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THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE VERBAL NOUN IN -((U)R)AKU IN THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE (FROM “MAN’YŌSHŪ” TO “GENJI MONOGATARI”)*

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΖΩΗ ΕΝ ΧΕΙΡΙ ΓΑΩΣΣΗΣ = MORS ET VITA IN MANU LINGVÆ
 (“The book of proverbs” 18, 21)

Abstract

The Old (eighth cent.) and Classical (ninth–twelfth cent.) Japanese verbal noun, in contemporary Japan called *ku gohō* 夕語法, was formed by means of a word-final suffix which can be presented in the general shape of *-((u)r)aku / -ke,ku*. Having a nominalising function, the morpheme transformed verbs and adjectives into action or state nouns of a wide spectrum of meanings: ‘doing something / being something’, ‘the fact that (he) does / is’, ‘what (he) does’, which – if accompanied by a suitable postposition – could also serve as predicates in subordinate clauses.

The nouns under consideration fell into disuse before the mid Classical period, only a dozen or so having survived up to the present day as petrified derivatives. The present article aims to examine the productivity of the suffix in some of the oldest extant texts, as well as the details of its disappearance.

In the “Man’yōshū” (after 771) the verbal noun is very frequent, combining both with verbs (of virtually all conjugations) and with adjectives, and showing no sign of restriction by any word-non-final suffix. In the fifth book alone, which comprises 114 poems, it appears as many as fifteen times – this amounts to an average of one form per 7.6 poems, and confirms the full vitality of the noun in the eighth century.

The “Taketori monogatari” (ninth / tenth cent.) also attests the morpheme in question rather abundantly, but added to three verbs only and without any word-non-final suffix interposed. All thirty-three occurrences are used to introduce quotations, often coupled with an-

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other form of the same verb which closes the direct speech – a pattern common in later texts too.

In the “Ise monogatari” (early tenth cent.) the verbal noun appears fifteen times, almost exclusively in the verse portions, and is invariably, with the exception of two fossils, represented by either of the following constructions: *-(a)n-aku ni* ‘since / when / although (he) does not’ – ten times, or *-(a)m-aku fosi-* ‘(he) wishes to’ – three times.

The first imperial anthology of poetry, “Kokin (waka) shū” (905–914), despite its relative variegation of the noun under discussion, is but a shadow of the “Man’yōshū”’s splendour, and most of these forms should rather be regarded as linguistic relics. In the beginning five books, constituting one fourth of the whole and comprising 313 poems, one finds the suffix sixteen times, but the forms’ absolute homogeneity is more than striking.

Ki no Tsurayuki in his “Tosa nikki” (around 935) used the said morpheme with economy, adhering to the established derivatives. One combination, however, namely *if-ik\er\aku* ‘here is what she said,’ stands out as long unseen and was perhaps taken over from some older text. The diary contains eight examples of the suffix altogether.

Murasaki Shikibu’s “Genji monogatari” (around 1004–1011) seems an excellent touchstone of the productivity of the verbal noun at that time, due to both its considerable size and the profusion of dialogues. Unfortunately, in the novel’s fifty-four lengthy chapters the suffix can be located merely three times, always being a part of some petrified form. Thus, any further quest becomes futile – the verbal noun must be pronounced dead.

On the basis of the above material, the frequency of the suffix’s occurrence in the selected Old and Classical Japanese texts (or their parts) can be summarised in the table presented in paragraph 5, where the number of pages (A) and the number of attested forms (B) are brought together to show the average number of forms per one hundred pages $((A / B) \times 100)$. The process of the disappearance clearly divides into three phases:

- until the end of the eighth century: virtually unlimited productivity and common use (at least in poetry; for prose appropriate texts are missing),
- ninth and tenth centuries: usage mainly restricted to the verbs of speech (in prose) and to the negative construction *-(a)n-aku ni* (in poetry); the frequency decreases slowly but steadily,
- since the early eleventh century: only lexicalised derivatives persist.

From the eleventh century on, it is solely the form *if-aku* (vel sim.) ‘here is what (he) says / said’, introducing a quotation, that still appears quite often in texts, although some other form of a verb of speech is used to close the sentence too. This is probably to be explained in part by the relative attractiveness of such a pleonastic construction, which can be observed in languages of different types: Classical Mongolian, Old Turkic, as well as Old Polish. With time, however, even this one lost its popularity.

Nevertheless, despite the thousand years that have elapsed since the extinction of the verbal noun, over a dozen of its relics are still encountered in Modern Japanese – amazingly strong resistance indeed.

1. The form, meaning and origin

In Old (eighth cent.) and Classical (ninth–twelfth cent.) Japanese the verbal noun – at present called in Japan *ku gohō* 夕語法 ‘the formation in *ku*,’ and earlier, among others, *ka-gyō engen* 加行延言 ‘the extension with *k*’ – was formed by means of the word-final suffix which could generally be written down as *-(u)raku / -ke₁ku*. Particular allomorphs have the following distribution, depending on the conjugational class of the lexeme or the word-non-final

suffix preceding it (for Old Japanese cf. Saeki 1976: 118–120, 139–147, 165, Syromiatnikov 1981: 125–127, Yokoyama 1950: 38–39; for Classical Japanese cf. Syromjatnikov 2002: 143–144, Vovin 2003: 265–267):

- OJ.a. consonantal verbs: the stem + $-aku$ (e.g. $kak-$ ‘to write’ → $kak-aku$)
 OJ.b. vocalic verbs: the stem + $-raku$ (e.g. mi_1- ‘to look, to see’ → mi_1-raku)
 OJ.c. bithematic verbs: consonantal stem + $-uraku$ (e.g. $okli_2-$ ‘to get up’ → $ok-uraku$, $tasukle_2-$ ‘to help’ → $tasuk-uraku$)
 OJ.d. partly irregular consonantal verbs with the stem ending in $-r\lambda-$: stem + $-aku$ (e.g. $ar\lambda-$ ‘to be’ → $ar-aku$)
 OJ.e. partly irregular consonantal verbs with the stem ending in $-n\lambda-$: stem + $-uraku$ (e.g. $sin\lambda-$ ‘to die’ → $sin-uraku$ ¹)
 OJ.f. $s\lambda e-$ ‘to do’ → $s-uraku$
 OJ.g. $k\lambda o_2-$ ‘to come’ → $k-uraku$
 OJ.h. predicative adjectives: stem + $-ke_1ku$ (e.g. $puka-$ ‘deep’ → $puka-ke_1ku$, $utukusi-$ ‘charming’ → $utukusi-ke_1ku$)
 OJ.i. preterite $-(i_1)k\lambda-$ → $-(i_1)s-iku$, exceptionally: $-(i_1)k-e_1ku$.²

This suffix fulfilled the nominalising function – it converted verbs and adjectives into nouns with a broadly understood meaning of a name of an activity or a state, whose English equivalents would be expressions like ‘doing / being (something),’ ‘the fact that (s/he) does / is (something),’ ‘what (s/he) does; this is what (s/he) does.’ As every noun, the verbal noun combined with various postpositions, often forming in this way the predicate of the subordinate clause (particularly in combination with the postposition of the dative-locative ni).

The form of $-(u)raku$ / $-ke_1ku$ suggests a complex character of that suffix, since it may be derived from the attributive (aorist) form $-(u)r_u$ / $-ki_1$ modifying a defective noun (an auxiliary one, known in Japanese as a formal noun: *keishiki meishi* 形式名詞) $*aku$, as was already tentatively suggested by Sansom (1928: 149–150) while he continued Yamada Yoshio 山田孝雄 (cf. Yamada 1990: 564–566) and Aston’s (1904: 142–143) deliberations. The sound changes are regular for Old Japanese: $*-(u)r_u aku > -(u)raku$, $*-ki_1 aku > -ke_1ku$.³ Any further identification of that noun is more difficult; it may have meant ‘a thing,’ possibly also ‘a place’ (it was, among others, searched for in the interrogative

¹ While it is true that this allomorph is not attested with verbs of the partly irregular group with the stem in $-n\lambda-$, it used to appear after the perfective suffix 2 $-(i_1)n\lambda-$ (cf. e.g. Mn.e below).

² As for the second variant, cf. the forms appearing in the same poem: $paple_2-k\lambda-e_1ku$ 破陪鷄區 ‘the fact that (he/they) spread’ and $sas-ik\lambda-e_1ku$ 佐辭鷄區 ‘the fact that (they) sprouted’ or ‘the fact that (they) pricked’ (*Nihon*: 10. *Ōjin*-13: 36 #II.202=512); a slightly different version, however, has: $paple_2-k\lambda-e_1ku$ 波閉祢久 ‘the fact that (he/they) spread’, but $sas-ik\lambda-e_1r\lambda-u$ 佐斯祢流 ‘the fact that he hammered’ (*Kojiki*: 2-*Ōjin*-4: 45 #144=275). – Both poems are not very clear due to the ambiguity of a considerable number of lexemes.

³ The precise phonetic rule was correctly formulated already by Aston (1904: 142): “Add *aku* to the attributive form, eliding the final *u* of verbs, and contracting the final *i* of adjectives with the *a* of *aku* into *e*.”, though his clarification of *aku* (allegedly a contraction of *aru* ‘to be’ + *koto* ‘thing, matter’) is hardly satisfactory.

pronoun *idu-ku* ‘where,’ cf. *idu-ti* ‘whither,’ *idu-pe₁* ‘where, what area, what place,’ *idu-re* ‘which’). In 1952 for the sake of comparison, Ōno Susumu 大野晋 quoted the word *akugarle-* ‘to wander, to stray,’ in which he wanted to see the compound of this **aku* ‘place; thing, matter’ and the verb *karle-* ‘to depart, to go away’ (cf. *Man’yōshū*, I, LVII–LX, and Tsuru 1999: 237, where one can also find the discussion of other, less convincing hypotheses and the history of research). All this is possible, even quite probable. From the point of view of phonetics the only problematic elements in this etymology are the variants appearing after the preterite morpheme, i.e. $-(i_1)s\text{-}iku \sim -(i_1)k\text{-}e_1ku$, however, in view of the complete irregularity (and a partial suppletion) of this suffix probably not too much importance should be attached to those.

The verbal noun went completely out of use before the middle of the Classical period, and has been preserved into the modern times only in several fossilised derivatives, which have a partly archaic or at least a bookish colouring (the notation of these forms is dealt with by modern orthography in a number of ways):

- MJ.1. *iw-aku* 曰(く) ‘as [the proverb *vel sim.*] says; reason, pretext, history’
- MJ.2. *negaw-aku wa* 願わくは ‘what I desire’
- MJ.3. *notamaw-aku* 曰(わ)く ‘as [the master] deigns/-ed to say’
- MJ.4. *omow-aku* 思わく / 思惑 ‘opinion, intention, expectation, speculation (< what one thinks)’
- MJ.5. *osor-aku* 恐らく ‘I am afraid that; perhaps, probably, most likely’
- MJ.6. *oi-raku* 老いらく (< *oy-uraku* ← *oyli-*) ‘old age’
- MJ.7. *tei tar-aku* 体たらく / 為体 ‘state of affairs, situation; pitiful / pathetic state, inconvenient position (< being in a situation / position)’⁴
- MJ.8. *i-unar-aku* 言うならく (earlier: 聞道 / 従道 / 説道) ‘as they (reportedly) say / tell’
- MJ.9. *kik-unar-aku* 聞くならく (earlier: 聞道 / 聞説) ‘as I (reportedly) heard’
- MJ.10. *i-er-aku* 言えらく ‘as is told’
- MJ.11. *omo-er-aku* 思えらく (earlier: 以為(らく)) ‘as I think, in my opinion; as it seems’
- MJ.12. *i-ik-er-aku* 言いけらく ‘as used to be said’
- MJ.13. *s-ube-kar-aku* 須((ら)く) ‘necessarily (< what one should do)’.

As can be seen, some of these formations have moved into the category of adverbs, possibly due to the presence of the final $-ku$, which may be associated with the adjectival suffix of the modal converb $-ku$, indeed forming, among others, adverbs (cf. Sansom 1928: 147–148).

It is interesting to study the productivity of this verbal noun in the oldest extant Japanese texts as well as the details of its disappearance.

⁴ The negative meaning of this phrase is secondary, but today almost exclusive.

2. The eighth century

In the “Man’yōshū” 萬葉集 (‘Collection of ten thousand leaves’, c. 771), the first Japanese anthology of poems, the verbal noun appears very often. Here this suffix is combined with both verbs (of any conjugation) and adjectives; in principle, it is also not limited by any word-non-final suffixes. Below are a number of the most typical examples showing this diversification (others can be found in Yokoyama 1950: 69–82, Yamada 1990: 557–566).⁵

- Mn.a. *SIPO MI₁T-E ba | IR-IN\Uru ISO₁ NO₂ | KUSA NAR\E YA?, | MI₁-raku SUKUNA-KU, | KO₁P(I₂)-Uraku no₂ OPO-ki₁.* 塩満者 | 入流磯之 | 草有哉 | 見良久少 | 戀良久乃大寸 (Man’yōshū: 7: 1394 #II.262) ‘Are you the seaweeds on the stony seashore which hide away when the tide begins to flow? [Our] meetings are few, but there is much longing.’
- Mn.b. *Imo ga mi₁-s\i | aputi no₂ pana pa | tir-in\ube₂-si, | wa ga nak-u nami₁ta | imada pli₂-n-aku ni.* 伊毛何美斯 | 阿布知乃波那波 | 知利奴倍斯 | 和何那久那美多 | 伊摩陞飛那久尔 (Man’yōshū: 5: 798 #II.58) ‘The Persian lilac flowers [*Melia azedarach*] at which my beloved looked will inevitably have fallen, while the tears which I cry have not yet dried up.’
- Mn.c. *Ki₁mi₁ wo omop-i₁ | a ga ko₁pli₂-m-aku pa | ara-tama no₂ | tat-u tuki₂-go₂to₂ ni | yo₂k(I₂)-uru pi₁ mo ar\azi.* 伎美乎於毛比 | 安我古非万久波 | 安良多麻乃 | 多都追奇其等尔 | 与久流日毛安良自 (Man’yōshū: 15: 3683 #IV.82) ‘I am thinking about you, and my longing in each coming moon – an uncut gem – of a day, in which it would recede, does not want to know [*lit. have*].’
- Mn.d. *Asipi₁ki₂ no₂⁶ | yama no₂ ko₂ n[O₂] ure no₂ | poyo₂ to₂r-itle-Ø | kazas-it(e)-uraku pa | ti-to₂se pok-u to₂ so₂.* 安之比奇能 | 夜麻能許奴礼能 | 保与等理天 | 可射之都良久波 | 知等世保久等曾 (Man’yōshū: 18: 4136 #IV.306) ‘With the fact that, having picked the mistletoe [*Viscum album*] from the tree tops in the mountains, they stick it in their hair, they are said to pray for a thousand years [of life].’
- Mn.e. “*Kusa-makura | tabi₁ ni pi₁sasi-ku | ar\am-e₂ ya” to₂ | imo ni ip-i₁s\i wo, | to₂si no₂ ple₂-n\uraku.* 久左麻久良 | 多婢尔比左之久 | 安良米也等 | 伊毛尔伊比之乎 | 等之能倍奴良久 (Man’yōshū: 15: 3719 #IV.94) ‘Although I said to my beloved: “Will I make a long journey in which the grass is a bolster?” – here the [whole] year has passed.’
- Mn.f. *YO₁ NO₂ podo₂ro₂ | WA GA ID/E-T/E-Ø K(O₂)-URE ba, | WA G[A] I₁MO-KO₁ GA | OMOP-E₁R\Is\iku si | OMO-KAGE₂ ni mi₁y(I₂)-u.* 夜之穗杼吕 | 吾出而来者 | 吾妹子之 | 念有四九四 | 面影二三湯 (Man’yōshū: 4: 754

⁵ The lettered citations (a, b, c, ...) are to show – by their diversity – how productive the suffix was at a given stage, while the numbered ones (1, 2, 3, ...) are to present the quantity of the attested forms in a particular text or its selected part (for statistical purposes). The initial letters mainly point to the quoted text, but sometimes to the language phase (Old Japanese, Modern Japanese) or a special construction with a *verbum dicendi*.

⁶ A constant epithet describing mountains; the meaning is unclear.

#I.310) ‘When at dawn after the night I left and returned [to my place], I [still] had my beloved’s sorrow in front of my eyes.’

In the fifth book of the “Man’yōshū” alone – with full phonetic notation and poems composed between the years 728 and 733 – there are as many as fifteen forms of verbal nouns derived both from verbs and adjectives (excluding the parts written in prose!). As this book comprises 114 poems altogether, statistically the ratio is one form per 7.6 poems, which is a considerable number. The complete list looks as follows (the translations attached – here and further on – are contextual):

- Mn.1. *pli₂-n-aku* 飛那久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 798 #II.58) ‘the fact that [tears] have not dried’
- Mn.2. *ar[^]-aku* 阿良久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 809 #II.66) ‘our being; the fact that we are’
- Mn.3. *kak/e₂-m-aku* 可既麻久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 813 #II.70) ‘what I want to say’
- Mn.4. *tir-aku* 知良久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 823 #II.74) ‘the falling [of the plum blossom]’
- Mn.5. *tir-am-aku* 知良麻久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 824 #II.74) ‘the fact that [the plum blossom] will fall’
- Mn.6. *n/e-n-aku* 祢奈久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 831 #II.76) ‘the fact that I am not asleep’
- Mn.7. *tir-am-aku* 知良麻久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 842 #II.78) ‘the fact that [the plum blossom] will fall’⁷
- Mn.8. *katar-aku* 加多良久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 852 #II.80) ‘what he said’
- Mn.9. *pus-er[^]-aku* 布勢良久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 886 #II.96) ‘what [I think to myself] while lying’
- Mn.10. *k(o₂)-uraku* 久良久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 894 #II.102) ‘what has come / arrived’
- Mn.11. *u-ke₁ku* 宇計久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 897 #II.116) ‘pain, bitterness, sorrow, care’
- Mn.12. *tura-ke₁ku* 都良計久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 897 #II.116) ‘heartlessness, insensitivity’
- Mn.13. *asi-ke₁ku* 安志家口 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 904 #II.118) ‘evil, misery’
- Mn.14. *yo₂-ke₁ku* 与家久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 904 #II.118) ‘good, welfare’
- Mn.15. *yo₂-ke₁ku* 余家久 (*Man’yōshū*: 5: 904 #II.120) ‘good, improvement’.

Taking the above into account one needs to affirm a full vitality of the Japanese verbal noun in the eighth century; the gradual limitation of its use must have taken place in the centuries to follow.

⁷ The whole verse is identical as in poem no. 824 (see Mn.5).

3. The end of the ninth and the first half of the tenth century

Chronologically, in the next important extant Japanese text, the “*Taketori monogatari*” 竹取物語 (‘The tale of the bamboo cutter,’ ninth/tenth cent.) the discussed form appears quite profusely, it is, however, formed of barely three verbs signifying the act of speaking (without any word-non-final suffixes) and used exclusively to introduce reported speech. The whole repertoire of the tale is covered (and this in excess) by the two following quotes:

Tk.a. *Ofotomo no Miyuki no dainagon fa, wa ga ife ni ar\i to ar\i fito mes-i-atumle-tle-Ø, notamaf-aku*: “*Tatu no kubi ni, gosikⁱ ni fikar-u tama a[n]-nar\i. Sore tor-itle-Ø tatematur-it(le)-ar\am-Ø fito ni fa, negaf-am-Ø koto wo kanafle-m-Ø*” to *notamaf-u*. *O* [pro: wo] *no ko-domo, ofosle-Ø no koto wo ukle-Ø-tamafar-itle-Ø maus-aku*: “*Ofosle-Ø no koto fa ito mo tauto-si* [pro: tafutosi]. *Tadasi, kono tama tafayasu-ku yle-Ø tor-azi wo. If-am-u ya?, tatu no kubi no tama fa ikaga tor-am-u?*” to *maus-i-af-er\i*.

大伴のみゆきの大納言は、わが家にありとある人召し集めて、のたまはく、「龍の頸に、五色にひかる玉あなり。それ取りてたてまつりたらん人には、願はんことを叶へん」とのたまふ。おのこども、仰の事を承はりて申さく、「仰の事はいとまうとし。たゞし、この玉たはやすくえ取らじを。いはむや、龍の頸の玉はいかゞ取らむ」と申あへり。(Taketori: 6. Tatsu #29) ‘*Ōtomo no Miyuki, the Grand Counsellor, was kind enough to summon everyone, whoever was in his house, and this is what he deigned to say: “There is reportedly a gem glittering with five colours on the dragon’s neck. I will fulfil [any] wish of the man who will get it and bring it [to me]” – he deigned to say. The servants heard out their master’s words and this is what they dared say: “The words of the master are extremely respectable. However, it surely is not easy to get this gem. Need this be said? How shall we get the gem from the dragon’s neck?” – they dared talk among themselves.*’

Tk.b. *Okina no if-aku*: “*Ka bakari mamor-u tokoro ni, ten no fito ni mo makle-m-u ya?*” to *if-itle-Ø, ya no ufe ni wor\i fito-bito ni if-aku*: “*Tuyu mo, mono sora ni kak-er\aba, fu to i-Ø-koros-i-tamaf-e*.” 翁のいはく、「かばかり守る所に、天の人にも負けむや」と言ひて、屋の上ををる人々にいはく、「つゆも、物空にかけらば、ふと射殺し給へ」。(Taketori: 9. Shōten #49) ‘This is what the old man said: “In such a well protected place will we yield even to the heavenly creatures?” – he said and this is what he told the people present on the roof: “If there is anything hovering in the sky – even a dew drop – would you please immediately kill [it] with a bow shot.”’

As can be observed, the form of the verbal noun is frequently accompanied at the end by the same verb which closes the quote – such a construction is also

common in later texts. “The tale of the bamboo cutter” demonstrates the suffix *-((u)r)aku* thirty-three times altogether:

- Tk.1–25. *if-aku* いはく (*Takekotori*: 2. Kikōshi #13 [4x] // 2. Kikōshi #14 // 4. Hōrai #18 // 4. Hōrai #21 // 5. Hinezumi #25 // 5. Hinezumi #27 [3x] // 5. Hinezumi #28 [2x] // 6. Tatsu #31 // 6. Tatsu #33 // 8. Mikado #42 // 8. Mikado #43 // 9. Shōten #46 // 9. Shōten #48 [2x] // 9. Shōten #49 [3x] // 9. Shōten #50 // 9. Shōten #52) ‘this is what s/he said / they said’
- Tk.26–31. *notamaf-aku* のたまはく (*Takekotori*: 4. Hōrai #18 // 4. Hōrai #19 // 6. Tatsu #29 // 7. Tsubakurame #36), *no-akaku* の給はく (*Takekotori*: 6. Tatsu #32), *tsukuru-aku* 宣はく (*Takekotori*: 6. Tatsu #34) ‘this is what he deigned to say’
- Tk.32–33. *maus-aku* 申さく (*Takekotori*: 4. Hōrai #22 // 6. Tatsu #29) ‘this is what he dares / they dared to say’.

In the “Ise monogatari” 伊勢物語 (‘Tales of Ise,’ early tenth cent.), in turn, this noun appears almost exclusively in poems (one exception only confirms this rule), which is, in any case, not surprising, when it is taken into consideration that poetry – after all, always more archaic than prose – constitutes the core of each chapter:

- Is.a. *Me-kar<le>-u to mo*, | *omofoye-n-aku ni* | *wasur-ar<le>-uru* | *toki si na-kere ba*, | *omo-kage ni tat-u*. 目かるとも | 思ほえなくに | 忘らるゝ | 時しなれば | 面影にたつ (*Ise*: 46 #36) ‘Even though we do not see each other any more, you are standing [continuously] in front of my eyes, as there is no single moment in which I could – for the lack of thoughts [about you] – forget [you].’
- Is.b. *Wa ga ife fa* | *kumo-wi-Ø no mine si* | *tika-kere ba*, | *wosif<le>-u to mo kōm-u* | *mono nar-an-aku ni*. わがいは | 雲井の峯し | 近ければ | 教ふとも来む | ものならなくに (*Ise*: 129 #79) ‘Because my house is close to the summit, among clouds, even when I say [where it is] – since you are not someone who would like to come...’
- Is.c. *O<y>/i-n-ure ba* | *sar-an-u wakar<le>-Ø no* | *ar-i to if-e ba* | *iyo-iyo mi-m-aku* | *fosi-ki kimi ka na!* 老いぬれば | さらぬ別れの | ありといへば | いや／＼見まく | ほしき君かな (*Ise*: 84 #58 [≈ *Kokin*: 17. Zō I: 900 #210]) ‘O, you [my son] – whom I desire to see more and more, as they say that, since I am old, [our] parting is unavoidable!’

These forms in the “Tales of Ise” appear to be almost as monotonous as in the “Takekotori monogatari,” but this is a somewhat different monotony. Namely, among all the fifteen nouns of the discussed type which this text attests, as many as nine appear after the negative suffix *-(a)n-* and before the dative-locative postposition *ni* (i.e. as *-(a)n-aku ni*), whereas another three – in the construction expressing willingness *-(a)m-aku fosi-*, applied to the same verb. One lexicalised

form (already modified phonetically anyway) and one introduction of a quote complete the picture:

- Is.1. *if-aku* いはく (*Ise*: 9 #14) ‘this is what he said’ (prose)
 Is.2. *oi-raku* 老いらく (*Ise*: 97 #66) ‘old age, aging’ (< *oy*/*li*-*uraku*)
 Is.3. *nar-an-aku ni* ならなくに (*Ise*: 1 #9) ‘since it is not [me]’
 Is.4. *omof-an-aku ni* 思はなくに (*Ise*: 36 #30) ‘when I did not [even] think’
 Is.5. *omofoye-n-aku ni* 思ほえなくに (*Ise*: 46 #36) ‘since I do not think / for the lack of thoughts [about you]’
 Is.6. *nar-an-aku ni* ならなくに (*Ise*: 71 #50) ‘since this is not [the road]’
 Is.7. *ar-an-aku ni* あらなくに (*Ise*: 72 #50) ‘even though they are not [at all merciless]’
 Is.8. *ak-an-aku ni* あかなくに (*Ise*: 82 #57) ‘when / even though I do not [yet] have enough’
 Is.9. *tanom-arle-n-aku ni* たのまれなくに (*Ise*: 83 #57) ‘because one cannot trust [it]’
 Is.10. *ar-an-aku ni* あらなくに (*Ise*: 96 #65) ‘even though [autumn] is not [yet] here’
 Is.11. *tokle-n-aku ni* 解けなくに (*Ise*: 111 #72) ‘because [the string of my robes] did not loosen up’
 Is.12. *nar-an-aku ni* ならなくに (*Ise*: 129 #79) ‘since you are not’
 Is.13. *mi-m-aku fosi-sa ni* 見まくほしさに (*Ise*: 65 #46) ‘out of desire to see [her]’
 Is.14. *mi-m-aku fosi-sa ni* 見まくほしさに (*Ise*: 71 #50) ‘out of desire to see [the courtier]’
 Is.15. *mi-m-aku fosi-ki* 見まくほしき (*Ise*: 84 #58) ‘[you] whom I desire to see’.

The “*Kokin (waka) shū*” 古今(和歌)集 (‘Collection of ancient and modern Japanese poems,’ 905–914), the first Japanese anthology of poetry compiled by imperial order, is in terms of the use of the verbal noun but a shadow of the former splendour of the “*Man’yōshū*.” Here and there combinations with some word-non-final suffixes or even adjectival stems do appear, they should, however, be treated as language relics:

- Kk.a. *Mi-yama ni fa | matu no yuki dani | kiyle-n-aku ni, | miyako fa nobe no | waka-na tum-ikl-er-i.* み山には | 松の雪だに | 消えなくに | 宮こはのべの | 若菜つみけり (*Kokin*: 1. Haru I: 18 #26) ‘At the time when snow on the pine trees does not [even] thaw [yet] in the beautiful mountains, the [whole] capital city collected early vegetables in the field.’
 Kk.b. *Omof-u-doti | mato-wi-∅ s(e)-er-u yo fa, | kara-nisiki, | tat-am-aku wosi-ki | mono ni zo ar-ikl-er-u.* 思ふどち | まとみせる夜は | 唐錦 | たまく惜しき | 物にぞありける (*Kokin*: 17. Zō I: 864 #202) ‘At

night, when we were sitting in the circle of close friends, it was a pity to cut [the gathering] short like the Chinese brocade.’

Kk.c. *Oi-raku no* | *kʌo-m-u to sir-isʌ-eba*, | *kado sas-itte-∅*, | “*Na-si*” to *ko-tafle-tle-∅*, | *af-azʌ-arʌ-amasʌ-i wo*. 老いらくの | 来むと知りせば | 門さして | 無しとこたへて | あはざらましを (*Kokin*: 17. Zō I: 895 #209) ‘If I had known that it is the old age coming, I would have barred the gate, I would have answered: “I’m out” – and we would not have met.’ (*oi-raku* < *oy(i)-uraku*)

Kk.d. *Mame narʌ-e do* | *nani zo fa yo-keku?* | *Kar-u kaya no* | *midarʌ-tle-∅ arʌ-e do* | *asi-keku mo na-si*. まめなれど | 何ぞはよけく | 刈る萱の | 乱れてあれど | あしけくもなし (*Kokin*: 19. Zattei: 1052 #247) ‘And even if I were faithful, what good is [in it]? And even if I lived a life as dissipated as the cut reed – there is nothing wrong [with it].’

In the initial five books of that anthology (constituting one fourth of the whole), including altogether 313 poems, one can find the suffix *-(u)raku* sixteen times, which gives the ratio of one form per 19.6 poems – almost two and a half times less than in the “*Man’yōshū*.”⁸ Notable is also the complete uniformity of the forms, both in poetry and in prose. Here is their complete list:

- Kk.1–5. *if-aku* いはく (*Kokin*: 1. Haru I: 7 #24 // 2. Haru II: 125 #48 // 3. *Natsu*: 135 #51 // 4. Aki I: 211 #65 // 4. Aki I: 222 #67) ‘this is what [some] say’ (prose)
- Kk.6. *kiyle-n-aku ni* 消えなくに (*Kokin*: 1. Haru I: 18 #26) ‘at the time when [snow] does not thaw’
- Kk.7. *mi-n-aku ni* 見なくに (*Kokin*: 2. Haru II: 74 #38) ‘because they will not see’
- Kk.8. *narʌ-an-aku ni* ならなくに (*Kokin*: 2. Haru II: 110 #45) ‘since these are not [flowers]’
- Kk.9. *ak-an-aku ni* あかなくに (*Kokin*: 2. Haru II: 122 #47) ‘because I [never] have enough’
- Kk.10. *kʌo-n-aku ni* こなくに (*Kokin*: 2. Haru II: 123 #47) ‘because he will not come’
- Kk.11. *todomar-an-aku ni* とどまらなくに (*Kokin*: 2. Haru II: 130 #49) ‘not stopping / not staying longer’
- Kk.12. *karʌe-n-aku ni* 枯れなくに (*Kokin*: 3. *Natsu*: 155 #54) ‘since [flowers] have not withered’
- Kk.13. *arʌ-an-aku ni* あらなくに (*Kokin*: 4. Aki I: 186 #61) ‘although it is not [autumn]’
- Kk.14. *momidli-∅-afle-n-aku ni* もみぢあへなくに (*Kokin*: 4. Aki I: 209 #65) ‘when [trees still] did not completely turn yellow and red’

⁸ In fact, poems in the “*Kokin shū*” are shorter, sometimes considerably, but in the statistics of the fifth book of the “*Man’yōshū*” the prose parts were omitted (as written in Classical Chinese, although probably read out in Japanese).

- Kk.15. *narʌ-an-aku ni* ならなくに (*Kokin*: 4. Aki I: 228 #68) ‘although I am not [travelling]’
 Kk.16. *fur-an-aku ni* ふらなくに (*Kokin*: 5. Aki II: 253 #75) ‘although [autumn rains] are not falling [yet]’.

In his “Tosa nikki” 土佐日記／土左日記 (‘The Tosa diary,’ ca 935) Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 uses the discussed noun rather sparsely, and in principle in the established, fossilised forms – such that definitely already dominate in the “Kokin shū.” With one exception (in a poem), he only introduces quotes with their help, whereby a puzzling element seems to be the concentration of their use in the first half of the *kisaragi* month, although the whole diary covers fifty-five days, i.e. almost two months:

- Ts.1. *Siro-tafe no | nami-di wo tofo-ku | yuk-i-kaf-itle-∅ | ware ni ni-be-ki fa | tare narʌ-an-aku ni.* しろたへの | なみちをとほく | ゆきかひて | われにゝべきは | たれならなくに (*Tosa*: Shiwasu 26 #10) ‘As there is no one who would resemble me and sailed far along the routes over the waves as white as the cloth of the mulberry fibre [*Broussonetia kazinoki*].’ (poetry)
- Ts.2. *So ga if-ikʌ-erʌ-aku.* “*Mukasi, sibasi arʌ-isʌ-i tokoro no na-[ta]guf-i⁹ ni zo a[n]-narʌ-u. Afare!*” to *if-itle-∅, yom-erʌ-u uta:* [...] そが言ひけらく、「昔、しばしありし所のなくひにぞあなる。あはれ。」といひて、詠めるうた、[...] (*Tosa*: Mutsuki 29 #44) ‘This is what she said: “We are, as I hear, at the “namesake” [= place with a name similar to that] of the place in which I once stayed for a while. O!” – she said and this is a poem she composed: [...]’
- Ts.3. *Fito-bito no if-aku.* “*Kono kafa, Asuka-gafa ni arʌ-an-e ba, futi-se sara ni kafar-azʌ-arʌ-ikʌ-erʌ-i.*” to *if-itle-∅, arʌ-u fito no yom-erʌ-u uta:* [...] 人々のいはく、「この河、飛鳥川にあらねば、淵瀬さらに変らざりけり。」といひて、ある人の詠めるうた、[...] (*Tosa*: *Kisaragi* 16 #63) ‘This is what the people said: “This river is not the Asuka river, so its depths and shallows have not changed at all” – they said, and this is a poem which a certain man composed: [...]’
- Ts.4–8. *if-aku* いはく (*Tosa*: *Kisaragi* 1 #47 // *Kisaragi* 5 #50 // *Kisaragi* 5 #53 [2x] // *Kisaragi* 9 #58) ‘this is what he said / they said’.

What is striking in the second example is the long unseen accumulation of word-non-final suffixes (*if-ikʌ-erʌ-aku* ‘this is what she said’) before the final -((u)r)aku, in any case quite isolated in this text. Did Tsurayuki not take this form from some older text, just as he probably did in the earlier poem with *ni-be-ki* ‘who would resemble’ (an archaism instead of the *ni-rube-ki* expected at that period; quote Ts.1)?

⁹ Possible are also other emendations, cf. *Tosa nikki*, Suzuki (ed.) 2002: 82–83/44.

4. The beginning of the eleventh century

The novel entitled “Genji monogatari” 源氏物語 (‘The tale of Genji,’ ca 1004–1011) authored by Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部 proves to be perfectly suitable – due to its considerable volume and the abundance of dialogues – to be a touchstone of the vitality of the verbal noun at that period. Unfortunately, as Syromjatnikov (2002: 144) warns, “В «Гэндзи» формы на *-aku* найти трудно” – very difficult indeed, one could add. In all the fifty-four chapters there appear barely three in total, and they are only set, petrified phrases:

- Gn.1. *Kakle-m-aku mo kasiko-ki o-mafe ni.* かけまくも畏きおまへに。
(*Genji*: 10. Sakaki-1 #I.363) ‘[A letter] to the one to whom one would be scared to speak.’
- Gn.2. *Kakle-m-aku fa | kasiko-kere do mo | sono kami no | aki omofoy(le)-uru | yufu-dasuki ka na.* かけまくは | かしこけれども | そのかみの | 秋思ほゆる | 木綿襷かな (*Genji*: 10. Sakaki-3 #I.382) ‘O, the ritual sash of mulberry fibre [*Broussonetia kazinoki*] – though it is scary to speak, [due to it] I [constantly] think about the past autumn!’ (poetry)
- Gn.3. “Ar\it(le)-uru *oi-raku no kokoro-gwe[n]saũ mo, yo-kar\an-u mono no yo no tatof-i to ka kik-is\i*” to *obos-i-idle-rarle-tle-Ø, wokasi-ku namu.* ありつる老いらくの心懸想も、「『よからぬ、ものの世のたとひ』とか聞きし」と、おぼし出でられて、をかしくなむ。 (*Genji*: 20. Asagao-5 #II.267)¹⁰ ‘He remembered: “I heard that such courtship in the old age which I have [just] experienced is an example of something improper among people” and [he felt] ridiculous indeed.’ (*oi-raku* < *oy(i)-uraku*).

No doubt, both *kakle-m-aku* and *oi-raku* are already fossilisations in this text, both traditionally given just in case as entries in dictionaries of pre-modern Japanese, anyway. Thus, any further search makes no sense: the verbal noun must be pronounced dead.

5. Stages of the disappearance of the verbal noun

Summing up the material presented above, the frequency of using the discussed form in the important records of the Nara and Heian periods can be tabulated as follows:¹¹

¹⁰ The punctuation marks in the edition used appear to be placed in somewhat unfortunate manner (not to say downright – misleading).

¹¹ In order to be able to compare the data from particular texts, the number of pages of the “Man’yōshū” is provided according to the same series as in the case of other texts here, i.e. the “Iwanami bunko” (*Shinkun Man’yōshū*, Sasaki (ed.) 1999–2000), and not according to the “Nihon koten bungaku taikai”, which otherwise constitutes the source of the quotes. One should remember, however, that any anthologies of poems are necessarily printed in a more “relaxed” manner than prose texts, therefore, the

Text	Number of forms A	Number of pages B	Number of forms per a hundred pages of the text (A / B) × 100
“Man’yōshū” (after 771), book 5	15	30	50.00
“Taketori monogatari” (9 th /10 th c.)	33	48	68.75
“Ise monogatari” (early 10 th c.)	15	79	18.99
“Kokin shū” (905–914), books 1–5	16	66	24.24
“Tosa nikki” (ca 935)	8	60	13.33
“Genji monogatari” (ca 1004–1011)	3	2153	0.14

The process of the disappearance of the verbal noun is clearly divided into three stages which are approximately dated as follows:

- up to the end of the eighth century: in principle an unlimited productivity and universality of use (at least in poetry; suitable extant texts in prose are lacking),
- the ninth and tenth centuries: limitations of the use – in prose for verbs of speaking, in poetry for the negative construction *-(a)n-aku ni* (one may also occasionally come across the tentative *-(a)m-aku*); the frequency of attestation diminishes gradually but steadily (Syromjatnikov 2002: 144, Vovin 2003: 265),
- from the beginning of the eleventh century onwards: only the use of lexicalised derivatives.

Beginning with the eleventh century only the *if-aku* (vel sim.) ‘this is what s/he said’ still endures as an introduction of the quote, which, however, is continuously accompanied by another verb form indicating speaking at the end of the sentence. It is attested by, e.g. the “Konjaku monogatari (shū)” 今昔物語(集) (‘Collection of tales of times now past’, early twelfth cent.: ca 1106–1120?):

Vd.a. *Sono noti, titi no yume ni, kano womna-go mimeu no yebuk^u wo ki-tle-Ø, tanagokoro wo af-asle-tle-Ø, titi ni maus-aku: “Ware wirikⁱ, Kwan’om no ofom-tasukle-Ø ni yor-itle-Ø, Tati-yama no digok^u wo idle-tle-Ø tau-riten ni um-arle-n\-u.” to zo tugle-k\er\-u.*
 其の後、父の夢に、彼の女子微妙の衣服を着て、掌を合せて、父に申く、「我れ威力・観音の御助に依て、立山の地獄を出で、忉利天に生れぬ」とぞ告げゝる。(Konjaku: Honchō XIV-7 #II.226)
 ‘Afterwards in the father’s dream that girl dressed in a delicate gown put her hands together and this is what she told her father: “Thanks to the power and help of Kannon [= Goddess of Mercy, Sanskrit: bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara] I came out of hell [in the mountains of] Tachiyama [= at present: Tateyama 立山 in the Toyama 富山 prefecture] and was reborn in the Heaven of Thirty-Three Gods [= Sanskrit: Trayas-trimśāḥ]” – she said.’

figure given in the rightmost column of the table is slightly lowered for poetry (“Man’yōshū,” “Kokin shū,” also “Ise monogatari”).

Such a resistance may possibly be explained partly by the fact that the above-mentioned pleonastic construction is quite common, one could say: natural – not only in the Altaic languages,¹² but also, among others, in Polish. For example, the Old Turkic inscription in memory of Kül Tegin of AD 732 describes the period of the Chinese bondage into which the Turks of the eastern kaganate fell in the years 630–682, and the beginning of the rebellion in such a way (Malov 1951: 21–22, 29, 37):

Vd.b. *Türk kara kamag | bodun an-ča te-miš: “El-lig bodun är-t-im. El-im amty kany? Käm-kä el-ig kazgan-ur män?” – te-r är-miš. “Kagan-lyg bodun är-t-im. Kagan-ym kany? Nä kagan-ka iš-ig küč-üg ber-ür män?” – te-r är-miš. An-ča te-p, Tabgač kagan-ka jagy bol-myš. |* (Kül Tegin, E 8–9 = large inscription 8–9) ‘All the Turkic common people thus said: “I was a people that had its own empire. Where is now my empire? For whom do I win [other] empires?” – it was saying. “I was a people that had its own kagan. Where is now my kagan? To what kagan do I give my work, my power?” – it was saying. And having thus said it became the enemy of the Chinese emperor.’

In turn, the sixth of the ten Old Polish “Gniezno sermons” (early fifteenth cent.), on St. Bartholomew, begins as follows (Taszycki 2003: 86):

Vd.c. *Dziatki miłe, nasz Chryst miły jest on swe święte apostoły temu to nauczał był, kakoćby na tem to świecie między chrześcijany bydlić mieli. A przez toć on rzekł jest był k nim, rzekąc tako: Estote prudentes, bądźcie, (dzie), tako mądry, jakoć są węzewie mądry; iż ci napirzwe wąż tę to mądrość ma, iże gdyż ji chcą zabić, tedyć więc on swą głowę kryje (i szonuje), a o ciałość on niczs nie dba.* ‘Dear children, our Christ beloved thus taught his holy apostles how to stay there in this world among Christians. And through this he said to them, thus saying: Estote prudentes, be (he says) so wise as snakes are wise; firstly the snake has this wisdom that when they want to kill it, then it hides its head (and respects it), and does not care about the body.’

The fact that no introduction of the citation of this kind appears in the “Genji monogatari” should not be surprising if one remembers unwillingness of the authoress to provide information about who speaks and to whom or about whom. Soon, however, also this *if-aku* (> *iw-aku*) recedes when the *verbum dicendi* which closes the citation begins to dominate it.

On the other hand, the aims of the nominalisation have long been served by other means: side by side with the always popular verbal form with the suffix *-(i)* (for the Classical language cf. Vovin 2003: 261–265) also nouns *mono*₂ ‘thing, object’ and *ko*₂*to*₂ ‘thing, affair, matter’ became more broadly used (in

¹² The analogy in Classical Mongolian is pointed out by Vovin (2003: 407/13).

Old Japanese they were still relatively rare in this function, cf. Syromiatnikov 1981: 125). In the second half of the Middle Japanese period (the Muromachi era) there additionally appears a nominaliser *no*, probably most popular at present.

To conclude, it is worth stressing the astonishingly powerful resistance shown by the verbal noun form – despite the one thousand and hundred years which have passed since those times when it was still even to a small extent productive, over ten formations with this suffix are still found in contemporary texts.

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All the quotes are cited exactly according to the sources listed below (each time it is a respective item from the “Iwanami bunko” yellow series, the only exception being “Man’yōshū” quoted according to the “Nihon koten bungaku taikai” series). The bibliographic data which they were provided with are structured according to the following schema – *The beginning of the title*: indicating the chapter or the book (: poem number) #(number of the volume and) page number in the edition used.

The morphological analysis of the Japanese examples is based on the model presented in the work “Japanese verbal classes...” (Majtczak 2008: 31–36) and follows the conventions outlined there; important is the fact that the angle brackets < > cover sounds which get reduced as a result of the morphological processes (sounds marked in this way are not present in the discussed forms!). The SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS in the Old Japanese quotes point to fragments recorded in terms of meaning (in logograms), not phonetics.

The statistical calculations were made on the basis of the following electronic versions of the texts: *Man’yōshū CD-ROM ban* (“Man’yōshū”), *Japanese text initiative* (“Takatori monogatari”, “Ise monogatari”, “Tosa nikki”), *Nijūichidai shū* (“Kokin waka shū”), *Genji monogatari no sekai* (“Genji monogatari”).

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