

## Lesson 23

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A postcard from Minoru to his mother.

おかあさん、お元気ですか。京都はこの三、四日ぐっと気温が下がり、すっかり秋らしくなりました。東京はいかがですか。きょうは朝から友達と奈良に遊びに行きました。駅前から鹿を見ながら奈良公園を通り、大仏殿まで歩きました。春日神社の近くでお弁当を食べてから久しぶりに新薬師寺まで行ってきました。もう十年も前にみんなでいっしょに行ったのを覚えていますか。萩の花が見事にさいっていました。一日中歩き回り、少し疲れたので帰りは新薬師寺前からバスに乗りました。今度の休みには紅葉を見に嵐山に行くつもりです。おとうさん、正おにいさん、それに国子にもよろしく伝えて下さい。では、さようなら。実

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### Comment

Minoru is a university student, but Japanese of all ages make these kind of trips. The habit of tourism within the country is an old one that has roots far back in Japanese history, when people would visit shrines and places famous for their spiritual atmosphere. For a Japanese today the habit begins with school trips to the major centres of historical and cultural importance. Kyōto and Nara are, of course, the main destinations. Kyōto is famous for its temples and for its position, surrounded on three sides by heavily wooded mountains. Nara, to the south, is somewhat older, and is similarly visited for its temples and shrines; above all, however, it is famous for the *shika* deer that roam the parks. One of the results of tourism being old and well established is that particular places are always visited at particular times of the year, and so in the popular mind place names become linked with seasons, and often with particular flowers. The temple at Hase, for instance, is famous for its tree peonies (*botan*) and Arashiyama, on the western edge of Kyōto, is prized for the show of autumn leaves and so in a sense signifies autumn. The habit of visiting certain sights at fixed periods means that you may find them well-nigh deserted at others. Note that in this short postcard to his mother Minoru uses generally polite verb forms.

### 23.1 The conjunctive form linking clauses

この三、四日ぐっと気温が下がり、すっかり秋らしくなりました。  
駅前から鹿を見ながら奈良公園を通り、大仏殿まで歩きました。

We have already met the conjunctive form; of the verb in 7.2 in the context of forming the polite *～ます* form. This conjunctive form itself can be found in numerous other contexts. It can, for example, be used simply to link two clauses. Such a link can be interpreted quite widely: '...and then', '...and so', 'and yet'.

上着をぬぎハンガーにかけた。  
I took my jacket off and hung it up.

The main difference between this kind of link and the use of the *～て* form that was introduced in 19.1, namely *上着をぬいでハンガーにかけた*, is that the conjunctive form is more likely to appear in formal written Japanese than in everyday speech.

### 23.2 'like', and '-ish'

秋らしくなりました。

*らしい* is a suffix which inflects in the manner of a descriptive verb. The basic meaning is 'seeming' or 'like' and here it follows directly after the noun: *秋らしい* 'autumnlike'. When used like this with a noun, the extended nuance may be 'typical of' or 'as befits'. Later on in the course you will meet it appended to verbs.

彼は留守らしい。  
He seems to be out.

彼は医者らしい。

It seems that he is a doctor.

日本人らしいですね。

That's very Japanese.

### 23.3 Verb in conjunctive + に + verb of motion

きょうは朝から友達と奈良に遊びに行きました。  
今度の休みには紅葉を見に嵐山に行くつもりです。

In 9.7 you were introduced to the pattern 'noun + に + 行く'. The conjunctive form can be also used in a similar construction. The second verb is invariably a verb of motion and the pattern signifies 'to move for the purpose of doing something'. Usually the subject of both verbs is the same and the first verb must represent a single action, not a state or a habit. Stative verbs, therefore, such as いる, ある, ちがう and all potential forms cannot be used in this pattern. Furthermore, those dynamic verbs that express actions that cannot be fully controlled by the self, such as 理解する, 知る and most expressions of emotion such as 笑う, 泣く or 喜ぶ, cannot be used in this pattern either, for what should be obvious reasons: you cannot 'move with the intention of doing something' that you cannot actually control. Other verbs of motion that can be used with に in this way include 帰る, もどる, 出る, 入る, 登る and 向かう.

何をしに駅へ行ったのですか。

What did you go to the station for?

指定席のきっぷを買いに行ったんです。

I went to buy a seat reservation.

山田さんは電話をかけにもどりました。

Mrs Yamada went back (home, or to her office) to make a telephone call.

Note that with verbal nouns such as 勉強する, the する can be dropped in this

pattern so that we end up with 'noun + に + 行く' again.

図書館へ勉強 (し) に行く。

To go to the library to study.

#### 23.4 Conjunctive + ながら

駅前から鹿を見ながら奈良公園を通り、大仏殿まで歩きました。

The word *ながら*, attached to the conjunctive form, connects two actions in the sense of 'while':

父はいつも朝刊を読みながら朝ごはんを食べる。

My father always has his breakfast while reading the morning papers.

Note that the actions must be two *separate* actions so that there is some kind of contrast between them. Hence a sentence like テレビを見ながら勉強した cannot be used, for instance, about an Open University student studying via the TV. The major restrictions on the use of *ながら* are as follows:

- (a) The actions in both clauses must be performed by the same person.
- (b) The actions must be either simultaneous or concurrent.

その青年は昼間は工場働きながら、夜は法律の勉強を続けた。

That youth worked in a factory during the day while studying law in the evening.

#### 23.5 ~てくる

新薬師寺まで行ってきました。

Later on in this course you will be introduced to a number of verbs which have special significance when they follow a ～て form. Among these will be ～てくる, which has more than one function. More will be said about this combination in due course. In this particular context it marks simple direction, but you will notice that where in English you would simply say ‘went to Shin-Yakushi-ji’, in Japanese you are more likely to say ‘went and came (back)’. Try and remember this because you will have a natural tendency to leave the second verb out.

This kind of construction is very common. When you leave the house in the morning, you will usually say 行ってきます as you go out the door, whereas in English you would be more likely to say ‘I’m off.’ Indeed you will find occasions when you will actually have to translate ～てくる as simply ‘go and...’ Take special note that くる in this idiomatic usage is usually written in *hiragana*. For example:

見てきます。

I’ll go and have a look (and then return).

肉や野菜は私が買ってきます。

I’ll go and buy the meat and vegetables.

## 23.6 Deverbals

帰りは新薬師寺前からバスに乗りました。

The conjunctive is also used to derive nouns from verbs, so-called deverbals; not all verbs can be transformed into nouns in this way. Do not try and invent them yourself. Some examples:

<i>verb</i>		<i>noun</i>	
休む	rest	休み	a rest, holiday
笑う	laugh	笑い	a laugh
答える	answer	答え	an answer

話す            talk

話 (はなし) a story, a talk

この電車は名古屋行きです。

This train is bound for Nagoya.

行き is sometimes pronounced 'き and sometimes いき in a context like this where it forms a compound; いき is becoming more common. When the word 行き is used in a sentence such as 電車は行きも帰りもとても混んでいました 'both the train going and coming back were very crowded', the reading いき is mandatory.

This kind of nominal transformation also occurs with the descriptive verbs 近い and 遠い that we introduced in 11.2. The ～く form can be treated as the conjunctive of the descriptive verb in this case. An example taken from the text of this lesson is 春日神社の近くでお弁当を食べてから...

図書館はこの近くです。

The library is near here (*lit.* in this vicinity).

### 23.7 How to 'sign off'

よろしく伝えて下さい。

You will be introduced to proper letter writing later on. Here Minoru has written a simple postcard, and one does not usually bother with formal set phrases on such a card. This phrase よろしく伝えて下さい, however, is a very useful and general way to finish a letter or short note like this: 'please give my best to...'

## Key to passage

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### *Romanisation*

O-kāsan, o-genki desu ka. Kyōto wa kono san yokka gutto kion ga sagari, sukkari aki rashiku narimashita. Tōkyō wa ikaga desu ka. Kyō wa asa kara tomodachi to Nara ni asobi ni ikimashita. Ekimae kara shika o minagara Nara Kōen o tōri, Daibutsuden made arukimashita. Kasuga Jinja no chikaku de o-bentō o tabete kara hisashiburi ni Shin-Yakushi-ji made itte kimashita. Mō jūnen mo mae ni minna de issho ni itta no o oboete imasu ka. Hagi no hana ga migoto ni saite imashita. Ichinichi-jū arukimawari, sukoshi tsukareta no de kaeri wa Shin-Yakushi-ji mae kara basu ni norimashita. Kondo no yasumi ni wa kōyō o mi ni Arashiyama ni iku tsumori desu. Otōsan, Tadashi o-niisan, sore ni Kuniko ni mo yoroshiku tsutaete kudasai. De wa, sayōnara. Minoru

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### *Translation*

Mother, how are you? In Kyōto the temperature has dropped like a stone these past three or four days, and it has become very autumnal. How is it in Tōkyō? Today I spent relaxing in Nara with friends. From just in front of the station we walked to the Daibutsuden through Nara Park looking at the deer. After we had eaten a boxed lunch near Kasuga Shrine we went as far as Shin-Yakushi-ji, where I haven't been for ages. Do you remember going there with everyone more than ten years ago? The *hagi* were blooming spectacularly. Walking around all day, we were a bit tired and so on the way home we boarded the bus in front of Shin-Yakushi-ji. Next holiday I plan to go to Arashiyama to see the autumn leaves. Please give my regards to father, Tadashi and Kuniko. That's enough for now. Minoru

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