

World Literature for Children: The Case of Iwaya Sazanami's *The Brave Dog Kogane-maru* (1891)

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The fairytale has always been known for its ability to travel, a capacity that likely originates with its oral roots. Its modern history as printed text is closely intertwined with translation, especially reinterpreted as literature specifically for children. In Japan, many European fairytales were translated and adapted during the Meiji period (1868-1912) translation boom, prized as entertaining vehicles for teaching moral values. *The Brave Dog Kogane-maru* by Iwaya Sazanami (1870-1933), the doyen of Meiji children's literature, is also a fairytale — an animal fable about a young dog (!) who takes revenge on his father's murderer. Novella-length, it is often described as the first original (i.e. non-translated) literary work written for Japanese children. The reality is more complicated, since Sazanami himself introduces his book as something of a cultural hybrid, formed by narrative techniques he regards as common to native and foreign fairytales alike. In his preface, he tells the reader that European sources such as "Märchen [fairytales] by the Grimms and Andersen" provided inspiration for his tale, as did a plethora of native works: "'Peach Boy' [Momotarô], 'Crackling Mountain' [Kachikachi yama]...*Tales of Times Now Past* [Konjaku monogatari], *A Collection of Tales from Uji* [Uji shûi monogatari] and so on, plus Temmei-era *kibyôshi* [popular 'yellow-cover' novels]." Cashing in on the current popularity of the translated fairytale, all the while relying on existing Japanese precedent, Sazanami incorporates traditional Confucian plot elements, a modern novelistic narrative, and even concessions to the emerging child reader. By drawing comparisons with both Kyokutei Bakin's *Nansô satomi hakkenden* (The Biographies of Eight Dogs, 1814-1832) and Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *Reinecke Fuchs* (Reynard the Fox, 1794), to which *The Brave Dog Kogane-maru* was compared, I will demonstrate how Sazanami used a complex process of intra- and inter-cultural translation to come up with his "original" work for the modern Meiji child.