

軍記物語の語り、覚書

—『ローランの歌』と比較して—

山下宏明

A Note on some Narrative Techniques in Medieval Japanese Storytelling: with reference to the Song of Roland.

Hiroaki YAMASHITA

What are the compositional techniques of oral literature? In considering this problem it is useful to examine the storyteller's use of his materials and how he presents them; in other words, the structure of the narrative. A storyteller constructs his narrative with an audience in mind. Narrative has three parameters; narrator, audience, and story material. Analysis of many types of Japanese oral literature has led me to formulate the following types of structures relating these three parameters:

- (A) The narrator maintains a third person point of view, presenting his materials objectively. Explanatory narrative.
- (A') In the midst of explanatory narrative, the narrator becomes exceptionally aware of his audience, addressing them directly.
- (B) The narrator enters into past events, separated from him temporally and spatially, relating them serially as if he were present. Reportage.

1) Japanese oral literature originally flourished in rural villages. As time passed, the aristocracy and priestly classes in the capital composed various kinds of literature which were profoundly influenced by the oral literature of rural villages. One is the warrior tale; "Masakado-ki 将門記", "Mutsuwa-ki 陸奥話記", "Hōgen Monogatari 保元物語", "Heiji Monogatari 平治物語", "Heike Monogatari 平家物語", "Taihei-ki 太平記" and so on. Another is the oral tale; "Kōwakabukyoku 幸若舞曲 or medieval tales for dancing", "SekkyōJōruri 説経浄瑠璃", "Old Jōruri 古浄瑠璃" and so on. Many of these various oral literatures still survive.

2) Hiroaki Yamashita 山下宏明, "Narrative and music of the *Tale of the Heike* 平家物語の語りと曲節", Bungaku 文学 November 1979 Tokyo Iwanami shoten 岩波書店.

- (B') The narrator abandons his third person stance, becoming one of the characters within the narrative, relating events as he experiences them.
- (C) The narrator relates the emotions or judgments of the characters, using direct speech or reporting unspoken thoughts.

For the moment we will consider the first four structural paradigms, A, A', B and B', in application to the *Song of Roland*.³⁾ I quote lines 2,646 and following; from Mr. Brault's recent edition:

The day is clear and the sun is shining.
 The emir disembarks from the lighter,
 Espanelis gets off with him on his right,
 Seventeen kings follow in his train,
 I cannot tell you how many counts and dukes there are.

In these lines, the narrative "I" is located where the pagan army advances, observing the ranks as they pass by in succession, and narrating the events as if he were reporting them. This type of "reportage" is the basic narrative format of the *Song of Roland*; and in this respect it demonstrates the same structure as the warrior tales and battle stories of medieval Japan.

In addition to type B (reportage) narrative, the narrator of the *Song of Roland* sometimes addresses his audience directly, as in lines 2,338-39:

Roland struck a dark stone,
 He whacks off more than I can tell you.⁴⁾

There are also the passages beginning "See now", such as lines 1989 and following, which may be considered direct address of the audience by the narrator:

3) Oxford Version (La chanson de Roland; Texte original et traduction par Gerard Moignet; Paris 1968). English translation is by Gerard J. Brault's "The Song of Roland". The Pennsylvania State University. 1978. There are some places where I have rendered the translation more literal in consideration of the narrative.

4) Original text says "Plus en abat que jo ne vos sai dire". Brault translates this line into "He whacks off more than I can say".

See now Roland, who has fainted upon his horse,
And Oliver, who has suffered a mortal wound.

Such lines fall into our category A'. However, expressions of direct address are very rare in the *Song of Roland*. The basic narrative structure in the *Song of Roland* is reportage, with occasional examples of direct address of the audience. What should we make of this? Of course I can give no definite answer to this question in the scope of a verbal presentation; but by introducing certain material from the Japanese narrative tradition, I hope to provide some clues to an understanding of the question. What follows is a hypothetical consideration of how the narrative structures of Japanese oral literature developed.

Japanese oral literature can be grossly divided into two categories. The first flourished in rural villages and is profoundly influenced by folk beliefs. We may call this folk narrative. The second category, warrior tales, flourished mainly in the capital. The aristocracy and priestly classes participated in the composition of these works, which display a more self-consciously fictional form. Representative of the folk narrative forms is *sekkyō jōruri* (which we might describe as Buddhist story sermons)⁵⁾. In *sekkyō jōruri*, the protagonist's career typically follows a pattern of many sufferings, tragic death, and rebirth as a god. In *sekkyō jōruri*, the narrator frequently addresses his audience directly.

In such warrior tales as the *Tale of the Heike* (in Japanese, *Heike Monogatari*)⁶⁾, however, there are almost no examples of such direct address. We should note that in fictional tales such as the *Tale of Genji*, produced by the courtly society of the Heian period, direct address of the audience is found. These works take the form of tales recited by court ladies to other ladies in the palace. *Monogatari* (which we may translate as "recitational fiction", a category spanning both oral

5) Sekkyō Jōruri: (a literal translation would cause more problems than it would solve). A recitational art form typifying what I have called "folk narrative". It is in the same stream of development as Heike recitation and Noh drama. "Buddhist story-sermons" will serve as a descriptive rendering of the term.

6) Heike Monogatari: (Tale of the Heike 平家物語) Warrior tale. Lengthy fictional account of the struggle for supremacy between the Heike 平家 and Genji 源氏 clans in late 12th century Japan. Portions of the work are still recited by blind singers in the city of Nagoya. English translations by A.L. Sadler (1918-21), Hiroshi Kitagawa 北川ヒロシ and Bruce T. Tsuchida (1975); French translation by Rene Sieffert (1975).

and written literature but inclusive of neither)—*monogatari*⁷⁾ fiction was, in the beginning, composed for recitation by a narrator before an audience. In the warrior tales on the other hand, direct address, which reflects this narrator/audience situation, is almost never found. In other words, these works display a closed narrative structure. As an example of this development in the technique of the warrior tale, consider the *Tale of the Heiji Era*⁸⁾ (in Japanese, *Heiji Monogatari*). This tale recounts the Heiji rebellion, caused by a factional split in the court of mid-12th century Kyōto. Of the many variant texts extant, the oldest is referred to as the “first variant text”⁹⁾.

The protagonist of the tale, Minamoto no Yoshitomo¹⁰⁾, defeated in battle at Kyōto, flees toward the eastern provinces. Midway he stops at a place called Noma, where he is betrayed and assassinated by a trusted retainer. Konnōmaru¹¹⁾, one of Yoshitomo's housemen, accompanies him on this journey. He escapes after witnessing his lord's assassination and returns to Kyōto, where he calls on Yoshitomo's wife Tokiwa. In the “first variant text”, Konnōmaru appears before Tokiwa and relates the events following Yoshitomo's departure from the capital. He describes the scene of his lord's assassination as follows:

At daybreak on the third of the month, at a place called Noma no Utsumi in the province of Owari, our lord was slain by the hand of Osada Shirō Tadamune, whose family have been housemen for generations.

7) *Monogatari* 物語: A term of extremely broad application, including much of both oral and written medieval narrative, from the fantastic to the historical. The word is often translated as “tale”.

8) *Tale of the Heiji Era*: Warrior tale. A fictional account of the abortive Heiji rebellion, a struggle for power between opposing factions at the court in mid-12th century Kyōto. No English translation available; French translation by René Sieffert (1968).

9) Oldest extant text of the *Heiji Monogatari* 平治物語, a fictional account of 12th century power struggle at the court in Kyōto. “*Heiji Monogatari Kujōkebon to kenkyū* 平治物語九条家本と研究 (Mikan kokubun shiryō kankōkai 未刊国文資料刊行会 Toyohashi 1960).

10) Minamoto no Yoshitomo 源義朝: Head of the Genji clan, promulgator and leader of the abortive Heiji rebellion 平治の乱, who was betrayed and assassinated by one of his own retainers while fleeing from the capital.

11) Loyal retainer in Yoshitomo's retinue, who witnesses his lord's assassination. In the first variant text of the *Heiji Monogatari*, he is represented as narrator of the story of Yoshitomo's death, which he reports to Yoshitomo's wife Tokiwa 常葉. Some scholars think the first variant text was written by Konnōmaru himself, or from his narration. My opinion on this point may be found in “The Structure of Story-telling in Japanese War Tales—with Special Reference to the Scene of Yoshitomo's Last Moments—” (ACTA ASIATICA 37, The Tōhō Gakkai 東方学会 Tokyo 1979).

Konnōmaru's report takes the form of direct speech. It is not the objective reportage of a third person unconnected with the events. Konnōmaru, who actually accompanied Yoshitomo and witnessed his assassination at first hand, recalls and relates these events in detail. Between the narrator Konnōmaru and the listener Tokiwa unfolds a vivid tale of their lord Yoshitomo and those who accompanied him. The narrative situation is clearly demonstrated by the following excerpt:

Thereafter seven or eight of Tadamune's men forced their way into the bathhouse. All (our lord) uttered was "Isn't Kamata there?", not knowing that Kamata had been killed in the early evening. Your servant lay flat on the ground, with my master's sword locked in my arms.

It is clear from the content and syntax of this passage that the narrator Konnōmaru is relating to Tokiwa and her attendants, events which he experienced directly. Konnōmaru uses the deferential expression *kono warawa*, which means literally "this child", and by extension "your servant" or "I", to refer to himself in Tokiwa's presence. He also uses honorific language: in Japanese, special morphemes are prefixed or suffixed to verbs and nouns when a speaker is addressing a person of higher rank than himself, or when he discusses matters relating to such a person. The use of such honorific speech on Konnōmaru's part indicates that in speaking to Tokiwa or of Yoshitomo, he is aware of their superior social status. In this way the "first variant text" uses forms of direct address in relating Konnōmaru's narration to Tokiwa. In my opinion, battle tales also began in this way, as reports before an audience using direct address.

In the "fourth variant text"¹²⁾, a later and more polished version of the *Tale of the Heiji Era*, this first person, eye witness account of Yoshitomo's assassination is entirely absent. Konnōmaru, who narrates these events in the "first variant text", becomes himself an object of narration:

Konnōmaru arrived at the bathhouse to rinse his master, carrying the latter's sword, so the assassins were not able to carry out the deed. He

12) A later and more polished version of the *Heiji Monogatari*. "Hōgen Monogatari/Heiji Monogatari" (Iwanami shoten 岩波書店 Tokyo 1961).

called "Bring my lord's robe. Is there no one there?", but since all was prepared for the assassination, there was no reply. Again Konnōmaru called "Hey! Isn't anyone there?"

In the "fourth variant text", it is not Konnōmaru the eye witness who relates the story, but rather a third person narrator, removed from the locus of action.

The representative work of the warrior tale category is the *Tale of the Heike* (or *Heike Monogatari*). Its narrative format is that of the "fourth variant text" of the *Tale of the Heiji Era*, which is to say third person narrative. Broadly considered, the *monogatari* tradition in Japan springs from the interaction of narrator and audience. We may liken this to the apron stage used in performances of Japanese medieval drama; the apron is a long runway extending straight out from the stage well into the seating area. The audience is thus brought into very close contact with the action onstage. Similarly, the narrator of early *monogatari* preserved a close interaction between his audience on the one hand, himself and his story on the other. As Japanese drama evolved, the apron stage gave way to the proscenium stage familiar to all of you. The audience was separated from the stage, becoming spectators rather than participants. Recited narrative underwent a similar development. Direct address of the audience and the vivid impression it made, fell into disuse. This is one stage in the development of recited narrative into polished fiction; but what is behind this development? It is the fixation or codification of tales. The cause of this fixation must be considered from many points of view; but I think, one of its causes is probably fixation of the tunes with which they were recited. I also think that Japanese oral literature as it originally existed can be classified into two categories, one of which is prayers to a god, the other of which is narration about a god. The former was generally connected with a melody.

The *Tale of the Heike* is sung to the accompaniment of a lute-like instrument, the biwa. Ten melodies, which can be classified into over ten types, are more variable and complex than those of the folk tales. Musically, each episode of the

13) For instance, we have the stage for Noh drama and Kabuki drama these days. Shigehiko Toyama's "Kindai dokusha ron 近代読者論 Theory of the modern reader". (Tarumi shobō 垂水書房 Tokyo 1964) contains an excellent analysis of these problems.

Tale of the Heike is a subtle combination of several of these melodies.¹⁴⁾ The melodies reflect the narrator's attitude toward his subject matter. In structure, the melodic sequence of each episode is strictly regulated. Thus, whole recitation of the *Tale of the Heike* is very polished musically, it is also nearly invariable. The actual singer recites according to the fixed melodic pattern, making no changes on behalf of the audience. This is one reason why the *Tale of the Heike* does not have the same open, audience-oriented structure found in folk narrative.

As I said at the outset, the basic narrative format of the *Song of Roland* is what I have called reportage, with occasional instances of direct address of the audience on the narrator's part. What might this structural format mean in terms of the historical development of the work? My view is that the Oxford text, considered in terms of the development of medieval Japanese narrative, has moved away from folk narrative and is in the process of fixation. The work as it has been transmitted to us would represent a point in this process of codification. I would of course appreciate your remarks on the applicability of my analysis of narrative formats in medieval Japan to such works as the *Song of Roland*.

The *Song of Roland* closes with the line

Ci falt la geste que Turolodus declinet

which Arinaga Hiroto¹⁵⁾ has translated as

チュロルデュス歌に作る史籍は、ここに終る。

In other words, "Here ends the history which Turolodus rendered in song." This is of course only one of many possible translations. The last line of the *Song of Roland* can be interpreted to mean that the work closes not as an oral recitation, but as a self-consciously literary version of a traditional story. This is in accord with my hypothesis, based on the Japanese experience.

14) Hiroaki Yamashita "Introduction to Heike biwa" (Teiji Ichiko 市古貞次 "Heike Monogatari (2)" Shōgakkan 小学館 Tokyo 1975), and "Narrative and music of the Tale of the Heike".

15) "Roran no uta ローランの歌 Song of Roland", translated by Hiroto Arinaga 有永弘人. (Iwanami shoten 岩波書店 Tokyo 1965).

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