We have thus far looked at *ryōsai kenbo* thought in the context of the discourse on girls’ education. Because these statements were made with the aim of promoting the future development of girls’ education or adapting it to the new era, they tended to be ambitious, with a forward-looking character. Here, I will approach the problem from another perspective by looking at the image of women presented in morality textbooks (*shūshin kyōkasho*) for girls’ middle schools. This will enable us to see what type of woman was considered exemplary and presented as such to girls in school. Since these morality textbooks were produced according to an authorized set of standards, the type of *ryōsai kenbo* that emerges can be said to accurately express the official views of the Ministry of Education. We will also gain a much clearer picture of how the conceptual content of *ryōsai kenbo* changed over time.

Before entering into specifics, some chronological background is in order. The content of morality textbooks used at girls’ middle schools was prescribed by the Teaching Curricula for Girls’ Middle School (*Kōtō jogakkō kyōju yōmoku*), which were created in 1903 and revised in 1911 and 1937. 1920, the year of the revision of the Girls’ Middle School Act, marks a turning point in the history of morality textbooks, since their content underwent considerable change at about this time; this will be a key point of focus in this discussion. The 1932 revisions to the Enforcement Regulations for the Girls’ Middle School Act (which added civics to the curriculum) marked another major shift in views about women, as Japan got on a semi-war footing. I will thus treat the period between 1920 and 1932 as a single unit. The numbers of morality textbooks examined for each time period are shown in Table 5.1. (The names of individual textbooks are listed in the Appendix.) Because of the small number published before 1903, these will be discussed together with those published between 1903 and 1911.

An analysis of textbooks should, naturally, be based on the versions actually approved for use. However, not all of the approved versions of the textbook are available in the Tōsho Bunko (Library of Textbooks) and...
Education Library of the National Institute for Educational Policy Research of Japan. In such cases, I have used the versions submitted for approval. The conclusions drawn should still be valid, since in cases where submitted and final versions are both available there are no significant differences in content. Quotations from submitted versions will be marked as such.

I. Morality Textbooks up to 1911

In June 1895, the Ministry of Education adopted Ordinance Number 4, requiring textbooks used in girls’ middle schools to meet prescribed standards. However, years passed with no publication of any morality textbooks, and the delay was such that at the 1900 National Council of Principals of Girls’ Middle Schools, a proposal was made to officially request the Ministry of Education to produce such textbooks.\(^1\) The next year, the Ministry of Education published the *Morality Textbook for Use in Girls’ Middle Schools* (*Kōtō jogakkōyō shūshin kyōkasho*), written by Nakajima Rikizō and Shinoda Toshihide, and that same year Inoue Enryō’s *Intermediate Moral Education for Girls* (*Chūtō joshi shūshinsho*) also appeared. The Ministry textbook had been produced hastily in response to the lack of textbooks, at the request of the National Council.\(^2\) It was probably

\(^1\) See “Zenkoku kōtō jogakkōchō kaigi” (National Council of Principals of Girls’ Middle Schools), *Kyōiku jiron* 557, October 5, 1900.

\(^2\) The Preface to the Ministry of Education textbook states: “Because of the complete lack of morality textbooks for girls’ middle schools at present, this work was submitted immediately for publication without the leisure of additional careful preparation. In the event that some parts are found to be unsuitable for actual teaching, they may be revised at a later time.” Monbushō (Ministry of Education), *Kōtō jogakkōyō shūshin kyōkasho* (Morality textbook for use in girls’ middle schools), vol. 1, 1902, revised edition, in *Kōtō jogakkō shūryō shūsei* (Collection of materials for girls’ middle schools), vol. 10, (Ōzorasha, 1989), 3.