Writing With the Grain: A Multitextual Analysis of Kaidan Botandoro

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Writing With the Grain

A Multitextual Analysis of Kaidan Botandōrō

A Thesis Presented

by

WILLIAM D. WOOD

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University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
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Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures
WRITING WITH THE GRAIN

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ABSTRACT

WRITING WITH THE GRAIN: A Multitextual Analysis of Kaidan Botandōrō

SEPTEMBER 2011

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As a text Botandōrō demonstrates bibliographic codes that straddle the border between modern and pre-modern literature. Wakabayashi would present his work as the fruit of his technique of ‘photographing language’ that, by extension, would provide closer and more direct access to the interiority of “author.” In his prologue he presented his shorthand method as a technique that would come to represent the new standard of modern writing. As they created a new system for transcribing language, stenographers were wrestling with the philosophical nature and limitations of language in spoken and written form, and their discoveries and accomplishments would provide a framework for future authors during a highly transformative period in the history of Japanese literature, whether intentional or not. By focusing on these paratextual elements in Botandōrō in the context of the tale’s intertextual construction we find that it is best viewed as a text that exhibits aspects of modern and pre-modern literature in its presentation as a material object, the claims it makes for sokki as a modern writing technique, and its negotiations with the idea of authorship.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Juror 1: Why do you keep your own record of the testimony, they write down everything that’s said?
Diane Chambers: They don’t write down emotions, attitudes, telling facial glances…
Juror 2: Study my face, what am I thinking?
Diane: …it is my duty to record each shred of evidence to give us every kernel of information so that we can make the thoughtful and correct decision.

-Shelly Long, Cheers episode 111, 1987

The business of language can, in broad abstraction, be regarded as the expression and transmission of information. It is not always the case, however, that the employment of language will lead to exactly the information that the employer intends being conveyed, for language must be couched in a physical medium, sensually detected, and interpreted mentally. All the physical processes required for the transmission of this information may also allow for omission or corruption of the information in the message. A listener may not hear a certain phrase correctly or misunderstand that which he has heard, while a speaker may choose to affect a certain accent, vocal timbre, or physical gesture that lends yet another layer or meaning to his words to interpreted, or misinterpreted, by his audience. While there may be no perfect physical medium to convey information both correctly and uniformly, there similarly exists no perfect ‘performer’ of language who posses full control of his message, nor an ideal audience capable of knowing exactly the speaker’s intended meaning undiluted by their own knowledge and experience. As the ‘intent’ of the speaker and the specific knowledge of the listener are beyond the control of the medium employed to convey the desired information, the objective of the medium then becomes providing closer and more direct access to the thought, to the interiority of the person who seeks to convey a message through language.
During the early Meiji period in Japan, finding such a means of expression which would minimize the loss of informational fidelity and allow for more direct access to the thoughts and interiority of the subject was of paramount interest in the political world, as the government was then seeking to produce a new modern society in which individuals came to be aware of their identity as members of a single nation. At this time the writing system was also undergoing a period of transition towards a more modern, which was often conflated with Western, style of writing which might provide such access. During this transformational period one of the early experiments in writing technique was stenography, which sought to fix spoken language to print in a way that would capture the tone and idiosyncrasies of an oral performer and convey the subtle atmosphere of a live performance to a greater degree than previous methods of writing were able to attain.

Early in the summer of 1884 Wakabayashi Kanzō 若林若林 (1857-1938), a recent graduate of a course in stenography (sokkihō 速記法) administered by Takusari Kōki 田鎖織紀 (1856-1938), was approached by members of the Tōkyō haishi shuppansha 東京稗史出版社 with the proposition that he transcribe for publication the rakugo tale *Kuwaidan botandōrō* 怪談牡丹燈籠, an interwoven account of ghostly love and faithful revenge and a speciality of popular raconteur San'yūtei Enchō 三遊亭圓朝 (1839-1900). Released as a series of thirteen fascicles at the rate of one per Saturday from July until December of 1884, *Botandōrō*’s commercial success would launch the short-lived

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1 According to the account in Wakabayashi’s autobiography these were a Mssrs. Kondō 近藤 and Nakao 中尾.


3 This period extends over the *ōbon* festival in Japan, during which the spirits of dead ancestors are welcomed back into the various towns and cities from the mountains. The traditional time for telling
but highly popular ‘genre’ of published material produced through stenography known as shorthand-books (sokkibon 速記本) or ‘phonobooks’,\(^4\) the titles of which soon listed well into the hundreds and sold in the hundreds of thousands. Such was Botandōrō’s commercial viability that it was reformatted and republished one year later as one of the first cardboard-bound western books (bōrubyōshibon ボール表紙本) by the publishing company Tōkyō monjidō 東京文字堂. These books were produced in such high volume that, as leading sokkibon scholar J. Scott Miller notes, “For much of the first decade of sokki popularity, bōrubyōshibon\(^5\) and sokkibon (in its narrow sense) were synonymous.”\(^6\) The combination of a new, Western-made and Japanese-perfected technology with a similarly new, Western binding method surely influenced the speed at which the genre gained popularity at a time when the West was viewed as the embodiment of civilization and progress in Japan.

In no small part, the success that the sokkibon genre enjoyed can also be attributed to the novel way in which language was presented in their pages. Botandōrō would introduce the Japanese reader to a unique experience wherein the spoken word was reproduced in print with a degree of accuracy never before encountered in a country yet to hear its first sound recording. Lacking the requisite vocabulary with which to describe the effect generated by reading sokki texts, in his prologue to the 1884 edition Wakabayashi describes sokki as a sort of “method of photographing language” (gengo no frightening stories, this would have been a commercially ideal period to publish one of Enchō’s ‘tales of the mysterious’ (kaidanbanashi 怪談噺).

\(^4\) Literally “shorthand books”. Phonobook is a term used by J. Scott Miller as an English equivalent for sokkibon. Miller p.477 While the term ‘genre’ implies a canon unified by similar content, sokkibon was understandably variegated in subject matter.

\(^5\) Cardboard-bound Western style books.

\(^6\) Miller p.478
*shashinhō* 言語の写真法\(^7\) which allows one to feel “as if one were actually making direct contact with [the characters]… in their present condition.”\(^8\) This sentiment would be echoed in the preface to the 1885 edition penned by literary giant Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935), who had just published his most famous work *Shōsetsu shinzui* 小説神髄. Frequently asked to endorse such projects with which he had no direct involvement, Shōyō would praise the book by noting it, “has a certain vigor and gives the sensation as though meeting face to face with Hagihara himself, or actually seeing the maiden Otsuyu before your very eyes.”\(^9\) Indeed the dialogue especially produces the impression that one is listening to the characters in one of Enchō’s performances rather than engaging the characters (graphs) that make up a piece of text.

Of course, this is not to say that none before Enchō’s time were producing convincingly authentic oral speech within their texts for, as Tokugawa fiction expert P.F. Kornicki correctly reminds, “[in terms of dialogue], linguistic realism… was a feature of most late Tokugawa writing.”\(^10\) As this technique continued to be developed even through the Meiji period, it is in no means peculiar to sokkibon. What is achieved in the text of *Botanudōrō*, however, is an effect that somehow surpasses the form and organization of the individual words themselves to draw the reader yet closer to an authentically oral experience. The work was also produced during a tumultuous historical period in Japanese literature in which styles and conventions were being examined, established and upturned, often in the course of a single text. And yet *Botanudōrō*’s significance as a text has rarely been explored in English scholarship beyond the loosely

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\(^7\) Wakabayashi preface.
\(^8\) Wakabayashi preface.
\(^9\) Shoyo prologue.
\(^10\) Kornicki p. 469.
held belief that its publication marked the formal beginning of the \textit{genbun itchi} movement.\footnote{A Japanese literary movement often characterized as an argument for a writing style that would unite the spoken and written Japanese language and allow one to ‘write as one speaks.’}

It is not difficult, however, to see how one can come to this conclusion considering Futabatei Shimei 二葉亭四迷 (1864-1909), the man who produced what is generally believed to be the first practical application of the \textit{genbun’itchi} style in his 1887-8 novel \textit{Drifting Clouds (Ukigumo 浮雲)},\footnote{Should also look at beginning of Enchō no sekai = seems to infer that B.D was written in Genbun’itchi.} admitted in his essay \textit{How I Came to Use Genbun Itchi} that “…I turned to \textit{genbun itchi} because I didn’t know how to write… I decided to visit professor Tsubouchi to ask his advice. He told me, “You know the comic storyteller Enchō, don’t you? Why not write the way Enchō narrates? I did just as he suggested… Certainly, as an attempt to reproduce Enchō’s narration the work was in the \textit{genbun itchi} style, but there were still problems with it.”\footnote{\textit{Yo ga genbun’itchi no yurai 余が言文一致の由来}, \textit{Bunshō sekai 文章世界}; 1:3, 1906. Rendered by Bret de Bary as “How I Came to Use Genbun Itchi.” I am borrowing Brett de Bary’s translation from Karatani p.48.} Here, then, it seems only natural to take Futabatei at his word that what he produced in \textit{Drifting Clouds} was the first novel written in the \textit{genbun’itchi} style and was heavily influenced by, if not directly borrowed from Enchō’s oral performances, which had already been fixed to print not three years ago. Simple extrapolation then allows one to assume \textit{Botandōrō} can also be considered an early, if yet incomplete, foray into the \textit{genbun’itchi} style and thus must have been the ‘pre-modern novel’ that directly led to the first ‘modern novel.’ These assumptions, however, are based upon a, perhaps, overly simplistic interpretation of the nature of the \textit{genbun’itchi} movement and its relationship with modern literature.
Perhaps more worthy of investigation, then, are those elements of modern and premodern literature present in the text which may aid in locating Botandōrô in Japan’s literary history, the claims it makes for Sokki as a modern writing technique, and how it negotiates with notions of authorship. In addressing these issues I will closely examine Botandōrô’s paratextual elements using the framework developed by Gérard Genette and, by employing Jerome J. McGann’s notion of textuality, will explore the text’s physical construction as a material object and determine how these issues may have evolved across the various publications the text enjoyed. By focusing on these paratextual elements in Botandōrô in the context of the tale’s intertextual construction we find that it is best viewed as a text that exhibits aspects of modern and pre-modern literature in its presentation as a material object, the claims it makes for Sokki as a modern writing technique, and its negotiations with the idea of authorship.

**Development of the Japanese Shorthand Method**

In 1870 Takusari Kōki 田鎖綱紀 was enrolled in the Tōkyō Daigaku Nankō 東京大学南校; a precursor to Tokyo University specialized in Western Learning. At this time he began frequenting the house of a Scotsman named Wilson, where he would first encounter a letter written in shorthand code developed by the Englishman Sir Isaac Pitman in 1837. Not tremendously impressed, it wouldn’t be until he met the American Robert G. Carlyle while serving as a mining specialist in Akita prefecture that Takusari would become captivated by a letter written in Graham shorthand, a modified Pitman, which Carlyle read to him aloud. Takusari was so enamored with the immediacy of the

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14 Takusari Kōki 田鎖綱紀(1856-1938) pen name: Genkōki 源綱紀
letter's oral style that he focused his energies on researching and applying the Graham
method of shorthand to Japanese, a task that was theretofore complicated by the
assumption that reproducing spoken Japanese would necessarily require reproducing
figurative kanji characters as well. J. Scott Miller would describe this desire among early
shorthand researchers as the "dogged insistence that the essentially phonetic script
preserve the ideographic utility of Chinese characters".15 Due to the nature of kanji usage
in Japanese, specifically in instances of homonyms, names or proper nouns, speech alone
would prove insufficient to provide the requisite information to determine which kanji the
speaker actually wished to employ in which instances.

Eschewing figurative kanji in favor of a purely phonetic dictation style marked by
obscure, flourished curlicues,16 Takusari succeeded in producing the first effective
Japanese shorthand method and soon announced his discovery to the nation with an
extolling article titled Japanese Phonography17 in the newspaper Jijishinpō 時事新報
under the name Ume no Yamotozonoshi 楳ノ家元園子 in September of 1882.18 Miller
also provides insight into Takusari's views on the potential applications for stenography
as he put forth in his article by drawing attention to the phrase "'Phonography'… makes
possible 'the direct transcription of even the longest and most complex discourses,'
including 'assemblies, street-corner disquisitions, and parodies of Buddhist scripture
[ahōdarakyo 阿房多羅経]."19

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16 See Picture 2 for a sample of similar, Wakabyashi-style shorthand.
17 Nihon bōchōkirokuhō (japanezu・fonogurafii) 日本傍聴記録法（ジャパネーズ・フォノグラフィー）
18 NKDBT p.444. Miller attributes this article to Takusari supporter; one Mr. Kataoka. He also uses the
19 Miller 1994, p474.
The following month Takusari offered a course in shorthand that would gradually gain in reputation and in half a year’s time produce, among others, the two graduates Wakabayashi Kanzō 若林 理 (1857-1938) and Sakai Shōzō 酒井 昇造 (1856-1924) in 1883. Convinced that there was surely some professional application to which stenography could be employed that would both provide financial support and stem the tide of dropouts from the course, Wakabayashi, Sakai, and other graduates held meetings of the Shorthand Method Research Group (Sokkihō kenkyūkai 速記法研究会) in Wakabayashi’s home and began seeking out new venues to refine, test and improve their newly acquired skill. As Takusari had suggested, the group did indeed practice their craft on the sermons of priests and clergymen as well as the speeches of various politicians.

However, the new technique wouldn’t realize an increase in popularity until Wakabayashi took on the dictation of the sequel to Yano Ryūkei’s 矢野 竜渓 oral performance of his tale Inspiring Instances of Statesmanship (Keikoku bidan 経国美談) in February of 1884. This success allowed Wakabayashi to join rank in the newspaper Yūbin hōchi shinbun 郵便報知新聞 and led to, according to the account in his autobiography, Mssrs. Kondō 近藤 and Nakao 中尾 approaching him with a certain proposition. Representing the Tōkyō haishi shuppansha 東京稗史出版社, which had until then largely published reprints of woodblocks such as Kyokutei Bakin’s Chronicle of the Eight Dogs (Hakkenden 八犬伝), these gentlemen suggested that Wakabayashi should transcribe Botandōrō for them, as surely “something interesting should come of

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20 A chronicle of the rise and fall of Thebes centered on the statesmen Pelopidas and Epaminodas, based on historical accounts of Ancient Greece. Contains views supportive of the Constitutional Reform Party (Rikkenkaishintō 立憲改進党 1882-1896), of which the author was a member.
Wakabayashi contacted fellow graduate Sakai Shōzō and they set to the task of recording. It is at this point that the narrative splits off into the three distinct perspectives of men whose work and opinions would come to shape the reception of *Botandōrō* in specific, and *sokkibon*速記本 as a (loosely amalgamated) genre; that of the highly influential literary figure Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遥 (1859-1935), the less than enthusiastic accomplice Sakai Shōzō and the largely *sokki*-aggrandizing Wakabayashi.

**Shorthand and the ‘Grain’**

The principle role of the prologue as a ‘paratext,’ to borrow Gérard Genette’s terminology, is to obtain “a better reception of the text and a more pertinent reading – more pertinent, naturally, in the eyes of the author and his allies.” In his prologue to the first printing of the 1884 fascicle version of *Botandōrō*, Wakabayashi attempts to achieve such a reception and reading by maintaining an almost exclusively positive appeal for *sokki* as a new method of writing, with attributes notably dissimilar, and presumably superior, to established writing techniques. Interestingly enough for a project designed to unite an oral tale with the written word, Wakabayashi first begins his prologue by offering the reader a clear distinction between writing and speaking with the statement, “While letters (*moji*文字) can adequately reproduce people’s words (*gengo*言語), these letters only fix in place the meaning (*igi*意義) of those words.” In this statement Wakabayashi proposes a relationship between the three fundamental concepts of written characters (*moji*), spoken words (*gengo*) and meaning (*igi*). In this relationship we see

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21 Quoted translation from Wakabayashi's autobiography *Wakaōjiden* 若翁自傳.
23 Excerpts from appended Prologue 3; unless otherwise noted all translations provided are my own.
writing being regarded as a type of tool which is capable of ‘reproducing’ the spoken word that has, of yet, been unable to fully realize this function, instead producing only the ‘meaning’ of these spoken words. But what is this ‘meaning’ and why does Wakabayashi propose it insufficient to completely reproduce the spoken word?

While gengo as a word generally implies ‘language’ in Japanese, the fact that it is set in opposition to the more concretely defined moji would seem to indicate a ‘spoken-word/written-character’ relationship. Somewhat more difficult to define, however, is the more vague igi, which can imply a sense of ‘meaning’ as well as ‘significance.’ Judging from its use in the sentence, however, it seems that Wakabyashi is using the term here as a substitution for the concepts of both ‘meaning’ (imi 意味) and ‘definition’ (teigi 定義). Assuming this to be the case, it would seem that Wakabayashi is expressing discontent with written characters as they have been employed thus far, for while they have the ability to reproduce spoken language perfectly, they instead have been providing only the gist, the meaning of what has been said. He clarifies his position in the prologue by noting in the next sentence that, “The reason it has not been possible to record a lively narrative without letting even a single word escape is that our country has not had a shorthand method to directly copy down the language…” In other words, for lack of a Japanese shorthand system, it has not been possible to capture the Japanese spoken word in real time (a lively narrative) with a high degree of accuracy (without letting even a single word escape). What Wakabayashi is proposing in his prologue, then, is that the correct method of using written characters to capture the spoken word hinges on the ability of said writing method to neither “mistake” nor “amend” nor “(let) even a single
That Wakabayashi both coins the phrase “(not) even a single word” (hengensekigo 片言隻語) and employs it in three separate instances throughout his prologue is significant because it implies an attempt to express a concept to layperson readers that was not possible to convey using existing terminology.

On first analysis the phrase hengensekigo is a combination of two previously existing words (hengen and sekigo) which both mean essentially “a few words” or “a few phrases.” That Wakabayashi chose to join them together to create a new term instead of employing a similar, already extant expression (such as hengensekku 片言隻句) certainly does enhance the impression that the perceived the phenomenon he was describing as an aspect of the spoken Japanese language never before realized nor made physically manifest in a text and thus required special terminology to convey its significance. While the usage of hengensekigo in modern Japanese is most commonly translated as “a few words,” and usually appears in conjunction with a negative verb, its graphic construction seems to indicate an attempt on Wakabayashi’s behalf to simultaneously express two ideas: that the essence of what is being captured and conveyed through sokki is both oral in nature (as may be hinted at from his usage of gengo 言語 as an analogue for spoken language in his prologue) and that it exists in a space potentially smaller than an individual phrase or word (as implied by the kanji 片 and 隻). It would be possibly to render the phrase in a more artificial manner as “fragments of language,” the importance of the phrase lies in the way in which Wakabayashi employs it to suggest that his shorthand method captures in letters ‘every part of oral speech.’ This interpretation would suggest that Wakabayashi believes his shorthand method will achieve an effect of

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24 Prologue 3. The phrases Wakabayashi employs are hengensekigo wo ayamarazu 片言隻語を誤まらず, hengensekigo wo kaishu seszu 片言隻語を改修せず, and hengensekigo wo morazu 片言隻語を洩さず. 
immediacy by capturing even those words that do not convey much in the way of meaning or function uphold a given literary style, such as interjections or accidental repetitions that would be excised or edited in traditional texts.

In making this claim, Wakabayashi argues that the text’s immediacy is acquired not as the result of any specific technique employed by the performer, but rather through the faithful application of his particular shorthand method. When the rules of this shorthand are obeyed and nothing is ‘mistaken, altered or left out’, the text naturally displays all the vibrancy and energy of the performance, as Wakabayashi makes clear by stating, “As we hear it, so we write it, letting not even a single word escape. If [Enchō] laughs, the writing laughs, if he angers, so too does the writing; if crying then crying, if rejoicing then rejoicing.”25 What is being provided the reader in a shorthand text, then, is some remnant of the oral performance itself, some aspect of the voice that has been transferred to the text. What this aspect might be and how Wakabayashi might best describe it to a credulous readership, however, may be the challenge that hengensekigo was brought forth to combat.

This specific phraseology of ‘(not) even a single word’ would be later echoed by Tsubouchi Shōyō in his prologue to the 1885 printing of Botandōrō; a cheaply produced, Western-style, cardboard-bound book put out by the Tōkyō monjidō publishing company. While Shōyō emphasizes in his prologue that shorthand is able to preserve written lines and sentences rather than specifically spoken words and phrases, the overall impression that what has been captured is a genuine oral rakugo performance remains. Although he only mentions shorthand once, Shōyō also attributes the text’s

25 Prologue 3.
immediacy to the sokki method by noting that it was through “…full use of the common, colloquial dialect (rigenzokugo 俚言俗語) [made] throughout which, though it may not be thought florid, line by line, sentence by sentence (kugotoni bungotoni 句ごとに文ごとに), preserves much of the original, active tenor…” An interesting distinction can be drawn here between literary expert Shōyō and the relative layman Wakabayashi. Whereas Wakabayashi had emphasized the orality of the text in describing it as a ‘photograph’ of spoken language, Shōyō’s instead focused on the textuality of speech through use of the words ‘lines’ and ‘sentences.’ This seems to indicate an assumption on Shōyō’s part that when Enchō composed and performed his stories he made use of the same creative faculties and techniques as would an author writing text.

Whether it be viewed as a text with oral elements or an oral tale committed to text, what remains clear is that the fundamental similarities of the phrases that Wakabayashi and Shōyō employed indicate that what they were both attempting to describe the same, special quality of the voice-as-performed that had found its way into the text, and that this quality was difficult to elucidate using the language available them at that time. Perhaps the concept they were grappling with can be clarified by calling upon the terminology provided by Roland Barthes in what he refers to as the “grain” of the voice, the physical brand with which a performer inevitably marks his performance, the “…materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue… the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs.”

On a technical level, the element of the ‘grain’ that Wakabayashi reproduced in text was acquired through, as far as is possible, exact transcription of the phonetic sounds spoken by the performer. Wakabayashi is referring to this specific function of shorthand

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26 Prologue 1.
27 Barthes 1977 p.182, 188.
when he says that the reason speech has, until that point, been captured “so poorly” is because “our country has not had a means to copy down the language exactly as it is (sonomamani chokuutsushi 其の儘に直写し);” a condition which he had “lamented for quite a while.” Taking Wakabayashi at his word, then, we can assume that when a stenographer who correctly applies the shorthand method hears a performer utter the hypothetical phrase shinakeryaanaran しなけりゃアならん, he should be able to 1) transcribe every spoken sound, 2) record the correct sound and 3) ignore the impulse to improve upon the phraseology as given by altering it to conform to a given standard of written Japanese, of which there were many (for example changing an uncommon phrase to a more standardized one, such as ‘shinakerebanaranai しなければならない’). What Wakabayashi is proposing here is that it is this high level of phonetic accuracy, which allows not even a ‘fragment of language’ to escape, that weaves into the text the very grain of Enchō’s voice, the physical performance aspect of his original “lively story (kappatsunaru setsuwa 活潑なる説話).”

Wakabayashi would describe the powerful effect this grain would inspire by assuring the reader that he would “…feel as you read these writings that you are in fact listening to the tale itself… it will be as if you see it as though it were actually happening.” Not only would one be able to hear the words echo off the pages but, by virtue of the text’s design, the images and physical sensations conjured by the story would surely and naturally percolate into the consciousness of the reader, bringing him into the storyteller’s reality. Shōyō would provide a similar account of the effect in

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28 Prologue 3.
29 Prologue 3.
30 Prologue 3.
commenting that to read the text “gives one the sensation as though meeting face to face with Hagihara himself, or actually seeing the maiden Otsuyu before your very eyes… as one comes to read on, sometimes laughing and sometimes being moved despite oneself, one imagines these to be utterly true events, and is prone even to forget that it is a work of fiction. Surely this may result from the craft of the piece.”\textsuperscript{31} The text is able to create this impression of immediacy by being, to a degree, freed from the writing conventions and figural aspects of the Japanese writing system that had thus far inhibited direct and unmediated access to the voice of the author-as-performer. Because the curlicues that stenography employed to capture such a voice directly represented phonetic kana, which were then transcribed and included as furigana alongside every Chinese character, as long as the reader was capable of mentally recalling or orally reproducing these sounds, an approximation of the performer’s original speech would be possible. This inclusion would permit even those with a fairly limited knowledge of kanji and written grammar would be able to engage the text and grasp its meaning. Readers well versed in the conventions of written Japanese as well, when encountering such a text, would soon notice a difference in the perceived immediacy of Botandôrô’s content, which allowed for a rather unique reading experience.

And yet, on this point there remains a certain anxiety in both Wakabayashi and Shôyô’s prologues that sokki, as a new and radical form of writing, may produce texts so radically different from those previous that they have the potential to repel readers expecting more traditional fare. In the 1884 edition Wakabayashi provided the explanation that “…the reason this is not like other common novels is, in other words, because we have, using our shorthand method, copied down directly language which does

\textsuperscript{31} Prologue 1.
not realize the proper tone (chō 調),\(^{32}\) which reveals the lack of grammar (gohōnaki 語法 なき) in our country's spoken tales (setsuwa 說話), and in the future… we hold the grand objective of desiring to reform (kairyō 改良) the use of language (gengo 言語) in our country…”\(^{33}\) Shōyō similarly qualifies his praise of the work’s craft in cautioning that, “its style may not be thought beautiful (hanaarumono to mo omoenu 華あるものとも覚えぬ)… [and] even though its effect relies on the ingenuity of the work, if he wasn't known as a former man of letters, one wouldn't think someone like old Enchō to be a person learned in the writing profession.”\(^{34}\)

When Wakabayashi and Shōyō refer to an imperfect tone or style, what they are lamenting is the absence of such stylistic literary conventions a poetic meter that would be expected by experienced readers of traditional literature. To eschew these conventions would mean abandoning what had long formed one of the most fundamental elements of the writing process itself. This anxiety that readers who held such expectations would put down the book in disgust would lead Shōyō and Wakabayashi to emphasize the immediacy of the text instead. Shōyō would align his loyalties with Botandōrō by claiming of Enchō that “…what this man simply states strikes deeply in places through to the marrow (zui 髓) of human emotion (ninjō 人情)…”\(^{35}\) Immediately after publishing Shōsetsu shinzui 小説神髄, that Shōyō would also refer to Botandōrō as a shōsetsu, especially in light of his recommendation to Futabatei to borrow from Enchō’s oratory style, it may indeed be the case that he considered Botandōrō effective in fulfilling his

\(^{32}\) Proper tone here refers to a 7-5 mora meter like a yomihon or ninjōbon.

\(^{33}\) Prologue 3.

\(^{34}\) Prologue 1.

\(^{35}\) Prologue 1, written under the pen name Haru no yaoboro 春の屋王人.
own criteria for writing novels, though ultimately Shōyō would be reluctant to fully relinquish the aesthetic conventions of traditional styles in his own writing.

His critique of grammar and style notwithstanding, Wakabayashi also finds himself praising Enchō’s skill in depicting his characters, admitting that “The remarks of the young ladies are skillfully and charmingly done, the words of the hill folk are accented dully and so forth…”\(^{36}\) Moreover, through his shorthand technique, the vigor of the original has been captured exactly; “As we hear it, so we write it…” Whether or not the effect achieved is indeed a result of capturing the ‘grain’ along with voice, or if this is even possible to execute in a textual medium, is debatable, but it is clear that this is what Wakabayashi believes he has accomplished. Having obtained this unmediated access to the voice, then, what Wakabayashi proposes is that sokki, as a new form writing, necessarily requires a new form of reading in order to be fully appreciated. The method he suggests at the end of his prologue is one in which the reader engages with the text not as an observer, but as a member of the audience or, as he states, “[We believe] those reading this book should have the same pleasurable experience as if they were actually listening intently to Mr. Enchō in a yose theater.”\(^ {37}\)

If we were to consider his critique of the a-grammatical qualities of the spoken word from a slightly different angle, however, it is possible Wakabayashi may have been attempting to present his technology as almost too perfect to the point where the previously unnoticed or disregarded flaws of the spoken language were made viscerally known to the reader, whose inexperience with this new form of literature might lead him to be repelled and form a lower opinion of the shorthand method. Rather than attempt to

\(^{36}\) Prologue 3
\(^{37}\) Prologue 3.
correct these flaws, however, in the interest of presenting himself as an impartial recorder of what may have been a less than perfect performance, Wakabayashi insists that he has merely, “directly recorded the story, as it was, without improving a fragment of its language, and fixed it to print.” It is specifically his use of ‘improving/repairing’ (kaishū) in this sentence that is suggestive, for while it implies that no editing has taken place, or is indeed even necessary with this technique, one need look only as far as the diary of Sakai Shōzō, the uncredited assistant transcriber of Botandōrō, to correct this account.

**Bibliographic Codes Across Printed Versions**

As Botandōrō was first and foremost designed to be sold as an object to be read, it is not at all surprising that some amount of editing took place to ensure that the book, at least in form, conformed to literary norms. As a physical object, the text produced in 1884 resembles other contemporary fascicles in appearance and structure. If one were to compare a full rakugo performance script against a text produced using transcription (which would make immediately apparent such disparities as the inclusion of illustrations in the transcribed text or the exclusion of the lengthy summaries of the story up to that point that typically began each night’s oral performance) it is clear to see that some amount of formatting was required to make these performances yield a product that resembled a contemporary text. By acknowledging there was more to the writing and publishing process of Botandōrō than simply fixing words to text we can instead draw our attention towards those elements of the physical text that conformed to the

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38 説話を其の儘に直写し片言隻語を改修せずして 印刷に附せし.
expectations of what a piece of writing should be and note how they appeal to different sensibilities of contemporary readers. These elements make up what Jerome J. McGann refers to as bibliographic codes, which are "...code(s) of meaning which the reader will decipher, more or less deeply, more or less self-consciously."\(^{39}\)

These codes are not only present in all texts, but also often change dramatically across publications, along with the goals of the text’s producers. But while these codes influence the reader’s reception of the text there is, clearly, no definitive method to prove that any given decision in format is a conscious attempt on the part of the author or publisher to sway the opinion of the reader. McGann cautions as much in saying that often "...authors (and authorial intentions) do not govern those textual dimensions of a work which become most clearly present to us in bibliographical forms."\(^{40}\) Indeed it is impossible to say if Enchō himself was involved in any of the choices that affected his own work’s format. Luckily these distinctions do not need to factor into a meaningful analysis of the text, as the bibliographic codes remain apparent, regardless of authorial or editorial intent. The work of analysis then becomes marking these bibliographic elements as they appear and noting how they are maintained, changed or eliminated in subsequent printings in the hope of gaining a clearer view, for example, of what presumptions these elements may indicate the printing companies made of the perennially shifting proclivities and socio-economic status of their audience.

While Botandōrō and sokkibon have often been discussed in English scholarship as dramatic departures from the traditionally accepted writing conventions of classical

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\(^{39}\) McGann 1991, p.115.
\(^{40}\) McGann 1991, p.58. A bibliographical form is a bibliographical standard arrived at either through convention or conscious decision on part of the publisher (and, depending on the level of involvement permitted, the author) of the text.
Japanese literature, when one actually picks up and glances over one of the 1884 edition fascicles perhaps the most striking aspects of the work is how orthodox it would have appeared both in presentation and content to readers of the time. The 1884 edition produced by the Tōkyō haishi shuppansha was printed in moveable type in a set of thirteen duodecimo fascicles and released once every Saturday for thirteen weeks from July until December⁴¹ at a mere cost of 7 sen, 5 rin each or 87 sen for the set (with the option of pre-ordering a limited home delivery in the Tokyo area from the publishing company). Before publishing Botandōrō this company had been in the business of transcribing old woodblock prints into moveable type and publishing them as Japanese fascicles reminiscent of Tokugawa period gesaku⁴² which, as P. F. Kornicki observes, were profiting from a resurgence of public interest at the time.⁴³ Given this background, it is not particularly shocking that many of these gesaku formatting techniques found themselves applied to Botandōrō.

In the background of each cover of each fascicle is displayed a borderless tri-chrome print of blue rain falling on a blue and gray peony bush with the name San'yūtei Enchō displayed first on the right hand side in black ink, read from top to bottom with no glosses, where he is attributed with providing the ‘performance/lecture’ (enjutsu 演述).⁴⁴ Directly to the left of Enchō’s name and given equal prominence in font size is Wakabayashi Kanzō, who is credited with the transcription (hikki 筆記). In the middle of

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⁴¹ This period extends over the oBon festival in Japan, where the spirits of dead ancestors are welcomed back from the mountains. A traditional time for telling scary stories, this would have been an ideal period to publish one of Enchō’s kaidanbanashi.

⁴² Gesaku 製作 - A broad term for the popular fiction written between the mid-18th century and the early Meiji period. The genre is characterized by a high degree of literary complexity generally aimed at the educated samurai class combined with the author’s sarcasm, as he writes ‘for fun,’ as opposed to undergoing a serious literary endeavor.

⁴³ Kornicki 1981.

⁴⁴ See Picture 1.
the page and in largest font is the title of the work, *Kuwaidan botan dōro* 佐談牡丹燈籠, with both the superscript *kuwaidan* and the subscript “volume number one” written with the standard, old-form *kanji* and read in the traditional style from right to left. Furthest left is the name of the publishing company; all in all a typical cover for the time with the notable exception of the two new credits of ‘performance’ and ‘transcription.’

Borders return on the following page in the inner colophon with a sample of *sokki* script in the rough is followed by its translation into semi-standardized written Japanese, replete with *kanji*. On this page both the borders as well as the folded, single-sided printing on thin paper (*minogami* 美濃紙) bound with paper string (*koyomi* 紙縒り) recall the technology of wood-block printing and publishing practices. It is interesting to see, however, that the first two leaves, as well as the final leaf, are not marked with the title, page number and name of the publishing company along the crease, as all other leaves are, indicating their inclusion may have come later in the printing process. Compartmentalization of visual and textual information through the use of border lines is a technique that has, as Kōno Kensuke notes, been employed throughout the development of the book in Japan, and it is worth noting that Wakabayashi’s prologue, beginning on the following page, is given its own unique and stylized border that physically separates it from the rest of the text.

The typeface employed for Wakabayashi’s prologue, while no larger than the main text and still rendered in moveable type, is more florid and tightly packed than the rest of the book, which gives it the appearance a more traditional, even scholarly

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45 There were many different styles and conventions for producing written works. Cite prof Seaman’s essay here.
manuscript. Unlike a text designed specifically for a highly learned readership, however, full glosses, or *furigana*, have been provided for the reader, allowing even the most basically literate to reproduce the words orally and thus grasp their meaning. The fact that *furigana* is provided for every *kanji* in every instance throughout the prologue and the remainder of the text (excluding the final advertisements included in the back) indicates a supposition on the part of the publishers that the reader might wish to read these sections aloud to others and employ the proper readings for the characters. This concession to the audience-as-reader accords with Maeda Ai’s proposal in his analysis of Meiji reading techniques when he contends that most reading was a communal and oral affair undertaken by the member of the household with the highest education for the benefit of those possessed of inferior learning. Were *furigana* not provided in every case, a much higher level of education would be required to pronounce the characters correctly and yet, as there was then no nationally determined and homogeneous reading for every *kanji*, a certain degree of error would be inevitable. Providing these glosses in the prologue also hints that its contents were considered by the publishers to supply important instruction on how to receive what not only the active reader but those who would soon be hearing the tale were about to experience, as one would expect of any paratext. It is interesting to note, then, that the prologue itself was composed in a traditional, scholarly prose that would have sounded out of place in colloquial conversation, but authoritative and convincing to listeners with some degree of literary experience.

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47 See picture 2.
49 Although due to the lack of kanji standardization “error” can be considered a flexible term. Here I mean clearly identifiable and specific errors, such as can occur when attempting to render a character or place name phonetically when several homophones exist.
In summary, by positioning the prologue at the beginning of the tale, providing a unique border and rendering it in a more florid font with a contemporary-yet-scholarly style, the reader/audience is given the impression that they are receiving the authoritative opinion of a highly learned person and should, therefore, afford it every due respect. It is very likely this effect was intentional as it was repeated and exaggerated in the 1885 Western edition with the introduction of prologues by Tsubouchi Shōyō and Fusao Kan 総生寛. The fact that glosses were not removed, however, seems to indicate that the publishers were making no assumption of a drastically improved literacy in their readership.

As can be seen in Picture 4, regardless of the Western binding, paper-making and printing techniques that were being employed in this version, both prologues are presented in a manner that is even more evocative of woodblock-reproduced manuscripts, not only in the floridity of the characters, but in the border around the script and the apparent coloration provided to the paper, perhaps reminiscent of a scroll printed on fine quality paper (ryōshi 料紙). Compounding the difficulty of Shōyō’s uniquely dense yet highly conventional literary style is the shape of the characters themselves, which one must possess a small degree of calligraphic familiarity to appreciate aesthetically, let alone to decipher their meaning. Perhaps hoping to avoid alienating the less than fully literate reader, however, glosses are still provided here and this antiquated style of calligraphy is not adopted in the body of the text itself in favor of standard print.

Notably absent, however, are Wakabayashi’s prologue along with his fawning endorsements of the shorthand method. In their stead is a short, dense prologue provided

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50 Pen name Kodōjin 古道人, referenced from Aozora Bunko.
by an obscure ‘person of the old way’ (Kodōjin 古道人) that recalls both the literary style and content of the prologue of the *Otogibōko* 伽婢子, the 1666 collection of short stories by Asai Ryōi 浅井了意 (1612?-1691) which contained *The Peony Lantern* (*Botan no tōrō* 牡丹燈籠), the story that inspired the posthumous romance section of *Botandorô*. In this prologue there is no mention of Wakabayashi’s glowing account of the merits of either the shorthand method’s accuracy, nor of Shōyō’s praise for Enchō’s uniquely descriptive style of performance. Instead, as was the case in the *Otogibōko*, the central assertions of this paratext are that the book itself is able to provide moral guidance for the reader, and that it does so by speaking of the strange and mysterious, despite the prevalent warnings in Confucianism against discussing such topics as extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder and spiritual beings. The essential work of this paratext, however, is to draw the reader’s focus to the historical antecedent of the tale, thus binding what may seem like a startlingly novel text (a western book written with shorthand technology) with a part of the established literary cannon.

This propensity to highlight the historicity of the text is further emphasized a few pages back where we see Wakabayashi’s name has been stricken from the cover page along with the demonstrative graph of the production and decoding of the shorthand method that had previously been included at the beginning of each fascicle in 1884. As would be expected, considering the 1885 version was produced by a different publisher, the original company missives and advertisements for upcoming publications and book-vendor locations, as well as several of Wakabayashi’s descriptions of the nature and

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51 妖力乱神 *kuwairyokuranshin*, a reference to the Transmission Chapter of *The Analects* (7-21). Both Kodōjin and Ryōi’s prologues make this reference. For a more detailed examination of Ryōi’s prologue, see appended article on the *Otogibōko*.

52 See Picture 3.
merits of the shorthand method that inhabited the pages of the earlier publication, were also removed. The 1885-book version also employs a more compressed font that perhaps suggests certain economic restrictions may have also guided the hands of the publishers.

Not omitted, however, is what we might suspect would be if the publishers were attempting to sever the bond with their gesaku roots and strive towards a more modern (read: Western) presentation: images. All of the original, unattributed pictures from the first printing return, some even featuring new borders added in after apparent formatting issues precluded their inclusion from the first fascicle. Far from a reduction in illustrated content, the first thing we are greeted with after Shōyō’s prologue is the addition of two apparently original double-page spreads depicting the main characters of the story with colored backgrounds. As can be seen in Tokugawa literature, these pictures are positioned in relation to and ostensibly describing while being described by the main text. These illustrations also progress at a slightly different pace from the story, often providing a glimpse of what to come, as if to whet the reader’s appetite and press him to read on. While the text itself has been compressed so that a similar number of words no longer occupy the same amount of physical space they did in the 1884 version, the order of the illustrations and their tendency to appear slightly before the action they depict has occurred in the text has not been changed. Also important to note is the fact that in both volumes these pictures and their expository texts are separated from the body of the main text in a manner that helps position the piece historically by way of Kōno Kensuke’s framework of the development of the Japanese ‘book’.

53 I say this because only the first fascicle contains borderless pictures, one of which contains a borderless piece of expository text (see picture 6). All subsequent fascicles contain pictures with borders that integrate with those around the main body of text, suggesting that perhaps the original pictures were too large for these margins. This was amended in the 1886 printing (see picture 7).
Kōno contends that over time illustrations were given their own separate place within a text where they once freely merged, even competed with the text in imparting meaning and visual-aesthetic imagery to the ‘reader’. Locked in a bordered prison on a separate page, eventually these illustrations were struck from texts altogether, no longer finding a home in those works deemed ‘purely literary’ (*junbungaku* 純文学). The burden of representing a given visual image was stripped from both the illustration and the figural element of kanji, which had been tamed into straight and uniform lines with the invention of moveable type, and instead was transplanted to the linguistic/literary element found in works of belles-lettres.

Present as well in the 1885 version are the small, cryptic pieces of *kanbun* poetry that precede each chapter, another *gesaku* convention that provides the educated reader with a glimpse of what is to come, functioning as a sort of indexing mechanism. While there is no table of context such as would be found in Futabatei’s *Ukigumo* in 1887-8, page numbers are included in the 1885 volume in a manner that reflects their current Western environment. No longer counting off leaves, which spanned two pages by the Western count, these page numbers appear at the top of the page, snugly resting next to the title on a bed of flourished underscore where they inform the reader over which of the 287 pages of main text their eyes currently pass. The count officially begins after the second prologue and, pictures inclusive, continues until just before the final colophon listing publishing information for the four previous *Monjidō* editions.

Ultimately the differences and similarities between these two versions of the same story seem to indicate fairly clearly how the publishers perceived the desires of the audience they targeted and envisioned. By essentially stripping mention of Wakabayashi
and making almost no mention of the shorthand method being employed to produce the
text the publishers seem, if anything, to accentuate the book’s merits as a text based in the
ninjōbon tradition.54 As a physical object the text resembles most other ninjōbon. Prose
written in a traditional literary style surrounds dialogue that is visually coded much the
same as a play script interspersed with pictures that reference but remain isolated from
the text (unlike, for example, gōkan, which often combined pictorial and textual imagery
in the same visual space). P.F Kornicki describes the written style of the ninjōbon genre
as “characterized by a romantic plot of some complexity, and they also took up the
‘tradition of linguistic realism’ established by the realistic dialogue of the sharebon
(araki p.45).”55 Closely following this template in its written style, the text also visually
reinforces the image of a manuscript through the addition florid scripts to the prologues.
Retaining the chapter-preceding kanbun and eliminating the sokki-aggrandizing
exposition present in the story’s fascicle forebear also strengthen the appearance of a
familiar (and thus commercially reliable) textual format. There was strong incentive for
publishing companies of the Meiji period to look back to established, Edo textual
convention for formatting inspiration. Kornicki asserts as much in cautioning that “…a
poor opinion of Edo fiction is no reason for ignoring it in studies of Meiji literature,” and
despite the assumption in Meiji scholarship that “Tokugawa fiction died within the
regime that tolerated its existence… those who rejected the bakufu and all its works did

54 Ninjōbon 人情本 - A genre of fiction originating in the late Edo period. Generally contained large
amounts of modern vernacular dialogue which was used to touch on contemporary topics, generally of
the Edo pleasure quarters. These books were derived from sharebon, which initially served the purpose of
demonstrating proper style, or tsū 通, of theater or pleasure quarter etiquette but turned to focusing on
human relationships and emotional/psychological themes. Tamenaga Shunsui, one of the authors Shōyō
raises for comparison in his prologue, was best known for the dialogue he employed in his tear-jerking
ninjōbon.
55 Kornicki, 1977, p.166.
Indeed, as Kornicki also notes, the publishers of the first edition of Botandōrō, the Tokyo Haishi Shuppansha, were initially in the business of reprinting earlier, established works; printing and selling some 7,000 copies of Hakkenden in under two years starting in 1882. While the Meiji period was a time of great literary change and experimentation, many of the highly educated, including Shōyō, held a great deal of admiration for earlier writing styles and would have difficulty relinquishing entirely the written aesthetic of the Tokogawa period.

And yet, in being published as a single, unified book constructed with Western binding techniques and printed on Western paper, Botandōrō as a text realizes a hybridity of bibliographic codes, as need be the case of texts produced during period of such rapid change. The publishers believed their readership that held certain literary expectations founded in gesaku traditions and, as such, did their best to accommodate these perceived desires. This longstanding tradition might, as Wakabayashi and Shōyō worried, compel the reader to approach the work as a traditional literary text and, seeing where it differs, find it wanting. However, one need only turn to P.F. Kornicki’s analysis to remember that “Tokugawa fiction was still held in high regard [in 1889]. It was so far from being regarded as inferior to the fiction of the Meiji period that it was given as place alongside the classics of Chinese, Japanese, and Western literature, while a similar place was denied to the works of Shōyo and Futabatei by all except [Kōtoku] Shūsui (幸徳秋水 1871-1911). And not even Shūsui saw fit to exclude the Edo writers altogether in favour of his contemporaries.”

Though the era underwent a rapid political shift, this would not

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56 Kornicki 1981, p.466, 470 respectively.
57 Kornicki, p.480.
have as immediate an effect on literary progress in Japan as is often assumed, and authors would continue to draw heavily from the Classics of the Edo period and earlier.\textsuperscript{58}

Considering these expectations, then, it is unsurprising to see a certain amount of anxiety on the part of the authors of the prologues that readers might find the written style of \textit{Botandōrō} wanting when compared to older works. This anxiety can be further elucidated by comparing the content of Shōyō and Wakabayashi’s prologues, extracting those goals and aspirations they appear to harbor for the work, and examining how issues of authorship are problematized throughout both versions of the text. Of particular interest is the degree to which Wakabayashi attempted to alleviate this anxiety in his prologue by insisting on the perfection of his technique, which he framed as a method of writing that embodied modernity itself.

\textbf{Shorthand Facts and Fictions}

One of the most readily apparent pieces of evidence against the assertion of a perfected shorthand technology, however, is the very fact that Wakabayashi requested Sakai’s assistance in transcribing the story at all. As Wakabayashi would later reason in his autobiography, “…thinking it wouldn't do to fail alone, I talked it over with Sakai Shōzō and the fellow agreed to help as it would make for good practice as well,” a statement that does not speak towards an excess of confidence. In fact, in this same account Wakabayashi would admit that, “Although I had transcribed speeches and lectures before, I had no experience with \textit{kōdan} or \textit{rakugo} but, unlike speeches and lectures, the nature of the thing was simpler so, thinking there should be no reason I

\textsuperscript{58} For a detailed discussion of the Japanese evolution of the format of books as physical objects that negotiate with visual and textual imagery see \textit{Shōsetsu no hajimaru, hon no tanjō}. 詳説の始まる、本の誕生.
couldn't write it, I promised to take the project on.” Somewhat recanting his initial assumption of the ease with which the job would go but maintaining his positive outlook, Wakabayashi describes the act of stenography from behind the curtain in saying, “as Enchō spoke so eloquently during his specialty scenes, the notes became surprisingly difficult but, the substance of the thing itself was rather simple so as long as there were two of us taking notes there was no reason we couldn't bring it together in the end.”

Wakabayashi’s assessment of the story as ‘simple’ seems be in reference to either the content of the story itself, which is relatively uncomplicated, or the construction of the tale in general as a combination of a fairly standard revenge plot interwoven with a ghost story. This ‘simplicity’ would, then, reside in the ‘meaning’ of the words, in the plot they construct, rather than in the vocabulary employed or the nuance conveyed in the tale itself. As gleaning the essential gist of a tale in favor of its precise recording is exactly what Wakabayashi laments in the very beginning of his prologue, it is interesting to see him display here what is, perhaps, a lack of concern in recording all the specific subtleties of Enchō’s oral performance (which if lost could later be reintroduced in committee) in favor of preserving the broader elements of the plot.

Sakai would provide a somewhat more complicated description of the process, however, in confessing that, “we didn't know whether the writing would go smoothly or not, so to test it out the two of us went on the same day to the Ryōgoku yose theater Tachibanatei 両国立花亭 and gave it a try in front of the stage, but it just didn't go very well.” In describing the transcription itself he alleges that, “Mr. Wakabayashi was absent two or three times, but I was the one who wrote through all fifteen nights from start to

59 Wakabayashi 1926.
finish. Of course it was shoddy brushwork but, whatever the case, first and foremost I was able to take the notes. Then we then relied on a certain gentleman, who was then a reporter at the informational newspaper, who corrected our writing quite well for us and then that would become what was printed.” Ultimately citing dissatisfaction with the finished product, Sakai went so far as to request that his name be withheld from association with the project, explaining that, “…I still thought my shorthand rather imperfect and so preferred not having my name appear...”\(^6^0\)

Disregarding Wakabyashi’s omission of a third party editor being called in to replace the kanji and edit various portions of the text, which runs contrary to his assertion in the prologue that no ‘improvement’ was carried out, Sakai’s accusation that Wakabayashi missed a few days of the performance does cast a somewhat suspicious pall over the potentially benign fact that a performance supposed to have taken over fifteen days with one day allotted to one volume was somehow captured in only thirteen fascicles. If several days’ worth of content has been excised from the text, it can hardly be argued that the story has been captured “in its entirety.” Also that Enchō himself is not allowed to insert into the text his makura 枕, a small speech which is independent from the ‘official’ story and us delivered at the beginning of a rakugo performance in order to provide context for the day’s tale and summarize the plot thus far for newly arrived audience members, is yet another example that clear editorial decisions were made to remove certain content, which does not support the ‘unimproved’\(^6^1\) image presented by Wakabayashi and Shōyō. Adding to these unspecified editing practices the occasional errors in transcribing place and character names that Enchō was unlikely to be

\(^{60}\) Sakai Shōzō (酒井昇造の「日本速記大家経歴談」日本速記雑誌、第六号 明44・11.

\(^{61}\) Kairyou sezu/ something else
responsible for as a twenty three year veteran of the tale, as well as the difficulty a
stenographer would have transcribing the tongue twisters and quick, sharp back-and-forth
arguments or *tanka* 短硬 between characters, it becomes clear that the shorthand method
being employed at the time did not quite exist in the perfected state its advocates would
profess.

Contemporary stenographer Akiyama Takayoshi 秋山節義 would say of the state
of the technology: "Not to criticize the techniques of my great upperclassmen, but to take
down with shorthand a performance exactly as it was, there was just no way to do it, I
think. If you can't keep up, you end up leaving things out." He points out there may be
times when one simply cannot hear something, which one then cannot write, which
means it has to be filled in later using the stenographer's own knowledge. As a result, if
Kuma-san says "いっぺえ、やってくとかァねえか" it may well become "一杯、やって
ていく所はないか." Even the sample of shorthand was complicit in its presentation
over a 'direct', kanji-laden transcription that provides no hint of the process involved
between the two stages. All of these choices are indicative of a larger pattern of
obfuscating those acts of editing which did occur. Because admitting that editing was
employed in the work’s creation would present a contrary view to the notion of
unmediated access to the voice, all discussion of these editorial practices were,
understandably, omitted from discussion in the prologues themselves. Japanese linguist
Shimizu Yasuyuki 清水康行 (1952- ) also identified specific discrepancies in the

62 Quoted in 円朝牡丹燈籠怪談話の深淵をさぐる
63 (「速記」『落語名作全集』第 2 期 第 2 巻所収 普通車 昭和 34 年) quoted in 円朝牡丹燈籠
怪談話の深淵をさぐる p.10
grammar and style of the text as well as specific errors that point to a “sinister hand”危ない手 playing a role in the stenographic process around the stage when kanji were being reintroduced to the original phonetic transcription. Regarding whether or not the tale was taken down exactly as it was performed, Kinsei literature and rakugo scholar Okitsu Kaname 興津要 (1924-1999) wrote:

"1. The technology of shorthand was insufficient. 2. Enchō hated having his techniques芸 stolen. 3. You can think there would be ample reason that Enchō would alter his performance all the more for the readers whom he could not see from the stage but, in the end, there is also that one must shake one's head in agreement to Nagai Hirō 永井啓夫 in his opinion that "in addition to breathing 呼吸, timing間, modulationメリハリ, and composure身振り," there was a limit to how far one could "perfectly textualize 文字化 the words expressed on the stage."

Furthermore, while the shorthand method certainly captured the colloquial grammar, realistic speech patterns and what Miller calls the “repetitive devices” borrowed from rakugo to distinguish sokkibon as a genre, there are many aspects of the performance itself that did not fall within the purview of transcription. Among these are the performers timing, his reading of and reactivity towards his audience, and perhaps most importantly his use of kowairo声色, a changing of the tone and qualities of his voice, gestures and position of the head that was employed to alert the listener to a character’s gender, age and social status. Kowairo would also allow the performer to

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64 「速記と落語」『落語の世界』 3巻所載 岩波書店 平成15年.
65 『三遊亭円朝』Encho's biography.
66 『明治開花期文学集』 所収 「怪談牡丹燈籠」 の補注 「日本近代文学大系」 第一巻 角川書店、昭和45年刊.
aurally mark which character is speaking at which time without resorting to preceding his every statement with that character’s name. An attempt was made to recreate some of these aspects in the text itself by employing standard theater notations for each character’s name before his lines, usually in the form of a single kanji shifted slightly to the right and without glosses. This practice would allow the ‘reader’, who as Maeda Ai notes would most likely be reading aloud to members of his family, to readily identify the speaker of a given piece of dialogue at a given time. In exchange for the gesture and physical mimicry that accompanied even the relatively sparse rakugo tradition of subanashi 素話 which Enchō espoused, the publishers also included illustrations (sashie 拡絵) in both the fascicle and Western versions of the story, neither of which credit a specific artist.

**Textuality and Botandōrō**

In his prologue Wakabayashi makes clear his grand designs for pursuing the shorthand method and what role he believes Botandōrō will play in furthering those goals. He assures the reader, “You will come to feel as you read these notes that you are in fact listening to the tale itself, and through this effect the shorthand method will be invited into the Diet, performances, lectures and the like, all places that require note taking and, when actually employed, will gain a tremendously favorable reputation… The reason I have set to use the method of shorthand to directly copy down this tale, to make this book, was not only for the sake of gaining a most agreeable novel (shōsetsu 小説). I decided I should use this as a shortcut to show the world the necessity and benefit of the shorthand method I have invented,” and it is “…in the interest of attempting to
broaden this method further, and for the betterment of the world that I have come to be employed at the Tōkyō Haishi Shuppansha…” through which “…we should hope to come to know a great increase in the successful application of our shorthand method.”

He later reiterates this objective in his autobiography in stating, “…the fact that one could read the story exactly as it was performed gained it a reputation and [the publication] experienced extraordinary sales. And, since even the cover and back pages of the [fascicle] were published with ‘written with shorthand letters’, it became an advertisement for shorthand as well. The result of which was that Enchō’s story was introduced to the world by means of shorthand and shorthand was introduced by means of Enchō’s story.” Once the method gained wide acclaim, naturally, it would become widely adopted as the modern writing technique of choice.

Even Sakai, who held a much more humble view of the sokki’s capabilities, reluctantly admits that, “Of course it was a very nice thing that on top of making this public to the world it would be possible to raise the names of the stenographers…” although he immediately sours his own optimism by stating “…but, I still thought my shorthand rather imperfect and preferred not having my name appear.” Readily apparent in these glowing assessments is the belief that if people are simply exposed to the marvels the shorthand method can produce, namely extremely accurate transcription that allows for an immediacy and vividness of prose previously unattainable, they will inevitably come to realize what an important technology shorthand is. Of course, while Sakai’s modest goal of “raising the name of stenographers” would at the least benefit the goal of securing stenography as a profession to the benefit of stenographers, it is greatly

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68 Prologue 3.
69 若翁自伝．
70 日本速記大家経歴談
overshadowed in scope when compared to Wakabayashi’s grand designs for using stenography for the “betterment of the world” (yo wo ekisen to suru koto 世を益せんこと). These high expectations of shorthand’s power, along with the visual prominence of the sokki sample in the 1884 printing, combine to project an interesting uncertainty in the reader. When one has stolen the words from the air and fixed them to print, who then can be called the rightful (and writeful) author; the performer, the transcriber or is it somehow the method itself?

In his prologue, Wakabayashi makes sure to note that sokki was a technology that he and his cohorts had perfected over a long period of research, and yet an interesting notion is raised in the last line of his prologue when he begins to lament the occasional lack of grammar, proper meter, and readability of the text. Wakabayashi ostensibly attributes these imperfections to the spoken Japanese language and even predicts and exhorts its reform, and yet the impression one takes away from this concession is that somehow the technology has overpowered the hand of its creator and brought to light new truths that he himself had neither foreseen nor felt able to “correct.” It is this feature of sokki, a technology which produces prose that is unlike that in other texts, that seems to be the source of Wakabayashi’s anxiety over Botandōrō’s reception and possible popular rejection; an outcome that would do little to benefit the promulgation of the shorthand method, let alone to better the world.

Wakabayashi shifts his focus from these ‘deficiencies’ later in the prologue, however, when he praises the skill of Enchō’s performance in saying, “Mr. San’yūtei

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71 Prologue 3.
72 Prologue 3.
73 At a time when most were advocating a reformation of the writing style to bring it closer to speech, Wakabayashi was calling for speech, which he seems to hold a low opinion of, to more closely resemble writing, a view perhaps influenced by his background in kanji study.
Enchō's ninjō stories splendidly portray social conditions and, by being able to move the reader by skillfully recreating all man's myriad emotions in these characters, it is as if one were actually making direct contact with them, as it were, in their present condition.\textsuperscript{74}

Here the driving force behind the chief effect of the work (that of a transcription’s oral immediacy and hyper-realism) is at least partially attributed back to the performer’s skilled rendering of people of differing social circumstance, as opposed to the method used to capture his performance. This position is then reinforced with the statement, “As ninjō stories are a specialty of the man's (Enchō), as you listen to his tale it will be as if you see it as though it were actually happening.” While Enchō can be looked upon as the embodiment of the craft itself, it should be noted that he skillful and psychologically believable portrayal of varying social types is an expected and defining characteristic of rakugo as a medium and not a unique product of Enchō’s invention. More to the point, however, is both the transcriber and performer are given what amounts to equal prominence on the title page. This placement would create in the eye of the reader a sense of equivalence that suggests both parties invested an equal amount of effort, skill and involvement in the text’s production. Looking further, perhaps another indication of authorial authority can be found elsewhere in the text.

Looking to the inside colophon one is presented with a noteworthy departure from traditional publishing practice in that the space usually reserved for ‘author’ or sakusha 作者, is instead occupied by Wakabayashi, who adopts the newly created title ‘transcriber’ (hikkisha 筆記者). No such title of responsibility is constructed for Enchō, who is himself excluded from in the inner colophon. Putting aside the absence of

\textsuperscript{74} Prologue 3.
accreditation for the artist of the picture inserts, *kan bun* poet for the Chinese couplets, the unknown ‘reporter’ who served as editor as well as the merely alluded-to Sakai, this privileged positioning does indeed seem to place more heavily the burden of responsibility, if not authorship, upon Wakabayashi more than any other. Simultaneously, however, Wakabayashi portrays his role, in essence, as simple wielder of a technological method, rather than as an active agent responsible for producing and endorsing the content of the text.

Wakabayashi would go on to complicate even this notion of ‘content provider’ in his prologue by drawing attention to the fact that, “[Botandōrō] was a *kaidan* novella adapted from the famous Chinese short story, not only extremely entertaining, but a tale steeped in *kancho* \(^{75}\) (勧懲に裨益ある) that always earns applause from the audience.” \(^{76}\) By drawing attention to antecedents of the tale the extent of Enchō’s contribution to its production is called into question and responsibility for the creative act is divided back through history. Shōyō would later echo this sentiment in the 1885 edition with the statement that while Botandōrō “…may seem suspiciously similar to [Shikitei Sanba’s] work, if one were but to take a step back and think, what this man simply states strikes deeply in places through to the marrow of *ninjō*.” \(^{77}\)

With the removal of Wakabayashi’s prologue, titular credit, and various shorthand-aggrandizing promotions situated at the terminus of several of the 1884 fascicles, the literarily inclined Shōyō is given free rein to reconstruct the history and nature of the tale and present it as writing which follows the tenants of the *shōsetsu*, thus

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\(^{75}\) An abbreviation of *kanzenchōaku*; a major didactic principle of late gesaku that proscribes that depiction of characters and scenes which, through direct act or through karma, reward good and punish evil.

\(^{76}\) Prologue 3.

\(^{77}\) Prologue 1.
worthy of serious literary consideration. While he is responsible for producing the only mention of the shorthand method in the 1885 edition, Shōyō more heavily attributes the uniquely lively nature of the story to Enchō’s superior skills, rather than a necessary byproduct of the ‘superior’ method used to transcribe them. In doing so he effectively wrests authorial credit back from both the shorthand-method itself and the man who employed it and applies it instead to the ‘original’ producer of this ‘original’ tale. The prologue that follows, written by Kodōjin in a fairly obscure and classical style, also attempts to situate Botandōrō among other great literary and religious texts and makes no mention of shorthand, rakugo, or even Enchō’s oratory style. The inclusion of two such literarily-oriented prologues, coupled with the removal of Wakabayashi’s and the decision to print the text as a book with that notes only Enchō’s name, illustrates a larger pattern on the part of the publishers to deny or at least obscure the oral heredity that Botandōrō enjoyed.

And yet, suspiciously absent from the authorial deliberation thus far is the voice of Enchō himself, who is never afforded a prologue of his own with which to frame his work as he saw fit. As he is not permitted a forum to express his opinion it cannot be determined how Enchō himself would have perceived the authorship of the now physical incarnation of his own work at the time of its first publishing. Wakabayashi at least favors the notion that he, and perhaps even the sokki method, deserve no less than equal credit for the text and ultimately claims for himself the title closest to ‘author,’ if we are to judge such using the inner colophon as a standard. Perhaps the logic behind the decision to exclude Enchō from voicing an opinion on his own work can be elucidated by
turning again to Marilyn Ivy’s account of the production of Tōno monogatari in 1912 by Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962).

In Ivy’s account Yanagita, much like Wakabayashi, claimed he strove only to transcribe directly the tales provided him by Tōno native Sasaki Kizen, and that he did so “without adding [or subtracting one] (kagen sezu 加減せず) word or phrase.” Significantly similar to Wakabayashi’s assertion that he “did not improve upon (kaishu sezu 改修せず) a single fragment of the language,” both these claims craft an image of unedited and therefore unmediated access to something that would normally be distant or unobtainable, be they tales of a far removed yet nostalgically intimate landscape or the privileged performance of a master storyteller brought into one’s own home.

Ivy’s analysis reveals cracks in this assertion of unmediated access, however, by revealing that “The restrained writing by which Yanagita conveys the ghastliness of Tōno always maintains a distance from its immediate origins: the local storyteller and his voice, a voice couched in the dialect of the Tōno region.” The tales Yanagita transcribed were translated from an oral into a literary style as well as stripped of the Tōno dialect of the ‘original’ tales. Wakabayashi, meanwhile, makes neither mention of the editing process that transformed his shorthand into coherent written Japanese nor the shortcomings in accuracy of the method itself. These editorial acts were consciously ignored to the point of obfuscation in order to lend credence to the notion that what was being provided the reader was access to the unmediated and original ‘voice’ of the

78 Ivy 1995, p.81. A hybrid translation of Ronald Morse and Ivy’s translations of a segment of the prologue to Tōno monogatari. Ivy notes Iwamoto Yoshiteru’s interpretation of the phrase as literally “without adding or subtracting.”
storyteller himself. Both Yanagita and Wakabayashi, in claiming authorial equality— if not ownership— of the works they helped produce, paradoxically present themselves as the simultaneous “amanuensis and author”\(^8^0\) of said text, and in doing so drive down (in the eyes of the reader) the evaluation of the original contributor of said text. But why should it be necessary to force such a rift between content producer (Enchō/Sasaki) and content provider (Wakabayashi/Yanagita)?

Here Ivy raises the possible explanation that “[Sasaki’s] struggle to attain recognition… in his own right… conflicted with Yanagita’s desires to maintain control over the tales, to retain ethnographic authority. Sasaki had to remain the native informant, the storyteller, for nativist ethnology to establish itself.”\(^8^1\) In other words, it was necessary to both distance and devalue the contributions of Sasaki as a content provider in order to allow Yanagita to maintain authorial control over said content. As Ivy notes, Yanagita accomplishes this task by making the open ended claim that Sasaki was “not a good story teller (Kyōseki-kun wa hanashi jōzu niwa arazaredomo).”\(^8^2\) This assertion could be referring to Sasaki’s heavy dialect or perceived literary inadequacies, either way it creates the distinct need for someone such as Yanagita to swoop in and fulfill the role of unbiased and pure-intentioned mediator of what would be otherwise inscrutable and inaccessible information. Wakabayashi could not make the similar claim of Enchō’s storytelling abilities, but as been noted Wakabayashi did make a point of saying that the “tone” of his speech does not conform with the established literary aesthetic. He also takes care to remind the reader that Botandōrō is a work derivative of previous Chinese

\(^8^0\) Ivy 1995, p.82.  
\(^8^1\) Ivy 1995, p.90.  
\(^8^2\) Ivy 1995, p.89. “Yanagita, Tōno monogatari, Yamata Shobō edition, 55.”
tales, thus further weakening the position that Botandōrō is an original story entirely of Enchō’s own creation rather than simply a quasi-hereditary staple of the rakugo medium.

Both of these statements, especially when viewed in light of the fact that Enchō is not given a forum in which to express his own views on the tale or its production, seem to indicate that Wakabyashi is positioning the stenographer in a place to attain authorial credit for the production of Botandōrō, which he could later point to in order to further the cause of stenography, much as Yanagita would with Tōno monogatari, Sasaki and nativist ethnology. Ultimately, perhaps to Wakabayashi’s chagrin, later publishers would give the performer the majority of authorial credit in further additions by largely stripping Wakabyashi’s name and most of the mention of the shorthand method from their pages. This trend would continue much in the same way current translations often prefer to omit the translator’s name in order to obscure the fact that an act of interpretation, of mediation has occurred and something of the original author’s voice, his ‘grain’ may have been lost in the process.

**Intertextuality and Origins**

In broad terms the plot of Botandōrō can be separated into two disparate and largely unconnected stories, one a ghostly romance of a style common to kaidanbanashi, the other a katakiuchi 敵討ち story of a type found widely throughout various Tokugawa period literary and theatrical genres. In Shinzaburō and O-Tsuyu’s ghost-love story, the central theme involving young women who return from the grave bearing peony lanterns to conduct a romantic (and fatal) haunting can be traced back to Chinese Ming dynasty short tale of mystery 怪異小説 that would later be adapted into an Asai Ryōi 浅井了意
(1612-1691) story called *Botandōrō* 牡丹燈籠, and eventually a kabuki play partially translated by Lafcadio Hearn as *A Passionate Karma*.

The original Chinese version of *Botandōrō* was penned in 1384 by the author known in Japan as Ku Yū 瞿祐 at the age of 33 as one volume in the 40 volume book *Sentōroku* 剪燈録. Ku Yū was punished for its publication with exile, after which his whereabouts became unknown. Later in 1421, 朝子昂 obtained a four volume book which had been sent to be revised by the then 75 year old Ku Yū, which would become the currently surviving *Sentōroku*. Only a tenth the size of the former book, each of the four volumes contained 5 chapters in addition to an appendix 秋香亭記, in which *Botandōrō* is the 4th story of the second volume. *Sentōroku* was introduced to Japan around 1469-86 and was soon popularized as a *shahon* 写本, the oldest version being the *Kanwakii* 漢和希夷, in which the story in question is untitled and the body of the text was written in the style of a direct Chinese 'translation' mixed with *katakana* 漢文直訳体. The Confucian Hayayashi Razan 林羅山 would come across the story when he was eighteen years old in 1600, then in 1624-44 would rewrite excerpts in a hybrid *kana* and present/perform this *shahon* as a diversion for the then ailing Tokugawa Iemitsu 徳川家光 (1604-1651). These excerpts were quickly disseminated and republished in 1698 as part of the collection *Eirikaidanzenshū* 絵入怪談全集. *Botandōrō* was not included in this version, but Hayashi had taken such a fondness to the tale that it is likely he was responsible for its reappearance in the translated 翻訳収載の写本 compilation *Yūreinokoto* 幽霊の事. In this interval Asai Ryōi would adapt *Botandōki* 牡丹燈記 from the Chinese *Sentōshinwa* 剪灯新話 into Japanese as part of the thirteen volume
*Otogibōko* 御伽婢子. As the name of the main character from this story, Hagihara Shinnojō 萩原新之丞, is remarkably similar to Enchō’s main character Hagihara Shinzaburō 萩原新三郎, it can be assumed this was the version which Enchō himself was directed to by kanji scholar and feudal retainer Shinobu Shogen 信夫恕軒 (1835-1910). ⁸³

The story next appeared as *Botandō no koto* 牡丹燈の事 in the hybrid-hiragana 和文体 *shahon* version *Kiiūōtanshū* 奇異雑談集 in 1687 in Kyoto, but this would eventually have come to be sold in Edo as well. When this version became a book, the title of the tale was changed to the more descriptive, if uninspired, *The Dead Woman who Killed a Man by Pulling him into a Coffin* (*Onnabito shigo otoko wo kan no naka he hikikorosu koto* 女人と後男を棺の内へ引込ころす事). There was also the annotated 注釈書 *kanbun* version *Sentōshinwakukai* 剪燈新話句解. The most widely read version of this story, however, is believed to be the Japanese *Kiiūōtanshū* of 1687. According to the prologue of this book, 蒼燈 means to extinguish the wick (written as 心＝芯) of a candle, to have the mindset こころ to speak long into the night, in reference to the contemporary past-time of *hyakumonogatari* 百物語. ⁸⁴

In an interesting parallel to the 1884 version of *Botandōrō*, the editor of this text, a Mr. Nakamura 中村某, emphasized more the novelty of the story and the fact that it was a tale from another country that had been translated into Japanese, rather the spookiness of the tale itself. Specifically, the 1687 version of the story would have been

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⁸³ NKDBTK p. 443.
⁸⁴ Ishii 2008, p.42.
read widely around the time when *otoginoshibi* were at the height of their popularity, a highly influential time in the development of *rakugo*.

Specific elements of the plot can be also be traced to theatrical kabuki and noh traditions as well as *setuwa* and *kusazōshi*, all art forms often referenced in *rakugo* performances. One point where these genres converge can be seen in the alternating-tale format of story, a plot-construction device known as *tereko* テレコ. This construction was adopted in performance traditions where one story, such as Shinzaburō's uncomplicated haunting, simply wouldn't last if stretched out over the entirety of the fifteen day schedule, meaning that familiar tropes like *katakiuchi* and *oiesōdo* 御家騒動, which the audience was intimately familiar with, were invoked to stretch out the plot of the primary for as long as possible. Enchō would draw inspiration for this approach from Kawatake Mokuami 河竹黙阿弥 (1816-1893), a man 23 years his senior.

Close analysis of character and place names can also reveal a resemblance to the particulars of a peasant murder 市井の殺人事件 that took place near the area Enchō was living at the time he was constructing the tale. Enchō based his story of Iijima Heisaemon’s slaying of Kurokawa at the start of the tale on a true incident in Ushigome 牛込 he was told of in a wholesale rice shop he frequented in Kitasanchō 北川町 in Fukugawa 深川. As the story goes, a shogunal retainer in Ushigome named Iijima 牛込の旗本飯島某 was killed by a footsoldier 若党 with a spear 槍 over a dispute involving insults and a dog attack.85 The name used in *Botandōrō* is Iijima Heisaemon 飯島平左衞門. Enchō would also reference in his tale one of his favorite patrons, the *ogiebushi* 萩江

85 NKDBTK p.446 #184 = needs review.
The name Otsuyu may have been taken directly from his stage name or from a story of a second son from Oomiya’s generation's who had a bride named OTsuyu お露, who died of illness/natural causes. He then took her younger sister, who had come to care for her older sister, as his second wife, but on the night of their marriage she also died. After this incident, the souls 亡霊 of the two dead women paid a visit to a man who put together a hut on the outskirts of Shinobazu noike 不忍池.

After Enchō decided on the names for his ghoulish pair he apparently purchased two dolls named OTsuyu お露 and OYone お米 from a nearby shop that sold floats (山車の人形). From this we can surmise that, while normally an apprentice raconteur would appear during the climax of a kaidan story as a yuuta ユータ, Enchō most likely acted out the earliest versions of his stories using dolls. Ishii Akira informs us that while the story was popular from its first performance, it began as musically accompanied 鳴物入り story with props 道具ばなし which was performed much like a play on a stage with painted backgrounds, props, music and sound effects 擬音 in which Enchō also incorporated vocal mimicry of popular actors of the time. While Enchō ultimately settled on subanashi as the style to drive rakugo forward as an art form, he is said to have been rather showy and rough during his prop years before developing his trademark refined and well-polished speaking technique.

86 A person dressed in ghost garb to scare the audience.
87 Possibly for such scenes as around Book 5 Chapter 12 when OTsuyu and OYone are flying about and come in through the upper window of Shinzaburō’s house.)
88 Ishii 2008, p.ii.
Enchō’s story departs from the norms of *kaidanbanashi*, however, by eschewing the customary gruesome story about a man who cruelly kills a woman who then comes back to haunt him in favor of a love story of a man for a woman that persists beyond death. This romantic-yet-destructive depiction of the two ghostly women is perhaps the most lasting legacy of the Asai Ryōi tale, which draws attention to the dangerous emotional susceptibility of a lonely widower. Much like the specific content of the tale, however, the story’s proffered moral imperative would also change in later versions, which would denounce both the power of a woman’s attachment to the physical world after death as a moral threat as well as the immorality of a physical relationship between the living and dead.

The variation in content that Enchō’s version of *Botandōrō* also underwent over the course of the twenty three years that he had been performing it highlights the difficulty one encounters when attempting the impossibility of determining which of his performances could be considered the “definitive performance.” Just as a *rakugo* story draws inspiration from past cultural, traditional and literary elements, it is also subject to social change with the whims of the audience and the experiences of the performer as it evolves over time. Once the performance has been physically fixed to a text, however, what it loses in its ability to change and adapt, it gains in authority by becoming the immutable, representative and authoritative version of the story.

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89 As seen in the *Shokoku hyakumonogatari* (諸国百物語 1690) version *Botandō, onna no shūshin* (牡丹堂、女の執心) which ends with the line "This woman’s tenacious heart, though three years had passed, had finally caught up with the man."

90 Such as the *Kiizōtanshū* (奇妙雑談集 1687) version, which sports the uninspired title: *The Dead Woman who Killed a Man by Pulling him into a Coffin* 女人死後男を棺の内へ引込ころす事. This tale ended with the description of the couple’s final, posthumous embrace.
In the long term, this impression of authority that literature was afforded would prove problematic for many of the less well known rakugo artists who, after the publication of their stories, found their performed versions to be considered as cheap imitations of a now widely available book. In order to meet the demand of now voracious publishers, raconteurs were expected to create a vast amount of novel material that was previously unheard of in a genre based largely on content inherited from one’s predecessors. While the system of sokkibon production worked out well for Enchō in specific by raising his recognition, it would ultimately prove anathema to the rakugo art form and directly precede its decline over the course of the late Meiji period.

As a text Botandōrō demonstrates bibliographic codes that straddle the border between modern and pre-modern literature. Wakabayashi would present his work as the fruit of his technique of ‘photographing language’ that, by extension, would provide closer and more direct access to the interiority of “author.” In his prologue he presented his shorthand method as a technique that would come to represent the new standard of modern writing. As they created a new system for transcribing language, stenographers were wrestling with the philosophical nature and limitations of language in spoken and written form, and their discoveries and accomplishments would provide a framework for future authors during a highly transformative period in the history of Japanese literature, whether intentional or not.

Eventually, however, shorthand would fall out of favor as raconteurs racked their brains for new material while competing literary figures began producing exciting new works in genbun’itchi and naturalist styles. With the loss of interest in performance rakugo, can one conclude, then, that by transcribing the voice to text with shorthand
Wakabayashi had accomplished what he predicted and captured the *grain* of the voice to so fine a degree that it outstripped the performance itself? How did the audience view the printed and performed versions when compared with each other?

What follows is the impression of a patron who saw Enchō perform *Botandōrō* after he had read the *sokkibon*. At the start of fall of 1885 Okamoto Kidō 岡本綺堂, one of the most famous playwrights of the prewar era, was a 14 year old middle school student in Tokyo (東京府立第一中学校) whose father was working in the English legation at the imperial palace. He would recall the printed version and this performance later at the age of 47:

"I borrowed the *sokkibon* of *Kaidan botandōrō* from a person in the neighborhood. At that time, I was about 13 or 14 but, reading the whole thing at once, I didn't feel very frightened. I wondered why this story was so famous, so much so that I found the whole thing quite strange indeed. Then, around half a year later, Enchō came to the 万長亭 *yose* hall, they said he would perform *Botandōrō* so I chose the night he would perform that *kaidan* and went to listen. It may seem like I'm making this up, but that night it was as if the first rains of the fall had been coming down all day and it was the perfect time of night to listen to a *kaidan* story.

"Are you going to listen to the *kaidan*, then?" My mother said, as if to intimidate.

"What, I'm not going to be scared by something like *Botandōrō*."

I, who had done up a fair amount of *sokki* version by then, strutted out as calm as could be. Fact was, I was wrong. When Enchō finally appeared on stage and began the *kaidan* in front of those candles, I felt more and more a certain type of unearthly sensation 妖気 come to me. The whole audience was holding their breath, listening
closely. As the conversation between Tōzō and his wife progressed, I began to feel a bit of a tingle on the back of my neck. Regardless of the great crowd packed in all around me, I was sitting in the small, dark, old house in Nezu 根津 that was the setting of the story, feeling as if I alone was being told this mysterious tale, from time to time I looked back to the left and right. Unlike today, the lamps in the yose in those times were dark. The candles from the stage were also dim. Outside you could hear the sound of rain. There's no mistaking these were conditions for creating the appropriate mood for kaidan stories but, even still, that I felt scared by this kaidan is fact and it was around 10 o'clock when it finished and the rain was ever still falling. I went home as if fleeing down the dark night road.

At this time I experienced what they called the weirdness of Enchō's performance through and through. Simply from reading the sokkibon, the kaidan which didn't feel nearly so chilling and frightening as this, when brought out to the stage and put forth with Enchō's own mouth, that it should wrap a person in such a terrifying ghastliness, this was truly a different thing entirely, I marveled.91

91「寄席と芝居と」  「綺堂随筆　江戸のことば」 所収河出文庫
Men able to make apparent their minds/passions almost exactly as they think/feel, unwittingly, and yet deftly, create works that naturally follow the rules of rhetoric, as the sage Edmund Spenser (士班釵) once said. How true indeed, these words are. Lately, using a technique known as shorthand, they have taken down precisely a recitation of the kaidan master, old-man San'yūtei; a work of fiction come to be called Botandōrō. In looking to compile this tale into a book 草紙, full use of the common, colloquial dialect 僭言俗語 has been made throughout which, though its style may not be thought beautiful, line by line, sentence by sentence (kugotonibungotonii 句ごとに文ごとに), it has a certain vigor and gives the sensation as though meeting face to face with Hagihara himself, or actually seeing the maiden Otsuyu before your very eyes. The coarseness of that Aikawa, the embodiment of loyalty in faithful manservant Kōsuke, as one comes to read on, sometimes laughing and sometimes being moved despite oneself, one imagines these to be utterly true events, and is prone even to forget that it is a work of fiction. Surely this may result from the craft of the piece. Yet, even though this effect relies on the ingenuity of the work, if he wasn't known as a former man of letters, one wouldn't think someone like old Enchō to be a person learned in the writing profession. Even so, better still that a piece like this be done in one breath, as a single utterance, putting the old Tamenaga on the run and outfoxing old Shikitei Sanba in composing this superb

92 Tsubouchi quoted frequently from Spenser in Shōsetsu shinzui, yet it is not clear whether this quote can actually be attributed to him.
novel which, although it may seem suspiciously similar to his work, if one were but to take a step back and think, what this old fellow says relentlessly pierces deep the marrow of ninjō,\(^{93}\) and it is when he reproduces feelings of love faithfully the effect is achieved—simply copying down the most superficial aspects of ninjō and producing prose that is no better than if it were already dead, those weak and inferior factions of the world who make flattering appeals to women and infants with their scribbles will read this Botan's prose and Oh! what shame they shall undoubtedly feel. In stating however briefly what places moved me, more or less, I bestow this prologue, written as requested.

Prologue 2: Kodōjin 古道人\(^{94}\)


While they say Confucius\(^{95}\) did not talk speak of extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder and spiritual beings,\(^{96}\) many strange events are written of in the Zuo Zhuan.\(^{97}\) Also, in the Doctrine of the Mean,\(^{98}\) when a state is about to rise to power there are always auspicious omens, and when it is soon to come to ruin there are calamitous omens (yōgetsu 妖蘖). Noticing this pattern, it becomes difficult to say there are not

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\(^{93}\) Tsubouchi's definition of ninjo.

\(^{94}\) Identity uncertain. Listed in Aozora bunko as Fusao Kan 総生寛.

\(^{95}\) Confucius 孔子 (551-479 B.C.) highly achieved Chinese scholar who lived in the latter part of the Spring and Autumn Period. Surname Qiu 丘. Chinese courtesy name Zhong Ni 仲尼. Basing his teachings on the virtues of filial piety and sincerity, toured several countries preaching ideal moral values to mankind, but they were not adopted, so he pursued writing and trained as many as 3,000 followers.

\(^{96}\) This is a reference to the Transmission chapter (Shu Er 述而) of The Analects (Lún Yǔ 論語).

\(^{97}\) Known in Japan as Saden 左伝, a shortened title of the Chronicle of Zuo (Chūnqiū Zuōshǐhuàn 春秋左氏伝), written by the Court Chronicler Zuo Qiuming 太史左丘明 of Lu 魯. Of the Three Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals (Chūn Qiū Sān Zhuàn 春秋三伝/三傳), it gives the best explanations of historical events of the time.

\(^{98}\) The Japanese Chūyō 中庸, one of the Four Books (Sishū 四書), thought to be written by Zisi 子思, the grandchild of Confucius, the book taught the moral of unchanging moderation (chūyō fuhen 中庸不變), it was a volume in the Book of Rites (Lǐjì 禮記).
incomprehensibly strange things that happen in our world. Especially in the Buddhist
texts, many strange things are brought out and these make up the Upaya,\(^99\) the
unfathomable and omnipotent Force (jintsū 神通) and the means to save all living things
from suffering and allow them to attain Buddha-hood. The strange events that this
volume speaks of also show the common man's inability to reach enlightenment and
strive to provide him a guidebook to leave behind this inability and enter into the true
path. Regarding less the verity of these events, the depth of the spirit (心) employed here
by the author (sakusha 作者) must be made known.

Person of the Old Way

**Prologue 3: Wakabayashi Kanzō 若林甘藏**


While letters can adequately reproduce people’s words, these letters only fix in
place the meaning of those words.\(^{100}\) The reason it has not been possible to record a lively
narrative without letting even a single word escape is that our country has not had a
shorthand method to directly copy down the language, which is something I lamented for
quite a while. As such I, along with my colleagues, have spent many years researching
this method, devising the best stenographic technique and, through frequent attempts and
training, we can finally directly copy spoken language without mistaking even a single
word. You will come to feel as you read this transcription that you are in fact hearing the
tale itself, and through this effect the shorthand method has been invited into the Diet,

\(^{99}\) *Upaya* 方便 A skillful way to guide and teach all living things.

\(^{100}\) As Wakabayashi uses the term here to mean spoken language, I have translated *gengo* 言語 as
‘words.’
performances, lectures and the like, all places that require note taking and, when actually employed, has gained a tremendously favorable reputation. As such, when I was planning to broaden this method further for the betterment of the world, an employee of the Tōkyō haishi shuppansha (東京稗史出版社), which formerly did business as contract publishers of people's history novels, came to me and said, “The famous rakugo artist Mr. San'yūtei Enchō’s ninjō stories portray social conditions so splendidly and move the reader by skillfully recreating all man's emotions in their characters so well that one experiences an extraordinary pleasure, as if one were actually making direct contact with (those characters), as it were, in their present state. If you use this method of shorthand to directly copy down this tale, to make this book, it will bring about not only a most agreeable novel (shōsetsu 小説), but will also serve as a shortcut to show the world the necessity and benefit of the shorthand method you have invented,” and so he recommended that I pursue this transcription. I gladly accepted and along with Shorthand Research Group (sokkihō kenkyūkai 速記法研究会) member Mr. Sakai Shōzō, we went to a theater where Mr. Enchō would appear and requested we be allowed backstage. Using the shorthand method we directly copied down the tale he performed, just as it was, without improving even a single word, and what we fixed to print then became, in other words, this Mysterious Tale of the Peony Lantern. This was a novel (shinki 新奇) kaidan adapted (hon’an 翻案) from the famous Chinese short-story (shōsetsu), and because this story is a speciality of his (Enchō) that is not only extremely entertaining but is also a tale steeped in morality (kanchō 勧懲) that always earns

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101 Ninjō 人情 A genre comprised of stories of human emotion/passion. Tear-jerkers.
102 Kaidan 怪談 A genre comprised of stories of the supernatural. Spooky stories, ghost stories.
applause from the audience, when you hear this narrative (setuwa 說話) it will be as if you are watching it actually happen, and as I heard it, so I wrote it down, without letting even a single word escape. When he (Enchō) laughs, the transcript laughs, when he angers, so too does the transcript; when crying then crying, when rejoicing then rejoicing. The remarks of the young ladies are skillfully and charmingly done, the words of the hill folk are dull and accented and so forth, and because we are able to take a picture of the spoken language, so to speak, using our method, we believe those reading this book should have the same pleasurable experience as if they were actually listening intently to Mr. Enchō in a yose theater. In doing so, I should hope you come to know just how great the efficacy of our shorthand method is. However, there are often places in this writing where we lose the literary style, where we do not obtain proper inflection, where it is not most convenient to read through, and the reason that it cannot be like other common novels is, in other words, is because we have, using our shorthand method, copied down directly language which does not realize the proper tone (chō 調), and it is because we hold the grand intention to reform the future use of language in our country that we show this lack of grammar in our country’s narratives, and so I would be lucky to ask that the members of the audience understand this and take pleasure in reading it.

Written by Wakabayashi Kanzō

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103 What is meant here by improper tone is ‘not in 7-5 syllable meter as found in yomihon or ninjōbon’.
Wakabayashi’s Perspective

In Meiji 17, Mr. Kondō 近藤 and Mr. Nakao 中尾 from the Kyōbashi no Tōkyō Haishi Shuppansha 東橋の稗史出版社 both came and told me something interesting should come of it if I were to transcribe, as it was performed, one of San'yūtei Enchō's ninjō banashi, and so their request was they’d like to have me to transcribe it. Although I had transcribed speeches and lectures before, I had no experience with kōdan or rakugo but, unlike speeches and lectures the content was simpler so, thinking there should be no reason I couldn’t write it, I promised to take the project on. However, thinking I might fail if I tried it alone, which wouldn’t do, I talked it over with Sakai Shozō 酒井昇造 and the fellow agreed to help as it would make for good practice for him as well. The company had just negotiated with the Enchō, and since we had earned his approval we made to attend and take shorthand at the Yose theater Suehirotei 末広亭 in Ningyōchō 人形町 where, at the time, Enchō appeared every night. Since Enchō’s ninjō stories were made such that a single tale would span fifteen days, we arranged that Enchō would appear all fifteen days without fail and our side would also avoid being absent. Finally, in the backstage of the Suehiro 末広, we wrote what Encho spoke on the stage (kōza 高座). That was his speciality "The Peony Lantern". Besides not having much experience taking shorthand of ninjō stories, Enchō spoke so eloquently during his specialty scenes that the notes became surprisingly difficult but since the substance of the thing itself was rather plain, as long as there were two of us taking notes we would somehow bring it together in the end. It was decided "The Peony Lantern" would be done with one seating equaling one chapter and, when it was published every Saturday, since "Enchō’s Peony

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104 Excerpt from Wakabayashi’s autobiography Wakaō jiden 若翁自伝.
Lantern" was already very popular and because people enjoyed that they could read the story exactly as it was performed, the magazine experienced extraordinary sales. And, since even the cover and back pages of the magazine were published with "written with shorthand letters", it became an advertisement for shorthand as well. The result of which was that Enchō's story was introduced to the world by means of shorthand and shorthand was introduced by means of Enchō's story.

**Sakai’s Perspective**

Mr. Wakabayashi had taken them up on their offer and so it came to be we would take shorthand of San'yūtei Enchō's newly created ninjō story The Peony Lantern. However, we didn't know whether the writing would go smoothly or not, so to test it out the two of us went on the same day to a yose theater called the Ryōkoku Rikkatei 両国立花亭 and gave it a try in front of the stage but it just didn't go very well. However, well, we thought if we just tried a little harder it should work out somehow so we decided to take the shorthand, gained Encho's acceptance, and then at the theater in Ikenohata called Fukinukitei 吹抜亭, this time using the backstage, we wrote. Mr. Wakabayashi was absent two or three times but I was the one who wrote through all fifteen nights from start to finish. Of course it was shoddy penwork but, whatever the case, first and foremost I was able to take the notes. Then we then relied on a certain gentleman, who was then a reporter at the Hōchi Newspaper 報知新聞, who edited our writing quite well for us and then that was what was printed. Of course when publicizing this text it would be better to display the names of the stenographers but, I was still an

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105 Excerpt from Sakai’s article 酒井昇造の「日本速記大家経歴談」日本速記雑誌、第六号 明4 4・11
imperfect stenographer and preferred not having my name appear, therefore we decided to publish it as Wakabayashi's shorthand and I would remain his assistant.
Picture 3. Cover of the fifth edition of the 1886 Western-style printing, displaying a noteworthy lack of both Wakabayashi’s name and reference to shorthand. Images copied from the Kindai Digital Library.
Picture 4. Inner jacket and first page, 1885 version.
Picture 5. Fusao Kan's prologue, 1885 version.
Picture 7. Iijima and Kurokawa square off, 1885 version. Note also the reintroduction of border lines around the text.
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