

Japanese Language and Literature

Journal of the American Association of Teachers of Japanese

jll.pitt.edu | Vol. 56 | Number 1 | April 2022 | DOI: 10.5195/jll.2022.225

ISSN 1536-7827 (print) 2326-4586 (online)

A Failure of Vision: Diachronic Failure and the Rhetoric of Rupture in the *Taiheiki*

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Introduction

The *Taiheiki* 太平記 (A chronicle of great peace, fourteenth century) tells the story of the ninety-sixth emperor Go-Daigo's 後醍醐天皇 (1288–1339) triumph over the Kamakura shogunate (鎌倉幕府 *Kamakura bakufu*), establishment of the Kemmu Imperium (建武新政 *Kemmu shinsei*, 1333–1336), and fall from grace that led to the Wars of the Northern and Southern Courts (南北朝動乱 *Nanbokuchō dōran*, 1336–1392).¹ Exciting stuff, and yet excitement is not the first thing that comes to mind when thinking of the *Taiheiki*, whose parts never quite merge into a thematic whole. The latter half is so disjointed that Paul Varley facetiously suggests that “the *Taiheiki*’s title should be changed from ‘Chronicle of Great Peace’ to ‘Chronicle of Great Horror’ (*Taihenki*).”² Rather, the *Taiheiki* is noteworthy for its lack of thematic cohesion, an absence of definitive authorship, abstruse biases, and bland, formulaic prose.³ Further, the text offers no explanation of the title, leaving us to ponder its connection to a narrative whose axis is not peace but war. And yet in spite of these weaknesses it enjoyed immense popularity during the Sengoku (1467–1615) and Tokugawa (1600–1868) periods, when people of all backgrounds sought to draw from it lessons on the nature of warfare and governance.⁴

This article has two main arguments. First, the *Taiheiki* is a failed narrative, one whose attempt to preserve the diachronic historical tradition from which it was born was at odds with the times. In failing to create a diachronic narrative along the lines of other war chronicles such as the *Heike monogatari* (平家物語 *Tales of the Heike*), the text also failed to achieve the popularity of other chronicles whose clarity of theme and tightness of narrative imbued them with a significance that rooted itself in the Japanese imaginary. In other words, the relevance of the *Taiheiki* stemmed from its parts—from episodes such as Kusunoki Masashige’s



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suicide at the Battle of Minatogawa, or Kō no Moronao (高師直 ?–1351), of *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (A treasury of loyal retainers, eighteenth century) fame, stealing the wife of Enya Hangan—rather than the whole.

Second, the terms *basara* (婆娑羅 ostentation or ostentatious), *fushigi* (不思議 mysterious or bizarre), and *gekokujō* (下克上 the low conquering the high) are characteristic of what I call the rhetoric of rupture, language that directly challenged imperial authority and the courtly tradition. By defining actions, events, and individuals using these terms, this rhetoric sought to contain their disruptive energies and make them serve the authors' attempts at fostering ideological coherence in the narrative. And yet, the events of the Nanbokuchō Wars themselves militated against coherence. In failing to envision a future in which imperial authority triumphed and order restored, the narrative presaged a different future in which that authority would be displaced by the harsh pragmatism of warrior power. In sum, the *Taiheiki's* critical stance toward rupturing events reveals not only a fundamental belief in the power of literature, war chronicles in particular, to restore social order, but also apprehension about such a reconciliation not coming to pass.

A Text Divided against Itself, Cannot Stand: Diachronic Failure and the Rhetoric of Rupture in the *Taiheiki*

According to Ōtsu Yūichi, war chronicles (軍記物語 *gunki monogatari*) were written as tales of rebellion against imperial authority (王権 *ōken*) so as to stage its eventual restoration.⁵ Texts such as the *Heike monogatari* (平家物語 Tales of the Heike, fourteenth century) were largely diachronic narratives meant to restore imperial order in the wake of conflict.⁶ Fast forward to the *Nanbokuchō* period, when the rupturing of the imperial lineage in the late thirteenth century made the creation of a diachronic, imperial-centric history more difficult than it had been in the past when the imperial order reigned unopposed. Not that people did not try; indeed, the *Taiheiki*, purportedly completed by 1374, nearly two decades before that rupture was “officially” resolved, was just that, an attempt to imagine a return to stability during, and shortly after, the bulk of the *Nanbokuchō* upheaval. Consequently, its authors would have found it difficult to craft a diachronic narrative that would reconcile a realm yet divided, a failure that permitted the development of an imaginary history in which the *Nanbokuchō* Wars continued beyond their time and subsequent wars could be conceived of as extensions of that conflict.

In failing to create a diachronic narrative, the *Taiheiki* represented a shift away from the epistemic rules that characterized life within the imperial order and toward what I term the pragmatic (実利 *jitsuri*) episteme, a world governed by the logic of *gekokujō*. In his seminal work, *Muen, kugai, raku: Nihon chūsei no jiyū to heiwa* (Unattachment, the sacred, paradise: freedom and peace in medieval Japan, 1987), Amino Yoshihiko uses the term *jitsuri* as a component of his theory of *muen* (無縁), or unconnectedness, to indicate an epistemological shift from an era dominated by belief in the sacred and social ties bound up in court hierarchy and ritual through which the sacred was made manifest, and in which freedom, or asylum (アジール), from social connection was undesirable and available only to a select few (such as recluses, or *tonseisha* 遁世者), to an era in which such freedom was desirable and could be acquired through violence and force of will, such as occurred during Japan's vaunted Sengoku period.⁷

Satō Kazuhiko expresses a similar notion when he argues that the *Taiheiki* was conceived of from the position of someone among the lower classes, a representation of the “ideology of the lower” (地下の思想 *jige no shisō*).⁸ Indeed, the text is replete with expressions of this concept, *basara* being the most conspicuous, but there are others: Go-Daigo's famous “free and easy gatherings” (無礼講 *bureikō*) allowed the emperor the opportunity to harness the power of the lower classes (地下の人々 *jige no hitobito*) in order to affect socio-political change, while allowing men like the Hino brothers Toshimoto (日野俊基 ?–1332) and Suketomo (日野資朝 1290–1332), the Buddhist monk Monkan (文観 1278–1357), and so-called *akutō* (悪党 evil band) types like Kusunoki Masashige (楠正成 1294–1336) the opportunity to “change history and reject structures of authority” on a scale broader than perhaps any time since the establishment of the *ritsuryō* 律令 state.⁹

Used in combination, the two notions—*jitsuri* and *jige no shisō*—are useful because they allow us to conceptualize the shift toward the pragmatic from two angles: on the one hand, *jitsuri*, with its focus on the sacred, has a religious connotation, while on the other, *jige no shisō* represents the power of the lower classes, what Satō calls *dōshin gōryoku no shisō* (同心合力の思想), or the “ideology of united power.”¹⁰ Going forward, I have elected to use Amino's term to refer to both, partly because (to my mind at least) it is pithier, and partly because it encapsulates both notions, in that the decline of the sacred authority of the imperial house prior to, during, and after the fourteenth century was the crucial factor in

engendering the possibility of Satō's *jige no shisō*, which in turn hastened that decline.

Eiko Ikegami notes that the primary motivation of the warrior class during the medieval period was freedom (from external control, it is important to note, not necessarily moral or social responsibility) and a fierce sense of self-determinism, especially the right to pursue the “self-redress of grievances” (自力救済 *jiriki kyūsai*).¹¹ Just as *jiriki kyūsai* is an expression of Amino's *jitsuri* or Satō's *jige no shisō*, so too is the *Taiheiki* an expression of a broader sociological shift toward the pragmatic that saw the warrior class transform from servants of the court to its custodians under the Tokugawa: in narrating the warrior class's subversion of imperial authority, the text fails to restore the imperial order, instead—and perhaps inadvertently—depicting the advent of the pragmatic. Accordingly, that the *Taiheiki*'s authors failed to craft a diachronic narrative is emblematic of Japan's shift toward the more pragmatic approach to power and authority that obtained during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

This transition has been referred to using the rhetorical term *gekokuujō*. During the fourteenth century, the word was used to describe people or events that destabilized society.¹² In other words, *gekokuujō* meant anything that seemed out of the ordinary, where ordinary meant the world as seen through the eyes of the imperial order (王権秩序 *ōken chitsujo*). David Spafford notes that we should not attribute “to *gekokuujō* more significance than it deserves...the world of *gekokuujō* is flattened into one defined by conflict and driven by the imperative of victory (or at least survival)—seemingly devoid, in its self-reflexive pronouncements, of any sentimentalism about the past and its norms.”¹³ To see the medieval world through the lens of *gekokuujō*, then, is to see it teleologically, a view that would strip individuals such as the *basara* warlord Sasaki Dōyo (佐々木道誉 1306–1373) of any nuance—a mistake, of course, for such warriors were highly-attuned to socio-cultural norms, if only to go against them. Even so, the term remains valuable because it encapsulates the pragmatism of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, the warrior class's drive toward self-determination, and the push by commoners and lower class warriors to carve out spheres of influence, all of which are analagous to Amino's *jitsuri* and Satō's *jige no shisō*. Further, it reveals a growing realization that for many people of the fourteenth century the world of the past was under assault, and that there was a recognized momentum toward greater autonomy from external control and from the hierarchy of the

imperial order that had once barred the advancement those of the lower orders such as Kusunoki no Masashige.

Of course we cannot impute this belief to every warrior or member of the lower echelons of society, nor can it tell us much about the particular motivations or experiences of those who participated in events associated with *gekokuujō*.¹⁴ Considering that the supposed authors of the *Taiheiki*—the monks Echin (恵鎮 1281–1356), Gen'e 玄恵 (1269?–1350), and a priest known as Kojima (小島法師 ?–1374)—were Buddhist monks whose literary authority was rooted in the exoteric-esoteric (顯密 *kenmitsu*) episteme of the past, it does not seem out of the ordinary that the narrative is critical of iconoclasts such as Sasaki Dōyo or the Zen monk Musō Soseki (夢想疎石 1275–1351), whose goals required a power structure in which status, precedent, and hierarchy were less important than results.¹⁵ For the *Taiheiki* and its authors, these agents of *gekokuujō* sought nothing less than to abrogate the hierarchical world of the past and thus the power structures in which the authors, and the text, were rooted. Accordingly, the *Taiheiki* was an ideological battleground where its conservative authors attempted to create a literary world in which there would be what Michele Marra calls “a restoration of the pristine order: the renewed victory of the top over the bottom (*jokokuge*) in the final silencing of subversion.”¹⁶ Although Marra’s pronouncement is directed at the “citizens,” or *machishū* (町衆), of the fifteenth century, it is no less appropriate in this context, for although Japan’s histories could afford to be diachronic up through the fourteenth century, the fall of the Kamakura shogunate and the chaotic nature of the *Nanbokuchō* struggle militated against any diachronic reading of the world.

The *Taiheiki*’s failure—the fault lines in its diachronic facade, as it were—are evident in its deployment of the rhetoric of rupture as a means of bolstering particular epistemological *a priori*, such as the inviolability of imperial authority, the locus of which was the belief in the interconnectedness of “imperial law and Buddhist law” (王法仏法 *ōhō-buppō*), which stemmed from a fundamental belief in the existence of the sacred—i. e., Shintō deities (神 *kami*) and Buddhas (仏 *hotoke*). The *Nanbokuchō* Wars clove that inviolability in twain, allowing warrior government an opportunity to acquire more power at the expense of both. Warrior authority, predicated as it was on its non-divine lineage and its monopoly of physical violence, was a profoundly worldly solution to problems the imperial court was loathe to employ when it could avoid the taboo of bloodshed.¹⁷ The Northern and Southern courts each represented

differing visions of governance, both revolving around the sacrality of imperial authority, specifically that of the emperor (天皇 *tennō*). But Go-Daigo's vision of rule was dependent on the imperial house's sacred bloodline stretching back to Amaterasu, and the authority of the office of emperor was derived from that connection; warriors, on the other hand, could claim no such divine ancestry, and so were compelled to rule mimetically—i. e., by controlling imperial authority in order to rule “as if” they were that authority—through their monopoly over physical violence.¹⁸ The ubiquity of the rhetoric of rupture in the *Taiheiki* demonstrates an awareness of, and resistance to, this trend.

Paved with Good Intentions: The Diachronic Failure of the *Taiheiki*

The *Taiheiki* is a failed text whose deficiencies largely stem from its consistent inability to shape the synchronic events of the *Nanbokuchō* Wars into a diachronic whole. The text is a jumble of episodes loosely ordered around events related to structures of power, namely that of imperial authority and warrior government, and usually divided into a two- or three-part structure, enumerated as follows.¹⁹

Chapters 1–11 chart the rise of Go-Daigo and the subsequent fall of the Kamakura shogunate at the hands of an army led by loyal followers such as Kusunoki Masashige and Nitta Yoshisada (新田義貞 1301–1338) and the Kamakura defector and future shogun Ashikaga Takauji (足利尊氏 1305–1358). Served by this diverse collection of warriors, Go-Daigo destroys the Hōjō-led Kamakura shogunate and from the ashes of war establishes his Kemmu Imperium.

Chapters 12–20 describe Go-Daigo's descent into moral turpitude and the subsequent rebellion of Takauji and his brother Tadayoshi (1306–1352). The brothers would eventually form an alliance with the Jimyōin 持明院 imperial bloodline, rival to Go-Daigo's Daikakuji (大覚寺), and go on to defeat him and occupy Kyoto, using the authority of the Jimyōin to create a new shogunate. Meanwhile, Go-Daigo would flee with the imperial regalia to the Yoshino mountains south of Kyoto and establish his Southern Court.

Chapters 21–40 follow the disorder accompanying the Ashikaga's attempts to deal with various challenges that stand in the way of their hegemony.²⁰ These chapters spend a great deal of time on interrogating the root cause of disorder, with a marked focus on two factors: (1) on “ostentatious warlords” (*basara daimyō*) such as Sasaki Dōyo, Kō no

Moronao, and Toki Yoritō (土岐頼遠 ?–1342), warriors so consumed with desire for wealth and power beyond their station that they were willing to throw the realm into turmoil to achieve them; and (2) on the vengeful spirits of the Southern Court and their role in fomenting the Ashikaga civil war known as the Kannō Disturbance (観応の擾乱 *Kannō no jōran*). The chronicle concludes with a questionable promise of peace under the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (足利義満 1358–1408) and his regent Hosokawa Yoriyuki (細川頼之 1329–1392).

The three-part structure of the *Taiheiki* follows the above division while the two-part structure condenses parts 1 and 2 into a single narrative, the rise and fall of Go-Daigo. What is important is not the divisions themselves but their plausibility, which, combined with the authors' inability to adhere to a thematic core, attests to its lack of diachronicity preventing the narrative from legitimating, and restoring, imperial authority under the Ashikaga.²¹ The primary trait of the *Taiheiki* is its failure to provide the sort of diachronic narrative characteristic of previous war chronicles, especially the Heike *variants*, to which its authors aspired.

This failure can be attributed to what Yamashita Hiroaki calls a “narrative of the now” (*ima no katari*), stories meant to bring back the dead as spirits and bridge the gap between space and time.²² With Kamakura's fall and the subsequent sundering of the realm into two sacerdotal centers, the *Nanbokuchō* Wars were not easily fit into orthodox conceptualizations of history; likewise, the authors of the *Taiheiki* did not have the advantage of hindsight or a stable political order from which to impose cohesion on the narrative as did other war chronicles. Thus, these so-called narratives of the now allowed them to bridge the gap between their own disordered epoch to earlier times when the (imagined) orderly society of the *ritsuryō* world still held sway in the hopes of a return to that world, for which the spirits of the dead had fought and died.

War chronicles prior to the *Taiheiki* sought to reproduce the continuities by which medieval Japanese made sense of the world, their narratives depicting how rupture was staved off and peace restored. In short, they were largely diachronic affairs meant to reaffirm what Michele Foucault might call “the nondual world of classification that was the orderly hierarchy of life as lived.”²³ However, the fourteenth century was a time when that order was challenged, destroyed, transformed, or inverted, and so it should come as no surprise that the *Taiheiki* failed to forge the sort of diachronic narrative that might preserve that world from the instability of the *Nanbokuchō* conflict.

In his discussion of original enlightenment (本学思想 *hongaku shisō*), David Bialock talks about *hongaku* as “an effect or symptom of a more complex discursive formation...and the reshaping of the medieval geographical imaginary...that created conditions favorable to the flourishing of a variety of logics founded on the play between difference and identity.”²⁴ This discursive formation was predicated on the rupture that was the *Nanbokuchō* conflict, wherein there was exceptional play between difference and identity, as we shall see in the following section. Although the authors of the *Taiheiki* sought the restoration of imperial authority through the sort of “closure suggested by a Foucaultian episteme...where everything serves the interests of power that gets expressed through the discursive formation” (where such closure is analogous to the creation of a diachronic narrative and the accompanying restoration of imperial authority), in the highly discursive environment of the fourteenth century, such closure was no longer possible.²⁵ Ironically, in that failure it became a truer telling of the events than any diachronic narrative could have been, and an accurate reflection of the complexity of early medieval Japan’s power dynamics.

For all its thematic incoherence, the *Taiheiki* does maintain two consistent patterns throughout the narrative: allusion to Chinese and Japanese history and a pattern of praise-criticism.²⁶ In his comparison of the use of allegories to Chinese history in the *Baishōron* (梅松論 Discourse on plums and pines) and the *Taiheiki*, Kitamura Masayuki argues that the latter text’s basic approach is to make allusions to Chinese tales and Japanese history in order to emphasize its praise and criticism;²⁷ Hyōdō Hiromi points out a similar strategy, a literary conceit he calls the “Genpei Alternation” theory (源平交代論 *Genpei kōtai-ron*), meant to manage the *Nanbokuchō* rupture by inventing an historical principle of the orderly alternation between the Taira and Minamoto families and imbuing it with all the significance of a war chronicle about rebellion against imperial authority.²⁸

The *Taiheiki* begins by doing just that, comparing the Kamakura shogun Hōjō Takatoki (北条高時 1304–1333) unfavorably to his predecessors who are depicted as upholding the imperial order. They “ministered to the needs of the distressed folk” and “lived modestly, dispensed benevolence, castigated their own faults, and observed the proprieties...‘Though highly placed, they were not dangerous; though the cup of their power was full, it did not overflow.’”²⁹ This, despite Hōjō Yoshitoki (北条義時 1163–1224) exiling Retired Emperor Go-Toba

following the 1221 Jōkyū War (承久の乱 1221). The point here is, of course, that Takatoki not only failed to live up to the morality of his predecessors—their frugality, their benevolence, their rectitude, their respect for precedent—but he too presided over the exile of an emperor.

Excoriations of Takatoki continue:

Takatoki turned his face away from the virtue of the emperor, holding his subject's duty as nothing...The deeds that [he] did were exceedingly base, and he was unashamed before the scorn of others. Without righteousness did he govern, not heeding the people's despair. By day and by night, with wanton acts he dishonored his glorious ancestors under the ground; in the morning and in the evening, with vain merriment he invited ruin in his lifetime. Fleeting indeed was his pleasure, even as the pleasure of Duke I of Wei who carried cranes; near at hand was his regret, even as the regret of dog-leading Li Ssu of Ch'in! Those who saw knit their eyebrows, and those who heard uttered condemnations.³⁰

Here allusion to Japan's past and Chinese antiquity accomplish several important tasks: (1) it connects the *Nanbokuchō* Wars to events stretching back to the Genpei Wars, fitting the former into a diachronic narrative; (2) it establishes the central conflict as a matter of imperial authority versus warrior power, where emperors such as Go-Daigo and warlords such as Takatoki (and, later, Ashikaga Takauji) are central to the story; (3) it sets a didactic, critical tone through its negative comparisons to better rulers and better times, such as its comparison of Takatoki to Duke I of Wei and Li Ssu of Ch'in, or its reference to the *Classic of Filial Piety* to describe Takatoki's poor qualities as a ruler;³¹ and (4) it augurs the importance of the rhetoric of rupture, depicting the *Nanbokuchō* epoch as one of epistemological conflict centered on whether imperial authority or warrior power would emerge triumphant.

If allusion is used to establish expectations of a diachronic narrative, then the pattern of praise-criticism is used to subvert those expectations. Kitamura identifies a tendency in the *Taiheiki* to lead with praise of individuals for their ideals and intentions only to criticize them for failing to live up to them.³² Take, for instance, Emperor Go-Daigo. Immediately following the condemnation of Takatoki, the *Taiheiki* launches into what initially seems to be an encomium, portraying the emperor as a savior come to restore order to a disordered realm. However, the story soon takes a surprising turn:

Truly was Go-Daigo an illustrious and sage sovereign, such a one as might bring justice to the state and peace to its people. Alas, that even a little he resembled Duke Huan of Chi and the Prince of Chu who lost his bow. Although he grasped the realm in his hand, because of this [his faults] he endured for but three years.³³

This reversal draws on a comparison to two characters from Chinese antiquity, Huan of Chi and the Prince of Chu, in order to subvert expectations for a diachronic narrative about the restoration of imperial authority. Huan's forced military conscriptions and unification of the civil and military functions of the state made him a despot in the eyes of Confucians, while the Prince of Chu's claim that his people would pick up his bow and fight for him was criticized by Confucius as small-minded, as Chu was unable to see past his own failures to recognize that he was a despot (霸王 *haō*)³⁴ The narrative's criticisms of Takatoki establish an expectation that Go-Daigo will be a savior, only to betray those expectations by leading the reader through a litany of Go-Daigo's positive traits only to conclude by juxtaposing Go-Daigo's faults with Takatoki's through allusion to despots and fools from China's past. Such reversals are common throughout the narrative and are essential in establishing an expectation of failure, as well as subverting expectations for a diachronic narrative.

The conclusion of the *Taiheiki* is similarly contradictory, ending in a manner that, although ostensibly providing the sort of hope for a return to peace, is far too definitive in its positive outlook to trust. The final episode depicts the rise of Hosokawa Yoriyuki to the office of shogunal regent and Ashikaga Yoshimitsu to shogun in 1367, providing a sanguine terminus to the narrative that offers very little aside from portents of war: emissaries from the Korean peninsula arrive begging for help against pirates (help the shogunate declines to give), after which the narrative embarks on an episode about the mythical Empress Jingū's (神功皇后) attack on Korea; a revolt by the warlord Shiba Takatsune (斯波高経 1305–1367), referred to here by his Buddhist name Dōchō (道朝); the deaths of the second shogun Ashikaga Yoshiakira and his the Deputy (關東公方 *Kantō kubō*) in Kamakura Ashikaga Motouji (足利基氏 1340–1367); the burning of the Ashikaga-sponsored Tenryūji temple; and a fight in the palace between monks of Enryakuji and Onjōji temples resulting in bloodshed. The lone ostensibly positive episode in the chapter, “The Matter of the Revival of the Middle Hall Gatherings” (*Chūden gyokai saikō no koto*), turns out to be negative as well, claiming that such gatherings are unsuitable for Japan

and depicting a series of bad omens, particularly the burning of Tenryūji temple, erected to pacify Go-Daigo's angry spirit.³⁵ In short, nowhere in the final chapter is there any foreshadowing of peace.

And yet the final passage suggests exactly that:³⁶

Of late Hosokawa Sama no Tō Yoriyuki presided over administration of the West, but because he destroyed his foes and made men his allies, and because it is said that the logic of his governance resembled the Jōei Formulary, it was decided in council that he would rise immediately to the office of shogunal regent and assist the young lord [Yoshimitsu]. Thus did Yoriyuki become Governor of Sagami Province and Chief of Staff (執事 *shitsuji*). His external appearance reflected his internal virtue, people said, and his family (氏族 *shizoku*) cleaved to him while other warlords (外様 *tozama*) obeyed his commands. Thus did the realm become peaceful. How auspicious!³⁷

This ending lends itself to two readings. The first is as a literal passage of celebration. It has been suggested that Yoriyuki, or perhaps an ally, had added to the text to celebrate his and Yoshimitsu's rise to power.³⁸ It is entirely plausible that Yoriyuki had a hand in the narrative's outcome, especially given the interest warlords had in the way they were depicted in war chronicles. Furthermore, it is possible that the final ten or so chapters were written in the years between 1358 when Ashikaga Takauji died and 1367 when Yoriyuki came to power. If so, it is unsurprising that he would have had the *Taiheiki* conclude as a paean to his and Yoshimitsu's new government. Finally, his—and the Ashikaga's—general dislike of *basara* and contentious relationship with warlords of the *shugo-daimyō* (守護大名 provincial constable) class would suggest that the critical stance taken toward *gekokujō* and *basara* in the last third of the narrative was a product of Yoriyuki's desire to restore order.³⁹ Nevertheless, a healthy dose of skepticism is in order, as the only concrete information we have on Yoriyuki's involvement comes from *Taiheiki hyōban hiden rijinshō* (太平記評判秘伝理尽鈔 Selected commentaries, secret transmissions, and underlying logic of the *Taiheiki*), a commentary written some two centuries after the completion of the *Taiheiki*.⁴⁰

The second reading is as an expression of irony.⁴¹ Despite peace being central to the narrative—as the title would seem to indicate—the text is replete with violence and betrayal, and the conclusion offers readers no guarantee that peace is in sight. This reading seems apropos, especially when we consider the possibility that the final passage serves as a point of

rupture presaging further disorder rather than a “felicitous words” (祝言 *shūgen*) such as might pacify the spirits of the dead (鎮魂 *chinkon*), protect the land, and restore or maintain order in the community.⁴² Further, when one recalls the pattern of praise-criticism underlying the narrative, one cannot help but ask whether the absence of any criticism of Yoriyuki might in fact be leading readers to extrapolate from that very absence their own criticism of the new regent and what is likely to happen during his time in office. Indeed, consider Susan Handleman’s claim that, “absence is the ground and content of the letter—signification arises through absence, rupture, and discontinuity of the letter.”⁴³ This is not to say that the authors necessarily intended an ironic reading, only that the narrative itself is largely pessimistic, and to attach a laudatory conclusion such as this could but generate a sort of *aporia*, or logical disjunction, that undermines any attempt to align the *Taiheiki* with the diachronic narratives of other war chronicles.

I take a conciliatory stance between these two readings because what I am interested in is the *aporia* generated by the text’s inconsistent biases.⁴⁴ Undoubtedly the rapidly-shifting political ground of the fourteenth century would have compelled the authors of the *Taiheiki* to maintain some modicum of objectivity so that they could narrate the events of the *Nanbokuchō* Wars and provide criticism where necessary without fear of reprisal regardless of the vicissitudes of war. On the other hand, the failure of the *Taiheiki* to mimic the diachronic narratives of other war chronicles was equally likely the result of both the historical fact of the imperial family’s continued division at the time of its writing and, *a posteriori*, the presence of warrior government, whose existence was inimical to its restoration. Or it may be that these views are not mutually exclusive. Regardless, the *aporia* generated is real, and a major reason preventing the text’s restorative function. Furthermore, this failure amounted to the continuation of the *Nanbokuchō* Wars in the medieval imaginary, and imbued the *Taiheiki* with a sort of ideological plasticity that allowed the text to remain relevant in a variety of chronological and spatial contexts.⁴⁵

The Rhetoric of Rupture: *Basara*, *Fushigi*, and *Gekokujō* in the *Taiheiki*

The *Taiheiki* functions as a signifier of epistemic rupture heralding the advent of a new age of pragmatism. Vyjayanthi Selinger’s insight into the crucial link between texts and ideology and the importance of that link for

legitimizing power is germane here, for war chronicles were essential sites in the legitimation, and restoration, of authority.⁴⁶ Ashikaga Tadayoshi was aware of this link, so much so that he ordered the *Taiheiki* amended to suit his tastes, and the sheer number of variants, by some counts over a hundred, speak to its perceived importance among warlords, who saw it as an opportunity to have their and their family's service recorded in the premier history of the age.⁴⁷ The ideology we are interested in here, however, is that of pragmatism (実利 *jitsuri*). The *Taiheiki*, far from legitimating either court or the Ashikaga, in fact paints a picture of a realm ruptured by that pragmatism, the result of which was an extension of the *Nanbokuchō* conflict in the medieval Japanese imaginary that lasted long after the conclusion of the fourteenth century.

This was done through what I call the rhetoric of rupture. Comprised of the terms *basara* (婆娑羅 ostentation), *fushigi* (不思議 bizarre; mysterious; uncanny), and *gekokujō* (下剋上 the low overturning the high), these words express anxiety surrounding the fate of imperial authority. The rhetoric of rupture served to agitate readers and “to give meaning to action,” where action meant a moral correction back to the past and the peace, fictional or not, of the imperial order.⁴⁸ Unfortunately for the authors of the *Taiheiki*, the synchronic nature of the conflict prevented them from creating a diachronic narrative that would have restored imperial authority and thus quelled that agitation. In other words, the rhetoric of rupture engendered *aporia* in the reader and expressed the authors' apprehension toward a new age in which warrior government's subversion of imperial authority could lead to but one outcome: war.

Basara

Before the *Nanbokuchō* period, *basara*, loosely translated as ostentation or ostentatious, did not denote gross ostentation. Rather, it was associated with the “non-person” (非人 *hinin*) class, and over time began to spread as those on the lower end of the social hierarchy, especially samurai, began to appropriate traditional symbols of wealth and power and recombined them into a sort of deviant expression of their hostility to the traditional hierarchy.⁴⁹ By the *Nanbokuchō* period, however, *basara* came to mean “those who repudiated the old order (i. e., the world of imperial authority) and held an uncompromising stance toward traditional power structures,” and was seen as a societal evil on par with *akutō*.⁵⁰

In describing Japan's medieval period, David Spafford writes:

[The medieval], which may seem more deserving of a capital “m” to us than it did to those who lived in it, could, and did, tolerate fragmentation, imbalance, and disorder to a degree that has long strained our ability to understand; as a system, if we can think of it as one, it was accommodating of change not because incremental change did not matter, but because the medieval derived whatever coherence it had (invoking “days of old”) from its availability to provide stability of meanings and expectations.⁵¹

Symbolism was an essential component of that stability in Japan’s medieval world. One’s choice of clothing or style of hair, for instance, was a visual symbol not only of rank and status, but also of continuity with the past and the order it represented. In other words, appearances were statements of one’s adherence to cultural norms rooted in that past, a fact made clear in the first episode of chapter 21, “The Audacity and Insolence of the Barbarians” (*Ban’i senshō burei no koto*):⁵²

Even in this time of disorder, warriors cared not for censure of the realm, indulging in all manner of luxuries and doing as they pleased...as a result, even when meeting a councilor (納言 *nagon*) or minister (宰相 *saishō*) on the road, warriors would point at them and laugh at their speech, and consequently courtiers soon began imitating the speech of warriors; creased caps (折烏帽子 *orieboshi*), which they were unaccustomed to wearing, appeared on their heads. Though they tried to look like warriors, their appearance was odd and the crown of their hats sat too low; they resembled neither courtiers nor warriors, and were like one who has forgotten how to walk in either the capital or provinces.⁵³

Although I have not quoted the passage in its entirety, it is replete with criticisms of *basara*-like behavior such as “censure” (誹り *soshiri*), “rewards exceeding one’s station” (乱階不次の賞 *rankai fuji no shō*), “not according to precedent” (礼にあらず *rei ni arazu*), and “unlawful” (法にあらず *hō ni arazu*). The *Taiheiki* aims these criticisms at behaviors, even ones as seemingly minor as one’s manner of dress, meant to undermine imperial authority precisely because these acts of rupture threaten to further disturb an already disordered world.⁵⁴

Fushigi

If *basara* indicates an act that threatens the imperial order, then its deployment in the *Taiheiki* in conjunction with another word in the

rhetoric of rupture, *fushigi*—the bizarre, mysterious, or uncanny—exacerbates the *aporia* such acts engender. This is evident in Chapter 23’s “The Matter of Toki Meeting the Imperial Procession and Committing an Outrage” (*Toki gyokō ni sankō shi rōzeki no koto*). This passage describes an encounter between the *basara* warlord Toki Yoritō and Kōgon, the first (then-retired) Northern Court sovereign, as the former rides home from an archery contest. Kōgon’s men announce the approach of the retired sovereign and expect the warriors to clear the road and perform the appropriate obeisance. Yoritō, however, has other ideas:

Yoritō had of late enjoyed great fortune and had comported himself without care of his reputation, and so he reigned in his mount and said scornfully, “There isn’t a man in this city for whom I should dismount. Who is this fool that speaks to me so? Someone clear these fellows out of here!”

The Retired Sovereign’s guards moved forward and said, “This is the Retired Sovereign’s procession, who are you to commit such an outrage?” To which Yoritō laughed sardonically, “Wait, did you say Retired Sovereign, or did you say dog? Well, if it’s a dog, shoot it down!”⁵⁵ And thirty or so of his men rode into the middle of the procession close to the carriage and riddled it with arrows. They cut the ox’s harness, and when the youthful ox-drivers tried to move the carriage [they found the] yoke was broken and it would not move. The attending nobles tried to protect the carriage from the arrows but they had been unhorsed and could do nothing. Yet they [Toki’s men] were not satisfied. They tore down the carriage’s hanging curtains and stomped on the wheel struts, and only then returned home . . . Later, being informed of the event, Lord Tadayoshi said, “Such a thing has never been heard of in other countries, and it goes without saying that something like this would occur in our court is exceedingly bizarre (*fushigi*).⁵⁶

The use of *fushigi* here is significant for several reasons. First, if, as Ōmori Kitayoshi argues, the *Taiheiki* deploys *fushigi* when events or actions undermine the ethics of the traditional order, then Toki’s trampling of Kōgon’s cart, whose wheels are an obvious symbol of the interconnectedness of imperial and Buddhist law, is a metaphorical assault on imperial authority.⁵⁷ Toki understood perfectly well that his act was a symbolic one meant to dominate that authority through violence. In other words, he sought to publicly demonstrate that symbolic authority could no longer prevent, contain, or divert warrior violence.

Second, *fushigi* draws the reader's attention to the sort of disruptions assailing the sense of order and chronology diachronic narratives sought to preserve. Toki's attack on the retired sovereign was just such an assault, an act so transgressive that the authors of the *Taiheiki*, ever eager to level criticism through comparisons to Chinese and Japanese antiquity, were compelled to transcend history with their final comment in order to condemn it.⁵⁸ It is also significant that Yoritō's attack occurs in the street is also important, for streets were places of powerful symbolic resonance, heterotopic spaces where one's place within society was negotiated, acted out, and observed.⁵⁹

Third, *fushigi* is used to explain inconsistencies with reality.⁶⁰ The reality offered by the *Taiheiki* is one in which the imperial order is made susceptible to change by its division into two centers of sacerdotal authority, the Northern and Southern Courts, and the presence of a warrior government able—and sometimes willing—to transcend that authority in order to achieve its aims.

It is telling that Ashikaga Tadayoshi is the one to utter the word *fushigi* here, since his real-life stance toward the court was conciliatory earns him some sympathy in the narrative in spite of some of his earlier transgressions, especially the poisoning of Go-Daigo's son, the famed warrior-prince Moriyoshi (護良親王 1308–1335).⁶¹ In short, Yoritō's act was so antithetical to the restoration of imperial authority that the only way the authors of the *Taiheiki* could express their anxiety and outrage was to express how anomalous was the act.

In the *Taiheiki*, *basara* warlords like Yoritō were anomalies who had a refined understanding of their newfound power and how to wield it. On some deep level they understood, as Hanna Skoda writes, that “violence as process is as much about representation and mediation as it is about the actual gestures involved, and the representation of violence depends most strikingly upon its definition by those with the power to delineate it.”⁶² Thus, in their willingness to use violence, both physical and symbolic, to redefine the rules of the established order, *basara* daimyo were in some sense *fushigi* themselves, strange and mysterious actors who did not play by the rules. They spoke the rhetoric of rupture, and as such were central participants in the overturning of the old imperial order in which power was expressed through the symbolic, in favor of a new world, the pragmatic world, in which the symbolic authority of the imperial bloodline was expressed through the raw, physical power of the warrior class.

Gekokujō

The word *gekokujō* appears in first in chapters 25 and 26, coinciding with the beginning of the *Kannō* Disturbance narrative, although the concept itself is evident throughout.⁶³ This disturbance was over whether leadership of the shogunate should continue to be divided between Ashikaga Takauji and his more conciliatory and policy-oriented brother Tadayoshi. *Gekokujō* is deployed here to signify an irrevocable shift toward the centralization of power and authority in the hands of the warrior class.

This shift is evident from the proliferation of vengeful spirits, especially *tengu* (天狗 goblins) and *oni* (鬼 demons).⁶⁴ The appearance of these mischievous spirits signals social disorder, as their main purpose is to thwart peace by hindering enlightenment and stigmatize those thought to be enemies of social order.⁶⁵ It is tempting to believe that the authors blame the spirits of the Southern Court for the continued disorder, but consider the following passage: Although the realm appeared peaceful, correct governance had deteriorated because warriors did not respect the Buddhas, gods, or the imperial regalia, and had even appropriated the lands of the great administrative and the line of regent (摂関家 *sekkanke*) families.”⁶⁶ Given the largely negative opinion of warrior governance throughout the latter half of the *Taiheiki*, it is likely that the authors are subtly suggesting that the appearance of vengeful spirits is in fact the fault of the Ashikaga, in particular their patronage of Zen.

Chapter 25’s “The Matter of *Tengu* Being Reborn to the Wife of Tadayoshi” (*Tengu Tadayoshi no shikke ni keshō suru koto*) tells of a nameless monk staying the night at Ninnaji temple. There he observes carriages flying toward him from the direction of Mt. Atago, and when they arrive at the mountain, Prince Moriyoshi, depicted here in the outfit he wore as abbot (座主 *zasu*) of Enryakuji, and three priests who served Go-Daigo, Shunga (春雅), Chikyō (智教), and Chūen (仲円), emerge from the carriage. The monk feels as if he has fallen into the realm of the *tengu* (天狗道 *tengudō*) as he watches them discuss their frustration with a “world ruled by warriors.”⁶⁷ They then hatch a plot to throw the world into disorder. Moriyoshi will possess Ashikaga Tadayoshi’s unborn son to sow discord between the brothers and lead Tadayoshi to evil. Shunga will possess Myōkitsu (妙吉侍者), a servant of the famous Zen monk Musō Soseki. Chikyō will aggravate tensions between Takauji and Tadayoshi’s major supporters by possessing Uesugi Shigeyoshi (上杉重能 ?–1350) and

Hatakeyama Tadamune (畠山直宗 ?–1350) while Chūen will possess their enemies the Kō brothers Moronao and Moroyasu (高師泰 ?–1351).

The monk is right to fear, for, as Wakayashi Haruko tell us, a *tengu*'s power was proportionate to the rank of the individual in life.⁶⁸ Moriyoshi alone would have been a fearsome opponent, but all four together were legitimate threats to social order, able even to topple the Ashikaga through their posthumous machinations. In other words, the narrative blames the origin of the Kannō Disturbance on the vengeful spirits of the Southern Court.

However, things are not quite so simple. One cannot ignore the role of Zen and its patriarch Musō Soseki in the appearance of the Southern Court dead. Our first clue as to Zen's culpability is that the sect is largely an object of criticism throughout the narrative.⁶⁹ This should not be surprising given largely pro-*kenmitsu* stance evinced throughout the *Taiheiki*, but it is especially germane here because in the chapter 24 episode "The Matter of the Tenryūji Memorial" (*Tenryūji kuyō no koto*), the Ashikaga erect Tenryūji temple as a means of pacifying Go-Daigo's vengeful spirit, and employ Musō Soseki to perform the apotropaic dedication instead of Enryakuji monks who were traditionally in charge of that function.⁷⁰ The return of the Southern Court spirits return suggests that Musō's apotropaic rite, commissioned by the Ashikaga, was a failure.

Go-Daigo himself reappears in the chapter 34 episode "The Withdrawal of the Various Armies" (*Shogunzei no taisan no koto*) in the dream of a warrior in service to the regent Nijō Moromoto (二条師基 1301–1365). The former emperor (先帝 *sentei*), having fallen into the realm of the *tengu* (天狗道 *tengudō*), returns possessing the countenance of a *yaksha* (夜叉 *yasha*) or *rakshasa* (羅刹 *rasetsu*) and surrounded by smoke and spitting fire with each labored breath; he is accompanied by his two loyal followers, the Hino Brothers Toshimoto and Suketomo, who now have red faces, dull eyes, and sharp, needle-like fangs protruding from their mouths. It is apparent that they are there to continue causing disorder, as they plot to have Hosokawa Kiyouji (細川清氏 ?–1362), the antagonist of the next several chapters, commit rebellion.⁷¹ The presence of the spirits of the Southern Court is not only indicative of their continued attachment to the idea of victory even in death, but also a criticism of the Ashikaga, whose willingness to abandon Enryakuji, and, more broadly, the apotropaics of the *kenmitsu* episteme, for the sort of political expediency that would become the hallmark of the coming age of pragmatism.

Another example is from chapter 26's "The Matter of the Great Lighting *Tengu* and the Record of the Future" (*Ōinazuma tengu mirai no koto*). The episode follows a monk named Unkei who has a "bizarre" (*fushigi*) experience. On the way to Tenryūji temple Unkei meets a *yamabushi* (山伏 mountain ascetic) who tells him the temple is nothing special due to its association with Zen and Musō Sōseki, and instead invites him to Mt. Atago where he encounters the spirits of the long-dead emperors Sutoku (崇徳天皇 1119–1164) and Junnin (淳仁天皇 733–765), Princess Inoue (井上内親王 717–775), Minamoto Tametomo (源為朝 1139–1170), and Go-Daigo himself, along with a number of renowned priests, all of whom were dethroned or disgraced or exiled individuals who have now become demon kings and gathered there to discuss throwing the realm into turmoil. Several *yamabushi* are there as well, and Unkei is surprised to see his new companion take a seat among them.

What follows is a long dialogue on the reasons for disorder that concludes with one of the elders blaming the discord between the Ashikaga brothers and the regent on a fundamental misunderstanding of the way of governance, asserting that "the low shall conquer the high before peace can be achieved, but in the end the low will eventually be punished, it being impossible to run from karmic punishment," before criticizing the Ashikaga for their pretentious (*basara*) behavior and lack of pity and compassion. Unkei, like the monk from the previous episode, believes himself to have fallen into the realm of the *tengu*.⁷²

The appearance of *fushigi* and the *yamabushi*'s criticism in this dialogue are critical for understanding how *gekokujiō* is deployed in the *Taiheiki*. The former appears six times in the episode, reinforcing, as we have seen with *fushigi* in the previous section, a sense of temporal and spatial destabilization of the diachronic order of the imperial realm under the Ashikaga; the *yamabushi*'s criticism, on the other hand, is directed at the Ashikaga's *basara*-like behavior, suggesting that they are agents of disorder. The latter half of the *Taiheiki* is less thematically abstruse than it at first appears, as long as one is able to interpret the text's rhetoric of rupture for what it is: a sign of epistemic transformation leading to the advent of a new world, that of the pragmatic.

The last appearance of the word *gekokujiō* appears in chapter 35, "The Matter of Niki Yoshinaga's Conduct" (*Niki Yoshinaga furumahi no koto*), right as the second shogun Yoshiakira (足利義詮 1330–1367) is trying to solidify his authority after the death of his father Takauji, a task further complicated by a Southern Court resurgence and a number of conflicts

among powerful warlords intent on using both events as opportunities for self-aggrandizement.⁷³ One warlord, Hatakeyama Dōsei (畠山道誓 ?–1362), journeyed to Kyoto ostensibly to fight the Southern Court, but at a party a drunken Dōsei confesses that, “Although I came from the east to destroy our Southern Court enemies, it was in fact to punish [Niki] Yoshinaga for his insolence. The rest of you must surely feel the same.”⁷⁴ It is not long before Yoshinaga gets wind of the plot and informs Yoshiakira of Dōsei’s intentions. The new shogun tells Yoshinaga that, “If, on the off hand, what you say is true, then it amounts to rebellion. Even so, if you and I were to fight as one, who would side with these would-be usurpers (*gekokujiō no monodomo*)?”⁷⁵

Yoshiakira uses *gekokujiō* to assert his place at the top of a new social order, one made possible through an overturning of the imperial order and necessitating a new rhetoric of rupture in order to depict the innocuousness of Yoshiakira’s claim to power, as well as cast Hatakeyama and his allies as usurpers seeking to disrupt that order. In other words, this *Taiheiki* episode reveals a logical disjunction that suggests it is violence, and not imperial authority, that is the precursor to peace, despite the narrative’s repeated assertions to the contrary.

These and other episodes in the latter half of the *Taiheiki* form a chain of meaning creating a literary heterotopia in which premodern *a priori* such as imperial authority are disturbed, undermined, and even dissolved.⁷⁶ Ironically, although the rhetoric of rupture is an expression of anxiety surrounding this disruption, it exposed fault lines in a narrative that might have otherwise achieved the diachronicity its authors sought. Further, through this rhetoric the text produced and reproduced the ideology of *gekokujiō*—the pragmatism and rationalism of Amino’s *jitsuri* and Satō’s *jige no shisō*—that were hallmarks of Japan’s late medieval period, the very future the authors of the *Taiheiki*, through their criticism, sought to avert.

Conclusion

At its core, the *Taiheiki* is a failed attempt at envisioning a diachronic narrative. Its authors sought to restore imperial authority in the face of warrior power increasingly unchained from the former’s limiting influence. To do so, the authors relied on several strategies. First were criticisms that, in the aggregate, point to a largely conservative outlook rooted in the *kenmitsu* episteme and a concomitant desire to see the restoration of imperial authority, regardless of which court triumphed. Second were

references to an idealized past, particularly parallels to Chinese antiquity and native events such as the Genpei Wars, in order to position itself within a literary tradition whose job was to ratify the victors in conflict, pacify the spirits of the dead, and, most importantly, paint a picture of a realm restored to peace and order under the aegis of imperial authority. And last was the rhetoric of rupture—*basara*, *fushigi*, and *gekokujō*—which was meant to divert and contain the disruptive energies of those events, individuals, and acts the authors of the *Taiheiki* considered a threat to the restoration of imperial peace and order. Although this rhetoric was meant to demonstrate the dangers of warrior power decoupled from imperial authority, as in the case of Toki Yoritō's assault on the imperial carriage, it also prevented the narrative from achieving ideological coherence, as evidenced by the gap between the text's introduction and perfunctory nature of its final passage. Accordingly, this ideological ambivalence about a world that was in the process of becoming became the thematic core of the *Taiheiki*.

The failures of the *Taiheiki* have made it inordinately abstruse and contributed to conclusions such as Thomas Conlan's, that "in order to understand the fourteenth century, the narrative of the *Taiheiki* needs to be forgotten."⁷⁷ Although Conlan qualifies his statement by saying that "this lengthy polemic instead should be treated with care as one of the many rich, albeit unreliable, sources for the age," I would suggest that it is precisely its unreliability that makes it *representative* of the *Nanbokuchō* epoch, and a text worth further scrutiny.⁷⁸ That the *Taiheiki* is unreliable and biased is not in doubt, but these very traits are an opportunity to explore the richness of the epoch that birthed such a complicated text.

In describing the Sengoku period, David Spafford says that it was "not so much the beginning of something new as a sense of the disordering of what always had been...the point was to return things to their original (proper) place."⁷⁹ This quote is equally applicable to Japan's fourteenth century. For Go-Daigo and the Southern Court, what could be more proper than the restoration of the emperor's authority? For the Ashikaga and the Northern Court, on the other hand, it was a return to the world of the early Hōjō regents, when court and warrior worked in tandem for the betterment of the realm, that was their aim. Both, however, depended on the past even as threats to imperial authority were no longer delimited by the certainties of meaning, precedence, and precedent, but by the unpredictability of violence.⁸⁰ Faced with such unpredictability, representatives of imperial authority would either bend, as the Jimyōin line did by accepting its

symbolic role in the affairs of warrior governance, or break, as did Go-Daigo when he refused that compromise and fought until—and beyond, according to the *Taiheiki*—his last breath to restore the world of Japan’s early sacerdotal monarchs, such as Temmu (天武天皇 631–686) and Shōmu (聖武天皇 701–756), among whom he undoubtedly counted himself a member.⁸¹

Somewhat paradoxically, in failing to reconcile its preference for an idealized past, the inevitability of the violent present, and a disordered future, the *Taiheiki* remained relevant in the *longue-durée*. Warriors such as Yui Shōsetsu (由井正雪 1605–1651), the Forty-Seven Ronin, and Yoshida Shōin (吉田松陰 1830–1859) all embarked on rebellious acts that led (or at least were meant to lead) to socio-political change in large part due to the *Taiheiki*’s influence on their thinking.⁸² In discussing how history and fiction are inextricably intertwined, Hyōdō Hiromi claims that the emperor-system of Japan’s early modern period rests on the fictional world of the *Taiheiki*.⁸³ While this may be true (a topic for another day, no doubt), this paper has argued that that foundation was an eminently unstable one.

NOTES

The author would like to express his gratitude to the editor and both reviewers for their time and willingness to provide substantive critiques on the initial draft of this paper. What had been largely undeveloped ideas about the *Taiheiki* were made intelligible by the clarity of their comments. Bless you all for your patience and kindness throughout this process.

¹ Helen McCullough’s 1959 translation of the first twelve chapters is the primary resource for those interested in the text, although more recently Joan R. Piggott has collated several episodes from later chapters, as well as the Edo-period variant *Hinin Taiheiki* (非人太平記 A poor man’s Chronicle of great peace) in *The Asia-Pacific Journal*. Helen McCullough, *The Taiheiki: A Chronicle of Medieval Japan*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); Joan Piggott, “Introduction to the *Taiheiki: The Chronicle of Great Peace*,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14.2 (2016): 1–6. As for the Wars of the Northern and Southern Courts, I prefer the pithier *Nanbokuchō* Wars to the unwieldy direct translation. Finally, this analysis is based on the *Rufu-hon* and *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki* variants, the most complete, accessible and thoroughly-annotated versions of the text. It should be noted that although variants exhibit minor discrepancies such as chapter divisions and titles, the narrative itself is largely unchanged. As such, I have elected to use the titles and chapters in the *Tenshō-hon* variant out of

expediency. Kikuchi Shin'ichi, *Rufu-hon Taiheiki*, accessed September 27th, 2021, <http://www.kikuchi2.com/sheet/thkm.html>; Hasegawa Tadashi, ed., *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1997. 4 vols).

² Paul Varley, *Warriors of Japan as Portrayed in the War Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 208.

³ The *Taiheiki* was originally created in the fourteenth-century, but neither the exact date of publication nor its authors are known for certain. The aristocrat Tōin Kinkata (洞院公賢 1291–1360), in his *Tōin Kinkata-ki* (洞院公賢記), writes that “I was told that on the 28th or 29th of last month that the monk Kojima passed away. He was the author of the *Taiheiki*, which has enjoyed popularity of late throughout the realm. Though he was of low standing, he was reputedly an exceptionally erudite scholar. [His passing] is most unfortunate.” We know little of Kojima, however, save that most scholars agree that he was likely a storytelling priest (物語僧) or menial priest (散所 *sanjō*), and Kinkata reveals nothing else about the priest's identity.

Imagawa Ryōshun (今川了俊 1326–1420) also names the Tendai monks Gen'e (玄恵 1269–1350) and Echin (恵鎮 1281–1356) as authors. The former was highly learned and taught Buddhism to five generations of emperors (the emperors Go-Fushimi (後伏見), Hanazono (花園), Go-Daigo (後醍醐), Kōgon (光嚴), and (光明 *Kōmyō*), earning him the appellation “The Teacher of Five Generations” (五国大師 *gokoku taishi*). According to Ryōshun, Echin brought the text to Ashikaga Tadayoshi for approval while Gen'e “read it aloud.” Echin's involvement is plausible for two reasons: (1) his fame undoubtedly would have given him access to the Ashikaga; and (2) Echin was based out of Hosshōji temple, known for its role in pacifying the Hōjō and its activity in *kanjin* campaigns, which were typically led by one skilled in oration and knowledgeable about literature. Echin would certainly fit as a candidate for having compiled and overseen the authoring of the *Taiheiki*. Gen'e, on the other hand, was a disciple (and perhaps sibling) of the renowned Rinzai 臨濟 priest and Confucian scholar Kokan Shiren (虎関師錬 1278–1346), and taught Sung scholarship to Go-Daigo and other nobles, and following the destruction of the Kemmu Imperium, aided the Ashikaga in drafting the Kenmu Formulary. Of the two, Gen'e, who held one of the highest administrative ranks in the Buddhist world, that of Dharma Seal (法印 *hōin*), was the greater authority; it makes sense that his rank and relationship with the Ashikaga would have allowed him access to Tadayoshi, and an excellent candidate to oversee the changes Ryōshun claims Tadayoshi sought to the text. As for Kojima, Matsuo Kenji argues that it is likely he belonged to Echin's group of priests, tying all three individuals together to create a plausible chain of authorship for the *Taiheiki*. For more, see part 4 of Matsuo Kenji, *Taiheiki—chinkon to kyūsai no shisho* (Tokyo: Chūō kōron shinsha, 2001), and Hasegawa Tadashi, “*Taiheiki no seiritsu to sakusha*,” *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō* 56.8 (August 1991): 35–40, 40.

- ⁴ The *Taiheiki*'s influence was felt most often through *Taiheiki yomi* (*Taiheiki* readings), a popular form of entertainment throughout the Tokugawa period that contributed to the dissemination of ideas about the reciprocal relationship between ruler and ruled that was the basis for political thought that would lead to the formation of the modern Japanese *kokka* (nation). Wakao Masaki, *Taiheiki yomi no jidai* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1999), 329–33.
- ⁵ *Ōken e no hangyakusha no monogatari* 王権への反逆者の物語. See Ōtsu Yūichi, *Gunki to ōken no ideorogii* (Tokyo: Kanrin shobō, 2005), especially pp. 12–20.
- ⁶ A tale of karmic reprisal focusing specifically on the theme of transience, the *Heike monogatari* is a fourteenth-century war tale (軍記物語 *gunki monogatari*) that narrates the Genpei Wars (源平合戦 *Genpei kassen*). It highlights the role of the clan patriarch Taira no Kiyomori (平清盛 1118–1181) in the Taira, or Heike, family's destruction, as well as the role of the scions of the Minamoto family, Yoritomo (源頼朝 1147–1199) and his younger brother Yoshitsune (源義経 1159–1189), in defeating the Taira forces and the subsequent founding of the Kamakura shogunate. The tale was primarily performed as oral narration by *biwa hōshi* (琵琶法師), or lute priests. There are several translations available, including versions by A. L. Sadler, Helen Craig McCullough, and Royall Tyler.
- ⁷ Amino Yoshihiko, *Muen, kugai, raku: Nihon chūsei no jiyū to heiwa* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1987), 254–64.
- ⁸ Satō Kazuhiko, “Nanbokuchō nairan to jige no shisō,” *Chūsei bungaku* 42 (1997): 3–10, 3, 9.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 9. Regarding the *ritsuryō* system (律令制 *ritsuryō-sei*), it originated seventh-century Japan as an attempt to replicate China's political system, where *ritsu* 律 meant criminal codes and *ryō* 令 meant administrative codes. This system initially divided the land into three general administrative divisions—province (国 *kuni*), district (郡 *gun*), and neighborhoods (里 *sato*)—and a central administration consisting of various departments and ranks, the lowest being eighth, held by court menials, and the highest first, held by true aristocrats who occupied the various minister positions. Supposedly based on merit in China, Japan's version of the codes accommodated the sacerdotal bloodline of the imperial family and its offshoots, which came to monopolize the highest administrative ranks.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.
- ¹¹ A quick summary of this point can be found on page 42 of Eiko Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorable Individualism in the Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995). For self-redress of grievances, see 86–87.

- ¹² Aside from appearing in the *Taiheiki* and the *Genpei jōsuiki* (源平盛衰記 fourteenth century), it appears in a lampoon (落書 *rakusho*) in the *Kenmu nenkanki* (建武年間記 fourteenth century). David Spafford, “An Apology of Betrayal: Political and Narrative Strategies in Late Medieval Memoir,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 35.2 (Summer, 2009): 321–352, 326–27. On a side note, I do not refer to *gekokujiō* only as a term for political instability, but also for the broader epistemological instability that obtained during Japan’s fourteenth century as a result of the *Nanbokuchō* Wars.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 326–27.
- ¹⁴ Spafford discusses the flattening effect of *gekokujiō*, arguing that it is a world “driven solely by the imperative of victory (or at least survival)—seemingly devoid, in its self-reflexive pronouncements, of any sentimentalism about the past and its norms.” While that may be true, it is also the case that the word’s appearance in primary sources indicates a cognizance of its import among those living through the epochs when the phenomenon of *gekokujiō* was prevalent. *Ibid.*, 326–27.
- ¹⁵ *Kenmitsu* (顯密) refers to the set of exoteric (顯) and esoteric (密) schools of Buddhism and their attendant practices, the former of which, referred to as Vajrayana, generally held that the truth of Buddhahood could not be communicated and that achieving it was not something that could be done in a single lifetime, while the latter, or Mahayana lineage, believed in the capacity of mantras, mudras, and mandalas to communicate that truth and achieving it in this life. In Japan, exotericism was largely represented by the Tendai school and esotericism by Shingon, although ecclesiastics were frequently schooled in both doctrines and practices. Kuroda Toshio outlines the importance of the so-called *kenmitsu* system (顯密体制 *kenmitsu taisei*) for the political relationships among the three major classes of powerholders: the court, warriors, and ecclesiastics, which Kuroda refers to as the “Gates of Power” (權門 *kenmon*). For more on the *kenmitsu* system, see: “Chūsei ni okeru *kenmitsu taisei* no hatten,” in Kuroda Toshio, *Nihon chūsei no kokka to shūkyō* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1975). For an excellent English source on the *kenmon* system, see Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: The University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000).
- ¹⁶ Michele Marra, *Representations of Power: The Literary Politics of Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1993), 170.
- ¹⁷ It is important to emphasize that warrior government was not necessarily perceived as secular, or that its dependence on violence somehow precluded warriors from a belief in the sacred. It is only to say that, while the imperial court derived its legitimacy from its sacred roots, that of warrior government

was from its mastery of physical violence, making it both able and willing to dispense with religious restrictions in favor of pragmatic solutions in ways the court, whose existence was ineluctably rooted in the *kenmitsu* episteme, could not. Kamakura's (and, later, the Ashikaga's) willingness to turn to Zen as a means of breaking the esoteric-exoteric sects' hold on power is one example. Sasaki Kaoru's extension of Kuroda Toshio's work on the *kenmitsu taisei* (顯密体制 exoteric-esoteric system) is germane here: in its attempt to transcend the power of the *kenmitsu* schools, the Kamakura shogunate turned to Zen Buddhism, creating a religious ideology composed of Zen and esoteric elements stemming from the activities of those Zen monks and esoteric (密教 *mikkyō*) ritual specialists who provided religious support to the shogunate. Sasaki refers to this development as the *zenmitsu taisei* (禪密体制 the zen-esoteric system), or *zenmitsu shugi* (禪密主義 the zen-esoteric ideology). Sasaki Kaoru, *Chūsei kokka no shūkyō kōzō: Taisei bukkyō to taiseigai Bukkyō no sōkoku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1988), and Sasaki Kaoru, *Chūsei Bukkyō to Kamakura bakufu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1997).

- ¹⁸ Thomas Conlan puts forth the theory that the Northern Court was characterized by what he calls “mimetic rule,” or “ritual mimesis,” a means by which the Ashikaga were able, through the command of Shingon esoteric ritual, to co-opt the authority of the imperial court and emperor in order to rule “as if” they were imperials. The primary instigator was the Shingon monk Kenshun 賢俊, Ashikaga Takauji's protector monk (護持僧 *gojisō*). Thomas Donald Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol: An Age of Ritual Determinism in Fourteenth-Century Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 15–16.
- ¹⁹ Scholars of the *Taiheiki* fall into one of two camps regarding its narrative structure, the two-part or the three-part theory. This distinction is largely academic insofar as the story's content remains largely unchanged across variants even when chapters are reordered or episodes renamed. For an excellent summary of the theories and the scholars who adhere to them, see Koakimoto Dan, *Taiheiki, Baishōron no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2005), 3–13.
- ²⁰ No extant copy of *Taiheiki* contains the original content of chapter 22, although some of the newer variants parse the chapters differently in order to create narrative continuity, older variants such as the *Jingū chōkokanbon* do not restructure the narrative. The *Taiheiki hyōban hiden rijinshō* (太平記評判秘伝 理尽抄) says that Hosokawa Yoriyuki had them burnt, but evidence for this claim is inconclusive. Hyōdō Hiromi, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei: rekishi to iu monogatari* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1995), 105–97.
- ²¹ Ōtsu, *Gunki to ōken no ideorogii*, 49–68.

- ²² Yamashita Hiroaki, “Rekishi no monogatari toshite no *Taiheiki*,” *Kokugo to kokubungaku* 76.4 (1999): 1–14, 6–7, 10–11.
- ²³ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 55.
- ²⁴ David T. Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from The Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007), 270–71.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 270–71.
- ²⁶ Both patterns are evident from the outset, where the *Taiheiki* precedes its criticism of Go-Daigo’s later conduct with several pages of laudatory exposition. See: Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 1: 19–26; chapter 6 in Kitamura Masayuki, *Taiheiki sekai no keishō* (Tokyo: Hanawa shobō, 2010), 317–22.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.
- ²⁸ The *Taiheiki*’s authors preferred anecdotes from the *Heike monogatari* due to its lyricism. Likewise, Hyōdō Hiromi identifies what he calls “Genpei Alternation theory” (*Genpei kōtai-ron*), a paralleling of the *Taiheiki*’s narrative to the Genpei Wars. *Ibid.*, 32–33; Hyōdō, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei*, 19–20, 42–44.
- ²⁹ McCullough, *The Taiheiki*, 3–4.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 3, 5–6.
- ³¹ “Takatoki turned his face away from the virtue of the emperor, holding his subject’s duty as nothing.” *Ibid.*, 3.
- ³² See chapter 6 of part 2 in Kitamura, *Taiheiki sekai no keishō*.
- ³³ Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 26. Unless otherwise indicated, all English translations are my own.
- ³⁴ Huan of Chi was a despot who relied on forced military conscription to conquer his foes and conflated the civil and military functions of the state. The Prince of Chu, meanwhile, lost his bow and assumed his people would pick it up for him, earning Confucius’ criticism in the second chapter of the *Family Sayings of Confucius* (孔子家語 *Kōshi kego*). For a short explanation of these two references, see McCullough, *The Taiheiki*, 7; Hasegawa, *Tenshōbon Taiheiki*, 1: 25nn 2, 3.
- ³⁵ Hasegawa, *Tenshōbon Taiheiki*, 4: 434–445.

- ³⁶ Kamata Kisaburō, *Taiheiki kenkyū: minzoku bungei no ron* (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1992), 200–208.
- ³⁷ Hasegawa, *Tenshōbon Taiheiki*, 4: 451–52.
- ³⁸ For more on Yoriyuki’s potential involvement, see Hyōdō, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei*, 104–105.
- ³⁹ The first passage of the Ashikaga’s seminal political tract, the *Kemmu Formulary* (建武式目 *Kemmu shikimoku*), proscribes *basara*, indicating that even they understood its deleterious effect on social order. “Muromachi Shogunate to Kannō Jōran” in Minegishi Sumio, *Ashikaga Takauji to Tadayoshi: Miyako no yume, Kamakura no yume* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2009).
- ⁴⁰ Hyōdō, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei*, 104–105. The *Taiheiki hyōban hiden rijinsho*, or *Taiheiki rijinsho* for short, is an sixteenth-seventeenth century commentary on the *Taiheiki* compiled by a monk of the Nichiren sect named Daiun’in Yōō 大雲院陽翁 (1560?–1622) for the purpose of edifying warriors on military and political strategy. For more on this text, see Wakao, *Taiheiki yomi no jidai*, 25–42.
- ⁴¹ Yamashita Hiroaki are just a few who have noted the *Taiheiki*’s ironic stance. See Yamashita *Ikusa monogatari no katari to hihyō*, 203–4; Sakurai Yoshirō in Saeki Shin’ichi, ed., *Chūsei gunki monogatari to rekishi jujutsu* (Tokyo: Chikurinsha, 2011), 211; Kamata, *Taiheiki kenkyū: minzoku bungei no ron*, 10.
- ⁴² Hyōdō Hiromi, *Ōken to monogatari* (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1989), 18–22; Higuchi Daisuke, in his analysis of the *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki* variant, argues that the final passage in fact subverts the intention of the felicitous words and moves the text into an “amoral world” in which the events (of the *Nanbokuchō* Wars) will be repeated. Higuchi Daisuke, “Shinkoku no hasai: *Taiheiki* ni okeru ‘Shinkō/ikoku,’” *Nihon bungaku* 50.7 (2001): 52–61, 59.
- ⁴³ Susan Handleman, in Mark Krupnick, ed., *Displacement: Derrida and After* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1983), 124.
- ⁴⁴ Kitamura, *Taiheiki sekai no keishō*, 351.
- ⁴⁵ The *Taiheiki* was quite popular during the Tokugawa period, especially the exploits of Kusunoki no Masashige, which were disseminated through “*Taiheiki* readings” (太平記読み *Taiheiki yomi*). The text remained popular up through the final years of the Tokugawa reign when the *sonnō jōi* (尊王攘夷 Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians) movement, energized by stories about Masashige’s loyalty to the emperor, spearheaded attempts to overthrow the Tokugawa. Similarly, Masashige was a popular fixture in the rhetoric of

loyalty used to indoctrinate soldiers into Japan's imperial army. For more, see Hyōdō, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei*, esp. chapters 4–7; Wakao, *Taiheiki yomi no jidai*, 25–49, 76–102.

⁴⁶ Vyjayanthi Selinger, *Authoring the Shogunate: Ritual and Material Symbolism in the Literary Construction of Warrior Order* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 10–11.

⁴⁷ For more on the Ashikaga's preoccupation with the *Heike monogatari* and its control of the Tōdō guild (*Tōdō-za*), which oversaw the text and its transmission, see Hyōdō Hiromi, "Geinō no iryoku to kōryoku—shogun-ke no geinō," *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kyōzai no kenkyū*, 45.7 (2006): 25–29. Imagawa Ryōshun gives a detailed account of Ashikaga Tadayoshi's concern for the *Taiheiki*'s discrepancies in the *Nan-Taiheiki*. Jeremy Sather, "A Critique by Any Other Name: Imagawa Ryōshun's *Nan-Taiheiki*, an Introduction and Translation (Part 1)," *Japan Review* 29 (2017): 39–68, 43–44.

⁴⁸ Hyōdō, *Ōken to monogatari*, 136–43.

⁴⁹ Hyōdō Hiromi, "Basara to akutō—Kojima hōshi wo megutte," *Kokubungaku* 3.2 (1991): 51–57, 53. *Gokenin* (御家人) refers to "honorable housemen," individuals who, in exchange for their allegiance to the Kamakura shogun, received confirmation of land rights (安堵 *andō*) and title of "land steward" (地頭 *jitō*). These individuals were *de facto* rulers of the lands they oversaw, responsible for collecting taxes and (ostensibly) providing protection to those they governed, but in practice *jitō* were largely rapacious governors whose control over their lands became hereditary. Warriors without the title were at a disadvantage compared to their *gokenin* peers when involved in land disputes, common occurrences among warriors.

⁵⁰ "Basara no shisō wa kyūtaisei o hitei shi, dentō-teki ken'i ni issai dakyō shinai tokoro ni tokuchō ga aru." Satō, "Nanbokuchō nairan to jige no shisō," 9. *Akutō*, usually translated as "evil bands," implies a collective of outsiders whose depredations were the bane of social order. However, Morten Oxenboell argues that "the term itself had little, if any, social meaning...rather, the term was a rhetorical construct that tells us more about the conflict parties and their ambitions and values than it does about criminal behavior..." and, further, that "they were not indiscriminate predators, and they were not marginal groups estranged from local society." In short, the term was "mainly used by absentee proprietors to describe groups of residents who were not degenerate bands of rogue warriors as much as they were an essential part of the self-defense structures of estate societies." When the capacity for violence, ever present across medieval society, erupted without the sanction of capital elites, however, violent entrepreneurs were often defamed as *akutō* by those elites. The term holds value for this paper because, just as the term *akutō* was part of the estate's "self-defense structure," *basara* was a defense mechanism of imperial authority

and those whose power was an extension of it, meant to defame those who sought to overturn the traditional order by means of raw power and influence at the expense of noble lineage and aristocratic rank. Morten Oxenboell, *Akutō and Rural Conflict in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2018), 8–11.

- ⁵¹ David Spafford, *A Sense of Place: The Political Landscape in Late Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013), 29.
- ⁵² It is interesting to note that while newer variants of the *Taiheiki*, such as the *Tenshō-hon* variant this paper relies on, use this title, older variants created closer in time to the actual events use “The Matter of the Basara Realm” (*Tenga basara no koto*). It is also important to note that, regardless of what title a variant uses, the content remains largely unchanged. For more on variants and their classifications, see Suzuki Tomie, “*Taiheiki* shohon no bunrui: kansū oyobi maki no wakekata o kijun toshite,” *Kokubun* 18 (1963): 9–19.
- ⁵³ “*Ban’i senshō burei no koto*” in Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 3: 19–20. For a slightly different version adhering more closely to the old form variants, see Hasegawa Tadashi, ed., *Taiheiki: Jingūchōkokan-hon* (Tokyo: Izumi shoin, 1994), 651–52.
- ⁵⁴ Ishida Jun, *Taiheiki-kō—toki to ba to ishiki* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 2007), 77.
- ⁵⁵ The Japanese word for retired emperor is *in*, and is phonetically and colloquially close to the word for dog, or *inu* 犬. The shock value and perspicacity of Yoritō’s insult depends on this play on words, and is less potent in English than in the original.
- ⁵⁶ Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 150–51.
- ⁵⁷ Ōmori Kitayoshi, *Taiheiki no kōsō to hōhō* (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1988), 72.
- ⁵⁸ Matsubayashi Yasuaki, *Chūsei senran to bungaku* (Osaka: Izumi shoin, 2018), 353.
- ⁵⁹ Hannah Skoda, *Medieval Violence: Physical Brutality in Northern France, 1270–1330* (Oxford, U. K.: Oxford University Press, 2013) 52–54; Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories*, 225, 252.
- ⁶⁰ Ōmori, *Taiheiki no kōsō to hōhō*, 359–80.
- ⁶¹ Tadayoshi himself was the more conservative of the two brothers and cleaved more to the court-warrior ideal of the past than did Takauji. For more on Tadayoshi, see Mori Shigeaki, *Taiheiki no gunzō, gunki monogatari no kyokō to shinjitsu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1991), 127–37.
- ⁶² Skoda, *Medieval Violence*, 6.

- ⁶³ Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 3: 336.
- ⁶⁴ According to Haruko Wakabayashi, *tengu* can be defined as “manifestations of Māra, or ma, the personification of the Buddhist concept of evil symbolizing obstacles to be overcome on the path to enlightenment.” Māra is an “evil deity from Indian folklore” who “not only brought pain and misfortune, but also obstructed the way of the Buddha.” On the other hand, *oni*, or ogres, are also—but not always—representations of evil, although they occupy an ambivalent role in premodern Japan, occasionally depicted as bringers of fortune and often more honest than the humans they torment. For more on *tengu*, see Haruko Wakabayashi, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls: Evil and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy in Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2012), xiii–xvi; for more on *oni*, see Noriko Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni from Ancient Times to the Present* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2010), 1–29.
- ⁶⁵ Wakabayashi, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls*, xv–xvi.
- ⁶⁶ Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 3: 141.
- ⁶⁷ These three monks, allies of Go-Daigo, were all related to him either through family, as in the case of Shunga, who was likely a member of a family serving Go-Daigo’s mother, or as followers, as in the case of Chikyō and Chūen, who served him in the Shōchū Disturbance, Go-Daigo’s first abortive attempt at destroying the Kamakura shogunate. Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 3: 213–214f. The realm of the *tengu* “were places separate from hell and the realms of hungry ghosts and beasts...a realm reserved for Buddhist practitioners who had failed to overcome the temptations of evil and could not attain *ōjō* [rebirth in the pure land].” Wakabayashi, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls*, 26–27, 32.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 150.
- ⁶⁹ Ashikaga governance is frequently criticized in the *Taiheiki*. The authors appear to have considered their choice of Musō Soseki to dedicate Tenryūji temple, which was meant to pacify Go-Daigo’s spirit, a mistake. In doing so they circumvented the traditional protector of the state Enryakuji temple and spurned Takauji’s protector monk Kenshun, whose belief in the efficacy of ritual mimesis was central to Ashikaga authority. Suzuki, *Taiheiki no sekai*, 55–8; Takagi Shinobu, “Rekishū jojutsu toshite no *Heike monogatari* to *Taiheiki*,” in Komori Yōichi et al., eds., *Iwanami kōza Bungaku 9: fuikushion to wa nani ka*, vol. 9. (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2002), 156–7.
- ⁷⁰ Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 3: 161–63.

- ⁷¹ Yasha and rakshasa originally were nature spirits or protectors of Buddhism, especially as servants of the warrior deity Bishamonten (毘沙門天); however, in this *Taiheiki* passage they are used as demons of violence (暴悪 *bōaku*) and cannibalism (食人鬼 *jikininki*), respectively, symbolizing their fallen existence on the *Rokudō* (六道), or Six Realms of Buddhist transmigration. Hasegawa, *Tenshō-hon Taiheiki*, 4: 181–85, 183nn 16, 17.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 3: 328–45.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 4: 193.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 4: 190.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 4: 193.
- ⁷⁶ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xviii.
- ⁷⁷ Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 13.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ⁷⁹ Spafford, *A Sense of Place*, 11.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 28–29.
- ⁸¹ Joan Piggott discusses the transformation of Japan’s early emperors from a martial theurgy to a sacerdotal monarchy under Emperors Temmu and Shōmu. Go-Daigo himself emulated Temmu in many ways, not the least of which was in his flight to Yoshino, the place to which Temmu fled before he mounted a counter attack that saw him triumph over his nephew Prince Ōtomo, also known as Emperor Kōbun (弘文天皇 648–672). Joan Piggott, *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship* (Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 1997), 11–13.
- ⁸² For more on Yui Shōsetsu and his relationship to the *Taiheiki* and Kusunoki Masashige, see part 6 in Hyōdō, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei*; Wakao, *Taiheiki yomi no jidai*, 103–04; Gunki bungaku kenkyū sōsho, *Taiheiki no sekai* (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 2000), 249–50; Wakao, *Taiheiki yomi no jidai*, 26; Hyōdō, *Ōken to monogatari*, 128–36.
- ⁸³ Hyōdō, *Taiheiki <yomi> no kanōsei*, 233.