THE NARRATIVITY OF THE MEDIUM:
THE ARCHITECTURE OF BOOK SPACE IN PICTURE BOOKS

by
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Part One - Introduction

Narrative is generally conceived of in the structuralist model as composed of two parts, story and discourse, but increasingly prevalent experimental practices in the realm of picture books necessitate the introduction of the medium as an important constituent of the narrative, which encompasses both semiotic and material manifestations. Although material aspects of the book have been examined in fields like art history, media studies and the history of the material text, placing these in the context of narratology allows us to understand features of the book significant to the narrative. This paper argues that the medium not only provides material support for the presentation of the narrative but also participates in the narration and occupies a unique signifying role.

By first modifying and expanding upon Chatman’s four-part division of the narrative, this paper includes the medium as a plane independent from discourse and then stages a dialogue between this new narratological framework and contemporary Japanese picture books (ehon) to demonstrate the complex interactions between medium and narrative. I introduce Barthes’s idea of “simultaneous systems” and Genette’s concept of paratext to elaborate on the relationship between medium and other narrative components and to bring in different perspectives on the material significance of medium. In addition, I take into account works by contemporary critics: Marie-Laure Ryan’s argument for a media-conscious narratology allows the medium to take an active part in shaping the reader’s experience of the narrative and helps locate our examination of the significance of

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1 In addition to Chatman’s story/discourse, a variety of terms are used to distinguish between what is told in a narrative and how it is told, for example, fiction/narration (Ricardou), histoire/discours (Benveniste) related to énoncé/énonciation, histoire/récit (Genette), signifié/signifiant (Barthes). For more information, see Gerald Prince’s *A Dictionary of Narratology*. 
medium in picture books within current discussions in media studies; Maria Nikolajeva’s extension of Genette’s concept of paratext in the context of picture books allows paratexts to function as more than an accessory element of the main narrative and lays out the direction that this paper will pursue further. While both scholars are attentive to features of medium, the specific design features of selected Japanese picture books offer a distinct lens and point towards places in Ryan and Nikolajeva’s works where the intricate and complex use of medium demonstrated in these picture books is not yet fully captured. The relationship between the selected texts of Japanese picture books and the theoretical framework in this paper, thus, cannot be reduced to the one serving as an example of the other. Just as Genette resists taking Proust’s Recherche as a mere “réservoir d’exemples” (reservoir of examples) for his theoretical interests in his preface to Discours du récit, the objective of the analysis here is not only to recognize the unique architecture of book space in each picture book and the convergent or divergent effects produced by the unique synthesis of elements, but also to distill the universal elements involved in such creative constructions that are relevant for our general understanding of the significance of medium (Genette 1972, 68).

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A Critique of Chatman’s Narratological Model

In the “Preface” to *Story and Discourse*, Chatman frames his work as a theoretical study of narrative form, in its abstract sense and not as the material “form of the surface of narratives” (Chatman 1983, 11). Chatman’s concern thus lies in developing a narrative theory that transcends the specificity of any literary genre and is applicable to “a wide range of narrative texts” beyond the verbal medium (Chatman 1983, 11). In the “Introduction,” Chatman establishes the parallel between the structure of language and the structure of narrative and focuses on narrative as a form of communication (Chatman 1983, 31). While Chatman is clearly aware of the role of medium in the transmission of narrative messages, since he includes examples of visual narratives and draws our attention to the different modes of spatial-temporal representation in verbal and cinematic narratives, he fails to distinguish the medium as independent from narrative discourse and as an element that not only supports the transmission of narrative but also participates in the construction of the narrative.

Chatman borrows the concepts of “content” and “expression,” “form” and “substance” from Hjelmslev and Saussure to help delineate a primary understanding of the structure of the narrative. While Chatman sees Hjelmslev’s distinction between “content” and “expression” as a relevant concept for specifying the interrelation between “story” and “discourse,” the two essential components into which the Structuralists divide the narrative, his introduction of “form” and “substance” is rather problematic. First of all, Chatman fails to provide a consistent definition for these two terms. He first explains the substance of expression in linguistic structure as “the material nature of the linguistic elements, for example, the actual sounds made by voices, or marks on paper” (Chatman
Later however, Chatman presents a different account when he juxtaposes the substance with the form of phonic expression, describing the substance of expression as “the myriad audible sounds utilized by a given language” and the form of expression as “the small set of discrete phonemes or range of phonic oppositions characteristic of it” (Chatman 1983, 23). In the first account, Chatman understands substance as the material embodiment of the form (the actual utterance of a word), whereas in the second account the substance is described as building blocks for the organizing structure in the form (the abstract sounds that can be arranged to produce the pronunciation of a word). When Chatman moves into translating the four-part division of linguistic structure into the realm of narrative (fig. 1.1.1), however, he resorts to the first account and takes the substance as the material presentation that allows the form to adopt a specific appearance. Thus, the substance of content (“the set of possible objects, events, abstractions, and so on that can be ‘imitated’ by an author”) becomes details that render the form of content (“narrative story components” like “events” and “existents”) concrete, and the substance of expression (“media” or “semiotic manifestation”) becomes the specific presentation of the abstract form of expression (“narrative discourse”) (Chatman 1983, 24).

If we return to the second account, which is closer to the accounts of Saussure and Hjelmslev, we reach a different understanding of the relationship between form and substance that facilitates a better arrangement of the components of the narrative: “form” as an abstract structure of the possible combination of elements and “substance” as the potential elements or constituents of such structure. As we introduce the revised concepts of “form” and “substance” into narrative structure, we need to redefine the substance of story as potential elements of the story (events, settings, characters) and the form of story
as a structure of possible combinations of such elements (for example, an abstract sequence that connects events). Chatman’s listing of “people, things, etc., as preprocessed by the author’s cultural codes” (Chatman 1983, 26) as the substance of content seems to be a too literal translation of “the whole mass of thoughts and emotions” (Chatman 1983, 23) in the substance of content in language that he quotes from John Lyons. Here, Chatman seems to confuse form and substance with the representing and the represented in mimesis. In the expression plane, we should also reconsider the substance of discourse as the potential elements of a narrative discourse (focalization, narrative time, etc.) and the form of discourse as a structure of possible combinations of such elements (for example, a structure created by the combination of the rhythm in narrative time and the shifting in narrative mode). Such an understanding of the form and substance of discourse will allow us to analyze not only how the use of a specific device in narrative discourse affects the way a narrative is presented but also what is unique about the way discursive elements are combined in a narrative.

By re-arranging Chatman’s diagram (fig. 1.1.2), this paper also allows the semiotic “manifestation” to emerge from narrative discourse as an independent element. Previously, Chatman has lumped together semiotic “manifestation” (“verbal, cinematic, balletic, musical, pantomimic, or whatever”) with elements of discursive presentation as the form and the substance of narrative discourse, conflating an element of the medium with an element of the discourse (Chatman 1983, 22). Chatman’s failure to recognize the intricacy and diversity of the medium as an element that deserves a plane of its own stems from his focus on the reading of a narrative as achieving an end, what he calls “reading out,” that is, to arrive at a higher level of meaning through penetrating “the surface or manifestation
level of reading” (Chatman 1983, 41). The emphasis on story and narrative discourse as the locus of meaning of a narrative \(^3\) gives less importance to the constraints and possibilities (the linearity of text, the spatiality of image, etc.) that semiotic codes impose on and offer to the narrative and ignores the process of reading in general as the coming-into-being of meaning that opens up the narrative for different levels of interpretation. Although minimizing the effect of medium allows Chatman to develop a narrative theory that concentrates on the essential properties of a variety of narratives despite their differences in semiotic manifestation or material appearance (in a book, on a screen, etc.), such isolation fails to take into account the specificity of a work and the organic relationships among story, discourse and medium that contribute to an experience of the narrative beyond reaching an anatomy of its narrative structure.

If the role of semiotic manifestation in Chatman’s account is minimal, the material book and other material manifestations are deliberately excluded. Although Chatman thinks that it is necessary to draw a distinction between elements of narrative (story, discourse, and semiotic manifestation) and material manifestations\(^4\), such a distinction does not lead to the understanding of the material book as a unique participant in the creation and experience of the narrative. Instead, it reduces material manifestations to “a means to ‘fix’ the work, or rather to make it accessible to the reader” (Chatman 1983, 27). The physical accessibility that the material book offers does not account for its potential to assist the aesthetic experience of the text; the reader has to transcend the distractions

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\(^3\) “[the narrative] may be transposed from one to another medium without losing its essential properties” (Chatman 1983, 20).

\(^4\) “Story, discourse, and manifestation must further be distinguished from the mere physical disposition of narratives – the actual print in books, movement of actors or dancers or marionettes, lines on paper or canvas, or whatever” (Chatman 1983, 26).
imposed by the physical condition of a book as to “mentally construct” the narrative as an aesthetic object: the reader has to “unearth the virtual narrative” behind each copy of the book, “whether it is ... an elegant library edition or a dirty, water-stained paperback version,” and remain immune to these immediate visual or tactile impressions imposed by “the physical condition of a book” (Chatman 1983, 27). By including semiotic manifestation as a mere conduit for narrative discourse and excluding material manifestation as an integral part of the narrative, Chatman leaves out the deep interconnections between semiotic manifestation and material manifestation: for example, the reader’s flipping of pages and movement of eyes across pages are closely related to the linearity of text. Such exclusion leaves little room for discussions not only of the relationship between semiotic manifestation and material manifestation, which is as complex and worthy of theoretical attention as the one between discourse and story, but also of the relationship of these two kinds of manifestations to discourse and story.

By re-positioning semiotic manifestation as an element of medium and not an element of discourse and including material manifestation as part of the narrative structure, we thus redefine the medium as a combination of semiotic “manifestation” (textual, visual, etc.) or the sign in its own right, and material manifestation (book, canvas, etc.) or the vehicle. Although it is helpful to make the distinction between semiotic and material manifestation, picture books like Komagata Katsumi’s Blue to Blue present cases in which such distinction is challenged and reinterpreted. In Blue to Blue, the texture of paper, an element of material manifestation, becomes a material corollary or complement to the verbal narrative in addition to an aesthetic statement, thus transforming itself into a semiotic code in its own right. For example, the undulating lines across the first pages
evoke the rhythmic waves of the sea (fig. 3.1.1), the watermarks of semi-transparent polka dots on the page echo the eggs laid by the salmon (fig. 3.1.3), and the slipperiness of a page both recalls the smoothness of fish scales and signifies the swiftness of the fish’s movement (fig. 3.1.4). The paper not only actualizes the image and text in a physical space but also has the capacity to convey narrative, since the qualities of the paper, such as texture, transparency and luminosity, form a language as complex as the verbal and the visual. It is thus important for us to see the two constituents of the medium, semiotic manifestation and material manifestation, less as disparate parts of a binary construction than as epitomes of what the constituents could be in order to take into account the fluidity and interaction between the two.

This suggestion of taking semiotic manifestation and material manifestation as two major components of the plane of medium also elucidates the issue of translation between media that is touched upon in Chatman’s “Introduction.” What mainly concerns Chatman in the transposition among media is in fact the translation between semiotic manifestations (e.g. the textual and the cinematic, the oral and the written, the visual and the verbal) and not material manifestations: “for instance it is clear that verbal narratives express narrative contents of time summary more easily than do cinematic narratives, while the latter more easily show spatial relations” (Chatman 1983, 25). Chatman also observes the fluidity among semiotic manifestations specifically with respect to the written text as having the potential to be transformed into an oral performance: “All written texts are realizable orally; they are not being performed but could be at any moment. That is, they are innately susceptible of performance” (Chatman 1983, 28). In the comic strip example (fig. 1.2) that Chatman provides at the end of his “Introduction,” however, his primary concern in the
reading and translating of visual narrative into verbal text centers on the relationship between semiotic codes and narrative content, and he thus concludes: “Narrative translation from one medium to another is possible because roughly the same set of events and existents can be read out” (Chatman 1983, 42). Although the verbal translation that Chatman provides reproduces the story of the comic strip, it is ineffective with respect to the transposition of discursive elements. The ending, which is also the climax, of the picture narrative takes advantage of the gaps between two frames (a visual convention of the semiotic language of comic strips) to heighten the contrast between the last shots: the crown of the king disappears and it is replaced with a bag of money. The text fails to re-enact the humorous effect of the pictures as it connects the two scenes with a causal explanation.

We may ask what issues are at stake with the translation between material manifestations that is left out in Chatman’s account: for example, how different is the comic strip that originally appears in a colored newspaper, on a broadsheet, from the one compressed into a black and white verso in a paperback, framed by an explication on the recto in Chatman’s own book?

While the concepts of semiotic and material manifestation capture essential aspects of the book medium—the mode in which story and discourse as a whole are conveyed (semiotic manifestation), and the physical form which the narrative adopts (material manifestation)—the book remains in Chatman’s account a self-contained and static object.

5 “He pawned his crown for a bundle of money so that he could go back to the Royal Casino to gamble some more” (Chatman 1983, 37).
6 According to Ryan, Gunther Kress’s analytical approach in elucidating the concept of medium includes “both modes and media” which does not define media as “a catalog of culturally recognized forms of communication” but as “a catalog of their material supports,” thus “he regards ‘text’ as a mode and ‘book’ as one of its media, ‘image’ as a mode and ‘the screen’ or ‘the CDROM’ as some of its media” (Ryan 2014, 28).
rather than a site of tension and activity, both in its process of creation and in reading. Although the medium is less able to reflect the process of creation with respect to the text, since typesetting to some extent makes uniform the individuality in the creator’s handwriting or at most fictively represents features of the original, the process of creation in the medium makes it possible for us to include books with illustrations executed on special material (e.g. texturized paper, fabric) or with special techniques (e.g. dyeing, embroidery) whose texturized pictorial surfaces are reproduced on a standard and smooth page. We thus need to distinguish such books from those like Komagata’s *Blue to Blue* that are made with special material whose visual or tactile features are directly accessible to the readers through their material manifestations. In the first kind of illustrated book, even though qualities like the pressure and the gestural movement of the brush and the instantaneous or gradual bleeding of ink into the texture of paper are mediated through the printed book, such traces of the process of creation are retained to allow the reader to reimagine the book as coming into being through the creator’s deliberation, improvisation, and hesitation. If the process of creation recalls the material significance of the original and the bodily energy of the artists manifested in their works, asking the reader to see graphic elements on the page less as static components than as signs of dynamic contact between the artist and the visual surface, the process of reading is more concerned with how the book as an object transforms itself into a site of performance through physical interactions with the reader. The introduction of the process of reading thus allows us to see the book

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7 For example in Kiyokawa Asami’s picture book, *Kamisama wa iru inai* (fig. 1.3.1), the glittering beads protrude from the paper, the feathers call attention to the volume of the space they inhabit and the various embroidery stitches create an array of textures on the surface of paper: none of these is immediately tangible for the reader in the printed book, who notices the range of unconventional material used in the original illustrations but at the same time experiences the surface mediated by the glossy paper in the printed book.
as a dynamic architectural structure that is animated through the touching, flipping, overlaying, unfolding, or even peeling, spinning, and rubbing of the reader.\(^8\)

Just as elements of material manifestation can be transformed into a semiotic code in their own right, the process of creation and reading thus has the potential to be developed into a language as complex as that of visual and verbal representation. In Lee Ufan’s picture book *Donguri to yamaneko*, the artist takes the material page as a site for staging an encounter between his brush, the ink and the paper. On one specific spread, the “pear-shaped” brownish points laid out in rows (fig. 1.4.1) are not fixed, static shapes or colors on a page but invite the reader to actively trace the gesture of painting itself so that the process of creating the illustration becomes the signifier of what takes place in the narrative scene (Kilpatrick 2013, 70). The artist’s act of letting droplets of brownish ink dripping onto the paper one by one from his brush can be traced from the interchange between the watery and drier strokes, re-enacting both the acorns approaching the scene of the trial one after another and the tears trickling down the cheeks of the coachman described in the text directly below the image. If it is the awareness of the process of

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\(^8\) In the book *The Cell* (fig. 1.3.2) designed by Brook Andrew (2010) as an echo of his installation, the pages “are made to be torn open by the reader” just as the space of the installation “is decorated both inside and out”; the page is no longer an illusional surface when the reader reaches its interior through peeling (Klanten et al. 2013, 241). Johanna Fuchs’s *The Subjectivity of Coincidences* (2012), however, moves away from the materiality of the pages to attend to the book as a physical object and challenges the fixed direction in which the readers orient themselves towards the book (fig. 1.3.3): “a movable kaleidoscope-like wheel” is placed on the cover so that when the reader spins the book, the rapid rotation of the wheel conjures up a kaleidoscopic pattern, evoking the central theme of chance and potential in the book (Klanten et al. 2013, 146). In the book *Fakery: Cosmetic Typographic Surgery* (fig. 1.3.4) designed by Tuesday Stevenson (2011), the readers are not only invited to explore the dynamic quality of the book but also to assert themselves as actors and actresses of the play unfolded on the stage of the book space: a pair of plastic gloves is added so that the readers smell the surgical setting and rub bluntly against the embossing, which signifies “some sort of underlying reality” in contrast with conspicuously words printed on the page (Klanten et al. 2013, 148).
painting that heightens the dynamism and theatricality of the scene in Lee Ufan’s picture book, in picture books like *Kotori* (fig. 1.4.2) it is only in the physical interaction between the reader and the page that the narrative unfolds. As the reader turns the semi-transparent page inserted in each spread, the little birds fly from recto to verso, the flapping of the transparent paper performs the sound of fluttering wings, and a gentle breeze blows.
Towards a Re-definition of the Medium

Although the essential components of the medium—semiotic manifestation, material manifestation, the process of creation and reading—proposed so far in this paper can be approximately mapped onto the different criteria that Marie-Laure Ryan lays out for defining the medium (semiotic substance, technical dimension, and cultural dimension), the places where the two accounts fail to overlap reveal significant differences in the conception of the interactions among components of the medium and the function of each component (Ryan 2014, 29). Both accounts begin by recognizing the fluidity of the term “medium,” with the aim of fleshing out its meaning in specific terms, but while Ryan seeks an all-encompassing definition of media in its general sense by “tak[ing] as its point of departure the media categories informally used in Western cultures” (Ryan 29), this paper takes the book medium as the starting point and exploits the potential of specific picture books whose intricacy and originality put previous narratological accounts of the medium to the test and gesture towards their inadequacies and inconsistencies.

In the description of the “three dimensions of mediality,” Ryan’s explication of “semiotic substance” and “technical dimension” matches and further elaborates on the concepts of “semiotic codes” and “material manifestation” used in this paper (Ryan 2014, 30); in the presentation of the corresponding approaches of these three dimensions, however, Ryan does not grant the technical dimension as much narrative power as the semiotic substance: the significance of technical dimension comes primarily from how it allows the narrative to be communicated “between sender and receiver,” remaining as a

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9 Ryan further specifies semiotic substance in terms of “spatiotemporal extension,” “signifying dimensions,” “sensorial impact,” and “mode of signification” and suggests the complexity in technical dimension by giving examples of “multilayered modes of production” (Ryan 2014, 29).
support for the semiotic substance which carries out most of the activity of narration (Ryan 2014, 30). Although Ryan does mention non-standard texts like picture books\textsuperscript{10}, she regards them as special cases and sets them apart from standard books as a different medium, thus denying the general possibility of a more complicated relationship between the semiotic codes and the material manifestation in which the material support has the potential to contribute to the narrative by transforming itself into a signifying element. In addition, Ryan's introduction of the “cultural dimension” as a necessary criterion for the definition of media brings in “the behavior of users and producers” and “the institutions that guarantee the existence of the media”(Ryan 2014, 30). While the focus on practices and behaviors echoes the significance that this paper places on the process of creation and writing, framing such practices and behaviors of readers and artists as primarily cultural and largely subject to institutional influences does not leave room for the kind of text whose process of creation and process of reading are not purely dictated by external cultural practices, but rather inspired by its own design.

Now that we have an understanding of the components and their relationships to each other within the plane of the medium, let us turn to the larger picture of the relationship between the medium, the discourse and the story of a narrative. Marie-Laure Ryan establishes the relationship between narrative and media by substituting for narrative the concept of “storyworld”; she thus shifts our attention away from the material presentation to the question of representation in the narrative. For example, in the final section on “application,” Ryan discusses the significance of the concept of storyworld in a

\textsuperscript{10} “The technologies that transmit other media may, however, develop their own idiosyncrasies and evolve from mere channels of transmission into autonomous media of information or artistic expression (e.g., artist book for books, serials and live broadcasting for TV, and computer games and hypertext for digital technology)” (Ryan 2014, 30).
“media-conscious narratology”: “Media differ from each other not only in their ability to focus on certain kinds of intradiegetic elements but, more important, in their repertory of extradiegetic elements” (Ryan 2014, 37). Although Ryan earlier suggests a variety of angles from which to approach the definition of the medium, here, in demonstrating the connection between storyworld and media, Ryan flattens the meaning of the medium into a purely semiotic sense. By responding exclusively to the question of what kinds of representation the medium (semiotic codes) allows and how distinct semiotic codes negotiate their priority as “modes of access” to the storyworld (Ryan 2014, 40), Ryan fails to address any relationship other than the one between semiotic manifestation and the substance of the story.

In order to differentiate fictional stories from nonfictional stories, Ryan resorts to “the triadic analysis of signs into a material object (or signifier), a meaning (or signified), and a referent” according to which “the text of the story is the material object, the storyworld is the meaning, and, in the case of nonfiction, the real world is the referent” (Ryan 2014, 34). Even though the inclusion of the referent in addition to the binary division of signifier and signified goes in a direction that this project is aiming at, Ryan oversimplifies the relationship between the fictional world and reality and compresses the material object, the meaning and the referent of the text into one single system, lumping the material book together with the text in the semiotic sense. By introducing the idea of “systèmes simultanés” (simultaneous systems), a model that Barthes develops in Système de la mode to account for the orders of signification in the fashion system, into the narrative structure, the first system, in which discourse is the signifier in relation to story, the signified, becomes itself an element of the second system, in which the story and discourse
are taken together as the signified in relation to the medium, the signifier (fig. 1.5.1). This approach therefore allows one to examine not only the relationship between the story and the discourse, but also the interaction between the medium and the story, the medium and the discourse. Thanks to the advantage of two simultaneous systems, the medium is thus in an equal signifying relationship with the story and discourse, without prioritizing story over discourse as in Ryan’s case. As Barthes suggests later, the layered structure of the simultaneous systems creates a certain distance between the first system and the second system and by focusing on the second system, one loses sight of the virtual opposition between the elements of the first system. In the case of narrative structure, this particular aspect of the “systèmes simultanés” makes it possible for us to take a step back and recognize the medium as in a signifying relationship with the narrative text (a combination of story and discourse) as an organic whole, as we may lose the complexity of the signifying role of the medium if we focus exclusively on the specific relationships between the medium and the story, the medium and the discourse.

For example, these simultaneous systems of narrative gives us a better account of the intricate architecture of narrative elements in Kitano’s picture book Hoshi no hanashi: the deconstruction of the book medium into a folded paper allows for the gradual unfolding and expansion of the page (fig. 1.5.2), demanding simultaneous movement of the eye and

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11 “Le système ainsi constitué peut devenir lui-même le simple élément d’un second système qui lui sera par consequent extensif”: The system thus constituted can itself become the simple element of a second system which consequently extends it (Barthes 1967, 38). The English translation of quotations from Barthes’s Système de la mode in this paper is cited from Matthew Ward and Richard Howard’s translation, The Fashion System. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.

12 “en isolant et en distançant le signe, il permet d’« oublier » l’opposition virtuelle des premiers signifiants”: by isolating and distancing the sign, it allows one to ‘forget’ the virtual opposition of the primary signifiers (Barthes 1967, 42).
the hand and making it a signifier of the motion of the characters’ viewpoint scanning
across the sky, shifting the focalization between the narrator and characters, and the
progression of the narration itself. Isolating one signifying relationship from others thus
fails to capture the unique polyphonic composition in this picture book that involves
layered correspondences among narrative elements.
Paratext: a New Lens for Thinking about the Medium

Where Chatman’s and Barthes’s diagrams and tables help us delineate a structural understanding of the components of the medium and the relationship between medium and other narrative elements, the catalogue of forms of paratext in Genette’s *Seuils* offers us a different approach. Unlike Chatman, who is only concerned with features of the medium that “participate in or reveal the broader, more abstract narrative movements” (Chatman 1983, 11), Genette values the material presentation of text, regardless of whether it constitutes a narrative or not, and sees the paratext as spatially framing and extending the internal text, rendering it in the form of material book so as to participate in the reception and consummation of texts in the external world (Genette 1987, 7). By proposing the term “reading out,” Chatman asks the readers to penetrate through the material surfaces of the book in order to focus on the abstract narrative structure; on contrary, Genette sees the readers as almost demanding the presence of paratext so as to make the naked text accessible and presentable to them: “le paratexte est donc pour nous ce par quoi un texte se fait livre et se propose comme tel à ses lecteurs, et plus généralement au public” (Genette 1987, 7). If Chatman assumes that the process of “reading out” allows different readers with different copies of the book to reach a similar aesthetic object, then Genette underlines paratext’s capacity to shape the same text into different messages for different

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13 In the chapter on “Le péritexte éditorial” (“The Publisher’s Peritext”) Genette identifies various productions of paratext like “la couverture, la page de titre et leurs annexes” (the cover, the title page and its appendages) and “choix du format, du papier, de la composition typographique, etc.” (selection of format, of paper, of typeface, and so forth) that are connected to the material aspect of the book (Genette 1987, 20). The English translation of quotations from Genette’s *Seuils* is cited from Jane E. Lewin’s translation, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Print.
14 For us, accordingly, the paratext is what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public.
readers. The paratext thus both gives the text an opportunity to “s’adress[er] (même réserve) plus spéciquement, et plus restrictivement, aux seuls lecteurs du texte” \(^\text{15}\) (Genette 1987, 14), and allows the readers to bring in their own contextual knowledge of the work or the author that “pèse sur [la] reception” of the text (influences how the text is received) (Genette 1987, 13).

On the one hand, Genette’s description of the function and significance of paratext gives the readers a certain degree of individuality and agency in the reception of the text; on the other hand, Genette constantly draws our attention to paratext as “l’ordre de l’influence” (the realm of influence) and “voire de la manipulation” (even of manipulation) for the author and editor to slip in certain messages to affect the readers’ reaction while escaping their consciousness (Genette 1987, 376). Thus, more than a transitional space “entre texte et hors-texte” (between text and off-text), the paratext is a site of “transaction” that the intentions of the author and editor negotiate with preconceptions of the readers (Genette 1987, 8). This conception of the paratext as more of an active force than accessory or decoration presents paratext as deeply connected to the main text: “le paratexte n’a pas pour principal enjeu de « faire joli » autour du texte, mais bien de lui assurer un sort conforme au dessein de l’auteur”\(^\text{16}\) (Genette 1987, 374). Although paratexts that are essentially spatial and material, classified under “le pérítexte éditorial” by Genette, do not completely overlap with the concept of material manifestation of medium that we have established earlier—the cover (a paratext of the story) is listed together with the choice of paper (an element of the medium)— both the material manifestation of the medium and

\(^{15}\) addressed (with the same reservation) more specifically or more restrictively only to readers of the text

\(^{16}\) the main issue for the paratext is not to “look nice” around the text but rather to ensure for the text a destiny consistent with the author’s purpose.
the paratext take into account aspects of the text beyond things that are typically viewed as textual. Genette’s defense of the paratext also allows us to make a similar argument that elements in the material manifestation of medium (e.g. paper design, size of the page) are not simply aesthetic statements, but venues for the author to imbue the reader with a certain aspect of the narrative in a less obtrusive way.

Genette, however, constantly shifts between emphasizing paratext as an ancillary component to the text that is subject to social and economic influences and pointing towards paratext as an opportunity for the creative extension of the text or even a necessary device to reduce the violence in the translation of graphically creative works from manuscripts to printed books. While Genette recognizes the intense connections between the paratext and the main text, he separates the paratext as a “fondamentalement hétéronome” (fundamentally heteronomous) and “auxiliaire” (auxiliary) component of the main text (Genette 1987, 16) and contrasts the paratext’s constant modifications “selon les époques, les cultures, les genres, les auteurs, les œuvres, les éditions d’une même œuvre” (depending on period, culture, genre, author, work and edition) with the main text that remains unchanged across time and space (Genette 1987, 9). In the chapter “Le péritexte éditoriale,” and specifically in the discussions on the format and choice of paper, elements that belong to the material manifestation of book medium, Genette is primarily concerned with the conventional cultural messages coded into different choices of the paratext, without suggesting the possibility of creative interpretation or transgression of such conventions.

Genette defines the format by returning to its initial connection with “le mode de pliage” (the manner of folding) and then tracing its development into a more general
description of the dimension of a codex that gives rise to the distinctions between "édition courante" (trade edition) and "édition de poche" (pocket edition) (Genette 1987, 23). Genette also presents several paratextual values typically linked with such distinctions between book formats: either “connoter le caractère « populaire » d’une œuvre ou son accès au panthéon des classiques” 17(Genette 1987, 22). In Genette’s mention of nineteenth century best-sellers, the “pavés sur la plage” (beach books), the aspect of weight is brought into the concept of format, but instead of becoming a signifier for the content of the book, it is designed only for “maintenir au sol une serviette de bain” (preventing a beach towel from being gone with the wind) (Genette 1987, 22). The choice of paper is even further alienated from the main text and the differences among kinds of paper are articulated only in pragmatic terms rather than as choices intended by the author to affect the reader’s experience of the text: “les différences réelles ne sont donc ici que d’ordre esthétique (agrément du papier, qualité de l’impression), économique (valeur marchande d’un exemplaire), et éventuellement matériel (plus ou moins grande longévité)18 (Genette 1987, 37).

At the same time, Genette is aware of cases in which the paratext is not simply added on to the main text, but the text demands the cooperation of paratext to translate certain graphic elements in the manuscript that are intrinsic to the text itself. For example, Genette legitimizes certain readers’ concern with the choice of typography and he mentions works by Mallarmé, Apollinaire and Butor, in which “la réalisation graphique est

17 connoting equally well a work’s “popular nature” or its admission into the pantheon of classics
18 the real differences are only aesthetic (attractiveness of the paper, quality of the impression), economic (the market value of a copy), and possibly material (greater or lesser longevity)
inséparable du propos littéraire,“19 and thus the typographic arrangement does more than render the printed words pleasing to the eyes of the readers as it carries over the unity between the content and medium in the original manuscripts (Genette 1987, 36). Genette’s observation addresses to some extent the issue of translation between material manifestations that is left unanswered in Chatman’s discussion of the comic strip. Although Genette does not look into the transformation of paratext from the handwritten to the printed, during which the liberty of the hand on paper has to conform to precise typesetting, he emphasizes that the omission of paratextual elements in the translation of manuscript into print format makes the original and the printed two different texts, “l’une où le propos mimétique est étendu au paratexte typographique (et orthographique), l’autre où il est restraint aux themes et au style”20; the differences between the two versions, or the result of incomplete translation between material manifestations, however, do not completely change the meaning of the texts since, according to Genette, “cette division même fait paratexte” (this very division becomes paratextual) (Genette 1987, 36).

Similarly, in Genette’s discussions of the “composition” of text on a page, he does not reduce the margins surrounding a poem to muted spaces created by conventions of writing but explores the surrounding white spaces as obstacles blocking the readers’ peripheral vision and directing their focus to the center of the page where the voice of the poems emerges: “aucun lecteur ne peut être tout à fait indifférent à la mise en page d’un poème, au fait par exemple qu’il se présente isolé sur la page blanche, entouré de ce qu’Éluard

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19 the graphic realization is inseparable from the literary intention
20 one in which the imitative intention is extended to the typographical (and orthographical) paratext, the other in which the imitative intention is limited to theme and style
appelait ses « marges de silence »21 (Genette 36). This instance shows that even in common paratextual practices, the role of paratext can move beyond connoting pure aesthetic, cultural or economic values to bring out a certain aspect of the text itself. The white spaces are created through the conventional alignment of verses in poems, a kind of textual structure that belongs to the textual manifestation; once actualized onto a piece of white paper, they not only mark the physical boundary of the poem, but also become visual signs of sonic effects. Somehow, the force of such negative spaces (an element of semiotic manifestation) is brought into full effect only when they become realized on the paper and appear in the context of a page (elements of material manifestation). The relationship between material manifestation and semiotic manifestation is thus contingent; not only does the material manifestation create a physical space that gives the reader access to the effects of semiotic manifestation, but also the physicality of the material manifestation itself invites an abstract textual sign to be expressed in immediately graspable visual terms.

Although Genette excludes paratext as an integral part of the main text, he underlines characteristics of paratext that make it essential to mediating between the fixed text and the diverse and changing groups of readers: “Étant immuable, le texte est par lui-même incapable de s’adapter aux modifications de son public, dans l’espace et dans le temps. Plus flexible, plus versatile, toujours transitoire parce que transitif, le paratexte lui est en quelque sorte un instrument d’adaptation” (Genette 1987, 375).22 While Genette uses the flexibility and mobility of paratext as an explanation for its ephemerality which

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21 no reader can be completely indifferent to a poem’s arrangement on the page—to the fact, for example, that it is presented in isolation on the otherwise blank page, surrounded by what Eluard called its “margins of silence”

22 Being immutable, the text in itself is incapable of adapting to changes in its public in space and over time. The paratext—more flexible, more versatile, always transitory because transitive—is, as it were, an instrument of adaptation.
marks its departure from the established text, from another perspective, it is possible for the paratext to exploit its flexibility and mobility so as to become a potential site for diverse creative activities that are deeply connected to the text itself or fulfill something that the text cannot bring forth on its own. For example, Genette uses the clothing metaphor to underline “la jaquette et la bande” (dust jacket or the band) as not only supplemental components external to the main body of text but also paratextual forms that bear paratextual messages “que l’on souhaite eux-mêmes transitoires, à oublier après effet,” consistent with their own ephemerality (Genette 1987, 30).

If we lay Genette’s clothing metaphor side by side with Tupera Tupera’s picture book, Shirokuma no pantsu (Polar Bear’s Underwear), we can see that Tupera Tupera’s paratextual design subtly challenges the metaphor by enacting it literally: an underwear-shaped mini-slipcover is wrapped around the book and it not only becomes an actual piece of clothing for the polar bear painted on the cover and but also the reader has to take it off in order to read what is inside the pages (fig. 1.6.1). The artists fully exploit the flexibility and mobility of the paratext in their design of the slipcover in relation to the book cover: the act of removing the slipcover becomes a literal performance of taking off the polar bear’s underwear. In addition, the message and the form of the slipcover are intricately woven into the content of the narrative: the first line of the paratextual message written on the slipcover asks the reader to take off the slipcover before opening the book, while the

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23 “La bande est, pour filer ces métaphores vestimentaires, une sorte de mini-jaquette réduite au tiers inférieur de la hauteur du livre”: The band—to spin out these metaphors of clothing—is a sort of mini jacket that covers only the lower third of the book (Genette 1987, 31).

24 that are also meant to be transitory, to be forgotten after making their impression

25 “Tupera Tupera” is the name created by Tatsuya Kameyama and Atsuko Nakagawa who work together as a team and engage in activities across various artistic fields.
rest of the paratext collapses into the narrative voice and introduces the reader directly into the story: the reader’s act of removing the slipcover not only enacts the beginning of the narrative but also hints at the possibility that the polar bear’s underwear is lost in the previous act of undressing. The bright red color of the band makes the reader assume the polar bear’s lost underwear to be in some similar color, thus ingeniously blinding the reader to the subtly shaded white underwear on the polar bear in the first spread and creating a mounting suspense leading up to the final climax of the narrative (fig. 1.6.2).

Such creative use of paratextual components (also elements of material manifestation) thus give us a glimpse into how the flexibility and mobility of paratext not only allows it to frame the text off the main stage but also to cast itself as a role in the narrative. If Genette restricts the flexibility and mobility of paratext to the transitional space between the text and the public, Tupera Tupera’s picture book grants the paratext the freedom to move in and out of the text. In the kind of dialogue that this paper stages between literary theories and picture books, the picture books do not remain objects of analysis to which theories apply, but have the capacity to complicate and to further expand theories.

In “Picturebook Paratexts,” Maria Nikolajeva has already staged a dialogue between Genette’s concept of paratext and contemporary paratextual practices in picture books: not only does the notion of paratext contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanism of picture books, but the picture books themselves in return point out places where Genette’s definition of paratext can be expanded upon and questioned. For example, Nikolajeva directly responds to Genette’s exclusion of paratext from the narrative by opening her essay with instances in which the covers of picture books are conceived as equally
important storytelling space as the pages within the book. Moreover, if Genette is primarily focused on the conventional use of paratexts and the cultural messages that they carry, Nikolajeva, by including a section on “Postmodern Play with Paratexts,” sees the possibility of extending the role of paratext beyond its normal function and makes the observation that the transgression of paratextual conventions is very much based on the reader’s familiarity with such conventions and they thus become, to some degree, paratextual messages of themselves (Nikolajeva 2001, 254).

Although Nikolajeva brings to our attention the greater role that paratext plays in picture books than in novels, she attributes the importance of paratext in picture books primarily to its close relationship with the story-level narrative. The paratext is thus significant only if it participates in “anticipating [or unfolding] the plot” or “amplify[ing] a certain interpretation” of the story for the readers (Nikolajeva 2001, 250). It may seem that Nikolajeva, by recognizing paratext as an extension or an intrinsic part of the story in picture books, further pursues Genette’s idea of paratext as actively framing the main text, but the exclusive focus on the connections between paratext and story-level narrative makes it hard for Nikolajeva not to reduce other functions of paratext to more trivial aesthetic values. The picture on the title page is described as “purely decorative” (Nikolajeva 2001, 250) and the discussion of the choice of format is restricted to “the aesthetic aspects of the actual size of a picturebook” (Nikolajeva 2001, 241). Sendak’s special choice of “coarse and crinkly-textured” craft paper in his picture book All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy is explained solely through its relation with the plot: how it

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26 “If the cover of a children’s novel serves as a decoration and at best can contribute to the general first impact, the cover of a picturebook is often an integral part of the narrative, especially when the cover picture does not repeat any of the pictures inside the book. The narrative can indeed start on the cover” (Nikolajeva 2001, 241).
prepares for the “unusual socially provocative” themes of the story and evokes the living situation and physical qualities of specific characters (Nikolajeva 2001, 249). The significance of the format in picture books extends beyond aesthetic choices as we think about the relationship between paratext and other levels of narrative, especially how paratext shapes the process of reading, an element of the level of medium. Although it can be argued that for picture books that are “available both in a large and a small format,” the size of the book “hardly affects our appreciation of the pictures” or our understanding of the plot (Nikolajeva 2001, 242), the book format has the power to completely transform the reading experience by proposing a different mode of reading. For example, the oversize format (大型絵本 ōgata ehon) of Japanese picture books implies that the narrative is read out loud to a larger audience, or even performed with the assistance of other media like music, puppets, or actors in costumes or with masks. Here, the book is no longer an object that fits the reader’s hand and whose narrative unfolds through the simple gesture of turning the page; instead, the choice of format transforms the book into a trope or the stage of performance itself.

In the section on “Back Cover,” Nikolajeva does touch upon the question of the process of reading and gives examples in which the “educational instructive paratexts” (Nikolajeva 2001, 253) provide a kind of “pedagogical context [that] significantly alters the nature of the reading experience” (Nikolajeva 2001, 254). We may ask, however, if the function of these “instructive paratexts” can expand beyond elucidating or extending aspects of the content of narrative. In the case of picture books which are made of new material, we see that the paratext does not function solely as a commentator on aspects of the story, but is needed to inform the readers about ways of caring for the material and to
teach them the necessary “tricks” for achieving the optimal effect. In *Kyō no oyatsu wa*, each page of the picture book is made of unconventional thick, mirror-effect paper and thus even before the title page, the paratext demonstrates that a the optical illusion of a three dimensional space can only be created through positioning the recto and the verso in perpendicular to each other (fig. 1.6.3). While the paratext in *Kyō no oyatsu wa* allows the author to assign the reader the intended way of positioning pages, it does not prescribe any other ways in which the readers’ hands should interact with the book. Such kinds of picture books are different from Shingu Susumu’s *Kotori*, for example, whose absence of paratext about the medium leaves room for the readers to experiment with different ways of working with the transparent pages. The presence or absence of paratext about the medium thus leads us to question whether the innovative use of the medium demands assistance from the paratext to dictate a specific way of reading or the subtlety and openness of the medium is brought into full play in the absence of such paratext so that the readers can invent ways of reading on their own. If the previous discussions of the process of reading and format underlines the theatrical potential of the picture books, the role of the paratext of the medium is parallel to the influence of stage directions in a theatre script: just as the stage directions engage the author and the actor in a dialogue on deciding how the final performance is to be enacted, the paratext of the medium is the site where the physical performance of reading is negotiated and explored.
Part Two - Ehon: An Introduction

Before proceeding to look closely at each chosen illustrated book in *Ehon: The Artist and the Book in Japan*, Roger Keyes takes the “introduction” as an opportunity to breathe life into the specimens of *ehon* (picture book) that are reproduced, catalogued and framed within the surfaces of glossy paper. While each *ehon* is a condensed and self-contained world, it also actively participates in and re-interprets the rituals of reading and artistic creation in the larger cultural context. Keeping this in mind, the second part of this paper will not only focus more deeply on two of the picture books that are encapsulated as examples in the first part, Komagata Katsumi (駒形克己)’s *Blue to Blue* and Shingu Susumu (新宮晋)’s *Kotori* (ことり), but also reintroduce these picture books to their original cultural and artistic contexts so as to understand the significance of the medium in the Japanese practices of reading and artistic creation. This “introduction” thus serves to thread the analysis of each individual picture book together while opening up a space for dialogues among picture books themselves to emerge and giving picture books the agency to directly respond to the theoretical framework established in the first part of this paper.

The first question we may ask is: what does the medium of picture book (*ehon*) mean, specifically, in the Japanese context? Seta Teiji 瀬田貞二 in his *Ehonron 絵本論 (A Theory of Picture Books)* presents the term *ehon* as hovering between two meanings: besides its contemporary reference to picture books for children, it generally denotes the type of books whose main body is formed by images (Seta 1985, 125). Although Keyes explores the aesthetic values and reading practices of *ehon* exclusively in the second sense and emphasizes *ehon* as a genre in which the primacy is given to images rather than text, both meanings are relevant to our understanding of the development and characteristics of
Japanese picture books for children (Keyes 2006, 14). Moreover, they are not two distinct ways of understanding the term *ehon* but are interconnected on multiple levels; such overlapping suggests that contemporary Japanese picture books are very much indebted to the rich pictorial tradition and the practices of incorporating a significant amount of visual elements into the printed material. Keyes describes the process of reading in *ehon* under the second meaning and argues that it differs considerably from the reading of standard Western texts, as the dominant presence of images invites a specific way of seeing and a contemplative and focused way of reading, thanks to “their artists [who] carefully create rituals of engagement to attract, absorb, and hold their readers’ attention” (Keyes 2006, 14). Such description of the intense interaction between the reader and the book is also applicable to contemporary Japanese picture books.

While the genre of illustrated narrative takes form as early as in medieval Heian manuscripts (*emaki* 絵巻 or *emakimono* 絵巻物), the term *ehon* 絵本 first emerges under the name of *Nara-ehon* 奈良絵本, a type of handmade booklet “published between the 15th and 17th centuries” (NCRCI 2001, 16). As a simplified version of *emaki, Nara-ehon* enjoys a smaller format which makes it “more easily handled and considerably less costly” than its predecessor (NCRCI 2001, 16). The translation from the scroll to the codex, however, reduces the narrative potential of the illustrations as they become mere repetitions or a

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27 「とにかく、さしもの絵巻物がおとろえ、かなりの休止期があったのちに、室町時代の末に絵巻物の簡略な絵本化というべきものがはじめられました。それが奈良絵本です。」 (Seta 1985, 128)

In any case, the format of the scroll with inserted illustrations loses its prime and enters into a considerable period of suspension until the end of the Muromachi Period, when the illustrated scroll starts to become simplified into illustrated booklets. They are called Nara picture books. (Translations of the Japanese quotations are mine unless otherwise indicated.)
decorative additions to the text rather than interacting and cooperating with the text; in other words, the illustrations remain static\textsuperscript{28} rather than lending themselves to become living things through guiding and propelling movement of the reader’s eye.

As the block-printing technique develops in the seventeenth century, images are able to be inserted into the text in a flexible and convenient way\textsuperscript{29} and to become “a regular accompaniment of Japanese texts” (Kornicki 1998, 57). Such prevalence of visual elements in Japanese printed texts\textsuperscript{30} brings in different levels of interaction with the readers since the reading of a page where both text and image are present not only calls upon a knowledge of textual conventions but the reader also engages simultaneously “with a calligraphic style reproduced in the printed text and with a visual style in the illustrations” (Kornicki 1998, 58). It is worthy to note that in the case of Japan the text is not set in movable type but rather carved along with images on the same wood block; thus the text is always calligraphic and does not conform to a standardized typesetting and the text is as

\textsuperscript{28}「そして物語の要所を選んで一ページごとに説明的に描いて挿入するのですから、もはや絵巻物の流動感や連続性は失われ、その表現も固定して、動きのないものとなりました。」 (Seta 1985, 128)

The main points of the stories are chosen and the illustrations are inserted page by page as explanations of text, therefore, the fluidity and continuity of the illustrated scroll is lost, the illustrations become ossified artistic expressions, and the book becomes a motionless thing.

\textsuperscript{29} “The inclusion of illustrations was of course facilitated by the fact that they were produced by the same block-printing process as the text, and this made it possible for illustrations to fill a whole spread by occupying the verso of one page and the recto of the next, to occupy a fraction of a page, to dominate the page with the text fitting into the empty spaces, to take the form of small visual interruptions to the text, and so on” (Kornicki 1998, 58).

\textsuperscript{30} “By the end of that [the seventeenth] century it had became the norm for almost all books in Japanese to include some form of illustration, including not only literary works but also, for example, mathematical and botanical studies, encyclopedias, cooking manuals and guide books” (Kornicki 1998, 57).
visually intriguing as the images. The introduction of images into the printed books is significant not only because the addition of the visual language brings in a different mode of reading, but because the insertion of images also activates the space of the printed page and opens it up for possible new encounters between the reader and the printed book. Interestingly, although the images lose their narrativity due to the demand of simplification and popularization of the illustrated narrative in the handmade books, the dexterity of the woodblock printing techniques re-embraces such visual elements, and to some extent announces a return to the organic text-image relationship that we find in medieval emaki.

Therefore, as Keyes observes, in the late nineteenth century, what people understand to be central to the artistry of ehon shifts from the visual to the workmanship, since “each single book is conceived, designed, published, manufactured, and distributed by representatives of many different trades and professions working in collaboration” (Keyes 2006, 12); such emphasis on workmanship does not reduce the range of narrative possibilities of the images, but rather re-enables the competitive matching of paper design, calligraphy and illustrations (fig. 2.1) that we see in medieval scrolls like the Tale of Genji scroll (Genji monogatari emaki 源氏物語絵巻). Keyes thus argues that Japanese picture books (ehon) “have much in common with what we in the West now call artists’ books, or livres d’artistes, although they addressed a wider audience” (Keyes 2006, 11); the omnipresence of images

As ehon (also known as books inserted with images) are created through the special method of printing each page with a separate printing block. Since ehon are printed through the special technique of carving both the illustrate and the text onto the same composite block, there comes the period when ehon are so popular that books without illustrations are hard to find.
in *ehon* makes them a site of convergence of diverse artistic activities, bringing together not only text and image, but also “visual artists, calligraphers, writers, and designers join forces with papermakers, binders, block cutters, and printers” (Keyes 2006, 12), low art and high art, originality and reproduction, tradition and modernity. Kornicki notices that Japan is a particular case in which it is very common for established artists also to take part in illustrating printed books and the design of printed material is very much part of “the national art as a whole” (Kornicki 1998, 59).

If both Kornicki and Keyes focus on *ehon* as printed books with illustrations in the general sense and give us the big picture of the features related to the process of printing and the insertion of images, among those books, the *Akahon* can be seen as the embryonic form *ehon*, whose contemporary usage is narrowed down to the specific meaning of picture books for children (NCRCL 2001, 17). The *Akahon* (the Red Books 赤本) derive their name from being “comprised of several illustrations bound in red” and they are booklets with images “created specially for an audience of children” (NCRCL 2001, 16). Unlike *Nara-ehon*, as Seta argues, the illustrations in *Akahon* are not static but bring forth a strong sense of visual energy and become animated through the movement of the reader’s eye (Seta 1985, 131). A more modern form of Japanese picture book for children emerges along with the Meiji educational reform, through which “the compulsory educational system [was] established in 1872” and the literacy rate was raised; all of these provide a fertile ground for “the burgeoning of magazine and periodical publication” (NCRCL 2001, 17). Although it is in the Meiji period that picture books for children are first published as “monthly

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32 「動きのある子どものための絵本をつくりだしました。」 (Seta 1985, 132) Picture books (*ehon*) for children that incorporate movement were then produced.
magazines for children” (NCRCL 2001, 17), the prioritization of national reform and modernization emphasizes the need to prepare the child as a potential force in helping realize the national agenda; it is therefore in the Taisho period (1912-26), whose democracy gives rise to the flourishing of new literature and culture, that several children’s magazines focusing on the aesthetic development of children were published in accordance with the new image of the child as pure and innocent (KGTKKT 2011a, 2). The gradual shift of illustration style in these picture books for children from Meiji to Taisho period also reflects the oscillation of styles in the realm of Japanese art: the illustrations are first mainly executed by nihonga ³³ painters during the Meiji period when nihonga was conceived as the most legitimate genre to achieve a balance of the East and the West and practiced as part of the core curriculum at Tōkyō School of Fine Arts, while artists of Western painting (yōga) begin to join in the Taishō period ³⁴ when Japanese artists were more openly exposed to post-impressionistic and avant-garde movements in Europe and renewed their understanding of what it means to be a Japanese artist. Such osmotic movement between fine art and illustration for children’s picture books is further exemplified by avant-garde artists like Murayama Tomoyoshi (村山知義), the leader of the

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³³ nihonga 日本画 (literally “Japanese painting”) is a term that is devised in correspondence to yōga 洋画 (literally “Western painting”) which focuses on modernizing Japanese painting by absorbing elements from traditional forms of Japanese art, in competition with yōga which interprets the modernization of Japanese art with the introduction of techniques, material and artistic thinking from the West.

³⁴ 「明治期の児童出版で絵を描いた画家たちは、日本画に学んだ人たちが中心でしたが、大正期になると、西洋画を勉強した童画家たちが、「赤い鳥」をはじめとする児童雑誌で仕事をします。」 (KGTKKT 2011a, 10)

The group of illustrators who worked for children’s publications in the Meiji period was centered on the group of artists who studied Nihonga; when it comes to the Taishō period, however, it was the group of artists who studied Western art that did illustrations for various children’s magazines, with “The Red Bird” topping the list.
Mavo group, who created illustrations for one of the most notable children’s literature magazines (fig. 2.2), *Kodomo no tomo* (子どもの友), at the beginning of his art career\(^{35}\).

The publishing of children’s magazines and picture books, after being completely put to a stop during the Second World War, resumed in the post-war period, starting with the importation of Western picture books. Japanese writers and artists then began to retell and recreate traditional Japanese folktales and fairytales in the form of picture book (KKT KKT 2011a, 9). In the 1970s, the number of original picture books published “was phenomenal” and the creation and publishing of Japanese picture books for children came into full bloom (NCRCL 2001, 19). Just as the cross-pollination between fine art and print design brought energy into *ehon* both in the general sense of illustrated books and in the specific sense of picture books for children from the Edo period on, the interactions and interconnections between fine art and picture books for children became increasingly intense after the picture book boom. The Chihiro Picture Book Museum (ちひろ美術館), the opening of which both reflected the cultural recognition of illustrations in picture books as art and marked the beginning of exhibition practices of picture book art, was established as early as in 1977; in the 1980s “artists who also practised in other media began creating original picture books” and both artists of the picture books that will be examined later belong to this group: besides writing picture books, Komagata Katsumi\(^ {36}\) works as a graphic designer and Shingu Susumu a sculptor (NCRCL 2001, 19). For such artists, the

\(^{35}\)”While still in school, Murayama produced his first work as a professional artist, doing illustrations for stories in Hani [Motoko]’s expanding list of publications, particularly the popular children’s magazines *Kodomo no tomo* (Children’s Companion) and *Manabi no tomo* (Learning Companion)” (Weisenfeld 2002, 30).

\(^{36}\) Both Komagata Katsumi and Watanabe Chinatsu (author of Kyō no oyatsu wa) call themselves “book creators” (造本作家) rather than “picture book writers” (絵本作家).
picture book is not only a medium for the fermentation, sedimentation and condensation of their thoughts for larger artistic projects but also an extremely versatile and experimental medium that brings together the visual, the textual, the material space of the book and the participation of the reader.

If we return to the question that we first began with, we may ask, this time specifically concerning ehon as picture books for children: how is the medium of ehon defined within Japan for both its adult and child audience? In the “introduction to Japanese children’s literature for primary school students and adults” compiled by the International Library of Children’s Literature in Tokyo, ehon is differentiated from illustrated children’s literature (jido bungaku 児童文学) by the intrinsic relationship that the illustrations and the book form (本のかたち) have with respect to the narrative:

子どもの本には、さし絵や表紙絵がついていますが、かりに絵を全部ぬいてしまっても、本のかたちでなくとも読める、ことばで語る本を児童文学といいます。しかし、絵本は、そうはいきません。 (KKT 2011b, 4)

Among books for children, many have illustrations on the cover and in the body of the book, but let us say, if we remove all the images and the features of book form from the book and we are still able to read, these books that rely on text to narrate are called children’s literature. For the picture books, however, this is not the case.

Although the term ehon only generally suggests that it is a narrative with images that takes the codex form, we note that the definition of picture book given here does not concentrate solely on the text-image relationship, but gives the book form equal primacy. In addition, ehon are further distinguished from children’s novels by their susceptibility to being performed and read out loud. A particular section in “A History from the International Library of Children’s Literature Collections” is devoted to discussing the importance of the voice: the text in picture books and literature in poetic form yearns for the incorporation of the reader’s voice, while other literature genres that explore deeper themes like war and
family crisis demand that the reader contemplate in silence (KKTKKT 2011a, 12). From such attention to the voice of the reader, we see that there is an awareness of the picture book as a script for performance and an acknowledgement of its theatrical potential. The element of voice and sound is certainly prominent in both Komagata's *Blue to Blue* and Shingu's *Kotori*: the profusion of mimetic expressions in Komagata’s text not only cooperates with the textures of paper to evoke visual and tactile senses but also invites the reader to chime in with the auditory; although Shingu’s *Kotori* is a wordless book, the sounds of the fluttering wings and baby birds chirping that spring from the flapping of semi-transparent pages make the book almost a musical instrument that waits to be played by the hands of the reader.
Komagata’s “Paperscapes”: Theatricality and Materiality in Material Manifestation

In Komagata’s Blue to Blue, the paper steps forward to take up a significant narrative role rather than retreating as the decorative backdrop or a pure material support for the visual and textual elements. Not only do the qualities of the paper like texture, transparency and luminosity evoke features of the landscapes and characters in the story, but also the shapes of the paper and the die-cuts create physical depth, letting layers of pages be seen through each other so that the scenery gradually changes as the readers turns from one page to another, and giving the characters the flexibility to be moved, turned and caressed by the reader’s hands. The versatility of paper thus allows it to function to some extent as a semiotic code and it is a language that is at the same time visual, tactile, and kinetic. At first glance, the materiality of Blue to Blue seems to lie in the topographical space that unfolds on each surface of the paper, the gentle flow of river stream (fig. 3.1.1), the dazzling reflection of sunlight by icy water (fig. 3.1.2), or the intimate tactile encounters with sea animals that the paper invites: we gently poke at the translucent membrane of the eggs laid by salmon (fig. 3.1.3) and we let the slippery fish scales escape through our fingers (fig. 3.1.4). Komagata, however, also draws our attention to the materiality of the book, a three dimensional object created by overlaying one piece of paper on top of another; the die-cut within the pages and the pages themselves cut in shape create a stage-like space with movable foreground, middle ground, and background that calls for the reader to travel through (fig. 3.1.5).

Although Komagata attributes the birth of Blue to Blue, a part of the “Paper Picture Book Series” (1994), to “his fortunate encounter with a paper company” (Beckett 2012, 54), the complex design and use of paper can be seen as in some way indebted to the rich
Japanese tradition of paper production and a persistent awareness of paper as a mode of expression in Japanese literary texts. As Thomas LaMarre points out, in the production of paper intended for poetry inscription in the Heian period, the aim is not to create a “neutral” surface whose smoothness effaces its own material presence, but to let the “effects of fibers” of the paper emerge and be in conversation with other modes of expression, pictorial or textual. The relief on each paper in *Blue to Blue* imbues the narrative on each page with a tangible quality of the natural world, which is not unlike the “paperscape” that LaMarre unfolds before our eyes:

“with dyes that seep and swirl, with flecks of colored paper scattered with figures and designs that twine and creep [the space of paperscapes] seem to anticipate or prefigure poems that sing of celestial and terrestrial movements: petals fluttering, rivers flowing, autumn leaves scattering, bugs chirping and susurrating, lovers meeting and parting, moons waxing and waning” (LaMarre 2000, 94).

Unlike the direct representation of text in “pictography or illustration,” the paperscape is loosely connected to the “naturalscape” depicted in the poetic text, and the “mode of mimicry” in the paperscape is rather open-ended (LaMarre 2000, 94). Far from an exact replica of natural elements in the text, the “paperscapes” are abstract enough for both text and the material surface of paper to “retain[a] a degree of autonomy” and relevant enough for them to be linked as a coherent genre (LaMarre 2000, 96). There is a similar relationship between text and the material surface of paper in Komagata’s paperscapes: while the text threads together distinct surfaces of paper and is configured in turn by certain features of the paperscapes, the textures of paper escape the realm of representation and go on to bring forth elements beyond verbal description or narration.

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37 “The makers of Heian papers not only had little concern for diminishing the effects of fibers but tended to augment them as well” (LaMarre 2000, 93).
Not only does the material surface of paper have significance in inscriptions of poetry, but it also intrudes into the narratives and assumes its theatrical role by interacting with the calligraphic text and performing certain aspects of the narrative literally on the page. For example, in the intricate assemblage of picture, paper and calligraphy of the Tale of Genji scroll (Genji monogatari emaki 源氏物語絵巻), the paper is not only carefully designed to tend to the effects that the calligraphy would like to achieve, but also has its own visual language and its unique role in the assemblage: the paper not only provides a chance for the artist to reinforce “the thematic and emotional tenor of the chapter” in a less conspicuous way but also to convey “meaning in ways more diffuse and less linearly communicative than the calligraphic script itself” (Jackson 2009, 8). In addition to providing a material support to illustration and calligraphy and subtly suggesting the underlying themes of the narrative, the paper directly interacts with illustration and calligraphy to create visual effects that signify aspects of the narrative.38 As Jackson points out, the calligraphy in the chapter of The Oak Tree (Kashiwagi 柏) I, sheet two (fig. 3.2.1)

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38 Although letting the texture of the paper affect qualities of illustration and calligraphy is not something that we see in Blue to Blue, it is definitely present in the creative practices of contemporary Japanese picture books. In the picture book Mimizu no Kantarō (みみずのかんたろう) by Tajima Yukihiro 田島征彦 (fig. 3.2.3), the dyeing technique of katazome 型染 on bamboo paper allows the visual texture of the bamboo paper to interact with the images themselves. Even though the actual book is not printed on bamboo paper, the fabric-like quality and earth-tone color of the paper retained through reproduction give a soft and natural lighting to the page; the reader can still detect traces of bamboo fiber on the page which bring in the natural world as the ever-present backdrop of the story. In addition, the earth tone of the paper reduces the contrast among colors in the illustration and draws our attention to the tactile quality of the painting surfaces: the rough surface of the paper resists the fluid flow of the ink and produces spontaneous bleeding of colors, thus mimicking the texture of grains of sand and mud. The heightened tactile sense evoked by the paper echoes the narrative of an earthworm told in first-person: the reader is thus drawn not only into the mind of the earthworm, but also into its body, experiencing the adventure in nature through the tactile sense of the earthworm.
is affected by the added decorative elements of squares of foil leaf and silver dust in the paper: the paper becomes less “porous [...] to allow ink [of the calligraphy] to permeate easily” and the “brush pressure” has to increase to let the characters leave a feeble trace over the decorative elements, thus evoking a sense of weakness and fragility (Jackson 2009, 13). In general, such decorative elements not only “alter the texture of the paper surface” but also “influence both the way ink reacts with the paper as well as the way the calligrapher reacts to the design the elements comprise upon that paper” (Jackson 2009, 13). In addition, such reflective surfaces of foil leaf infect the reading experience of the text and may echo elements of disturbance and instability present in the story of the narrative, as the reader’s focus is dispersed across the page rather than tracing vines of ink flowing down the page. In the analysis of sheet three from *The Oak Tree II* (fig. 3.2.2), Jackson underlines the capacity of the foil leaf in “alter[ing] a sheet's luminescence,” as “the brazen bits of gold and silver” form reflective surfaces that are visually “intense and immediately perceivable” (Jackson 2009, 15). At a first glance, the spatial dispersion of luminous foil leaf across the sheet distracts the reader from the linear reading of the calligraphy text, while in a closer look, individual pieces of foil leaf interfere with the flow of the ink in the calligraphy: both the luminosity and texture of the foil leaf interact with the linearity and ink quality of the calligraphy to perform the disturbance caused by illness.

As we have seen, the incorporation of other material among paper fiber in illustrated scrolls produce both visual and tactile effect; in Komagata’s *Blue to Blue*, there is a similar interest in the luminosity of paper and the visual effect of reflective surface, but there is also an equal attention to the unity between the visual and the tactile surface as they cooperate to signify a wider range of sensory elements. On a breath-taking page (fig.
3.1.2), the blunt indented texture on the black paper—as if the paper has been kneaded by hand—mimics the skin of the whale, and the subtle glow of the paper stands in contrast with the dazzling surface of the textured white paper that evokes scratches and cracks in the ice and the shiny surface of the icy ocean in sunlight. The lustrous sheen that dominates the visual surface is supplemented with the crazed tactile surface; together they stand as signifiers for the cold and shiny surface of the icy sea described in the text \(^{39}\), but they also elaborate on the image of solid, crackled surface of ice hinted at in the text. The texture of paper thus becomes narrative voices or brushstrokes embedded in the medium itself that strike the reader first through seeing and become rediscovered through touching.

Just as different images propose different ways of seeing, paper with varied textures inspires various gestures of the hand: a gentle poking, a swift slapping, a lingering caress. In addition to inviting the reader to engage with the narrative through bring together their senses of seeing and touching, *Blue to Blue* pushes the reader to explore new ways of incorporating each sense into the performance of the narrative. As Imai Yoshiro 今井良朗 argues, in the case of Komagata’s book, when it comes to “seeing” or “seeing with eyes,” not only the visual sense is of great significance, but it seems essential to acknowledge anew that we come to perceive and recognize the object through the entire sensorium that is based in physical movements.\(^ {40}\) Thus, not only are the visual and tactile elements in a

\(^{39}\)“つめたくこおったうみがキラキラとかがやいていた。L’océan glacé scintille.” – The cold and icy ocean shines, *sparkling in the sun* (visual effect of the mimetic expression “*kira kira*”). Komagata’s *Blue to Blue* is published in both Japanese and French: both the original texts are quoted in this paper, but I choose to translate only the Japanese text as it presents a more intriguing interplay between the reader’s senses.

\(^{40}\)「見る」「目に見る」ことは、…視覚機能が大きな意味をもつことに間違いいないのだが、人は身体的行為による全感覚を通して対象を知覚し認識することを、あらためて知ることが必要だろう。（Imai 2014, 91)
signifying relationship with the narrative, but also the gestures of the hand, moving on top of the paper surface or tapping and turning paper-characters that spring up from the gutter, are all part of the reader’s encounter with the book object and become semiotic codes in themselves. For example, in the following spread narrating the baby salmon’s journey to the further north, the overall haziness and subtle splashes of color of the visual surface hint towards the vast ocean space they have traveled and the accelerated passage of time, the fluidity of the paper surface echoes the continuous swimming of baby salmon in the text as the reader’s hand slides towards right to turn the page,\(^{41}\) while the specific glazed and slippery quality of the material page (fig. 3.1.4) recalls the smoothness of fish scales as the reader’s hand caresses the page and the swiftness of the fish’s movement as the reader’s hand slides across quickly the page, as if enacting the moment when a school of fish escapes from the grip of the hand. In another spread at the beginning of the book (fig. 3.1.3), the co-presence of the red dots printed on the surface of paper and the watermark of polka dots embedded within the material page evoke a sense of depth and “the numerous cuts in the tail [of mother salmon] crea[te] the effect of movement as it lays its eggs in the river”: the reader’s fingers comb through the cuts in the tail, performing the swaying of the tail as a live scene (Beckett 2012, 55).

The architectural world of paper in Blue to Blue draws our attention to both the physical space of the page and that of the book; the two spaces are connected and interwoven into each other through paper-cutting, which gives birth to shapes, underlines depth by trimming the pages into a multi-layered stage, and conjures up shadows when

\(^{41}\)それでもあきらめずにおよぎつづけると…… Ils nagent sans relâche … - Nevertheless, they continue to swim without giving up……
light shines through. In an interview for “Ilustratour” in 2014, Komagata explains that his practice of creating images through means other than illustration is shaped by his formation as a graphic designer and not an illustrator, a practical limitation that makes him resort to other forms of expression, like those of paper-cutting and paper-landscaping. The cover of Blue to Blue (fig. 3.1.6) is stunning because it does not fully conceal the body of the text but “a cut-out allows readers a glimpse of the range of colours and shades of the graduated pages inside” (Beckett 2012, 54). The hole carves out a space for a pattern of wavy shapes formed by pages inside the book to emerge and to interact with the undulating lines which are part of the texture of the cover. In this case, the cover is neither an accessory to the main narrative, nor a component in “le plus extérieur” (the outermost) (Genette 1987, 20); instead, the body of the book becomes a constituent of the cover and the cover in turn announces the narrative in a poetically condensed form at the very first encounter between the reader and the book, giving the reader a taste of every page even before opening the book. The cover of Blue to Blue thus escapes Genette’s description of the “pérítexte” as extrinsic and accessory, and literally pursues what Sugiura Kohei 杉浦康平, a Japanese book designer, puts forth in his book The Birth of Shapes「かたち誕生」: to compare the cover to clothes is to assume the cover as separable from the book, but to consider the cover as the face, and thus an extension of the body of the book, captures how the cover condenses the content of the book, and thus makes visible what cannot be seen from the outside, just as how the face extracts and exposes the activity of the vital organs and internal processes.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{42}「装幀、つまり本のデザインは、ふつうは着るものにたとえられる… しかし、顔は着脱できない。自らの身体の延長、からだそのものであるからです。あるとき、表紙に
If we now open the book and take a look at each spread inside, little paper shapes stick out for people to touch and to handle, thus distinguishing themselves from the rest of the spread lying flat in the hands of the readers. These mini-paper sculptures spring out from the gutter at the moment one turns the page, as if setting foot onto the theatrical stage of the spread in real time. In a spread mentioned earlier (fig. 3.1.3), the tail of the mother salmon rises up from a warm background of translucent polka dots as the reader enters the spread, creating the impression of the salmon “swim[ming] into the gutter”; the readers do not see the first half of a fully grown salmon until the very end, when the baby salmon mature and return to the river where they were first born (fig. 3.1.7): “the front half of the salmon suddenly swims out of the gutter” and the reader now discovers the beautiful fin in delicate die-cut, echoing the tassel-like tail at the beginning (Beckett 2012, 55). The disappearance of the first half of the body at the beginning and the appearance of the second half in the end not only signify respectively the departure and the arrival of the baby salmon’s journey, but they also create an image of a grey salmon swimming through the physical body of the book, a thick stack of texturized paper: the maturity of the salmon is therefore achieved through traveling across both the surface of individual spread and the material space of the book.

In some spreads, as Beckett observes, the whole scene does not consist of only one single element leaping up against the background, but is “formed by a complex superposition of multiple intricately cut pages” (Beckett 2012, 55). In the specific spread (fig. 3.1.5) narrating the growing salmon travelling through the marine landscape, floating
along with the swaying seaweed, the double insert presents us with a foreground of rocks, a middle ground of “the forest of seaweed” (kaisō no hayashi かいそうのはやし) and a background of a school of salmon diving deeper and deeper in the ocean. As our hand unfolds each layer of the landscape, we first swim over a rocky mound (fig. 3.1.5) and then pull back the curtains of seaweed (fig. 3.3.1), following the group of salmon until they head towards the darker region of the sea in further north (fig. 3.3.2). The overlaying of cut pages lets the reader not only see through the eyes of the travelling salmons but also enter into their skin and experience movement underwater. By turning one cut page after another, the readers enact the salmons’ actions of travelling through oceanic landscape in the story, and at the same time, such performative act creates a shift in focalization as the reader is no longer a far-off observer of the journey but suddenly adopts the visual and kinetic perspective of the salmons. The superposition of paper pages, an element of material manifestation, thus enacts the story and signifies a feature of the discourse through being animated by the reader’s hand in the process of reading.

Similarly, in another spread towards the beginning, when baby salmon encounter a family of swans (fig. 3.4.1), the double insert gives the reader an opportunity to participate

\[43\] フウフウゆれるかいそうのはやしをくぐりぬけ。Louvoyant dans les forêts d’algues ondulantes. – Slipping through the forest of seaweed that sways and floats in the water (a visual image conjured up by the mimetic term “fuwa fuwa” that accentuates the lightness of the seaweed and its sinuous movement in water). It is interesting that the mimetic language employed to describe the lightness of the seaweed is echoed and further elaborated in the texture of the paper: the specific paper chosen in this spread gives an immediate impression of a lush greenery, while it is in fact of the same texture as the paper used in a previous spread to mimic the feathery bodies of the swans. By choosing a paper of a texture that the reader has already encountered, the artist establishes a connection between the seaweed and the feather: the leafy texture is both a descriptive device of the thick foliage of the seaweed at the literal level and a metaphor for the seaweed’s lightness in water as a feather, subtly hinting towards the tactile sense implied in the mimetic expression.
in the performance of the narrative, perhaps in a more open-ended way. The spread consists of two ducklings in the foreground, with mother swan in the middle ground, against a background of tiny baby salmon floating down in swirling river streams. According to Beckett, this specific spread is one of the many instances in Blue to Blue and in Paper Picture Book Series where multiple viewing possibilities are presented to the reader: the “die-cut shapes of animals” are colored and textured on both sides so that they can “be viewed against the recto or the verso” (Beckett 2012, 55). Although Beckett suggests that there are three different ways to read the spread—“the ducklings can be viewed on the verso opposite their mother (fig. 3.4.2), they can appear nestled against their mother on the recto (fig. 3.4.1), or they can disappear behind her when the mother is viewed on the verso under the baby salmon (fig. 3.4.3)”—Beckett’s reading of this specific spread assumes the pages as static illustrations and the spreads as discontinuous, without seeing that the gesture of the reader, the plasticity of the paper, and the skillful cuts are all elements that seek to transcend the fragmentation of the narrative imposed by the codex form (Beckett 2012, 56). These three viewing situations can actually be temporally connected at the reader’s hand: the flipping of the first insert to the verso and then back to the recto creates the movement of the little swans turning their head to look at the fish on the verso and then turning back to talk to their mother on the recto; the flipping of the second insert to the verso enacts mother swan, after conversing with her ducklings, turning to address the baby salmon who now have swum from the verso to the recto.

Finally, we can say that not only are the physical space of the pages and the material space of the book intrinsic to the unfolding and enacting of the narrative—paperscapes are at the same time signifiers of specific aspects of the narratives and theatrical stages for the
reader to perform the narrative in live—but they are to some extent the required medium for the specific narrative. Different from the digital media which do not leave traces of usage, books are fragile, they get old, they get wrinkles, and they share time together with the reader. The delicate paper-cuts in Komagata’s *Blue to Blue* that are intended for the child reader seem to even dramatize such fragility. In the interview, Komagata tells the story of his daughter’s experience with this book: although the pages were first crumpled and torn, gradually his daughter grows to learn that things break and how to take care of them. *Blue to Blue* is also a story about growth, as the tidal waves rise and fall, the salmon babies swim towards the sea and the adult salmon swim back to the river, through the hands of the reader that opens and reopens the book. The story thus becomes more and more familiar and the book becomes older and older. Not only does the story invites the child reader to witness the growth of baby salmon, and the rhythmic cycles of marine life through repeated reading, but the material book also helps the child grow into a caring person and grows old along with the child.
Shingu’s Breathing Pages: the Poetics of the Process of Reading in *Kotori*

Shingu Susumu’s sculptures gently wave, turn, spin and dance, responding to the rhythm of the wind or water, and translating the invisible energy of the natural world into a graphic and kinetic language: curved metal tubes rotate and glitter in the sun, sending forth a swirling waterfall of light (fig. 4.1.1); geometric shapes with their invisible wings attract or divert each other, halt or shift extemporaneously (fig. 4.1.2). Similarly, in the picture book *Kotori* where a story of the birth and the hatching and the growth of little birds takes place, the semi-transparent pages subtly roll as the readers’ fingers set on their edges to turn, swiftly flutter from recto to verso along with the reader’s hand slightly flapping, and are finally put to rest by overlaying themselves on top of other pages.

As Tomoko Masaki observes, “the way of moving in Shingu’s sculptures is not showy or astonishing or overwhelming at all,” and the dynamic element in his picture book is also very much embedded within the banal gesture of turning the page, one after another, from right to left (Masaki 2010, 153). Although Shingu does not anticipate *Kotori*’s being read in a completely unconventional way, Shingu does prevent us from chasing the plot with haste, going on from one spread to another without savoring the theatrical potential of the act of turning itself, just like what he does to his sculptures, which force the viewer to stop and wait for a while, until a gust of wind or a flow of water brings them back to life. If the life of the sculptures depends upon natural energies of wind and water, the narrative also relies on the reader to advance in the plot, to enrich features of story with multi-sensory performance, to set the speed in which the narrative takes place. The process of reading, and especially the physical engagement of the reader, takes up a significant role in Shingu’s picture book; like Shingu’s sculptures longing to catch the power of wind and water, forces
outside of themselves, without which “the object[s] [themselves have] no meaning,” the
pages in Shingu’s book yearn to be awakened by the motions of the reader’s hand, which is
anticipated to be a source of narrative power (Shingu 1997, 288). The process of reading
therefore does become a language as complex as the visual and the textual, and together
with other elements of the medium, qualities of the material paper, the effects that the
process of creation produce in the image, it brings forth features of both the story and the
discourse.

Before going into creating kinetic sculptures, Shingu Susumu earned his formation
in oil painting from Tōkyō School of Fine Arts and Accademia di Belle Arti at Rome. The
medium of the picture book not only offers Shingu the opportunity to work with the two-
dimensional surface again, but it also poses the challenge of unearthing the movement and
rhythm within a seemingly static object. Shingu is able to some extent to transpose the
insights he gained through working with kinetic sculptures into the design of Kotori as he
excavates the wind hidden in the still pages of the codex. What Shingu does in Kotori is not
only to make the invisible wind visible, but also to subvert our understanding of the book
space as the flat rectangular spread by making use of the whole volume of the space
occupied by the pages rotating along the axis of the gutter. The idea of creating a three-
dimensional world based on two-dimensional surfaces that we find in Kotori has its
precedent in Japanese art, since various traditional Japanese formats consist of moving

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44 Shingu Susumu is not the only Japanese picture book artist who is interested in the
three-dimensionality of the space created by two-dimensional surfaces. Picture book artist
and graphic designer Watanabe Chinatsu, whose picture book Kyō no oyatsu wa has been
discussed earlier in this paper, is also interested in designing three-dimensional space that
is automatically created through interaction with viewers from objects consisting of flat
surfaces (しかけの視覚伝達デザイン). Such idea is realized not only in her “Mirror Picture
Books Series” but also in her giant book and folding screen installations.
visual surfaces and movement is inherent in such structures. As Trede points out, the pictorial surfaces do not set themselves as freestanding objects disconnected with the perception space of the viewer, but are very much part of it:

“Japanese handscrolls, albums, and fan paintings have to be touched, opened, and moved to become fully visible. The viewer may decide for himself the speed of viewing and the section he chooses to see. Likewise, folding screens and hanging scrolls, which are shown according to the seasons or for special occasions and are returned to storage after use, have to be opened and positioned. Even painted sliding doors, today considered part of the canon of Japanese painting, can be adjusted in or out to manipulate the composition of an entire wall” (Trede 2006, 21).

Not only the viewers at the time are familiar with the different rituals of interacting with art objects, but the artists themselves when designing these pictorial surfaces are also highly conscious of the effect of their contact with the perception space of the viewer; for example, the composition of the paintings has to be devised in such a way that the movement of sliding doors does not obscure the main figures at any time (Trede 2006, 21). As demarcations and dividers of spaces, the sliding doors are opened and closed for practical purposes, but the theatrical and temporary spaces that they create can be put to some more original use. In Higashiyama Kai’s design for the interior of Tōshōdaiji Temple, the sliding doors stage a narrative of monk Ganjin’s voyage across the Japan Sea: as the viewer travels through or across the hall of Shinden-no-ma by opening sliding doors on any side (fig. 4.2.1), the movement of the sliding doors animates the directional flows of water depicted on the doors themselves (fig. 4.2.2), and performs the sonic effect of rolling waves so as to echo the title of the work, “Sound of Waves.”

Like images, the texts in Japanese tradition are also inscribed on mobile surfaces, and the act of reading can thus mean much more than a purely intellectual activity, to the extent of encompassing a range of physical actions, “some of which were more akin to
ritual than to what we think of as ‘reading’: flipping, copying, reciting, or even washing one’s hand and rinsing one’s mouth can be part of such reading practices (Kornicki 1998, 252). If we think of the performative act of reading in the religious context as an element bridging the human body and the sacred text, “pointing to them not as discrete from one another but rather as nodes along a shared material continuum” (Eubanks 2011, 3), in the secular context, these physical acts mark the desire of the readers to respond to and to partake in the creative activity performed by the author. In addition, the observation of the wind generated by the act of unfolding a book in Kotori is not something completely unprecedented. Although Kornicki defines tendoku (転読) as “a term that confusingly embraces both the act of reading through a text and the act of skipping through a long text” (Kornicki 1998, 252), tendoku can also refer to the ritual practice of fully opening and closing a scripture in accordion binding, letting the pages running through in air without actually reading through (fig. 4.2.3), and thus producing an auspicious “dharma wind” that grants protection to both the performer and the spectator of this Buddhist ceremony. Shingu’s conception for the act of reading in Kotori, however, does go beyond a pure ritual performance: the choice of a codex binding allows the turning of the page to be enacted in

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45 As Okada hypothesizes, in the specific context of the reception of secular Japanese literature in the Heian period, “the act of ‘reading’ was a far cry from the passive and individual act it has become today; it was a communally oriented, integrative process that no only required linguistic and poeticohistorical competence but also summoned calligraphic, vocal, and even painterly talent and freely allowed a degree of rewriting, or recreation” (Okada 1991, 23). Okada’s conjecture echoes what Haruo Shirane states in his discussion on the reception of literary texts in premodern Japan: since the reader is also a “practitioner” and “producer” of text, “the use of literary texts is closely tied to the process of creative writing” as he or she “looks to the text not only for narrative, characters, and scene, but also for models of composition, style, and poetic diction and for creative inspiration” (Shirane 2008, 9).
more different kinds of gestures other than flipping, and the action itself is slowed down by the weight of illustrations to acquire a more contemplative aspect.

What is ingenious about Kotori’s design is that the reader does not have to perform anything more than the conventional act of turning the page sequentially, from right to left, one page after another, to experience the animated effect of the birds flying out of one page and landing at another, and the immediate gust of wind breathing out from the pages. The process of reading in Kotori is thus very different from the one in Komagata’s Blue to Blue, where the primary concern lies in staging an encounter between the reader and the tactile landscape on each page, through which the narrative still flows along even if each spread is read as a static piece. In other words, although the careful architecture in Blue to Blue presents itself as a script that can be performed in various ways, the most theatrical rendering of the narrative requires the most subversive approach: the reader does not have to flip back and forth the figures sticking out from the gutter to mimic the movement of the characters in order to follow the story, but it is such a way of reading against the linear progression, and the transgressive interpretation of book space as something more than the flat surfaces of the spread, that give birth to this enactment of the narrative. If Komagata’s ostentatious display of paperscapes draws our attention primarily to the graphic surface and makes the less conventional acts of reading—turning the same page back and forth, or combing through the cuts—something that demands extra effort and deliberation, Shingu subtly integrates the magic of the wind into the natural process of reading: even if the reader misses the significance of flipping in the narrative, he or she has already performed it in the course of reading. In addition, the gesture of the hand in Kotori centers on the sculptural space of the book, and unlike Blue to Blue, Kotori gives less
priority to the interaction with the surface of the paper, but rather emphasizing the bending, flipping, vibrating, rotating of paper across a larger space.

Shingu uses two kinds of paper in *Kotori*, the glossy, opaque paper that is the standard choice for printing images, and the semi-transparent, or the so-called tracing paper. The use of semi-transparent paper is not something completely unprecedented in the Japanese *ehon* tradition, since most of those illustrated books are printed on semi-transparent paper, and thick opaque paper lends itself to special effects. In contemporary picture books, however, since the glossy paper reproduces qualities of images most accurately, the presence of semi-transparent paper signals an unusual feature of the narrative, and certainly Shingu is not the first to take advantage of the translucent quality of this paper. In the chapter on artists’ books in children’s literature, Beckett introduces Munari’s “groundbreaking book” *Nella note buia (In the Darkness of the Night)*, in which a certain section consists of layers of semi-transparent paper that create depth (fig. 4.3.1); the non-transparent area of illustrations on these pages both conceals and reveals so as to build suspense and theatricality (Beckett 2012, 52). Munari’s original play with the semi-transparent paper is picked up by Komagata in one of his other picture books, *Mitsuketa! (Found it!)*, where not only is depth created by the layering of semi-transparent pages (fig; 4.3.2), but each page itself has a gradation of translucency (fig. 4.3.3) and the range of colors interacts beautifully with the light in the reader’s space.

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46 “*Ehon* designers tend to choose papers that are either semi-transparent or opaque. Thick, opaque papers are especially suited to special effects like embossing” (Keyes 2006, 23).

47 “Komagata was obviously strongly influenced by these pages when he created *Found It!* The reader/viewer perceives the images of several translucent pages simultaneously, creating a sense of three-dimensional space” (Beckett 2012, 52).
While for Munari and Komagata, the semi-transparent paper as a material manifestation creates effects that are essentially visual, for Shingu, however, the semi-transparent page exploits its own material quality and its position as a constituent of the codex in order to engage with the reader's the full sensorium: visual, tactile, kinetic and even auditory. The translucent visual quality works with the lightness and thinness of the paper to signify the swiftness and nimbleness of the birds' movement; in addition to having tactile qualities like the thinness and lightness of the weight, the semi-transparent paper is more pliable, and the reader can thus flap the crispy paper to perform the auditory effect that signifies both wings fluttering in the wind and the noisy chirping of baby birds (fig. 4.4.1); as a page in the kinetic structure of the codex, the semi-transparent paper waits to be turned, and the motion of the reader brings forth the motion of the bird, and a gentle breeze hits the face of the reader. Not only the material manifestation itself has the potential to become a semiotic code in its own right, being activated through the process of reading, but also the various sensory languages that the material manifestation speaks collaborate and permeate into each other to create for the reader a multi-level experience of the narrative.

As we have seen, the signifying relationships between the medium and the story in Kotori are rather open-ended, and they give rise to various ways of interpretation; on one hand, the absence of direct paratext denies any clue to which of those interpretations brings forth the kind of performance intended by the script of the book, but on the other hand, the tracing paper, unlike the artistic paper in Komagata's Blue to Blue that strikes the reader as something entirely new, reminds the reader of its practical use outside the book and thus subtly encodes a paratextual message within itself. Upon its very first encounter
with the reader, it manages to evoke the reader’s desire to overlay the semi-transparent page onto the illustrated page so as to trace the differences between the two scenes as a record of the passage of time. While the superposition of the two pages (fig. 4.4.2) allows us to locate precisely the effects of time elapsing, it is the reader’s act of transporting the semi-transparent page from right to left that gives continuity to the narrative: instead of seeing the recto and the verso as two separate moments in time, the quick turning of the page enacts the bird flying into the page from the right side; its swift movement scares away the lizard and makes the leaves gently sway in the wind generated by the fluttering of its wings. Such paratext of the medium is very different from the one in Kyō no oyatsu wa (fig. 1.6.3), which precedes the main narrative and gives explicit instructions on how to care for the material due to the reader’s unfamiliarity with it; here, however, by bringing in the kind of material that has a particular practical function in the reader’s daily life, the material carries a tacit paratext of itself by implicitly suggesting a process of reading that is anticipated by the whole architecture of book space.

If the superposition of layers of semi-transparent paper in Munari and Komagata’s books makes possible a rhythmic alternation between covering and discovering for the reader, in which each semi-transparent page is sequentially linked to its previous and following pages, Shingu’s book departs from the two, since the semi-transparent pages are not overlaid on top of each other, but instead against an illustrated or a white blank page not at all transparent. The illustrated but opaque page, the illustrated and semi-transparent page and the white blank page in each spread form a narrative unit, but instead of being the mid-point of the chronological order, the semi-transparent page connects with the other two pages in the unit spatially. The three kinds of pages together establish a visual rhythm
oscillating between emptiness and fullness, echoing the story itself which begins with the cavity of the tree hollow and ends with a blue sky filled with little birds and unfolds through the birds departing from one side of the page and arriving at the other. The semi-transparency of the page thus connotes less the liminal state between seeing and not seeing, being and not being, than movement, transition and liveliness.

The temporal effect in *Kotori* is multi-layered since the act of flipping the page determines both the speed of the story (the speed of the birds arriving onto the scene) and the speed of the discourse (the speed of leaving one scene for another). The narrative speed is also brought forth by an intricate choreography between various elements of the medium plane, among which the process of reading threads together other elements into a coherent performance of the narrative. In the first half of the book, as we have seen, once the reader opens the spread, the semi-transparent page appears on the right against a white background, and as the readers follow their instincts to turn the semi-transparent page and overlay it on top of the illustrated page on the left, they trace and perform a narrative consisting of a bird coming upon a tree hollow (fig. 4.4.2), encountering his mate (fig. 4.4.3), then after the two decide on making the tree hollow a dwelling place (fig. 4.4.4), the father bird flying in and out to bring nesting material (fig. 4.4.5) and food (fig. 4.4.6) for the mother bird. In the first half, the act of tracing allows the reader to follow carefully the course of preparation for the hatching of the little birds, whereas the act of turning performs the birds physically leaving the space blank on the right so as to jump into the illustrated scene on the left. If in the first spreads the act of turning is the real time performance of the bird’s first discovering of the tree hollow and his first encounter with his future spouse, the narrative speed picks up in the last few spreads and the single act of
turning is thus the condensed performance of the bird’s iterative actions of leaving and coming back.

In the spread at the very middle of the book (fig. 4.4.7), the semi-transparent page disappears, together with the white blank page and a fully colored spread unfolds before our eyes. The layers of paint and the thickness of the paper accentuate the immobility of the scene and weight the movement of the reader’s eye; the absence of the semi-transparent paper makes the reader’s hand halt and puts the rhythmic movement of turning and flapping the page to a pause, resonating with the endless rainfall and the painstaking wait for the birth of little birds. The narrative speed suddenly slows down, and just as the baby birds inside the eggs being hatched by their parents yearning to catch the wind and take off, soaring into the blue sky, it waits to be picked up in full speed, dashing towards the final climax of the story.

In the second half, the white blank page shifts from the left to the right, therefore the overlaying of semi-transparent page on the illustrated page (fig. 4.4.8) propels the reader to continue turning the page from right to left in order to render both pages more legible (fig. 4.4.9). If curiosity drives the reader to continuously scroll back to the left side where the semi-transparent page is superposed on the illustrated page in the first half, in the second half the desire to read both the semi-transparent and the opaque illustrated pages propels the reader’s eyes and hands to move rightward and forward in the narrative: the speed of the narrative picks up along with the pace of growth of the little birds until they fly far up into the blue sky. Tracing the differences between the semi-transparent and the opaque illustrated pages when superposed becomes more difficult in the second half, which points towards the stylistic departure of the semi-transparent page from the opaque
and illustrated one. In the opaque illustrated pages, the colored surfaces remains to be bound within definite contour (fig. 4.4.10), and the profusion of details grasps the reader's attention, whereas in the semi-transparent pages, the illustration employs unbounded surfaces carried out by dry brush strokes (fig. 4.4.11): the washed out colors echo the flimsy quality of the paper, and the agile execution of the artist to signify the movement as too rapid to be fully captured, and the reader's focus slips from the page at any moment. Here, a feature of the semiotic code produced by the process of creation collaborates with quality of the material to inspire a certain reaction from the reader that affects the process of reading: now as the readers flips hurriedly from one page to another, the leaves of the tree sway in a wilder wind, and the little birds grow up at a more drastic speed.

Finally, the relationship between the processes of reading and creation in Kotori can be further complicated by the idea that what Shingu creates in this book comes from an insightful reading of the nature of book space, the full narrative potential of the paper, and the “natural” energy of the reader implied within the book form—just as Shingu is “at first a reader of nature” and then a creator of “what he has aesthetically felt” in his sculpture works (Masaki 2010, 163). Moreover, as Shingu emphasizes that the sculptural works that he creates does not mark the end of his reading of nature, but are tangible machines that help him continuing observing nature, perhaps “in a more personal way” (Shingu 1997, 288), it may also be true for Kotori that the picture book does not announce itself as a perfected rendition of what Shingu reads in a book, since all the creative devices in Kotori are nothing but part of a mechanism that invites further exploration and discovery.
Conclusion

While our quest for a re-definition of the medium begins with a re-examination of Western structuralist models so as to re-construct a narratological framework where the medium emerges as a narrative language that has the potential to signify aspects of both story and discourse rather than a mere material support for the narrative, I propose that we now take a step back and look at the relationship between story, discourse and medium and the dynamics among components within the plane of medium through a more figurative lens. Although within the space of this paper, a virtual dialogue has been continuously staged between Western literary theories and practices in contemporary Japanese picture books so that the analytical tool helps elucidate the complexity of each creative work and becomes in turn sharpened by the artistic practice during the process of analysis, such Western theories may have little influence on what the Japanese artists try to achieve in their architecture of book space. By shifting from the etic to the emic perspective, and by returning to Sugiura Kohei’s account of book form, filled with imagery, with a sensibility towards the theatrical performances and experiences gained through actual practice of book design, we will perhaps gain a different understanding on the role of medium within the narrative.

Before going on to the corporeal metaphors of “the book as a body” (本のからだ) and “the book cover as human face” (本の表紙は顔である), Sugiura looks closely at the key constituent of the book, the paper: according to Sugiura, the paper is an object of definite thickness and three dimensionality48, just like the paperscapes created by Komagata in Blue

48 「紙はたしかな厚みをもつ、三次元の物体です。」(Sugiura 1997, 158)
to Blue. Although the materiality of the paper is effaced as it lies in the reader’s hands as flat visual surfaces, the paper is brought back into life once the page is turned and a wind is breathed into the page,\textsuperscript{49} just like the semi-transparent pages that flutter at the reader’s fingertips in Kotori. The process of reading is thus filled with theatricality\textsuperscript{50} as the interference of the reader’s hand transforms the paper from a two-dimensional surface into a three-dimensional object, and as the flow of the gestures of reading leads us through a journey continuous in both time and space: we thus enter into the body of the book from the front cover, stepping back a little to take a peep at the spine, and then drifting along each half of the spread, or sliding down the fore-edge to land at the back cover. The architectural space of the book is thus not static: once fallen into the hands of the reader, a play is staged, and the book becomes the site of constant oscillation between surface and three-dimensionality, space and time, as active and alive as the human body.\textsuperscript{51} If the theoretical framework that this paper presents allows us to trace the multi-layered collaboration and movement between elements of the medium in different parts of the body of the picture book, the body metaphor helps us to see the tensions and activity in the book space as a whole.

\textsuperscript{49}「ところがこの紙に手を触れて、それを半分、また半分を折りたたんでいきます。そうすると、紙に息が吹きこまれる。紙は「いのち」をえて、たちまちのうちに存在感のある立体物へと変化しています。」(Sugiura 1997, 158)

However as the hand touches the paper and folds it in half over and over again, a breath is exhaled into the paper. The paper then acquires “life” and instantly becomes transformed into a three-dimensional object that asserts its existence into the world.

\textsuperscript{50}「一枚の薄い紙が、二次元から三次元へと姿を変える。劇的な変化が生みだされます。」(Sugiura 1997, 159)

\textsuperscript{51}「平面であり、立体でもある本。空間であり、時間でもある本。劇的な流れを生み出す本、動く本…… このような本の全体のたたずまいを、生きた身体、人間のからだの広がりにたとえることができると思います。」(Sugiura 1997, 163)
The idea that the book is a body may also shed light on our understanding of the relationship among components of the medium at large and even the relationship between story, discourse and medium. In Sugiura’s description, we observe that the book is not only a body in itself, but is created, reproduced, distributed, animated and performed by actual bodies. The corporeal motif thus threads together distinct elements of the plane of the medium: the material manifestation actualizes the semiotic codes into a physical form, the movement of the author’s body in the creative process is recorded and encoded into the book space and the hands of the reader transform the book into a living object in the process of reading. Such correspondences among components within the plane of the medium mirror the coherent relationship between story, discourse and medium brought forth in the corporeal metaphor: the story, discourse and medium are organically connected, and the narrative becomes dismembered when any of the three is singled out and separated from the rest.

Earlier in this paper, we raised the question of what issues are at stake with the translation between media, and specifically between material manifestations that is neglected in Chatman’s account; this question also asks to what extent the general framework developed in this paper and specifically tailored to the discussion of the medium of picture book is transposable to that of another medium. Such question is not only pertinent to the understanding of the medium in general but also relevant to that of the “afterlife” of picture books, since the exhibition of original illustrations from the picture book in the museum space becomes an increasingly common practice in Japan after the establishment of Chihiro Art Museum, which prompts us to ask specifically what the effect of translation is when text and image moves from book space into exhibition space. For
example, in the exhibition of Shingu Susumu’s drawings for *Kotori* (2011) in Suita, Japan (fig. 5.1.1), the pages no longer flutter and turn, but become specimen that are framed and mounted, dead and uapproachable. Watanabe Chinatsu’s exhibition of her mirror books takes a completely different form (fig. 5.1.2): no original drawings are displayed, but signs for gestures of hand are added onto each page, extending the paratextual instructions that appear within the picture books. While these two exhibitions show how the process of reading is reduced or amplified through translation, the exhibition of original paintings from Hiroshi Senju’s *Hoshi no furu yoru ni (When Stardust Falls, 1994)* at Hiroshi Senju Museum Karuizawa (2014) points out to us ways in which the spatial qualities of the museum architecture can signify aspects of the narrative as the material space of the book. Senju’s pictorial narrative is displayed along a circular corridor, an adventure of a fawn chasing the fallen star, leaving the forest on a starry night (fig. 5.2.1) and coming back at dawn (fig. 5.2.2); the use of laminated glass and ovoid openings in the architecture introduces light and natural landscape into the exhibition space (fig. 5.2.3), which conjures up scenes of traveling through woods and gradual transition from darkness to light as the viewer proceeds from one painting to another, re-enacting the experience of the fawn within the frame. The issue of translation from book space into exhibition space can be even more complicated by Tashima Seizo’s various “picture books in space” (kūkan ehon) in which the picture books are not only translated into the exhibition space from pages of a book, but are created and meant to be read within the context of a three-dimensional space (fig. 5.3.1).

Finally, the components of the medium suggested in this paper, semiotic manifestation, material manifestation, process of creation and process of reading do not
remain as “un instrument d’incarcération, d’émondage castrateur ou de mise au pas” but are descriptive terms that seek to discover and to clarify (Genette 1972, 271). To some extent, the space that this paper has carved out for the medium is like the cut-out hole in the cover of Komagata’s Blue to Blue: instead of fully enclosing or defining things within the space, it is only a beginning for future transformations. Moreover, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the potential of the medium to narrate, this paper has undoubtedly sought to read the Japanese picture books in the most transgressive way, perhaps even beyond what the books themselves originally intended, but just as Genette defends his specific focus on the aspects “les plus déviants” (the most deviant) in Proust’s text by suggesting it as a mode of reading “un peu plus que légitimes aux yeux de Proust” (a little more than legitimate in Proust’s eyes) (Genette 1972, 271), the picture books chosen in this paper all envision reading as a creative act in itself, both in the practical sense of performing the narrative live, exploring different ways of unfolding and touching, and in the theoretical sense of using the material of the book as the substance for critical thoughts, and perhaps just as what this paper has already put forth.

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52 an instrument of incarceration, of bringing to heel, or of pruning that in fact castrates
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Primary Texts


Secondary Texts


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Appendix
fig. 1.1.1 Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 1983, diagram of narrative structure.

fig. 1.1.2 Diagram of narrative structure including medium
A Comic Strip Example

Picture narratives can be divided up into frames, the technique of the modern comic strip. Comic strips without dialogue, captions, or balloons are relatively pure (if banal) examples of narrative in picture form and as such conveniently illustrate my diagram of the narrative situation.

The comic strip I have chosen appeared in 1970 in the Sunday supplement of the San Francisco Chronicle. For convenience of discussion I have labeled the ten frames 0 through 9 (0 containing introductory or “front” matter). With the exception of the bubble in 1 and the signs in IV, VI, and VII, there are no words in this narrative. Even those words could have been replaced by visual indications to distinguish the casino from the pawn shop. The traditional three balls could have been used for the one and perhaps a pair of dice for the other. But as it stands, the medium is mixed: we must distinguish (1) drawing, either representational or stylized-conventional, from two uses of words (2) dialogue (in the comic-strip convention of the “bub-
ble”) and (3) legend (the signs identifying the two buildings).

The story might be verbalized as follows: There once was a king. Standing on the tower of his castle, he saw something “that looked like fun” through his binoculars. He rushed downstairs and out of the castle and soon arrived at the Royal Casino. He played dice and lost. Leaning dejectedly, he happened upon the Royal Loan Company. A crafty thought came to him. He pawned his crown for a bundle of money so that he could go back to the Royal Casino to gamble some more.

These are abstract narrative statements, hence I have italicized them. This English-language version is not at all the story per se; it is but one more (and poorer) representational representation of it. Story, in my technical sense of the word, exists only at an abstract level; any manifestation already entails the selection and arrangement performed by the discourse as actualized by a given medium. There is no privileged manifestation.

Further, though the above is, I think, a reasonably complete depiction of “what happens” in the story, it cites only some among an infinity of possible events. For example, the very existence of the king presupposes the event of his birth, his royalty...
fig. 1.3.2

fig. 1.3.3
fig. 1.3.4
fig. 1.4.1 Lee Ufan, *Donguri to yamaneko*, 1983.

fig. 1.4.2 Shingu Susumu, *Kotori*, 2007.
fig. 1.5.1 Barthes, *Système de la mode*, 1967.

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fig. 1.5.2 Kitano Takeshi, *Hoshi no hanashi*, 2012.
fig. 1.6.1 Tupera Tupera, *Shirokuma no pantsu*, 2012.

fig. 1.6.2 Tupera Tupera, *Shirokuma no pantsu*, 2012.
fig. 1.6.3 Watanabe Sanatsu, *Kyō no oyatsu ha*, 2014
fig. 2.1 *Genji monogatari emaki, “Minori”*

fig. 2.2
fig. 3.1.1

fig. 3.1.2
fig. 3.1.3

fig. 3.1.4
fig. 3.1.5

fig. 3.1.6
Huang 83

fig. 3.1.7

かがれ なつかしい においしてきた。ここは どこだろう？
Veillè qu’ils retrouvent une odeur familière. Où sommes-nous donc ?

じぶんたちの うまれたかわに かえってきたのです。
Les saumons ont grandi et sont revenus dans leur rivière natale.
Les bébés saumons rencontrent une famille de cygnes et leurs descendents... et sont fiers de leurs parents !

Petit à petit, ils descendent la rivière... Très vite leur grand-père... Qui sait s'il verra sa première gorgée ?
fig. 4.1.1 Water Tree, Aono Dam Park, Hyogo, Japan

fig. 4.1.2 Ripples of Light, Sarusawa Pond, Nara, Japan
fig. 4.2.1

fig. 4.2.2

fig. 4.2.3 Tendoku performance at Banzeizan Daiunji, June 2014
fig. 4.4.6

fig. 4.4.7
fig. 5.1.1

fig. 5.1.2
fig. 5.2.3

fig. 5.3.1