

What do we know about Premodern Japanese?

One of the intriguing things about Premodern Japanese is its *kakari-musubi* construction, which at least looks initially to be something like Sinhala in the history of Japanese, and a possible additional case to use for the idea that question particles move (and can move covertly). Things are more complicated, however.

Major (political) periods:	Old Japanese	Nara 700–800
	Early Middle Japanese	Heian 800–1200
	Late Middle Japanese	Kamakura 1200–1378
		Muromachi 1367–1573
	Modern Japanese	Edo 1603–1867
	Contemporary Japanese	1867–

Verbal conjugations:	shûshikei	conclusive
	rentaikei	adnominal
	izenkei	realis/presuppositional
	mizenkei	irrealis
	renyôkei	adpredicative

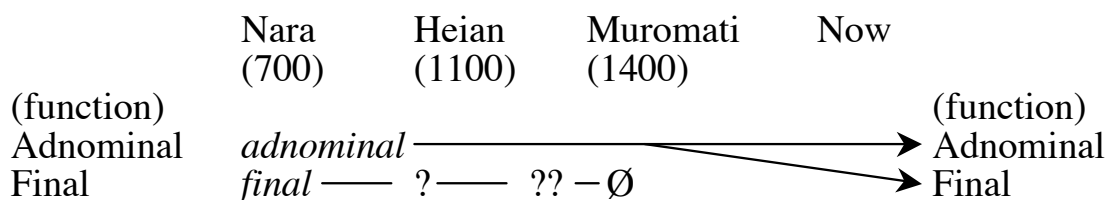
Prior to the 8th century, mostly a couple of inscribed swords and mirrors, and quite a number of inscribed wood tablets—but mostly these contain personal and place names and aren't very revealing about the structure of the language.

Manuscripts from the 8th century (handed down and copied in many versions). Mostly formal prose or poems—not exactly what was spoken on the street.

Primary source from the Nara period is the *Man'yooshuu* (collections of myriad leaves) over 4500 poems, 20 volumes, latest poem 759, earliest probably mid-5th century.

Primary source from the Heian period is *The Tale of Genji* (54 volumes, early 11th century), also *Taketori Monogatari* (not sure of the details on that one).

(1) The takeover of the adnominal form (table from Ogawa 1976:224)



Nominative case marking:

Subjects marked with \emptyset in shûshikei

Subjects marked with *ga* or *no* in rentaikei

Kakari-musubi (suspense–resolution)

so/zo focus/emphasis rentaikei

namu focus/emphasis rentaikei

ya question rentaikei

ka question rentaikei

koso izenkei

← survived to today (sans KM)

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(2) ...[...K...V_[M]...]...

(3) a. sisi husu-to **tare-ka** kono koto oomae-ni maosu.

beast lie-QUOT **who-Q** this thing Emperor-DAT say-M

‘Who reported to the Emperor that beasts were lying?’

(*Nihon Shoki* [720]:75, Ogawa 1977:221)

b. **tare-ka** mata hanatatibana-ni omoi-idemu.

who-Q againflower.orange-DAT remember-M

‘Who will again remember (me) at the time of the mandarin orange flower?’

(*Shin Kokin Wakashû* [1205]:3, Ogawa 1977:222)

(4) [beasts(nom) lie that] who KA this thing emperor-to said_M?

(5) tire-ba-**koso** itodo sakura-wa medeta-**kere**
fall-cond-EMPH the.more cherry-TOP wonderful-M

uki.yo-ni **nani-ka** wisasi-karu bek-i.

sad.world-DAT **what-Q** long-V should-M

‘It is because they fall that cherry blossoms are so fine;

in this woeful world what should be longlasting?’

(*Ise monogatari* [900]:82, Whitman 1997:162)

(6) fall KOSO more cherry wonderful_{IZEN} sad-world-in what KA long-be should_{REN}?

(7) Nihibari Tsukuba-wo sugite **ikuyo-ka** ne-tsuru?

Nihibari Tsukuba-acc passed **how.many.nights-ka** sleep-perf

‘How many nights have I/we slept after passing Nihibari Tsukuba?’ (Kojiki)

In the Nara period, *ka* could also mark the focus of a yes-no question:

- (8) ...atamitaru **tora-ka** hoyuru?
irritated **tiger-ka** roar
'Is it an irritated tiger that is roaring?' (Manyôshû #199)
- (9) Manyôshû 1742 ka ynq
tada hitori i-watarasu ko ha [waka-kusa no tuma] **ka** aru ramu
only one prf-cross girl ha young-glass no spouse **ka** be-aux
kasi-no-mi no hitori **ka** neramu
acorn no one **ka** sleep
'Does the girl who is crossing [the bridge] alone here have a *new husband*? Does she sleep *alone* like an acorn?'

Although not common, there are cases where a *wh*-word inside an island shows *ka* outside. Ah-ha.

- (Premodern Japanese)
- (10) [**ika** yoo naru kokorozasi aramu hito-ni]-**ka** awamu to obosu.
how kind is love have person-DAT-Q wed that think-M
'[What kind of love]_i do you think you would want to marry a person that has t_i?'
(*Taketori Monogatari* [c. 900], Ogawa 1977:216, Whitman 1997:166)
- (11) [Wagimoko ga **ika** ni omoe] **ka**, nubatama no hitoyo mo otizu ime ni si miyuru.
my.wife nom **how** think **KA** EPITHET gen one.night even miss dream in see
'I dream of my wife every single night, wondering how she misses me.' Man.3647
- (12) Haru makete mono-ganasikini sa-yo hukete ha-buki naku sigi
spring wait sfx-sad sfx-night get-dar wing-flap sing sandpiper
[**ta ga** ta ni] **ka** sumu
who ga paddy **ka** live
'Being melancholy as spring has come, in whose paddy, I wonder, does a sandpiper live flapping and singing as the night wears?' (Manyôshû #4141)
- (13) **ta ga** sono no ume ni **ka** ari-kemu kokodakumo sakini-keru **ka** mo
[**who ga** garden no plum ni] **ka** be-aux this-much bloom-aux **ka** no
mi ga hosi made ni
see ga want till at
'(From) plum trees of whose garden were [these branches], I wonder? They are blooming this much! To the extent that I wish I can see the trees myself.'
(Manyôshû #2327)

This looks kind of like Sinhala in the history of Japanese. Perhaps this makes more plausible the Q-movement account of CJ *ka*, then.

Traditional view of the loss of KM over time (perhaps related to the loss of M distinctions)

(14)	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Nara		Heian				Kamakura		Muromachi
					<u>loss of KM</u>				

Nomura (1993) analyzed the relative ordering of *wh*-words, *ka*, and *ha* in Manyôshû, and noticed a couple of interesting generalizations:

Nomura I: *wh+ka* overwhelmingly precedes nominative-marked subjects

- (15) Kasugano-no fuji-ha chiri-ni-te **nani-wo-ka-mo** [mikari-no hito]-**no**
 [Kasugano-gen wisteria]-top fall-perf-conj **what-acc-ka-mo** hike-gen person-**nom**
 ori-te kazasa-mu?
 pick-conj wear.on.the.hair-will
 ‘Since the wisteria flowers at Kasugano are gone, what should hikers pick and wear on the hair?’ (Manyôshû #1974)

- (16) [Kado tate-te to-mo sashi-taru]-wo **izuku-yu-ka** imo-**ga**
 gate close-conj door-also shut-past-acc where-through-**ka** wife-**nom**
 iriki-te yume-ni mie-tsuru?
 enter-conj dream-loc appear-perf
 ‘From where did my wife come and appear in my dream, despite the fact that I closed the gate and shut the door?’ (Man.#3117)

Nomura II: *wh+ka* overwhelmingly follows *ha*-marked topics

- (17) ...Hatsuse-no kawa-**ha** ura na-mi-**ka** fune-**no** yori-ko-nu?
 Hatsuse-gen river-**top** shore absent-ness-**ka** boat-**nom** approach-come-neg
 ‘Is it because Hatsuse River has no shore that no boat comes near?’ (Man.#3225)

Nomura III: *wh+ka* usually follows unmarked subjects

(In the *rentaikei*, these *should* probably be topics too)

Counts:	XP- ka ... subj- no/ga ... <i>rentaikei</i>	about 90	(95%)
	subj- no/ga ... XP- ka ... <i>rentaikei</i>	4 (or 5)	
	XP- ka ... subj- ha ... <i>rentaikei</i>	2 (or 3)	
	subj- ha ... XP- ka ... <i>rentaikei</i>	about 50	(95%)
	XP- ka ... subj ... <i>rentaikei</i>	13	
	subj ... XP- ka ... <i>rentaikei</i>	about 30	(70%)

Nomura (1996): These correlations no longer hold in the Heian period.

(18) [Medurashiki hodo-ni-nomi aru gotaimen]-**no ikade-ka-ha** oroka nara-mu?
rare extent-in-only is meeting-**nom how-ka-top** slack be-will
‘How could such an infrequent rendezvous not be passionate?’ (*Genji*)

Watanabe (2001): This is *overt wh-movement* in Nara Japanese.
Wh-words fit between topics and subjects, as we’d expect.

topic ... [_{CP} wh(+ka) [_{IP} subject-nom ...

Kuroda/Miyagawa: It’s not completely clear that this is really *wh*-movement of the English type, though. Suggest: EPP in English ([*uD**]) attracts focus in Japanese ([*uFoc**]). Either *wh*-words are inherently focused or *ka* confers focus.

Yanagida (2003, 2004), Kinsui (2002):

- kakari phrases must precede *ga* and no marked subjects (K moves out of VP)
- *wo*-objects may precede kakari phrases (*wo* can move out of VP)
- *wo*-objects precede bare and *ga*/no marked subjects.

(19) Hito-kuni ni kimi **wo** imasete **itu-made ka a ga** kochi-wo-ramu toki no siranak ni
foreign land to you **wo** let-go **when-till ka I ga** miss-be-aux time no know-neg
‘Letting you go to a foreign land, till when will miss you, know knowing the time
(when)?’ (Manyōshū #3749)

(20) Ihe ni yukite **ikani ka a ga** se-mu makuraduku tuma-ya sabusiku omohoyu-besi mo
home at go **how ka I ga** do-aux pillowed spouse-house sad feel aux emotive
‘What would I do after returning home? Our bedroom with pillows would look
sad.’ (Manyōshū #795)

- (21) [tamasaka ni wa **ga** mi-si hito] **wo** [ikanaramu yosi wo motite] **ka**
 by-chance ni I **ga** see-aux person **wo** what fate wo by **ka**
 mata hito-me mi-mu
 again one-sight see-aux
 ‘A person I happened to see, by what chance will I see again?’ (Manyôshû #2396)

Wh-questions without *ka* also occur, and show different properties:

- *shûshikei* or *izenkei* (not *rentaikei*)
- subject is bare (as expected, *ga/no* goes with *rentaikei*)
- *wh*-word follows subject (no more evidence of “*wh*-movement”)

- (22) Ahu-mu hi **wo** sono hi to sira-zu took-yami ni **idure** no hi made **are**
 see-aux day **wo** the day as know-neg eternal-dark at **which** no day till **I**
 koho wa-ramu
 miss be-aux
 ‘Without knowing the day we will see, until when will I miss you in pitch darkness?’ (Manyôshû #3742)

- (23) Kamusaburu Taruhime-no-saki kogi-meguri mire domo aka-zu **ikani ware** se-mu
 Awesome Taruhime-Point row-around see though bore-neg **how I** do-aux
 ‘After having rowed around it while seeing it, the awesome Taruhime Point never gets boring. What would I do?’ (Manyôshû #4046)

Moving from Nara to Heian:

- *Rentaikei* still used.
- *wh+ka* decreased—*wh* alone became dominant (in *Genji*)
- According to Ogawa, *ka* could no longer attach to non-*wh*-phrases (essentially: couldn’t mark focus of yes-no questions anymore)
- Seems to have become specialized for rhetorical questions (about half of the *ka* questions were rhetorical—but yet only half)

- (24) **nani-goto-wo-ka** notamaha-n-koto-ha uketamahara-zara-n.
what-think-acc-ka say.hon-will-think-top accept-neg-will
 ‘What will I not accept which you will say?’
 (Whatever you say, I’ll accept) (*Taketori*)

- (25) ...yama-hototogisu **nado-ka** ki-naka-nu?
 mountain-cuckoo **why-ka** come-sing-neg
 ‘Why doesn’t a mountain cuckoo come and sing?’ (Man.#4210)

- (26) **Ika** yoo naru kokorozasi aramu hito ni **ka** awamu
 how manner is intention is person dat meet
 ‘What manner of man hast thou a mind to mate with?’ (*Takekoto*)
- (27) **Ika** ni omoite **ka** nanzira kataki mono to maosu-beki
how think you hard thing quot say-should
 ‘What do you take into consideration and say it is a terrible task?’ (*Takekoto*)

Watanabe (2001): How did it disappear? Why did it disappear?

How could kids tell there was overt wh/focus movement?

- The ordering of topic > kakari > nominative was the trigger for them too.

Dropping of *ka* from *wh*-phrase seems to have correlated with loss of *wh*-movement:
 The focus particle was responsible for *driving* *wh*-movement.

Traditionally, this was supposed to have arisen through “loss” of *rentaikei* (distinction)
 Now: Why so slow? It took like 300 years?!

Watanabe’s ideas:

Wh-movement alone isn’t correlated with *rentaikei*; nom marking preserved it.

The *rentaikei* marking served as *wh*-agreement, supported *wh*-movement analysis.

Use of final *nari* (locative+be) became common, obscured the *ga/no-rentaikei* connection.

[... no/ga ... V_{RENTAIKEI}] nari_{SHÛSHIKEI}

- (28) Menoto-ni haberi-shi mono-**no** mizuhagumi-te sumi-haberu **nari**
 nurse-ni be.polite-past person-**nom** get.old-conj live-be.pol **nari**
 ‘Someone who used to be my nursing mother lives there after getting old.’ (*Genji*,
 Yuhugaho 1246).