism, which was an integral part of *ochikobore seishun* protagonists' rebellion, is muted as the focus is on more the self. Furthermore, the presence of supernatural creatures such as the Dullahan and a half breed vampire in the series raises the level of fantasy and decreases the realism of the Ikebukuro presented in the text. Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad and Carrie Hintz argue that fantastical elements in the majority of adolescent fiction can function as a buffer between reader and text so the text is read as a "flight of fancy" rather than a grim representation of the society that readers occupy.<sup>489</sup> Although Basu, Broad, and Hintz were referring to English and American adolescent fiction, and dystopian fiction in particular, their statement can also be applied to Japanese urban fantasy fiction like the *Durarara!!* series where supernatural creatures and extreme violence are a constant reminder to readers that the story is flight of fancy. What it offers readers is mostly entertainment and escape, while any kind of social criticism that may emerge from Mikado's fight against the corrupt and privileged portrayed adults throughout the series is far more subtle than the earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction.

### **Escapism**

If earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction such as the *I.W.G.P* series and the *Zombies* series attempted to both educate and entertain readers by raising awareness of various social issues in Japanese society, the *Durarara!!* series leans further towards entertainment and thus the element of escapism is stronger. The protagonists' rebellion in *ochikobore seishun* fiction had allowed readers to vicariously experience teenage rebellion through the text and escape from their own stifling life as a student. As noted in Chapter 3, Harada Munenori, one of the earliest writers of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, had commented

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<sup>489</sup> Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad and Carrie Hintz, *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (New York: Routledge, 2013.), 4.

that he wrote tales of teenage rebellion in order to add excitement to the ‘mundane everyday’ that readers experienced under the Japanese education system in the 1990s.<sup>490</sup> In addition to school related stress, to the conditions of economic recession resulted in intensified competition for placement in universities and youth unemployment, which meant that hard work no longer guaranteed career success and the competition for positions in prestigious universities or large corporation became more intense for contemporary youth. In fact, scholars such as Masato Wada and Bruce Burnett observe that since the late 2000s, policies have re-implemented nationally standardised testing as well as increased class hours;<sup>491</sup> suggesting that the government’s focus is gradually shifting back towards the achievement of high academic standards rather than creating a more nurturing and relaxed environment that encourages learning. Although the socio-economic circumstances may have changed since the 1980s, today’s adolescents continue to suffer stress and anxiety so that works like the *Durarara!!* series offer its readers escape from their stifling school life.

For the majority of adolescent readers, Raira High School that Mikado and his friends attend would probably seem like an ideal school as teachers do not interfere with students’ lives outside the school; and, the combination of absent parents and this relaxed school environment, there is little pressure to perform well academically. According to Miyadai, such fantasising of the ideal school is a common trope in Japanese popular culture because everyone can identify with school experience and, whether the memories readers hold are bitter or sweet, he claims that everyone dreams of how it can be or could have been which is why many manga and anime have a school setting.<sup>492</sup> The relaxed and casual atmosphere of Raira High School, that allows its students the freedom to roam the city at night without any consequences, is perhaps the biggest fantasy which offers the element of escape for teenage readers, as they vicariously experience freedom through Mikado’s personal rebellion and search for *hinichijō*.

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<sup>490</sup> Harada Munenori 原田宗典, “Heisei Tomu Sōyā” 平成トムソーヤー [Heisei Tom Sawyer], *Harada Burogu* はらだブログ [Harada Blog], accessed August 24, 2006, [http://www.haramu.net/work/archives/2005/11/post\\_1.html](http://www.haramu.net/work/archives/2005/11/post_1.html).

<sup>491</sup><sup>491</sup> Masato Wada and Bruce Burnett, “Yutori Kyoiku and the Uncertainty of Recent Neo-liberal Reforms in Japanese Higher Education,” *Bulletin of Centre for the Research and Support of Educational Practice* 7 (2011): 78.

<sup>492</sup> Shinji Miyadai “Transformation of Semantics in the History of Japanese Subcultures Since 1992,” 245.

## *Ochikobore seishun fiction in kētai shōsetsu*

### **The conventions of *kētai shōsetsu***

Technically, the term *kētai shōsetsu* can refer to any digital fiction written and shared on a mobile phone, but the scholars and critics of *kētai shōsetsu* tend to focus on those produced and read by adolescent girls; for example, Jane Sullivan specifies this Japanese literary phenomenon as ‘pulp fiction’ written and read by teenage girls and women in their 20s.<sup>493</sup> The use of the term *kētai shōsetsu* by scholars such as Hayamizu and Honda to refer to teen romance published and read on mobile phones by teenage girls<sup>494</sup> also indicates that the term refers specifically to digital fiction that has emerged from Japanese girls’ culture. Hayazumi and Honda mostly focus on works published on Magic I-land, a forum that caters to teenage girls and women in their 20s.

Like *ranobe*, *kētai shōsetsu* is a rapidly growing market; for example, online providers similar to Magic I-land have multiplied in the last few years and literary prizes for *kētai shōsetsu* have been established by the publishers. Despite its rapid growth, the mass production genre diversification evident in *ranobe* is absent in *kētai shōsetsu* as teen romance continues to dominate and adolescent girls remain as its primary target readers. Recently, the target has expanded slightly to include women in their 20s, but in terms of genre, there is a little effort to extend beyond the formulae of romance or attempt to reach wider range of readers. At a glance *kētai shōsetsu* websites such as Magic I-land seem to offer wide a range of styles, such as horror, mystery, poems and even what they claim as “*junbungaku*” (pure literature). Despite this seemingly wide range, the majority of texts are in fact teen romances (or love poems) that have incorporated elements of other genres like horror or mystery, making them sub-categories of teen romance, rather than a separate genre.

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<sup>493</sup> Jane Sullivan, “Thumbs Down to ‘the Nokia Novel,’” *Age* (Melbourne, Victoria), February 9, 2008. Cited by Larissa Hjorth, *Mobile Media in the Asia-Pacific: Gender and the Art of Being Mobile* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York NY: Routledge, 2009), 231.

<sup>494</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 7-8. Honda Tōru, *Naze Ketai Shōsetsu wa Urerunoka*, 20-21.

In addition to wide range of sub-categories within the larger frame of teen romance, there are also multiple key words that users can use to refine their search; for example, the terms *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* are frequently used as key words to search for and categorise the girl-meets-rebel type of teen romance.



The two images on the left are screen shots of the Magic I-land mobile site, and the two on the right are of the Wild Strawberries mobile site.

These special pages that feature and recommend popular girl-meets-rebel stories in both Magic I-land and Wild Strawberries indicate that *bōsōzoku*, *furyō* and *yankī* are recognised by readers as genre defining elements in *kētai shōsetsu*, unlike other forms of adolescent fiction where such terms are rarely used to categorise texts. Phrases like “want to be protected by the strongest man” and “a rebel, who is stronger than anyone and loves more passionately than anyone else, will captivate everyone!” in the above webpages indicate that “manliness” (*otokorashisa*) is associated with the words *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku*, and it is the dominant element that draws girls to this particular sub-category of teen romance.

The demand for strong and dependable male heroes by female readers of *kētai shōsetsu* coincides with the emergence of the phenomenon of “herbivore boys” or men (*sōshoku danshi* or *sōshoku kei danshi*). According to Kumagai Keichi, the term was first coined by Maki Fukasawa in 2006 to refer to boys who lacked sexual drive, were not “manly” and who engaged in “feminine” activities such as “cooking

and eating sweets.”<sup>495</sup> The same year, Kan’no Aya’ published a manga series titled *Otomen* (2006), which is about a boy whose athletic and “manly” behaviour is a façade for his love of cute, pretty and girly things, and who meets and falls in love with a tomboy. Kan’no combines the word *otome* meaning maiden or young girl and the English word ‘men’ to refer to boys with girlish hobbies. Following the success of manga like *Otomen*, the herbivore man phenomenon reached its peak in the late 2000s when more feminine types of boys became a trend not just in *shōjo* manga but in popular media that targeted a female audience. Morioka Masahiro also lists the characteristics of herbivore men as follows; they are “gentle,” “not bound by manliness,” “not aggressive when it comes to romance” and “view women as equals.”<sup>496</sup>

Scholars like Morioka define ‘manliness’ as the “ability to fight, be relied upon, and aggressively take the lead in their interaction with women.”<sup>497</sup> This reads like a description of a typical *furyō*, *yankī* or *bōsōzoku* making one wonder whether Morioka had these rebellious boys in his mind when describing the antithesis of herbivore men. While these new types of Japanese male identity flourished in the popular media, a demand for the older, traditional form of masculinity began to grow. In fact, Fukasawa notes that there has been a severe backlash towards the herbivore boys from older men (*oyaji*) who are appalled by the loss of what they consider as manliness, and from women who, on the one hand demand gender equality but express a desire for ‘manliness’ in a potential partner and wish to be romanced.<sup>498</sup> On Magic I-land in a recent search, there were 19118 *kētai shōsetsu* under the key word *furyō*, 2929 under *yankī*, and 7727 under *bōsōzoku*; while there were only 119 under herbivore men and 22 under *otomen*.<sup>499</sup> This comparison of search words used in Magic I-land suggests that a

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<sup>495</sup> Keichi Kumagai, “Herbivorous Boy, Otaku, or Petit-Nationalist? Floating Japanese Men, Masculinity and National Integrity,” in *Cool New Asia: Asian Popular Culture in Local Context*, eds. Elena Kolesova and Scott Wilson (Auckland: Unitec ePress, 2012); 72. Morioka Masahiro, “A Phenomenological Study of ‘Herbivore Men’,” *The Review of Life Studies* 4 (September 2013): 1.

<sup>496</sup> Morioka, “A Phenomenological Study of ‘Herbivore Men’,” 7.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>498</sup> Fukasawa Maki 深澤真紀, *Heisei Danshi Zukan: Risupekuto Danshi to Shirafu Danshi* 平成男子図鑑：リスペクト男子としらふ男子 [Illustrated Handbook of Heisei Boys: Respectful Boys and Sober Boys (Tōkyō: Nikkei BP Shuppan Sentā, 2007) 1-2.

<sup>499</sup> Search results from May 7, 2015.

large majority of these *kētai shōsetsu* readers prefer the traditional masculinity over the new masculinity that embraces femininity, especially when it comes to romance.

This demand for traditional ideal manliness by female readers is what links *kētai shōsetsu* to 1980s rebellious youth culture, and Hayamizu interprets this link as a revival of *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* within contemporary teenage girl culture. Indeed, the reference to the old-school rebellious youth culture of the 1980s is clear in *kētai shōsetsu*, while such links seem to be gradually fading elsewhere in popular media as the more recent forms of rebellious youth culture such as colour gang are beginning to take over. For example, in the same search, there were only 16 *kētai shōsetsu* listed under the key word ‘colour gang’ which is also part of the 19118 under *furyō*, as authors use multiple key words to categorise their work and terms like colour gang and *furyō* are used simultaneously. While the colour gang is gradually being recognised by readers of *kētai shōsetsu* as part of larger frame of rebel narrative, the difference in numbers indicate that the old-school rebellious youth culture continues to dominate.

Hayamizu also notes the link between *kētai shōsetsu* and 1980s rebellious youth culture, in his analysis of tragic romances, by arguing that teenage girls sharing their misery with each other through readers’ pages in magazines such as *Teen’s Road* (1988-1998) are the origin of *kētai shōsetsu*.<sup>500</sup> While *kētai shōsetsu* targets girls in general, *Teen’s Road* caters specifically to girls who are more inclined toward rebellious teen culture such as *furyō*, *yankī* and *redīsu* (the female version of *bōsōzoku*).<sup>501</sup> As Hayamizu points out, the magazine is filled with images of girls wearing *tokkōfuku*, bleached hair and thick make up, and looking rebellious, but the content is filled with discussion of issues such as bullying, friendship and dating boys instead of the gang wars or brawling that these girls were known for.<sup>502</sup> He draws parallels between the conventional tropes in *kētai shōsetsu* and issues that frequently

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<sup>500</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 86-89.

<sup>501</sup> See Chapter 1 (p12) for more on female versions of 1980s Japanese rebellious youth identities.

<sup>502</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 87.



come up in these readers' pages where readers reveal their secrets such as pregnancy, abortion or violent boyfriends. He cites the following passage from *Teen's Road* in particular to demonstrate this point.

I am a 13 year old yankī. One night during spring, I had lost my boyfriend to one of my friends and I was so sad that I cried while walking along the bar district. I turned around when I heard someone honking their car horn. A twenty-something year old was the driver. He got out of the car and asked whether I was okay. His kindness just made me cry harder. His name was Tetsuya. He was 18. "What's your name?" "Rie." "How old are you?" "Thirteen." "Thirteen? I thought you were a high school student." He said as he laughed. And he asked "Why were you crying?" So I told him everything. I cried again. He held me tightly. We talked till morning. I went home that day but I had fallen in love with him so I went to his place again. One day, he said "Go steady with me" so I was really happy. From then on I lived with him, and five months just flew by. [...] On the 30<sup>th</sup> of July, I was waiting at home for Tetsuya to finish work when the phone rang and one of the OBs of bōsōzoku said "Tetsuya was involved in a car accident. He might not make it. Come to XXX hospital." [...] "Rie, I'm so glad I met you. And I'm sorry I couldn't make you happy." And he quietly passed away while holding on to my hand. I will never forget that night of 30<sup>th</sup> July. Tetsuya, I'm so glad I met you too.

*Teen's Road* March Issue (1995)<sup>503</sup>

Hayamizu points out that this confession of a reader from *Teen's Road* reads like a plot summary of a typical *kētai shōsetsu*.<sup>504</sup> These pieces from the magazine are read by readers as the supposedly authentic experience of rebellious teenage girls, but the editor's half-hearted comment to Rie's tragic story ("I hope you get over your sadness!") suggests that not everyone took these accounts too seriously.<sup>505</sup> By sharing their misery with their fellow readers, it is as if the readers contributing such stories to the magazine are playing the part of a heroine from a tragic teen romance. These tragic stories like Rie's are so common in *Teen's Road* that Hayamizu describes them as the "inflation of misery and misfortune" by teenage girls.<sup>506</sup> Another scholar to focus on the sharing of misery in *kētai shōsetsu* is Honda, who lists prostitution, rape, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, terminal illness, suicide, and

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<sup>503</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: "Sai Yankīka" Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 89-91.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

true love as the seven recurrent tropes. Both Honda and Hayamizu argue that personal tragedies have become a crucial, if not compulsory, part of *kētai shōsetsu*.<sup>507</sup>

The majority of these readers' stories in *Teen's Road* are shared under a pen name and this anonymity had allowed the girls to share their innermost secrets and feelings and discuss issues like prostitution and pregnancy that they might feel uncomfortable sharing with close friends or family members. Likewise, the majority of *kētai shōsetsu* authors write under an online alias so that, even when their work becomes a best-seller, hardly any background information about the author is revealed and even gender or age is an assumption. For example, Yū is a common name for both girls and boys so readers can only assume her gender from the fact that she writes teen romances on Magic I-land. It seems that the author is of little significance, to the *kētai shōsetsu* readership. This is in significant contrast to the *kōsei* autobiography – the origin of *ochikobore seishun* fiction – where the identity of the author as an “authentic” *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* was essential.

*Kētai shōsetsu* readers are in their teens or 20s, so their recognition of *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* are based on imagined nostalgia created via their consumption of popular media; ‘authenticity’ for them is based on the fictional portrayal of rebellious boys as charismatic good bad boys, rather than as problem youth of the 1980s, as documented by scholars or journalists. This demonstrates the way that *yankī* (as well as *furyō* and *bōsōzoku*) culture is being perpetuated in popular media post 1980s, through *kōsei* autobiographical writing, entertainment novels and now in *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, in addition to the plethora of manga and film, and challenges Hayamizu's argument that *kētai shōsetsu* is a revival of *yankī* culture. Also, it is difficult to claim that this is a revival as readers are only consuming *yankī* culture through reading *kētai shōsetsu* – there is no evidence of them incorporating it into their own identity performance.

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<sup>507</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 12-18.

Explorations of girls' culture throughout the 1980s and 1990s (prior to the advent of the internet) indicate that exchanging personal stories through letters, exchanging diaries (*kōkan nikki*), as well as readers' pages in magazines had been an especially common mode of communication amongst teenage girls.<sup>508</sup> When internet usage became widespread, the platform for such exchange shifted online and teenage girls began to share personal stories on blogs and social networking sites. This correlation between the exchange of personal stories before the internet and the rise of *kētai shōsetsu* is evident in its narrative style, with the first person autodiegetic narration and third person narration with occasional free indirect discourse having become established as preferred styles in *kētai shōsetsu*. These two styles reveal the innermost thoughts and emotions of the protagonist directly to readers.

The overall dominance of teen romance in *kētai shōsetsu* is best illustrated by the reception of two works by Yoshi. While his teen romance *Deep Love (Dīpu Rabu, 2000)* sold more than 25,000,000 copies, his second work, which combines horror with science fiction entitled *I Want to Live Longer (Motto Ikitai, 2004)*, had been a disappointment for the publishers as they were left with 200,000 dead stock.<sup>509</sup> It is obvious that this attempt at writing a *kētai shōsetsu* that was not a teen romance failed to attract as much readership as *Deep Love*. Hayamizu suggests that while readers find teen romance like *Deep Love* relatable, the majority would find the protagonists of genres like horror or science fiction difficult to relate to and so he concludes that the relatability of heroines determines the success of *kētai shōsetsu*.<sup>510</sup> Rather than assuming that teenage girls are unable to relate to any heroine that is not a teenager in love or tormented by love, I would counter that such a preference for the teen romance element should be identified as part of the conventional formula that readers have come to expect when reading *kētai shōsetsu*.

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<sup>508</sup> Hirofumi Katsuno and Christine R. Yano "Face to face: on-line subjectivity in contemporary Japan." *Asian Studies Review* 26, no.2 (2002): 222, doi: 10.1080/10357820208713341.

<sup>509</sup> Hayamizu *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: "Sai Yankīka" Jidai no Shojo tachi*, 83.

<sup>510</sup> Ibid.

## Conventions of *kētai shōsetsu* and *ochikobore seishun* in Yū's *Wild Beast* series

### Gender reversal in tales of teenage rebellion

Up to this point, *ochikobore seishun* fiction has been dominated by male protagonists and focused on their rebellion, but the emergence of *ochikobore seishun* elements in *kētai shōsetsu* breaks this long standing tradition by incorporating a gender reversal in both the point-of-view and readership which turns the focus from the rebel himself to the damsel-in-distress he rescues. At the same time, this shift also changes the focus from boys to girls' rebellion and for the first time, *ochikobore seishun* fiction offers its female readers the fantasy both of dating a rebel as well as the enactment of female rebellion. Although there are a small number of female protagonists in *ochikobore seishun* fiction (the example of *Speed* (2006) by Kaneshiro Kazuki is discussed in chapter 3) the overall scarcity of female protagonists in *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* outside *kētai shōsetsu* indicates that female rebellion has remained largely unexplored until girls become the primary significant target readership. Yū's *Wild Beast* series is a typical girl-meets-rebel *kētai shōsetsu* that tells the story of an ordinary teenage heroine, Ayaka, who meets and falls in love with a *bōsōzoku* leader, Ryūki, who is depicted as a typical good bad boy. The relationship between damsel-in-distress and good bad boy which is part of *ochikobore seishun* narrative is retained despite the shift in point-of-view, as the heroine faithfully plays the role of damsel-in-distress by amplifying the positive traits that portrays her lover as a good bad boy. In the *Wild Beast* series, the members of Yajū (Wild Beast), especially its leader Ryūki and his best friend Mikage, are portrayed as typical good bad boys in that their wayward behaviour, such as smoking and drinking alcohol, are downplayed while their positive traits such as loyalty, chivalry, and their strong sense of right and wrong are highlighted when they rescue and protect the heroine from various dangers.

The scholarship on teenage rebellion, whether sociological or literary, is unanimous in showing how the girls are overshadowed by the boys. However, Leerom Medovoi, who examines American teenage rebellion in the 1950s, also points out that, while girls were indeed often eclipsed by the boys,

rebellious girls in the 1950s America played a significant role in post-war American popular culture.<sup>511</sup> He categorises the portrayal of rebellious girls of the 1950s America into two types, drawing on Rachael Devlin's analysis of female rebellion in adolescence: girls who date rebels (often in order to substitute for incompetent or absent fathers) are "bad girls" and those who assume a masculine identity are "tomboys."<sup>512</sup> He further explains that a "bad girl" performs rebellion by associating with bad boys and adopting anti-domestic sexualised femininity, while a "tomboy" rebels by incorporating masculinity modelled on the "bad boy" paradigm. In Medovoi's categorisation then, the two key types of deviant behaviour enacted by the teenage heroine are either to date a rebel or become a rebel herself by imitating a rebellious boy. He argues that a heroine's romantic relationship with a rebel is a form of rebellion as she is refusing to be a good girl and dating a good boy; her choice to date a rebel and join his defiance of "domesticated parent culture" is a performance of adolescent rebellion.<sup>513</sup> The damsels-in-distress in the *ochikobore seishun* narrative perform rebellion in a similar way as Medovoi's bad girls, they date a rebellious hero and choose to join his rebellion rather than persuade him to change his ways. The tomboy type of female rebellion is absent in earlier *ochikobore seishun* narrative, but appears in *kētai shōsetsu* where stories of female *bōsōzoku* members and *on'na banchō* (female *banchō*, a female version of *furyō* leader) are gradually increasing. This emergence is alluded to in the *Wild Beast* series as it depicts a peripheral but recurrent female character Ryō, who is a retired *bōsōzoku* leader, and who, unlike the damsel-in-distress heroine, performs rebellion by adopting a *bōsōzoku* identity.

### **Damsel-in-distress: rebellion through her good bad boy**

The incorporation of teen romance into *ochikobore seishun* narrative and the shift in point of view brings romance between the heroine and rebel to the foreground, unlike in *Speed* where there were no element of romance between the heroine and the good bad boys. As romance becomes central to the

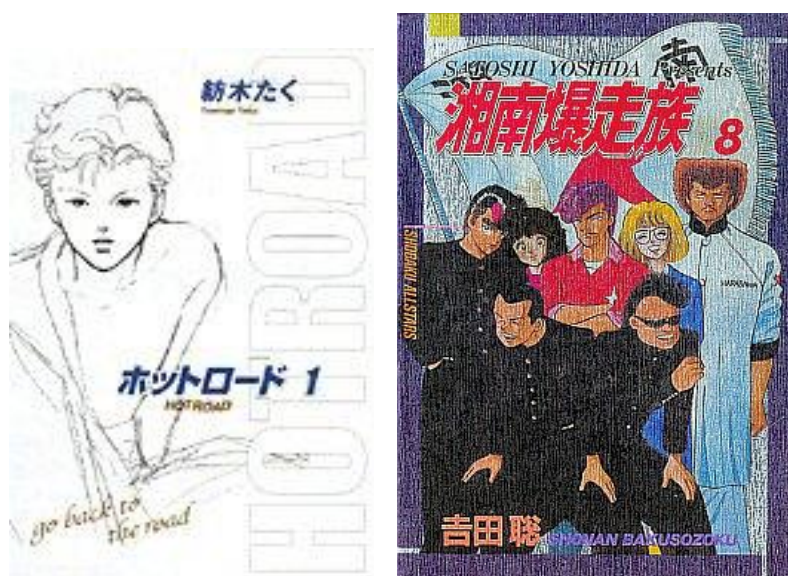
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<sup>511</sup> Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 267.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., 266.

plot, it becomes necessary to depict a rebel hero whom the female protagonist and the readers (vicariously enjoying the romance) would find attractive and appealing. Ayaka describes both Mikage and Ryūki (not just Ryūki with whom she forms a romantic relationship) as being handsome; she further describes Mikage as “kind-looking” “gentle” and “nice” while Ryūki is described as cold and intimidating but nevertheless good-looking.<sup>514</sup> Physical attractiveness has been an irrelevant feature in *ochikobore seishun* fiction prior to its incorporation into teen romance. This highlights *kētai shōsetsu*’s link to *shōjo* (girls’) manga, especially to those that incorporate *bōsōzoku* culture such as *Hot Road*, where handsome features are added to the conventional portrayal of *bōsōzoku* as good bad boys.



*Hot Road*, collector’s edition volume 1 (2006) by Tsumugi Taku (left) *Shōnan Bakusōzoku*, volume 8 (1995) by Yoshida Satoshi (right)

A visual comparison of *bōsōzoku* portrayed in *shōjo* manga like *Hot Road* and *shōnen* (boys’) manga like *Shōnan Bakusōzoku* indicates that *bōsōzoku* in teen romance are often depicted as good looking but, more importantly, the exaggerated hairstyles and fashion style of *bōsōzoku* culture, like purple hair and the overdone pompadour hair style evident in *Shōnan Bakusōzoku*, are toned down so that the wide ranges of girls reading the text would be able to find the male rebel attractive. Such a toning down of the more extreme elements of *bōsōzoku* culture in *shōjo* manga is also evident in the *Wild Beast* series,

<sup>514</sup> Yū ユウ, *Wairudo Bīsuto I: Deai hen* ワイルドビースト I : 出会い編 [Wild Beast I: Stories of the Encounter] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2009), 26, 31.

where *tokkōfuku* (*bōsōzoku* uniform)<sup>515</sup> and the team flag are the only elements that are used by the boys to perform their *bōsōzoku* identity. It is further mentioned throughout the series that when these boys are not wearing *tokkōfuku*, they looked like regular good-looking high school boys. Thus, the toning down also contributes to the need to fit these boys into the contemporary setting where the *bōsōzoku* fashion style is considered out-dated and far removed from the styles that contemporary teenage girls find attractive.

The shift in point-of-view from rebel to that of female heroine, who is rescued by him, also means that the protagonist is observing her romantic partner's rebellion, rather than actively engaging in teenage rebellion herself. For example, when the heroine begins a relationship with Ryūki, who is the leader of *Yajū* (Wild Beast), she becomes part of the gang by association. Throughout the series, she spends time with her boyfriend and his gang members at their gang headquarters and joins them when they ride out.

The “Christmas ride out” was the same as the last ride out. There were colourful lights and people everywhere. As soon as we started driving away, Ryūki and Mikage began talking about something but I was fascinated by the scenery and was glued to the window side.<sup>516</sup>

As the girlfriend of the leader, Ayaka is allowed to sit next to him in the back seat of the black Mercedes Benz and is driven around by one of the members, while the rest of the gang follow on their motor cycles. Her passive participation in the ride out by riding alongside her boyfriend indicates that she is accepted by the gang as the girlfriend of the leader but not as a member. Her position (or lack of position) within the gang is emphasised throughout the series as Ryūki repeatedly “orders” Ayaka not to “interfere” with gang matters and reminds her that she is his girlfriend and not an official member of the gang.<sup>517</sup> The fact that Ayaka is an observer and not an active participant in *bōsōzoku* activities

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<sup>515</sup> See Chapter 1(p36).

<sup>516</sup> Yū, *Wairudo Bīsuto I: Deai hen*, 204-205.

<sup>517</sup> Yū ユウ, *Wairudo Bīsuto II: Kuro Sofa hen* ワイルドビースト II : 黒ソファ編 [Wild Beast II: Stories of the Black Sofa] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2009), 238, 244.

emphasises her position as a damsel-in-distress whose primary function is to be rescued and protected by the rebel hero so that he may be portrayed as a good bad boy.

The narrator-protagonist's position as a damsel-in-distress is established from the very beginning as the two main characters meet when she jumps in front of an on-coming car and is rescued by Ryūki and his friend Mikage. In addition to establishing the narrator-protagonist as a damsel-in-distress and Ryūki as the good bad boy, this opening also directs focus onto the heroine's misery rather than to rebellion, as illustrated by the following monologue in the opening chapter:

It's good that I'm stupid.  
Because you know, I don't want to think too much at times like this.  
I use to hate that I'm stupid, but right now, I'm glad that I am.  
I mean, I was able to sleep at times like this because I'm an idiot.  
I may be an idiot, but an idiot who is trying hard...but I'm thinking, trying too hard is not too good.  
I hate thinking and I've been thinking hard ever since I got here...and I'm drained.<sup>518</sup>

The narrator-protagonist's decision to end her life seems somewhat sudden and without pretext, but the majority of *kētai shōsetsu* readers would not be alarmed by such a suicidal narrator-protagonist, since misery is one of the core elements that readers expect to see in *kētai shōsetsu* (which, as discussed above, Hayamizu describes as an “inflation of misery.”)<sup>519</sup> Throughout the series, it is gradually revealed that the narrator-protagonist's reasons for attempting suicide stem from multiple miseries: guilt towards her hard working mother, anger towards her father who has abandoned her, and frustration and fear from peer pressure. At the same time, these miseries are what make the heroine a damsel-in-distress and the rebellious hero a good bad boy because he rescues her. Initially, Ayaka shows fear when she sees the *tokkōfuku* and realises that the boys are in fact *bōsōzoku* members, as illustrated in the following passage:

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<sup>518</sup> Yū, *Wairudo BīsuboI: Deai hen*, 7.

<sup>519</sup> Hayamizu, *Kētai Shōsetsuteki: “Sai Yankīka” Jidai no Shōjo tachi*, 92-94.



I've been kidnapped.  
By someone.  
And that someone is not a nice person.  
I've been kidnapped by someone who wears this kind of clothes.  
I'm going to be killed.  
I'm going to be finished off.  
So is this "Mikage" is also that kind of person too?  
This kind-looking, gentle...person wears that kind of clothes?  
He doesn't look like he's one of them!!  
Not at all!!  
But then again, you say that you can't judge a book by its cover.  
He looks really nice, but he might really be an evil person who has murdered a few people!!  
Worse than kidnappers!  
I don't think I can get home alive!!  
Well, I did try to "sleep" but I wanted to sleep peacefully, not be in pain. I just wanted to rest in peace!  
So why is this happening to me?<sup>520</sup>

Her initial fear towards the *bōsōzoku* at this point highlights that she is just an ordinary high school teenager with no prior association with rebellious youth such as *bōsōzoku*, and her preconceived idea that they are dangerous criminals reflect the way society considers them. However, as her relationship with the two boys develops through the series, both Mikage and Ryūki, are revealed as good bad boys once she realises that they are not the "evil" criminals she had initially suspected. The way in which their relationships develop indicates that the paradigmatic relationship between damsel-in-distress and rebellious hero is retained, as well as the primary function of the damsel-in-distress, which is to foreground the positive traits of both Mikage and Ryūki who rescue her repeatedly from the bullies at her school, bad boys from rival *bōsōzoku* teams and other dangers or miseries that she faces throughout the series. Their *bōsōzoku* activities, such as riding out and gang feuds, are briefly mentioned as the narrator-protagonist shows concern for the safety of Ryūki and Mikage, but they are pushed back to backdrop as romance remains the main focus of the narrative.

In addition to the trope of the damsel in distress, the portrayal of parents in *Wild Beast* series seems to follow the convention of *ochikobore seishun* fiction. Ayaka's mother is physically present but emotionally absent and her father is absent throughout the series until the very last chapter. However,

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<sup>520</sup> Yū, *Wairudo BīsutoI: Deai hen*, 18.

unlike earlier *ochikobore seishun* heroes who are unfazed by the absence of parents, Ayaka is so overcome with emotions ranging from guilt to anger towards her parents that these become part of her misery from which she needs to be saved.

Since Mum has lived a lot longer than I have, I bet that she has lot more regrets.  
Like wishing that she'd never met Dad.  
That she'd never got pregnant.  
That she'd never had me.  
That I would go away.  
That she hates her life.<sup>521</sup>

While Ayaka's relationship with her mother, who is working hard to provide for her daughter after the divorce, is not antagonistic, she is convinced that she is nothing but a burden to her mother and Ayaka is overcome by guilt at having to spend the hard earned money on useless things such as make-up and fashion items to keep up with her friends at school. It is also revealed through the series that her mother rarely has time for her daughter because of work and there is an obvious lack of communication between them. For example, in volume 2, Ayaka reveals that she has developed a rash resulting from malnutrition which her own mother is unaware of, as Ayaka does not want her mother to worry.<sup>522</sup> This lack of communication does not derive from a lack of love and affection but rather from the protagonist's sense of guilt that somehow she has ruined her mother's life. On the other hand, Ayaka blatantly blames her father for leaving them. The failure of her parents' marriage has made her so pessimistic about love that she wonders if there is such thing as "true love."<sup>523</sup> Through Ryūki, Ayaka changes her mind about true love and the series ends with an "I love you" from Ryūki and a heroine revelling in happiness at the prospect of a future with him.<sup>524</sup>

By the end of the series, Ayaka is able to reconnect with her parents but, in a way, Ryūki is the one who saves her from the miseries of a 'broken home' with his marriage proposal; he has found full-time

<sup>521</sup> Yū, *Wairudo Bīsuto I: Deai hen*, 106.

<sup>522</sup> Yū, *Wairudo Bīsuto II: Kuro Sofa hen*, 80-83.

<sup>523</sup> Yū, *Wairudo Bīsuto I: Deai hen*, 190.

<sup>524</sup> Yū ユウ, *Wairudo Bīsuto VIII: Fainaru* ワイルドビースト VIII : ファイナル [Wild Beast VIII: Final] (Tōkyō: ASCII Media Works, 2010), 258.

employment after graduating from high school and this means that Ayaka will be able to start a family of her own with him.<sup>525</sup> Although the heroine does show some concern over not being able to find employment herself, her insecurity is quickly overshadowed by her excitement at the prospect of marriage.<sup>526</sup> In the *Wild Beast* series, marriage seems to represent social and financial security for girls like Ayaka who have no ambition for further education or career goals. The implication of this resolution is that Ayaka continues to play the role of damsel-in-distress until the very end by continuing to depend on Ryūki who promises to take care of her after high school graduation. This may seem like a reinforcement of the societal expectation for girls to find a spouse and become a housewife, but on the other hand, it could be a manifestation of the female desire to find someone who they can depend on both emotionally and financially, in reaction both to the current unemployment problem as well as the herbivore men phenomenon. Ending the narrative with a rebel “graduating” from both his *bōsōzoku* and his high school to join adulthood through full time employment is not part of the conventions followed by the *I.W.G.P* and *Zombies* series, but it is a typical ending in *kōsei* autobiographical writing where the good bad boy’s graduation from his rebellious ways and his securing of stable employment are signs that he has been fully rehabilitated (*kōsei*) and further evidence that he is a good bad boy and not a bad boy who is impossible to rehabilitate. Thus, Ryūki’s graduation and employment at the end of the series emphasise his good bad boy status as well as satisfying the formulaic *kētai shōsetsu* readers’ fantasy of finding a man who will take care of her.

Another misery that the rebellious hero saves the heroine from is peer pressure from her so-called friends. Peer pressure is a relatively new trope in *ochikobore seishun* fiction as the focus had been predominantly on the experience of boys, but in Kaneshiro’s *Speed* where the focus is on a female protagonist, the issue of peer pressure is briefly introduced when she begins to question conformity with school. However, in *Speed*, the heroine’s struggle with conformity is aimed more towards school authority than towards her peers. In the *Wild Beast* series, peer pressure itself becomes one of the main

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<sup>525</sup>Yū, *Wairudo Bīsuto VIII: Fainaru*, 258.

<sup>526</sup>Ibid.

tropes; conflict with school authority being absent, peers becomes the primary enforcer of conformity in Ayaka's life. Throughout the series, Ayaka expresses frustration at having to follow other girls as in the following passage:

Every morning, I repeat the tedious task.  
Styling my hair and carefully putting make up on.  
I'm only in high school, yet I look like an office-lady.  
I really hate looking like this.  
Thick make up, curly waves in my hair.  
But I have to.  
Because I have to.  
Everyone is wearing their hair in curls.  
Get ready and put some make up on.  
I can't be bothered with it all, but I have to, because it's today, again.  
I have to do this even though it means I have to wake up early in the morning.  
Otherwise, I become the odd-one out.  
Every time I put my make up on, my reflection makes me sick. Am I the only one feeling this way?  
Putting on a lip stick even though it doesn't suit me, just because my friend recommends it...I think I am drowning in all this.  
That's why I hate this.  
That's why I planned to "sleep."<sup>527</sup>

Ayaka is weary of conformity but she is unable to stand up to the girls; indeed, she is fearful of retribution to such an extent that she sees ending her life as the only solution. Ayaka's initial efforts to fit in and be one of the girls at school is something that many of teenage readers would be able to relate to, as commodification has become an essential part of performing group identity within youth culture ever since the 1980s. The protagonist's struggles with her school friends in the *Wild Beast* series shows how hairstyle, make up and fashion style are not just part of performing group identity to differentiate the members from the non-members amongst the girls, but it is also part of enforcing conformity and reinforcing commitment within the group. The refusal to conform results in punishment and Ayaka is subjected to bullying after her eventual refusal to follow the group. For example, when Ayaka changes her mind about sleeping with a customer in a hotel room that her class mates had arranged for her, she

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<sup>527</sup> Yū, *Wairudo BīsutōI: Deai hen*, 60.

is not only bullied in school but they attempt to have her raped by members of a rival gang to Ryūki's. This is unsuccessful because Ayaka is rescued by Ryūki and his gang.<sup>528</sup>

Recalling the way that the Zombies expressed their rejection of conformity through refusing to carry a mobile phone, enjoy karaoke, or support the Tokyo baseball team, Ayaka's frustration at having to follow other girls and keeping up with fashion trends can be interpreted as an expression of rebelliousness. Unlike the Zombies, Ayaka is unable to express this rebellion through her actions and stand up to her class mates on her own; but nevertheless, her reluctance and eventual refusal to blindly conform can be interpreted as a hint of rebelliousness that is amplified when she comes into contact with the good bad boy. In earlier *ochikobore seishun* fiction, Holdenesque anger and frustration had been directed towards 'phoney' adults, whereas in *Wild Beast*, it is directed towards fellow 'phoney' teens. In the absence of parents or other oppressive authority figures, the power struggle of the protagonist in *Wild Beast* is more horizontal. Though peer pressure is a relatively new trope in *ochikobore seishun* narrative, Ayaka's struggle with her class mates can also be interpreted as a stand against conformity, which is one of the conventional and recognisable tropes of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, and a sign of her own rebelliousness. As noted by Medovoi, dating a rebel and finding "his style of masculinity" attractive is a form of female rebellion as she is rejecting societal expectations to be "good" and date a "good boy."<sup>529</sup> Ayaka's choice to date the leader of a *bōsōzoku* gang instead of other boys in her school can be interpreted as a form of rebellion but it is heavily overshadowed both by the heroine's role as a damsel-in-distress and her romantic relationship with him. This shift in point-of-view to that of damsel-in-distress also affects the vicarious experience of the reader, as the experience of rebellion becomes secondary, and romance with the rebel becomes the central focus.

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<sup>528</sup> Yū, *Wairudo Bīsuto II: Kuro Sofa hen*, 195.

<sup>529</sup> Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 266.

### Good bad girl: rebellion modelled on a good bad boy

The *Wild Beast* series also portrays another form of adolescent female rebellion through the secondary character Ryō, a retired leader of Yajū, who continues to ride with the gang. In contrast to the damsel-in-distress, who needs to be rescued and protected, Ryō is a strong independent woman who actively and independently performs rebellion against society through *bōsōzoku* identity. One of the on-going developments in *ochikobore seishun* fiction is the gradual diversification of female characters; the emergence of the strong and independent female character who earns the rebellious hero's respect rather than sympathy is a case in point, of which the female narrator protagonist Kanako, from the *Zombies* series, and Komomo and Rin, from the *I.W.G.P* series, are such examples.<sup>530</sup> Although these female characters are stronger and more independent than those who are depicted as helpless victims, they retain elements of the damsel-in-distress trope as their relationship with the rebellious hero and his support is what makes them stronger and independent. However, such dependence is absent in Ryō's character, as her relationship with the good bad boys is one between equals; despite having retired from the position of gang leader, she continues to associate with the gang and even rides out with them in her "mini skirt" and the boys note that she is one of the best riders and can even outride the police.<sup>531</sup>

When gender positioning within the *bōsōzoku* culture of the 1980s is taken into account, it becomes clear that Ryō's equal status (or even superior status as she had been the leader) within Yajū in the *Wild Beast* series is a product of fantasy. Like the majority of the rebellious youth cultures of the 1980s, *bōsōzoku* had been a heavily gendered space where only male members were allowed to call themselves *bōsōzoku* (female members were called *redīsu*).<sup>532</sup> The term *redīsu* was used to refer to girls associating with the *bōsōzoku* in general, ranging from the members of all-female motorcycle gangs to the girlfriends of *bōsōzoku* members. Gender hierarchy was strictly imposed within the *bōsōzoku*

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<sup>530</sup> See Chapter 3 (p148-150).

<sup>531</sup> Yū, *Wairudo BīsutōI: Deai hen*, 204.

<sup>532</sup> Nanba Kōji 難波功士, *YankīShinkaron: Furyō Bunka wa Naze Tsuyoi* ヤンキー進化論:不良文化はなぜ強い [Evolutionary Theory of Yankī: Why Rebellious Cultures are Persistent] (Tōkyō: Kōbunsha Shinsho, 2009), 156.

culture as female riders were to ride behind the male riders.<sup>533</sup> By contrast, Ryō along with Mikage takes the lead during one of their ride outs, indicating that, at least within Yajū, a girl can be an equal as long as she shows the skills and character of a *bōsōzoku*. Thus, using the term *bōsōzoku* instead of *redīsu* for Ryō, and her status and influence within the gang, is a challenge against this gender hierarchy and allows readers to temporarily experience freedom from hegemonic masculinity. The phenomenon of female readers enjoying the escape from gender hierarchy vicariously through female characters is well documented by Janice Radway who argues that reading romance novels is a “way of temporarily refusing the demands associated with their social role as wives and mothers.”<sup>534</sup> The *kētai shōsetsu* offers similar escape and vicarious pleasure through characters like Ryō. However, the emergence of such independent female characters is a recent development in *ochikobore seishun* narrative. For example, in *Speed*, the female protagonist had been disappointed when she realised that no matter how hard she tried, she would never truly be one of the boys simply because she was a girl.<sup>535</sup> Ayaka shows a different type of disappointment as, at times, she feels distant from Ryūki and Mikage because she cannot understand (nor is she interested in) the *bōsōzoku* activities:

While we were walking back to the shed from the restaurant Misuzu, Ryō was obviously overly excited about the ride-out. Her eyes were bloodshot and she was in heated discussion about something. Something about motorcycle riding techniques and engine parts. But I had no idea what she was saying so I just smiled and nodded while she talked away. When her conversation turned towards stealing motorcycles, we finally got there.<sup>536</sup>

The contrast between Ayaka’s and Ryō’s reactions toward motorcycle culture highlights the polarised positions of the tropes of damsel-in-distress and the good bad girl within the narrative of teenage rebellion. Ryō’s position as one-of-the-boys is further emphasised by her financial and social independence. Unlike Ayaka, who chooses to be financially and socially dependent on Ryūki, Ryō is not married and has a full time job that gives her financial independence. Her independence can be

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<sup>533</sup> Endō Natsuki (author) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

<sup>534</sup> Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 11.

<sup>535</sup> Kaneshiro Kazuki 金城一紀, *Supīdo スピード* [Speed] (Tōkyō: Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 275-277.

<sup>536</sup> Yū, *Wairudo BīsutoI: Deai hen*, 202.

interpreted as a form of rebellion against society which encourages women to find a spouse, become a housewife and reproduce. Furthermore, her continuous association with the Yajū after her retirement also indicates that she continues to rebel against society in her post-adolescence (as she is in her 20s).

Despite incorporating the masculine identity of *bōsōzoku* in her rebellion, Ryō retains her femininity, for example she rides motorcycle wearing her miniskirt and, according to the narrator-protagonist, Ryō is attractive, as noted in the following passage:

Her long brown hair was styled as perfectly as it could ever be, something I would never be able to do, her make-up was perfect too. Even with years of practice, I would never be able to do that. As viewed through the slit in her bright red skirt, her legs were skinny and perfect too. Everything about her suggested that she was part of the ‘night life’ - she was the most beautiful woman I had ever laid my eyes on.<sup>537</sup>

Ayaka focuses on Ryō’s appearance and is in awe, as well as showing mild envy, towards Ryō’s perfect make-up and fashion style. As a sister-like relationship begins to develop between the two, Ryō gives Ayaka a more suitable make-over and in doing so teaches and encourages the protagonist to be herself and stand up to her class mates. This tutelage allows Ayaka to break free from her peers and conformity. Thus, Ryō becomes a role model or a mentor for Ayaka, as she is given moral support and advice from the former *bōsōzoku* leader. At the same time, Ryō is depicted as a charismatic leader, not just to Ayaka but also to the other male members of Yajū as she continues to give advice and support to the gang even though she has retired. She is not only one of the boys, but one of the best and a leader to the boys. Such a character is a challenge to male oriented *bōsōzoku* or any other type of male oriented rebellious youth culture. Through such characters, readers are able to experience rebellion like the boys, free from the gender hierarchy that society imposes on them. Although Ryō’s rebellious identity is modelled on male *bōsōzoku* identity (instead of that of *redīsu* which had been subordinate to *bōsōzoku*), her rebellion is not dependent on the boys as the damsels-in-distress are. The emergence of good bad girl characters like Ryō in *kētai shōsetsu* indicates that a new imaginative role for girls is being forged

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<sup>537</sup> Yū, *Wairudo BīsutōI: Deai hen*, 87.



in contemporary tales of teenage rebellion where they have the most influence. *Kētai shōsetsu* is UCC (user created content) shaped by readers' desires and fantasies.

### **Girl's rebellion**

Aoyama Tomoko notes that academic interest in *shōjo* (girls) culture ranging from manga to performing arts, has significantly increased in the recent years to the extent that scholars no longer need to point out the gap in scholarship.<sup>538</sup> Yet, the more deviant forms of female identity such as those of *yankī* and *redīsu* from the 1980s and *gyaru* (gal) from the 1990s are still largely neglected by academics.<sup>539</sup> The focus on boys in Japanese scholarship on youth problems is not unique as a similar observation can be made of American scholarship. The earlier studies of juvenile delinquency in America focused predominantly on boys as illustrated by the following statement made by Paul Goodman in 1960:

The problems I want to discuss in this book belong primarily, in our society, to the boys: how to be useful and make something of oneself. A girl does not have to, she is not expected to, "make something" of herself [...] Correspondingly, our "youth troubles" are boys' troubles – female delinquency is sexual: "incurability" and unmarried pregnancy.

Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (1960)<sup>540</sup>

Although this statement is a product of its era, with which few would agree nowadays, the fact that girls have largely been overshadowed (and continue to be) by boys in the discourse of teenage rebellion is undeniable in both the Japanese and American contexts. For example, Ramona Caponegro, who explores female rebellion in the American juvies of the 1950s, has noted that rebellious girls have failed to attract critical attention and goes further to point out that the majority of scholarship on

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<sup>538</sup> Tomoko Aoyama, "The Girl, the Body, and the Nation in Japan and the Pacific Rim: Introduction," *Asian Studies Review* 32 (2008): 285.

<sup>539</sup> Works like *Bad Girls of Japan* (2005) by Sharon Kinsella focus on rebellious girls but the majority of studies focus on *kawaii* culture or *fujoshi* culture. *Kawaii* means cute in Japanese and it refers to girls who like girly and cute fashion. *Fujoshi* means 'rotten girls' and refers to both the readers and creators of Boys Love (or Yaoi, homosexual fantasy manga and novels for female readers).

<sup>540</sup> Paul Goodman cited by Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*, 168.

teenage rebellion seems to consider “maleness” a necessary precursor for delinquency. Likewise, underlying sexism in the discourse of teenage rebellion is also evident in Japanese context where scholars like Sato Ikuya, Igarashi Taro, and Nanba Koji have conducted extensive analysis of male rebellion in *furyō*, *yankī*, and *bōsōzoku* culture but little effort has been made to study female rebellion, as girls are only mentioned as a supplementary detail to boys’ rebellion.

When it comes to the sexual behaviour of adolescent girls, both society and academics show great concern. For example, in contrast to the lack of scholarship on *furyō shōjo*, *yankī shōjo*, or *redīsu* culture, there are abundant studies on *enjo kōsai* (often translated as compensated dating). The term *enjo kōsai* was first coined in the 1970s and initially it referred to sexual relationships between middle aged men and university students or working girls with low incomes.<sup>541</sup> However, in the 1990s, the problem of *enjo kōsai* triggered moral panic when it was reported that girls as young as those in junior high school were participating in prostitution. To this day, promiscuousness amongst girls is considered as an alarming sign of “delinquency” and *enjo kōsai* continues to be one of society’s major concerns.<sup>542</sup> As society’s concern increased, scholars began to argue that *enjo kōsai* is one of the ways in which a girl rebels against her parents, since a girl’s body is allegedly the property of the father.<sup>543</sup> For example, psychologist Ogura Chikako defines female adolescence as a period when a girl realises that she is not the owner of her body and realises that it “serves someone else’s desire.”<sup>544</sup> Ueno Chizuko claims that when a girl sells her body, she is exercising her right of ownership and challenging her father and it becomes an act of rebellion.<sup>545</sup>

The argument that *enjo kōsai* is a form of empowerment, disavows or condones the exploitation of adolescent girls by adult males. While it is the adult males who seek out these girls, society views it as

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<sup>541</sup> Ueno Chizuko, “Self-determination on sexuality? Commercialisation of sex among teenage girls in Japan,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 4, no2 (2003): 317. DOI: 10.1080/1464937032000113060.

<sup>542</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, 318-319.

<sup>544</sup> Ogura Chikako, *Sekushuaritī no Shinrigaku* [Psychology of Sexuality] (Tōkyō: Yuhikaku, 2001), 3. Cited by Ueno, “Self-determination on sexuality? Commercialisation of sex among teenage girls in Japan,” 322.

<sup>545</sup> Ueno, “Self-determination on sexuality? Commercialisation of sex among teenage girls in Japan,” 323.

a girls' problem and blame is laid mostly on those girls who 'shamelessly' offer their bodies for cash, while the male desire for underage girls is "naturalised."<sup>546</sup> Furthermore, such a view suggests that the only way for a girl to take control of her own body is through prostitution. Female protagonists like Ayaka in the *Wild Beast* series challenge such arguments by demonstrating that *enjo kōsai* is far from reclaiming her own body, as she is never in control during the process of *enjo kōsai*. The argument that *enjo kōsai* is a form of empowerment ignores the way hegemonic masculinity works.

The narrator-protagonist of the *Wild Beast* series is able to take control of her own body by refusing, rather than engaging in, prostitution. For some girls, *enjo kōsai* may be indeed be a form of rebellion against parents and means to gain financial power and satisfy their hedonistic consumption, but characters like Ayaka show that refusing it can also become a powerful performance of rebellion, especially when there is peer pressure involved. The lack of any power struggle with adults in the *Wild Beast* series foregrounds another element that seems to have escaped the notice of scholars exploring *enjo kōsai*, as the pressure on these teenage girls to conform within the group can also be a major factor in engaging in such activity.

The current approach to adolescent sexuality and teenage rebellion, especially with regard to *enjo kōsai*, also reveals the double standard society applies to adolescents. Being sexually active is not considered as a 'boys' trouble' while it is considered as the ultimate form of deviance for girls. It seems that when adolescent girls engage in sexual behaviour they are severely stigmatised. As noted by Wini Breines, who explores American female rebellion in the 1950s, the consequences of being promiscuous was so great that the majority of girls were reluctant to outwardly perform rebellion (which may explain why girls were less eager to go greaser than the boys).<sup>547</sup> Although Brienés' analysis is of American girls in the 1950s, little seems to have changed over the years, as American society continues to frown upon

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<sup>546</sup> Ueno, "Self-determination on sexuality? Commercialisation of sex among teenage girls in Japan," 321.

<sup>547</sup> Wini Breines, "Postwar White Girls' Dark Others," in *The Other Fifties: Interrogating Midcentury American Icons*, ed. Joel Foreman (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 55.

girls engaging in sexual activity while boys are relatively free to explore their sexuality in their adolescence.<sup>548</sup> Japanese society also shows this double standard as only girls are chastised and stigmatised for exploring their sexuality while boys are free to experiment. Adolescent sexuality is often only problematised in the context of such issues as *enjo kōsai* in which the blame is laid solely on the girls and not the men who exploit them.<sup>549</sup>

Those studying female rebellion in fiction, such as Medovoi and Caponegro, also focus on sexuality and Medovoi, in particular, even suggests that sexuality can also be power, by using Hal Ellson's *Tomboy* (1950) as an example, where the "tomboy" heroine "withholds sex to maintain her power" within the gang.<sup>550</sup> At the same time, sexuality can also be her vulnerability, because once she gives herself, there is a risk of losing her position within the gang and "being passed on to another and another boy" just like the other girls.<sup>551</sup> Thus, the protagonist guards her own body by withholding it from the boys. Whether discussing 'bad girl' or 'tomboy' types, Medovoi's discussion of female rebellion in 1950s America seems to centre on sexuality. In *Tomboy*, the rebellious heroine laments being a girl as she is aware of the fact that no matter how much of a masculine identity she may adopt, her feminine body is what separates her from the rest of the gang and she will never really be one of the boys. When she confides in one of her closest friends, he agrees and somewhat sympathetically points out that "[a] boy can do everything. Girls can hardly do anything."<sup>552</sup> The heroine of *Speed* echoes this dissatisfaction.

However, a good bad girl character like Ryō in the *Wild Beast* series has status or power within the gang not from her sexuality but from her skills in motorcycle riding, her charisma, and her ability as a

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<sup>548</sup> For instance, teenage girls are at the centre of attention in issues like sexting and sexualisation in the media. See R. Danielle Egan, *Becoming Sexual: A Critical Appraisal of the Sexualisation of Girls* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

<sup>549</sup> Ueno, "Self-determination on sexuality? Commercialisation of sex among teenage girls in Japan," 322.

<sup>550</sup> Ramona Caponegro, "Where the 'Bad' Girls Are (Contained) Representations of the 1950s Female Juvenile Delinquent in Children's Literature and Ladies' Home Journal," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 48, no.4 (Winter 2009): 320.

<sup>551</sup> Hal Ellson, *Tomboy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 34.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

leader; in other words, her femininity does not hinder her from performing *bōsōzoku* identity. A girl performing a male form of rebellious identity is the ultimate fantasy and escape for girls and perhaps one of the reasons why so many girls consume *furyō* manga and film in which they are able to vicariously experience teen rebellion through male protagonists.<sup>553</sup> In addition to consuming male oriented *ochikobore seishun* fiction, the emergence of good bad girls in *kētai shōsetsu* indicates that there is a growing desire and demand amongst girls to perform rebellion in other ways than through their sexuality.

### The personal versus the social

Another significant change from previous *ochikobore seishun* fiction is the personalisation of rebellion as the protagonist's desire for *hinichijō* overshadows any fight for freedom or stand against conformity. According to Satō, rebellious youth cultures like *bōsōzoku* offer its participants an experience of *hinichijō* and escape from mundane *nichijō*.<sup>554</sup> In the *Wild Beast* series, the protagonist is not deliberately seeking *hinichijō* but she is seeking escape by means of suicide. Her encounter with the good bad boys rescues her and offers her an alternative escape through *bōsōzoku* activities. It is also the case with Ryō, who has retired from the gang and has a full time job but continues to participate occasionally in *bōsōzoku* activities through the series as if taking a break from her job (*nichijō*). This desire for *hinichijō* emphasises 'self' in rebellion as it does in *ranobe*; for example, in the *Wild Beast* series, issues like bullying and *enjo kōsai* are presented as the personal struggles of the heroine. Her conflict with peers can be interpreted as a stand against conformity but within the text, the focus is on the protagonist and social criticism is muted by this emphasis on self.

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<sup>553</sup> When discussing the readership of so-called male oriented manga and films that cater to the male desire for adventure and escapism with the editor Nagasaka Tadashi from Futabasha, it was noted that while the target is primarily boys, in recent years there has been an increase in the female readers and audience who prefer *shōnen* manga or films rather than *shōjo*. Nagasaka Tadashi (editor) in discussion with the author, November 16, 2012.

<sup>554</sup> Satō Ikuya, 佐藤郁哉, *Bōsōzoku no Esunogurafi: Mōdo no Hanran to Bunka no Jyubaku* 暴走族のエスノグラフィー: モードの叛乱と文化の呪縛 [Ethnography of Bōsōzoku: Revolt of the Mode and Spellbinding Culture] (1984), 266.

These issues are mostly presented as heroine's miseries that are crucial in portraying a tragic heroine who needs to be rescued by the hero rather than as wider social phenomena. This approach encourages readers to feel empathy for the suffering protagonist but fails to encourage readers to engage with constructive social criticism with regard to issues like bullying or *enjo kōsai*. In his studies on *kētai shōsetsu*, Honda argued that the readers of *kētai shōsetsu* seem to “enjoy” reading about teenage pregnancy or abortion which society considers as “sins” or “corruption.”<sup>555</sup> The portrayal of the ‘misery’ resulting from such deviancy is presented as a form of entertainment rather than as a story to teach its readers a lesson in life. Triggering readers’ emotions with tragic narrative has become a recognised form of entertainment in Japanese popular media. There is even a Nintendo DS game called *99 Tears (99 no Namida)* in which the players stream 99 sad or moving short stories until they cry. Likewise, in the *Wild Beast* series, bullying and *enjo kōsai* are part of the ‘tear-jerking’ element that weakens the didacticism that had been evident in earlier *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*. In the *I.W.G.P* series, the issue of bullying is presented to readers through the protagonist’s interaction with a friend who had been bullied at school and the protagonist’s anger and despair is directed not just at the bullies but also towards society, that produces such an environment and fails to prevent such behaviour, thereby encouraging readers to think about these social issues. Such social commentary is weaker in the *Wild Beast* series, as the heroine only expresses fear and frustration towards her bullies and her refusal to participate in *enjo kōsai* is out of fear rather than from a sense of right or wrong. The protagonist draws empathy from readers but little effort is made to preach or educate on the issues of *enjo kōsai* or bullying.

Though the *Durarara!!* and *Wild Beast* series are discreet types of adolescent fiction that target different sets of readers, they are both example texts that indicate the way that *ochikobore seishun* fiction continues to evolve. Some of the core elements of *ochikobore seishun* narrative are retained, in particular, the portrayal of rebellious youth as good bad boys and rebellion performed through the

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<sup>555</sup> Honda, *Naze Ketai Shosetsu wa Urerunoka*, 18.

rejection of conformity are evident in both series. In these examples from *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, changes are made to some of the paradigmatic formulae of *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*. The classic power struggle with adults as parents and teachers is replaced by the more horizontal power struggle with the fellow gang members or peers at school. Likewise, links to the 1980s Japanese rebellious youth culture such as *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* culture is evident in both series, but undergoes change as it is adapted to fit the contemporary setting. In the *Durarara!!* series, the character that is introduced as a *bōsōzoku* member wears a straw hat and suit, instead of the traditional *tokkōfuku* or leather biker jacket, and his appearance is not much different from other characters. Whereas in the *Wild Beast* series, the *bōsōzoku* members wear the *tokkōfuku* but the protagonist notes that when the boys are not wearing *tokkōfuku*, they look like regular high school students. This adaptation or watering down of traditional *bōsōzoku* fashion style is an attempt to make it more appealing to contemporary readers as the more traditional old school rebellious youth fashions are somewhat extreme and these days are more often used in Gag manga like *Cromartie High School* by Nonaka Eiji for comic effect.<sup>556</sup> Unlike Nonaka's manga, in the *Durarara!!* series and the *Wild Beast* series, rebels need to be “cool” in the eyes of contemporary readers. Particularly in the *Wild Beast* series, the rebellious heroes need to be romantically appealing and thus, the out-dated mode of *bōsōzoku* fashion are toned down and only the *tokkōfuku* is retained in depicting a modern-day *bōsōzoku*.

Another significant change to the existing *ochikobore seishun* formula is the personalisation of rebellion. In both the *Durarara!!* and *Wild Beast* series, the protagonists are seeking an escape from their lives. The method of escape is different as Mikado, from the *Durarara!!* series, attempts to escape from his mundane life in suburban Japan by relocating to Ikebukuro and immersing himself in colour gang activities while Ayaka, from the *Wild Beast* series, attempts to escape her life by ending it. However, for both protagonists (whether intentionally or unintentionally) their escape is enacted through their association with gang culture; the colour gang in the *Durarara!!* series and *bōsōzoku* in

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<sup>556</sup> See Chapter 1 (p36-37) for images of rebellious youth culture losing its ‘threatening’ image and becoming cute or humorous in the mainstream media portrayal.

the *Wild Beast* series. This indicates that gang culture or rebellious youth culture in general are elements of *hinichijō* that allows them to break free from the never ending and tedious *nichijō*. Through their pursuit of *hinichijō*, readers are able to vicariously experience teenage rebellion through adventure in the underworld, or romance with a good bad boy. Since these rebellions are based on individual pleasure and desire, it becomes increasingly difficult to interpret either the protagonists' actions as a fight for justice or freedom or teenage rebellion as a grandiose socio-political statement. Nevertheless, the actions of both protagonists can be read as social criticism, especially their stand against conformity, but any kind of social commentary in either series is significantly muted by the elements of fantasy in the *Durarara!!* series and romance in the *Wild Beast* series. The social commentary in these two series is not as explicitly presented as it had been in the *I.W.G.P* or *Zombies* series, where the protagonists blatantly criticise society and educate readers as much as they entertain them. Thus, in its more recent manifestation in *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, *ochikobore seishun* fiction slides towards 'entertainment' and away from 'education' on the *dolce et utile* scale used by scholars of adolescent fiction to measure the degree of entertainment and education in the narrative. These changes in the *ochikobore seishun* formula, evident in *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, are evidence that *ochikobore seishun* narrative continues to evolve. Indeed, the very fact of continual evolution itself draws attention to the necessary fluidity in literary categorisation, which must be able to incorporate the parallel evolution of readership and socio-cultural context in which these texts are produced.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, I have proposed and elaborated a new literary category – *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu*, by identifying and examining a set of formulae that articulate a distinct sub-category of adolescent narrative in contemporary Japanese literature. Japanese scholarship on rebellious youth culture has steadily grown in the last few years but the scholarly focus remains on popular culture and popular media, such as manga, anime and film. For example, in 2014 alone, Saitō Tamaki published *Yankī-fying Japan* (*Yankīka Suru Nihon*, 2014), and contributed in *The Anthropology of Yankī: The ‘Art’ and Expression of Rebels* (*Yankī Jinruigaku: Toppatsusha tachi no ‘Āto’ to Hyōgen*, 2014) edited by Nobumasa Kushino from Tomonotsu Museum, and Inada Toyoshi published the populist but rather scholarly *Yankī Manga Guide Book* (*Yankī Manga Gaido Bukku*, 2014). Compared to the pre-2000 period, when studies on Japanese rebellious youth cultures were scarce, the growth of scholarship in this field is significant, but academic attention continues to derive predominantly from sociology and cultural studies, and narratives in adolescent fiction remain neglected. The titles listed above also highlight the continued use of the term *yankī* as a generic over-arching term for Japanese rebellious youth and their culture by these scholars, despite their focus being on either the rebellious youth culture of the 1980s or identifying traces of *tsuppari*, *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* culture in contemporary popular media. As I have elaborated in this thesis, this practice is problematic as it does not acknowledge or address the confusion around the plethora of terms deployed to indicate the various types of rebellious youth culture in Japan.

The neglect of *ochikobore seishun* fiction seems to derive from the dismissive attitudes in mainstream academia towards popular fiction. The discourse on Japanese popular fiction is centred on the Meiji and Taishō periods as scholars remain silent on contemporary Naoki Prize winning writers such as Ishida Ira or Kaneshiro Kazuki. The emergence of *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu*, the latter in particular,

has also prompted discussion as to whether these new forms of adolescent fiction can be considered as *shōsetsu*, and questions have also been raised as to whether these forms can be recognised as literature at all.<sup>557</sup> Once again, the scholarly treatment of these literary phenomena is predominantly in the fields of cultural studies or media studies. Examples include Azuma Hiroki who has written on *ranobe*, and Larissa Hjorth on *kētai shōsetsu*. Recently, a linguist has joined the discourse with the publication of Senko K. Maynard's *Theories on Expression in the Light Novel (Raito Noberu Hyōgenron, 2012)* and *Thoughts on the Language of Mobile Phone Novel (Kētai Shōsetsugokō, 2014)*, but literary scholars like Kume Yoriko, Inoue Nobu, and Ōhashi Takayuki, whose work I have drawn on in my exploration of *ranobe*, are in an extremely minority position in the discourse of Japanese literature. Ōhashi, in particular, explores teenage narratives in manga and anime, as well as novels (including *ranobe*), in *The History of Girls'/Boys' Fiction Examined through the Light Novel (Raito Noberu kara Mita Shōjo/Shōnen Shōsetsushi, 2015)* which places adolescent fiction within the larger frame of popular media instead of discarding it as mere 'entertainment'. This thesis both reclaims the term *shōsetsu* for this body of literature and reclaims these recent forms of adolescent fiction for literary studies by showing their continuities within the subgenre that I have proposed.

Thus, in order to develop a literary critical discourse for *ochikobore seishun shōsetsu* in the face of such a lacuna in the Japanese scholarship, I have drawn extensively from American scholarship. Those who have explored aspects of Japanese adolescent fiction tend to rely on the American context and incorporate some kind of comparative approach since the scholarship on American adolescent literature is abundant. Also because America was the first society to experience the rise of the teenager and the first market to develop the 'cheap' paperbacks that specifically targeted adolescent readers, both of which are the conditions that produced JD fiction. What links the American and Japanese contexts are both the commonalities of experience per se (albeit with a delay of at least two decades), as well as the specific influence of American culture in Japan during the post-war years, making the two contexts

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<sup>557</sup> Ishihara Chiaki 石原千秋, *Kētai Shōsetsu wa Bungaku ka* ケータイ小説は文学か [Are Mobile Phone Novels Literature?], Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobō, 2008.

comparable and American scholarship instrumental in this thesis. I have drawn from a wide range of scholarship including Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson on autobiographical writing, Michael Barson and Steven Heller on American rebellious youth culture, Leerom Medovoi and Leslie Fiedler on teenage rebel narratives in American literature, John Cawelti and Frederic Jameson on popular fiction, and Sheila A. Egoff and Roberta Seelinger Trites on JD novels. While this work has been foundational to my understanding and analysis of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, at the same time I have sought, whenever possible, to connect with and relate to the critical context in Japan.

In tracing the evolutionary development of *ochikobore seishun* fiction, I have identified changes in the mode of writing from what I have termed *kōsei* autobiographical writing to mystery fiction, and then from mystery fiction to fantasy (urban fantasy in *ranobe*, and romantic fantasy in *kētai shōsetsu*) fiction. The mode of writing changes as *ochikobore seishun* fiction evolves but the deployment of intimate modes of narrative, which maintain the central role of the reader, remains throughout. The first stage of *kōsei* autobiographical writing appeared at a time when rebellious teens were being depicted as juvenile criminals by the news media and thus, the initial portrayal of the good bad boy had educational import as it provided readers with a more positive insight into *bōsōzoku* culture. By contrast, *kōsei* autobiographical writings published after the mainstreaming of *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* culture play on the imagined nostalgia for the late 1970s and 1980s of a new generation of readers, and the glamorised portrayal of the rebellious teen in these works reinforces the recurrent character trope of the ‘good bad boy’.

The glamorisation of the teenage *ochikobore* hero continues in adolescent mystery fiction. Now the added role of the ‘detective’, who rights wrongs, foregrounds once again the positive traits of the good bad boy hero; in addition, the incorporation of mystery into *ochikobore seishun* narrative significantly changes the readerly experience. The mystery elements, such as the role of the detective and the chase and capture of the culprit, augment the vicarious thrills of teenage rebellion and elevate the degree of

escapism. However, at the same time, these mystery novels also present readers with various social issues, especially the discrimination of marginalised people and corruption in society, so that the didactic element is strong. As *ochikobore seishun* narrative shifts from mystery to fantasy, this educational tone is overshadowed by the fantasy element that brings escapism to the fore.

Cawelti argues that the formula for popular fiction gradually and continuously evolves as writers experiment with the existing formula and the relationship between the text and the reader continues to shift. The most significant change evident in the shift from mystery to fantasy in the development of *ochikobore seishun* narrative is the personalisation of rebellion, or the focus on self. This is a trend first noted in popular media such as manga and anime by scholars like Miyadai Shinji and Ōsawa Machi, but is one that is also evident in fiction that targets a younger generation of readers. The focus on self, enhanced by the added element of fantasy, mutes the didactic impulse in its disengagement from social reality. Ōsawa and Miyadai argue that the failure of socio-political movements in the 1960s and early 1970s lead to the loss of any notion of an absolute and unifying ideology.<sup>558</sup> As a result Japanese youth began to seek escape in popular media in order to cope with what Miyadai terms *owari naki nichijō* (never-ending everyday). Likewise, the social realities that readers of *ochikobore seishun* narrative in *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu* face, such as youth unemployment and efforts at school no longer guaranteeing their future, prompt their ‘escape’ into highly fantasised tales of teenage rebellion.

The good bad boy trope itself, while dominant, also undergoes development in terms of the rehabilitation of the rebel hero. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, the fact that it is written from a position of rehabilitation allows the author to claim good bad boy status. Having become a productive member of society as an adult is one of the strongest indications that he is a good bad boy and not an

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<sup>558</sup> Ōsawa Masachi cited in Motoko Tanaka, “Trends of Fiction in 2000s Japanese Pop Culture.” *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies* 14, no.2 (2014), accessed June 5, 2015, <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/ejcs/vol14/iss2/tanaka.html>. Miyadai Shinji 宮台真司, *Owarinaki Nichijō wo Ikero* 終わらなき日常を生きろ [Live the Never-ending Everyday] (Tōkyō, Chikuma Bunko, 1995).

irredeemable ‘bad boy’. By contrast, in the mystery fiction exemplified by Ishida and Kaneshiro, there is no need for the protagonists to rehabilitate, as the very role of a ‘detective’ solidifies his good bad boy status in the face of the multiple social ills that he confronts. There is no longer a need for the rebellious protagonist to rehabilitate, as the society that labels him as ‘bad’ or *ochikobore* is questioned instead.

In *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu* the very issue of rehabilitation is superfluous because it both transcends the central preoccupation with the self, and relates to the condition of *owarinaki nichijō* in the conventional world, from which the characters seek to escape. Characters like Kadoda from Narita Ryōgo’s *Durarara!!* series is in full-time employment but at the same time, maintains his membership of the colour gang; likewise, Ryō from Yū’s *Wild Beast* series continues her *bōsōzoku* activities despite working at a bar full time. In *kōsei* autobiographical writing, graduating from rebellious youth culture had been an indication of rehabilitation and a step towards maturity. However, the *ochikobore seishun* heroes (and heroines) in fiction continue to engage in rebellious youth culture even as they proceed to adulthood. For both Kadoda and Ryō, gang and *bōsōzoku* activities are elements of *hinichijō* that allow them to escape from the never-ending everyday. The freedom to enjoy gang culture in adulthood seems to be part of the fantasy that continues to draw readers to *ochikobore seishun* fiction. The shifting significance of the issue of rehabilitation highlights the importance of the interrelationship between ever changing social realities and this body of popular fiction.

It is possible to argue that this interrelationship is enacted in the changing role of girls in *ochikobore seishun* narrative, which began as a very masculine-defined genre. In its earlier manifestations, vicarious rebellion could only be experienced by the female reader through engagement with the male protagonist. But in fantasy fiction this engagement is broadened and greater account is taken of the expectations of the young female reader. Vicarious rebellion can now take place through the female protagonist’s relationship with the rebel hero, as well as through the depiction of the good bad girl. The

emergence of the good bad girl who performs rebellious youth identity such as *bōsōzoku* or *banchō* (the term for the alpha male within a group of *tsuppari*), which was previously portrayed as accessible only to boys, is most evident in *kētai shōsetsu*. The good bad girls in *kētai shōsetsu* claim these previously male-oriented identities as their own, and, in doing so, offer female readers vicarious escape from gender hierarchy. The emergence of such characters highlights how a change in readership alters and contributes to developments in the genre formula. As the production and consumption of *ochikobore seishun* narrative now spans over three and a half decades, it has both reflected various socio-cultural changes and responded to changes in readership as one generation replaces another.

### New Developments

While stories of good bad girls are in great demand on *kētai shōsetsu* websites such as Magic I-land and Wild Strawberries, the success of both the *Durarara!!* and *Wild Beast* series seems to have contributed towards the expansion of *ochikobore seishun* narrative elements in *ranobe* and *kētai shōsetsu* respectively.



*The Delinquent Monk and the High School Girl Apprentice* by Takemura Yūki (left), *The Lone-Wolf's Earnest and Blind Love* by Tuzuri (centre), and *Exciting Romance with the Wolf Type Rebel Boyfriend* by Nāna (right)

In addition to the continued publication of the *Durarara!!* series under the new series title *Durarara!! SH* (2014-2015), the most recent *ranobe* to combine *ochikobore seishun* elements with fantasy is Takemura Yūki's *The Delinquent Monk and the High School Girl Apprentice* (*Furyō Bōzu to Minarai Jyoshi Kōsei no Reikan Mesoddo*, 2015). The *Wild Beast* series was republished in book form for the

second time with a different publishing company in 2013, and other girl-meets-rebel works such as *The Lone-wolf's Earnest and Blind Love* (*Furyō Ōkami no Ichizu na Dekiai*, 2014) by Tuzuri and *Exciting Romance with the Wolf Type Rebel Boyfriend* (*Ōkamikei Furyō Kareshi to Ren'ai*, 2013) by Nāna have also been published in book form following their online success.

At the same time, the publication of *ochikobore seishun* mystery novels also continues with two more volumes of Ishida Ira's *I.W.G.P* series, *Ikebukuro West Gate Park XI: The Parade of Hate* and *Ikebukuro West Gate Park Episode of Youth: The Birth of a King* being published in 2014. Moreover, works like Akiyoshi Yui's *The Story of a Girl in the Corner of the Classroom Falling in Love with a Delinquent* (*Kyōshitsu no Sumi ni Iru On'na ga Furyō to Ren'ai Shichatta Hanashi*, 2013), which incorporates teen romance into the *ochikobore seishun* formula in a similar way to *kētai shōsetsu*, have also emerged, indicating a continuing diversification in tales of teenage rebellion in adolescent literature through genre-mixing.



*Ikebukuro West Gate Park XI: The Parade of Hatred* by Ishida Ira (left), *Ikebukuro West Gate Park Episode of Youth: The Birth of a King* by Ishida (centre), and *The Story of a Girl in the Corner of Classroom Falling in Love with a Delinquent* by Akiyoshi Yui (right)

Furthermore, even the publication of *kōsei* autobiographical writing which looks back to the 1980s and the old-school rebellious youth cultures such as *furyō*, *yankī* and *bōsōzoku* has also continued. The most recent *kōsei* autobiographical works to be published are Endō Natsuki's<sup>559</sup> *Harajuku Bad Angels* (*Harajuku Baddo Enjerusu*, 2013) and Yumesaki Takayuki's *The 120% Adolescence of Bōsōzoku*

<sup>559</sup> Endō Natsuki is a famous former *bōsōzoku* leader first introduced in Chapter 1.

(*120% Bōsōzoku no Seishun*, 2015). These two texts are based on the authors' own experiences of being *bōsōzoku* in the 1980s and the widening temporal gap between the events narrated and the time of publication mean that reminiscence is replaced by imagined nostalgia for a new generation of readers. The use of manga art on the cover of Endō's work and the film adaptation of his other work suggests that his work targets a contemporary youth audience which recognises these types of teenage rebellion from their exposure to *ochikobore seishun* narratives in fiction as well as in other popular media.



*Harajuku Bad Angels* by Endo Natsuki (left) and *The 120% Adolescence of Bōsōzoku* by Yumesaki Takayuki (right)

The evolution of *ochikobore seishun* narrative from *kōsei* autobiographical writing to *kētai shōsetsu* explored throughout this thesis shows the importance of understanding the socio-cultural contexts that produce such texts as well as the relationship between the text and the reader. In doing so, this thesis has highlighted the need for fluidity in literary categorisation. This is most clearly indicated by the way in which all elements in this evolution themselves continue to evolve, responding to the preferences of multiple generations of readers and an ever more complex market.



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