

# *Edo travel books and local word lists – A glimpse on the early sources of Hachijō language*

Étienne Baudel – 35th Paris Meeting on East Asian Linguistics

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# Introduction

# Introduction (1) – Edo travel books

- The Edo period spans from **1603** to **1867** and is generally considered a period of stability and development.
- Several scientific genres became popular during that period, among which **travel books**.
- These books combine various comments (literary, linguistic, historical, geographical, zoological, botanical...) and are therefore **invaluable sources** on a variety of topics.

# Introduction (1) – Edo travel books

- They are often **richly illustrated**:



Satō Yukinobu, *Izu kaitō fudoki*, vol. 2, pp. 69-70 (1782)

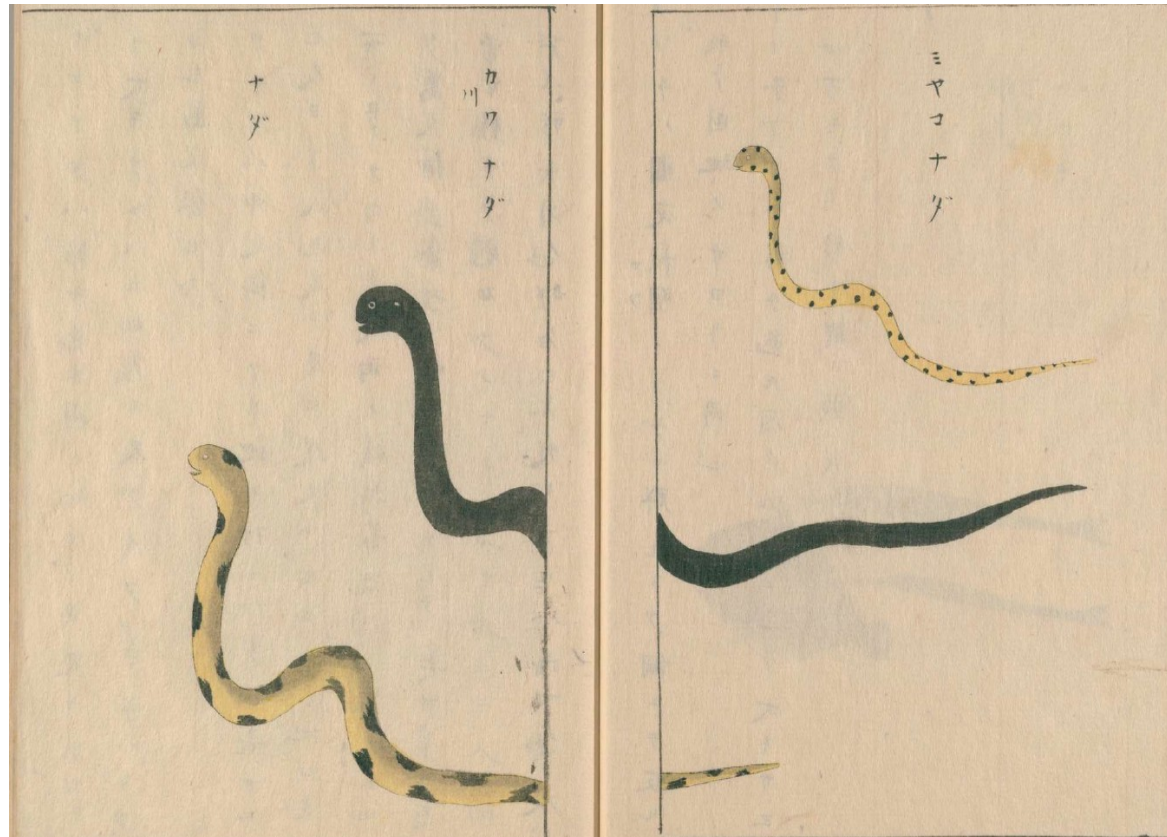
# Introduction (1) – Edo travel books



Kakusō Kizan, *Yatake no nezame-gusa*, pp. 20-21 (1848)



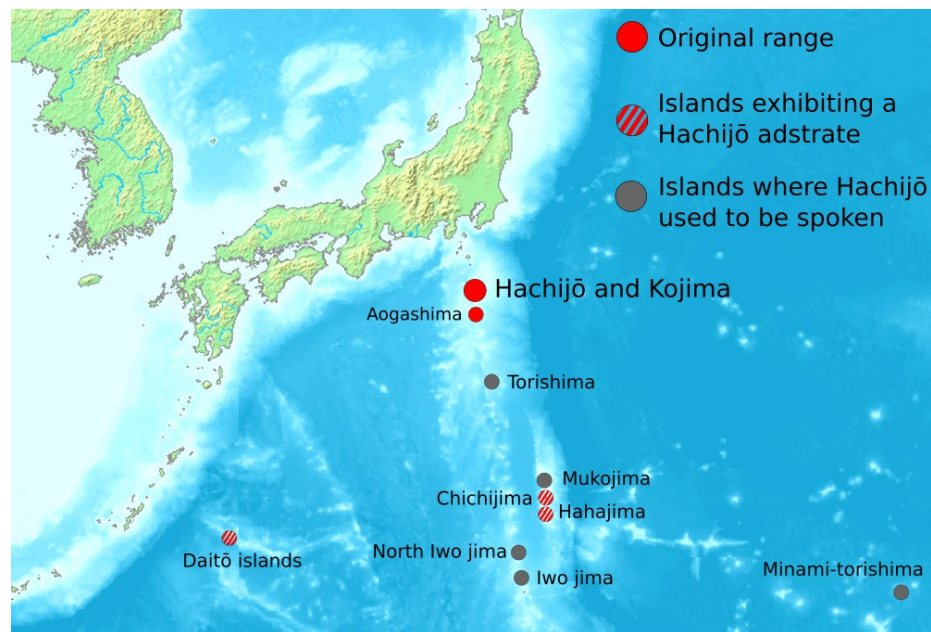
# Introduction (1) – Edo travel books



Ōhara Masanori,  
*Hachijō-shi*, vol. 3, pp.  
43-44 (1811 [1854])

# Introduction (2) – Hachijō

- The Hachijō language is a now-endangered **minority language** of Japan, spoken on the **South Izu islands**, south of Tōkyō:



## Introduction (2) – Hachijō

- In the Edo period, those islands were perceived as **remote** and **exotic**, and were the subject of many legends.
- They were placed under direct rule of the shogunate, and their access was forbidden to mainland commoners, as they were used as a **banishment territory**.
- Because of this peculiar status, no less than **30 descriptions of the South Izu islands** were written in the Edo period.



# Introduction (3) – Aim of this presentation

- This presentation will be dedicated to the linguistic data provided by travel books from the Edo period, and especially to the **Hachijō wordlists** they contain.
- This data is to a large extent **new**:
  - While some of those lists have been edited, a lot have **never been transcribed or commented** before.
  - To the best of my knowledge, they have **never been compiled and compared** together.

# Introduction (3) – Aim of this presentation

- First of all, I will introduce the **11 lists** that I could gather so far.
- Then, I will present the **methods** I am using in order to include this data to my research and a few **findings** I was able to make so far.



A young girl from Hachijō,  
Ōhara Masanori, *Hachijō-shi*,  
vol. 3, p. 14 (1811 [1854])

# (1) The Hachijō wordlists

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- **WHAT?**
- So far, I found **11 Hachijō wordlists** from the Edo period, published in 10 travel books.
- They are made up of **between 30 and 290 items each.**
- Thus, they add up to **roughly 1400 items** in total.

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- the 1781 *Izu kaitō fudoki*, written by SATŌ Yukinobu (ca. 80 items)
- the 1791 *Nanpō kaitō-shi*, by AKIYAMA Funan (ca. 40 items)
- the 1796 *Shichitō nikki*, by KODERA Ōsai (ca. 40 items)
- the 1797 *Hachijō Hikki*, by FURUKAWA Koshōken (ca. 30 items)
- the 1801 *Izu shichitō fudo sairān*, by MISHIMA Masahide (ca. 80 items)
- the 1802 *En'ō kōgo*, by TAKAHASHI Yoichi (ca. 200 items)
- the 1811 *Hachijō kiriko-ori*, by HATTORI Yoshitaka (ca. 60 items)
- the ca. 1811 *Ichīwa ichigen*, by ŌTA Nanpo (ca. 210 items)
- the 1839 *Asahi gyakutō-ki*, by SAWARA no Kisaburō (ca. 30 items)
- the 1858 *Hachijō jikki*, by KONDŌ Tomizō, with 2 word lists (ca. 210 items / ca. 390 items)

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- **WHEN?**
- All those wordlists date from the **late Edo period**, namely between **1781 and 1858**.
- It is likely that earlier ones existed but were lost.
- 8 of those 11 wordlists were written within the same 30 years (1781-1811), which shows a **trend** in the interest for those territories in the capital.



# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- **WHERE? / FOR WHOM?**
- Those works were mostly **written, copied and sold in Edo.**
- Thus, most are still in the Tōkyō Metropolitan Archives to this day.
- There were not made for the local audience, but rather **for the elite.**

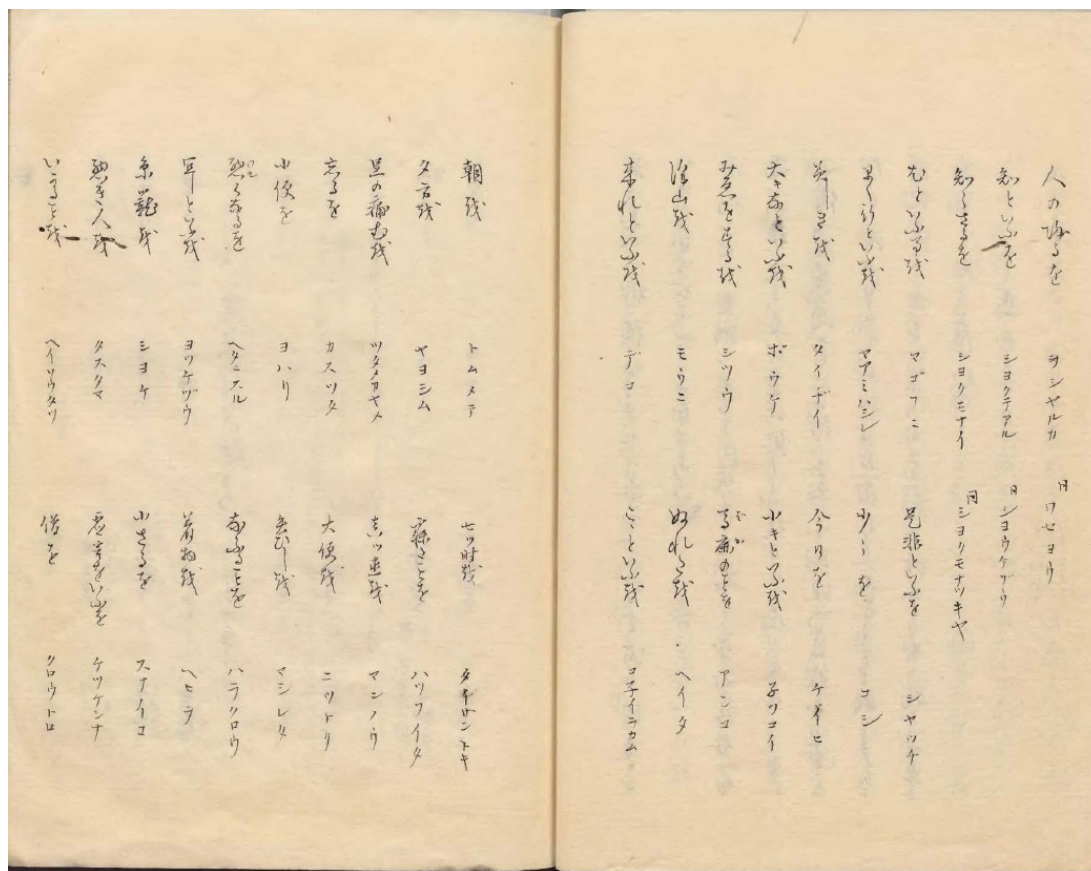
# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- **WHO?**
- All those wordlists were written by **educated male authors**, out of which:
  - 5 were shogunate officials
  - 3 were exiles
  - 1 was a court poet and writer (who never even went to the islands!)
  - **only 1 was a local islander**
- Therefore, it is likely that **these lists show data that underwent influence from the classical language.**

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- **HOW?**
- Most of those lists are **ordered thematically**.
- They usually provide Hachijō lexemes in *katakana* (some in *man'yōgana*), with a translation into classical Japanese.
- Occasionally, they also include valuable notes and comments.

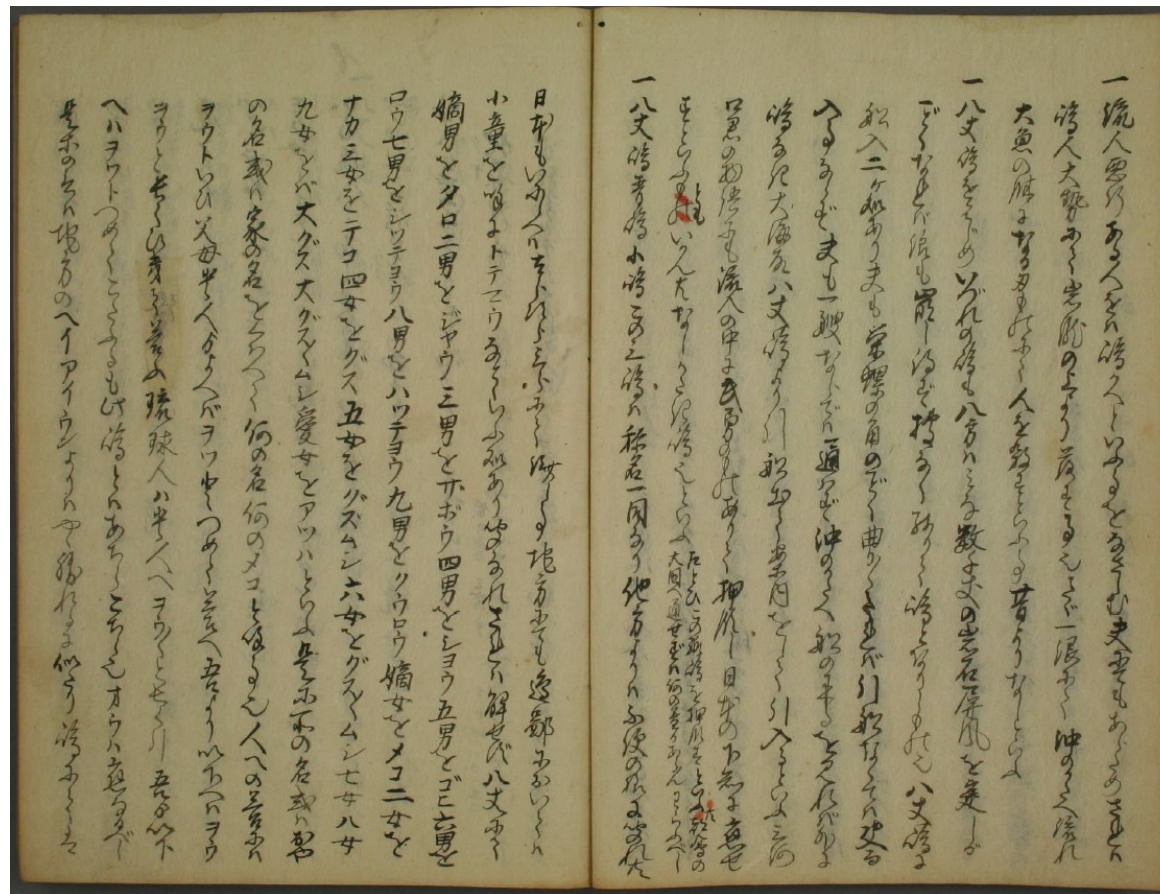
# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists



A clear example:

Hattori Yoshitaka, *Hachijō kiriko-ori*, pp. 77-78 (1811)

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists



A more difficult example:  
Furukawa Koshōken, *Hachijō hikki*, pp. 18-19 (1797 [1805])

## (2) Methods and findings



## (2) – Methods and findings

- The first step of my work was to **transcribe** these lists into several tables.
- Those tables are only made of two columns: **list items**, and **given translation**. Ex, for Satō, 1781:
  - woshiyatsute 人の来し時貴人へ
  - waita ka 同輩へ
  - woshiyare 帰る時貴人へetc...

## (2) – Methods and findings

- Then, I **compiled** all transcribed lists within one file, in order to **interpret** their data together and to provide an English translation; e.g.:
  - <shitsuchiyau>, <shitsuchiyau>, <shitsuteu>, <shitsu-chiyau>, <shitsuteyou>, <hichiyau>, <hitsuteu>; 七郎  
→ /**shicchou**/ 'seventh son' (modern Hachijō *shicchō*)
  - <daichii>, <daidjii>, <daijihi>, <daishii>, <dahijihii>, <taidjii>; 美し, 美しき, うつくしき, 見事  
→ /**daijii**/ 'beautiful' (modern Hachijō *deajikya*)

## (2) – Methods and findings

- In most cases, I observed that variants are due to **allography in the classical Japanese spelling**, such as <ou> / <au>, <teu> / <chiyau>.
- In other cases, they show variations that exist in modern-day Hachijō:
  - **d**okurou / **r**okurou 'sixth son'
  - **h**itsuteu / **sh**itsuchiyau 'seventh son'
  - yok**k**e / yoke 'good'
  - hi**i**ru / he**i**ru 'moth'
  - ho**a** / ho**u** / ha**a** 'mother'

## (2) – Methods and findings

- In some cases, a few variants are most likely to be **copy mistakes**, for instance in Mishima, 1801:
  - <**beta**>, 出来の悪き : *heta* (ベ / ヘ)
  - <**kusudama**>, 盗賊 : *nusutama* (ク / ヌ)
  - <**geshi**>, 少し : *koshi* (ゲ / コ)

## (2) – Methods and findings

- Compiling this data also allowed me to notice that most items occur in at least two wordlists, and a few even occur in all of them.
- Some newer wordlists also appear to be quite visibly **based on older ones**, sometimes with notable changes.
- After removing double counts, I estimate the total amount of old Hachijō data in those wordlists at **about 730 items**, i.e. roughly **1000 lexemes**.

## (2) – Methods and findings

- When comparing this data with modern-day wordlists (such as HIRAYAMA et al. 1992-1994; ASANUMA, 1999; YAMADA, 2010), we can see that:
  - **roughly half** of Hachijō lexical items are still in use to this day
  - **many words** that were common in old Hachijō are not used anymore (like *taka-dara* 'basket', found in 5 wordlists)
  - **many words** (at least 130) **are impossible to analyse** and will need further investigation



# Conclusion

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- Wordlists from the Edo period are **highly valuable** as they are the **first attestation of Hachijō**.
- However, they **must be used with caution**, as they were written by mainlanders for mainlanders, and then intensively copied and altered.
- **Much more research is needed** on this topic in order to analyse difficult words and to include them to the description of the language.

おかげさまで！

/ Thank you very much!

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