INTERACTION BETWEEN CHARACTERS IN *HEIKE MONOGATARI* DIALOGUES: LANGUAGE FORMS AND FUNCTIONS

by

ALEXEY LUSHCHENKO

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Abstract

This thesis examines language aspects of interaction in dialogue passages of *Heike monogatari (The Tale of the Heike, 1371)* focusing on the role of language forms in characterization. The main goal of the present study is to assess the role of language variation and analyze how it participates in construction of asymmetries in social status and power between characters.

Selected dialogue data is divided into two groups according to the participants and the dominant context: political interaction at court and interaction involving religious matters. Analysis of language forms in each dialogue draws on research by Japanese scholars and covers a wide range of linguistic phenomena such as sound changes, lexical choices, and markers of politeness. Linguistic findings are intended to supplement recent studies of the literary, socio-political, and religious contexts for early medieval narratives.

By selecting a specific language style for each interacting character, the author(s) constructed particular images that have shaped audience’s perceptions of the characters. This study brings attention to language variation and clarifies how the socio-political status of characters, their interpersonal relations, and attitudes toward each other are encoded in the language of *Heike monogatari* dialogues. As such, this study is perhaps the first attempt in English to adopt a sociolinguistic approach to a Japanese pre-modern text, focusing on language properties and shifts in style in *Heike monogatari*. 
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Introduction

*The Tale of the Heike* (Kakuichi variant of *Heike monogatari*, 1371) is a set of narratives about one of the turning points in Japanese history, the Genpei war (1180-1185), and the events leading up to the conflict. Its panoramic portrayal of the events taking place at the court, in Buddhist monasteries, and on the battlefields introduced a multitude of diverse characters who later reappeared continually in a vast number of literary works inspired by *Heike monogatari*. The text itself, created for oral performances, in addition to its literary richness and dramatic content, is also known for “its linguistic and tonal complexity.”¹

In this study, I examine a selection of dialogue passages from a linguistic perspective focusing on the variation in language forms found in the represented speech of characters. Analysis covers a wide range of linguistic phenomena from sound changes to lexical choices and polite expressions. The usage of specific forms is interpreted with extensive references to research in stylistics done by Japanese scholars of the text.

One of the aims of the study is to assess the role of language variation in the formation of the audience’s image of interaction between characters. I certainly acknowledge the dominance of content (what happens in the narrative) over form (how it is expressed) in constructions of characters’ images, however, in this study I focus on the variation in language between characters in different settings and I attempt to show that language properties complementing the content play a significant role in enhancing the portrayal of characters and encoding negotiation of relationships between characters. The diversity in interaction in terms of language choices is significant as one of the elements shaping the audiences’ collective imagined view of the past.

Table 1 – Basic diagram: the link between texts and construction of perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fictional literary dialogue Speaker 1 ↔ Speaker 2</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Language forms</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Audience reception</th>
<th>Image of: { characters (Speaker 1 and 2) } attitudes hierarchy identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ 1 Language forms are an inherent component of a text that parallels its content.</td>
<td>○ 2 During a performance, audience attends to content (what is said) and form (how it is said).</td>
<td>○ 3 Based on the content and form, audience’s perceptions of the speakers are constructed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current research on language properties of pre-modern Japanese literary texts, including *Heike monogatari*, lags far behind the socio-historical and literary analyses of the same texts. This study aims to bring attention to issues of language and style that have been researched by Japanese scholars, but remain largely unexplored in Western studies of *Heike monogatari*. This thesis also attempts to show that the discussion of language aspects of the narratives can potentially supplement literary and historical interpretations.

**About Heike monogatari**

The Tale of the Heike (*Heike monogatari*) is a large-scale set of narratives in the genre of *gunki monogatari* (war tales) focusing on the events of the Genpei war (1180-1185), one of the major turning points in premodern Japanese history.

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2 For example, questions of language forms and style are rarely discussed in detail in the following recent studies of *Heike monogatari*: Paul H. Varley, *Warriors of Japan as Portrayed in the War Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994); Elizabeth Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions: Authorizing Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006); David T. Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from the Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2007).
More than a hundred variants of *Heike monogatari* differ in length, style and content. They are usually subdivided into two textual lineages: 1) “read variants” (*yomihonkei*) intended for reading are associated with official historical texts influenced by Classical Chinese and 2) “recited lineage” (*kataribonkei*), specifically modified for public oral recitations, known for lower use of Chinese elements and a much greater inclusion of fictional episodes.\(^3\) Although this binary division is useful for general classification, it can be seen as somewhat reductive in simplifying the fluid blurred boundaries between the variants.

The recited variants were part of a performance tradition, that is, the narratives were performed under a musical accompaniment of a *biwa* lute by blind wandering monks (*biwa hōshi*). Performances took place in public spaces, such as markets, but also in temples and residences of courtiers and warriors. Being performed for centuries before diverse audiences from commoners to the highest ranks of court and warrior nobility, the narratives helped shape a corpus of stories and characters familiar to people of different backgrounds thereby contributing to the formation of a shared cultural framework.\(^4\)

Neither the author(s) nor the textual evolution of the text can be established with precision. The production and compilation of the variant examined in the present study, *Kakuichibon Heike monogatari* (1371), was a long process spanning more than a century from the early thirteenth to the late fourteenth century. In 1371, one of the masters of the *heikyoku* (recitation of *Heike* narratives) guild, *biwa hōshi* Kakuichi (d. 1371), dictated the variant that came to be the standard for later generations of his followers, blind performers of the *Ichikatarō* school. The text consists of twelve *maki* (scrolls or chapters) followed by the additional

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\(^3\) For a more detailed discussion of variants see Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions*, 9-14.
“Initiates’ book,” each containing a varying number of sections centred on a specific episode. Its style, in general, is described by the term wakan konkōbun (mixed Japanese-Chinese style) referring to the combination of classical Japanese syntax and vocabulary with a number of Sino-Japanese loanwords and syntactical structures. It is acknowledged that dialogue passages contain a wide variety of colloquial expressions.

The content of the tale combines historical narration of events related to the Genpei war with Buddhist and military setsuwa (oral-derived narratives) anecdotes resulting in a detailed and complex description of the wide range of characters interacting in a wide geographical space. As a whole, the tale relates the rise and fall of the Taira (or Heike) military clan with the first half centred on the figure of Taira no Kiyomori (1118-1181), the head of the Taira clan, and his political struggles with courtier and imperial opposition in the capital. The second half is devoted to the large-scale war between the military clans of the Taira and the Minamoto (or Genji) in which the former suffer a series of defeats and are exterminated.

**Data and Heike language**

The central text for the current study, *Heike monogatari* (Kakuichi variant, Takano-bon copy), is a representative text for Kamakura (1185-1333) period Japanese, and its linguistic features are usually considered as typical for the language in the post-Genpei period marked by the increased influence of warrior clans and peripheral non-elite groups in political and cultural affairs. It is precisely such processes of power redistribution that need to be accommodated and legitimized. Both new voices (of warriors and non-elite monks, for example) and old ones (those of nobility) are prominently represented in the *Heike* narrative. Narratives, considering

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5 Ichiko Teiji, ed., *Heike monogatari*, Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū, vols. 45-46. (Shōgakukan, 1994). In the following footnotes abbreviated as SNKBZ.
their role in influencing collective imagination, become a new domain of contest over authority and legitimacy. As suggested by Prasenjit Duara, “narratives [...] are necessarily selective processes which repress various historical and contemporary materials as they seek to define a community.” The narrative of Heike monogatari is a selection that can be said to promote various kinds of “peripheral” speech to the status of a new norm that defines the post-Genpei society.

As for the language of the text, it has been often noted that the language use and style of Heike monogatari is highly diverse. It is not surprising to find a great degree of variation given the panoramic detailed narrative of events with a wide spectrum of participants and a vast geography. Heike monogatari is known for its complexity and rich vocabulary, including many Sino-Japanese (kango) terms. Most variants of Heike are believed to contain considerable linguistic data of interest to researchers of Kamakura spoken language, namely onomatopoeia, dialecticisms and zokugo (vernacular, colloquialisms), especially in dialogue parts.

It can be concluded that linguistic data of Heike monogatari is not uniform and there is a significant correlation between linguistic forms chosen by author(s) to represent speech of characters and the social setting in which it is uttered.

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Recent studies of *Heike monogatari*

Several concepts influence the approaches and methodology adopted in recent studies of premodern Japanese narratives. The trend is to revise canonical interpretations and to bring attention to underrepresented voices and counternarratives. The clear-cut separation between categories such as literature and history or Buddhism and Shinto is seen as removed from actual cultural practices of the medieval Japan. The focus is on representations, rather than facts. The narratives are seen as constructing the imagined past. These concepts influence the approach of two recent studies of *Heike monogatari*, one by David Bialock\(^9\) and another by Elizabeth Oyler.\(^10\) The first study situates *Heike monogatari* inside the Sino-Japanese tradition that continuously influenced narratives from the Nara period (710-792) on, whereas the second study traces how diverse *Heike* narratives were being reinterpreted from Kamakura to Edo (1603-1867) period.

David Bialock’s *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories* analyzes textual traditions and ritual practices from the Nara (710-792) to Kamakura (1185-1333) period in their relation to questions of space and power. Key themes that permeate Bialock’s discussion are the interplay between official and unofficial historical narratives, unorthodox forms of oral speech, perceptions of defiled and sacred space, and tensions between center and periphery. In the discussion of *Heike monogatari* Bialock emphasizes the role of elements stemming from the Sino-Japanese tradition in representations of royal authority and spatial opposition between center and periphery. He presents *Heike* narratives as complex combinations of official Chinese-style historiography with unofficial marginalized forms of discourse. According to Bialock, the tension between official centralized history and peripheral potentially subversive

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\(^9\) Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories*.

\(^10\) Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions*. 
narratives results in the incursion of marginal into the center with concomitant disruption of hierarchies and combination of unorthodox oral discourse with official style. My research draws on Bialock’s discussion of nomadic speech, center-periphery relationship, ritual and power. My analysis of interaction between *Heike* characters examines language aspects of the phenomena discussed by Bialock.

Elizabeth Oyler’s *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions* discusses narratives about the Genpei war as a set of tales repeated and reworked from late Kamakura to Edo (1603-1867) period shaping, as a result, an idealized image of the past for audiences and readers. Special attention is devoted to issues of violence and factional struggles that accompanied the rise of the Minamoto and their later representations promoting the Minamoto power as a model of unity, rule of law, and military rule sanctioned by divine powers. Analyzing multiple variants of several episodes involving key Minamoto figures, Oyler traces how interpretation of the events shifted and what elements or motifs were added, emphasized or downplayed in different narratives. The study focuses on the role of prophetic dreams, written petitions and oaths in the constructions of political and divine legitimacy, affirmation of Minamoto clan unity and the portrayal of warrior government originating in a just system of law. My research examines the role of language choice in shaping characters’ images and I specifically draw on Oyler’s discussion of Yoritomo as a judge in my analysis of Yoritomo’s speech.

**Recent studies of medieval literary dialogue – International overview**

Before taking up the discussion of dialogue in pre-modern Japanese literary works it is worthwhile to consider how similar materials have been approached and what kinds of questions have been raised in recent years. The following overview is by no means exhaustive
and is intended only as a brief summary of recent trends.

In English, a number of scholars have argued for the validity of an approach integrating literary criticism with linguistic and socio-historical tools to study texts, including pre-modern ones, as data for investigating issues of communication and social relations. This approach was not widely accepted several decades ago and scholars had to defend claims of utility of linguistic theory in domains of literature\(^{11}\) or the view that sociolinguistic methods can be successfully applied to pre-modern texts.\(^{12}\) More recently, similar views have contributed to the formation of influential trends in language studies such as Discourse Analysis\(^{13}\) or Historical Pragmatics that investigate many facets of interaction and its relation to social identity, culture, status and power in modern as well as pre-modern texts. Historical literary dialogue, as an approximation of interaction, is one of the key kinds of data analyzed in these approaches and it has been the primary object of several recent studies.\(^{14}\)

In German scholarship, the study of stylistic differences in direct speech passages found in medieval epics has been conducted for a century. However, research done in the last several decades has led scholars to the awareness of the gap separating linguistics and literature and to the need to bridge this methodological gap. Research in the area of fictional literary dialogue is only in the beginning stages, particularly when it comes to medieval literary works. Recently several conferences were held as a way to promote application of linguistic


methods to medieval literary texts.\textsuperscript{15} The theme was the analysis of dialogue forms and functions in medieval epics as well as the attempt to probe possibilities and problems opened up by historical linguistic analysis of text passages. Among the issues raised by German scholars are: descriptive analysis of dialogue structure, status and gender-specific differences in speech (construction of identity in courtly literature, unconventional language use in a court setting), German adaptations of Latin and French works (comparative study of direct speech), relationship between oral and written, traces of natural speech in epics (interjections and ellipsis, for example), comparison of direct speech use by different authors, possible influences from classical poetic and rhetoric theory on medieval epics, and performance of medieval texts.

In summary, German scholars consider medieval literary dialogue to be a relatively new area of study that is still in need of new methods of analysis grounded in linguistics and literary studies.

French scholars have also paid considerable attention to questions of orality, performance and text in the last several decades. Works of the influential literary critic Paul Zumthor in the 1970s and 80s, for example, brought attention to the oral performance aspects of medieval poetry and epic literature.\textsuperscript{16} A more recent study approaches medieval prose from a comparative angle tracing the use of direct speech in French vernacular as a development of narrative technique resulting in a clearer structure suitable for aural reception.\textsuperscript{17} Growing complexity of dialogue in courtly texts of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries is discussed from

\textsuperscript{15} In 2005 and 2007 at the University of Bremen. See Nine Miedema and Franz Hundsnurscher, eds., \textit{Formen und Funktionen von Redeszenen in der mittelhochdeutschen Grossepi}k (Forms and functions of speech scenes in Middle High German epic) (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2007).


\textsuperscript{17} Frank Brandsma, “La vérité vivifiée? Le discours direct aux débuts de la prose française,” \textit{Faits de langues} 19 (2002).
pragmatic and narratological points of view in a recent monograph by Denoyelle-Boutle.\textsuperscript{18} Based on the data from a vast array of texts in prose and verse, the monograph contains analysis of context (situation, participants, themes), dialogue structure (realism, tempo, politeness, structural patterns) and functions (dramatic, analytic, characterization, emotive, ideological). Alongside such large-scale studies done from a more literary perspective, there are cases of detailed research on the linguistic features of orality present in medieval texts. For example, language scholar Oppermann closely examines the functions and context of use of one adverb and an infinitive construction in texts of different genres in order to reach conclusions about the degree of orality of texts in a corpus.\textsuperscript{19} Despite considerable research efforts in this direction, scholars consistently emphasize the fact that the topic of orality markers in medieval texts rests largely unexplored. It is expected that more scholarly works will appear in the future.

In Japanese studies, a recent scholarly approach is to consider questions of style and communication in addition to traditional discussion of linguistic forms in Japanese pre-modern texts. This tendency can be understood as a step toward increased interaction between disciplines of linguistics and literary studies. However, there is still a shortage of interdisciplinary studies that would specifically research medieval dialogue data as a distinct category. For the Heian period (794-1185), for example, Yamaguchi Nakami has examined language use in monogatari, diary and setsuwa genres focusing on issues of characterization and interaction with extensive discussion of dialogue.\textsuperscript{20} Kobayashi Yoshinori, one of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} Evelyne Oppermann, “L’infinitif injonctif en français médiéval: de la représentation d’un ordre oral à l’instruction écrite,” \textit{Faits de langues} 7, no. 13 (1999).
\item \textsuperscript{20} Yamaguchi Nakami, \textit{Heianchō no kotoba to buntai} (Kazama Shobō, 1998).
\end{itemize}
linguists researching Japanese language in the Kamakura period (1185-1333), has researched specific forms and constructions in dialogue passages of the *Engyōbon Heike monogatari*.\(^{21}\)

Research by other scholars has focused on *onbin* forms distribution in *Heike monogatari* dialogue.\(^{22}\) Book-length linguistic studies of *Heike* stylistics have been published with separate sections discussing dialogue data.\(^{23}\) Ogawa Eiichi devotes a section of his predominantly linguistic discussion of *Engyōbon Heike monogatari* to specifically address large-scale issues of communication in pre-modern Japan.\(^{24}\)

Evidently, researchers in different parts of the world working with different textual traditions acknowledge the importance of studying medieval literary dialogue for a better understanding of communication practices and language use in pre-modern settings as well as for analyzing techniques of characterization used in literary texts.

### Goal and research question

The translator of *Heike monogatari* into English, Helen McCullough, praised the author’s command of language, his concern “for the nuances of diction, his masterly exploitation of the full range of the Japanese language and his careful matching of style to

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\(^{24}\) Ogawa, *Enkyōbon Heike*, 459-485.
content.” The text is linguistically and tonally complex, and importantly for the present study, it incorporates “many conventional oral storyteller’s phrases and make[s] free use of colloquialisms, especially for dialogue, and of onomatopoeia” in its military setsuwa, at least.

This study is partly intended to be a limited illustration of the above description of language use in Heike monogatari; often similar statements pass without explicit examples, and even a perfect translation is unable to convey the original fully due to specific linguistic and stylistic means used in the Japanese text.

The main goal of the present study is to assess the role of language and its use in the Heike narrative in relation to questions of power, politics and identity. By examining literary texts and social relations represented in them from a language-based perspective, I discuss the language means used to highlight the shifts between settings and speakers. It is evident that the language of characters shifts from one setting to another, but so far there has not been a detailed study in the research of Heike monogatari in English devoted to the shifts in language forms and their functions in the narrative. In what way does language change when a particular speaker occupies a different social position or shifts his or her attitude? Through analysis of variation in dialogue of literary characters I investigate the degree of correlation between the socio-political status of participating characters, the context of the dialogue, and linguistic forms chosen. Likewise, I discuss techniques of characterization in the text intended for oral performance. In doing so, I raise a fundamental question of language choice for a performed

26 Ibid., 464.
27 In this study the term “identity” refers to the set of properties such as social status, gender, age and occupation inherent to a given character. Under the influence of the so-called social constructionist views, I consider a character’s identity as being constructed (by author(s) for audiences) in the course of interaction in (fictional) conversations. See Denton N. Mendoza, “Language and identity,” in The Handbook of Language Variation and Change, eds. Jack Chambers et al., 475-499 (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002).
text as it plays a role in the formation of audience’s perceptions of the characters and their shifting relationships.

**Key themes**

In a recent monograph on the language of *Heike monogatari* Ogawa Eiichi states that existing research on the history of the Japanese language has been overly preoccupied with detailed questions while leaving comprehensive large-scale issues largely unexplored. There is a lack of research that would link historical linguistics with studies of communication and social history, for example. Currently there is a shortage of scholars who even attempt to raise “macro-questions” of pre-modern communication instead of limiting themselves to “micro-questions” of changes in language structure.

In this study I pose questions about social status and linguistic communication as represented in the dialogue passages of *Heike monogatari* and I rely both on linguistic/stylistic findings and on literary analysis that focuses on narrative structure, discourse functions and techniques of characterization. Through this approach I argue that there is a need to minimize the gap between research done in literary studies and linguistics. A more active use of findings in these areas can open a more comprehensive perspective on the textual data and its social functions.

Secondly, I argue for a greater role of Japanese text in studies related to Japanese literature. In scholarship done in English, it is common to neglect Japanese text even in scholarly works dealing with literature and to substitute it with translations. The only exception is poetry which traditionally appears in rōmaji transliteration, partly because the sound

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28 Ogawa, *Enkyōbon Heike*, 484.
qualities of a poem are considered significant. In the case of non-poetic texts, English translation overshadows the Japanese text and gives priority to the meaning of the narrative at the expense of its language properties. In other words, translation emphasizes the question of “what happens?” and silences the question of “how is it phrased?” Considering that Heike monogatari contains valuable linguistic information, I base my analysis on numerous examples in Japanese.

Next, this study examines details of language use in the texts of the Kamakura period. In scholarship on Heike monogatari one often finds statements about its language being stylistically close to the spoken language of the Kamakura period with a much wider use of colloquialisms and dialecticisms in the speech of characters than can be found in Heian court literature. However, apart from several examples it is rare to find concrete evidence of linguistic and stylistic variation and its discourse functions in specific contexts. Several Japanese linguists have carried out detailed studies, but they are largely ignored by Western scholars of literature due to the lack of interdisciplinary communication mentioned above. That is why I attempt a discussion of literary discourse relying considerably on the linguistic findings of Japanese scholars of Heike monogatari.

One of the goals of discourse analysis is to find a relationship between choices made in writing or speech and the contextual factors that constrain these choices. This relationship is never one-dimensional due to a multitude of factors influencing human interaction. It is this relationship that makes it possible to analyze various functions of discourse pertaining to

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29 Habein, *The History of the Japanese Written Language*, 52. Among the examples provided are sound changes (*onbin*), onomatopoeia, sentence-final emphatic particles *koso* and *zo*, and honorific verb *sōrō*.
30 See works by Kobayashi, Nishida, Okumura and Yamaguchi listed in the bibliography.
31 Here and later the term “discourse” is often used in a post-structuralist sense following Foucault who defined discourses as “practices that systematically form the objects of which
social status, identity and power. The complex relation between vernacularization, group
identity and political power is the dominant theme in South Asian research done by Sheldon
Pollock\textsuperscript{32}, and it is of considerable interest to approach East Asian texts, such as Heike
monogatari, from a similar angle. There is some overlap in terms of research questions with
disciplines such as sociolinguistics that study language use and its social role, but current
sociolinguistic studies focus mainly on data elicited from living informants, although
sociolinguists studying language change and variation consider written documents to be a valid
source of data.\textsuperscript{33} I consider sociolinguistic approach possible even for written texts from the
pre-modern period as they are also a representation (if not a “transcript”) of language
conventions, especially in dialogue. The study of language variation can thus shed light on pre-
modern social structures, culture and communication.

The themes mentioned above underlie the methodological approach undertaken in this
study. Considering the large amount of data contained in Heike monogatari and the lack of
similar studies of premodern Japanese texts in English, the present short work can only be
partial and experimental. I hope that it will bring more attention to language variation in pre-
modern Japanese literary texts.

\textsuperscript{32} Sheldon I. Pollock, The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and
Power in Premodern India (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

\textsuperscript{33} Romaine, Socio-historical Linguistics, 1982.
Methodological approach

The methodology for this study has been adopted to suit both the research goals and the data available for analysis. It consists of several steps: 1) data choice and classification; 2) qualitative analysis; 3) significance of variation in language use for discourse-power relations.

As a common practice in discourse analysis, data samples tend to be limited in size for a more detailed understanding of specific dialogues. Therefore, instead of vast generalizations I focus on details of form and function in sets of selected passages. The main criterion for choosing particular sections is the prominence of verbal interaction among characters. The passages are classified into two groups according to the participants and the dominant context: court and politics, and religious matters. Each group of texts thus makes up a sample of conversations from a specific discourse sphere.

Upon close reading of selected passages a number of elements are identified as candidates potentially carrying a function of marking extralinguistic information, such as status of participants. Among these elements special attention is paid to distribution of onbin and keigo, interjections and onomatopoeia, personal pronouns and choice of lexical items. Ellipsis and word order, as well expressions of rudeness-politeness, power-powerlessness, such as interrogation, threat and demand are also considered. Much of this analysis is qualitative and descriptive, although many of the elements listed above deserve attention not only because of their inherent functions in discourse, but also because linguistic research has identified them as markers dependent on social factors. I consider that grounding my analysis in the results of quantitative linguistic research done previously is essential to the claims I make and to the goal of using linguistic and literary approaches in a complementary way.

The last component consists of two points: 1) the role of discourse elements in shaping and highlighting socio-political aspects of character interaction in a given scene and 2)
identification of “text-external” socio-political implications. The first point focuses on the meaning of conversational choices and sequences for characterization of the participants in the setting constructed by author(s). Here I discuss questions of a character’s personality, role in action and the issue of manipulating audience reception of the character. The second point examines the larger questions of communication in pre-modern society, specifically the didactic role of showing a model of discourse in various settings and the political role of establishing/reaffirming hierarchies of values and power in communicative practice of different social layers and discourse spheres. By discussing didactic roles or functions of communication, I consider the impact of particular conventions and uses of fictional discourse on real-world communication in different settings, the way fictional conventions reinforce and perpetuate speech norms and expectations.

**Orality and writing in premodern literary works**

For analysis of “orality” markers in pre-modern texts scholars turn to literary dialogue passages as the closest possible approximation to speech conventions, grammar and style. “Orality” in medieval texts is a complex issue that has generated intense discussions. Undoubtedly, there is a legitimate concern and a somewhat uneasy feeling of doubt towards any attempt to find “speech” in texts written centuries ago. Firstly, medieval vernaculars of Europe or Japan are dead languages with no living speakers, and secondly, all the works in these languages exist only in writing and most often in the form of literary writing that is inherently artificial, consciously structured by authors, and very different from spontaneous speech found in conversations.\(^\text{34}\) It follows that one cannot claim that a given medieval text is a

reliable transcription of some utterance. Of course, the above considerations impose a number of constraints on the approach to texts and their analysis. Typical conversation analysis and socio-linguistic studies deal with data collected from speakers of identifiable background. Interviews and conversations are recorded for later analysis. Dealing with a text is a very different matter, especially if its authorship and circumstances of composition are unknown, as is often the case with medieval texts. Not any given text is suitable for investigating questions of orality. The crucial criteria are the intended use of text, the process of its composition and the degree of the author’s accuracy in representing speech forms in writing. Some texts are specifically intended to be read, others are used as scripts for performance. Some texts are composed during performance, others are written to be recited orally later. Presence or absence of highlighted stylistic, dialectal and status variation also depends on the author’s intent, the genre of the work, the contents of the text or scene and the possibility to record linguistic oral features in writing. These and other considerations have been at the center of methodological and theoretical debates about “oral literature,” its definition and ways to study it. Despite the problematic status of oral literature, it is the best approximation of speech for time periods for which spoken records are simply not available and it has been studied by historical linguists and sociolinguists for purposes ranging from evolution of vernacular languages to correlation of socio-historical class stratifications with linguistic variation.35

It is clear that medieval texts are not direct records of speech events and they do not give us direct access to oral practice, since literary dialogue belongs to the category of invented texts, that is, “a hypothetical imagined speech intended to be characteristic of its fictitious speakers.”36 However, it is possible to consider the following direct speech from Heike

35 Chambers, The Handbook of Language Variation, 70.
36 Ibid., 73.
monogatari, for example, as a representation of oral/spoken language.

Example: 「入道かたぶえどするやつが、なれるすがたよ。しやつここへひき寄せよ」
[Kiyomori’s order to warriors who brought Saikō] “This is what’s become of the fellow who aspired to bring me to ruin. Pull him over here.”

The utterance represents words attributed to the speaker Kiyomori who addresses warriors in specific circumstances. Lacking speakers who actually spoke or heard this kind of language, we cannot know how close this representation is to actual oral speech, whether it is too exaggerated, stereotyped or too literary for everyday speech. Nevertheless, assuming that the author(s) wrote for an audience aware of contemporary style differences and speech conventions, we can consider this representation to be sufficiently realistic and characteristic of the way people of similar rank might have talked with each other or were expected to talk in this way. Importantly, the chosen representation of speech projects a specific image of interaction in a given setting and thus shapes audience’s perceptions of characters and communication norms. Texts themselves often contain clues that point to a conscious selection of linguistic means by an author trying to emphasize differences between oral dialogue and non-dialogue text. This is the case when certain words and grammatical forms appear consistently in direct speech and are never (or rarely) observed in other sentences.

This view is supported by results of linguistic analysis of specific “oral” forms used in Heian-Kamakura literary texts. Kobayashi Yoshinori, a scholar of Kamakura language and kanbun, has analyzed linguistic forms exclusively used in dialogue (Table 2). The row of 0s shows that these forms are never found in non-dialogue sections of Engyōbon Heike monogatari (early 14th century).

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This evidence convincingly shows that Heian and Kamakura authors were aware of a different kind of language to be employed in dialogue. These independent findings are also in favour of the approach taken in this study that attempts to explore dialogue data as a category of text with its own distinctive properties.

**Linguistic setting**

Literary works of various genres and historical documents are the primary sources of information for scholars of language history. Despite the abundance of these materials, the corpus of linguistic data is not made up from language samples representing all possible patterns of variation that existed in reality. The information in the corpus is constrained by the availability of data (it is impossible to assess how much was lost, destroyed or not yet published for ready analysis), the language, style, contemporary literary conventions and, importantly, by the authors’ personal choices (conscious or not) of what to put down in writing. Therefore, the commonly used distinctions between Japanese written language (*kakikotoba*)

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Kobayashi, “Kamakura jidai no kōtōgo,” 49.
and spoken language (*hanashikotoba*) as well as divisions by periods (Kamakura or Muromachi language) are approximate at best.

Instead of divisions by period, it is more precise to talk about a “literary language” chosen for a specific group of texts and some approximations to language use it tries to represent. This leads to a new set of problems related to time and language change over time. The basic issue is that for a Japanese text one cannot be absolutely confident about the time of its creation solely on account of certain linguistic features observed in it. Since *bungo* in its classical form is considered the dominant written literary language from Heian to early modern times, its use for a text does not indicate the tenth century or seventeenth century as the time of its composition, but rather a choice by its author who thought it to be suitable for the audience, subject matter and so on (degree of admixture of non-classical forms was likely determined in a similar way). Thus, to talk about language change from the Heian to Kamakura period makes more sense as a difference in literate groups’ judgements of what is acceptable or desirable in writing, what style, grammar and vocabulary to employ for a given text. Availability of this choice necessitates the study of literary texts from a sociolinguistic perspective that can eventually provide answers about the discursive factors and socio-political goals that constrained the authors in their choices of language.

Now I will briefly outline some of the current dominant views on the state of language in the Kamakura period. Chinese language was used for written documents related to political affairs, legal codes and historical treatises, the notable exceptions being the use of “mixed Japanese-Chinese style” *wakan konkō bun*\(^{39}\) in historico-political works such as Jien’s (1155-

\(^{39}\) Writing style that combines Sino-Japanese loanwords (*kango*) for most lexemes with *kana* for grammatical elements.
1225) Gukanshō (1219) or Chikafusa’s (1293-1353) Jinnō shōtōki (A Chronicle of Gods and Sovereigns, 1343), both works not written, however, with the authorization of the rulers.

Wakan konkō bun was a dominant style from around 1100 and was typically used for writing works of all Buddhist genres, such as sermons, setsuwa anecdotes, sutra translations and Buddhist-derived genres such as gunki monogatari, including Heike monogatari.

At the same time, the written language of prestige and the dominant spoken vernacular were both associated with the capital of Heian-kyō (present Kyoto) and they functioned as a linguistic standard understood by most people in the provinces while coexisting with local dialects. From around 1200 to 1600 the capital standard has incorporated some dialectal features.

The capital standard language was slowly challenged by other dialects during the Kamakura period and it was primarily Buddhist monks who advocated the use of dialects in preaching. In the eastern provinces the emergence of dialectal features in written form gradually increased from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century in the shōmono (vernacular commentary on Chinese Zen texts) written by Zen sect monks actively supported by Kamakura military rulers. Interestingly, they were probably inspired by the earlier continental practice (from around the eighth century) of using Chinese written vernaculars for the same purpose.

43 Ibid., 21.
44 Takeuchi, The Structure and History, 23.
46 Ibid., 23.
Theoretical background

In this section I will discuss several interrelated issues: 1) the acknowledgement of internal cultural dynamics and internal models in the relationship between text and power; 2) the meaning of language use in the process of vernacularization.

The relationship between text and power is expressed in the narratives dealing with probably the greatest rupture in the pre-modern period in Japan: the Genpei War (1180-1185). Re-imagining of the past through repeatedly reworked historic narratives, far from being a process limited to modern culture, was a part of the Kamakura cultural life. Given the multitude of forces involved in the Genpei conflict spanning large geographical areas, it is not surprising to find an array of narrative techniques employed to justify actions, demonize or glorify characters, and explain the political origins of contemporary powerholders. Such ideological use of narratives takes place in a setting defined by internal models of power, language and belief that are impossible to reconstruct fully, and the only solution in finding a reasonable approximation is to examine closely the narratives/texts themselves, their circulation and audiences. Accordingly, theories relevant for the politics of language practice and the role of vernacularization in establishing social order need to be tested on the empirical language data. In this thesis, supporting evidence from the text of Kakuichi Heike monogatari (1371) will illustrate the link between social and linguistic/stylistic variation, a neglected component of the discursive models created in premodern Japan. Thus, an active engagement with internal Japanese discourse can be achieved, I believe, through a closer study of textual features and of the context of production and circulation of texts.

The process of constructing a discourse, an intellectual tradition perpetuated through texts that operates to impose a domination, is a helpful abstraction in this case. The discourse produced over time by essentially an intertextual network of texts, consists of a durable set of
terms, images, metaphors that become accepted as truth (perceived to be even more real, in a sense, than the object they describe).

This approach (influenced in part by ideas of Foucault and dependent upon structuralists), although rooted in Western philosophical tradition, can be potentially applied to a wide range of contexts that deal with texts, discourses and power relations without ignoring the local internal dynamics and specifics. For example, LaFleur’s *The Karma of Words* analyzes the relationship between Buddhism and the literary arts in medieval Japan by ambitiously reconstructing “the basic intellectual and religious shape of that epoch” and describing medieval Japan in terms of an *episteme* with “the intellectual problems, the most authoritative texts and resources, and the central symbols being all Buddhist,” holding “intellectual hegemony.” LaFleur’s theoretical approach sees texts as “embedded in the social history of a given era” and focuses consistently on the contents of the texts.

In the article “Deep Orientalism?” Sheldon Pollock argues for extending the problematics of power and domination to indigenous discourses of power, “the various systematized and totalized constructions of inequality in traditional India.” As an instance of precolonial domination in India, Pollock surveys the eleventh- to twelfth-century texts on social order produced in the courts of ruling elites of the period and discusses the use of Vedic knowledge, the monopolization of Sanskrit and the restriction of access to Sanskrit “literacy”

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49 Ibid., x.
51 Ibid.
to sustain the dichotomization of the social order (arya/non-arya binary) and to rationalize the need for power asymmetry.

In this study, I am interested in the ways power distribution and character interaction are encoded in the language of dialogue passages in *Heike monogatari*. By analyzing interaction represented in dialogues, I hope to move a step closer toward understanding the internal model of “language/text - power/social identity” that is supported by examinable textual content. Consider the following insightful statement by Sheldon Pollock:

Choosing a language for literary and political text production implies affiliating with an existing sociotextual community or summoning such a community into being. For it is in part from the acts of reading, hearing, performing, reproducing, and circulating literary and political texts that social groups come to produce themselves and understand themselves as groups... The vernacularization of literature and political discourse is a social act, and one that typically bears major geocultural and political entailments.  

It is difficult to find a more concise and exact description of the significance of *Heike* narratives and their language use for producing a shared image of communities with similar ideals, views of the past and a style of speech noticeably contrasting with ways of representing speech in other narratives of a far lesser circulation, such as Heian court narratives. Active circulation of Genpei narratives propagated the new language style with a greater focus on formerly “peripheral” interaction (seen, for example, in the scenes with low-ranking warriors and monks as the main characters).

Audiences hearing *Heike* performed would recognize the style of expressions as appropriate approximations of speech of various social groups. The kinds of language/style must draw on common perceptions of interaction and, at the same time, they play powerful roles in creation of a shared view of the past and of a shared sense of identity.

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The very action of recording, performing and listening to the language forms (including non-courtly, provincial ones most likely to be associated with warriors) creates a discourse that is no longer limited to the capital court society, but spans a wider range of areas and people. The author(s)’ choice to include peripheral discursive patterns in the text of *Heike* is a socio-political act establishing a shared perception of power, identity and community.

As noted by Pollock, “It is no easy thing to theorize pre-modernity without deploying the theoretical instruments forged by modernity, since they are the only ones we have.” At the same time, he suggests that “theory is there to be tested” by the examination of empirical materials. The discussion above tries to bring attention to several issues of socio-political use of pre-modern texts/language in addition to promoting a balanced synthesis of modern theory and internal dynamics of language and power. It is important to acknowledge the role of pre-modern texts in legitimizing complex political formations and sustaining views of social change. I also argue for a need to include language factors (beyond the level of narrative) in the discussion of power discourse. Posing the question of why a specific language, register or style was chosen to create literary/political texts is of considerable importance in the investigation of complex relationships between pre-modern texts and contexts of culture and power.

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Chapter 1 - Court and Politics

The *Heike monogatari*, despite being a *gunki monogatari* (“war tale”), is not focused only on military affairs, but covers a wide range of communicative settings aiming to show how society is impermanent and how any position or activity is temporary and dependent on the universal workings of fate. One of the settings featured prominently is the court and the political meetings in the capital. For the purposes of this study it is appropriate to view the court not as a stable entity, but as an image constructed by the narrative. Thus, the *Heike monogatari* narrative projects a specific set of events as having taken place in the capital during the Genpei war. The presentation of these events taking place in the capital influenced the audiences’ views of the capital and politics. In this chapter, I focus on the representation of the speech of various characters interacting in the court and in various political settings in the capital.

Many of the sources hinting at the obscure process of production of the *Heike* text mention names of people connected to influential figures at court. Thus, the *Heike* representation of communication at court can be considered close to a “witness account,” no matter how idealized or edited it may be. Probably the best known account regarding possible authorship is found in *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness, ca. 1330) (*dan* 226) in which the authorship is attributed to Nakayama Yukinaga (ca. 1165-?), a courtier-official with a “reputation for learning” who, as a Buddhist priest, worked under Jien (1155-1225), the abbot of Enryakuji temple and the author of the historical treatise *Gukanshō* (1219). Apparently he had close ties with the Kujō branch of the Fujiwara and served Kujō Kanezane (1149-1207),

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54 As pointed out by Varley, in the *Heike*, the dominant theme is “the conviction that everything is ultimately governed by an unfathomable, relentless fate.” Paul H. Varley, *Warriors of Japan as Portrayed in the War Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994), 87.
the imperial regent and author of the diary Gyokuyō (Jeweled Leaf, 1164-1200), one of the possible sources for the Heike. Kujō Kanezane was one of the key political figures during the last decade of the twelfth century. In 1185, he was at the head of the council of nobles partial to Kamakura, the gisō kugyō 議奏公卿, and functioned as a key mediator of court-bakufu politics. He was also involved in appointing Yoritomo to the official position of seiitai-shōgun 征夷大将軍 (Barbarian-Subduing General) in 1192. Moreover, he was at the center of an influential circle of people actively involved in cultural affairs: his brother Jien wrote history, and Hōnen (1133-1212), the founder of the Pure Land Buddhist sect in Japan, was his religious teacher. Heike monogatari, in its content and themes, shares traits with Gyokuyō, Gukanshō and Hōnen’s teachings. As for the audience, Kakuichi Heike is considered more capital-centred than other variants in its political attitudes and geography of the described events. Nishida mentions a focus on court events, avoidance of violent descriptions, and a generally dignified, courtly literary style as its qualities. As for the language, variation observed in speech of various groups of characters did not exceed the level of comprehension of the people in the capital, that is, the speech of Azuma warriors is not represented in actual Azuma dialect, but only as a provincial-sounding (inakarashisa) speech that did not impede comprehension for the capital audience. The “courtly” view of events in the Heike follows from the link of its authors and editors to capital officials and institutions, as mentioned above.

Let us now turn our attention to some of the specific examples of character interaction

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55 Varley, Warriors of Japan, 83-4.
56 Gomi Fumihiko, Kyō, Kamakura no ōken (Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003), 34. The council was imposed on Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa (1127-1192, r. 1155-1158) by Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147-1199, r. 1192-1199).
57 Varley, Warriors of Japan, 46.
58 See Gomi, Kyō, Kamakura, 58 for a list of people in this network and texts they wrote.
59 Bialock, Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories, 2.
60 Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 34.
61 Ibid., 38.
in the capital which show how language use supplements the content of characters’ utterances and highlights differences in power.

**Giō**

The rather long *setsuwa*-like story of the *shirabyōshi* dancer Giō, not found in all copies of *Kakuichi Heike*, illustrates Kiyomori’s arrogant behaviour resulting from his unrestrained political control. It is only a minor, non-violent incident in a series of Kiyomori’s acts and orders that are shown as breaking court etiquette and norms of conduct expected from a person in power. As stated in the beginning of the “Giō” episode, “Kiyomori indulged in one freakish caprice after another.”

Oyler also mentions that the episode describing Kiyomori’s “heartless treatment of Giō is but one of the most salient examples of his unfitness to rule.”

Another prominent theme in this episode is the portrayal of Buddhist practice as a way of escaping involvement in transient matters of the capital. My discussion is intended as a linguistic addition to literary analyses of content. How does the narrative represent Kiyomori’s interaction with dancers? How do differences in language contribute to the image of Giō and Kiyomori?

Consider first the frequent use of *onbin 音便* in this episode. *Onbin*, or historical sound change, has been one of the key areas studied by Japanese language scholars. As a result,

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64 The difference in speech styles is often expected and self-evident (especially if the audience already knows a lot about the characters). At the same time, textual data does not allow us to state that all the characters in power speak with people of lower status in the same way. I analyze by what language means the difference is encoded in the dialogue and how language forms participate in constructing the image of relationships between characters.
several studies have been produced based on quantitative analysis of the distribution of onbin forms in specific texts.

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<th>Table 3 Onbin distribution between male and female speakers</th>
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As seen in Table 3 there is a vast percentage difference in verbal onbin use by male (74%) and female (29%) characters of Kakuichi Heike.\textsuperscript{65} Moreover, when onbin forms are classified by characters, a clear correlation between its use and the low social status of women is observed.\textsuperscript{66} These results will be important for passages discussed later. Here, I would like to focus on Okumura’s statement that the “Giō” section has an exceptionally high use of onbin in women’s dialogue, which can be attributed to the social status of shirabyōshi dancers.\textsuperscript{67}

Let us first examine the use of onbin and the very plain style in the short statements of shirabyōshi dancers who gossip about Giō’s fortune of being favoured by Kiyomori:

Ex. 1 うらやむ者共は、「あなめてたの祇王御前の幸や。おなじあそび女とならば、誰もみな、あのようでこそありたけれど。いかさま是は祇といふ文字を名について、かくはめでたきやらむ。いざ我等もついて見む」とて、…

The envious ones said, “Lucky Giō! What entertainer wouldn’t want to be exactly like her? It must be because she has used ‘Gi’ in her name; I’ll do that too.” […] “What difference could a name or part of a name make?” they [the many spiteful ones] sniffed. “Good fortune is something a person is born with from a previous existence.” (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 30)

\textsuperscript{65} Okumura, “Kakuichibon Heike,” 2. Overall statistics based on Kakuichi Heike (Ryūkokudaigakubon 龍谷大学本) excluding “Giō” and several other sections.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 6. Some high status characters also use onbin and some characters use both onbin and non-onbin forms. This deviation in some of these cases is explained by the widespread use of onbin forms of specific words such as yoru よる > yotte よって (that is, nobody uses the full form yorite よりて).

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., 10.

\textsuperscript{68} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 35.
The *shirabyōshi* dancers refer to Giō adding the honorific suffix *gozen* since she is a favourite of high-ranking Kiyomori. Exclamation is expressed by the construction *ana...ya* あな…や, by *iza* いざ or even by *nandeu* なんてう, mostly used by men. The dancers’ speech among themselves lacks *keigo* forms and presence of *onbin* in *tsuite* ついて（*<tsukite* つきて）and *annare* あんれ（*<arunare* あるれ）is noticeable. *Onbin*, as a variable whose use is not random, often signals an informal or low-level discourse. Certainly, not every single *onbin* form is such a marker since many had apparently become fixed and commonly used by speakers of all stations, nevertheless *onbin* can be seen as marking speech level. Also, the use of the Buddhist term *zenze* 前世 (previous existence) hints at the close or even expected contact between dancers and Buddhism.69 It may also function as a foreshadowing of the subsequent transformation of the dancers into hermit nuns as well as a contrast with the superstitious significance ascribed to Giō’s name.70

This sample of *shirabyōshi* speech is found at the very beginning of the episode and shows the presence of unofficial marginalized speech in the capital. Before the protagonists, Giō and Hotoke, are introduced, the audience can hear the speech of their colleagues. “In conventional interpretations of the well-ordered realm, […] the fluidity implicit in the identity of *shirabyōshi* represent[s] a potential danger. *Shirabyōshi* occupy a special social stratum that can easily bleed into others and disrupt order. Uneasiness about this sort of disruption provides

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69 Giō’s *imayō* song (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 269) is full of Buddhist content. Moreover, later in the episode Giō’s mother, Toji, persuasively preaches with Buddhist arguments and at the end *shirabyōshi* suddenly, without special training, know how to speak as nuns as is evident from the high rate of *kango* Buddhist terminology in their speech.

70 There is some symbolism in names: *gi* 祇 in Giō’s name, associated with Shinto-related terms, contrasts with Hotoke’s name *hotoke* 仏 (“Buddha”).
the impetus for the “Giō” episode.” Their speech, full of contractions and rough exclamations (such as nandeu なんでう), reinforces the non-elite image.

Let us now turn to several qualities marking Kiyomori’s speech addressed to Giō and Hotoke. Rudeness in a character’s speech is often linked with negative qualities of personality. This common (if not universal) effect can usually be achieved by direct insults, examples of which will be provided in later sections, or through indirect ways of showing disrespect. What kinds of expressions are chosen to emphasize Kiyomori’s quick temper as opposed to polite entreaties of the shirabyōshi? Kiyomori’s “voice,” that of a patron of a group of dancers, represents the oppressiveness of the rigidly hierarchical world of the Heike. It is constructed from three kinds of utterances: 1) reaction to obedience, delight; 2) reaction to disobedience, discomfort; 3) misjudgement of feelings, no concern for etiquette, demands and threats.

After Giō’s request to meet Hotoke, Kiyomori says:

Ex. 2 入道「いでいでわごぜがあまりにいふ事なれば、見参してかへさむ」とて …
「… 今様一つ歌へかし」と …
「わごぜは今様は上手でありけるよ。この定では、舞もさだめてよかるらむ。
一番見ばや。鼓打召せ」とて

Kiyomori: Well, my dear, since you make a point of it, I’ll see her before she goes. […] Give me an imayō. […] You sing imayō nicely, my dear; I suspect you are a good dancer, too. I’ll watch you perform a number. Call the drummer. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 31)

In this episode Kiyomori’s polite speech (in tone only, without polite forms to inferiors) is limited to cases when he is disposed to follow Giō’s suggestion to meet Hotoke or when he is pleased with the entertainment. Kiyomori’s response to Giō’s explanation of dancer customs

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71 Oyler, “Giō: Women and Performance,” 361.
74 Ibid., 342.
75 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 37.
and feelings shows that he is inclined at times to satisfy her requests which seem too long to him (amari ni ifu あまりにいふ). He talks to her in an endearing tone evident in ide ide いで いで as an exclamation of reluctant agreement together with the pronoun wagoze わごぜ, a second-person pronoun showing affectionate attitude to women. According to the table of address forms in the *Kakuichi Heike* (Table 4), Kiyomori’s use of wagoze わごぜ plus ifu いふ (no keigo) in response to Giō’s use of highest honorifics, falls into category 3 “addressing people of lower status.” Kiyomori’s use of language shows his understanding of mutual positions, with him as the hegemonic master and the shirabyōshi as low status female dancers.

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The same pronoun appears in Kiyomori’s praise of Hotoke’s song a while later. As wagoze わごぜ is not used by men elsewhere in *Heike*, its double use by Kiyomori to two different

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76 Cited in Nishida, *Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki*, 64.
77 Giō’s mother uses it to address Giō and Giō in turn calls Hotoke wagoze.
women is likely a highly marked term of address that signals a quick shift in Kiyomori’s affections.\textsuperscript{78}

Turning now to the arrogant side of Kiyomori, who positions himself as the master of the itinerant dancers, we see that his impatient reaction to unexpected discomforting events or signs of disobedience from lower status people is immediate and verbally expressed. For example, when Hotoke arrives uninvited, Kiyomori forcefully expresses his understanding of the relationship between itinerant female performers and him as a powerholder.\textsuperscript{79}

Ex. 3 入道「なんでう、さやうのあそび者は、人の召しにしたがうてこそ参れ。左右なう推参するやうやある。其上祇王があらん所へは、神ともいへ仏ともいへ、かなふまじきぞ。とうとう罷出でょ」\textsuperscript{80}
Kiyomori: What is this? Entertainers like her are not supposed to present themselves without being summoned. What makes her think she can simply show up like this? Besides, god or Buddha, she has no business coming to a place where Giō is staying. Throw her out at once. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 31)

The dissonance between the actions of female performers and Kiyomori’s expectations is evident in the forms that vividly express the master’s criticism of the dependent dancers.\textsuperscript{81}

Kiyomori exclaims with nandeu なんでう, followed by a rhetorical question of indignation ya aru やある, a pun\textsuperscript{82} on Hotoke’s name (“Buddha”), a strong prohibition majiki まじき with an emphatic particle zo ぞ. His order to get out quickly contains a humble verb makaru 罷る that emphasizes the mutual status difference.

Another example is Kiyomori turning down Hotoke’s request to leave:

Ex. 4 入道「すべてその儀あるまじ。但し祇王があるをはばかるか。その儀ならば祇王をこそ出さめ」と\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{78} As mentioned by Oyler, “The fundamental problem with the world [ruled by Kiyomori] is […] the capriciousness of [the] ruler, whose passions flit from one object to another without any thought of consequence or responsibility.” Oyler, “Giō: Women and Performance,” 362.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 350.
\textsuperscript{80} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 36.
\textsuperscript{81} Oyler, “Giō: Women and Performance,” 349-350.
\textsuperscript{82} Puns or humiliating treatment of names regularly appear in the text (Heiji (clan) as heiji (wine bottle) in Chapter 1.12, naming a horse with owner’s name Nakatsuna in Chapter 4.6, Nekoma Lord as neko “cat” in Chapter 8.6).
\textsuperscript{83} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 38.
Kiyomori: That is out of the question. Are you hanging back because of Giō? If so, I’ll dismiss her. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 32)

Hotoke’s second attempt to persuade Kiyomori to let her go is cut short by his brusque decision:

Ex. 5 入道「なんでう，其儀あるまじ。祇王とうとう罷出でよ」と

Here we see again the exclamation *nande u* and the repeated use of *sono gi arumaji*

その儀あるまじ (That’s out of the question). The order from Ex.3 is repeated here, *toutou makari ideyo* とうとう罷出でよ (leave the house at once), this time intended for Giō.

Having decided to keep Hotoke, Kiyomori counters arguments of propriety and embarrassment by directly stating his will. Interestingly, Kiyomori repeats the same refusal to Hotoke later forbidding her to greet Giō (その儀あるまじ84). These elements unambiguously mark Kiyomori as the decision-maker who limits and controls the actions of the dancers. He does not persuade, but orders unilaterally. Repetition of the same order to different dancers only highlights his capricious inconsistency.

In several cases, Kiyomori’s words are not rude or harsh, but they are certainly inappropriate for the occasion and either make him appear unconcerned about Giō’s feelings or, even worse, make her suffer humiliation on purpose. For example, after sending Giō away,

Kiyomori sends a message, casual in tone and audacious in content:

Ex. 6「いかに、其後何事かある。仏御前が余につれづれて見ゆるに、参って今様をも歌ひ、舞なんどをも舞うて、仏なぐさめよ」と85
Kiyomori: How have you been since we parted? Hotoke seems bored nowadays; come and amuse her with some *imayō* and dances. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 33)

84 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 43.
85 Ibid., 40.
The greeting *ika ni, sono nochi nanigoto ka aru* いかに、其後何事かある obviously expresses no regret about the rude dismissal a year before. Kiyomori’s choice of imperative form (*nagusameyo* なぐさめよ), humble verb (*maitte* 参って), and the use of *nando* なんで to list *shirabyōshi* arts convey a disrespectful attitude toward Giō, not to mention that now she is forced to entertain her rival Hotoke described as *tsurezurege ni miyuru* つれづれげに見ゆる (looking bored).\(^{86}\) Having received no response, Kiyomori resorts to a threat:

Ex. 7 入道「など祇王は返事はせぬぞ。参るまじいか。参るまじくはそのやうを申せ。浄海もはからふむねあり」と
Kiyomori: Why don’t you answer? Do you refuse to come? Say so, if you do. There are steps I can take. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 33)

Kiyomori’s message is introduced by the question *nado…zo* など…ぞ, rough-sounding question *majii ka* まじいか (*onbin* form of *majiki ka*), order *mōse 申せ* and a plain statement of threat at the end. His words are far from courteous: he uses humble verbs for Giō’s actions to emphasize her inferiority. Considering the vast difference in power, Kiyomori’s verbal threat is clearly meant to be an act of tyranny and abuse of power. All the other characters in this episode persuade others to act a certain way, whereas only Kiyomori gives direct orders and achieves obedience by way of threats. By coercing Giō to perform, Kiyomori demonstrates that “he is an unworthy audience,”\(^{87}\) another instance of hegemonic control of itinerant performers. Language forms in Kiyomori’s speech make up a part of his image of a leader who demands obedience.

Next, the language of *shirabyōshi* and their manner of request needs to be discussed in contrast to Kiyomori’s speech. The narrative itself is structured in such a way as to let the

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\(^{86}\) SNKBZ, vol. 45, 43-44. Same greeting and demand are repeated when Giō actually comes to perform later.

\(^{87}\) Oyler, “Giō: Women and Performance,” 357.
audience observe the behaviour and speech of *shirabyōshi* characters in three different settings: with Kiyomori, with their mother at home, and together as nuns.

In the mansion of Kiyomori, Giō speaks up in defence of Hotoke who is told to leave. Ex. 8「あそび者の推参は、常のならびでこそさぶらへ。其上年もいまだをさなうさぶらふなるが、適々思ひたつて参りてさぶらふを、すげなう仰せられてかへさせ給はん事こそ、不便なれ。いかばかりはづかしうち、かたはらいたくもさぶらふらむ。わが立てし道なれば、人の上ともおぼえず。たとひ舞を御覧じ、歌をきこしめさずとも、御対面ばかりさぶらうて、かへさせ給ひたらば、ありがたき御情でこそさぶらはんずれ。唯理をまげて、召しかへして御対面さぶらへ」と

Giō: It is quite the usual thing for an entertainer to present herself without an invitation. Then, too, they say Hotoke is still very young. It would be cruel to send her home with that harsh dismissal, now that she has ventured to come here. As a dancer myself, I cannot help feeling involved: I would be uncomfortable and sad, too. You would be doing her a great kindness by at least receiving her before sending her away, even if you don’t watch her dance or listen to her sing. Won’t you please be a little lenient and call her back to be received? (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 31)

Giō, out of solidarity with Hotoke, defends her uninvited appearance in Kiyomori’s mansion as a common practice of the dancers, thereby contradicting Kiyomori’s initial decision to send Hotoke away. Giō’s bold speech, given the vast difference in status, shows that she has influence over some of Kiyomori’s decisions, at least in the matters of *shirabyōshi* practice. Of course, this power is concealed under the most elaborate honorific forms. Among less conspicuous features, one can find the use of -ramu らむ and -nzure んずれ forms that function to soften the request as well as many *u-onbin* (ku > u) forms *wosanau* をさなう, *sugenau* すげなう and *hazukashiu* はづかしう. The structural elements of the request are by no means simple. Arguments are linked by conjunctions *ga* が and *wo* を, reasons and condition are signalled by conditional –*ba* ば and concessive construction *tatohi*…*tomo* たとひ…とも (even if…), all contributing to a successful, albeit wordy, persuasive request. The

88 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 36.
great status gap separating Giō from Kiyomori is acknowledged in the highly polite level of her speech. The noticeable abundance of the polite auxiliary verb saburafuさぶらふ, a form used by women, unambiguously marks the speaker’s gender. Her use of the highest honorific verbs for his actions (ohoserarete仰せられて, goranji御覧じ, kikoshimesazuきしみます) with honorific go御+Noun forms clearly marks the asymmetry in social positions of the interlocutors; that is, Giō draws on a conventionalized set of choices for a low status person addressing a top-ranked official. In this case, the identity of a dancer is constructed not only by the outline of professional practices, but also by means of using a set of specific forms in one’s speech. Participating in an established register is closely linked to the creation of a norm or a natural convention that is expected in similar situations. Thus, from the audience’s perspective, “hearing” a shirabyōshi in a performance or text who does not talk like Giō would likely be perceived as a deviation.

Ex. 9 仏御前「こはされば何事さぶらふぞや。もとよりわらはは推参の者にて、出され参らせさぶらひしを、祇王御前の申状によってこそ、召しかへされてもさぶらふに、かやうに召しおかれなば、祇王御前の思ひ給はん心のうちははづかしうさぶらふ。はやはや暇をたうで、出させおはしませ」と99

Hotoke: What is this? I came here on my own and was thrown out, but then I was recalled through Giō’s intercession. If I were to be kept here, it would embarrass me to know what Giō’s thoughts would be. Please let me go home right away. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 32)

After Kiyomori has decided to keep Hotoke, he does not let her change his mind. Similar to Giō’s speech, Hotoke’s unsuccessful request is marked by heavy use of saburafuさぶらふ with high honorifics to Kiyomori (mesi召し, owashimaseおはしませ) and moderate ones to Giō (omohi tamaω思ひ給はん). Particularly representative of Hotoke’s “voice” is the use of the first-person pronoun warawaわらは, which is far from neutral, as it is explicitly

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associated with modesty if not self-abasement. The use of this pronoun as well as the phrase *haya haya itoma wo taude* (please let me go right away) may be considered appropriate for characterisation of Hotoke as a young low status dancer. The pronoun *warawa* is not found in Giō’s speech since she is older than Hotoke. *Haya haya* conveys a sense of hurry and desperation better than the neutral *hayaku*, and *tamahite > tabite > taude* is a rarely used contracted *onbin* form, likely a sign of Hotoke’s emotion and a marker of her low status. Both of her noticeably long requests to leave are rejected by Kiyomori’s brief statements as he reasserts his power to make decisions.

Both speeches by Giō and Hotoke in these two examples (Ex.8 and 9) are significant as attempts to resist Kiyomori from an inferior position. Giō can firmly state her position, whereas the younger Hotoke, unaccustomed to interaction with powerful leaders, shows her agitation and weakness. The problem is that Kiyomori is not the right audience for their eloquence and politeness. Once he has a goal, he does not tolerate any opposition and ignores arguments of propriety.

How do *shirabyōshi* speak at home? The shift in setting to a private space is paralleled by shift in choices of language forms. The most evident change can be observed in a greater flexibility in the use of politeness markers such as *saburafu*, indicating in this case a non-official home setting as well as a greater focus on parent-daughter relations instead of a *shirabyōshi* identity. Giō’s mother, Toji, persuades Giō to visit Kiyomori:

Ex. 10 Toji: 「いかに祇王御前、ともかくも御返事を申せかし、左様にしかられ参らせんよりは」

Giō: 「参らんと思う道ならばこそ、聴而参るとも申して、参らざらむもの故に、何
Toji, a figure of power in the family, puts pressure on Giō to convince her to perform for Kiyomori. She relies on persuasion and avoids direct orders. As a rule, parents, including Toji in this example, do not use sōrō 候 style when speaking to their children. Her insistence is softened by exclamation ika ni いかに, adverb tomokaumo ともかうも (onbin form of tomokakumo ともかくも, somehow), and the conversational inversion of clauses resulting in yori wa よりは at the end of her utterance. These forms certainly differ from those in Kiyomori’s orders. Giō’s reply contains a curious irregularity. Children usually address their parents using polite sōrō 候 style, but Giō omits them in her reply. Apart from using humble verbs to emphasize the status gap between her and Kiyomori, Giō speaks in a plain non-polite style (oboezu おぼえず, arazu あらず) to her mother, Toji. The switch into plain forms signals that she temporarily does not recognize Toji’s status and dares to decide on her own. In this case, language forms underline Giō’s distraught condition as she tries to remain secluded at home ignoring both Kiyomori’s calls and Toji’s advice. Later, Toji’s admonition succeeds in making Giō turn to regular polite usage of saburafu さぶらふ in her reply.

Ex. 11「げにもさやうにさぶらはば、五逆罪うたがひなし。さらば自害は思ひとどまりさぶらひぬ。」

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90 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 41.
91 Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 226.
92 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 45.
Giō: You are right. I would undoubtedly be committing one of the Five Deadly Sins if we all killed ourselves. I will abandon the idea of suicide. […] (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 35)

It is definitely possible to consider this shift as a marker of a change in Giō’s attitude towards her mother from a more defiant firm refusal (irregular lack of saburafu さぶらふ earlier) to being persuaded not to commit suicide (using saburafu さぶらふ). 93 Interestingly, this restoration of parent-daughter relations is brought about by Toji’s Buddhist sermons (see Ex. 12) and coincides with Giō’s decision to become a nun.

The following speech is an example of mother’s way to equate advice with preaching that highlights a close link between dancers and Buddhist knowledge. Even before they take the tonsure, the dancers recite verses filled with Buddhist content during performances and they are also exposed to sermons at home.

Ex. 12 「天が下に住まん程は、ともかくも入道殿の仰せをば背くまじき事にてあるぞ。男女の縁宿世、今にはじめぬ事ぞかし。千年万年とちぎれども、やがてはなる中もあり。白地とは思へども、存生果つる事もあり。…それにわごぜは、此三年まで思れ参らせたれば、ありがたき御情でこそあれ。召さんに参らねばとて、命をうしなはるるまではよもあらじ。唯都の外へぞ出されんずらん。…唯われを都のうちにて、住み果てさせよ。それぞれ今生後生の孝養と、思はむずる」 94

Toji: Anyone who lives in this country had better not disobey Kiyomori. The bonds linking a man and a woman are fashioned before this life begins. Sometimes a couple part early after having sworn to stay together forever; sometimes a relationship that had seemed temporary lasts a lifetime. […] That you enjoyed Kiyomori’s favor for three years was an unusual show of affection on his part. Of course he is not going to kill you if you refuse to answer his summons; he will simply expel you from the capital. […] Won’t you please let me finish out my life in the capital? I will think of it as a filial act in this world and the next. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 34)

Giō is, in fact, manipulated in different ways both by Kiyomori and by Toji. Her mother persuades by drawing on religious Buddhist kango vocabulary (enshukuse 縁宿世 “bonds,”

93 This possibility is mentioned in Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 248.
nagarahe 存生 “lifetime,” konjōgoshō no kyōyō 今生後生の孝養 “filial act in this world and the next”), skilfully balancing logical argumentation (domo...ari ども…あり and conditional -ba ば) with emotional persuasion (emphatic particles zotoyo ぞとよ, zokashi ぞかし and affectionate address pronoun wagoze わごぜ).

In the final scene, the two long speeches of Giō and Hotoke as nuns are filled with Buddhist discourse, of course. Both of them make use of honorific forms towards each other as a sign of mutual respect and reconciliation. The use of saburafu さぶらふ, however, resurfaces here again only in Hotoke’s speech and only when she recalls the events at Kiyomori’s mansion. This way former service to Kiyomori is contrasted with current independence away from the capital.

Ex. 13 「…もとよりわらはは推参の者にて出され参らせぶらひしを，祇王御前の申状によってこそ，召し返されもさぶらふに，… 今様歌ひ給ひしにも，… 常は暇を申ししかども，入道殿さらに御用いましまさず。つくづく物を案ずるに，娑婆の栄花は夢の夢、楽しみ栄えて何かせむ。… かやうに様をかへて参りたれば，日比の科をばゆるし給へ。…」

Hotoke: I went to Kiyomori’s mansion on my own initiative and was turned away, but then I was called back, thanks entirely to Giō’s intervention. […] When you were summoned to sing the imayō, […] I kept asking for my freedom, but Kiyomori would not grant it. When we stop to consider, flowering fortunes in this world are a dream within a dream; happiness and prosperity mean nothing. […] Now that I have come to you in this altered guise, please forgive my past offenses… (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 36)

In the first instance of direct communication between the two dancers without Kiyomori’s interference, Hotoke asks Giō for forgiveness in respectful terms. When talking of Giō’s actions she uses honorific auxiliary verb tamafu 給ふ. By retaining honorific forms for Kiyomori and marking his actions as those of a superior (onmochiimashimasazu 御用いましまさず “would not grant it”), she indirectly explains her stay in Kiyomori’s mansion as unavoidable due to the large difference in power. As soon as she starts her sermon beginning

95 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 47-8.
with *tsukuzuku* つくづく, forms of polite auxiliary verb *saburafu* さぶらふ disappear and only honorific forms like *tamahe* 給～ are employed for Giō’s actions and humble forms such as *mairitareba* 参りたれば for her own actions. Memories of past service shift into present reconciliation.

Ex. 14 「誠にわごぜの是ほどに思ひ給ひけるとは、夢にたれ知らず。…まことの大道心とはおぼえたれ。うれしかりける善知識かな。…」
Giō: I never dreamed that you felt that way. […] I look on you as a great teacher. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 37)

Giō, in turn, uses *tamafu* 給ふ for Hotoke’s actions and also the address pronoun *wagoze* わごぜ. Her final speech is mostly in Plain style (*ari* あり, *nari* なり, *-keri* けり etc.) and the Buddhist words *daidōshin* 大道心 (a person of great resolve to seek Buddhist path) and *zenchishiki* 善知識 (great teacher) show Giō’s admiration of Hotoke’s decision to become a nun. Both Giō and Hotoke construct their identities as nuns through mutually polite confessions and lengthy Buddhist reflections on impermanence of fortune. As pointed out by Oyler, “each enables the other to embrace fully their shared Buddha-nature and pursue their goal of rebirth in harmony and peace.” In a sense, they remodel their *shirabyōshi* solidarity into solidarity of hermits and their service to Kiyomori into devotion to Amida Buddha who is to be trusted. Their attitude to Amida Buddha is expressed by the humble auxiliary verb *tatematsuru* 奉る.

Ex. 15 弥陀の本願を強く信じて、隙なく名号をとなへ奉るべし。
Toji, Giō and sister (as hermits in the hut in the Saga mountains): […] we must rely firmly on the Original Vow of Amida […] we must maintain a constant stream of invocations.”
(McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 36)

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96 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 49.
98 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 46.
We have examined some of the ways language choices constitute an integral element in the representation of Kiyomori’s arrogance, the shift between Giō speaking to Kiyomori and to her mother at home, and the shift of both *shirabyōshi* in performing roles of dancers and nuns. The focus on language forms does not aim to challenge interpretations of the “Giō” episode, but rather to suggest which forms used in dialogues vividly indicate difference in power and sudden shifts in attitude. For audiences listening to *Heike* performances, variation in the speech of characters did not go unnoticed and, thus, played a role in forming the image of Giō, Kiyomori, and Hotoke. Since identities are constructed in the process of “doing” and not simply “being,” the way characters speak lets audiences form a clear image of their identities and mutual relationships.

The interaction between the dancers and Kiyomori, as depicted in the episode, raises the problem of communication between different status groups. Since Kiyomori does not enter into a dialogue with dancers preferring a unilateral issuing of orders, he eventually loses both dancers and his status of a “*shirabyōshi* patron.” Later on, similar attitude toward courtiers and others who somehow depend from him (including Retired Emperor) leads him to lose their support. Although this narrative fulfills a prominent role in characterizing Kiyomori as a ruler, it does not reveal a political conflict, which will be the subject of the next section.

**Political interaction**

Power struggle between factions at court, secret plots to overthrow the Heike, and the violent consequences of betrayal are the themes dominating the narrative of Chapters 1-3 of *Heike monogatari*. Among many possible views of court life, this narrative foregrounds the image of court as an arena of political conflict with many risks of failure for the participants. The set of narratives dealing with these matters is approached here as a political world’s
representation that shapes audience views of power relationships in the capital. We should keep in mind that this is not an esoteric narrative for inhabitants of the capital only, but a widely circulating text that allowed people to experience capital life from a distance through the medium of biwa hōshi performances. As described by Bialock, wandering biwa reciters of the medieval Heike gained custody of historical narrative. Referring to the early eleventh century, Bialock writes, “Once the written production of court scholars, history has now become the utterance of wandering reciters at the margins of power.” It does not matter that much that the message is a mixture of facts, rumours, and exaggerated accounts. What matters is the influence this depiction of capital politics exerted on the audience’s collective image of the capital.

In addition to noting how language properties of these narratives vary according to setting, I will also discuss in greater detail those communicative aspects that are prominent in character interaction. In this section, I examine dialogue speech from the following chain of settings spanning Chapters 1 to 3: 1) Conspiracy; 2) Betrayal; 3) Interrogation; 4) Admonition/persuasion.

**Conspiracy**

Secret meetings held at Bishop Shunkan’s villa at Shishi-ga-tani in the capital gather many influential people who oppose growing Heike power, including the principal conspirator Major Counselor Fujiwara no Narichika, his supporter Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa, and several prominent religious and military figures. Noteworthy is the choice of the particular banquet scene as the only representative example of dynamic interaction at these meetings.

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The presence of Retired Emperor at the secret meeting is significant by itself as well as his reaction to Narichika’s witty manipulation.

The communication in the conspiracy setting is characterized in part by secrecy/caution, solidarity, and ludic behaviour. All of these elements are present in the following conversation:

Ex. 16

1) Jōken: 「あなあさまし。人あまた承り候ひぬ。唯今もれきこてて、天下の大事に及び候ひなんず」
2) Ret. Emperor: 「あれはいかに」
3) Narichika: 「平氏たはれ候ひぬ」
4) Ret. Emperor (smile): 「者ども参って猿楽仕れ」
5) Yasuyori: 「ああ、あまりに平氏のおほう候に、もて醉ひて候」
6) Shunkan: 「さてそれをばいかが仕らむずる」
7) Saikō: 「頭をとるにしかじ」
8) Jōken (silent)

1) Jōken: This is dreadful! Many people are listening. The secret will leak out in no time; there will be a crisis.
2) Ret. Emperor: What does that mean?
3) Narichika: The downfall of the heiji.
4) Ret. Emperor (smile): Everybody come forward and do a sarugaku turn.
5) Yasuyori: Ah! There are too many heiji. They have made me tipsy.
6) Shunkan: What shall we do with them?
7) Saikō: The best thing is to take their heads.
8) Jōken (silent) (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 47)

Jōken’s reaction upon learning the true purpose of the meeting is far-sighted, considering the consequences, and highly cautious, as is emphasized by the exclamation ana asamashi あなあさまし (this is dreadful!). His agitated exclamation and advice of precaution is expressed politely (sōrahinu 候ひぬ) with the use of the humble verb uketamawaru 承る (to hear), as a reminder that the Retired Emperor’s words are heard by many of those present.

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100 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 71-2.
101 He is a son of Fujiwara no Michinori, also known as Shinzei (1106-1160). He is a very high-ranked priest consistently presented as wise and courtly.
Jōken’s utterance is significant in two respects. Firstly, it warns the Retired Emperor of the risk involved in showing support of Narichika’s plot in front of many untrustworthy people. Secondly, and more importantly, it provokes vigorous action of Narichika, who hurries to dispel fears and doubts by “repairing” the conspiracy through language manipulation.

Before going further, I would like to mention several points about the Retired Emperor that help explain the position he takes in this scene. As indicated above, Kujō Kanezane’s diary Gyokuyō and Jien’s Gukanshō are some of the likely sources for Heike monogatari and the image of Go-Shirakawa presented in these works is of interest here. Gukanshō states that Go-Shirakawa was always interested in dance, including sarugaku102 dance. In addition, being fond of imayo103 songs, he personally compiled an imayo anthology Ryōjin hishō 梁塵秘抄 (Secret selection of dust on the beams, ca. 1170). In Gyokuyō we find a curious criticism of Retired Emperor by Fujiwara Shinzei (1106-1160):

謀反の臣傍らに在るも、一切覚悟の御心無し。人、これを悟らせ奉ると雖も、猶以って覚えず。かくの如き愚昧は古今未だ見ず、未だ聞かざるものなり。104

The scene of conspiracy mostly observed from the point of view of Jōken, a son of Shinzei, corroborates this view by providing an example of Go-Shirakawa’s full trust in his subjects combined with carefree participation in a conspiracy despite Jōken’s warnings.

During the banquet, Narichika, interested in gaining direct imperial support, involves the Retired Emperor into the conspiracy by overturning a bottle before him. When the intrigued (and distracted) Go-Shirakawa asks about it, Narichika employs an ingenious

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102 Literally “monkey music,” a form of popular dance involving comic mime, juggling, and acrobatics.
103 Literally “present style,” a vocal genre popular in the late Heian period.
104 Kokusho kankōkai, ed. Gyokuyō (1964; reprint, Tokyo Kappan, 1907). “When rebellious subjects are by his side, he is completely unaware of that. Even when somebody lets him know about it, he still does not notice it. Such folly has never been seen nor heard of in the past or present.” (Translation mine.) Despite having such interests and qualities that seem to be far from ideal for a ruler, Go-Shirakawa managed to repeatedly assume control of top-level politics during a period of 35 years. Cited from Gomi, Kyō, Kamakura, 37.
wordplay punning on the homophony between *Heiji* (Heike clan) and *heiji* (a flask) that he overthrew (*tafare たふれ*) in a joking way (*tahare たはれ*) as a service to the Retired Emperor (polite auxiliary *sōrō 候* can simultaneously mean “to serve” as an independent verb). The effect is immediate—Retired Emperor notices with a smile a theme for a comic dance (*sarugaku*). Noteworthy is the address form *monodomo 者ども*, mostly said to inferiors, and the use of humble verbs *mairu 参る* and *tsukamatsuru 仕る* for actions done by lower status people for the speaker. 105 Yasuyori, Shunkan and Saikō elaborate the pun further as they perform a dance. Yasuyori shows respect to his audience (by using the polite auxiliary *sōrō 候*), Shunkan is unsure (*-muzuru ~むずる* contracted from *-mutosuru ~むとする*) how to overthrow the highly-placed Heike (acknowledging by the use of a humble verb *tsukamatsuru 仕る* that the revolt is an action done for the Retired Emperor), whereas Saikō employs no honorific or polite markers equating the Heike with “bottles.” The structure of their utterances is effective for persuasion of fellow conspirators: statement of problem → question → answer.

The narrator’s mention of Jōken’s silence at the end reminds Heike audiences of his earlier failed attempt to caution the Retired Emperor.

The whole scene can be interpreted as a cunning move by Narichika to manipulate Go-Shirakawa, using his weakness for popular dance and song together with his naïveté in political matters that does not let him foresee the consequences of this “innocent” entertainment. On the other hand, it may be a shrewd political move on Go-Shirakawa’s part to mobilize forces at court with grievances against the Heike in order to check Heike’s growing power. 106 After all, dance as a joint activity, together with humorous witty utterances, is a powerful tool for

105 Actually, it is a kind of honorific attitude to oneself expressed in the speech of imperial members and other superiors. More on this controversial phenomenon later in this chapter. 106 Interestingly, this episode fits well into Bialock’s discussion of ritual properties of “ludic play” and “violence inherent in royal power.” See Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces*, 173.
creating a sense of solidarity among participants. Needless to say, a shared feeling of defiance is generated by bold utterances of the rebellious intentions hidden only behind the obvious pun.

This episode brings together ludic play at the riotous banquet, language manipulation and violent political plans. The very possibility of having a sarugaku dance in the capital in the presence of the Retired Emperor is a striking idea that likely forced a re-evaluation of the image of the capital: peripheral language and dance practices could be performed in the heart of the capital with imperial sanction. As pointed out by Bialock,

[...] one of the defining characteristics of late Heian royal authority was the increasingly close association between retired sovereigns and a variety of marginal entertainers, including sarugaku performers. Linked to the unruly demonic powers, one of the hallmarks of parodic sarugaku was the boisterous laughter (oko no warai) that came at the climax of the performance, signalling a ritual inversion of hierarchy and a revivifying of sacred authority.  

A curious parallel can be drawn between the Shishi-ga-tani meeting and the later Muromachi period group meetings that joined entertainment with formation of leagues for a common cause. “At these meetings people ate and drank together, held discussions, developed strong communal bonds, and strengthened their ties of solidarity. Such bonds created a climate favourable to revolts [...]”  

There can be only two ways to account for such parallelism, either Muromachi period practice was layered upon the past Genpei narratives (quite probable given the year (1371) the Kakuichi Heike monogatari was written down) or the Muromachi meetings were not a novelty, but a continuation of earlier practice. What is quite certain is that the Shishi-ga-tani performance must have been a familiar and common activity for biwa hōshi audiences who may have linked it to contemporary meetings of their own. In sum, within the Heike, the planning of a violent overthrow of the Taira by people close to the Retired Emperor

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takes place in the marginal space on the outskirts of the capital and consists of a ludic behaviour featuring a ritual inversion of Taira power. Verbal manipulation and wordplay blur the distinction between formal political communication and ritualized decadence.

Betrayal

The next event following the plot is the betrayal, which consists of a significant dialogue between Yukitsuna, one of those present at the Shishi-ga-tani banquet, and Kiyomori provoking a chain of actions against the plotters. Immediately noticeable is the density of dialogue in this episode with several cases of consecutive utterances uninterrupted by narratorial comment. The speakers are clear since there are only two characters, and the utterances thus help create an atmosphere of closeness or secrecy.

Ex. 17

1) Yukitsuna: 「人伝には申すまじき事なり」
2) Kiyomori (comes out): 「夜ははるかにふけぬらむ。ただ今いかに、何事ぞや」
3) Yukitsuna: 「昼は人目のしげう候間、夜にまぎれて参って候。此程院中の人々の、兵具をととのへ、軍兵を召され候をば、何とかきこしめされ候」
4) Kiyomori: 「それは、山攻めらるべしとこそ聞け」
5) Yukitsuna (approaches and lowers his voice): 「其儀では候はず。一向御一家の御上とこそ承り候へ」
6) Kiyomori: 「さてそれをば法皇もしろしめされたるか」
7) Yukitsuna: 「子細にやおおよび候。成親 卿の軍兵召され候も、院宣とてこそ召され候へ」...「暇申して」
1) Yukitsuna: It is not a matter I can entrust to an intermediary.
2) Kiyomori: It is very late. What business brings you here?

3) Yukitsuna: I have come in the dark because many inquisitive eyes watch in the daytime. Have you heard why the Retired Emperor’s associates are assembling arms and mustering warriors nowadays?

4) Kiyomori: They say His Majesty intends to attack Mount Hiei.

5) Yukitsuna: That is not the reason. I have heard that the Taira clan is the real target.

6) Kiyomori: Does the Retired Emperor know about it?

7) Yukitsuna: Of course. Narichika tells his recruits he is acting on the Retired Emperor’s orders. [...] (Then he excused himself and withdrew.) (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 63)

Structurally, the dialogue consists of several transitions, a change in distance between Yukitsuna and Kiyomori as the interaction continues and a gradual action-reaction approach chosen by Yukitsuna as he exploits the knowledge gap to convey secret information in a persuasive manner. In this short interaction we see a shift in loyalty when Yukitsuna betrays the Shishi-ga-tani conspiracy, including the Retired Emperor, in order to secure the future trust of Kiyomori. We also observe an interesting interplay between power conferred institutionally (that is, in terms of status and rank Kiyomori is much higher than Yukitsuna) and power negotiated situationally expressed in possession of the secret (Kiyomori knows less than Yukitsuna).

Yukitsuna arrives at Kiyomori’s mansion unexpectedly late at night as a stranger. Initially having to communicate with Kiyomori through a messenger, he prompts Kiyomori to meet him privately by hinting at the secrecy of his message (Ex.17-1). Kiyomori is perplexed by the reason for a late visit (Ex.17-2). His question is stated plainly with no honorific markers and somewhat impatiently (*ikani, nanigoto zo ya* いかに、何事ぞや), acknowledging Yukitsuna’s lower status as a courtier. Yukitsuna stresses the importance of his secret (Ex.17-3) and gains initiative by questioning Kiyomori. As expected, Yukitsuna employs polite *sōrō* 候 style showing respect to Kiyomori’s high position and humbles himself (*maitte* 参って).

Here I would like to point to the use of *aida* 間 in his answer. This conjunction expressing
reason or cause is not neutral in its sociolinguistic aspect, but significantly skewed in its
distribution towards interaction between men (mostly warriors).\textsuperscript{110}

Consider the following table showing distribution of conjunction \textit{aida} 間 in dialogue passages
of \textit{Kakuichi Heike monogatari}:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker (M)</th>
<th>Listener (M)</th>
<th>Speaker (M)</th>
<th>Listener (F)</th>
<th>Thoughts (M)</th>
<th>Thoughts (F)</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, out of 27 man-to-man cases, 13 are warrior-to-warrior dialogues.

The function of \textit{aida} 間 to contribute to construction of a political dialogue between
men should not be underestimated. It is often true that one does not need elaborate and explicit
markers placed densely in an utterance to convey the setting or relation between characters. A
single appropriately used marker, even if it does not attract much attention, may be an effective
detail enhancing the overall scene (in the sense of matching linguistic form with content and
context to create a unified whole that is presented as a “norm”). Of course, it is futile to judge
how a given marker was received by fourteenth-century audiences and what associations it
evoked then, but even an approximate indication of uneven distribution of a form (such as \textit{aida}
間) is of value to formulation of interpretations of the passage in which the form is found.

The question of Yukitsuna (Ex.17-3), a pre-planned rhetorical strategy, is one of the
key points in this dialogue (\textit{nantoka kikoshimesare sōrō} 何とかきこしめされ候). Questions
play a large role in configuration of situationally negotiated power. In other words, posing a
question is a powerful claim to imposing control on the direction in which the conversation
will develop and it is usually done by a person of higher institutional status who asks inferiors.
In this case, however, we see a mismatch between institutional power and situationally

\textsuperscript{110} As noted in Nishida, \textit{Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki}, 340-354.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 345.
negotiated one, since Yukitsuna, despite being inferior in status, dares to question Kiyomori and take control of the conversation. The highly polite form *kikoshimesare sōrō* きこしめされ候 serves as a “repair” technique, a way to mask the bold manipulation behind a formal acknowledgement of Kiyomori’s high rank. The casual response of Kiyomori (Ex.17-4) allows Yukitsuna to reveal his key information mixing truth (existence of anti-Heike conspiracy) with lies (current military preparation is not aimed at Heike power). At this point, Yukitsuna’s utterance (Ex.17-5) contradicts Kiyomori’s opinion and reveals straightforwardly the conspiracy’s aim being the Heike clan. There are many honorific prefixes *go/on* 御 for the Heike in Yukitsuna’s betrayal statement and also the humble verb *uketamawaru* 承る (to hear) for his own actions.

I would like to draw a parallel between Kiyomori’s (Ex.17-4) *to koso kike* ところ聞け and Yukitsuna’s response (Ex.17-5) *to koso uketamawari sōrahe* ところ承り候へ. Both claim to have heard the information without specifying exact sources. This emphasis on “hearing” brings attention to the fact that in the capital, even information of highest political significance is essentially orally transmitted like a rumour. Such circumstances explain the readiness with which Kiyomori listens and reacts to the news of conspiracy. If we consider the emphasis on heard information, then we can say that this passage participates in a larger discourse on rumour at court and provides evidence for a view of a leader collecting hearsay to form an opinion or decision. As pointed out by Bialock, in Confucian orthodox historiography, “attending to rumour,” or the “voice of the people,” was viewed as indispensable to the conduct of virtuous government.\(^{112}\) As for *biwa hōshi* performances, mention of hearsay as a legitimate source of evidence for Kiyomori indirectly asserts the credibility of *Heike*

\(^{112}\) Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces*, 286.
monogatari, to a large extent a collection of hearsay itself, as an equally reliable account of court politics. In a sense, the audience found itself in a position quite similar to Kiyomori’s, having to reach conclusions based on hearsay evidence provided by biwa hōshi. Itinerant performers, “as frequenters of the markets and waysides where rumour proliferated,” may have thus shaped a popular attitude to Heike monogatari accounts as one of the types of historical evidence.

Kiyomori’s reaction immediately follows (Ex.17-6). Not having any conflicts with the Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa in the past, he is surprised and worried by possible opposition from the Retired Emperor whose superior status he acknowledges by one of the highest honorific forms shiroshimesaretaru ka しろしめされたるか. Yukitsuna replies with a rhetorical question (Ex.17-7). Again, formally polite and deferential to Kiyomori, he still succeeds in maintaining control of the conversation by answering confidently as if he were an advisor to Kiyomori, this attitude being expressed in the rhetorical question with an idiomatic expression shisai ni ya oyobi sōro 子細にやおよび候 (of course, clear without going into details). He emphasizes the link between Narichika and the Retired Emperor with a repetitive mesare sōro...koso mesare sōrahe 召され候...こそ召され候へ. Courtly politics is shown to be structured in such a way that a relatively inferior courtier present during the conspiracy at Shishi-ga-tani succeeds in escalating latent tensions between powerful political figures into an open conflict. Coming as a stranger, Yukitsuna succeeds in getting Kiyomori’s attention and trust. His cautious and forceful presentation of secret information convinces Kiyomori of its accuracy and triggers a series of actions aimed against the plotters and the Retired Emperor.

113 Bialock, Eccentric Spaces, 286.
114 Even late in the Edo period, the Heike monogatari was classified as “miscellaneous history” (zatsushirui). See Oyler, Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions, 163, note 30. It might be added that regarding hearsay as hearsay (rather than fact) is quite an objective view of historical accounts.
Kiyomori’s method of verifying the truth of Yukitsuna’s words is interesting from the perspective of communication. He sends a messenger to a courtier at the Retired Emperor’s mansion with a notice on the conspiracy and his intention to suppress it. Kiyomori’s plan is to test Go-Shirakawa’s position in the matter and check his reaction. The courtier informs the Retired Emperor who understands in panic that the conspiracy has been betrayed. Unable to reply with anything except *saru nitemo, ko wa nanigoto zo* 「さるにても、こは何事ぞ」, Go-Shirakawa only confirms Kiyomori’s suspicions. This brief episode reveals a multi-layered system of communication at the court with key politicians interacting through messengers. The importance attached to the manner of communication among political figures deserves attention. Despite the indirectness inherent in such a system, the role of verbal behaviour in establishing political configurations was (or was shown to be) significant. In this example, Kiyomori readily decides that Go-Shirakawa’s hesitation and inability to give a convincing answer necessarily support Yukitsuna’s allegations about his anti-Heike political stance.

**Arrest and interrogation**

Let us consider the scene of Saikō’s arrest and interrogation in Kiyomori’s mansion. In the discussion above, I discussed Saikō’s unrestrained behaviour during the *sarugaku* dance at the Shishi-ga-tani when he openly threatened to behead the Heike like “bottles.” In this episode, I will examine how language forms chosen by the same Saikō enhance the content of his message to Kiyomori and how they reinforce a very audacious attitude taken in courtly conflict settings.

This scene opens and develops consistently along two interdependent themes that likely characterize Genpei-era court politics: 1) conflict over position relative to the Retired Emperor

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115 “What is all this?” (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 64).
as the “axis” of legitimacy and 2) harsh speech accompanying violence. The Retired Emperor is not a direct participant at this point, and yet his support of the anti-Heike revolt constrains Kiyomori’s claims to legitimacy and indirectly structures the interaction.

Warriors serving Kiyomori encounter Saikō in the street heading to the Retired Emperor’s Hōjūji palace:

Ex. 18「西八条へ召されるぞ。きっと参れ」
Warriors: You are summoned to Nishihachijō. Come along now. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 64)

Warriors try to lure Saikō to Kiyomori’s headquarters at Nishihachijō, simultaneously establishing a status gap between Kiyomori and Saikō (honorific verb mesu 召す “to summon” referring to their superior Kiyomori). As agents of the Heike they permit themselves to express demands in a direct and rather forceful way (emphatic zo ぞ and kitto きっと), as if they were relating Kiyomori’s order (imperative form maire 参れ is definitely an order to an inferior).

Saikō feigns to have misunderstood the immediacy of the order and attempts to appeal to the authority of the Retired Emperor. Notice the use of the verb sousu 奏す “to report (to the Emperor)”:

Ex. 19「奏すべき事があって、法住寺殿へ参る。やがてこそ参らめ」
Saikō: I am on my way to the Hōjūji Mansion with an urgent report for the Retired Emperor. I will go to Nishihachijō as soon as I am free. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 64)

Instead of letting him go on his important mission, the warriors ordered to arrest the conspirators only hasten to prevent his further contact with the Retired Emperor and his possible escape to relative safety:

Ex. 20「にっこい入道かな。何事をか奏すべきかんなら。」

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116 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 112.
117 Ibid.
さないはせそ」
Warriors: What do you think you’re going to report, you odious monk? Forget it! (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 64)

Heike warriors suddenly lose their temper and disclose their anger by way of direct rudeness, that is, they treat him as a conspirator to be arrested right away. In such circumstances, Saikō’s close position to the Retired Emperor is irrelevant as evidenced by the disrespectful forms of the warrior speech, primarily the adjective nikkui にっくい (emphatic onbin change from niki にくき “hateful”) followed by the contraction bekannaru べかなるる (from bekuarunaru べくあるなる) and the prohibition na...so な…そ. Compared to the “capital” speech of Saikō, the multiple occurrence of contracted forms in the warrior speech clearly stands out as “peripheral” or unrefined. Bialock, discussing the warrior’s status in the medieval imaginary, mentions aristocratic perceptions of the warrior as the “barbarian within.” I would add that representations of warrior speech in Heike monogatari often mark it as different from the elite speech of the capital and thus reinforce the image of warriors’ otherness.

Brought before Kiyomori, Saikō is subjected to humiliating accusations:

Ex. 21 「入道かたぶけうどするやつが、なれるすがたよ。しやつここへひき寄せよ」

Kiyomori: This is what’s become of the fellow who aspired to bring me to ruin. Pull him over here. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 65)

Kiyomori speaks in front of his warriors, and his speech, not much different from theirs, is characterized by contractions (katabukeudosuru かたぶけうどする < katabukentosuru かた ぶけんとする) and contemptuous address forms (yatsu やつ and shiyatsu しやつ). Typical for Kiyomori is the frequent use of imperatives (hikiyoseyo ひき寄せよ) that highlights his
position of power, a position of judge in this case. Shiyatsu しやつ as a rarely used rude address form deserves a more detailed discussion here.

By no means is the use of rude forms (such as shiyatsu しやつ) an innovation first seen in the *Heike monogatari*. Earlier Heian works, such as *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, 1008), also provide examples of marked non-neutral words used in the speech of characters who are thus singled out as rustic and vulgar. Rude words occurred rarely in court speech and in *Genji monogatari*, for example, none are used in poems and in the narrative. Rude speech is limited to specific characters such as Taifu no Gen, a rich landowner in provincial Hizen. Taifu no Gen utters the only example of derogatory address seen in the entire *Genji monogatari* in the form of the pronoun suyatsubara すやつばら (they), a variant of rude forms such as soyatsu そやつ, kuyatsu くやつ, kayatsu かやつ. Such language use would be considered inappropriate at court and it thus emphasizes Taifu no Gen’s rough character and deviation from court conventions—a clear example of speech being a marker of a character’s identity.\(^{121}\)

One technique to highlight the refined qualities of a courtier, however, is to mix words that are usually found in *waka* poems, so-called *kago* 歌語 (poetic words), into the speech of that particular character. For example, Kaoru can be said to have a preference for poetic words in his speech, such as when he comments 「中空に人わらへにもなりはべりぬべきかな」.\(^{122}\) The phrase *nakazora nari* 中空なり (“unsettled, restless; in mid-air”) is found in *waka* poems of *Kokinshū* (poem #481) and *Ise monogatari* (section 21), that is, its conventional usage is strongly associated with poetry and Kaoru’s choice to use it in a

\(^{121}\) Yamaguchi Nakami, *Heianchō no kotoba to buntai* (Kazama Shobō, 1998), 138-140.

conversation reveals his refined character. Similarly, Prince Genji often draws on poetic vocabulary in his speech as in the following example when he talks to Tamakazura:

「なよ竹を見給へかし。」 Here, nayotake なよ竹 ("pliant bamboo") alludes to poems in Kokinshū (#993) and Manyōshū (Book 2, 217).

In the scene of Saikō’s interrogation, Kiyomori uses a rude word that would characterize him as a provincial warrior in the eyes of courtiers. The use of the “vulgar word” (zokugo 俗語) shiyatsu しやつ positions Kiyomori closer to provincial warriors than to courtly officials, a move that is on one hand justified by the emergency of the setting, but at the same time serves as a reminder of Kiyomori’s inherent quality of a “provincial” ignorant of courtly norms. The Heike author(s)’ choice of language reinforces Kiyomori’s undeservedly high position and his definite break from traditional courtly speech norms.

In the following accusation speech, Kiyomori pursues two aims, 1) to position Saikō in a low status category separate from the Retired Emperor in order to remove legitimacy granted to Saikō’s plans by the Retired Emperor and 2) to establish his own authority as a judge.

Ex. 22 Kiyomori: 「本よりおのれらがやうなる下賤のはてを、君の召しつかはせ給ひて、なさるまじき官職をなしたび、父子共に過分のふるまひると見しにあはせて、あやまたぬ天台の座主、流罪るざいに申しおこなひ、天下の大事ひき出いて、剰あまつへ此一門ほろぼすべき、謀反にくみしてんげるやつなり。ありのままに申せ」 Kiyomori: Although this wretch and his sons sprang from the dregs of society, the Retired Emperor took them into his service and gave them offices to which they had no right. Not content with aping their betters, they proceeded to create a national crisis by contriving the exile of the innocent Tendai Abbot. And now, to cap it all, this creature turns out to have joined a conspiracy against our house. Confess everything! (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 65)

124 Nishida, Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki, 110.
Kiyomori’s choice of address and honorific forms (ascribed to him by Heike author(s), of course) is in itself a claim to setting up hierarchies of power. Thus, a sharp contrast between the Retired Emperor and Saikō is paralleled by forms of address like kimi...meshitsukawase tamahite 君...召しつかはせ給ひて and onorera...gerafu no hate おのらら...下臈のはて.

The highest honorific pronoun kimi 君 and the triple honorific construction meshitsukafu 召しつかふ with honorific causative se せ and honorific auxiliary verb tamafu 給ふ are juxtaposed with the lowest pronoun of abuse onorera おのれら and a rude reference to low status gerafu no hate 下臈のはて. Kiyomori brings attention to the extreme unworthiness of Saikō and his undeservedly high position of service to the Retired Emperor as he expresses disapproval of the Retired Emperor’s decision to grant Saikō important positions at court. Criticism of the Retired Emperor takes the form of nasarumajiki なさるまじき and nashitabi なしたび, honorific expressions (nasaru and tabu) of a lower degree and majiki まじき, marking strong inappropriateness. At this point, Kiyomori still acknowledges the Retired Emperor’s top status, but also claims himself to be in a position sufficiently high to point out mistakes in decisions and appointments made by the Retired Emperor. Next, Kiyomori assumes the role of a judge, listing Saikō’s crimes with formal legal vocabulary (kabun 過分, ruzai 流罪, tenka no daiji 天下的大事, muhon 謀反). His use of the onbin contraction idaite 出いて (< idashite 出して) and of the emphatic past -tengeru てんげる, one of the characteristic forms used in Kamakura-period texts and not found in courtly Heian literary texts, creates a dissonance with

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126 Nishida, Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki, 331.
127 The use of onbin in a verb like idasu 出す is a relatively rare phenomenon that occurs only in male speech. Probably an insignificant detail, it may have been found appropriate for Kiyomori in the context of interrogation. See Okumura, “Kakuichibon Heike monogatari,” 4.
formal capital speech. Ordering with a humble verb *mōse* 申せ is another detail lowering Saikō’s status.

Saikō’s reply contains highly significant choices of language forms no less astonishing and audacious than its content (the two are discussed as inseparable entities complementing each other).

Ex. 23 「さもさうず。入道殿こそ過分の事をば宣へ。他人の前は知らず、西光が聞かんところに、さやうの事をばえこそ宣ぶまじけ。院中に召しつかはる身なれば、執事の別当、成親卿の院宣とてもよばれし事に、くみせずとは申すべき様なし。それはくみしたり。…」

Saikō: What nonsense! It is you who forget your position when you talk like that. Others may not object, but I refuse to let you use such language to me. I don’t claim that I, as a member of the Retired Emperor’s staff, refused to participate in the recruitment activities that Narichika said His Majesty had ordered. I did participate. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 66)

What makes Saikō’s reply sound bold? Here we have to understand what is missing in his speech. The general norm for interaction between people of different social status is for a lower one to show politeness to the interlocutor by using *sōrō* 候 style. To understand how pervasively strong this convention was, one has only to recognize that even in the case of addressing one’s enemies and in the speech of a prisoner, a lower status speaker still chooses the *sōrō* 候 style, a marker of respectful politeness. The only *sōrō* 候 in Saikō’s speech is *samosōzu* さもさうず, where *sō* さう < *sōrō* さらふ is the contracted colloquial *zokugo* form common in the speech of warriors, including Kiyomori. However, in this case it is part of a fixed idiomatic expression meaning “on the contrary.” Overall, Saikō is determined to break the norm and avoids the polite *sōrō* 候 style. This is a clear indication of Saikō’s insubordination and treatment of Kiyomori as a person of lower or equal status. Even though

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Saikō employs honorific verbs such as notamafu 宣ふ, tamafu 給ふ, and owasu おはす, they are not part of the set of highest honorific verbs and are used regularly in the speech of equals or even to somewhat inferior interlocutors. This is exactly the message Saikō sends to Kiyomori and the attending warriors, namely that he, as a member of the Retired Emperor’s group, does not consider Kiyomori to be his superior. Daring to speak as an equal, he ignores the large difference in rank and power, seriously challenging Kiyomori’s claims to authority both as a Chancellor and a judge. Additionally (Ex.24), Saikō selects the second-person pronoun gohen 御辺 to refer to Kiyomori, which only reinforces the stance he takes, since this pronoun is spoken to equals and those slightly inferior in status. In this dialogue, Kiyomori’s onorera おのれら and Saikō’s gohen 御辺 carry enough information about the attitudes taken by each speaker and they, in a sense, structure the verbal representation of the power conflict.

This episode contains one of the more transparent examples of language variation. In addition to providing valuable data for linguistic analysis of politeness expressions in premodern Japanese, the speech of Saikō is one of the clearest expressions of courtiers’ great irritation and resentment towards the Taira rise to power. The highly irregular absence of polite forms in his speech is a direct, manifest expression of resistance to Kiyomori and, more generally, to formerly marginalized warrior clans.

Ex. 24 Saikō: 御辺は、故 刑 部 卿 忠盛の子でおはせしかども、十四五までは出仕もし給はず、故 中 御 門 藤 中 納言家 成 卿 の辺に、たち入り給ひしをば、京童 部は、高平太とこそいひしか。... 殿 上 のまじはりをだにきらわれし人の子で、太政大臣までなりあがったるや過分なるらむ。侍 品の者の、受 領、検非違使に はうれいなる事、先例傍 例なきにあらず。なじかは過分なるべき」

130 Nishida, Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki, 64.
Kiyomori: 「しやつが頸、左右なうきるな。よくよくまいしめよ」…
「しやつが口をさけ」

Saikō:  Although you were the son of the late Punishments
Minister Tadamori, you never
showed your face at court until you were fourteen or fifteen. The city riffraff used to call you
‘Towering Heita’ in the days when you hung around Middle Counselor Ienari’s house. […] To
rise to the eminence of Chancellor was certainly far beyond the deserts of the son of a man
whose very presence in the Courtiers’ Hall provoked resentment. There is no lack of early or
current precedent for the appointment of someone of samurai status to a provincial or Police
office. How can I be accused of exceeding my station?

Kiyomori: Don’t cut off his head just yet. Tie him up tight. […] (Split open his mouth.)
(McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 66)

Saikō, proudly declaring himself to be “someone of samurai status” (saburaihon no
mono 侍品の者) following the order of the Retired Emperor, sees no excess in his rank or
actions and accuses Kiyomori of usurping undeserved status. Characterization of Saikō as bold
and defiant is further complemented by the way he outlines his view of Kiyomori. He denies
Kiyomori the right to make false accusations (Ex. 23): e koso notamafumajikere えこそ宣ふ
まじけれ (“I refuse to let you use such language to me”) with the marker of strong
prohibition or inappropriateness maji まじ, often seen in the speech of Kiyomori and rarely
spoken to him. He goes on to recount Kiyomori’s career from a humiliating experience in his
youth when he was nicknamed Takaheida 高平太 (‘Towering Heita’) to the position of daijō
daijin 大政大臣 (Chancellor) listing several intermediary positions, likewise undeserved in his
opinion. Saikō’s accusation essentially mirrors Kiyomori’s one before in terms of exposing the
other side as wrongfully occupying the position at court, not mentioning, however, the Retired
Emperor’s promotion of Kiyomori in the past. Angered Kiyomori is left speechless and in a
plain style (kiru na きるな, sake さけ) orders guards to torture Saikō, referring to him again as

131 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 114.
Kiyomori’s order to split Saikō’s mouth before execution explicitly reveals Kiyomori’s rage at the opponent’s insolent speech.

This sample of conflict dialogue offers us insight into the way power dynamics were encoded in speech strategies. Considering the irregularity of Saikō’s defiant reply (absence of sōrō 候 style), we can hypothesize about its role in redefining communication “norms” at court. Extreme absence of sōrō 候 politeness indicator where it is expected exposes importance of its functions in regular contexts thereby reinforcing the use of sōrō 候 when interacting with superiors. Transgression of the conventional boundaries of speech contrasts with the “norm” and highlights it. It might be added that ignoring the irregularity of Saikō’s language greatly diminishes the force of his verbal challenge to Kiyomori.

What image of the court is conveyed in this interrogation? Not surprisingly, it is a world of factions and struggles for positions. Noteworthy is the background of people competing in the court system. Judging from accusations centered on the undeserved positions of certain characters and their low origins, social mobility was a phenomenon in the capital and it is possible that both Kiyomori and Saikō were of low background and that they rose to prominent positions exceptionally quickly, especially Kiyomori. This may explain the peculiar features of Kiyomori’s speech, such as shiyatsu しゃつ insults used only sporadically in earlier texts (such as Genji monogatari) to mark provincial speech. Heike monogatari reveals how speakers from peripheral, provincial groups moved into the centre of power so quickly that their speech behaviour betrayed their origins. Saikō, knowing Kiyomori’s background, speaks as though they were equals. It is a power struggle between Narichika’s faction (Saikō) and Kiyomori’s clan, and even if Saikō’s brave challenge to the violent usurper Kiyomori is admirable, Kiyomori’s insults and violence are justified as punishment of rebel conspirators.
Senju-no-mae

Having discussed several dialogue sequences taking place at the Kyoto court, I will now consider the contrasting interaction at a parallel seat of power located in Kamakura (Kantō) headed by Minamoto no Yoritomo, the leader of the bakufu military organization, who succeeded in consolidating control over the eastern provinces. Yoritomo, according to the Kakuichi account, has joined the anti-Heike revolt after obtaining the order from the Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa legitimizing the overthrow of the Heike. Formally, he positions himself as defender of imperial power against “court enemies,” the Heike. The following episode is a scene of Yoritomo’s interrogation of Taira no Kiyomori’s son Shigehira, one of the top Heike commanders, who was taken prisoner and brought to Kamakura. He is accused of burning Nara temples with Buddhist sacred objects, one of the worst crimes that were thought to have led the Heike to ruin.

Ex. 25 Yoritomo: 「抑君の御いきどおりをやすめ奉り、父の恥をきよめんと思ひたちしくは、平家をほろぼさんの案の内に候へども、まさしく見参にいるべしとは存ぜず候ひき。… 抑南都をほろぼさせ給ひける事は、故太 政 入道殿の仰ぎこふせにして候ひしか、又時にとての御ばからひじて候ひけるか。以ての外の罪業にてこそ候なられ」

Yoritomo: Because I have wished to calm His Majesty’s wrath and redeem my father’s honor, the destruction of the Heike has entered into my planning, but it had never occurred to me that you and I might meet here. […] Now tell me, did you destroy the southern capital on Kiyomori’s orders, or was it your own spur-of-the-moment decision? It was an incredibly wicked deed. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 338)

If we compare this interrogation with Kiyomori’s one discussed earlier, the difference in language is enormous. Shigehira is, of course, of a much higher status than Saikō and his crime is not participation in a conspiracy to overthrow Yoritomo, but speaking respectfully

132 SNKBZ, vol. 46, 287.
with an “enemy of the court” who has burned Nara does reveal much about Yoritomo as a leader/judge and about the role of communication in the legitimacy claims of the Eastern “court.” Yoritomo does not torture Shigehira and no insults such as shiyatsu しやつ are addressed to him. What kind of politeness level does Yoritomo find appropriate in the situation? For Shigehira’s actions, he uses one of the highest honorific expressions ~sase tamafu させ給ふ, for his own actions (to the Retired Emperor) he uses humble expressions (tatematsuru 奉る). The consistent and abundant use of the polite discourse marker sōrō 候 immediately stands out as the way to express a respectful attitude to the addressee, Shigehira. All of these qualities mark very respectful speech. Generally speaking, this speech style is used to talk to people of higher status than the speaker or in formal situations between refined high level people (even of equal position) as a show of mutual respect.

Ex. 26 Shigehira: 「…衆徒の悪行をしづめむがためにまかりむかって候ひし が らんめつばう 程に、不慮に伽蓝 滅亡に及び候ひし事、力及ばぬ次第なり。…
今又運づきぬれば、重衡とらはれて是まで下り候ひぬ。…
これまでくだるべしとは、かけても思はざりき。唯先世の宿 業 こそ 口惜し候へ。…
弓矢をとるならひ、敵の手にかかって命を失ふ事、まったく恥にて恥ならず。只 は おおん 芳恩には、とくとくくうべをはねらるべし」

Shigehira: It happened by accident when I went to suppress the monks’ violence; there was nothing I could do to prevent it. […] Now our luck has turned, and I have come down here as a prisoner. […] but the thought of coming here had never entered my head. I can only regret the evil act in a former life that has produced this karma. […] It is common enough for a warrior to fall into enemy hands and perish; there is no real disgrace about it. I ask only that you cut off my head with as little delay as possible. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 338)

133 Nishida, Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki, 330.
134 Ibid.
135 SNKBZ, vol. 46, 288.
As for the courtier-warrior Shigehira, his speech is likewise formal and respectful in addition to being an elaborate rhetorical composition about the fate of the whole Heike clan. In terms of language, he does use the polite marker sōrō 候 to convey respect to his audience, primarily Yoritomo, although significantly less frequently than Yoritomo. Most sentences remain in a neutral form ending in arazu あらず, arī あり, nari なり, for example, with sōrō 候 style limited to mention of his own actions and feelings. Even talking about his own execution, he uses the honorific passive form hanerarubeshi はねらるべし (you should cut off my head). Shigehira’s speech greatly moves the audience, warriors present at Yoritomo’s court, so that Yoritomo finds it necessary to explain his role in the fall of the Heike.

Ex. 27 Yoritomo: 「平家を別して私のかたきと思ひ奉る事、ゆめゆめ候はず。ただ帝王の仰せこそ重う候へ」
Yoritomo: I do not in the least regard the Heike as personal enemies. I am simply obeying His Majesty’s orders. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 338)

Yoritomo again speaks in a polite and formal manner using sōrō 候 repeatedly to show respect to Shigehira. The emphatic negation yumeyume…zu ゆめゆめ…ず and the justification (excuse) tada…koso ただ…こそ reveal some of the anguish and sympathy he feels about the destruction of the Heike, as does his insistence on following imperial orders. Using the humble auxiliary verb tatematsuru 奉る, usually addressed to imperial members and high status courtiers, also shifts responsibility for Shigehira’s arrest to the Retired Emperor and the court. In this narrative, Yoritomo is not made to appear as a leader fully independent from the capital court. A little later, upon hearing of Shigehira’s wish to take religious vows, Yoritomo’s strict decision is still made by taking imperial interests into consideration.

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Ex. 28 Yoritomo: 「それ思ひもよらず。頼朝が私のかたきならばこそ。朝敵と
してあづかり、奉ったる人なり。努々あるべうもなし」

Yoritomo: That is out of the question. It would be different if he were a personal foe, but he is
an enemy of the court entrusted to my care. There can be no thought of such a thing.
(McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 339)

Still humbly using *tatematsuru* 奉る as a sign of respect for the imperial court, he
emphatically (*yumeyume* 努々) forbids Shigehira, whom he calls an “enemy of the court”
(*chōteki* 朝敵), to avoid execution by becoming a monk. Yoritomo stops short of saying “I
would let him take the tonsure.” The unfinished utterance after *naraba koso* ならばこそ
emphasizes that Yoritomo’s decisions are constrained by the capital court.

Such communication samples can be interpreted as demonstrating Yoritomo’s
dependence on imperial legitimization and also highlighting his role in setting up a new semi-
courtly judicial space where values mentioned by Shigehira (service to the Emperor, warrior
ideals) are upheld and promoted. The refined and learned speech and response to it are not the
least elements of the image of Yoritomo’s rule of law. Compared to Kiyomori’s interrogations,
the court of Yoritomo stands out in a much more favourable light as a place in which the best
courtier-warrior qualities of the Taira (epitomized in Shigehira’s speech) are well received and,
at the same time, the insulting and violent components abundantly present in Kiyomori’s
Rokuhara “court” are excluded. In this sense, Yoritomo’s peripheral court gains much more
legitimacy than Kiyomori’s one in the capital ever had.

We should not ignore the later date of the Kakuichi text (1371) relative to the events in
question, as this fact increases the likelihood of a superposition of later developments onto
Yoritomo’s image. As discussed by Souyri, in the 1230s, half a century after Yoritomo set up

137 SNKBZ, vol. 46, 290.
judiciary institutions, the Hōjō clan reformed the legal system: “The leaders of the bakufu around 1230 were not the provincial warriors who had been Yoritomo’s companions around 1180. Instead, they had been educated in Confucian principles in the innermost circles of the Kamakura government, and they were familiar with the Chinese classics.”\(^\text{138}\) The Hōjō regime’s reliance on Confucian ideology to maintain order can be seen in Shigehira’s speech about serving the Emperor, his learned citation of Shi ji (Records of the Historian by Sima Qian, ca. 145-ca. 90), as well as in Yoritomo’s emphasis on acting by imperial order. “The Hōjō regents wanted to preserve the status quo—cooperation with the Kyoto court and the great monasteries—and not to create confrontation.”\(^\text{139}\) A similar position is taken by Yoritomo in the above scene when he sends Shigehira to the Nara monks for execution. These possible later manipulations of Yoritomo’s image in the narrative were achieved in part through the adaptation of dialogue to project a “Confucian” and highly learned context on the early Kamakura institutions. In short, the elaborate highly respectful speech of Shigehira’s interrogation would be more suitable for the Kamakura courts under Hōjō rule than for its earlier prototype under Yoritomo. Thus, language analysis reinforces Oyler’s discussion of narratives being reworked to idealize Yoritomo’s government. The choice of language for the interrogation scene is one of the components in a larger project of idealizing the past warrior world with Yoritomo represented as a fair judge who, unlike Kiyomori, follows laws and not his personal arbitrary views.

Turning now to a brief comparison between Giō in the capital and Senju-no-mae in Kantō, we see many parallel attributes, together with a notable difference in terms of

\(^{138}\) Souyri, The World Turned Upside Down, 57.
\(^{139}\) Ibid., 59.
communicative roles. Senju-no-mae, a refined daughter of a provincial chōja\textsuperscript{140} 長者, is sent by Yoritomo to attend on Shigehira.

Ex. 29 「男なんどはこちなうもおぼしめす。なかなかきんなは苦しかじとて、参らせられてさぶらふ。『何事でもおぼしめさん御事をは承って申せ』とこそ 兵 衛佐どの殿は仰せられ候ひつれ」\textsuperscript{141}

Senju-no-mae: His Lordship was afraid you might consider him boorish if he sent a man. […]

He sent me because he thought you would find a woman more agreeable. ‘If there is anything he wants, learn what it is and tell me,’ he said. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 339)

She speaks in the most polite style with numerous honorific and humble forms with the polite sōrō 候 auxiliary (in its feminine saburafu さぶらふ variant, same as Giō). It is significant that in addition to being a servant and entertainer she is also a messenger sufficiently trusted by Yoritomo to mediate his communication with Shigehira. In contrast, no such function is assigned by Kiyomori to Giō. At the same time, Senju-no-mae is exceptionally learned in poetry and Buddhist imayō songs: 「極楽ねがはん人はみな、弥陀の名号唱べし」.\textsuperscript{142} Moreover, she is versed in shirabyōshi-style Buddhist chants\textsuperscript{143}: 「一樹の陰に宿りあひ、同じ流をむすぶも、みな是先世のちぎり」.\textsuperscript{144} Shigehira is astonished by the courtly qualities of the lady in the provincial Kantō region:

\textsuperscript{140} Usually translated as “brothel-keeper,” but the word also means “head of a clan” or simply “a rich man.”
\textsuperscript{141} SNKBZ, vol. 46, 290.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., 292. “All those who desire rebirth/ in Paradise/ must intone the sacred name/ of Amida Buddha.” Translation from McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 340.
\textsuperscript{143} As is the case with Giō, this passage poses puzzling questions about the education of women and Buddhism. This episode reinforces the seemingly natural relationship of women entertainers with Buddhist content, exemplified in the knowledge of Buddhist concepts and terms, as well as in a consistent predisposition to becoming nuns. Both Giō and Senju-no-mae eventually take religious vows.
\textsuperscript{144} SNKBZ, vol.46, 292. “A bond from another world unites all those who merely seek shelter under the same tree, who merely scoop water from the same stream.” Translation from McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 340.
Shigehira: It is a pleasant surprise to discover such refinement in the eastland. Please sing another song – anything will do. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 340)

The keywords here are *yū naru hito* 優なる人 (refined person) and *あづま* (Azuma, eastland) the very combination of which aims at closing the perceived cultural gap between Yoritomo’s seat of power and the court in the capital. The character of Senju-no-mae, with her refined artistic skills, adds a new layer to the constructed image of the eastern provinces.

Azuma is not only the land of superior archers and horsemen, but it can also rival the capital in culture and learning. This episode suggests how the capital no longer held exclusive control of culture and how it was possible to encounter refinement and cultivation among non-elite groups in the border regions.

**Admonition**

After the failure of the anti-Taira conspiracy, the capital is on the verge of open conflict between Kiyomori and the Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa. One of the main issues is the difference in opinion about the meaning of imperial service. Kiyomori mistakenly considers it to be similar in nature to services rendered in a military organization to a lord by his retainer, with rewards expected in return. When the Retired Emperor attempts to curtail the powers of the Heike clan, despite his imperial status, Kiyomori simply sees him as his lord, and thus considers it his duty to stop serving such a lord and to arrest him. As a newcomer to court politics and a pragmatic leader, Kiyomori attempts to forcibly remove all opposition. In terms of language, the following monologue of Kiyomori exemplifies the quick transition from a

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“courtly” discussion of politics to military orders, characterizing Kiyomori as a leader who relies on force to settle political issues.

Ex. 31 「既に君の御のために命をうしなはんとする事度々に及ぶ。縦ひ人何と申すとも、七代までは此一門をば争でか捨てさせ給ふべき。… この一門亡すべき由、法皇の御構結こそ、遺恨の次第なれ。此後も謳奏する者あらば、当家追討の院宣、下されつと覚ゆるべし。朝敵となっては、いかにくゆとも益あるまじ。世をしずめん程、法皇を鳥羽の北殿へうつし奉るか、しからずは是へまれ、御幸をなし参らせんと思ふはいかに。其儀ならば、北面の 輪矢をも一つ射てんずらん。侍共に其用意せよと触るべし。大方は入道、院がたの奉公思ひききたり。馬に鞍おきせよ。長なり出いだせ」

Kiyomori: (It was) I who put my life in jeopardy for His Majesty time after time. His Majesty ought to have stood by our clan unto the seventh generation, regardless of what others might have said. Instead, he has plotted to crush us […] That is certainly ample cause for resentment! If somebody slanders us in the future, His Majesty is going to decree our destruction. It will be too late for regrets after we are labeled enemies of the state. I am thinking of moving His Majesty to the Toba Northern Mansion or else bringing him here until I can finish restoring order. What’s your opinion of that idea? Of course, his North Guards will probably shoot an arrow in our direction. Pass the word to the samurai to be ready. I will serve this Retired Emperor no longer. Saddle me a horse! Get me a full suit of armor! (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 73)

The transition can be seen at the level of content, with Kiyomori first describing former services, then shifting to threats and orders. The utterances become noticeably shorter and more stilted. Contractions such as kore he mare 言へまれ (<kore he mo are 言へもあれ), itenzuran 射てんずらん, omohikittari 思ひききたり increase the tempo and create an impression of rough, warrior-like speech. Before the question ika ni いかに, Kiyomori consistently employs high honorific forms (~sasetamafu ~させ給ふ) for actions related to the Retired Emperor and humble forms (tatematsuru 奉る and mairasen 参らせん) for his own

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147 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 132.
148 I avoid labelling this speech “non-courtly” because in the Heike monogatari narrative it has become a common occurrence even at the top level of court politics.
actions. After the sharp turn to military matters after *sono gi naraba* 其儀ならば, there are no honorific forms and the decision to sever ties of service to the Retired Emperor is conveyed using the plain wording *omohikittari* 思ひきったり (I break off [my service]), followed by two military orders.¹⁴⁹ In this speech, the shift in Kiyomori’s attitude is foregrounded through language. In the course of a single monologue, Kiyomori’s image changes drastically: as a politician he talks at length about his tensions with the Retired Emperor and the possible consequences for the Heike, then, as a military leader, he states his intent to lead forces to arrest the Retired Emperor. His logic, impeccable for a warrior, is accompanied by the sudden turn to speech level appropriate for warriors.

Shigemori, presented as the ideal courtier, gives a lengthy admonition addressed to Kiyomori to convince him that his rash decision is inappropriate for a court setting.¹⁵⁰ The speech is one of the samples of pre-modern art of rhetoric and also a clear example of the syncretic relationship between Buddhist, Confucian and Shintō ideas, although Confucian values dominate in this case. What are the required components for a persuasive official speech? Firstly, as a subject of lower rank and Kiyomori’s son, Shigemori consistently uses the polite *sōrō* 候 style with the honorific (*ohnose* 仰せ) and humble forms (*uketamawari* 承り).

Ex. 32 「此仰せ承り候に、御運ははや末なりぬと覚え候。」¹⁵¹
Shigemori: Your words make it seem that your luck has come to an end. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 74)

Secondly, the speech is highly intertextual with quotations from Chinese classics such as the *Shi ji* (Records of the Historian), *Shi jing* (Book of Poetry, 1st millennium BCE), and the

¹⁴⁹ Contrasting with the humble form *utsushi tatematsuru* うつし奉る “(thinking of) moving (His Majesty)” earlier in the speech.
¹⁵⁰ Even more importantly, it is also directed at the audiences listening to the *biwa höshi* performance.
¹⁵¹ SNKBZ, vol. 45, 134.
poetic anthology *Wakanrōeishū* (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Singing, 1013) accompanied with frequent use of *kango* compounds related to Buddhism, politics and moral values.

Ex. 33 (Shi jing quote) 「普天のした、王地にあらずと云ふ事なし。」 152

(*Wakanrōeishū* quote): 「千顆万頌の玉にもこえ」 153

Shigemori: Under the all-embracing heavens, there is no land but the King’s. [...] (The debt I owe him) is weightier than a thousand–nay, than a myriad–gems; [...] (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 75)

Evidently, the “ideal” courtier was expected to make use of his knowledge of canonical texts in Chinese and to affirm his status as a court official by striving to model his speech on the style of official documents. 154

Ex. 34 「太政大臣の官に至る人の、甲冑をよろふ事、礼義を背くにあらずや。…

をしている相の法衣をぬぎ捨てて、忽ちに甲冑をよろひ、 弓 箭を帯しましまさむ事、

内には既に破戒無懺の罪をまねくのみならず、外には又、仁義礼智信の法にもそむき候ひなんず。… まづ世に四恩候。天地の恩、国王の恩、父母の恩、衆生の恩、是なり。其なかに 尤 も重きは朝恩なり。」 155

Shigemori: [...] hasn’t it always been a breach of decorum for a man who has attained the chancellorship to put on helmet and armor? [...] When a man discards sacerdotal robes [...] and hastens to array himself in helmet, armor, bow, and arrows, he commits sins against Buddhism by breaking the commandments and losing his sense of shame, and he also ignores the Confucian principles of benevolence, righteousness, proper demeanor, wisdom, and good faith. [...] In this world, we have what are known as the Four Obligations: debts we owe to

152 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 135.
153 Ibid., 137.
156 Ibid., 136.
heaven and earth, to sovereigns, to parents, and to all living things. The most important is our
debt to the sovereign.

[…] To resort to violence against the Retired Emperor now, with no regard for his great
kindnesses, will surely evoke the displeasure of Amaterasu and Hachiman. Japan is the land of
the gods, and the gods do not tolerate impropriety. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 74-5)

Several structures reoccur in Shigemori’s speech to enhance the argument and make a coherent
statement: *-ni arazu ya* にあらずや, *-sōrahinanzu* 候ひなんず, concessive *-tomo* とも (even if),
*-beki* べき (should), and *-nominarazu* のみならず (not only).

The language properties of this speech contribute to an image of a courtier as learned
and eloquent. We can hypothesize that while non-courtly audiences may have been impressed
by the linguistic skills of Shigemori (though likely unable to fully grasp all literary terms and
allusions), the courtly listeners were expected to imitate the style of Shigemori in order to be
considered worthy courtiers and officials. In short, Shigemori’s “voice” participated in
perpetuating the standard of courtier speech.

Kiyomori’s response demonstrates his change in attitude after hearing Shigemori’s
admonition.

Ex. 35 「いやいやこれまでは思ひもよりさうず。悪党共が申す事につかせ給ひて、
傍事なんどやいてこむずらんと、思ふばかりでこそ候へ」

Kiyomori: No, no. It would be inconceivable to go so far. I was merely afraid that an
unfortunate situation might develop if scoundrels gained the Retired Emperor’s ear.
(McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 76)

Kiyomori speaks in a very subdued tone, without his former resolve, as is evident from such
forms as *-muzuran* むずらん (might), *nando* なんと (and such), *bakari* ばかり (only). The
element betraying Kiyomori’s emotions is the highly irregular use of the polite style *sōrō* 候.

As a general rule, parents never use *sōrō* 候 when speaking to children. In this case, Kiyomori

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157 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 139.
uses it twice さず (considered to be a zokugokei 俗語形 a “vulgar, colloquial form” of sōrawazu さうらず) and sōrahe 候へ. This reaction can be interpreted either as a mistake due to his emotional state or as a sign that in this situation Kiyomori treats Shigemori not as his son, but as a court official in a formal setting. In the latter case, the communicative function of the さる 候 style brings attention to changes in relationships. This linguistic detail highlights the purpose of the whole scene—to prove the efficacy of Shigemori’s admonition in persuading Kiyomori.

In the above discussion, I have identified language properties of Kiyomori’s speech and Shigemori’s admonition. The analysis shows how contrast in language reinforces different images of the two characters. Kiyomori’s quick transition to military language sharply contrasts with Shigemori’s elaborate and courtly speech.

**Imperial speech**

In this section I will examine one of the main features of interaction and language use of the top imperial characters such as the Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa. The representation of imperial speech is characterized by the use of so-called jikei hyōgen 自敬表現 “self-honorific expressions,” that is, these characters refer to their own actions using honorific forms and employ humble forms for third or second-person actions directed to the speaker. Modern Japanese does not use honorific expressions to refer to oneself and even in classical texts they are rare. Despite the considerable role played by language use in constructions of the imperial image, it is usually not mentioned outside of linguistic research where it has attracted attention and generated opposing hypotheses. The general problem is whether the emperor actually used

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first person honorific forms in his speech or the *biwa hōshi* added them for their performance of imperial speech. Supporters of the former hypothesis, like Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) and Yamada Yoshio (1873-1958), claimed that self-honorific expressions were actually uttered by emperors. These scholars claim that the emperor used honorific forms for himself in order to convey self-respect and recognize his own status, or as simply an adoption of his subjects’ usage. In contrast, Mitsuya Shigematsu (1871-1923), Takagi Ichinosuke, and Kindaichi Haruhiko propose that this was a phenomenon limited to literature.\(^{159}\) Nishida Naotoshi has conducted a detailed research on this issue involving a wide range of sources from the Kamakura period, including imperial diaries and other texts written by emperors, as well as writings by officials citing emperor’s words in documents, diaries and historical texts. Nishida’s analysis revealed the rarity of first-person honorific expressions, with usage in the personal writings of emperors limited to *tamafu* 賜ふ (給う), *mesu* 召す, *ohosu* 仰す, and *omae* 御前, as well as a few other terms. Self-honorific forms, however, were found to be widely used in imperial edicts, especially the forms *oboshimesu* おぼしめす and *kikoshimesu* きこしめす, which are not found in diaries.\(^{160}\) Nishida concludes that first-person honorific forms were used in the actual language of emperors and that there was also a style of transmitting imperial speech in oral proclamations or edicts written by court officials. Honorific imperial forms in *Heike monogatari* closely resemble this official style and are thus taken to be expressions imitating the established style of transmitting words of emperors by officials.\(^{161}\) Nishida comments that since self-honorific expressions were a characteristic of

\(^{159}\) Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 320.

\(^{160}\) Ibid., 345-6.

\(^{161}\) Nishida, *Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki*, 66.
“imperial speech,” as transmitted inside the court and outside of it, such expressions have sounded natural to courtly audiences witnessing performances of the *Heike*.\(^{162}\)

Audiences hearing the *Heike* performed would have been unaware of the actual speech forms used by the emperor, but would have associated the use of first-person honorific speech forms with the emperor. These forms quoted in edicts and heard in *Heike* performances were likely considered as a characteristic privilege and one of the defining properties of the imperial discourse. The fact that imperial diaries do not contain some common self-honorific forms may be due to the private nature of such writings not intended for public knowledge. Public documents like edicts and performances representing imperial speech reinforced official constructions of imperial status. In any case, the focus in investigations of literary language is not to find out how real emperors spoke, but rather to assess the representation of a character’s speech and the functions it plays in characterization that, in turn, forms audience’s perceptions of emperors. The point is that *Heike monogatari* consistently fills imperial utterances with first-person honorific forms that emphasize the imperial speech and place it into a distinct status category relative to other groups.

Let us now see how imperial speech is represented in specific passages. One example can be seen in the dialogue between Kiyomori’s son Munemori and the Retired Emperor. Munemori is sent by Kiyomori to put the Retired Emperor under house arrest.

Ex. 36 Munemori: 「とうとう召さるべう候」
Ret. Emperor: 「こはされば何事ぞや。御とがあるべしともおぼしめさず。成親、俊寛しゆんくわんしゆう
俊寛 が様に、遠き国、遥かの島へもうつしやらんずるにこそ。主上さで渡らせ給へば、政務に口入する計なり。それもさるべからずは、自今以後さらでこそあらめ」

\(^{162}\) Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 360.
Munemori: We ask that His Majesty get in quickly.
Retired Emperor: What is the meaning of this? I am not aware of having done anything wrong.
I suppose you intend to banish me to some distant province or remote island, as you did
Narichika and Shunkan. I have merely taken a hand in matters of state because of the
Emperor’s youth; if that is unacceptable, I will cease to do so from now on.
Munemori: There is no question of any such thing. My father wants you to stay in the Toba
Mansion until we can restore order.
Retired Emperor: In that case, Munemori, you come with me. (Munemori refuses)
(McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 126)

Arrest of the Retired Emperor is one of Kiyomori’s most outrageous transgressions, as
it puts him perilously close to being an “enemy of the court.” Kiyomori isolated Go-Shirakawa,
fearing that he might issue an anti-Heike edict that would destroy their legitimacy. After
Shigemori’s death, nobody stopped Kiyomori from proceeding with the treasonous arrest. In
the above dialogue, Munemori’s words to the Retired Emperor reveal his psychological state,
both tense and resolved (as evident from tōtō とうとう quickly). He does not phrase his order
in usual imperative forms like the honorific verb plus –sōrahe ~ 候へ or -se tamahe ~ せ給へ,
but employs an indirect\textsuperscript{164} statement of appropriateness (-beu sōrō ~ ぺう候) with honorific
passive mesaru 召さる (in this case meaning “to ride, to get into…”). Go-Shirakawa’s reply
contains a number of expressions signalling his perplexed and helpless state: the exclamation
ko wa sareba nanigoto zo ya こはされば何事ぞや, suppositions about the intentions of the
Heike -nzuru ~ んずる combined with the elliptical ending ni koso にこそ, the excuse suru
bakari nari する計なり and the promise not to interfere -bekarazu wa…de koso arame ~ べか

\textsuperscript{163} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 253.
\textsuperscript{164} Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 297.
As for honorific forms, the Retired Emperor’s speech stays mostly neutral (nari なり, aru ある) with a moderate usage of first-person honorific forms (ontoga 御とが and ontomo 御供, honorific verb oboshimesazu おぼしめさず and second-person action expressed with humble verb maire 参れ).

Imperial authority is confronted with military opposition, against which it is helpless. This representation greatly differs from the traditional constructions of the emperor’s sacred authority found in the Kojiki, for example. As discussed by Bialock, “peripheral “kami” (deities) were made to swear an oath of submission to the central authority embodied in the person of the tennō. […] In exchange for their oath, they were […] incorporated into a sacred order at the apex of which stood the tennō, who mediated and thereby monopolized all sacred speech.”

In the Heike narrative, the Retired Emperor and other imperial characters still retain the monopoly of sacred speech, emphasized by the exclusive right to use first-person honorific forms, but they are helpless against Kiyomori’s military forces. Shortly after reaching the place of exile, the Toba Mansion, Retired Emperor says to one of his courtiers:

Ex. 37「いかさまにも今夜うしなはれなんずとおぼしめすぞ。御行水を召さばやとおぼしめすは、いかがせんずる」
Retired Emperor: I am sure I will be put to death tonight. Can you arrange for me to bathe? (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 127)

There are several cases of first-person honorific forms in his speech in this example:

oboshimesu おぼしめす, mesabaya 召さばや, and ongyōzui 御行水. In addition to being a clear distinctive feature of imperial speech (important for aural differentiation of “voices” by the audience), these instances of unusual honorific usage bring attention to the exceptional

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165 Bialock, Eccentric Spaces, 122.
166 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 255.
status of the emperor in any context so that his privileged speech contrasts even more sharply with the context of exile and overall treatment by Kiyomori.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I examined a limited set of conversation samples in order to reveal language aspects of interaction associated with the court and political affairs. What can be concluded after examining language structures found in interactions in the capital?\textsuperscript{167} Analysis of the language properties of communication reveals how language choices construct an image of power relations in the capital. Courtly politics, even in the relatively peaceful time before open battles, is depicted as an arena of factional struggles with rumours, conspiracies, betrayal, arrests, violent interrogations and executions. Competition over hierarchical positions of power, abuse of power and tensions between capital nobility and the provincial military clan of the Heike structure the narrative and make up a large part of the capital politics.

*Heike monogatari* projects a complex image of court interaction by presenting a set of communicative settings associated with the court, a subset of which was discussed in this chapter. Interaction between characters extends beyond the narrative as it shapes the audience’s image of the social hierarchies in the society of the past. The dialogue passages are fictional recreations of the “voices” of people involved in political matters. For example, Kiyomori “seems totally lacking in refinement” and he is portrayed as “a tyrant, merciless in his dealings with men who oppose him.”\textsuperscript{168} This image varies depending on with whom Kiyomori interacts. In this chapter, I have shown how language elements at the level of words

\textsuperscript{167} We should be aware that the discursive concept of “court” or “capital” is not a fixed entity, but a dynamic set of varied practices. Most of the passages discussed above share the location (capital) in which they take place.

and individual utterances combine to create the “voice” of a given character. Minor choices in pronouns and honorific forms, together with shifts from neutral to polite style in the course of a single dialogue, for example, signal shifts in attitude and convey a character’s challenge of status hierarchies.

An argument can be made about the role of the language of conversations in the process of vernacularization in pre-modern Japan. In this case, vernacularization is not so much expressed through the contrast of Chinese to local Japanese (as in the tenth-century Kokinshū prefaces), as through the demonstration and exploration of various registers of language simultaneously existing in the capital. This process shows that “language, place and power were becoming mutually constitutive through the representations and circulation of vernacular texts”\(^{169}\) such as Heike monogatari. Pollock’s terms “vernacularization of political space” or “the creation of vernacular polity”\(^{170}\) may indeed be applied to the centers of power conceptualized in the text of Heike monogatari, if we consider the striking range of speech variation coexisting in the capital and the ambiguous status of Kamakura combining peripheral qualities with courtly formality and refinement.

Much of this chapter was devoted to characterization techniques—various linguistic and stylistic means to mark qualities and attitudes of characters. Conversations, as represented in the Heike monogatari, often show only minor,\(^{171}\) but significant, variation or irregularity in form, which can be recognized as such when compared with linguistic scales of higher-lower honorific attitude, polite-impolite, frequent-rare and other relative differences. Fortunately,

\(^{169}\) Pollock, The Language of the Gods, 421.

\(^{170}\) Ibid.

\(^{171}\) The language of the text is a sufficiently uniform system shared by all characters. We do not find one group speaking in Chinese and another in classical Japanese, for example. The aim is to find small variation in the uniformity, a task similar to studying variation in modern Japanese as carried out in the fields of sociolinguistics and pragmatics.
such reference scales have been made based on data of the whole text and thus it is possible to assess relative “stances” or attitudes taken by characters in specific dialogues and then to analyze their role in the political situation in the narrative.

Table 6  Discursive interactive settings  -  Capital / Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language forms</th>
<th>Expression of</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participant 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Significance</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Shirabyōshi  
- soften request らむ、んずれ  
- onbin うたで  
- many さぶらふ and high honorifics  
- pronoun わらは  
- Bud. kango | Kiyomori  
- short sentences  
- exclamation いでいて  
- pronoun わごぜ  
- exclamation なんでう  
- prohibition まじ  
- imperatives 参って  
- question まじいか | Kiyomori’s “voice”  
| | | Speech contrast according to setting  
| | | Dancers speak as nuns |
| Shirabyōshi  
- shift to regular さぶらふ | Mother  
- Bud. kango  
- complex ども, ば  
- emotion ぞかし, ぞとよ  
- pronoun わごぜ | Shift in attitude  
| | | Defiant to obedient  
| | | Persuasion as preaching  
| | | Variation due to personal attitude  
| | | Persuade in Bud. terms |
| Nuns  
- Buddhist discourse  
- mutual honorific 給ふ  
- humble 奉る (to Amida) | Nuns  
- さぶらふ about court  
- わごぜ to younger | Equality  
| | | Shift court > hermit  
| | | Solidarity, mutual respect of nuns |
| Conspiracy members  
- “heiji” pun  
- polite form 候 | Retired Emperor  
- orders 参って... でしれ  
- orders dance 猿楽 | Solidarity through dance and verbal activity  
| | | Cooperation  
| | | Peripheral practice at court |
| Betrayal: Yukitsuna  
- Questions  
- 候 polite style  
- humble 承る, hearsay | Kiyomori  
- plain style  
- honorific to Ret. Emperor | Change in distance, stranger to advisor  
| | | Exploit knowledge gap  
<p>| | | Rumour, hearsay in politics |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language forms</th>
<th>Participant 1</th>
<th>Participant 2</th>
<th>Expression of</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interrogation: Saikō - irregular lack of 候 style</td>
<td>Kiyomori - contractions - imperatives - rare insultsしゃつ - honorific to Ret. Emp. 君 and derogatory to Saikōおのれら</td>
<td>Defiance - Insubordination - Speech to inferiors - Conflict over positions Ret. Emperor as “axis” of legitimacy</td>
<td>Vulgar speech</td>
<td>Legal setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrast: Shigehira - polite 候 - Bud. and warrior rhetoric</td>
<td>Yoritomo - polite 候 - humble 奉る (to Emp.)</td>
<td>Mutual respect - Dependence on imperial court - Eloquence - Messenger Educated</td>
<td>“Ideal” court</td>
<td>Refined “peripheral” culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senju-no-mae - polite さぶらふ - Bud. kango</td>
<td>Kiyomori - shift to irregular polite 候</td>
<td>Persuasion - Shift in relations Son as official</td>
<td>“Ideal” courtier</td>
<td>Power of persuasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admonition: Shigemori - polite 候 style - intertextual, kango - rhetorical questions</td>
<td>Munemori - indirect order べう候</td>
<td>Munemori: anxiety - Ret. Emp.: Imperial status</td>
<td>Distinct imperial “voice”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, examination of language properties provides supplementary empirical evidence that corroborates hypotheses and claims based on literary analysis of the narrative content. For example, Elizabeth Oyler discusses the “rise of periphery versus corrupt center,” focusing on the socio-political events in the Kakuichi Heike monogatari narrative. This theme is linked to the construction of idealized interpretations of warrior rule in the past. My

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\(^{172}\) Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions*, 63.

\(^{173}\) Ibid., 135.
analysis of the two interrogation scenes, by Kiyomori in the capital and by Yoritomo in Kamakura, demonstrates that the contrast in language forms is an important perspective supporting Oyler’s discussion. In addition to the growth of political influence, the “rise of the periphery” also involves aspects of culture and learning as is evident from the “Senju-no-mae” episode, when a provincial entertainer matches a learned warrior-courtier from the capital in refinement and cultivation.

Analysis of language functions also brings attention to aspects of interaction at court discussed in literary and historical works and provides complementary data that reinforce the points made. For example, following Amino Yoshihiko’s studies of wandering non-agricultural groups in medieval Japan, David Bialock discusses setsuwa-type narratives, shamanistic utterances and rumour as parts of nomadic speech in pre-modern Japan. He views *Heike monogatari* and the *Kojiki* as “narratives that assemble nomadic utterance on a large scale,”\(^ {174}\) and discusses their relationship to ritual behaviour. Court conversations provide supplementary evidence of nomadic speech. For example, the speech and dance during the Shishi-ga-tani conspiracy meeting is a relevant sample of nomadic speech performed in the capital with participation of the Retired Emperor. This example shows the presence of marginal entertainment in the political centre and the concomitant reformulation of courtly “norms.” Bialock discusses the “shift from centered to peripheral space”\(^ {175}\) as it affected ritual and social behaviour. Kiyomori’s rude and warrior-like language and the Retired Emperor’s support of marginal performances can both be considered “defiled” (by the standards of the

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\(^ {175}\) See Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces*, 217-8. Defilement came to be seen not as an exterior element to be expelled, but as an interior phenomenon. This transformation changed the perceptions of space, “experienced as both center and a state of liminality invested with strange powers.” Capital elites perceived this shift as social disorder.
earlier Heian elites) and their presence in the top levels of power in the capital adds a new layer to Bialock’s discussion.

In the next chapter, we will consider language variation phenomena in a set of dialogues involving religious characters.
Chapter 2 - Religion

In this chapter I will discuss the interaction in the complex sphere of religion as represented in fictional dialogue passages of *Heike monogatari*. The term “religion” is undoubtedly an abstract overgeneralization that obscures the diversity of doctrines and practices in premodern Japan. Since this thesis focuses on fictional interaction in *Heike monogatari*, I follow the classification of the text’s author(s) and consider “religious” those characters who are labelled as priests (*hōshi*) or monks, and those settings that involve elite clergy, itinerant monks, warrior-monks, and supernatural beings. I examine language choices attributed by *Heike* author(s) to these characters and discuss how language variation contributes to their characterization.

In general, there is a consensus about the significance of Buddhism as the integral component of most cultural, social and political phenomena in the medieval period, including events of the Genpei War (late twelfth century) and their performed representation as a collection of narratives from the thirteenth century onwards. For example, Keene states that “there was a great upsurge of religious belief during the Kamakura period, and many varieties of literature reveal the omnipresent influence of Buddhism.”¹⁷⁶ The canonical texts of the period¹⁷⁷ were likewise Buddhist since “the literate people of the country held the classics of

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¹⁷⁷ Criticising current trends in religious studies, Dobbins points out that “there is a tendency in modern scholarship to privilege doctrinal treatises and elite texts as the most reliable source on beliefs and practices in medieval religion. […] But the problem with using them as historical sources is that they present an idealized picture of religion...” See James C. Dobbins, *Letters of the Nun Eshinni: Images of Pure Land Buddhism in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2004), 21. *Heike monogatari*, not an elite doctrinal work, projects vivid images (not always idealized) of religious characters. Considering the wide circulation of *Heike* narratives, the images they promoted had great influence on audiences. The role of language in creating these images will be examined in this chapter.
Buddhism to be the ultimate norm.\textsuperscript{178} At the same time, other religious systems (such as Shinto) or social relation systems (such as Confucianism) were a syncretic part of the overarching Buddhist framework, as exemplified by the content of Heike monogatari.

The textual production and circulation of Heike monogatari is closely linked with Buddhism. The probable author, Yukinaga, was a courtier and later monk, the first reciter Shōbutsu was a blind monk from the eastern provinces, influence and patronage of the Kujō family resulted in the incorporation of the Pure Land Amidist themes such as the belief in mappō, fate, and impermanence as preached by Hōnen (1132-1212), and the reciting performances often took place in places of worship in the capital or in public places (crossroads and markets) by the blind monks, biwa hōshi, affiliated with temples. The author(s) regularly present the events in the narrative as convincing proofs of the Amidist concepts of impermanence and futility of relying on one’s own forces to achieve enlightenment. The overall viewpoint or religious framework is undoubtedly and explicitly Buddhist with motifs that came to be later labelled as Shinto, Daoist and Confucian present throughout the narrative, without seeming disruptive.

Considering that Buddhism permeates the Heike monogatari and its transmission, I will discuss the ways in which the speech of characters in religious settings is represented in the text, how they speak, and what kinds of communication they establish with their interlocutors. Thus, by analyzing religion in Heike monogatari as a discourse constituted from a number of dialogues, I will discuss what language choices were associated with religious settings or came to be associated with them as a result of wide circulation of the Heike monogatari narratives.

How to approach the task of defining certain forms as peculiar to speech of a priest or a monk, for example, is far from obvious. There are several indicators of religious speech such

\textsuperscript{178} LaFleur, The Karma of Words, 11.
as specific terms often used in religious settings and even special discourse forms such as prayer, sermon or petition that constitute the language of religion in the text. It is often the case that numerous *kango* lexical items and intertextual citations of Buddhist sutras are used in the context of religious activities, because Chinese (often in its *kanbun kundoku* version) was the language of religious texts and practices, and Chinese discourse was inevitably incorporated into vernacular religious narratives. Characters that can be classified as religious, primarily priests and monks, often do not limit themselves to religious activities. Contrary to political settings discussed in the previous chapter, religious ones are not necessarily concentrated around political centers and show a wider geographical distribution. It does not mean, however, that religious characters are somehow secondary or peripheral. On the contrary, they often interact with military and courtly leaders, participate in military conflicts as warriors and make political decisions. In such cases, their speech does not differ in many respects from the speech of other non-religious characters. Recent research often considers evidence from non-canonical sources to examine “how practiced religion diverges in clear-cut ways from the idealized religion articulated in orthodox doctrine.”¹⁷⁹ One of the goals of this chapter is to add a language dimension to the divergence of practice from orthodox doctrine and to show that language of religious characters in *Heike monogatari* is rarely limited to Buddhist vocabulary and citations from sutras, but covers a much wider range of speech styles.

Below we will consider various cases of interaction in religious settings. Special attention will be devoted to 1) unambiguous markers of religious speech as expressions of affiliation to religious community or maintenance of such community with shared speech norms, 2) cases of language interaction aimed at creation of social alignments and power

asymmetries, and 3) speech properties of individual characters that construct idiosyncratic “voices.”

**Retired Emperor as medium**

One example of Retired Emperor’s speech that is worthy of attention in terms of its language and socio-religious significance is the address to malignant spirits believed to be hindering the Empress’ childbirth. His participation in the role of a shaman in rituals aimed at warding off evil spirits is by itself a clear designation of imperial position as a mediator between the living and the spirits. Obviously the interaction with spirits is done verbally and consists of the following speech followed by an incantation from the Thousand-armed sutra (Senjukyō, 千手経). The narrative specifically emphasizes Retired Emperor’s speech as the most effective contribution to the successful childbirth.

Retired Emperor: No matter what kind of spirits you may be, you cannot approach Her Majesty as long as this old monk is here. Furthermore, of the angry spirits who have appeared now, every one owed his career to the imperial family’s generosity. Even if you feel no gratitude, how can it be right for you to obstruct this birth? Leave immediately! (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 102)

Ex. 38 「いかなる御物気なりとも、この老法師がかくて候はんには、争でかちかづき奉るべき。就中今あらはるる処の怨霊共は、みなわが朝恩によって、人となしつ者共ぞかし。たとい報謝の心をこそ存せずとも、豊障礙をなすべきや。速やかにまかり退き候へ」

Retired Emperor: No matter what kind of spirits you may be, you cannot approach Her Majesty as long as this old monk is here. Furthermore, of the angry spirits who have appeared now, every one owed his career to the imperial family’s generosity. Even if you feel no gratitude, how can it be right for you to obstruct this birth? Leave immediately! (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 102)

What kind of language forms are chosen to communicate with the spirits? The humble and polite stance taken by the Retired Emperor is evident from the honorific prefix on 御 in onmononoke 御物気 (spirits) and the use of oibōshi 老法師 (old monk) as a humble term of self-reference. Furthermore, he simultaneously humbles (to show respect to the Empress) both

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180 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 198.
himself and the spirits with verbs sōrawan 候はん and tatematsu 奉る. In the last utterance, after reproaching the spirits for being ungrateful for their careers due to imperial generosity, that is, putting them in a position of subjects, he uses the authoritative compulsory order “humble verb + sōrahe 候へ” asserting his high imperial status. In this case, language choices directly participate in the construction of the Retired Emperor’s identity as a figure with wide influence that extends even to spiritual beings. Among other notable properties in this speech is the complete lack of first-person honorific forms otherwise quite prominent in imperial speech. In this episode, the Retired Emperor is presented as a priest (an image reinforced by heavy presence of kanbun kundoku elements as well as the subsequent direct quotation of a sutra that highlight the religious dimension of this interaction), with only the final command serving as the reminder of his imperial authority. Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa “known for his cultivation of marginal performers [and] his deep devotion to Buddhist rites”181 achieves control over demonic powers by appropriate incantation that establishes the relations of obligation between him and the spirits.

**Shunkan**

An interesting case of verbal behaviour showing the relation between polite forms and the emotional state is the scene when Bishop Shunkan is left behind in exile on the island of Kikai-ga-shima. Language forms in this episode reinforce the image of his separation from the capital, the loss and subsequent restoration of status. First of all, he is not presented as the ideal model of a priest. He participated in the anti-Taira conspiracy meetings held at his villa at Shishi-no-tani, went into exile to Kikai-ga-shima and was denied pardon by Kiyomori. At the island he does not participate in religious pilgrimages and prayers as “a most irreligious

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man”\textsuperscript{182} tenzei fushin daiichi no hito 天性不信第一の\人.\textsuperscript{183} Moreover, his misfortune is attributed in part to “his sinful, callous appropriation of the offerings of the faithful.”\textsuperscript{184}

For the purpose of contrast, let us first examine some of the properties characterizing the speech of high ranking Dharma Seal Jōken in a formal setting.

Dharma Seal Jōken: I can see why you might feel angry just now about the matters you have mentioned. … It is a common failing to believe what we hear and doubt what we see. There is much reason to fear the consequences in this world and the next if you listen to the loose talk of worthless men and set yourself against His Majesty, in spite of the extraordinary favor you enjoy. The mind of Heaven is as inscrutable as the vast blue sky: so, without doubt, is that of the Retired Emperor. When an inferior defies his superior, can he be observing proper decorum for a subject? That is something you should consider carefully. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 122)

The formal tone, the political significance of the utterance, and the eloquence of the speaker mark the language of Jōken as well as other similar “courtly” admonitions such as the one by Shigemori examined in Chapter 1. Formal politeness to his listener Kiyomori is expressed by the sōrō 候 style in many sentences; whereas, respect is conveyed by honorific forms - sasemashimasu ~させますます, -sasetamafu ~せ給ふ. The language is quite “regular” with few contracted forms, no inversions or unfinished phrases, no interjections and exclamations. As expected in formal speech, vocabulary and sentence structures resemble kanbun kundoku style in the high frequency of kango (shō\textsubscript{1}jin 少人, fugen 浮言, goshiyui 御思

\textsuperscript{182} McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 89.
\textsuperscript{183} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 170.
\textsuperscript{184} McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 113.
\textsuperscript{185} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 243-4.
and structures such as *ani* 豊...*ya* や. The use of Buddhist terminology, for example *myōken* 冥顕 (this world and the next), contributes to the image of Jōken as a member of the top clergy, just as the Confucian rhetoric at the end (*jinshin* 人臣 and *rei* 礼) is chosen to convey the political intent of the speech. Unlike Shunkan, who is also a priest of high rank, Jōken does not avoid religious discourse and furthermore mixes it with politics.

Having established some reference points of formal religious discourse, let us consider how Shunkan’s speech differs from it and how it changes in the course of interaction. Hearing the voices of messengers from the capital he is surprised and compares them to voices of tempting devils: 「... 又天魔波旬の、我心をたぶらかさんとていふやらん。...」

In this case, the simple mention of a four-character *kango* Buddhist term reminds of Shunkan’s former position of a temple administrator. This phrase also contrasts with Shunkan’s extremely limited use of Buddhist vocabulary in the subsequent scenes.

Upon reading the pardon and not finding his name, he clings to Naritsune’s sleeve.

Ex. 40「俊寛がかくなるといふも、御へんの父、故大納言殿、よしなき謀反ゆゑなり。さればよその事とおぼすべきからず。ゆるされなければ、都までこそかなはず共、此舟に乗せて、九国の地へつけて給べ。おのおのの是におはしつる程こそ、...」

Shunkan: Your father’s miserable conspiracy is to blame for my plight. You can’t simply wash your hands of me. I realize that I can’t go all the way to the capital without a pardon, but please let me travel on this boat as far as the Nine Provinces. (Tidings naturally arrived from the city once in a while) while you two were here... (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 99)

Even though he pleads to take him along, Shunkan’s speech is moderately polite because, regardless of the exiled status, Shunkan is Naritsune’s superior due to his age and high rank.

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186 This word appears twice in the text only in the speech of priests. The second occurrence is in Chapter 11 (18) said by ascetic preaching to Munemori.
He does use honorific forms such as obosu おぼす, owasu おはす together with the second-person pronoun onoono おのの, but he avoids any polite sōrō 候 style endings. The same attitude is reinforced by the imperative tsukete tabe つけて給べ, since ordering with the form tabe 給べ, sometimes used even to inferiors, expresses a light degree of respect.\(^{189}\) Taken together, these are the characteristics of the speech addressed to people of equal or somewhat lower status.\(^{190}\)

Ex. 41 「まことにさこそはおぼしめされ候らめ。…」\(^{191}\)
Naritsune: It is entirely natural for you to feel that way. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 99)

In contrast to Ex. 40, Naritsune consoles Shunkan with highest honorific forms, double honorific construction oboshimesu おぼしめす with honorific passive and polite sōrō 候. As the boat departs Shunkan’s utterances become shorter, more stilted.

Ex. 42 「さていかにおのおの、俊寛をば遂に捨てはて給ふか。… ただ理をまげて乗せ給へ。せめては九国の地まで」\(^{192}\)
Shunkan: Are you really going to abandon me? … Can’t you stretch a point and let me get on? Take me as far as the Nine Provinces, at least. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 100)

Shunkan still keeps the imperative tamahe 給へ for polite request. Exclamations sate さて and ika ni いかに followed by address form onoono おのおの (pronoun said to one’s equals) are part of the increasingly desperate image of the Bishop whose words are in no way influenced by his religious background, but rather emphasize the tragedy of a common human.

Losing hope, he does not finish the last utterance. Being finally left on the island, he shrieks in panic:

\(^{189}\) Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 302.
\(^{190}\) Nishida, *Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki*, 63.
\(^{191}\) SNKBZ, vol. 45, 192.
\(^{192}\) Ibid., 194.
Ex. 43 「是乗せてゆけ、具してゆけ」

Shunkan: Let me go with you! Take me! (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 100)

These words said while beating his feet against the sand as a child (*osanaki mono* をさなき者), mark the extreme degree of Shunkan’s despair. Contrary to his previous pleas, this time Shunkan omits all polite forms (no use of *tamahe 給へ*), resulting in plain short imperative forms that express his complete lack of concern about matters of status or etiquette.

This passage is noteworthy in two respects that concern the function of politeness forms. First, Shunkan’s utterance said in an extreme emotional condition reveals to what extent the speaker has to be agitated to drop politeness forms from his speech. Second, the last desperate cry with plain imperatives does reinforce the physical separation between Shunkan and those returning to the capital in the boat. In other words, Shunkan stops speaking as a Bishop from the capital interacting with people of similar space (capital) and background and simply shouts as a desperate person left in exile. The peripheral location of the island is thus paralleled with unusual plain speech and the child-like behaviour of Shunkan.

From the Pure Land Buddhist perspective, Shunkan’s despair and helplessness confirm the validity and truth of the Pure Land teachings. As stated by Dobbins,

> Pure Land was a Buddhism for those aware of their own inadequacies and vulnerabilities, whether cleric or layperson. The sense of vulnerability that propelled people toward its teachings was heightened, it seems, by the conditions and events of medieval Japan.

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Narratives, such as the one about Shunkan, emphatically promoted these views. The universal nature of human vulnerability is brought to the fore, while membership in religious institutions is portrayed as completely irrelevant in the desperate situation.

The task of acknowledging and restoring Shunkan’s status of a bishop by appropriate
interaction is taken up by his loyal young disciple Ariō who brings a letter from his daughter,
later buries his bones at Mount Kōya and wanders praying for his salvation. The master-
disciple relationship is restored in the course of their dialogue during the dramatic encounter
on the island.

Ex. 44 Ariō: 「物申さう」
Shunkan: 「何ごと」

Ariō: 「是に都よりながされ給ひし、法勝寺執行御房と申す人の、
御行ゑや知たる」
Shunkan: 「是こそそよ」
Ariō: 「有王が参って候。…」

Ariō: Excuse me.
Shunkan: What is it?
Ariō: Do you know where I can find a person called the Hosshōji Administrator, who was
exiled here from the capital?
Shunkan: I am that man. (falls on the sand unconscious)
Ariō: Ariō is here. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 111)

The key shift is the transition from plain shiritaru 知たる (when Ariō has not yet recognized
Shunkan) to the humble polite maitte sōrō 参って候 announcing the disciple’s arrival to his
master. Later on, Shunkan talks at length about his life in exile and his family, addressing
Ariō as nanji 汝 or onore ののれ (second-person pronouns for inferiors) and consistently
speaking in plain style (ari あり, nari なり, -sezu せず, -beshi べし). Shunkan’s image as “a
most irreligious man” is partly constructed from his speech, since he does not discuss Buddhist
matters and rarely draws on kango vocabulary. The narrative mentions, however, that he did
chant the name of Amida Buddha before his death. The above examination has shown the role
of language choices in Shunkan’s characterization. The gradual reduction in politeness and

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196 Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 238-9.
complexity of his utterances parallels his despair, isolation, and loss of status. In terms of language, Shunkan stands out as an exception among other priests, monks and nuns featured in *Heike monogatari* (compare with Jōken’s speech in Ex. 39 above), primarily by his almost complete avoidance of prayers and Buddhist *kango* vocabulary. It is my hypothesis that *Heike* author(s), who label Shunkan as “irreligious,” consistently stress his non-Buddhist language to highlight that Pure Land is attainable even by “sinful” people who, like Shunkan, begin to practice *nenbutsu* only before death.

**Mongaku**

The very presence of the narrative about “rough saint” *arahijiri* あらひじり 197 Mongaku in *Heike monogatari* greatly expands the perceived scope of activities for a monk. Mongaku is an eccentric monk believed to possess supernatural abilities, who is highly mobile in terms of the places of his activity and his influence at the highest levels of politics. Being one of the few characters who interacts with a wide range of people, from those in the countryside and in the city streets to the imperial court, and is able to converse with deities and worldly leaders such as Minamoto no Yoritomo, he epitomizes the dynamism characteristic of *setsuwa*-tale elements 198 in *Heike monogatari*. As an unpredictable ascetic, Mongaku fits well into a tradition of widely known “popular” religious figures such as Ikkyū (1394-1481). 199 Adherents of Buddhist schools that put emphasis on severe physical austerities were easily transformed in the popular imagination into exaggerated supernatural figures. Having taken the tonsure they continued to interact with “worldly” people and, thus, there had to be a way to

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197 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 381.
emphasize their difference from common people. One element of eccentric behaviour is verbal
communication. Buddhist teachings contributed to the construction of eccentric speech by
insisting on the impossibility of expressing enlightenment in words. For Buddhist sects such as
Ch’an (Zen), words, considered only an inadequate aid to approach the enlightened state, had
to be necessarily illogical and unusual to have some effect on the mind. As stated by Heine,
practices of the Ch’an sect stressed “an overcoming and transcendence of the ordinary ways of
thinking and expressing.”

One has only to recall the Chinese kung-an (J. kōan) 公案, records
of sermons or question-answer sessions between master and disciples, “created from the
eleventh through the fourteenth centuries” in China. “Kung-ans use language to defeat a
reliance on words or speech in order to thereby create a shock effect that stimulates the mind to
awaken from its philosophical slumber.” These records “capture the conversations and
nonverbal exchanges that show how masters sought to break through barriers of language and
hierarchy imposed by social and religious structures.”

The kōan tradition was introduced to Japan by Zen monk Dōgen (1200-1253) who produced a variety of texts in the first half of the
thirteenth century after his return from China. In addition, the same Ch’an schools in Tang
China (about eighth century CE) “are known to have championed the use of vernaculars.”

Usually the influence of these practices in Japan is traced to Zen monks “commenting on
works written in Chinese in so-called shōmono” in fifteenth-seventeenth centuries, making
wide use of written vernacular including Azuma dialectal features. Even earlier, some religious

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200 Steven Heine, “Ch’an Buddhist Kung-ans as Models for Interpersonal Behavior,” Journal
of Chinese Philosophy 30, no. 3-4 (September/December 2003): 526-7. Also see Bernard Faure,
201 Heine, “Ch’an Buddhist Kung-ans,” 528.
202 Ibid., 527.
203 Ibid., 529.
204 Steven Heine, “Kōans in the Dōgen Tradition: How and Why Dōgen Does What He Does
leaders, such as Nichiren (1222-1282), the founder of the Hokke (Lotus Sutra) Buddhism, openly advocated the use of dialects when preaching. In most cases, individuals related to Buddhism were the ones who pioneered ways to make complex Buddhist texts and ideas more accessible, probably because they were forced to communicate with commoners in various regions far more often than the members of literate nobility. Thus, we can observe two currents in Buddhist views on language, one promoting unconventional illogical speech as a way to enlighten the mind and the other supporting accessibility and clarity. Mongaku’s speech can be hypothesized to have integrated eccentricity from the Zen kōan trend and plain direct simplicity from the tendency to popularization.

The Kamakura period is well-known as the time when unorthodox religious teachings gained in popularity among various status groups from top nobility to provincial commoners. *Heike monogatari* contributes to the projection of a highly varied image of characters involved in religious activities. Far from an orderly centralized group with a unified hierarchy, they differ from each other while co-existing in the overarching framework of Buddhism. This co-existence of official high-ranked “sedentary” clergy with “nomadic” ascetic/mystic monks is a prominent part of the religious narrative of *Heike monogatari*.

The goal of the following discussion is to assess the role of speech representation of the “nomadic” monks represented by Mongaku. By deciding to place the speech of peripheral characters in the same text with official speech of high-ranked clergy grounded in canonical texts, *Heike* author(s) do make a claim to its value; that is, *Heike* author(s) considered

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207 A representative of this group is Dharma Seal Jōken (see Ex. 39 above for an example of his speech).
208 Likely there were many similarities between them and the wandering *biwa hōshi* reciters of the *Heike*. The term “nomadic” refers to wandering non-elite ascetics, such as Mongaku, who often display eccentric behaviour (including speech) that links them to supernatural powers.
peripheral speech sufficiently significant to be included and recited on a par with other types of speech. This phenomenon can be described as one of the elements of religious vernacularization and can be attributed either to the continental Ch’an school influences or to the similarity in problems faced by Buddhist clergy in the process of promoting Buddhist teachings among wide audiences.

Mongaku, openly labelled as arahijiri (rough saint, ascetic), is a primary case for discussion. How is his speech and verbal behaviour singled out among other “voices”? In a wide range of interactive settings, what attitude does he take towards his interlocutors and how is he treated speech-wise in return? By considering these questions I will attempt to sketch the verbal identity of such wandering monks and their relative position in various communicative settings.

Several episodes with an itinerant monk Mongaku, who interacts with diverse interlocutors during his wanderings, provides us with valuable information about language variation. As his first trial austerity, Mongaku spends seven days in a hillside thicket with insects and then has the following conversation with a local person.

Ex. 45 Mongaku: 「修行といふはこれ程の大事か」
Local man: 「それ程ならんには、いかでか命もいくべき」
Mongaku: 「さてはあんべいごさんなれ」
Mongaku: Do austerities entail more or less that degree of pain?
Local man: How could people survive if they did?
Mongaku: Then there is nothing to worry about.
(McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 178)

The casual manner of talking about religious austerities is one of the characteristic traits of Mongaku that positions him close to common people. Both sides speak as equals using plain style with no politeness or respect markers. The last utterance conveys Mongaku’s attitude

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most clearly: the combination of a rare kango term anbei anbei (安平)\textsuperscript{210} with a highly contracted expression gosannare gosannare (from ni koso aru nare nikoarunare にこそあるなれ) expresses in a concise way the “voice” of Mongaku, both religious and rough. The choice of a rare kango term out of many synonymous words can be considered a characterization technique emphasizing his monk status, whereas the contracted expression fits well with the image of a “rough monk.”\textsuperscript{211}

In the following two scenes Mongaku perseveres in a harsh deadly trial he himself devises, namely to stand for twenty-one days under the icy waterfall reciting invocations to Fudō. After being carried out unconscious by a divine youth sent by Fudō, Mongaku is warmed by a fire built by onlookers whom he scolds in anger:

Ex. 46 「われ此滝に三七日うたれて、慈救の三洛叉をみてうど思ふ大願あり。今日はわづかに五日になる。七日だにも過ぎざると、なに者がここへはとってきたるぞ」\textsuperscript{212}

Mongaku: I made a great vow to stand under the waterfall for twenty-one days while reciting three hundred thousand Fudō-invocations. Today is only the fifth day. Who dared bring me here before I had even completed the first seven days? (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 178-9)

What can be observed in this utterance is a continuation of the same pattern that mixes Buddhist terminology with spoken plain forms. Wandering ascetics, represented by Mongaku,

\textsuperscript{210} It appears only once in the Heike text and 3 times in the lengthy (48 volumes) Genpei jōsuiki (A Record of the Rise and Fall of the Minamoto and Taira, ca. 1250). In this case, since the dialogue is about austerities, I consider the rare kango term a marker of Buddhist vocabulary. As will be seen from the subsequent examples, eccentric Mongaku does mix explicitly Buddhist terms with contracted “spoken” forms.

\textsuperscript{211} Unfortunately, the domain of humour is largely beyond the reach of my current research on pre-modern dialogues, since it is difficult to say which words and scenes were intended for laughter. This particular scene is a possible candidate for humorous interpretations. The exaggerated “austerities” and the speech of Mongaku could be viewed as a parody on monks involved in incomprehensible rituals and on their preference for kango vocabulary to seem learned in the eyes of commoners.

\textsuperscript{212} SNKBZ, vol. 45, 378.
were likely comprehensible and familiar to the majority of people precisely because of their plain language and intensive devotion to religious practices. A charismatic individual performing on a local level and drawing curiosity to his actions can successfully gain popular support and develop a “new religion” loosely based on “official” doctrines. The question of language is one of the central ones for this purpose and it is no coincidence that many leaders of Kamakura-period “new religions” relied on vernacular speech for preaching. Although this hagiographical account is not necessarily a sermon, its inclusion in the narrative that was recited in a temple by a biwa hōshi monk may have given it some qualities of a sermon.

Accordingly, Mongaku does not avoid Buddhist terms (such as jiku 慈救 invocations to Fudō, rakusha 洛叉 one hundred thousand, daigen 大願 great vow), but it does not make his utterance sound formal, since these religious terms are counterbalanced by the predominantly plain forms hardly associated with formal religious activities (utarete うたれて, sugizaru 過ぎざる, nanimo なに者). The spoken informal tone is evident primarily in the contracted forms miteudo みてうど (< mitento みてんと) and the final totte kitaru zo とってきたるぞ with onbin totte とって(< torite とりて), both likely intended as signs of anger at those who interfere with his austerities.

Mongaku, however, is not shown as a “rough monk” all the time and the contrast is highlighted to a large extent by the choice of language.

Ex. 47 Mongaku: 「抑 いかなる人にて来ましませば、かうはあはれみ給ふらん」
Messenger: 「… 明王の 勅 によって来れるなり」

Mongaku: Who are you who treat me with this compassion?
Messenger: …We are here by command of our master…
(McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 179)

When two divine youths pull out Mongaku from under the waterfall and bring him back to life he addresses them politely (honorific verb *mashimasu* まします and *tamafu* 給ふ). They, in turn, respond in plain language (*kitareru nari* 来れるなり). When they disappear in the sky, Mongaku respectfully refers to Fudō’s action with honorific verb *shiroshimesu* しろしめす (to know) saying to himself:

Mongaku: 「さればわが 行 をば、大 聖 不動 明 王までも、
しろしめされたるにこそ」

Mongaku: The holy Fudō himself knows of my austerities.
(McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 179)

What distinguishes this passage (and most other episodes with Mongaku) from the typical dialogue in *Heike monogatari* is the absence of polite auxiliary *sōrō* 候. It may be hypothesized that this auxiliary has not fully lost its original meaning of “to serve (a superior)” and was avoided in specific settings, especially those related to religious domain. As will be discussed later, *sōrō* 候 style was not used by preachers, for example. This absence of the polite *sōrō* 候 style indicates a space in which “service” in its courtly or military sense is not as important as the close interpersonal relation and informality. Mongaku does acknowledge the higher status of the divine messengers and Fudō by honorific verbs *mashimasu* まします, *shiroshimesu* しろしめす and honorific auxiliary *tamafu* 給ふ, just as the divine youths use plain forms to Mongaku. Surely the divine world has its own hierarchies that have to be respected, but they are not always institutional ones that require *sōrō* 候 style.

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Mongaku at court

One of the most vivid scenes of a chaotic court is the result of Mongaku’s intrusion into the mansion of Go-Shirakawa. Having vowed to rebuild the Jingoji temple, he arrives at the Retired Emperor’s Hōjūji mansion with a subscription list, a common practice of the late Heian period. For example, by issuing an edict calling for a wide donation campaign, the Retired Emperor himself actively promoted the restoration of the Great Buddha statue at Tōdaiji burned in 1180 by the Heike and even personally participated in various related ceremonies.\(^{216}\) Mongaku, along with Hōnen, for example, did raise funds for religious buildings.\(^{217}\) Usually in return for donations they promised accumulation of merit leading to attainment of Buddhahood.

Here I examine the representation of the attitude taken by each side in the conflict between Mongaku and Go-Shirakawa’s court. In fact, the presence of Mongaku at court brings about a sequence of rough rude utterances that expose the violent side of the imperial space. The following sequence of utterances is extraordinary in assembling an array of rude informal expressions unlike the ones typically encountered in courtly formal settings.

Ex. 48 Retired Emperor: 「何者ぞ。そくびつけ」
Police lieutenant Sukeyuki: 「何条事申すぞ。まかりいでよ」
Mongaku: 「高雄の神護寺に庄一所寄せられざらん程は、まったく文覚づまじ」
Courtiers: 「こはいかに、こはいかに」
Guard: 「えたりをう」
Mongaku: 「...三界は皆火宅なり。王宮といふとも、其難をのがるべからず。十善の帝位にほこつたうとも、黄泉の旅にいてなん後は、牛頭馬頭の責をばまぬかれ絵はじ物を」\(^{218}\)

Retired Emperor: Who is that? Hit him on the head!
Police lieutenant Sukeyuki: What are you jabbering about? Get out of here.
Mongaku: I won’t budge until His Majesty donates an estate to the Takao Jingoji.
Courtiers: (bewildered exclamations)

\(^{216}\) Gomi, Kyō, Kamakura no ōken, 40.
\(^{217}\) Ibid., 41.
\(^{218}\) SNKBZ, vol. 45, 384-5.
Guard: I’ve got you!

Mongaku: … The Three Worlds are a burning house; not even an imperial palace can avoid destruction. You may pride yourself on your imperial position now, but you will not escape the torments of the ox-headed and horse-headed torturers after your journey to the Yellow Springs! (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 181)

Mongaku’s loud petition interrupts a favourite pastime of the Retired Emperor, a musical performance and singing. Imperial reaction to this inconvenience is highly informal as the use of the insult sokubi そくび emphasizes. This rude attitude immediately escalates the conflict, as the courtiers rush to make Mongaku leave. In response to the police lieutenant’s order, phrased as a command to inferiors (humble verb makaru まかる), Mongaku states his ultimatum in plain language, the only form indicating the higher status of the addressee (Sukeyuki and indirectly Retired Emperor) is the honorific passive yoserarezaran 寄せられざ らん, which is in fact one of the least honorific choices to show respect. Addressing people of the Retired Emperor’s court with a low degree of politeness, together with an emphatic negation mattaku まったく... maji まじ and plain (not humble, as might be expected) verb izu いづ (to go out, leave), sounds like a demand that overtly challenges imperial authority. In the ensuing fighting in the Hōjūji mansion, two brief exclamations increase the diversity of speech, one being the cries of agitated courtiers (kowa ikani こはいかに) and the other the exclamation etari ō えたりをう of the warrior-guard serving in the mansion. His battle cry as he wrestles with Mongaku belongs quite certainly to characteristic warrior speech. Even after Mongaku has been dragged outside and tied up, he utters a shocking statement, cursing the Retired Emperor. He does make a concession by employing honorific forms thereby

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219 The other example in Heike monogatari (Ch. 4-15) also uttered by a warrior upon hitting the mark with his arrow is described as “the archer’s cheer” in McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 162.
acknowledging the imperial status. These forms (with honorific auxiliary tamafu 給ふ) expressing a relatively low degree of respect\textsuperscript{220} are noticeably inappropriate for referring to royalty. Moreover, they are used inconsistently with several verbs (such as idenai いでな) in plain form. The main distinctive feature of Mongaku’s speech, however, is the contracted variant tau たう of the honorific auxiliary tamafu 給ふ in the expression hokottautomo ところつたうとも (< hokori tamafu tomo ところたまふとも). This contracted form occurs relatively rarely and as a highly marked form plays a prominent role in characterization. Being limited in distribution, primarily seen in the speech of characters such as Mongaku and Kiso no Yoshinaka,\textsuperscript{221} this form fulfills a social function of stigmatization categorizing its users as rough and provincial.\textsuperscript{222} The image of Mongaku as an eccentric monk is not only constructed from descriptions of his actions, but also from the language choices he makes.

What makes Mongaku’s character subversive is the consistent expression of his statements in Buddhist terms. Even his cursing of the Retired Emperor is premised upon one of the central passages of the Lotus Sutra\textsuperscript{223}: sangai wa mina kataku nari 三界は皆火宅なり (The Three Worlds are a burning house). Citing canonical Buddhist texts and demonstrating his mastery of Buddhist vocabulary (jūzen no teii 十善の帝位 imperial position, gozumezu no

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{220} Nishida, \textit{Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki}, 291.
\item \textsuperscript{221} Cousin of Minamoto no Yoritomo. He defeats the Taira forces and temporarily controls the capital (Chapters 7-8). His rough manners shock courtiers as in the following example when he makes fun of a courtier’s name (tsuzumi, or hand drum): 「抑わ殿を皷判官といふは、よろづの人にうたれたうたか、はられたうたか」 (SNKBZ, vol. 46, 142) Kiso no Yoshinaka: “Tell me, do they call you the Tsuzumi Police Lieutenant because everyone beats you, or because you stuff your face until it stretches?” (McCullough, \textit{The Tale of the Heike}, 275) In this example, the form tamafu たまふ is used twice in the contracted form tau たう.\textsuperscript{222} Nishida, \textit{Heike monogatari no kokugogakuteki}, 291.
\item \textsuperscript{223} The Lotus Sutra (hokkekyō 法華経) is one of the main canonical texts of Mahayana Buddhism in East Asia. Mongaku alludes to the passage in Chapter 3 Simile and Parable, “There is no safety in the threefold world; it is like a burning house…” See \textit{The Lotus Sutra}, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 47-79.
\end{itemize}
Mongaku borrows official Buddhist discourse to attack the court and predict its fate.

What image of the palace does this scene promote? First, the palace is not presented as an unattainable space of refinement and power. On the contrary, Mongaku’s intrusion and reactions to it prove it to be very permeable to “peripheral” speech: the Retired Emperor’s rude insult, Mongaku’s defiant irreverent speech, the warrior cry and the courtiers’ helpless background exclamations. Second, absence of the polite sōrō 候 style in Mongaku’s language brings to the fore the dangerous independence of religious wandering ascetics and their status of being outside the system of service to the court. Nishida considers the lack of sōrō 候 style a characteristic of religious sermons (see Hōnen-Shigehira dialogue below). Mongaku’s utterances do conform to the preaching style and even the curse is a reminder of the universal nature of Buddhist laws that work equally for all, not exempting even the top rulers. Mongaku’s radical understanding of Buddhist doctrines incidentally does not contradict the key themes of Heike monogatari stated in its preface, namely the “impermanence of all things” and “the fall of the mighty.” It becomes clear that the Buddhist worldview in its extreme manifestation shapes Mongaku’s language choices and his movements (all places, including the palace, considered equally transient) that appear shocking to the courtiers. On a more practical level, the passage does promote the use of spoken forms as a possible way to communicate even in court settings in addition to affirming the wide extent of the phenomenon of wandering individuals with “supernatural” powers (including the biwa hōshi performers to some degree) who are to be feared for their power to curse and threaten social order in case of conflict.

224 Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 245.
Let us now turn to a highly dynamic dialogue sequence involving the exiled Mongaku and the police guards who accompany him to Ise. In this satirical episode, Mongaku tricks corrupt police officials, who ask for a bribe, into writing a letter to the Bodhisattva Kannon. This excerpt is primarily significant in terms of (1) the exaggerated gap in politeness and respect expressed verbally in the conversation between the two sides and (2) the mixture of social satire with religion.

Ex. 49  Police aides: 「庁の下部のはらひ、かやうの事についてこそ、おのづからにの依怙も候へ。いかに聖の御房、これ程の事に逢うて、遠国へながされる給ふに、知人はちち給はぬか。土産料ごときの物をもこひ給へかし」

Mongaku: 「文覚はさ様の要事ふべき得意ももたず。東山の辺にぞ得意はある。いでさらばふみをやらう」...

「法師は物をえ書かぬぞ。さらばおれら書け」...

土産料ごときの物も大切に候。此使にたぶべし」と書け」

Police aides: 「さて誰どのへと書き候はうぞ」

Mongaku: 「清水の観音房へと書け」

Police aides: 「これは庁の下部をあざむくにこそ」

Mongaku: 「さりとては文覚は、観音をこそふかうたのみたてまったれ。さらでは誰にかは用事をばいふべき」

Police aides: When we Police aides perform this kind of duty, we always try to be nice to the prisoner. How about it, Reverend Sir? You must have friends, even though you have met with this misfortune and are going into exile. Ask them for farewell presents and food. Mongaku: I have no friends I can call on for such favors. But come to think of it, I do know someone in the eastern hills area quite well. I’ll send him a note. [...] I don’t know how to write. You write it. […]

“I will have great need of farewell presents and food. Please give the bearer of this message something.”

Police aides: How shall I address it?

Mongaku: Write, ‘To the Reverend Kannon at Kiyomizu.’

Police aides: You are trying to make fools of us.

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Mongaku: Not at all. I have complete faith in Kannon. And there is nobody else I can turn to. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 182)

Although Mongaku is an exiled monk, the guards treat him with respect, which is expressed in the address form *hijiri no gobō 聖の御房*, the honorific auxiliary *tamafu 給ふ*, and the polite verb *sōrō 候*, a rare occurrence in all episodes with Mongaku. Taking into account the satirical purpose of this scene, the exaggerated politeness of the guards is likely intended for a comic effect. Their greedy expectation of a bribe forces them to sound respectful. Another possibility is that the use of *sōrō 候* in this case is a parody of the officials’ “service” – they keep up formal appearances even when asking for a bribe.

In contrast to the guards, Mongaku speaks rudely showing no respect to his interlocutors. His utterances consistently stay in plain style (*aru ある, kake 書け*), he addresses them with a derogatory pronoun *orera おれら* and orders them to write. By treating the guards as inferiors, Mongaku reverses the institutional hierarchy “guard-prisoner” and demonstrates the vulnerability of the state officials to manipulation. After dictating a long note, he announces that they should address it to Kannon. Comic effect hinges in this line on the broken expectations of the guards and on the reference to Bodhisattva as if she were a common monk. Being outside of the “worldly” system of relations, Mongaku can allow himself to expose the wrongdoings of secular officials freely. The language use in this episode clearly points to the fact that the monk makes fun of the officials’ greed and corruption and not of the religion. The difference in attitude is clearly shown by the simple comparison of plain rude forms said to the guards (*orera おれら, kake 書け*) with a highly humble form referring to Kannon (*tanomitatematsutare たのみたてまつたれ*). Overall, Mongaku succeeds in beating the minor police officials “on their own territory,” that of the bureaucracy and compilation of
documents. This kind of witty interaction is a considerable component in the construction of Mongaku’s character. Although rough and eccentric, he has a firm will and faith that successfully counteract worldly corruption.\(^{226}\) Setsuwa like this one aim to show praiseworthy and charismatic qualities of wandering ascetics to wider audiences, simultaneously raising the status of their language style and promoting it as a more acceptable and familiar norm.\(^{227}\)

**Mongaku and Yoritomo**

Let us finally examine Mongaku’s dialogue with Yoritomo, both a hagiographical and a political event of primary significance as a result of which Yoritomo raises the anti-Heike rebellion from the eastern provinces. In the Heike narrative Yoritomo does not occupy a prominent place among other characters and his figure is rarely in the center of events. This episode is the first and rare case depicting Yoritomo not as a background abstract leader, but as a more realistic character. This is achieved, out of all possible choices, by means of a religio-political conversation with the eccentric exiled Mongaku. The scene is primarily significant as

\(^{226}\) In this respect Mongaku contrasts with Bishop Shunkan who never mentions religion and, on top of that, is accused of stealing donations.

\(^{227}\) This scene also sheds some light on the premodern literacy situation. Here it is relevant to mention Ogawa Eiichi’s discussion about the existence of different “standard languages” in pre-modern Japan. He proposes *kanbun kundoku* as a candidate for a “written standard language” and *wakan konkō bun* (dominant language style of *Heike monogatari*) as a “standard language of understanding.” According to this hypothesis, there was not a single “standard” language for all types of communication (reading, writing, speaking and comprehension) in premodern Japan, but several different languages used as “standards” for specific kinds of communication. This hypothesis helps explain the ability of *Heike* audiences to understand the complex language of *Heike monogatari* during oral performances without implying that they could read or write the same text. Now, if we turn to Mongaku’s statement about not being able to write (assuming it to be true and not a part of his joke), it seems puzzling since not long before he read a complex *kanbun*-influenced subscription list not to mention his otherwise learned speech with numerous Buddhist *kango* terms. Apparently, in pre-modern times it was possible to be able to read without being able to write and *kango* words were widely understood and even used in speech by people unable to write them down. See Ogawa, *Enkyōbon Heike monogatari*, 480-1.
an example of interaction taking place at the intersection of the religious with the political. It also plays a role in constructing a view of relations between the clergy and the military leadership in which the former can talk almost as an equal with the latter.

Ex. 50 Mongaku: 「いまは源平のなかに、わとの程将軍の相もつたる人はなし。はや
はや謀反おこして、日本国したがへ給へ」
Yoritomo: 「思ひもよらぬ事宣のたま輝る聖御房かな。われは故池の尼御前に、かひなき
命をたすけられ奉って候へば、その後世をとぶらはんために、毎日に法花経一部
てんどくのせ
と轉読する外は他事なし」
Mongaku: […] There is nobody these days among either the Genji or the Taira whose physiognomy points to supreme military command as plainly as yours. Revolt now and rule Japan!
Yoritomo: No such thought has ever entered my mind. The late Ike Nun saved my worthless life; my sole concern at present is to pray for her salvation by daily summary recitations of the Lotus Sutra. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 183)

Mongaku does not speak in a formal honorific tone with Yoritomo. It is true that Mongaku is about ten years older and that his status as a monk may influence his way of speaking, but the absence of formality is most likely due to his “rough” character that is also responsible for the directness of his proposals. As in the episodes discussed above, Mongaku avoids the polite sōro 候 style, a choice that removes formal recognition of social hierarchies as is commonly observed in preaching. The use of tamahe 給へ in the imperative does not mark any special respect being a common polite form among equals or even said to inferiors. Pronouns unavoidably indicate the speaker’s attitude, and in this case Mongaku’s address of Yoritomo with watono わとの is one of the key features in his speech of incitement. The pronoun is used to refer to one’s equals or those slightly lower in status, but its use also indicates a feeling of

228 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 390.
229 Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 302.
familiarity or friendship. Thus, Mongaku takes the following position or stance vis-à-vis Yoritomo: by speaking as Yoritomo’s friend and advisor in addition to being a man skilled in reading people’s faces, he flatters Yoritomo and immediately urges him to revolt quickly (hayahaya はやはや). In contrast to Mongaku’s bold initiative, Yoritomo responds passively and humbly. When this conversation takes place he is not the military leader of the Minamoto yet, but merely an exiled man immersed in religious matters. His moderate respect of Mongaku is evident in the honorific verb notamafu 宣ふ (to say) and in the title hijiri no gobō 聖御房 (Reverend Sir). These forms together with the polite sōrō 候 style reveal that Yoritomo treats Mongaku as his equal or as a man of somewhat superior status while attempting to keep the conversation at a formal level.

Ex. 51 Mongaku: 「天のあたふるをとらざればかへつて其とがをうく。... 御辺に心ざしのふかい色を見給へかし」
Yoritomo: 「あれはいかに」
Mongaku: 「これこそわとのの父故左馬頭殿のかうべよ。平治の後獄舎のまへなる苔のしたにうづもれて、後世とぶらふ人もなかりしを、... 山々寺々をがみまはり、とぶらひ奉れば、いまは一劫もたすかり給ひぬらん。されば文覚は故守殿の御ためにも奉公の者でこそ候へ」

Mongaku: “He who refuses Heaven’s gifts incurs Heaven’s censure.” [...] See for yourself the sympathy I have for you. (He draws from his breast a skull in white cloth)
Yoritomo: What is that?
Mongaku: It is the head of your father, the late Director of the Stables of the Left. After Heiji, it lay buried under the moss in front of the prison; there was nobody who offered prayers on the Director’s behalf. [...] (I have carried it around my neck) visiting and praying at many mountains and temples, so I think the Director has been rescued from a kalpa of suffering. You can see I have done my best to be of service to him. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 183)

In this scene, Mongaku’s skills in manipulation are to a large degree verbal as he balances between roles of an ascetic saint and a political advisor.\(^{231}\) His task is not a simple one for a monk: he has to convince Yoritomo to give priority to political revolt and revenge for his father over his current preoccupation with prayers. Starting with a quote from Shi ji (Records of the Historian), a political text and not a Buddhist sutra, Mongaku then switches to a different mode, focusing on Buddhist rhetoric with overtones of friendly familiarity. Now addressing Yoritomo with the pronoun gohen 御辺 (said to people of equal or somewhat inferior status), Mongaku sets up the show of “Yoshitomo’s skull”\(^{232}\) with a highly unusual phrase likely intended to sound mysterious and intriguing (kokorozashi no fukai iro 心ざしのふかい色).\(^{233}\) To gain Yoritomo’s trust he tells of the great religious services he has rendered to Yoshitomo by praying on his behalf and visiting temples with his remains. As he describes his deeds, Mongaku again addresses Yoritomo as watono わとの (marker of familiarity), uses Buddhist terms gose toburafu 後世とぶらふ (pacify the spirit for afterlife) and ichigō 一劫 (one kalpa), and emphasizes the services to Yoshitomo with many honorific and polite forms (tatematsuru 奉る, ontame 御ため, sōrō 候). The use of sōrō 候 is striking, being the first

\[231\] Portrayal of the link between priests and political leaders in Kakuichi Heike monogatari (1371) can be an indirect commentary on the influential Zen monks. “[Zen] monasteries had as their patrons members of the warrior and courtly elites. […] Their monks, who must be counted among the intellectuals of the age, […] served as cultural and political advisers to shoguns and emperors…” Martin Collcutt, “Zen and the gozan,” in The Cambridge History of Japan, Vol. 3 Medieval Japan, ed. Kozo Yamamura, 598 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

\[232\] As plainly stated in Chapter 12 (2) this time Mongaku brought “merely an old skull from somewhere.” (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 402).

\[233\] Having searched for similar phrases in the online collection of Japanese texts (University of Virginia Library, “Japanese Text Initiative,” [http://etext.virginia.edu/japanese](http://etext.virginia.edu/japanese)), I could not find any instances of these words combined together with a similar meaning in other Japanese texts. Very low frequency of the phrase suggests that it may be a made-up idiosyncratic combination of words. This rare word choice may indicate Heike authors’ decision to promote eccentric image of Mongaku.
occurrence in Mongaku’s speech. Its use signifies the temporary shift in his attitude to Yoritomo that establishes a formal relationship of service and obligation. As a result of this speech, Mongaku can be said to have converted Buddhist services to Yoshitomo’s spirit into political service to Yoritomo. In fact, he does go to the new capital at Fukuhara and through his acquaintance, Mitsuyoshi, serving the arrested Retired Emperor, he succeeds in obtaining the edict legitimizing Yoritomo’s anti-Heike rebellion. All of a sudden, Mongaku is a messenger at the top political level and once again he uses the formal polite sōrō 候 style in his message to the Retired Emperor via Mitsuyoshi (Mongaku here speaks on behalf of Yoritomo). In the transmitted message Mongaku expresses Yoritomo’s allegiance to the Retired Emperor by humble verbs tamawaru 給はる (to receive) and mōsu 申す (to speak).

Ex. 52 「伊豆 国 流人 前 兵 衛佐 頼朝 こそ、 勧 勘をゆるされて院宣をだにも給はらず、八ケ国の家人ども 催 しあつめて、平家をほろぼし、天下をしづめんと申 し 候へ」 Mongaku: The Izu Exile Yoritomo says he will mobilize his hereditary retainers in the Eight Provinces, crush the Taira, and restore peace to the land if only he is pardoned and given an edict from His Majesty. (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 184)

What does the language of this episode tell about the character of Mongaku and, more generally, about the relation between religious ascetics and top levels of power? Being an ascetic or saint he can allow himself to communicate with everybody without a feeling of awe, being above worldly affairs, he is able to meddle into them when he decides, and being outside of service hierarchies he manipulates others by imposing his services to them. His prodigious verbal ability is one of the main qualities helping him gain an upper hand in interaction. This

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234 Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa was in a precarious situation at this time having lost his son Prince Mochihito (killed in the course of an anti-Taira rebellion he was persuaded to lead), being under house arrest and witnessing the unchecked Heike power with Kiyomori undertaking transfer of the capital to Fukuhara.

image is ambiguous and can be taken as praise for “peripheral” wandering monks’ power to influence political events and as a warning about the dangers for the whole state stemming from seemingly inoffensive eccentric monks. The Kamakura period saw an expansion of various religious movements including the Zen sect. As an institution, the network of Zen monasteries grew rapidly under the patronage of the Ashikaga shoguns.\textsuperscript{236} In the late thirteenth century, “Zen monasteries were built all over Japan. The reasons for their success can be found in the alliance forged between the Zen masters and the leaders of the bakufu.”\textsuperscript{237} Mongaku’s close association with Yoritomo, the founder of the \textit{bakufu}, can be seen as an early case of this alliance.

The analysis of interaction in Examples 50-52 has identified several shifts in language forms that highlight Mongaku’s skill in positioning himself as a Buddhist “saint” and then as a political advisor. The narrative of Mongaku can be seen as a reaction to the close ties between monks and the military leadership and as a reminder that the \textit{bakufu} was indebted to monks from the very beginning, the Genpei conflict.

\textbf{Meetings of warrior-monks}

So far I have discussed the speech of religious individuals interacting mostly in one-to-one communicative situations. However, among the religious interactive settings, meetings of the monks deserve to be examined from the language perspective, since this approach reveals some of the conventions considered appropriate on such occasions that distinguish religious meetings from other types of gatherings. The link between language choices and promotion of solidarity among members is one of the key properties to be analysed.

\textsuperscript{237} Souyri, \textit{The World Turned Upside Down}, 78.
Let us first briefly look at the formality level of other types of meetings in *Heike monogatari* in order to have some “reference points.” First, at the meeting taking place in the imperial palace, the Chancellor and twelve senior nobles decide the punishment for an abbot. Consultant Nagakata speaks as follows.

Ex. 53 「法家の勘状にまかせて、死罪一等を減じて遠流せらるべしとみえて候へども、...」

Consultant Nagakata: The legal experts recommend distant banishment, a sentence one degree lighter than execution … (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 57)

Nishida points out that the use of polite *sōrō* 候 may be due to Nagakata’s relatively low rank, but it may also be a marker of dignified speech among top courtiers. Among other properties of high official speech is the dense use of *kango* terms from legal lexicon (*kanjō* 勘状, *shizai* 仕立, *ittō* 死罪一等). A second example is the meeting of Bodhisattvas and divinities dressed like senior officials in the imperial palace (the meeting is seen in a dream by a warrior). By their divine decision the Taira lose the Sword of Commission (symbol of imperial authorization to defeat enemies of the court) which is entrusted to Yoritomo.

Ex. 54 Hachiman: 「この日来平家の預かりたつ節刀をば、今は伊豆国の流人に頼ちにたばうずるなり」
Kasuga divinity: 「其後はわが孫にもたび候へ」

Bodhisattva Hachiman: The Sword of Commission, temporarily entrusted to the house of Taira, is now to be presented to the Izu Exile Yoritomo. Kasuga divinity: Please give it to my grandson after that. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 172)

Again, polite *sōrō* 候 style is used by the Kasuga divinity to acknowledge the superiority of the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman. The conference of the deities follows the style of the top court

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238 SNKBZ, vol. 45, 96.
239 Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 265.
officials and in both cases sōrō 候 style emphasizes the formality of the meeting and the attention given to hierarchies of power. The top seat in the warrior’s dream is occupied by Hachiman, the god of war and the tutelary deity of the Minamoto, who speaks less formally with sound contractions tabauzuru たばうずる (< taban to suru たばんとする) frequently found in warrior speech.

Now, having identified the polite sōrō 候 style as a typical feature of the official meetings, let us consider the various utterances at the gathering of monks at the Miidera monastery. Warrior-monks 241 decide on the plan for a night attack on Rokuhara to overthrow the Taira.

Ex. 55 1) Monks: 「… 此事のびてはあしかりなん。いざや六波羅におし寄せて、夜打にせん。… 大手は伊豆守を大将軍にて、悪僧ども六波羅におし寄せ、風うへに火かけ、一もみもうでせめんに、なかた太政入道、焼きだいてうたざるべき」

2) Shinkai: 「かう申せば、平家の方人とやおぼしめされ候らん。たとひさも候へ、いかんが衆徒の儀をもやぶり、我等の名をも惜しまれば候べき。… 後日に寄せさせ給ふべや候らん」

3) Keishū: 「証拠を外にひくべからず。我寺の本願、天武天皇は、いまだ東宮の御時、大友の皇子にはばからせ給へて、… 自余は知らず、慶秀が門徒においては、今 夜六波羅におし寄せて、打死せよや」 242

1) Monks: […] but we can’t keep sitting here. We must launch a night attack against Rokuhara. […] our frontal attack force of armed monks, commanded by Nakatsuna, should advance against Rokuhara, set fires on the windward side, and strike a single decisive blow. In that way, we can burn Kiyomori out and kill him.

2) Holy Teacher Shinkai: Even though I may seem to be siding with the Taira, I cannot neglect my duty to you or view the temple’s reputation with indifference. […] We ought to postpone

241 In this study, I discuss warrior-monks in the chapter on religion and treat them as a militarized group of monks. Although their meeting takes place in a monastery, they discuss military matters as warriors. For a comprehensive examination of the social origins, political and military activities of warrior-monks see Mikael S. Adolphson, The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sohei in Japanese History (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007).

the attack...
3) Holy Teacher Keishū: There is no need to look outside for proof that a small force can prevail. In the days when he was still Crown Prince, Emperor Tenmu, the founder of our temple, [...] Whatever anyone else may do, I call on my followers to die in battle against Rokuhara tonight! (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 149)

It is clear that in this situation the warrior-monks, being fully involved in the anti-Taira rebellion of Prince Mochihito, interact as warriors and do not mention any religious matters.

Their vocabulary is military (oshiyosete おし寄せて, youchi 夜打, ohote 大手, taishōgun 大将軍, hikake 火かけ, hitomomi mōde 一もみもうで). Moreover, the speaker in Ex.55-1 makes use of the interjection izaya いざや and forms with onbin sound changes (moude もうで < momite もみて, daite だいて < dashite だして) that increase the tempo of his utterance and play a role in characterizing him more as a warrior rather than a monk. The overall style of his speech is noticeably plain without honorific forms and polite sōrō 候.

During monk meetings, the norm is to speak without sōrō 候 style; that is, in contrast to courtier meetings, monks prefer to avoid emphasis on formality and hierarchy among themselves. It can be hypothesized that the use of plain forms is a linguistic way to enhance solidarity among the members of warrior-monk groups. This reasoning is supported by the sharp contrast in the speech of the Holy Teacher Shinkai who is portrayed as a supporter of the Heike. His call to postpone the attack on the Heike (Ex. 55-2) puts him in opposition to the rest of the assembly and prolongs the discussions, disrupting the night attack on Kiyomori’s forces. What is noteworthy is the fact that his political opposition to the warrior-monks’

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243 Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 266.
244 This observation is also true for warriors who are not monks. As pointed out by Nishida, sōrō 候 style is not used in interaction between companions and friends of low status. The use of this style between fellow warriors emphasizes formality, distance and even hostility. See Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 254-6.
245 His political alignment is due to economic reasons: he had received prayer commissions from the Heike. After the attack’s failure, warrior-monks destroy his cloister and he seeks Heike support in the Rokuhara.
assembly is paralleled by language choices that are markedly different. Even ignoring the content of his statement, several features that can be said to break the norms of religious assemblies define the tone of the speech: the consistent use of polite auxiliary verb ｓōrō 候 and some of the highest honorific forms -sasetamafu させ給ふ and oboshimesu おぼしめす with humble verb ｍōsu 申す for own action. Nishida considers the presence of ｓōrō 候 forms to be a sign of Shinkai’s humble attitude to the audience.\(^\text{246}\) It may be added that his politeness is out of place as it brings uncustomary formality into the monks’ assembly and hinders the solidarity and unity of its members. The speech in the ｓōrō 候 style readily evokes associations with court official meetings with defined hierarchies of power and formal atmosphere. Clearly such language is an irregularity at the warrior-monk meeting, and Shinkai’s choice identifies him as a pro-Heike official rather than a monk, and given the circumstances, a traitor of the Miidera warrior-monks. This linguistic evidence confirms the significant role played by language variation in issues of group formation since by being too humble and formal Shinkai emphasizes his separation from the assembly.

The contrast of Shinkai’s language is further strengthened by the following reply (Ex. 55-3) given to him by the Holy Teacher Keishū, a senior monk of similar old age and high status. In his speech, Keishū follows the conventional plain style\(^\text{247}\) (with honorific forms only used to show respect to the emperor of the past) and ends with a military decision uchijini seyo ya 打死せよや (let’s die in battle), plain and emphatic (particle ya や). Shinkai’s speech with ｓōrō 候 (Ex. 55-2) found between the speech of other warrior-monks (Ex.55-1 and Ex.55-3),

\(^{246}\) Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 266.
\(^{247}\) The use of plain style at religious meetings is a characteristic of the setting and the same Holy Teacher Keishū speaks in a very polite formal way with Prince Mochihito. Ex. 「いづくまでも召しぐせられ候べし」 “Take him (Keishū’s disciple) anywhere at all.” (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 152).
both without sōrō 候, clearly stands out and points to the importance of language variation in the representation of contrast between characters.

Investigation of stylistic differences has helped better assess the difference in tone and stance of the opposing sides at the meeting. In this episode, language style of various speakers (plain vs. formal) highlights their political alignments. Failure of one speaker to follow the common pattern of interaction disrupts the solidarity of the group. The energetic plain military speech of the majority emphatically contrasts with his formal polite speech.

**Hōnen’s sermon**

Having examined some of the communication properties of religious discourse, many of them political and unrelated to religious matters, let us consider the speech of the exclusive domain of the clergy—the sermon—and some of its language properties. The dialogue between Hōnen, the founder of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan, and one of the top courtier-warriors of the Heike, Shigehira, takes the form of Shigehira’s confession about his evil deeds and anxieties about afterlife followed by the sermon in which Hōnen outlines the key teachings of Pure Land Buddhism. The interlocutors have been for years in a master-disciple relation.

Ex. 56 「今度いきながらとらはれて候ひけるは、二たび上人の見参に罷りいるべきで候ひけり。… 懇懐の心のみぶかくして、かつて当来の昇沈をかへりみず。… 願はくは上人慈悲をおこしあはれみをたれて、かかかる悪人のたすかりぬべき方法候ば、しめし絵へ」

Shigehira: I must have been taken prisoner because I was destined to meet you again. […] (I was) too proud and arrogant to worry about my fate in the next world. […] Please, Your Holiness, be compassionate and merciful. If there is a way to save such a sinner, tell me of it. (McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 334)

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The disciple Shigehira’s respectful attitude to his religious guide is conveyed by the humble forms *makaru* 罷る, the honorific auxiliary *tamafu* 給ふ, and the choice of the polite *sōrō* 候 style for the whole confession.

Ex. 57 Hōnen: 「誠に受け難き人身をうけながら、むなしけ三途にかへり給はん事、

かなしんでもなほあまりあり。しかるを今穢土を厭ひ浄土をねがはんに、悪心を捨てて善心発しまさん事、三世の諸仏も定めて随喜給ふべき。...

『尊称 名号至西方』と釈して、尊ら名号を称すれば、西方に至る。...

行 住 座臥、時処諸縁をきらはず、三業四威儀において、心念口称を忘れ給はずは、…」 249

Hōnen: It is a sorrow beyond sorrow that you should face the prospect of returning to the Three Evil Paths after having enjoyed the rare good fortune of being born a man. But the Buddhas of the Three Worlds must surely feel happiness because you have now abandoned wicked thoughts and embraced good ones, desirous of rejecting the impure world and achieving rebirth in the Pure Land. […]

It is explained, ‘He who intones the sacred name with all his heart will enter the Western Paradise.’ […]

[…] and if you meditate on Amida Buddha in your heart and keep his name on your lips, always and everywhere, whether you are walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, […]

(McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, 334-5)

As for Hōnen, his speech is similarly respectful, as is customary in polite communication (honorific auxiliary *tamafu* 給ふ and honorific forms –*mashimasu* ～ますます), with a notable total absence of polite formal *sōrō* 候 style. Nishida identifies avoidance of *sōrō* 候, even in the presence of *tamafu* 給ふ, as the marker of a “preaching style.” 250 Other properties include influences from *kanbun kundoku* (such as *negawakuwa* 願はくは in Ex. 56), the long sentences with clauses linked by -*te* ～て and -*ba* ～ば forms, and the high presence of *kango* vocabulary. *Kango* density and complexity does differentiate the master’s utterances from”

249 SNKBZ, vol. 46, 280-1.
250 Nishida, *Heike monogatari no buntaironteki*, 245.
those of the disciple. For example, if Shigehira can handle *kango* compounds consisting of two
characters (such as *jihi* 慈悲), Hōnen freely employs highly complex and rare four-character
compounds (*gyōjūzaga* 行住座臥, *shinnenkushō* 心念口称) and even several seven-character
slogans. This is undoubtedly a case of so-called “code switching”\(^{251}\) from “Chinese”\(^{252}\) to the
*kanbun kundoku* variety of pre-modern Japanese since the religious formula obeys syntactical
rules of Classical Chinese and it is pronounced as is, according to *on*-readings. Clearly Hōnen
does not expect Shigehira to understand the formulas in “Chinese” and provides translation
into *kanbun kundoku* Japanese. In this way, Hōnen’s identity as a priest and religious guide is
linked with (or constructed by means of) his language ability. To initiate Shigehira into the
community of Amidist believers means in part to share with him the knowledge of sacred
formulas that were apparently recited orally.

To make sure the above properties are not random, but comprise a set of features
making up the “style of preaching” we turn to another sermon given by Honshōbō Tangō, an
ascetic from Ōhara, to the captured Munemori before execution.

Ex. 58「いまはとかくおぼしめすべきらず。最後の御有様を御観せむにつけても、た
がひの御心のうちかなしかるべし。生をうけさせ給ひてよりこのかた、たのしみさ
かへ、昔もたくひすくなし。... いはんや電光朝露の下界の命においてをや。...」

251 It occurs when a speaker switches between different codes in the course of a single
252 I put “Chinese” in brackets because *on*-readings provided in *furigana* are adapted to
Japanese phonology.
Honshōbō Tangō: You must not trouble your mind about your son now. Both of you would suffer great agony if you were to see each other at the end. Even in past ages, few men have known such happiness and prosperity as you experienced from the time of your birth on. […] What, then, shall we say of human life in this world, a flash of lightning, a morning dewdrop? […] Who has tasted the elixir of eternal youth and immortality? Who has prolonged his days like Dongfang Shuo or the Queen Mother of the West? […] Thus the Buddha teaches, ‘Our minds are void of themselves; sin and blessedness lack true existence. When we meditate on the mind, there is no mind. The laws do not dwell in the Law.’ To regard good and bad as unreal is to be in accord with the Buddha’s mind. […] (McCullough, The Tale of the Heike, 395-6)

Clearly, a number of properties coincide with those in Ex. 57: the use of honorific forms oboshimesu おぼしめす, -sasetamafu させ給ふ; the expressions from kanbun kundoku such as iwanya いはんや; the presence of four-character compounds and the explanatory paraphrase of a sutra passage in “Chinese.” One notable novelty is the imitation of Chinese word order Verb-Object (nametarishi furōfushi no yaku 嘗めたりし、不老不死の薬) by inverting the regular Japanese word order Object-Verb. As in Hōnen’s sermon above (Ex. 57), Honshōbō Tangō does not use the polite sōrō 候 style except for two times closer to the end of his sermon, presumably when he addresses Munemori directly.254 In this case, the last passage in sōrō 候 style is not a part of the sermon, but a more personal formal address to Munemori as the former head of the Heike clan.

From a religious and political viewpoint, the inclusion of Pure Land doctrines into the Heike monogatari narrative was not an ordinary matter as it positioned the narrative as a tool for promotion of Amidist discourse. First of all, Hōnen’s radical new teaching was opposed by institutional schools (such as Tendai) and by the other sects (Nichiren’s one, for example) to the point that Hōnen was exiled from the capital in 1207.255 On the other hand, Hōnen’s

254 Nishida, Heike monogatari no buntaironteki, 246.
teachings found wide popular support in the capital and later in the provinces due to the clarity of the teachings and the ease of practice. Historical Hōnen was able to gain support among a wide range of people. For example, the influential capital official and imperial regent Kujō no Kanezane was one of his disciples. *Heike monogatari* is known to be steeped in Amidist views, thus taking a specific political and religious stance to the events described. Here it is relevant to mention Paul Varley’s observation that many Taira from the capital (but no peripheral Minamoto) seek assurance of rebirth in Amida Buddha’s Pure Land paradise. Without suggesting a religious motif for the Genpei conflict, it is still necessary to recognize the subversive religious stance taken by the *Heike* narrative. It would be interesting to consider the role of *Heike monogatari* recitals throughout the land in spreading the Pure Land teachings and worldview in the provinces.

**Conclusion**

Analysis of the data in this chapter has revealed some of the language aspects of communication in the diverse religious domain represented in the *Heike* narratives. In a number of cases, author(s) clearly attributed different language choices to characters depending on their religious attitude, practice and setting. I have examined samples of official vs. “nomadic” speech, personal vs. group settings, religious vs. politicized religious interactions and in each case the difference in language can be detected. Analyzed characters have distinct “voices” that determine how they are perceived by *Heike* audiences. If these voices were different, then audiences would have different perceptions of the characters. In other words, if Mongaku calls Yoritomo * watono わとの*, it shows that he addresses Yoritomo

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256 Gomi, Kyō, Kamakura no ōken, 192.
257 Varley, Warriors of Japan, 115.
in a familiar and friendly manner. If he would use other more formal address forms, the image of their relationship would be different. Similarly, if Hōnen uses Chinese formulas from sutras in his speech and other monks do not, it does give him a special status relative to others.

Since language markers indicate extralinguistic information such as social alignment and power asymmetries, the clergy’s reluctance (except for political settings) to use sōrō 候 style, for example, does put them into a group beyond relations of “service,” in contrast to the court and the military spheres. In the rare cases when monks do use the polite auxiliary sōrō 候, as does Mongaku to Yoritomo or Holy Teacher Shinkai to the monk assembly, the shift into political discourse is strongly marked showing the speaker as a political advisor and messenger in the first case and as a traitor of the warrior-monks’ cause in the second one.

Table 7  Approximate classification of priests by language style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Courtly</th>
<th>Religious institution</th>
<th>Use of formal 候</th>
<th>General speech style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hōnen</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Purely religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jōken</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Religious and political</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shunkan</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Irreligious, courtly,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wabun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrior-monks</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongaku</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Rough and religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political and religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some cases, however, the priests and monks do not even mention religious matters and in their speech they rarely or never cite sutras or employ kango compounds. This is especially true of Shunkan, who speaks in wabun and never brings up religion despite being an institutional priest of high rank, and of warrior-monks whose utterances are fully military in their content and do not differ from those of warriors.

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258 Used as a collective term for all involved in religious practice, even if in name only.
As the language evidence shows (Table 7), in the world presented in *Heike monogatari* there is no uniform way of speaking in the religious community. This means that diversity in the religious domain has a linguistic dimension. Author(s) of *Heike monogatari* used various language means to represent diversity. I have discussed how the speech of different characters is encoded in the *Heike* text and how language variation participates in characterization. The *Heike* narrative portrays a wide diversity among the priests, each possessing particular preferences in language choices and a particular manner of interaction. It is notable that they differ not by supporting opposing religious teachings, but by their involvement in matters outside of religion proper, that is, politics and war. Most of the priests examined in this chapter interact either in political affairs or in military ones. In the narrative, only Amidist priests (most notably Hōnen) and partly the ascetic Mongaku are positioned outside of politics and war.

What do these results and the prominence of “unorthodox” speech, especially in the case of Mongaku, contribute to our understanding of vernacularization of religious discourse? Bialock suggests that unofficial discourse of *setsuwa* genre “gave rise to new forms of vernacular history as it invaded the sphere of historical narrative.” In *Heike monogatari*, he sees a shift in discursive codes as unofficial *setsuwa* “began to combine in unprecedented ways with official document style and other formal rhetorical modes, ultimately disrupting, inverting, and relativizing the hierarchy of styles that had prevailed up to about the eleventh century.” How do the language results examined here correlate with this discursive shift? It is clear that language evidence corroborates this view in many respects. Mongaku’s “rough” utterances do not replace or merge with the official rhetoric of Jōken or Hōnen’s preaching, but exist in a

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260 Ibid.
parallel way occupying their level in the hierarchy of language styles. Mongaku, because of his skilful manipulation of eccentric speech, has more influence on the political events than institutional priests and, thus, narratives focusing on his interactions at court and with Yoritomo participate in the inversion of language and social hierarchies.

The inclusion of “unorthodox” language choices in the same narrative with high-level formal speech necessarily relativizes the hierarchy of language styles while putting emphasis on the possibility for religious discourse to assume many “worldly” forms, ranging from military to political. As seen from Tables 7 and 8, the involvement of religion in secular matters is represented and reinforced by the diversity of language styles attributed to characters of priests and monks.
Table 8  Discursive interactive settings - Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language forms</th>
<th>Participant 1</th>
<th>Participant 2</th>
<th>Expression of</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retired Emperor</td>
<td>Malevolent spirits (silent)</td>
<td>- shift from polite respectful attitude priest → spirits to authoritative command to imperial subjects</td>
<td>Retired Emperor as priest, medium</td>
<td>Ability to order spirits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shunkan</td>
<td>Naritsune, courtiers</td>
<td>“irreligious” man despair</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parallel between physical and linguistic separation from capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>oぼしめす with polite 候</td>
<td>recognition of master’s identity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Re-establish status of Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongaku</td>
<td>1) Commoners</td>
<td>Eccentric monk Rough and religious</td>
<td></td>
<td>Close to commoners - in the peripheral areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- plain style</td>
<td>1) - plain forms, contractions - include religious kango</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to communicate with divine forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Divine messengers</td>
<td>Not always rough Polite to divine</td>
<td></td>
<td>“corrupt centre”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- plain style</td>
<td>2) - polite honorificまします, 給ふ</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intrusion of “peripheral speech” into the court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) At court</td>
<td>challenge to the imperial authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>Curse as sermon?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- rude, informal expressions そくび</td>
<td>mixture of “voices” at court relg.+courty+milit.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Witty charismatic monk tricks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- warrior exclamation</td>
<td>monks outside of imperial service</td>
<td></td>
<td>corrupt officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Police guards</td>
<td>satire and religion reversal of hierarchy “guard-arrested”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- formal polite 候, honorific 給ふ</td>
<td>reversal of hierarchy “guard-arrested”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language forms</td>
<td>Participant 1</td>
<td>Participant 2</td>
<td>Expression of Significance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) informal: avoids 候 style</td>
<td>- pronoun わとの (emphasizes friendly attitude of advisor)</td>
<td>- Yoritomo</td>
<td>Interaction of equals, Mongaku’s initiative direct, informal familiarity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Buddhist kango 候 style</td>
<td>- pronoun 御辺 (equality)</td>
<td>- passive and humble</td>
<td>shift in attitude: relg. service → polit. service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(relations of service), Honorific prefix 御</td>
<td>- Buddhist kango 候 style</td>
<td>- honorific verb 宣ふ</td>
<td>Intersection of religious with political</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- polite formal 候 style</td>
<td>Religious manipulation of political leaders by “peripheral” ascetics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrior-monk meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shinkai</td>
<td>Solidarity and in-group equality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- informal, plain style, no 候</td>
<td></td>
<td>- consistent use of polite auxiliary 候, high honorific forms</td>
<td>Traitor breaks assembly speech conventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- military vocabulary, onbin</td>
<td></td>
<td>- させ給ふ, おぼしめす, humble</td>
<td>Monks speaking like warriors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no mention of religion</td>
<td></td>
<td>申す for own actions:</td>
<td>Ling. contrast = polit. alignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall assembly style shift:</td>
<td></td>
<td>shift to official formal meeting style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 候 → + 候 → - 候</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(traitor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hōnen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shigeihara</td>
<td>“preaching style”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- respectful 給ふ</td>
<td></td>
<td>- humble forms for himself, honorific auxiliary 給ふ to Hōnen,</td>
<td>initiation into Amidist teachings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- complete absence of 候 style</td>
<td></td>
<td>- consistent 候 style</td>
<td>Hōnen as a rare case of a purely religious character</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- high density of complex kango compounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>- moderate use of 2-character kango religious terms</td>
<td>Knowledge of Amidist formulas as a prerequisite for faith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- intertextual: citing sutras</td>
<td></td>
<td>- some kanbun kundoku influence: 願はくは</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

This thesis has examined the language of interaction between characters as represented in dialogue passages of *Heike monogatari*. Drawing on linguistic and stylistic analyses of the text and on recent studies of the literary, socio-political and religious aspects of Kamakura-period narratives, I have analyzed language variation in selected dialogues from *Heike monogatari* and the role of language forms in constructing asymmetries in social status and power between characters. The study has aimed to show the language aspects of character interaction and their role in characterization.

This research follows in its approach the themes influencing current studies of premodern Japanese texts, including *Heike monogatari*. The theme of continuous construction of the past by later narratives that are reworked and reinterpreted has been central to recent studies. In the present research, I view the fictional dialogue representing interaction between characters as one of the most effective means of projecting “images” of the characters that help shape audience’s imagination of the past. As information directly received by audiences listening to *Heike* performances, language forms contributed to the reception of characters. I have discussed various language means and how they highlight diverse ways of interaction that demonstrate the qualities of characters and their attitudes in specific settings.

This thesis has also examined texts as expressions of power. Power asymmetry is consistently encoded in the dialogues, and negotiations of status and power are prominently expressed by language choices. The decision of the text’s author(s) to include “peripheral”

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261 For example, see Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories* and Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions*.
262 The complex relation between texts and power is discussed by Bialock in *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories* and by Pollock in *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*, for example.
voices and to represent them as prominently participating at the highest levels of power is an effective statement about the inversion of hierarchies at the time of the Genpei war.

Following a trend in current studies to examine underrepresented sides of the narratives, this thesis brings attention to minor variation in language forms and shifts in style that are often neglected despite being an integral component of the narrative. They play a significant role in enhancing the overall depiction of interaction and emphasizing the relations between characters. This approach fits into another prominent tendency of current research: to avoid vast generalizations based on clear-cut binary oppositions (such as center-periphery or Buddhism-Shinto) and instead examine phenomena in all their complexity. Accordingly, instead of considering a character’s image as a given, I discuss how the image is partially constructed and enhanced by small details of language on the level of specific dialogues. By so doing, I avoid generalizations and try to make small claims grounded in specific empirical data.

**Overall conclusions and significance**

Analysis of selected dialogues in this thesis has clarified the role of language and style in the portrayal of the socio-political status of characters, their interpersonal relations, and attitudes toward each other. I have identified evidence of stylistic variation in the text and by analyzing it I have revealed language aspects of characterization in *Heike monogatari*. By selecting a specific language style for each interacting character, the author(s) projected a particular image that has shaped audience’s perceptions of that character. Even minor variation in the use of pronouns or polite forms, for example, often expresses attitudes and stances of characters. In the course of dialogues they negotiate their own positions and make attempts to

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263 For example, see Dobbins, *Letters of the Nun Eshinni* and Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions* among other works.
manipulate their interlocutors. Which language choices they make determines whether they recognize the status hierarchy or not, and whether they claim membership in one group or another.

Especially prominent in the examined dialogues is the interplay between language use and space. In the *Heike monogatari*’s representation of the world, the clear binary relation between the center and the periphery is blurred and both spaces share a number of speech properties. The “peripheral” speech of Kiyomori, Mongaku, and warriors is present in the capital, while “courtly” speech is one of the features of Yoritomo’s peripheral court in Kamakura. The contrast in speech between Kiyomori and Yoritomo is one of the components in the contest over authority and legitimacy. Another speech contrast between formal dignified priests and eccentric monks confirms the author(s)’ avoidance of uniform simplified representations of the diverse Buddhist community.

Overall, the study has examined some of the nuances of language use that not only testify to the literary mastery of the author(s), but also have continuously influenced audiences’ perceptions of characters and of the historical past. In this study, I do not propose a new literary interpretation of *Heike monogatari*, but approach the textual data with stylistic analysis. It is intended as a supplement to studies of *Heike monogatari* from socio-historical, literary, and religious perspectives. By bringing attention to language variation in premodern Japanese texts, this research offers insight into ways status, power, social relations and affiliations are encoded in the language of *Heike monogatari* dialogues.

**Strengths and limitations of the study**

Despite the prominence of stylistic variation in the text, there are still no studies in English devoted entirely to the tonal and language complexity of *Heike monogatari*. The
present study is the first stylistic analysis of the language use in the *Heike* dialogues. Without limiting the analysis to descriptions of style, I examine the link between language forms, characterization, and constructions of power asymmetry.

The study combines linguistic and literary approaches in a complementary way. In addition to recent studies of *Heike monogatari* in English, I rely on several linguistic works by Japanese scholars. Thus, it becomes possible to supplement interpretations of characters and settings with empirical language evidence.

Another feature of this research is the inclusion of the Japanese text of *Heike monogatari*. Unlike most studies in English that often exclude Japanese text, I provide large parts of dialogues in full as they are the primary data. Longer dialogue sequences convey the dynamics of interaction and show how the mutual attitudes of the speakers shift.

Since methods of analysis of language variation in premodern Japanese texts are not yet developed, it is necessary to discuss several limitations of this research. First, for a text as long and diverse as *Heike monogatari* the scope of this study is far from comprehensive and resembles a collection of case studies. This approach, however, is suitable for an examination of variation in a large sample of data.

Second, the classification of data is undeniably somewhat artificial and does not represent the only possibility of categorizing available data. Any simple categorization fails to account for the complexity of characters and settings in the text. Since there are many cases with no clear-cut boundaries between discourse settings (such as court and religious settings, for example), labelling a setting as “courtly” is a great simplification. There is a similar difficulty in categorizing characters appearing in different communicative situations.

Third, a great part of analysis is qualitative in nature as I have not done an independent statistical analysis of the text. This does not mean that claims are fully subjective, since they
are interpretations based on presence or absence of specific linguistic forms in the text samples. The most subjective claims are the ones about the impact of Heike discourse on communication relationships in society. Here, it is crucial to avoid projecting modern stylistic interpretations onto interpretations of texts by the audiences in the past. Overall, however, the attempt was made to correlate my interpretations with results obtained from quantitative analysis (where possible) from linguistic and stylistic research done by Japanese scholars.

Finding a way to analyze literary discourse from a linguistic viewpoint puts a difficult dilemma before a researcher. As noted by Pearce, “the aim should be to avoid two fundamental failings: production of an uncoordinated collection of comments on linguistic features, and production of critical conclusions formulated in such a way as to lack examinable empirical content.”\textsuperscript{264} This statement pinpoints a general problem with linguistic approaches to literary texts. I agree that to produce an interpretation it is not enough to describe linguistic elements found in a sentence or a passage as often happens in linguistic or stylistic studies. A strong argument about a text has to go beyond description to say something critical about the functions of particular language elements in a text and outside of it. I hope that in most cases I avoid a shortcut of slipping into meaningless lists of features.

Also, I emphasize that the object of this study is not necessarily the spoken language of the Kamakura period, but the literary and discourse representations of relations and power dynamics in fictional character interaction. Essentially I try to answer the question of what linguistic variation means in Heike monogatari as a literary work and what role language plays in constructing the image of society and power at the time of the Genpei conflict for later audiences.

\textsuperscript{264} Roger Pearce, \textit{Literary Texts: The Application of Linguistic Theory to Literary Discourse} (Birmingham: Birmingham University, 1977), 29.
**Future research directions**

*Heike monogatari* is a very long narrative with many characters. For future research, linguistic and stylistic properties of many other episodes can be studied. Since the conflicts of the Genpei war are described in detail in the text, communication in military settings is one of the primary areas for stylistic analysis. It seems particularly important to add comparative elements to analysis of dialogue interaction. Methods can be developed to trace how a character’s speech changes depending on the genre or the time period of the text. For example, how is Kiyomori’s speech represented in Edo-period narratives and in what ways is it different from the *Heike* representation? Stylistic analysis can potentially supplement the discussion of changes in reception of the Genpei war by later audiences. Another way to approach communication represented in *Heike* narratives is to classify dialogues by categories such as “persuasion,” “order,” and “demand,” in order to assess which stylistic choices are associated with each category. For example, what language choices differentiate persuasion speech of a courtier from that of a warrior? Overall, examination of language variation in *Heike monogatari* and in other premodern texts is currently in the beginning stages. Development of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis can offer new perspectives on premodern communication. Application of these methods to narratives, such as *Heike monogatari*, can shed more light on how they were intended to be understood by authors and how they were received by audiences.
Works Cited


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