

THE ROLE OF MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAPANESE AND UZBEK CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



<https://doi.org/10.24412/2181-1784-2026-21-129-136>

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ABSTRACT

The article presents a comparative historical analysis of the role of periodicals in the formation and evolution of children's literature in Japan and Uzbekistan. It explores the developmental path from ancient didactic traditions and medieval humanism to the establishment of professional creative writing in the 19th and 20th centuries. Particular attention is given to the influence of enlightenment movements (the Meiji era and Jadidism), the ideologization of the press during the wartime period, and the post-war flourishing of diverse authorial genres. The author establishes that newspapers and magazines served as a key "incubator" in both cultures, facilitating the qualitative transition from folklore forms to a modern systemic genre structure in children's literature.

Keywords: *children's literature, periodicals, comparative analysis, Japan, Uzbekistan, Jadidism, enlightenment.]*

要旨

本稿は、日本とウズベキスタンにおける児童文学の形成と進化の過程において、定期刊行物が果たした役割を比較歴史的観点から分析するものである。古代の教訓的伝統や中世の人文主義から、19世紀から20世紀にかけての専門的な芸術文学の形成に至るまでの変遷を考察する。特に、明治維新やジャディード運動といった啓蒙運動の影響、戦時下におけるメディアのイデオロギー化、そして戦後の作家による多様なジャンルの開花に焦点を当てる。本研究は、新聞や雑誌が両文化において、口承・伝承形態から現代的なジャンル体系へと移行させるための重要な「インキュベーター

(孵化器) 」として機能し、児童文学の専門化を確固たるものにしたことを論証する。

キーワード： 児童文学、定期刊行物、比較分析、日本、ウズベキスタン、ジャデイド運動、啓蒙思想

ANNOTATSIYA

Mazkur maqolada yapon va o'zbekiston bolalar adabiyotining shakllanishi va rivojida davriy matbuotning tutgan o'рни qiyosiy-tarixiy jihatdan tahlil qilingan. Bolalar mutolaasining qadimiy didaktik an'analar va o'rta asrlar gumanizmidan XIX–XX asrlardagi professional badiiy so'z san'ati darajasiga qadar bo'lgan taraqqiyot yo'li tadqiq etilgan. Ma'rifatparvarlik harakatlari (Meiji davri va jadidchilik) ta'siri, urush davri matbuotining mafkuralashuvi hamda urushdan keyingi yillarda turli janrlarining ravnaq topishiga alohida e'tibor qaratilgan. Muallif har ikki madaniyatda gazeta va jurnallar adabiyotni folklor shakllaridan zamonaviy janrlar tizimiga o'tkazishda asosiy omil va vosita vazifasini o'taganini asoslab bergan.

Kalit so'zlar: bolalar adabiyoti, davriy nashrlar, qiyosiy tahlil, Yaponiya, O'zbekiston, jadidchilik, ma'rifatparvarlik.

The evolution of children's literature as an autonomous artistic phenomenon in Japan and Uzbekistan is inextricably linked to the emergence and development of the periodical press. Magazines and newspapers did not merely serve as publication outlets; they functioned as catalysts for shaping aesthetic concepts, defining pedagogical objectives, and fostering environments for professional authorial growth. In both cultures, periodicals acted as "incubators" through which literature for children transcended the confines of didactic moralizing and folkloric retelling, evolving into a sophisticated genre of *belles-lettres*.

In Uzbekistan, the earliest monumental text containing references to child-rearing and literacy is the *Avesta* (9th century BCE – 8th century CE). This work emphasized education as a primary tool for combating evil, positioning the "prudent child" dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and craftsmanship as the ideal. Following the introduction of Islam in the 8th century, the *Haftiyak* — an abridged selection of the Quran — became a cornerstone of primary reading, serving as the inaugural primer in *maktab*s [Safarov 2022: 69-71].

Concurrently in Japan, the Heian period witnessed the birth of visual storytelling traditions that would become the precursors to modern children's books. The renowned *Choju-giga* ("Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Birds," 12th century) employed anthropomorphic imagery for the purposes of satire and entertainment, thereby establishing the foundation of Japan's distinctive visual culture.

In 11th-century Uzbekistan, Mahmud al-Kashgari documented elements of Turkic folklore—including lullabies (*alla*), ritual songs, and game songs — within his encyclopedic work, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*. These elements constituted the foundational fabric of the early world of childhood. Furthermore, treatises such as Yusuf Khash Hajib's *Kutadgu Bilig* ("Wisdom of Royal Glory") and Ahmad Yugnaki's *Hibat al-Haqa'iq* ("The Gift of Truths") established a comprehensive system of ethical precepts for the youth [Jumaboyev 2006: 27].

In Japan, the Muromachi period (1392–1573) saw the emergence of *otogi-zōshi*, illustrated narratives rooted in legends and folk tales. Although these works were not exclusively authored for a juvenile audience, narratives such as *Issun-bōshi* ("The One-Inch Boy") subsequently formed the basis of the classical canon of Japanese children's literature [Williams 2012: 208].

The Timurid era (15th–16th centuries) in Uzbekistan was defined by the literary contributions of Alisher Navoi. His epic poems, such as *Farhad and Shirin*, championed labor, science, and humanism [Jumaboyev 2010: 80-82], becoming essential reading for the rising generation. Similarly, Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur's *Babur-name* served as an invaluable scholarly resource for youth, providing extensive knowledge of history and geography [Jumaboyev 2006: 27].

During the Edo period (1603–1868), Japan experienced a significant boom in children's publishing, driven by woodblock printing technology (*mokuhansha*) [Williams 2012: 4]. The 1670s saw the emergence of *Akahon* ("Red Books») — affordable, small-format editions of myths and folktales produced specifically for children. One of the earliest examples is considered to be *Yama-hototogisu* ("The Cuckoo from the Mountain," late 17th century), which contained didactic stories intended for grandchildren [Williams 2012: 9]. This evolved into the *Kurohon* ("Black Books") and *Aohon* ("Blue Books") genres, which featured more sophisticated narratives.

In Uzbekistan during this period, literature remained predominantly manuscript-based, focusing on genres such as parables and fables. Muhammadniyoz Nishoti (*Husnu Dil*) and later Muhammad Sharif Gulkhani (author of the famous *Zarbulmasal*, early 19th century) utilized allegorical images

of animals and birds to instill wisdom in children and to denounce vices such as greed and vanity [Jumaboyev 2006: 27, 79].

Modern children's literature in Japan began to take shape during the Meiji period (1868–1912), when national modernization stimulated the conscious development of juvenile culture. A pivotal stage was the emergence of magazines such as *Shōnen-en* (1888), *Shōkokumin* (1889), and *Nihon-no-shōnen* (1889), which initiated the systematic publication of works for youth. It was during this time that the publisher Hakubunkan launched the series *Shōnen bungaku sōsho* ("Youth Literature Series"). Its first volume, Iwaya Sazanami's *Koganemaru* (1891) [犬飼和雄 1989: 7], is widely regarded as the starting point of modern Japanese children's literature.

In Uzbekistan, a parallel process commenced in the early 20th century under the influence of the Jadid movement, which viewed the enlightenment of children as the cornerstone of national revival. Educational reformers such as Abdulla Avloniy and Hamza Hakimzoda Niyozı authored the first textbooks and manuals (e.g., *Birinchı Muallım* and *Yengil Adabiyot*), which essentially functioned as the inaugural readers for children. In 1907, Abdulla Avloniy founded the newspaper *Shuhrat*, utilizing its pages to propagate the ideals of education and science among the laboring classes [Jumaboyev 2006: 28], thereby laying the foundation for the future Uzbek juvenile press.

Japanese magazines of the late 19th century actively featured translations of Western classics, such as Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, translated by Wakamatsu Shizuko (1890). These translations introduced novel moral systems and narrative forms into the literary landscape. Concurrently, Iwaya Sazanami utilized periodical platforms to reform *kokumin dōwa* (national fairy tales), adapting folkloric themes for a new generation of readers.

In the Uzbek context of the 1910s, the publications of Munawwar Qori Abdurashidkhanov (*Adibi Avval*) and Saidrasul Aziziy (*Ustozi Avval*) played a crucial role in shaping new ethical norms and a pursuit of knowledge in children through the printed word [Safarov 2022: 106]. The development of the Uzbek children's press received a significant impetus in 1919 with the launch of the magazine *Bolalar Yoldoshi* in Samarkand, which encouraged both teachers and students to participate actively in the creation of literary content [Safarov 2022: 103].

In Japan, the Taishō period (1912–1926) was marked by a zenith of humanistic ideals, which manifested in the activities of the magazine *Akai Tori* ("Red Bird," 1918), founded by Suzuki Miekichi. This periodical became the

epicenter of the *dōshin bungaku* ("children's heart literature") movement, which asserted the primacy of the purity of the child's soul and artistic merit over dry didacticism [Collins 1983: 47]. Its contributors included such masters as Ryūnosuke Akutagawa (*The Spider's Thread*) and Mimei Ogawa (*The Red Candles and the Mermaid*), who crafted philosophical and realistic fairy tales.

In Uzbekistan, during the 1920s, magazines such as *Yosh Turkistonliklar*, *Bolalar Dunyosi* (1921), and *Yosh Kuch* (1929) played a decisive role in broadening the thematic scope of children's literature [Jumaboyev 2006: 28]. Within these publications, a new generation of authors emerged — including Zafar Diyor, Ilyas Muslim, Shukur Sadulla, and Quddus Muhammadi—whose poetry and prose exhorted children to master science and technology. The magazine *Yosh Kuch* aimed to unite young talents and publish works that mirrored the contemporary zeitgeist [Safarov 2022: 106].

The Japanese periodicals of the 1920s also served as an arena for ideological contestation. Alongside the lyrical *Akai Tori*, there existed a proletarian school of children's literature centered around the magazine *Shōnen Senki* ("Youth War Flag," 1929). This publication sought to introduce concepts of class struggle into the juvenile consciousness, although many of its issues were suppressed by censorship [Collins 1983: 49, 51]. Nevertheless, this movement gave rise to "life-literature" (*seikatsu dōwa*), which focused on the depiction of everyday reality.

During this period, the genres of the realistic short story and novella were actively introduced into Uzbek literature via periodicals [Jumaboyev 2006: 39]. In the early 1920s, the magazine *Sharq Chechagi* published translations of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales and works by Abdulla Qodiriy (e.g., *Tayoq Maktabi*), contributing to the professionalization of national juvenile prose. The newspaper *Lenin Uchquni* (founded in 1929) emerged as the primary organ for children's literature [Safarov 2022: 104], ensuring a continuous dialogue between authors and their audience.

In the 1930s, Japan witnessed an intensification of state control over the juvenile press. The immensely popular magazine *Shōnen Kurabu* (with a circulation reaching 642,000 copies) became an instrument for propagating the ideal of the "great man" who serves the Emperor and the nation [Collins 1983: 49, 59]. Historical narratives serialized in the magazine, such as Eiji Yoshikawa's *Shinshū Tengu*, combined adventurous plots with nationalistic pathos [Collins 1983: 56, 76]. In 1941, the Japan Association for Children's Culture was established to exercise total control over literature, publishing the pro-war magazine *Shōkokumin Bunka* [Collins 1983: 45].

Similarly, in Uzbekistan during the 1930s and the Second World War, children's literature addressed the tasks of patriotic education through periodicals. Poets such as Zafar Diyor ("The School is Your Front") and Shukur Sadulla ("What Have You Done?") used newspaper platforms to exhort children to contribute to labor efforts in the rear to support the front lines [Jumaboyev 2006: 29, 30]. The newspaper *Lenin Uchquni* published verses by Gafur Gulyam (e.g., "Our Valiant Generation Before the Trial"), which were imbued with faith in victory and calls for heroism.

Japanese children's magazines during the war instilled in young readers the notion that dying for the Emperor was the ultimate honor. Literature was transformed into a tool for spiritual mobilization, where even fairy-tale protagonists acquired the traits of ideal soldiers [Collins 1983: 41, 43, 45]. In Uzbekistan during the same period, magazines became a platform for the development of juvenile epic poetry and ballads on military themes. The works of Oybek and Hamid Olimjon, published in the periodical press, depicted the lives of children under wartime conditions—their suffering and resilience—thereby constructing the image of the young patriot.

Following Japan's defeat in 1945, the juvenile press underwent a radical transformation. Magazines such as *Akatonbo* ("Red Dragonfly," 1946) and *Ginga* ("Galaxy") emerged, promoting ideals of peace and democracy [Collins 1983: 98]. However, by the early 1950s, these publications were superseded by mass-market entertainment magazines (e.g., *Bōken Ō*, *Manga Ō*) featuring adventure comics, a shift that drew criticism from proponents of "serious" literature [Collins 1983: 102]. In 1960, a group of critics and authors published the manifesto *Kodomo to Bungaku* ("Children and Literature"), calling for the creation of high-quality, realistic works free from hollow didacticism [Collins 1983: 102].

In the 1950s, new authors such as Satoru Sato (*The Little Country No One Knows*) and Tomiko Inui began to emerge through magazines, introducing modern fantasy and psychological realism into the literary canon. Periodicals also facilitated the growth of literary criticism, which enabled a re-evaluation of the past and the formulation of standards for contemporary children's books [Collins 1983: 113, 115].

The post-war period in Uzbekistan marked a flourishing era for children's magazines and newspapers. The magazine *Guncha* (resumed in 1958) and the newspaper *Lenin Uchquni* became focal points for prominent authors. These outlets featured poetic cycles by Quddus Muhammadi (*Nature's Alphabet*), Ilyas Muslim, and Pulat Mumin, which balanced aesthetic education with popular science.

Magazines also spurred the development of children's science fiction and adventure novellas (e.g., H. Tukhtaboev, H. Shaikhov) [Jumaboyev 2006: 41].

This analysis leads to the conclusion that the development of children's literature in Japan and Uzbekistan, despite their geographic and cultural distance, followed common patterns in which the periodical press served as the primary instrument of evolution. It was specifically the magazines—Japan's *Akai Tori* and *Shōnen Kurabu*, and Uzbekistan's *Guncha* and *Lenin Uchquni*—that transformed children's reading from a secondary pedagogical tool into an autonomous art form. In both traditions, periodicals ensured the transition from rigid religious didactics to humanistic ideals and psychological realism. During periods of historical challenge (the early 20th-century reforms and the Second World War), children's newspapers and magazines in both countries served as key channels for shaping civic identity and national consciousness. Thus, children's periodicals in Japan and Uzbekistan were not merely means of text distribution, but unique socio-cultural spaces that defined the modern character and high artistic standards of literature for the younger generation.

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