

# A diachronic perspective on early Japanese adjectival morphology: Some more pre-Old Japanese copulas

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East Asian Linguistics Seminar  
5 March 2013

This talk presents an analysis of the inflectional morphology associated with adjectives in Old Japanese (8<sup>th</sup> century), arguing that what has traditionally been thought of as inflectional endings (e.g., *-ku*, *-ki*, *-si*, etc.) in fact

- (a) are to be understood as originating in forms of an earlier copula, and
- (b) can be analysed synchronically in Old Japanese as forms of a restricted copula with forms in *k-* ~ *s-*.

Based on this analysis, a hypothesis is proposed which links these forms and other inflectional material in Old Japanese (e.g., past tense suffixes used with verbs) and reconstructs a pre-OJ copula which can be reconstructed as *\*k-* ~ *\*s-*, and which is further reflected in a number of other grammatical elements in OJ, including the two past tense auxiliaries, the verb *se-* 'to do' (*suru*) and the demonstratives *ko* and *so*.

Grammatical morphemes derived from  
a p(re-O)J copula root \*t- ~ \*n-

# Grammatical morphemes derived from a p(re-O)J copula root \*t- ~ \*n-

	<i>t-</i>	<i>n-</i>
Copula	<i>to, tu</i>	<i>ni, no</i>
Oblique case and conjunctive particles	<i>to</i>	<i>ni, nite</i>
Genitive particle	<i>tu</i>	<i>no</i>
Gerund	<i>-te</i>	
Perfective	<i>-te-</i>	<i>-n-</i>
Continuative	<i>-tutu</i>	
Semblative ('be like')		<i>nasu ~ nosu</i> <i>-zi &lt; *nV(-)si</i>

# *nasu* ~ (EOJ) *nosu*

朝日奈須

asapi *nasu*

morning-sun like

'like the morning sun' (MYS 13.3234)

# Adjectival derivational formant

$-zi < * -nV(-)si$

adjectival derivational formant  $-zi < * -nV(-)si$

*ipyezi* 'like (this) house' (*ipye* 'house'); *omozi* 'close (as if from same mother)' (*omo* 'mother'); *onazi* ~ *oyazi* 'same, similar'; *warezi* 'like me' (*ware* 'I').

**N-*zi mono*** 'like (a) N, typical of (a) N, as befits (a) N'

馬自物

uma-*zi mono*

'like a horse' (MYS 13.3276)

(also with *inu* 'dog', *i* 'cormorant', *uma* 'horse', *kakwo* 'fawn', *kamwo* 'duck' *sisi* 'wild animal', *toko* 'bed', *tori* 'bird', *yuki* 'snow', *wotokwo* 'man')

Grammatical morphemes derived from  
a p(re-O)J copula root \*k- ~ \*s-

# Adjectives in Old Japanese

Predicative use, bare stem

於曾也是君

*oso ya*, ko no kimi

stupid EXCL this GEN lord

‘he is stupid, this man!’ (MYS 9.1741)



Attributive use

a. (compounded)

夜須伊

*yasu-i*

easy-sleep

'good, sound sleep' (MYS 15.3771)

阿賀波斯豆摩

*a ga pasi-duma*

I GEN dear-spouse

'my dear wife' (KK 59)

b. (bare stem)

予能等保臂等

[*yo no topo*] *pito*

age GEN distant person

'person of old age;' (NSK 62)

和賀美賀本斯久迹波

[*wa ga mi ga posi*] *kuni*

I GEN see GEN want] country

'the country I long to see' (KK 58)

波毘呂久麻加斯

[*pa-biro*] *kumakasi*

leaf-wide great.oak

'wide-leaved great oak' (KK 91)

c. (followed by a form of the copula)

等保能久爾

[*topo no*] *kuni*

distant COP.ADN land

'distant land' (MYS 15.3688)

登保都比等

[*topo tu*] *pito*

distant COP.ADN person

'distant person' (MYS 17.3947)

## Adverbial use

a. (compounded)

*tika-duk-* ‘approach; close/near-touch/stick to’

b. (bare stem)

波也許

*paya ko*

quick come.IMP

‘come quickly!’ (MYS 15.3636)

c. (followed by a form of the copula)

麻用賀岐

*maywo-gaki*

eyebrow-paint

許迓加岐多禮

*ko ni kaki-tare*

thick COP.INF paint-drip

‘paint the eyebrows thickly’ (KK42)

## Used with the ‘adjectival copula’

a. Predicative use, conclusive form (終止形) *-si*

安我牟祢伊多之

*a ga mune ita-si*

I GEN heart painful-ACOP.CONCL

‘my heart aches’ (MYS 15.3767)

b. Attributive use, adnominal form (連体形) *-ki*

久路岐美祁斯

*kurwo-ki mi-kyesi*

black.ACOP.ADN HON-clothes

‘black clothes’ (KK 4)

c. Attributive use, adnominal or conclusive form

迦具漏伎            可美  
*kagurwo-ki*        *kami*  
black-ACOP.ADN hair  
'black hair' (MYS 5.804)

蚊黑爲                髮  
*kagurwo-si*        *kami*  
black-ACOP.CONCL hair  
'black hair' (MYS 16.3791)

d. adverbial use, infinitive (≈連用形) *-ku*

岐美賀由岐

*kimi ga yuki*

my.lord GEN go

気那賀久那理奴

*ke naga-ku nari-nu*

day long.ACOP.INF become-PERF.CONCL

‘it has been a long time since you left’ (KK 88)

	taka-
Finite	
Conclusive	takasi
Adnominal	takaki
Exclamatory	takasa
Exclamatory	takakyere
Non-finite	
Infinitive	takaku
Infinitive	takami
Gerund	takakute
Gerund	takamito
Conditional	takakyeba
Conditional	takakupa
Provisional	takakyeba
Provisional	takakyereba
Concessive	takakyedo
Concessive	takakyeredo
Nominal	takakyeku
Negative nominal	takakyenaku
Conjectural	takakyem-



	kanasi-
Finite	
Conclusive	kanasi
Adnominal	kanasiki
Exclamatory	kanasisa
Exclamatory	kanasikyere
Non-finite	
Infinitive	kanasiku
Infinitive	kanasimi
Gerund	kanasikute
Gerund	kanasimito
Conditional	kanasikyeba
Conditional	kanasikupa
Provisional	kanasikyeba
Provisional	kanasikyereba
Concessive	kanasikyedo
Concessive	kanasikyeredo
Nominal	kanasikyeku
Negative nominal	kanasikyenaku
Conjectural	kanasikyem-

# OJ forms

Finite	
Conclusive	si
Adnominal	ki
Exclamatory	sa
Exclamatory	kyere
Non-finite	
Infinitive	ku
Infinitive	mi
Gerund	kute
Gerund	mito
Conditional	kyeba
Conditional	kupa
Provisional	kyeba
Provisional	kyereba
Concessive	kyedo
Concessive	kyeredo
Nominal	kyeku
Negative nominal	kye-naku
Conjectural	kye-m-

# Main EMJ forms

Conclusive  
Adnominal  
Exclamatory

*si*  
*ki ~ i*  
*kere*

Infinitive  
Gerund  
Conditional  
Provisional  
Concessive

*ku/u*  
*kute/ute*  
*kupa/upa (> kuwa/uwa)*  
*kereba*  
*keredo*

- a. The so-called inflectional endings of adjectives in Japanese are really a restricted (and suppletive) copula: **'adjectival copula'**
  
- b. Its main forms exhibit an alternation *k-* ~ *s-*

# Analytic forms

a. *ku ar-*

岐美何余曾比斯

多布斗久阿理祁理

*kimi ga yosopi si*

*taputwo-ku*

*ari-kyeri*

my.lord GEN attire EMPH

admirable-ACOP.INF

exist-

MPST.CONCL

'your attire, it is admirable, my lord!' (KK 7)

b. *ni ar-*

伊麻許曾婆

*ima koso pa*

now FOC TOP

和杼理迩阿良米

*wa-dori ni ara-me*

I-bird COP.INF exist-CONJ.EXCL

'Now, I am my own' (KK 3)

# Abbreviated analytic forms

a. *ku ar-* => *kar-* (> EMJ カリ活用)

伊麻乃久須理師

*ima no kusurisi*

now COP.ADN master.of.medicine

多布止可理家利

*taputwo-kari-kyeri*

admirable-ACOP-

MPST.CONCL

'the present master of medicine is worthy of praise!' (*Bussoku* 15)

b. *ni ar-* => *nar-*

烏梅能波奈

*ume no pana*

plum GEN blossom

伊麻佐可利奈理

*ima sakari nari*

now in.bloom COP.CONCL

'The plum blossom is in bloom now' (MYS 5.850)

# Parallelism in development between regular and adjectival copula

OJ	EMJ/early LMJ	late LMJ/NJ
<b>primary paradigms</b> <i>ni, no, to, tu,</i> <i>si, ki, ku, ...</i>	<b>primary paradigms</b> <i>ni, nite, de, no, to</i> <i>si, ki/ i, ku/u, ...</i>	<b>primary paradigms</b> <i>dya, da, na, no, ni, ...;</i> <i>i, ku/u, katta, ...</i>
	<b>secondary paradigms</b> <i>nar-, tar-, dyar-</i> <i>kar-</i>	
<b>analytic forms</b> <i>ni/to ar-;</i> <i>ku ar-</i>	<b>analytic forms</b> <i>ni/nite/de/to ar-</i> <i>ku ar-</i>	<b>analytic forms</b> <i>de ar-</i> <i>ku ar-</i>



- a. The so-called inflectional endings of adjectives in Japanese are really a restricted copula:  
**‘adjectival copula’**
  
- b. Its main forms exhibit an alternation *k-* ~ *s-*

Finite	
Conclusive	si
Adnominal	ki
Exclamatory	sa
Exclamatory	kyere
Non-finite	
Infinitive	ku
Infinitive	mi
Gerund	kute
Gerund	mito
Conditional	kyeba
Conditional	kupa
Provisional	kyeba
Provisional	kyereba
Concessive	kyedo
Concessive	kyeredo
Nominal	kyeku
Negative nominal	kye-naku
Conjectural	kye-m-

Grammatical morphemes  
which may be related to the  
adjectival copula  $k-$  ~  $s-$

# Past tense auxiliaries

Widespread form identity of the *si* and *ki* based forms of the adjectival copula with forms of the two past tense auxiliaries: *ki* simple past and *kyer*-modal past.

Grammaticalization of tense markers from copula are frequently proposed in the grammaticalization literature (and earlier; e.g. Franz Bopp who posited copula origins for many conjugational endings in Sanskrit).

## Paradigm of the simple past tense auxiliary

Conclusive	<i>ki</i>
Adnominal	<i>si</i>
Exclamatory	<i>sika</i>
Conditional	<i>seba / kyeba</i>
Concessive	<i>sikado</i>
Provisional	<i>sikaba</i>
Nominal	<i>siku / kyeku</i>
Conjectural	<i>kyemu</i>

## Paradigm of the modal past tense auxiliary

Conclusive	<i>kyeri</i>
Adnominal	<i>kyeru</i>
Exclamatory	<i>kyere</i>
Concessive	<i>kyereba</i>
Provisional	<i>kyeredo</i>
Nominal	<i>kyeraku</i>

# Form overlap

## Adjectival copula

*si*  
(< \*si-amu-pa))

*ki*  
*kyeba* (< \*ki-amu-pa)  
*kyeku* (< \*ki-aku)  
*kyemu* (< \*ki-amu)

*kyere* (< \*ki-are)  
*kyeredo*  
*kyereba*

## Simple past

*si* (*sika*, *sikado*, *sikaba*; *siku*; *seba*)

## Simple past

*ki*  
*kyeba*  
*kyeku*  
*kyemu*

## Modal past

*kyere*  
*kyeredo*  
*kyereba*

Other grammatical  
morphemes which may be  
related to the adjectival  
copula  $k-$  ~  $s-$



# The adverbial/stative formant \*su

Given the *k-* ~ *s-* alternation, an alternation may be proposed between two formants with remarkably similar morphology and syntax:

the adverbial adjectival copula *ku* and

the adverbial/stative formant \**su* which forms part of the semblative copula (*nasu* / *nosu*) and the negative auxiliary *-zu*.

## Adjectival copula

*ku*

*ku*

*kute*

*kupa*

## Semblative

*nasu* < \*na-su

## Negative

-(a)zu < \*ani-su

-(a)zute < \*ani-su-te

-(a)zupa < \*ani-su-pa

*nasu ~ (EOJ) nosu*

朝日奈須

asa-pi *nasu*

morning-sun like

'like the morning sun' (MYS 13.3234)

	Negative	
	<i>-(a)zu ~ -(a)n-</i>	
Conclusive	<i>zu</i>	
Adnominal	<i>nu</i>	
Exclamatory	<i>ne</i>	
Infinitive	<i>zu (~ ni)</i>	
Gerund	<i>zute (~ nito)</i>	
Conditional	<i>zupa</i>	
Provisional	<i>neba</i>	
Concessive	<i>nedo</i>	
Nominal	<i>naku</i>	

# Further related grammatical forms?

Demonstratives:

*ko*

*so*

Focus particles:

*ka*

*so*

Grammatical verbs:

*ko*– ‘come’

*se*– ‘do’

吾戀	君曾	伎賊乃夜	夢所見鶴
wa ga kwopuru # <b>kimi so</b>		<i>kizo no</i> ywo #	ime ni mi-ye- <i>туру</i>
I GEN love.ADN	my.lord SO	last.night GEN night dream DAT see-PASS-	PERF.ADN

‘It was you, my beloved lord, that I saw last night in a dream’ (MYS 2:150)

..月乎	白妙乃	雲香	隱流
..tukwi <i>wo</i> #	sirwotape <i>no</i> #	<b>kumo ka</b>	kakus- <i>eru</i>
moon ACC white.cloth COP.ADN		cloud KA	hide-STAT.ADN

‘Is it white clouds that are hiding the moon?’ (MYS 7.1079)

Focus	IS	presupposition
[wa ga kwopuru kimi ] you my beloved lord	so IS	[kizo no ywo ime ni miyeturu] (what) I saw last night in a dream
[sirwotape no kumo ] white clouds	ka IS	[kakuseru] (what) are hiding (it)

	<b>*k-</b>	<b>*s-</b>
adjectival copula	<i>ku, kute, kupa</i> <i>ki</i> <i>kyeba, kyedo, kyeku</i> <i>kye-naku, kye-mu</i> <i>kyere, kyereba, kyeredo</i>	<i>sa</i> <i>si</i> <i>seba</i>
simple past tense	<i>ki</i> <i>kyeba, kyeku, kyemu</i>	<i>si, sika, sikado, sikaba, siku</i> <i>seba</i>
modal past tense	<i>kyeri, kyeru, kyere,</i> <i>kyeredo, kyereba, kyeraku</i>	
semblative		<i>na-su</i>
negative		<i>-zu &lt; *ani-su</i>
focus particles	<i>ka</i>	<i>so</i>
demonstratives	<i>ko</i>	<i>so</i>
grammatical verbs	<i>ko-</i>	<i>se- (&lt; *sə-)</i>



## Afterthought: Lexical k ~ s alternation candidates

*toki* 'time'

*tosi* 'year'

*aka(-)* 'bright, red'

*asa* 'morning'

*okure-* 'be (left) behind'

*oso-* 'late'

*kosi* 'loins'

*se ~ so-* 'back'

*kapa* 'river'

*sapa* 'marsh'

*kup-* 'eat'

*sup-* 'imbibe, inhale'

# Finally

The Korean 'do' verb, MK *ho-* > NK *ha-ta*, is easier to compare with OJ *se-* (*suru*) if OJ *se-* reflects a root *k- ~ s-*.