

Book Review – *Philosophy of the Tourist*, by Hiroki Azumi, trans. John Person.
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Hiroki Azuma offers at the start of the recent translation of his celebrated *Philosophy of the Tourist* that he is specifically not writing about the “tourism” that exists as a part of a currently broad historiography on the topic within the humanities. The cover image—which shows two slovenly Western tourists seemingly lost in their journey, ostensibly unknowing of their destination, uncultured and passive—points to this issue, whereby Azuma questions the existing meaning of the tourist in historiography and the public sphere through an image of the way tourists are often dismissed as inferior and non-essential to understanding the modern world.

Taking tourism seriously and in a different theoretical direction, Azuma starts from first principles concerning what a tourist meant in different versions of classical, neoclassical, and modern philosophy. This analysis, published in different forms in Japanese originally from 2011 to 2017, offers a way of thinking about the governing dynamics of world systems in a new frame, and reflects upon the tourist as the “other” in different contexts. As such, rarely does the work engage with specific tourists or specific tourist sites, as *Philosophy of the Tourist* looks not to what tourists specifically do for themselves, but rather their places as active or passive agents in the networks of the information age and knowledge economy; explicitly, what they do to the world system.

Azuma defines tourism simply as the movement of a person from outside of their original land to visit or travel to another place for reasons outside of employment. For Azuma, the modern historiography on tourism places the tourist too quickly into modern ideals of globalisation, liberalism and mundialisation without understanding that those categories are tied to a primary rootedness that also involved the birth of the tourist. A scholar of Jacques Derrida from early in his academic career, Azuma starts his analysis in *Philosophy of the Tourist* from his work on Derrida and the postcard, especially applied in the second section of this work. This approach allows Azuma to offer a reassessment that is consequently about deconstructing oversimplifications related to categories of globalism. It examines tourism before it became commonplace, as it transitioned into a quotidian phenomenon, and explores the modern age of its frequent use in what Azuma understands as a flawed historiography.

This vast reconsideration is separated into two sections that comprise seven chapters, which are often written in the first person with much internal dialogue on the page that might turn away the non-theoretical reader. The first section “Philosophy of the Tourist,” looks at the tourist as a figure of Enlightenment philosophy that was at the source of how Immanuel Kant understood the possibilities of the Democratic and perpetual peace. That framing, whereby the tourist was one of the first ideals that would have been necessary for the assurance of peace across territories through free movement of bureaucrats, places the modern tourist in limbo between the global and the local.

Based on analysis of different perspectives and influences of the traveller in Rousseau, Voltaire, and Kant, readings of hate and love of the “other” through Carl Schmitt, Alexandre Kojève, and Hannah Arendt, and the possibilities of resistance and revolution through Hardt and Negri on the multitude, the first part of *Philosophy of the Tourist* is an ambitious reimagining of actants in the world system. The project as a whole, and especially the second part of the book, “Philosophy of the Family,” focuses on Dostoyevsky and the fraught ideal of the Family as a basis for building political connections with the “other”. This analysis is directly linked with literature from Kojin Karatani on the structures of modern world economies related to cultures and the ‘other’, as both Karatani and Azuma apply Kant’s understanding of the perpetual peace to think about issues of borders, nations, and travellers. The definition of tourism in these shared contexts is inherently positivistic, in that it seeks to establish a link to the perpetual peace of Kantianism, but is also anti-modern, as it explores the wake of the Hegelian and Marxist positioning of the power of the nation as linked to the rise of capital after primitive accumulations. As such, Azuma is between and within many different dialectics of modern theory, attempting to position the tourist within a considerable number of literatures that lay at the basis of philosophical inquiry since the Enlightenment.

In identifying the role of the tourist as part of the nation-state (protected by the allegiance to the original place) and the world system (protected by the need for the expansion of markets), Azuma articulates a theory of modernity that wavers between the extremes of the democratic peace to be earned supposedly by respected but relatively open borders, and the total war and anarchy that could arrive without protections of original place and nationalism. Thinking more with Schmitt and placing that German philosopher in a similar field of thinking as Arendt on issues of nationalism and insider/outsider classifications, allows Azuma to reason freshly about multifarious networks of connection related to borders, immigrants, and tourists.

In this theoretical analysis on ‘othering’ that leads into the second part of the work on the “Philosophy of the Family,” the tourist exists apart from the original nation-state of their

origin (because they have money to spend elsewhere) and are never to be integrated into the new place of their travel (as they have original allegiances to the previous space). They become, at times, nearly total capitalists in their consumption in the foreign space, as the tourist does not seek to create cultural alliances or familial bonds in the new place—neither for revolutionary aims of the multitude nor for any kind of new nationalism as Family. These are visits solely to consume and are protected by the rights to consumption granted by the world system and forms of discourse tied to modern capital, forever knotted to the safeguards of nationalism that provides rights of protection.

Philosophy of the Tourist is for a wider audience of radical readers, especially those well-versed in Kant, Schmitt, and modern neo-Marxist philosophies. As Azuma claims, tourists, even as they themselves might be passive in their desires to create links to others in new spaces, must, inherently create associations simply by existing, building cybernetic nodes of connection with both human and nonhuman objects of agency. As such, tourists unwillingly become, for Azuma in a positive takeaway provided implicitly through much of the work, the main actants in bringing down the ultimate emergence of capital linked to the world system after the End of History so categorised by Francis Fukuyama; because, in their mysterious ability to be always creating the world system, whether through “misdelivery” or actual alliance in the possible frame of the Family, the tourist can also uncannily map its undoing.

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