

# Adopting a Philological Approach Toward *Chishi*

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**Abstract** Hachijō, a small endangered Japonic variety, is fortunate enough to have been documented since the Edo period, and to have been abundantly described and commented ever since. As a matter of fact, Hachijō linguistic material can be found in about two dozen documents from between 1746 and 1858, which provide valuable lexical, grammatical and phonological insights into early Hachijō. This article proposes a preliminary study of those sources, with a summary of the existing literature about them, and an introduction to the philological questions they raise.

**Keywords** Japanese. Philology. Dialectology. Historical Linguistics. Palaeography. Codicology.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 1.1 What is Hachijō? – 1.2 The Early Sources of Hachijō. – 1.3 Methodology and Aim of This Study. – 2 Sources, Editions and Compilation. – 2.1 Comprehensive Inventory. – 2.2 Existing Literature. – 3 Preliminary Findings and Prospective Research Topics. – 3.1 Lexicon. – 3.2 Phonology. – 3.3 Grammar. – 4 Conclusion.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 What is Hachijō?

Hachijō is a small Japonic variety,<sup>1</sup> traditionally spoken on three islands which are located in the south of the Izu 伊豆 archipelago, roughly 300 km south of Tōkyō (namely, from north to south: Hachijō-jima 八丈島, Kojima – or Hachijō-kojima – (八丈) 小島 and Aogashima 青ヶ島). While Hachijō is, in English and in Japanese alike, named after the most populated of those three islands, its native speakers usually simply call it *Shima-kotoba* 島言葉, lit. ‘island words’, or, more rarely (and mostly only among younger speakers), *Shima-ben* 島弁, lit. ‘island dialect’.

There are eight recorded local varieties (or topolects) of Hachijō, each of them corresponding to a different village, and having some lexical and phonological peculiarities. Five of them are located on Hachijō-jima (counter-clockwise: *Mitsune* 三根, *Ōkagō* 大賀郷, *Kashitate* 榎立, *Nakanogō* 中之郷, *Sueyoshi* 末吉), two on Kojima (*Toriuchi* 鳥打 in the north and *Utsuki* 宇津木 in the south), and only one on Aogashima. Regarding the pre-modern sources of Hachijō, it is likely to assume that all attested varieties in that period are from Hachijō island, more specifically from the villages of Ōkagō, Mitsune and Sueyoshi.

The position of Hachijō within the Japonic family is still a matter of debate, but it is often considered to be a descendant of Eastern Old Japanese, either alongside other Eastern Japanese varieties (De Boer 2020, 52), or (most commonly), as its sole descendant (see for instance Kupchik 2011, 7). However, other specialists also consider that there are also several shared innovations between Central Old Japanese and Hachijō, which makes its classification unclear (see, for instance, Hirako, Pellard 2013, 52); and others even estimate that the majority of the linguistic data might actually speak against that traditional classification (Baudel, forthcoming).

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**1** It should be noted that until recently, Hachijō was almost universally considered to be a dialect of Japanese, rather than an independent language (and subsequently called *Hachijō-hōgen* 八丈方言, ‘Hachijō dialect’). This view still appears to be dominant among Hachijō native speakers. Then, in the early 2000s, Japanese sociolinguists started treating Hachijō as a separate language, preferring the term *Hachijō-go* 八丈語 in Japanese (see, for instance Hashimoto, Long 2003; Long 2004; Asahi et al. 2004). This terminology gradually became dominant among linguists, both inside and outside Japan. However, it must be noted that, to the best of my knowledge, no objective criteria was really brought up to justify the use of one term rather than the other, since the putative absence of mutual intelligibility between Hachijō and the dialect of Tōkyō (mentioned, for instance, by Tsuzuku 1955, 37; or more recently, by Iannucci 2019, 100-4) was, in fact, never assessed scientifically. For that reason, I prefer to avoid using both ‘language’ and ‘dialect’, which are rather connoted terms, and prefer to use the broader term ‘variety’ instead.

Finally, it is unknown how many speakers of Hachijō are currently left, but while the number of passive speakers might very well be of a few thousand, the number of fluent speakers of Hachijō is more likely to be somewhere between a few hundred and a thousand people,<sup>2</sup> most of them being elderly. Because of this, Hachijō was included in UNESCO's *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (Moseley 2009), alongside seven other languages of Japan, and granted the status of 'definitely endangered'.

## 1.2 The Early Sources of Hachijō

Although the south Izu islands were, for centuries, difficult to access from the mainland because of the strong Kuroshio 黒潮 stream, they played an important role in the court religion of ancient Japan, and were therefore already subject to frequent imperial petitions in the Heian period (794-1185) (Alaszewska 2018). However, very few sources about those islands remain from that period, and, to the best of my knowledge, the islands are only mentioned in shrine inventories and in recordings of fortune-teller visits to the imperial court.<sup>3</sup> In Hachijō-jima on the other hand, some annals were preserved (called *Hachijō-jima nendaiki* 八丈島年代記 'Annals of Hachijō island') covering the years 1335 to 1635. However, they barely contain any local word either, since they only focus on recording natural disasters, famines, and land management. Thus, we can probably safely assume that there is no substantial source for Hachijō that would correspond to the period of Old Japanese (roughly sixth to eighth century) or to that of Middle Japanese (roughly ninth to sixteenth century), and that all of its attestations correspond to the Early Modern Japanese period (seventeenth-nineteenth century), at the earliest.

In 1600 the contact of the South Izu islands with the mainland was dramatically increased, when the islands were placed under direct military rule in order to be used as a banishment territory. Thus, the

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**2** As pointed out by Iannucci (2019, 9), the number of 8,000 speakers provided by the 2009 version of the Unesco's *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (which can still be found on the *ELP* page 'Hachijō') is necessarily largely overestimated, since it exceeds the whole population of Hachijō-jima, where the vast majority of remaining speakers reside. Thus, while more than 20 years ago, Kaneda (2001, 45) estimated that there might be at most 3,000 thousand speakers left, in 2019, Iannucci (2019, 9) estimated that the number of "truly fluent speakers" was more likely "in the low hundreds". For a more specific discussion on the phenomenon of 'language erosion' in the South Izu, and the precise unfolding of the language shift to Tōkyō Japanese in those islands, cf. Baudel, forthcoming.

**3** The only notable exception is *The Tale of Hōgen* (*Hōgen Monogatari* 保元物語) (c. 1320), in which Minamoto no Tametomo is said to have ended his life in the South Izu islands. Of course, no real description of the islands or of their dialect appears in this fictitious work, but the image it conveys does reveal the peculiar place that those islands had in the Japanese culture (cf. Mollard 2021, 38-9).

occasional petition of officials to the South Izu became a yearly visit and, during roughly 260 years, over 1,800 convicts, mostly of relatively high social status,<sup>4</sup> were sent to the South Izu islands. This policy made the South Izu islands appear as a remote and ominous land in the capital, and reactivated older myths and legends about them<sup>5</sup> In parallel, the Edo period (1603-1868) saw a boom in scientific and cultural productions in mainland Japan, and especially the birth of a new genre called ‘geographical descriptions’ (*chishi* 地誌). Namely, many documents on remote territories were written and published, often including richly illustrated geographical, zoological or botanical descriptions, and sometimes local legends or words, which form invaluable sources for the dialects and minority languages of Japan. This trend applied especially to South Izu islands, and several dozens of geographical descriptions were copied or published about those three islands between 1746 and 1868, most being either commissioned from shogunate officials, or written by convicts. A comprehensive inventory of those sources, and a review the existing literature about them will follow this introduction.

### 1.3 Methodology and Aim of This Study

This article is a preliminary research on the pre-modern sources for Hachijō, namely all documents written before the Meiji Restoration (1868). Therefore, it can be considered an attempt to adopt a philological approach to the study of a minority language, which appears to be quite uncommon in the field of Japanese studies. Thus, this article is based on a review of the existing literature, on a comparison of contemporary editions with available manuscripts, on a critical compilation of all the attested data, and on a comparison of that data with contemporary language sources. In order to do so, a first section will present a comprehensive inventory of those documents and of the existing literature about them, and a second will present some of the insights that those sources can provide about Hachijō, and some of the questions that remain open for further research.

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<sup>4</sup> For a more detailed presentation of the exiles to the South Izu, cf. Kasai, Yoshida 1964.

<sup>5</sup> For example, see the description of Bakin’s work by Mollard (2021, 28-33, 38-9).

## 2 Sources, Editions and Compilation

### 2.1 Comprehensive Inventory

As stated earlier, there are many pre-modern documents about the South Izu, presenting a great variety of form and content (including annals, chronicles, diaries, petition reports, geographic descriptions, maps, calendars, etc.). However, at this stage of my research, I found that only about twenty of those documents appear to contain substantial<sup>6</sup> linguistic data, namely:<sup>7</sup>

1. 1746 *Hachijō-jima-ki* 八丈島記 ‘Records of Hachijō island’, written by Ike Norimitsu 池則満.
2. 1747 *Hachijō-jima doryaku-shi* 八丈島土畧誌 ‘Outline document of land properties of Hachijō island’, by Furukawa Koshōken 古川古松軒.
3. 1781 *Izu kaitō fudoki* 伊豆海島風土記 ‘Chronicles of the ocean islands of Izu’, by Satō Yukinobu 佐藤行信.
4. 1791 *Nanpō kaitō-shi* 南方海島志 ‘Documents from the southern sea islands’, by Akiyama Funan 秋山富南.
5. 1796 *Shichitō nikki* 七島日記 ‘Diary from the seven islands’, by Kōdera Ōsai 小寺応齋.
6. 1796 *Kaitō zatsuwa* 廻島雑話 ‘Short word about an island trip’, by Ōta Hikosuke 太田彦助.
7. 1797 *Hachijō hikki* 八丈島筆記 ‘Notes about Hachijō island’, by Furukawa Koshōken 古川古松軒.
8. 1800 *Izu shisho* 豆州志稿 ‘Manuscript of Izu’, by Akiyama Funan 秋山富南.
9. 1801 *Izu shichitō fudo sairān* 伊豆七島風土細覽 ‘Detailed observation of the Chronicles of the seven Izu island’, by Mishima Masahide 三島正英.
10. 1802 *En’ō kōgo* 園翁交語 ‘Conversations of old gardeners’, by Takahashi Yoichi 高橋與一.
11. undated (c. 1810) *Hachijō-jima runin no hanashi* 八丈島流人之咄 ‘The history of Hachijō island exiles’, by Matsuda Heiemon 松田兵右衛門.
12. undated and anonymous (c.1810) *Hachijō-jima monogatari* 八丈島物語 ‘Tales from Hachijō island’.
13. 1811 *Hachijō-shi* 八丈誌 ‘Hachijō documents’, by Ōhara Masanori 大原正矩.

<sup>6</sup> That is, more than just a few isolated words.

<sup>7</sup> It must be noted that most of those works have numerous alternative titles and versions, and their authors alternative pen names. Thus, the names and titles provided here are the ones most commonly found.

14. 1811 *Hachijō kiriko-ori* 八丈裁衣織 ‘The weaving of Hachijō cut clothes’, by Hattori Yoshitaka 服部義高.
15. c. 1811 *Ichiwa ichigen* 一話一言 ‘Small texts with small comments’, by Ōta Nanpo 大田南畝.
16. 1814 anonymous *Hachijō-jima daigai-chō* 八丈島大概帳 ‘Large account of Hachijō island’.
17. 1839 *Asahi gyakutō-ki* 朝日逆島記 ‘Asahi’s records of topsy-turvy islands’, by Sawara no Kisaburō 佐原喜三郎.
18. undated (c. 1840) anonymous *Sangashima keihō dai-hikan* 三ヶ島刑法大秘鑑 ‘The Large secret account on the penal code of three islands’.
19. 1848 *Yatake no nezamegusa* 八丈の寢覚草 ‘The waking up of Hachijō grass’, by Kakusō Kisan 鶴窓帰山.
20. 1858 *Hachijō jikki* 八丈實記 ‘The true account of Hachijō’, by Kond Tomizo 近藤富藏.

Those works mostly belong to the genre of ‘geographical descriptions’ (*chishi*), and subsequently include a lot of botanical and animal lexicon, often coming with rich illustrations. More than half of those documents also include one or several (in the case of Kondō 1858) wordlists of the local variety. In total, not only isolated words, but also, several sentences and two full texts are attested: namely, a letter and a short dialogue, both of them being provided by the 1848 *Yatake no nezamegusa*.

Overall, this can be said to be quite a lot of sources for a minority language of Japan at that time. In addition, the fact that about 15 of those works were written within the same 30 years (1781-1811) shows that there seems to have been some kind of trend in Edo around that time, in the interest for that remote territory.

Regarding the origin and target audience of those works, we can say that they were mostly written, copied and sold in Edo, and can safely be said to have been made for the elite people in the capital, rather than for the local audience of the Izu islands. It can also be noted that they were all written by educated male authors, who were either:

- shogunate officials (Satō, Kodera, Hattori, Ōta Hikosuke),
- convicts who were banished to the island (Mishima, Matsuda, Ōhara, Sawara, Kakusō, Kondō),
- scientists and learned men (Akiyama, Furukawa, Ōta Nanpo).

Only one of those authors appears to have been an islander: Takahashi Yoichi, who was a silk trader from the village of Mitsune.

Finally, it must be noted that the manuscripts of most of those documents have been digitalised and made available online (the only exceptions being Ōta Hikosuke, Mishima, Sawara and Kondō). Several of them also have been edited in modern versions, either in

compilations of *chishi* about the Izu islands (most notably Takakura 1968 or Kanayama 1976), or as separate books. However, several of those works remain without any modern edition to this day, namely Ōhara, Hattori, the *Hachijō-jima runin no hanashi*, the *Hachijō-jima monogatari*, and the *Hachijō-jima daigai-chō*.

More importantly, as far as I know, these sources have never been properly compiled together or systematically criticised, especially regarding their codex variants, possible copy mistakes, and information sources. These questions would require further investigation.

## 2.2 Existing Literature

In general, studies about the Edo sources for Japanese dialects and varieties can be said to be surprisingly rare, especially when compared with the amount of synchronic approaches: in the case of Hachijō, out of more than 200 existing references about the language, only a handful include pre-modern sources to their consideration (such as Tamura 1928; Motoyama 1934 or Yoshimachi 1951), and the only ones that do only focus on one or two pre-modern documents. The only exception in this regard is the comprehensive study published by NINJAL in 1950, which I will now briefly comment.

### 2.2.1 The 1950 NINJAL Study

In 1949, the newly founded National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) dedicated its first ever full-scale study to Hachijō. This choice is explained in the introduction of this work (3) to have been motivated by four elements:

1. the South Izu were, at that time, undergoing language shift from the local variety to the standard language from Tōkyō (which is the phenomenon that NINJAL originally wanted to document)
2. Hachijō is different enough from the dialect of Tōkyō to make that language shift easy to observe
3. the classification of Hachijō is unclear, which made its description important
4. Hachijō is attested in sources from the Edo period, which makes it possible to document its recent evolutions

In other words (as stated in point 4), the existence of pre-modern sources is not coincidental with Hachijō being the first ever language studied by NINJAL, but, quite in the opposite, those early attestations were an element that motivated its description. Thus, in total, 25 pre-modern sources for Hachijō are listed and described in this study (272-86), and the lexical content of 20 of those 25 sources is

included in the provided lexicon (321-413), for a total of almost 1,400 entries. However, it must be noted that among those 25 references, some appear to be alternative titles of the same work rather than different documents, while others barely contain any linguistic content. For those reasons, some of those references were not included above in our list of the 20 major pre-modern sources.

More generally, this study is also based on more than 40 modern sources (listed at pages 303-18) on the language, as well as on a 10-day field study conducted by 10 NINJAL members in Hachijō-jima. The methods, circumstances and people involved in this investigation are extremely thoroughly detailed, and several important results are provided about the differentiated use of Hachijō and Tōkyō Japanese, the inner diversity of Hachijō, its phonological, grammatical and lexical peculiarities, notable cultural features of its local community, etc. For all these reasons, this study can be considered one of the most important milestones in the study of Hachijō, alongside its first English description (Dickins, Satow 1878), its first Japanese description (Hoshina 1900), or, more recently, its comprehensive description by Kaneda (2001).

Finally, the question of the continuity between the pre-modern attestations and the contemporary language is also assessed in the study. Namely, a quantitative estimation was conducted comparing the wordlist provided by Ōta (c. 1811) with data gathered during the Institute's fieldwork. The study concludes (221) that in total, 78% of the Hachijō words provided in Ōta's wordlist were still in use in 1949, that 29% were altered in some ways, and that only the remaining 7% had completely fallen out of use, although there were strong differences between generations and villages regarding the preservation of lexicon (222). I will develop further about this estimation in the following paragraph, mostly in order to explain why I disagree with these numbers (cf. *infra*).

## 2.2.2 Limits of the 1950 NINJAL Study

Given the fact that this question is not at all the focus of this study, the 1950 NINJAL study is not exempt of some weaknesses in its consideration of Hachijō pre-modern sources. Most notably, the data compiled from those sources is 'sorted', but not 'filtered', which means that every different spelling is shown in a separate entry, without any cross-reference or comparison between those entries. This is unfortunate, since allography is particularly strong in the Edo period (especially when writing down a non-standardised oral language), and can give some valuable insights on the pronunciation of some phonemes at that time. For instance, one given lexeme such as *shicchou* (seventh son) (cognate of Tōkyō Japanese given name *Shichirou* 七郎) can be



found in no less than 8 different entries in the study's index: ヒッチョー <*hicchō*>, ヒツテウ <*hitsuteu*>, ジツテウ <*jitteu*> (with probably erroneous *dakuten*), シツチャウ <*shicchau*>, シツチョー <*shicchō*>, シツチョウ <*shicchou*>, シツテョウ <*shitteyou*> (with an erroneous テ for チ) and シツテフ <*shittetu*>. In total, about a third of the 4,700 entries provided in the study's index can be considered to be spelling variants, rather than different lexemes.

In addition, as shown with the example of *shicchou*, probable copy mistakes (whether in the Hachijō headwords or in the provided translation in classical Japanese) are also quite common in texts from that period, and, while they are valuable to establish codical relations, presenting them as separate entries without any commentary can be misleading. For instance, several entries such as *chifuchi*, *chifuno*, *chizuna* are all presented as meaning 'dandelion' (in Japanese *tanpopo* 蒲公英) in pre-modern sources of Hachijō, such as the *Oki no Kojima-ki* (a variant name of the *Izu kaitō fudoki*). However, those forms are unattested in contemporary sources of Hachijō (such as Kobayashi 1984 or Asanuma 1999), which instead have only one etymologically transparent form: *chibuna* (analysable as 'latex plant': *chibu* + *na*). Given the fact that no regular sound change or lexical derivation could explain those three forms in Hachijō, the most reasonable explanation is probably that they are miscopies from <*chibuna*> (or, rather, from <*chifuna*>; that is, *chibuna* written without *dakuten*), caused by the resemblance between the 3 *katakana* <ナ>, <チ> and <ノ>. Such miscopies appear to be especially common in some pre-modern sources, such as the *Oki no Kojima-ki* and the *Izu shichitō fudo sairān* (which could possibly indicate that they were copied by someone who did not speak Hachijō). It is also more frequent for some words than others: for instance, the Hachijō word *hikkan* (Japanese *hikan* 被官, 'servant') appears with several aberrant spellings, such as ヒヅリツン <*hizurishin*> or ヒヅリソン <*hizurison*>, in addition to the expected ヒツクワン <*hitsukuwan*>. This might possibly indicate that those words were rather infrequent or difficult to analyse, compared with other lexical items.

The blindness of the 1950 NINJAL study towards allography and misspellings also has a strong influence on its quantitative estimation of how much old Hachijō remained in use in contemporary times. For instance, while the study concludes that a word from Ōta's word-list like トウフ <*toufu*> (grotto), was not used any more in 1949, I consider that this form is more likely a miscopy from the widely attested Hachijō word トウラ *toura* ~ *doura* (with <ラ> miscopied as <フ>). The same thing is true for instance of ニロノッテ <*nironotte*> (together), which is probably miscopied (with <モ> misread as <ニ>) of モロノッテ *moronotte* ('together', which is attested, for instance in Kobayashi 1984); for フングミ <*fungumi*> (loincloth), probably miscopied from the widely attested word フンドシ *fundoshi* ('loincloth')

with <ドシ> miscopied as <グミ>), or of the expression フツケフツケ <*fukke-fukke*> (light rain), which I believe, is miscopied from the verbal form フツテフツテ *futte-futte* (falling lightly) (with <テ> misread as <ケ>). Besides, in many other cases, the NINJAL study also considers words that are attested in Ōta's wordlist to have fallen out of use merely because of a missing *dakuten*, while those words are safely attested in many contemporary sources. This can be seen for instance in *ogoru* ('be noisy'; written as <*wokoru*>), *mabaru* ('to watch'; written as <*maharu*>), *tabi* ('menstruation hut'; written as <*tahi*>), and in several other words.<sup>8</sup> This mistake is quite surprising, given the fact that some of those words are extremely common in Hachijō, and given the fact that the use of the *dakuten* is known not to have been systematic in the Edo period.

Finally, and perhaps quite surprisingly, the 1950 NINJAL study also reports that several Hachijō words from this wordlist have fallen out of use, while those are (sometimes abundantly) attested in other contemporary sources. This is the case, for instance, of the words *nusutama* ('thief'; attested, for instance, in Asanuma 1999), *itari* (leisure house), *kubona* (spider) (both found in Isozaki 1977), *nosu* (to eat a lot) (Ogawa 1958), *tomi-sagari* (good rain) (Kobayashi 1984), or *kūrou* (sixth daughter) (attested, for instance, in Isozaki 1977; Kobayashi 1984; Yamada 2010). Thus, we have to assume that either the sample of 20 people chosen to conduct the fieldwork study was too small to represent the whole of the speakers' community, or that there was some kind of flaw in the data collection.

In any case, because of all the aforementioned elements, I think we can safely consider that the proportion of Hachijō words that were preserved between Ōta's wordlist and the contemporary language is more likely to be higher than what the NINJAL study suggests. According to my personal recount, I consider that out of 207 entries in Ōta's wordlist, only 9 clearly attested words (or 4% of the total) appear to have fallen out of use before 1949, while 9 entries remain difficult to analyse. In other words, a total of 189 words (or 92% of the wordlist) appear to have been partly or completely preserved between 1820 and 1949, which shows an even greater continuity between pre-modern and contemporary Hachijō that the study suggested.

However, given the fact that the author of this wordlist, Ōta Nanpo, was neither native from the islands, neither even traveled there

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<sup>8</sup> Namely: *tega* (hoe) (written as <*teka*>), *tego* (third daughter) (written as <*teko*>), *jirou* (fifth daughter) (written as <*chiirou*>), *kedouzu* (sewer) (written as <*kedousu*>), *yobi* (belt) (written as <*yohi*>), *donza* (rag) (written as <*tonsa*>), *yagi* (fishing pole) (written as <*yaki*>), *jougi* (bowl) (written as <*shiyaugi*>), *kendon* (gargling bowl) (written as <*kenton*>), and *daisan* (modern Hachijō *de:shan* ~ *dya:shan*) (3 pm) (written as <*taisan*>).

in person, given the fact that the source(s) he used are unknown, and, more importantly, given the many miscopies we saw in his wordlist, I think that this wordlist should probably not be regarded as the most representative pre-modern source of Hachijō. Instead, I think it would be most valuable to compare modern linguistic data to compiled data from all pre-modern sources, in order to get a clearer idea of the lexical, phonological and grammatical retentions and innovations that occurred during the last centuries. Thus, we can now, in a final section, introduce to some preliminary findings in this topic, and to prospective research questions that will need to be investigated about the pre-modern sources of Hachijō.

### 3 Preliminary Findings and Prospective Research Topics

#### 3.1 Lexicon

As stated earlier, the first task of this research on the pre-modern sources of Hachijō was to compile all attested lexemes into a comprehensive table, to sort those lexemes by removing double counts, and, finally, to compare them with the more than 8,000 Hachijō lexemes gathered from contemporary sources. In total, when adding up lexical content from all 20 aforementioned pre-modern sources, the pre-modern Hachijō lexemes add up to roughly 1,000 items. This number shows once again how well attested this variety was in the Edo period, when compared with other minority languages of Japan. Besides, these lexemes can be noted to include a lot of highly iconic Hachijō words (such as *nyoko* ‘first daughter’, *menarabe* ‘girl’, *ojari yare* ‘welcome’, etc.); but also many words that are unattested in contemporary sources, most of which being of obscure composition, or occurring only once.

Due to the difficulty of analysing a lot of those forms, it is hard to get a precise account of the percentage of pre-modern lemmas that were preserved in the contemporary language. According to my current counting, it can, at this stage, only be roughly estimated that roughly 70% of pre-modern words can safely be considered to have been fully or partly<sup>9</sup> preserved in the contemporary language, and that less than 10% of pre-modern Hachijō words can probably safely be considered lost.<sup>10</sup> In other words, I consider that, at this stage,

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<sup>9</sup> As a matter of fact, some roots were preserved, but the composition of the independent lemma was altered, for instance *kona* (silkworm) and *kasuru* (to forget) are both well attested in pre-modern Hachijō. However, in the contemporary language, they are obligatorily, respectively, suffixed (*kona-sama*), and prefixed (*hik-kasuru*).

<sup>10</sup> An example of word that can safely be considered lost, is *takadara* (bamboo basket). As a matter of fact, this word respects two different criteria, namely:

roughly 20% of pre-modern Hachijō lexemes are not well attested or analysable enough to be considered safe attestations. As I hope to have shown with the example of Ōta's wordlist, it is likely that a sound part of those 20% obscure terms are actually well attested lexemes that were simply misread or miscopied in the available manuscripts. Thus, providing an analysis for those roughly 190 forms will be an important part of the future research on that topic, and will require a lot of philological work.

In any case, it can already be noted that the attested pre-modern Hachijō lexemes are extremely diverse, and cover all parts of speech, all lexical *strata* (native, Sino-Japanese, onomatopoeic), as well as various semantic fields (such as flora and fauna, kinship lexicon, body parts, society and culture, etc.). In this perspective, it would also be interesting to study which parts of lexicon were best preserved in the contemporary language, and which ones were replaced more quickly. For instance, it would be interesting to see whether the proportion of different *strata* in the pre-modern sources matches the one of the contemporary language, since it would be plausible to assume that the pervasive influence of Tōkyō Japanese on Hachijō caused an increase in the use of Sino-Japanese in the contemporary language.

### 3.2 Phonology

Perhaps more importantly, the pre-modern sources of Hachijō can also provide some valuable insights on its historical phonology. However, in this perspective, we need to be careful about the classical Japanese spelling, which might in some cases be misleading. For instance, while looking at some attested forms like *kuwan* (coffin) or *hikkuwan* (servant), we might think that pre-modern Hachijō preserved Sino-Japanese labio-velars /kw/ and /gw/ before /a/. However, another hypothesis is to interpret this spelling as being imitated from the classical Japanese cognates *kuwan* 棺 and *hikuwan* 被官. In the absence of any evidence in favour of one or the other of these hypotheses, this question cannot be answered yet. Similarly, since we observe some variations between palatal /s/ and /h/ in initial position, as in *shicchou* (seventh son) (most sources)/*hicchou* (Ōta, c. 1811), we might think that, in pre-modern Hachijō, like in the modern-day language, there was no clear opposition between those two phonemes in this phonological context. However, since this /sy/ ~ /hy/ merging

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– It is safely attested in pre-modern Hachijō (with at least five different occurrences, and a rather transparent composition), meaning that it is unlikely to have been miscopied from something else.

– It is, to the best of my knowledge, absent from all contemporary sources (except when those are quoting pre-modern documents).

is also a well known feature of the Edo/Tōkyō dialect,<sup>11</sup> it is not clear whether this variation is due to the object language, to the language of the transcriber, or to a convergence of both. These questions require further investigation.

In other cases however, as stated before, the important allography found in pre-modern sources can provide some valuable insights on the phonology of pre-modern Hachijō. Namely, based on the available data, we can assume that pre-modern Hachijō had:

- systematic palatalisation of /s/ before /e/ in initial position, hence the writing of the word *shei* (to know) (< \*shoi, adnominal *shoke*) as <*sei*>
- occasional medial gemination of occlusive /k/, hence a variation between <*yoke*> (good) (Takahashi 1802; Kondō 1858) and <*yokke*>,<sup>12</sup> or between *nekoi* (small) (Kodera 1796; Kondō 1858) and *nekkoi* (most other sources)
- sporadic palatalisation of medial /s/, hence <*daisan*> (Hattori 1811; Ōta c. 1811; Kondō 1858) ~ <*daishan*> (Takahashi 1802; Kondō 1858)

All of these features are also well documented in the contemporary language.

In this perspective, another interesting variation is the initial *r* ~ *d*-, which can be seen in the name ‘sixth son’, which is written as *rokuro* (in most sources) and *dokuro* (in Akiyama 1791; Kodera 1796). This variation is interesting to observe, not only because it exists in the contemporary language and is consciously (usually negatively) perceived by the speakers, but also because *rokuro* is the only word presenting this alternation in pre-modern sources. As a matter of fact, other words that start with /r/ in standard Japanese are ‘only’ attested with initial /d/ in Hachijō sources in the Edo period (like *dzunin* (exile) – Japanese *runin* 流人, or *djinki* (jealousy) – Japanese *rinki* 愔気). Thus, in my opinion, we can assume that the initial /r/ had undergone full fortition into /d/ in the stage of pre-modern Hachijō, before being shifted back to /r/ later by influence of the standard language, when the social stigma made such features of local speech appear negatively.

Similarly, a couple of sound changes can be safely said to have occurred before the Edo period in Hachijō, since they are already reflected in pre-modern sources, for instance:

- the dropping of several medial consonants, such as /s/, or /m/, e.g.: <*aitaba*> (angelica plant) (modern *e:taba* / *ya:taba*)

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**11** Cf. for instance Martin 1987, 1.

**12** Satō 1781; Akiyama 1791; Mishima 1801; Hattori 1811.

MJ < *asitaba* - Japanese *ashitaba*); <*akai*> (mallotus tree) (modern *akke*: / *akkyā*: MJ < *akame* - Japanese *akame*)

- the merging of several vowel hiatuses into /ei/ or /e:/, as showed for instance in <*tei*> ‘hand.ACC’ (< te wo), <*kimei*> (guts) (<\*ki-mo-wi), or <*tenegehe*> (towel) (< tenegui)<sup>13</sup>
- the gemination of voiced consonants after moraic /n/ in some topolects (which is a well-known characteristic of ‘uphill’ Hachijō), for instance in <*atsude*> /*adde*/ (why) in Kakusō 1858 (modern-day *ande* ~ *adde*).<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, it is interesting to observe that some of the most widespread sound changes of Hachijō are not yet attested in pre-modern sources, such as:

- the differentiated treatment of /ei/ to either /ei/ or /i:/, for instance in *peiru* (to get wet) (most varieties) / *pi:ru* (Kashitate, Nakanogō, Sueyoshi). Pre-modern sources usually<sup>15</sup> all have <*ei*> (written as <*ei*> or <*ehi*>) in all occurrences
- the raising of /o/ to /u/ near labial<sup>16</sup> (for instance, pre-modern sources have *yowai*, while contemporary Hachijō is *yuwea*, *yuwakya*)
- the sporadic dropping of medial /r/ (pre-modern *anmari*, modern *anmai* ‘(not) quite’)
- the merging of /z/ and /j/: pre-modern *zanmai*; modern *zanme*: ~ *janme*: (forgiveness’)
- etc.

Therefore, it seems likely to assume that all of these innovations occurred later in the history of Hachijō. However, given the fact that the data is quite shallow in some cases (especially regarding some

<sup>13</sup> There are, however, a few exceptions to this treatment, since we can observe spellings such as <*kogoheru*> (to be cold) (modern *kogeiru*) or <*nekkohi*> (small) (modern *nekkei*, *nekkokya*). This could either indicate that <*ei*> was still occurring in free variation with the original vowel hiatuses; but it is also possible to assume that those minority spellings are secondary, since they could be either etymological (in the case of *kogeiru*), or influenced by the rest of the pattern (in the case of *nekkei*, *nekkoke*). Finally, it is also possible that this shift was still ongoing at that time (cf. *infra*).

<sup>14</sup> This feature is only clearly attested in this source, perhaps due to ‘uphill’ topolects being overall less attested than the other topolects. There might also be one occurrence in Kondō 1858 *yotsupari* (urine), if we assume that this form is altered from \**yobbari* (modern Hachijō *yonbari* ~ *yobbari*). However, it is equally possible that <ツ> is simply a miscopy from <シ>.

<sup>15</sup> There might actually be one occurrence of /i:/ in Ōta’s wordlist: <*hiiru*> (moth); all other pre-modern sources have <*heiru*> for the same word. However, I consider one occurrence too shallow an evidence to ascertain that this sound change was already starting at that time.

<sup>16</sup> Again, there might be one occurrence of this sound change in Ōta’s wordlist: *marubu* (to die), while all other pre-modern sources have *marobu*.

topolects), it is difficult to be certain at this stage, and much more research will be needed in order to grasp the details of Hachijō's historical phonology.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, a couple of sound changes might actually be directly documented in the pre-modern sources; namely:

- the differentiated treatment of /awa/ in different varieties (namely /o:/ in most varieties, /a:/ in Sueyoshi and /oa/ in Kashitate and Nakanogō, hence for instance *no*: ~ *na*: ~ *noa* 'rope'). For instance, the word for 'mother' \*hawa (Japanese *haha*) appears as *hou* (Takahashi 1802), *hoa* (Hattori 1811) and *ha*: (Ōta 1820; Kondō 1858). Since this change is attested in some words, but not in other within the same sources, we can assume that the older and the more recent pronunciation were still, at that time, in more or less free variation
- the merging of /ai/, /ae/ and /ayu/ to either /e:/ or /ya:/,<sup>17</sup> depending on the topolect (as in *ne*: ~ *nya*: 'seedling'). In pre-modern sources, <ai>, <ahi>, <ae>, <ahe> are by far the most common spellings for that /e:/ ~ /ya:/ phoneme, and appear to be in rather free variation.<sup>18</sup> However, <ei> also occurs sporadically: for instance, *akke*: ~ *akkya*: (heel) occurs as <akkahi> in Ōta, but as <akkei> in Kondō (1858); similarly *ke:daruku* ~ *kya:daruku* (being dull) appears in Kondō as *keidaruku*.<sup>19</sup> This seems to show that there was at that time some degree of free variation between older and newer pronunciations, at least in some topolects; perhaps not unlike in modern-day colloquial Japanese (*urusai* ~ *uruse*: 'noisy')<sup>20</sup>
- (possibly) the lowering of /i/ to /e/ after labial: *hepira* (clothes) (most sources) ~ *hebera* (Hond 1810), *tsugumi* (kneecap) (Satō 1781) ~ *tsugume* (most sources)

However, the data remains very shallow, and since it is difficult to know for sure which Hachijō topolect is attested in each text, it is almost impossible to have certainties at this point. Besides, due to the scarcity

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**17** Examples of <ya> spellings are not entirely clear in pre-modern sources, possibly because 'uphill' topolects are less attested. More research is needed on that topic.

**18** As a matter of fact, <ae> and <ahe> also occur in cases in which they are not etymological, such as *mahe* (cocoon) in Ōta's wordlist (modern *me*: ~ *mya*: < \*mayu) or *nahe* 'not.FIN' (modern *ne*: ~ *nya*: < \*nasi).

**19** There are several possible occurrences of <ei> < \*ai in other sources than Kondō (including older ones). However, the etymology of those words is less certain, which makes them less solid evidence.

**20** This free variation is perhaps best attested in Dickins and Satow's (1878) account on Hachijō, in which the verb *mairu* (to take), occurs as both <meeru> and <mairu> in *rōmaji*.

of sources, there are, in many cases, no occurrences at all which could indicate whether a sound change had occurred or not in premodern Hachijō. For instance, none of the words which exhibit the merging of /m/ and /n/ in palatal environment (such as *michiru* ~ *nichiru* ‘to get full’) are attested in pre-modern sources.<sup>21</sup> Thus, it is impossible to determine whether this change took place in pre-modern times or not. In other cases, it is impossible to tell whether a sound change is attested or not, because of the classical spelling: for instance, the modern Hachijō word for ‘coffin’ is *gan* which appears in old sources as <*kuwan*>, and it is unclear whether the initial consonant was voiced after the Edo period, or whether the old sources simply exhibit a missing *dakuten*.

More generally, in many cases there are too few occurrences to ascertain whether a sound change occurred, or whether the few possible occurrences are miscopies. For instance, the raising of /ou/ to /u:/ is well documented in some contemporary topolects of Hachijō and could be attested in the pre-modern language in the word *magou ni* (really), since a form <*magu: ni*> is also found in Kondō (1858). However, since we are dealing with a *hapax*, it is also equally reasonable to assume that this occurrence is a miscopy of <𐄂> to <𐄃>, and further evidence will have to be brought up to decide between those two possibilities.

In fact, even when we are dealing with a widely attested word, the allography can be difficult to analyse. For instance, the word for ‘ninth son’ exhibits several different spellings:

- <*kurau*> (Satō 1781)
- <*kuurou*> (Furukawa 1797)
- <*kuteu*> (Akiyama 1791; Kodera 1796)
- <*kutteu*> (Kakusō 1848), <*kutsuchiyau*> (Kondō 1858)

However, it is difficult to make sense of this diversity. While <*kuteu*> appears to be the best attested form, and fits the modern *ku-chou* (Nagakubo 1937; Isozaki 1977), then it is unclear how to interpret the geminate in Kakusō and Kondō. This could either indicate that pre-modern Hachijō did not have any opposition between plain and geminated /ch/ in medial position; or it could instead be a secondary spelling, influenced by the forms *shicchou* (< *shichirou* and *hacchou* (< *hachirou*)). Finally, in that case, we could assume that <*kurau*> was miscopied from <*kuteu*> (with <𐄂> misread as <𐄃>),

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**21** In fact, there might be two examples of neutralization of the *m* ~ *n* opposition in palatal environment in Ōta’s wordlist. Namely, we could assume that the form <*iden*> ‘oh well’ is miscopied for \**ideni*, which could be a variant of the well attested form *ide-mi* (which also occurs in the same wordlist). Similarly, we can assume that the form <*mishihitowomofu*> (which is translated as ‘ugly’) is to be read \**mikei* to *omou* ‘I think that [it] is ugly’, with \**mikei* being a variant of the well attested form *nikei* ‘ugly’ (SJ *nikui*). However, given the high number of miscopies in that text, these two examples are probably not clear enough to be considered proof of this phenomenon.



and that <*kuurou*> exhibits either a spelling influenced by the standard *kurou* 九郎, or a miscopy of <ッテ> as <ウロ>. On the other hand, it is also possible to assume the contrary, that is, that *kurou* (attested in Satō with classical spelling <*au*> for /ou/) is the genuine old form (as expected through the etymology), and that Furukawa <*kuurou*> exhibits the same form with an erroneous lengthening. In that case, we could assume that the refecation of *kurou* to *ku(c)chou* on the model of the preceding forms *shicchou* and *hacchou* (which also extended to the following *jicchou*) was rather recent, so that both form were still coexisting at the end of the eighteenth century. Again, more research is needed in order to decide between those two possibilities.

### 3.3 Grammar

Finally, it must be noted that although Hachijō pre-modern sources mostly contain isolated words rather than complete sentences, they still exhibit a lot of grammatical elements that are considered characteristic for that variety, such as:

- the adjective adnominal form *-ke* (first attested in 1781)<sup>22</sup> and its final form *-kya* (c. 1811)
- the verb adnominal *-o* (1848)<sup>23</sup>
- the adjectival negative final form *-nnaka* (1801) and its adnominal counterpart *-nnoa* ~ *-nno*: ~ *-nna*: (1797)
- the copula *dara* (1802) and its adnominal form *doa* ~ *-do*: ~ *-da*: (1848)
- the past tense ending *-ara* (1848), and its adnominal *-oa* ~ *-o*: ~ *-a*: (1811)
- the reduplicated past *-arara*, and its adnominal *-aroa* ~ *-aro*: ~ *-ara*: (1848)
- the conjectural morpheme *nou* (1811)
- the comparative/volitional morpheme *-gon* ~ *-gan* (1802)
- the diminutive/derogative/nominalising morpheme *-me* (c. 1811)
- the intensive verbal prefix *hiQ-* (1796)
- etc.

However, several less typical morphemes also abundantly occur in the same sources, such as a final adjective morpheme *-shi*, a past tense morpheme *-ta*, an adnominal copula *na*, a negative auxiliary *-nu*, etc. In some cases, it seems likely that this allomorphy is due to an influence of classical Japanese (for instance, in the case of adjective

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<sup>22</sup> The date of the first attestations are based on current research results, but might be revised as new sources are discovered and treated.

<sup>23</sup> Many grammatical morphemes are first attested at this date, since Kakusō's book contains the first two long texts in Hachijō.

adnominal *-ki* instead of *-ke*). However, in other cases, it can be difficult to decide whereas a form was influenced by other varieties of Japanese (and especially by classical Japanese or by the dialect of Edo), or whether is an inherited form, which gradually fell out of use in the recent history of the language. All those questions would need further investigation that would by far exceed the scope of this article.

#### 4 Conclusion

Thanks to their unique position within Japan, the South Izu islands were fortunate enough to be abundantly described during the Edo period in many documents. However, while those pre-modern sources for Hachijō are remarkably numerous, diverse and invaluable, they remain critically understudied to this day. Several of those documents are still in need of a modern edition, and a comprehensive study of all those sources would also prove most useful, in order to analyse obscure forms. The only existing attempt of a compilation of those documents (NINJAL 1950) is now quite outdated, and not exempt of shortcomings.

Given the facts that those works document more than 100 years of Hachijō's linguistic history, they might exhibit some ongoing language changes and archaisms that could help shed light on important questions about Hachijō, such as its classification within Japonic languages. However, much more research is needed at this stage, in order to get a clearer picture.

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