

## Keynote Address : Tourism as a Phenomenon of Civilization

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## Keynote Address: Tourism as a Phenomenon of Civilization

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### 1. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH ON TOURISM

"Tourism," the major theme for discussion at this symposium, has not been the subject of rigorous study in the Japanese academy. However, tourism is a very important subject from the perspective of the modern world entering the twenty-first century.

One of the major developments of the late twentieth century has been the enormous increase in the movement of people on a world-wide scale. According to one set of statistics, the number of people who traveled abroad in 1950 was a mere twenty-five million, whereas in 1990 that figure was 440 million. This is an eighteen-fold increase in a span of forty years. The World Tourism Organization estimates that nine hundred million people will travel to foreign countries in 2000. Of this number, more than 80 percent are expected to be tourists. This means that we cannot omit the subject of tourism from our discussions of the twenty-first century.

In Japan, over ten million people traveled abroad last year (1990), a number which prompted considerable comment. When foreign travel for tourist purposes was liberalized in 1964, travelers going abroad numbered only 128,000 annually. In twenty-six years there has been a remarkable eighty-three-fold increase in tourists traveling abroad from Japan. It is predicted that at the end of this century there will be close to twenty million Japanese going abroad each year. This explosive mobility phenomenon on a global scale in the latter half of the twentieth century signifies the establishment of a system of civilization throughout the world that makes travel and tourism possible. I consider civilization to be a system composed of the interaction among human beings, devices, and institutions. Travel and tourism can be made possible only with the establishment of a system of civilization consisting of clusters of various devices and institutions. In this sense, tourism is a most appropriate research topic for the comparative study of civilizations.

Yet, so far, there have been few studies dealing with tourism. Several reasons may be cited for the lack of investigation into this topic. One is that tourism is considered to be a pleasure activity, and thus, no matter how much the phenomenon is studied, it will never be considered to be the pursuit of truth. In recent years there has been more active research on pleasure, but systematic and thorough research on tourism is yet to be conducted. As tourism is saddled with an image of being commonplace, scholars have shied away from taking it up as a topic for research.

Moreover, there are problems in the way the academic field of "tourism studies" has been treated in the past. In Europe, research into tourism became active in the 1920s and 1930s, while in Japan research into this field was first taken up in the 1950s. Tourism studies became widespread on the wave of the tourism development boom within Japan, and the Japanese Society of Tourism Studies was formed in 1960. The study of tourism in Japan was centered on research for practical use for such purposes as tourism development and hotel management. The result was that tourism studies developed the image of being concerned mainly with practical research. This reality was made plainly obvious when the Japanese Society of Tourism Studies applied for recognition as a scholarly organization to the Science Council of Japan. After review it was considered to be a non-scholarly organization because many of its members were from the tourism industry. In recent years, however, tourism research has attained unprecedented levels of scholarship throughout the world. The International Academy for the Study of Tourism established in 1988 is representative of this trend. This international academy on tourism studies has limited its membership to seventy-five individuals and aims to raise the status of tourism research. It also plans to integrate the various fields embraced by tourism studies, including anthropology, geography, economics, psychology, and political science. Although tourism research in Japan may not yet have reached the levels found in other countries, joint research projects on the topic of tourism are being conducted under the auspices of the National Museum of Ethnology. I anticipate that in the near future these efforts will result in findings which will be recognized throughout the world. As this is the first international symposium on the topic of tourism to be held in Japan, I hope for results which will attract attention both here and abroad.

## 2. TOURISM AND INFORMATION

For the last thirty years or so I have pursued studies on information from various perspectives [UMESAO 1988]. My basic understanding is that human history has passed from the agricultural age through the industrial age, and is about to enter the age of information industry. I have dealt with issues regarding tourism primarily from the perspective of information industry studies. In particular, I have written several articles on issues concerning tourism in Kyoto. One of these was my 1961 essay titled "Kyoto wa kankô toshi de wa nai" (Kyoto is not a tourist city) which appeared in the travel magazine *Tabi* [UMESAO 1961]. I also presented a

lecture "Nanajû nendai no kankô Kyoto no bijon" (The vision for tourist Kyoto for the 1970s), sponsored by the Kyoto City Culture and Tourism Bureau, to leaders of Kyoto's tourism industry in 1970 [UMESAO 1970]. In these works, I criticized the tourist industry for destroying culture by tourism pollution and tourism activities and for plundering cultural sites. However, I also noted that the tourism industry is an information industry and a culture industry. In this context, I suggested the systematization of the tourist industry centered on the principle of cultural production, urged the formation of a creative tourism industry, and supported the establishment of a "Tourism Industry Research Center."

The dictionary defines tourism as "to visit and view the scenery and landscape of other countries or other regions, or to observe their civilizations or institutions." In other words, tourism means the viewing of clusters of devices and institutions which exist in a non-ordinary space for the viewer. The word tourism, kankô, is said to derive from the expression "to observe the brightness of the realm" which appears in the Chinese *I-Ching* (Book of Divination). But here we must take heed of the fact that in Chinese the word "observe"〔觀〕 means not only "to see" but also "to manifest." According to *the Book of Divination*, the ruler of a realm and his advisors must themselves travel throughout the ruler's territory and observe the way his people live. This was one way to review the ruler's method of government. If he was ruling well, the people's lives would be comfortable and full of cheerful activity. This is what would make the realm shine brightly. If, however, he was ruling badly, the people would be impoverished and unable to live in a cheerful manner. It is obvious that the realm would not shine brightly if that were the case. In this way "observing" relates to "manifesting" brightness in the realm. If we consider "observing" and "manifesting" from the perspective of information theory, "observing" means receiving information while "manifesting" means transmitting information. We tend to emphasize the "observing" aspect of tourism, but I think we can say that tourism is intrinsically a phenomenon in which there is a correlation between the receiving and transmitting of information.

### 3. TOURISM AND THE SYSTEM OF CIVILIZATION

I stated above that tourism is closely related to the system of civilization. What is particularly significant is the issue of the production of various cultural resources. Production generally means the work of interpreting a play or script and, based on this interpretation, integrating and harmonizing various expressive elements such as acting, sets, lighting, and music. We refer to those who take part in this work as producers and directors of stage dramas, films, or television programs. Production, however, is not by any means limited to the fields of stage, film, and television. It relates to a wide variety of human activities taken in the broadest sense. Particularly in the case of tourism, various methods of skillfully harmonized expression have been used to present famous sites and sights for a long time. That is to say, cultural production has always been associated with tourism.

For example, efforts have been made all over the world to present a particular location as an attractive place for tourism because of its connection with a legend or an ancient account. It is said that the production of stage dramas became established in the latter half of the nineteenth century, but in the field of tourism, the tradition of cultural production can be traced all the way back to ancient times.

Cultural production represents the software to present a phenomenon as something attractive by combining a variety of cultural elements. In other words, it is software necessary to draft a program to create something attractive. Making confident use of various clusters of devices and institutions and turning a certain location or phenomenon into something "bright" based on this software is cultural engineering. We can posit that the integration of cultural production and cultural engineering leads to the development of tourism.

It was forecast in the late 1970s that the explosive increase in the number of tourists will make tourism-related industries a key industry sector in the twenty-first century. I maintain that the key industry in the twenty-first century will be the information industry. As tourism-related industries form a segment of the information industry, their importance should increase in the future. In particular, in light of the linkage between cultural production and cultural engineering, tourism-related industries have the potential of becoming a key industry sector. In the past I have defined culture as "the emission of spiritual energy" [UMESAO 1981]. Tourism is a type of emission of spiritual energy. For this to be achieved, it requires the skillful integration of cultural production and cultural engineering. Should the tourism-related industries succeed in attaining high levels of deployment of cultural production and cultural engineering, they may become a key industry sector for Japan.

#### 4. TOURIST FACILITIES

Here I will take up the devices of tourism as related to cultural production and cultural engineering. Presentations of tourist attractions have been carried out by a variety of devices throughout history. For example, in China, famous sites have been designated on a grand scale from olden times. In my rather wide-ranging travels in China, I have come across designations of famous spots in all sorts of locations. Sword Lake (Jian chi) and the Western Lake (Xi hu) in Zhejiang province and the Du gong yan of the Chengdu Basin in Sichuan province are impressive three dimensional devices utilizing civil engineering. China has also skillfully turned settings of legends and historical accounts into devices. Influenced by this, Japan has created devices out of well known sites by such means as erecting stone monuments in locations closely connected to legends.

From the perspective of the comparative study of civilization there appears to be a great regional variation in the creation of tourist devices. Compared to the basically well developed nature of presenting tourist devices in Japan and Western Europe, it seems that tourist devices were not developed in the Indian and Islamic

regions despite the existence of considerable travel activity from ancient times. I hope this point can be addressed in discussions during this symposium.

I have analyzed Japan's system of civilization in the Edo period from various perspectives. Focusing on tourism and its systems of devices, I consider that the Edo period in Japan attained the world's highest level of overall infrastructure formation. By the mid-seventeenth century, in the first half of the Edo period, not only was the entire nation equipped with a system of roadways, but numerous way stations were also established with inns offering lodging and meals. The establishment of the "*sankinkôtai*" (alternate attendance) system spurred the development of these travel devices. And yet, transportation facilities hardly advanced at all during the Edo period. This was because the shogunate's policy forbade the use of mobile transportation facilities such as horse drawn carriages. As a result, people were forced to travel the roadways on foot. This led, paradoxically, to the popularization of travel among the general populace. On his trip from Nagasaki to Edo in the Genroku era (1688-1704), Engelbert Kämpel, a physician attached to the Dutch merchant house at Dejima, expressed surprise that there were more Japanese traveling on the roads than the population of a European city. It is recorded that at about the same time that Kämpel made his trip nearly one million Japanese people were going back and forth on the Tōkaidō annually. As the population of Japan at that time is said to have been a little less than thirty million, this means that one person in thirty traveled on the Tōkaidō. In that period the common method of travel in Europe was by horse drawn carriage. Because the use of carriages was limited to the upper classes, travel did not become popularized among the general populace.

In Europe it was the construction of railways in the nineteenth century that first allowed the popularization of travel for all classes. Until then, commoners did not travel much. The construction of railways certainly transformed the way people traveled in many countries. Since that time, advances in transportation facilities have played a significant role in the growth of tourism. The mobility of people has expanded rapidly with the emergence of automobiles on land, steam ships on water, and airplanes in the sky.

Advances made in optical instruments were another important development in tourist devices. The invention of various optical instruments in the nineteenth century led to the taking of travel photographs. The first collection of photographs published in the world in the mid-nineteenth century was a series of travel photographs including the "Egyptian series" by the Frenchman Maxime du Camp. In the 1860s the stereoscope became wildly popular in Europe and America, with several hundred thousand sets sold in one year. People in the middle class bought collections of stereoscopic photographs of landscapes from all over the world and enjoyed taking a vicarious round-the-world trip by viewing these photographs. Picture postcards have also long been essential for tourism, but advances in cameras may render them obsolete. Further developments in optical instruments have caused significant changes in the way people engage in tourism. Investigations of this type from the perspective of information studies are also an important aspect of

tourism studies.

## 5. INSTITUTIONS OF TOURISM

Turning to the institutions of tourism, the contributions of religious institutions are evident in the advances made in tourism. First, we can cite the importance of pilgrimages. As travels by the faithful to holy places, pilgrimages have been institutionalized by many religions including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Although pilgrimages were fundamentally travels affirming faith, in practice they featured considerable elements of tourism as well. I hope that there will be some investigation into the relationships between pilgrimages and tourist travels at this symposium.

The background of the popularization of tourism in Japan's Edo period lies in the significant role played by the practice of visiting and worshipping at temples and shrines. It was because this system of visiting temples and shrines for worship was recognized that, even during the shogunate's rule over feudal domains, commoners were permitted to travel outside their native villages. This made possible the distinction in practice between the official purpose (*tatema*) of travel to worship at shrines and temples and the real motive (*hon*) of taking a pleasure trip. In Europe, the countries that became Protestant during the Reformation of the sixteenth century no longer sanctioned pilgrimages in principle. Apparently, because pleasure was such an integral part of pilgrimages of that time, the Protestants determined that these pilgrimages were not purely trips to affirm faith. A similar opposition to pilgrimages was seen in Japan in the Jōdoshinshū sect, though this did not have much effect on the overall situation.

Another important aspect of the relationship between religion and tourism was the role of travel agencies. Whereas Western records indicate the establishment of the modern travel agency, such as that represented by Thomas Cook, in the mid-nineteenth century, travel agencies were well established in Japan long before that time. They were generally run by those connected to religious establishments, such as low level priests called *onshi* or *oshi*, who posted their subordinates and deputies around the country to act as tour guides. These priests contributed greatly to the institutionalization of package tours. They created a system so that travelers could make their trips with peace of mind by packaging the overall services related to travel. They arranged for setting up the route from provincial villages to a particular temple or shrine, guides along the road, reservations at inns, tour guides, worship at the temple or shrine, entertainment such as theaters or visits to the pleasure quarters, and the provision of lodgings. In addition, mountain ascetics (*shugenja*) developed package tours for people interested in mountain retreats. These examples show that in Japan religious officials had a role in institutionalizing the travel industry from before the Edo period. It will be interesting to compare this with the transitions in the travel industry in other regions at this symposium.

From the middle Edo period, guidebooks to tourist spots were published in

various forms. Illustrated guide books to places of note began to be published from the middle to late Edo period and sold very well. Examples that dealt with famous places in Japan include *Miyako Meisho Zue*, *Tôkaidô Meisho Zue*, *Ise Sangû Meisho Zue*, and *Edo Meisho Zue*. During the same period in Europe the publication of travel journals and accounts of expeditions to Asia, Africa, and the South Pacific created a great impact. Exotic paintings were also commercialized, leading to "the picturesque boom." The eighteenth century commercialization of travel images through visual media in both Japan and Europe can be thought of as parallel phenomena of civilization.

The development of service institutions related to tourism is also important. Japan had developed various service institutions early on. By the middle of the Edo period, institutions for services connected with travel and tourism were already in place, such as lodgings with meals included, baggage handlers, and inn keepers' trade associations.

Japan experienced the Industrial Revolution in terms of the harnessing of motor power in the Meiji period under the influence of the West. It has been said, however, that prior to that time, by the middle Edo period, Japan had undergone an "industrious revolution" accomplished by manpower [HAYAMI 1979]. Viewed from another perspective, this can be considered a service revolution. According to economic historians, England also underwent a service revolution prior to the Industrial Revolution. In any event, the specialization of services in various fields which occurred in the latter half of the seventeenth century contributed significantly to the development of tourism in Japan.

## 6. THE POPULARIZATION OF TOURISM

As in the old phrase, "A journey is a sad thing, a difficult thing," hardship was an inevitable accompaniment to travel. Yanagita Kunio traces the derivation of the word *tabi* [旅] (journey) to the word *tabe* [給べ] (bestow). That is to say, travelers in the past were forced to make their journeys by receiving handouts from strangers as if they were mendicants. The English word "travel" shares its derivation with "travail," meaning labor pains and toil, from the Latin word "*tripalium*," which was an instrument of torture. The French word "travail" also shares this derivation and has the same meaning of "work," "labor pains," and "toil." Words having the same root as travel are connected in some way to the suffering and pain faced by human beings.

In contrast, present-day travel is far removed from such suffering and pain. In place of the pain and danger inherent in travels of the past, enjoyment and excitement are now skillfully presented for the present day traveler. With the close of the "era of exploration and adventure" in the eighteenth to nineteenth century, the "era of tourism" was launched. During the era of exploration and adventure, explorers and adventurers encountered actual life-threatening experiences in their travels. In the era of tourism, however, tourists are presented with a pre-programmed time and

space for quasi-real experiences. Over ten million visitors go to Tokyo Disneyland in Urayasu each year. Faithfully constructed according to the American manual, it is an impressive success of cultural production and cultural engineering ingeniously aimed at encouraging the emission of spiritual energy. A large number of theme parks are presently under construction in various locations throughout Japan. This indicates to me the importance of the role to be played in the future by the production of such programmed spaces.

At the other end of the spectrum is the boom in tourism to unexplored regions. Unlike the travels of exploration fraught with danger of eras past, these are exploration tours for the general public to regions which are produced to appear unexplored. Unexplored regions used to be the exclusive purview of ethnologists, but now, in some cases, tourists have ventured deeper into unexplored regions than scholars.

My sense of curiosity has drawn me to read accounts of explorations since I was a child. Of the many accounts of explorations I read as a boy, I was most excited by two volumes by Tachibana Nankei [1903a, 1903b, 1974a, 1974b], *Saiyûki* and *Tôyûki*." A physician active in the second half of the eighteenth century, Tachibana Nankei also authored many excellent works on medicine. During the Temmei era (1780s), early in his medical practice, he undertook two major trips. On one of these, he traveled from Kyoto on the San'yô Kaidô, around Kyushu, and crossed over to Shikoku. A year later he took a trip to the east, going from Kyoto to Edo and on to places in Mutsu and Shin'etsu. Each of these trips lasted about a year, and after his return to Kyoto he authored *Saiyûki* and *Tôyûki*. In these volumes he described in great detail his observations of the geographical features, animals, plants, and cultural customs of the areas he visited. The two volumes of the travel accounts were published in 1795 (Kansei 7) and apparently became best sellers of their time. We had these two volumes in my home, and I remember avidly reading them as a child.

Tachibana Nankei was not an explorer per se. A physician by profession, he was eventually appointed physician-in-waiting to the imperial court, receiving the title Iwaminosuke. Rather than exploring regions where no man had gone before, he traveled to places anyone could go to and set down his observations in travel accounts in a way that aroused the intellectual curiosity of his readers. It may be that, spurred by reading Tachibana Nankei's travel accounts, many people in the Edo period went to tour the same locations. There were many travel diaries published in the Edo period besides those of Tachibana Nankei. Innumerable travel diaries were privately printed by ordinary townspeople as well.

Along with the popularity of travel accounts, the second half of the eighteenth century also experienced a boom in illustrations of famous places. When the *Miyako Meisho Zue*, which launched the popularization of illustrations of famous places, was published in 1780 (An'ei 8), the first print run of 4,000 copies sold out immediately, and it became a best seller going through many printings. The popularity of travel diaries and illustrations of famous places vividly represents the

trend toward the popularization of tourism in Japan. We can easily imagine how various travel accounts and illustrations of famous sights must have excited people and enticed them to travel.

The world has produced a number of eminent travelers in the past. Ivan Batouta, Marco Polo, and Xu Xiake took trips of historical importance and wrote about them in their travel accounts. For example, the great Chinese traveler Xu Xiake started his travels at age twenty-two and continued to travel throughout China for nearly thirty years until the year before his death at age fifty-five. He wrote of his observations during this time in diary form published in ten volumes as *Xu Xiake Youji* (Xu Xiake's Travelogue). It is not the typical enumeration of classical verse and prose beloved of Chinese literati. Rather, based on his own observations, its contents cover a wide range of topics from the natural, such as geography, geology, water ways, botany and zoology, to mineral products, industries, communities, and ethnic customs. No person in Japan gave his entire life to travel and compiled a magnificent travel account on such an impressive scale. Yet, in counterpoint to the lack of such a prominent traveler, a feature of Japanese civilization is that travel for the common people had become popularized in the Edo period.

In this way, the nature of tourism should be vastly divergent between lands where a mass society developed and lands where this did not take place. I hope that this will be another point for active discussion at this symposium.

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