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### **Situational Conditions of Attitude Change within Tourism Settings: Understanding the Mechanics of Peace through Tourism**

**by  
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#### **Abstract**

The peace through tourism debate has gained considerable momentum following the first international conference on peace through tourism in 1988. Empirical analysis of tourism as a means for fostering peace has been minimal compared to other areas of tourism. Contact theory stems from the field of social psychology and implies that contact between people, generally of different ethnicity, will lead to a change in, or a reaffirmation of, intercultural attitudes towards other ethnic groups. The aim of this research paper was to evaluate the relevance of conditions identified in contact theory as explaining attitudes of tourists towards cultural groups at a destination. The research implied that all are important for positive attitude change but that common goals, voluntary and intimate contact and the absence of negative personality structures are of particular importance.

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# **Situational Conditions of Attitude Change within Tourism Settings: Understanding the Mechanics of Peace through Tourism**

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## **Introduction**

The peace through tourism debate has gained considerable momentum following the first international conference on peace through tourism in 1988 (McIntosh et al, 1995). Proponents of tourism as a force for peace have argued that tourism has the potential to bridge cultural differences between people, to protect the environment, preserve cultural heritage and alleviate poverty through economic development (D'Amore, 1988a; Khamouna and Zeiger, 1995; Askjellerud, 2003, 2006; Kelly, 2006a). Opponents argue that tourism is merely a beneficiary of peace (Litvin, 1998) and has a negative impact on host communities (Archer et al, 2005).

While the debate continues, empirical research into the topic has been minimal compared to other areas of tourism research (Ap and Var, 1998). An understanding of how peace through tourism is possible requires research into how positive attitudes are created. The aim of this report is to examine the arguments relating to peace through tourism, and through an analysis of contact theory and tourism experiences, examine how positive attitude change occurs within tourism settings.

## **Background**

While there have been fleeting glimpses of a connection between tourism and peace throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Litvin, 1998), the principle of tourism as a means for fostering peace has gained considerable momentum in the past 30 years. One of the first instances of a formalised approach to fostering peace through the use of tourism occurred at the 1973 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Helsinki. The 'promotion of tourism' was seen as an important strategy for the conference aimed at developing positive relations between Eastern and Western Europe. Subsequent CSCEs in Geneva (1975) and Vienna (1986) reaffirmed this position (Bloed, 1990).

Following the initial CSCE, the international tourism fraternity also began to recognise the potential of tourism as a means for peace. The 1980 World Tourism Conference in Manila declared that 'world tourism can be a vital force for world peace' (UNWTO, 1980). The International Institute for Peace through Tourism was founded in 1986, and the first international conference directed at the subject; *Tourism a Vital Force for Peace*, took place in Vancouver in 1988 (McIntosh et al, 1995; Var and Ap, 1998). A number of global conferences on peace through tourism have followed: Montreal, 1994; Glasgow, 1999; and the most recent global summit held in Pattaya, Thailand in October 2005 (IIPT, 2006).

In addition, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has entrenched the principles of tourism for peace into their introductory statement on the importance of tourism: 'Tourism [is] a powerful force for improving international understanding and contributing to peace among all the nations of the world' (UNWTO, 2006a, Section 2, Para 4).

Along with the formalised approaches to peace through tourism, substantial literary discussion has taken place on the topic. A perusal of the literature identifies the emergence of two opposing arguments.

While mention was made about tourism's potential for promoting peace prior to 1988, it was in that year, those cataloguing its history argue, that the peace tourism movement began, at least from a literary standpoint (McIntosh et al, 1995; Khamouna and Zeiger, 1995; Litvin, 1998; Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000; Kelly, 2006a). Prior to the first global conference on peace through tourism in 1988, the conference founder, Louis D'Amore published two articles; 'Tourism: A Vital Force for Peace' and 'Tourism: The World's Peace Industry' (D'Amore, 1988a, 1988b). Both articles argued that tourism could be regarded as a force for world peace, and has the potential to bridge cultural differences between people, to protect the environment, preserve cultural heritage and alleviate poverty through economic development.

### **Proponent Views**

The majority of the pro-peace tourism literature focuses on the notion that tourism, through contact with other cultures, leads to greater understanding and affection between cultural groups (Khamouna and Zeiger, 1995; McIntosh et al, 1995; Askjellerud, 2003, 2006; Poyya Moli, 2003; Kelly, 2006a). A common and reiterated line of argument, it remains principally a utopian ideal and open to critique.

However, building on the claim by D'Amore, there is a growing trend towards recognition of tourism's potential to aid peace through economic development and poverty alleviation (UNWTO, 2002, 2005). One particular strategy that has drawn recent attention has been pro poor tourism; 'tourism that results in increased net benefits for poor people' (Pro Poor Tourism Partnership, 2005: section 1, Para 1). Other authors that have recently written on pro poor tourism include Rogerson (2006) and Bowden (2005) among others.

Using a case study approach, a number of authors also argued that tourism has not only the potential to aid peace but could indeed be the driving force towards healing the rift between divided nations (Poria, 2001; Yu & Chung, 2001; Henderson, 2002). Henderson (2002) and Yu and Chung (2001) discuss the notion in regards to a divided Korea while the latter also examines the theory with respect to Taiwan and China. Poria (2001) argues that tourism, in particular heritage tourism, could be a force for peace within the Middle East.

## **Opponent Views**

As with any balanced debate, there exists substantial argument against those advocating tourism as a contributor to peace. The most common critiques of the peace tourism theory parallel those used against tourism in general. Arguments about tourism's exploitative nature are common including its tendencies to commoditisation (Cohen, 1988; Archer, Cooper and Ruhanen, 2005), and museumisation (MacCannell, 1973). Others argue that tourism can act as a form of neo-colonialism (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; De Kadt, 1992; Hall, 1994), perpetuating preexisting cultures of dominance between developed and developing areas. Dann (1988) describes tourism as a promoter of master/servant relationships.

Within the distinctly peace tourism literature there are a number of views from those denying tourism's ability as a force for peace (Pizam, 1996; Litvin, 1998). Litvin argues that tourism does not create peace but simply benefits from it. He writes, 'tourism is clearly a beneficiary of peace, but as tourism is never successful in the absence of peace, it cannot, therefore, be a generator of peace' (1998:64).

Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000) argue neither one way nor the other, claiming that, 'while tourism has the potential to promote intercultural understanding and tolerance, it has an equally strong potential to have the opposite effects' (p. 31). But while Tomljenovic's and Faulkner's article fails to take a distinct position, its strength lies in its objective analysis of the argument as a whole. They argue that both schools of thought legitimise their argument by emphasising the form of tourism that is most congruent and then generalise for tourism as a whole, and 'therefore [it] seems likely that both points of view are correct for different types of tourism experience' (Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000:21).

All of the literature reviewed here has presented a general discussion of the arguments surrounding peace through tourism but not based primarily on empirical research, Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000) and Rogerson (2006) being the exceptions. While these discussions provide a constructive base, empirical research is needed. As Litvin stated, 'the topic is of sufficient importance that it deserves further review and warrants findings that go beyond opinion, conjecture, and anecdotal evidence' (1998: 65), a view shared by Kelly (2006b) and Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000). The following section will review the empirical research into the topic thus far.

## **Empirical Research Review**

Empirical research into tourism's ability to generate peace is extremely important to further understanding of the issue but remains reasonably limited, particularly in comparison to fields such as ecotourism and tourism marketing (Ap and Var, 1998; Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000). Despite this, the research into the topic has been enormously valuable and the following section will briefly summarise five key studies; two from Ap and Var (1990, 1998) and one each from Pizam (1996), Kelly (1998) and Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000).

In one of the earliest empirical studies into peace through tourism, Ap and Var (1990) undertook 'an exploratory survey of Australian and North American tourism professionals to examine their perceptions of tourism as a promoter of world peace' (p. 267). The study's goal, as stated in the report, was to 'identify common parameters and measures which quantify a social impact of tourism' (p. 267). The study concluded that there is a strong view amongst tourism professionals that tourism has a positive, economic impact but uncertainty concerning the relationship between tourism and world peace.

Abraham Pizam (1996) reported on four studies undertaken between 1990 and 1994 that 'evaluated the role of tourism as an agent of [attitude] change between pairs of countries that have been traditionally unfriendly or hostile to each other...' (p. 203). The experiences in focus were escorted bus tours between residents of the USA and the USSR, Israel and Egypt, and Greece and Turkey (two studies). Each of the four studies was of longitudinal design and utilised a structured questionnaire allowing a quantification of results. The cumulative findings of the studies showed only a 'relatively small number of changes in the opinions and attitudes of travellers resulting from their tourist experience ... (and) the majority of changes occurred in a negative direction' (p. 210).

Kelly (1998) reported on an investigation that was 'directed to ascertaining the extent to which One World Travel Tours (OWTT), a subsidiary of Community Aid Abroad, has been effective in encouraging the development of traveller attitudes deemed conducive to peaceful relationships between countries' (p. 4). A combination of structured surveys and open ended questionnaires was utilised on 86 people partaking in an OWTT organised trip. The research ascertained that, with some qualifications, tour experiences did have a positive influence on the attitudes of the participants.

The second study reported by Ap and Var (1998) was a cross-national study of student's perceptions on the notion of peace through tourism. Focusing on six countries - Australia, Canada, England, Korea, Turkey and the United States of America - a structured survey was utilised that included categories to establish respondent information including ethnic background and tourism experience. Results indicated a strong belief amongst respondents that tourism promotes cross cultural exchange and understanding but uncertainty as to its direct influence on world peace. Cross national difference were evident but not significant.

The most recent of the empirical studies, reported by Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000), sought to test the factors influencing attitude change in tourists. The first study examined three groups of Croatian students visiting three separate destinations, Spain, Greece and the Czech Republic. The research utilised a pre and post trip questionnaire. The second study looked at Australian students visiting Japan and a case study approach involving questionnaires, trip diaries and interview techniques was employed. The study concluded that tourism can promote intercultural understanding and tolerance, but may also have the

opposite effect. Quality of services on the trip affected attitude change and positive attitude change was most congruent to contact that was voluntary and not contrived.

As a general statement, the above studies have been important in furthering the knowledge base on peace through tourism by providing greater insight into the topic. The two studies by Ap and Var (1990, 1998) are valid as basic analysis into attitudes towards peace through tourism and Pizam (1996) offers a practical analysis of tourism's capacity to affect attitude change, albeit within already unfriendly situations and particularly isolated forms of tourism. However, it is the study by Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000), and to a lesser extent that by Kelly (1998), that provides the greatest understanding into the mechanics of generating peace through tourism.

However, it is suggested here that there is a need to understand how positive attitude change occurs, and that understanding relates to contact theory.

### **Contact theory**

Contact theory, also referred to as contact hypothesis (Amir, 1969; Pettigrew, 1998), stems from the field of social psychology and implies that contact between people, generally of different ethnicity, will lead to a change in, or a reaffirmation of, intercultural attitudes towards the other ethnic group (Allport, 1954; Amir, 1969; Cook, 1978; Pettigrew, 1986, 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2005). Contact theory can be regarded as the 'science' behind attitude change, and if it is assumed that positive attitude change is a precursor to peace (Pizam, 1996; Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000) its importance becomes obvious. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama said in his Nobel Lecture, 'When we feel love and kindness toward others, it not only makes others feel loved and cared for, but it helps us also to develop inner happiness and peace' (Gyatso, 1989:258).

The wealth of information on contact theory is so large that a comprehensive review is not within the scope of the current research. A recent meta-analysis uncovered 515 studies (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2005) and therefore this report will focus on what the literature refers to as the seminal works in the area (Hewstone and Brown, 1986; Dixon et al, 2005). Of the early studies into contact theory, the work by Allport in 1954 is arguably the most influential (Pettigrew, 1998). Allport in his book, 'The Nature of Prejudice' (1954), outlined the situational conditions whereby intergroup contact will lead to a decrease in prejudice. Allport made the general assumption that:

*Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e., by law, custom or local atmosphere), and provided it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two group. (1954:281).*

These assumptions have been supported by a number of authors writing in the field (Amir, 1969; Cook, 1978; Pettigrew, 1986, 1998).

Amir's (1969) article is of particular value due to its detailed analysis of empirical studies to support his assumptions for the contact hypothesis. Amir's assumptions are distinct in that he outlines six favourable conditions that will reduce prejudice and six unfavourable conditions that will lead to an increase in prejudice. In summary, the six favourable conditions are:

- a) equal status of parties;
- b) contact between majority group member and minority elite;
- c) social climate in favour of contact;
- d) contact of an intimate nature;
- e) contact is pleasant or rewarding; and
- f) both parties share common or superordinate goals.

The unfavourable conditions are:

- a) when contact involves competition;
- b) when contact is unpleasant and involuntary;
- c) when contact causes lowering of participants' prestige;
- d) when members of group are in a state of frustration;
- e) when groups in contact have opposing moral or ethical standards; and
- f) contact is between majority group member and minority group member of a lower status.

Cook's (1978) contribution to the field of contact theory is significant in that he has undertaken considerable research into contact theory between groups holding negative attitudes towards each other. Cook has summarised his hypothesis as such;

*Attitude change favourable to a disliked group will result from equal status contact with stereotype-disconfirming persons from that group, provided that the contact is cooperative and of such a nature as to reveal the individual characteristics of the person contacted and that it takes place in a situation characterized by social norms favoring equality and egalitarian association among the participating groups (pp 97-98).*

The literature from Pettigrew and Tropp (2005) is useful as it provides a contemporary analysis of contact theory based on analysis of studies over the past 50 years. Although heavily focused on the assumptions made by Allport in 1954, the research is current and comprehensive. Pettigrew and Tropp argue that the assumptions made by Allport are relevant to a decrease in prejudice but are not as stringently required as Allport believed. They believe greater emphasis should be given to the negative variables that may contribute towards increased prejudice such as participant anxiety and threat.

An important point emerging from the Pettigrew and Tropp study was the risk of contact research becoming an 'open-ended theory' (2005:271). It is argued that a limit ought to be applied to the number of circumstantial situational conditions seen as affecting attitude change. Pettigrew (1998) discusses this problem in some detail. He writes, 'too many factors would exclude most intergroup situations ... The problem is that writers often confuse *facilitating* and *essential* conditions' (pp 69-70). With such diversity in literature advocating a magnitude of conditions affecting attitude change, the *essential* aspect

becomes increasingly blurred. However, a perusal of the seminal literature indicates that many of the conditions are overlapping and determining a condensed but holistic set of variables affecting attitude change is possible. Therefore, for this report, the following situational conditions for positive attitude change have been adopted;

1. a perception of equal status between individuals;
2. the existence of common goals;
3. authority sanction (i.e., by law, custom or local atmosphere);
4. voluntary contact of an intimate nature; and
5. the absence of negative personality structures.

Conditions one to three are drawn predominantly from Allport (1954), but are equally advocated by Amir (1969), Cook (1978) and Pettigrew (1986, 1998). Condition four, voluntary and intimate contact, is derived not only from the assumptions made by Amir (1969) and Cook (1978), but also in recognition of the negative impact that casual contact may have on attitudes (Allport, 1954:264). The effect of personality structures stems from Amir's section on 'personality factors' (1969:335) and takes into account the importance of negative variables as implied by Pettigrew and Tropp (2005). Limiting to five situational conditions reduces the risk of the theory becoming open-ended, while the broad nature of the conditions allows the integration of other, facilitating factors (Pettigrew, 1998).

### **Research Hypothesis**

As previous studies have indicated, there exists a need for further research into the topic of peace through tourism. The mechanics of generating peace through tourism lie in developing increased intercultural exchange and understanding, and the theory behind that is contact theory. Analysing the conditions influencing attitude change within tourism settings is integral to understanding how peace through tourism is achievable. '(It) is suggested that an investigation of the role and nature of contact and how it affects tourist-host interactions may provide some insights as to how tourism reduces barriers between peoples and facilitates social or intergroup relations' (Ap, 2001:52).

The aim of the research reported here is to judge the impact of the five situational conditions listed above in the development of attitudes of tourists towards cultural groups at a visited destination. It is anticipated that in those situations where a positive attitude change occurs all situational conditions will have been met. Positive attitude change refers not only to replacement of an originally negative attitude but also includes affirmation of prior positive attitudes as a result of contact.

### **Methodology**

As noted, a desktop review of contact theory literature was utilised to determine the independent variables affecting attitude change. Justification of these variables was included in the section pertaining to contact theory. The researcher adopted a qualitative approach and used a semi-structured narrative interview technique to collect data.

A narrative style of interview technique was employed. Respondents were asked to narrate on their autobiographical experiences of travel and contact with different cultural groups from their own. Sarantakos argues that narrative interviews ‘tend to be closer to life and more natural’ (2005:279), thereby increasing the likelihood of a more valid response. The responses were subjectively coded during the interview to detect the occurrence of the five situational conditions previously outlined. The interviews were semi-structured in nature so that questions were asked to expand on the situational conditions if they were not voluntarily explained.

Convenience sampling was employed with 10 respondents, five male and five female, of ages between 21 and 57, and all previously known to the researcher. The only prerequisite for inclusion in the study was that the respondent had previously undertaken international travel. Interviews were summarised and those points pertaining to the situational conditions were transcribed. The results have been included in the following section.

## Results

Ten interviews were undertaken and transcribed (see Appendix A). Of the ten respondents, seven indicated a positive attitude change towards the out-group (the cultural group involved in the contact situation that was different from that of the respondent): *interviews 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10*. Two respondents indicated a negative attitude change: *interviews 3 and 5*, and one respondent was classified as neutral since the respondent did not claim to have either a positive or negative experience.

A summary of the occurrence of the situational conditions for the positive, negative and neutral cases has been provided in **Tables 1** and **2**. Within the tables, ‘X’ marks the incidence of the situational condition and ‘O’ marks its absence. ‘N/A’ indicates the condition was not perceived by the respondent.

**Table 1: Positive Attitude Change**

| Situational Condition          | Interview Reference No. |   |   |   |   |   |    |  |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|--|
|                                | 1                       | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 |  |
| Equal Status                   | X                       | X | X | X | O | X | O  |  |
| Common Goals                   | X                       | X | X | X | X | X | X  |  |
| Authority Sanction             | X                       | X | X | X | X | X | X  |  |
| Voluntary and intimate contact | X                       | X | X | X | O | X | X  |  |
| Personality structure          | X                       | X | X | X | X | X | X  |  |

**Table 2: Negative Attitude Change and Neutral**

| Situational Condition          | Interview Reference No. |   |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------|
|                                | 3                       | 5 | 8 (NEUTRAL) |
| Equal Status                   | O                       | O | N/A         |
| Common Goals                   | O                       | O | O           |
| Authority Sanction             | X                       | X | X           |
| Voluntary and intimate contact | O                       | O | O           |

Of the seven respondents who indicated a positive change, five acknowledged a perceived equal status level with the out-group and two indicated an unequal status level; one inferior and one superior. Both respondents that indicated negative change acknowledged a perceived status inequality. The respondent who experienced no change was not assessable. Indicators of equal status included direct reference to equal status (*interviews 1, 2, 4*), out-group being on a similar level (*interview 9*) and the out-group being like us (*interview 6*). Indicators of unequal status included direct reference to status inequality (*interview 5*), perceived emphasis on status by out-group that differed from respondent (*interviews 7, 10*) and contact situations based around social organisational roles (*interview 3*).

All of the respondents who signified a positive change acknowledged common goals between themselves and the out-group member within the contact situation. Indicators of common goals included religion (*interviews 1, 2, 4*), intercultural exchange (*interviews 7, 10*) and education (*interview 6*). The two negative change and the neutral responses acknowledged not sharing common goals with out-group members.

In all ten cases, authority sanction for contact existed.

Six out of the seven of the respondents acknowledging positive change, indicated that contact was voluntary and of an intimate nature. Indicators of intimacy included friendship potential (*interviews 1, 2, 4, 6, 9*) and conversation that transcended mere pleasantries (*interviews 1, 4, 10*). Voluntary and intimate style contact was lacking in all three instances that did not develop a positive change. Particular lack of intimate contact was noted from *interview 8* and perceived animosity from the out-group in *interview 5*. Language also acted as a noticeable barrier to intimate contact in *interview 7*.

In all seven positive change and the neutral change cases, the absence of noticeable negative personality structures existed. The respondent in *interview 10* acknowledged a level of anxiety towards the out-group but developed notions of sympathy as a result. In both negative change cases, respondents acknowledge negative personality structures. Indicators of negative personality structures were exploitation (*interview 3*) and antipathy as a result of perceived antagonism (*interview 5*).

In the cases where the respondent indicated either a negative or neutral attitude change towards the out-group as a whole, the respondent acknowledged particular contact experiences that were regarded as positive. Although the general attitude change was not positive, a number of the situational conditions were obvious in these positive experiences. The situational conditions acknowledged from all three respondents were contact of greater intimacy than normal and the sharing of common goals. The positive experience acknowledged by one respondent (*interview 8*), contained all the situational conditions of positive attitude change.

Alternatively, two of the positive change responses (*interviews 2, 4*) discussed negative change experiences. Both experiences were categorised by negative personality structures; fear of crime (*interview 2*) and corruption (*interview 4*).

## **Discussion**

The results of this study have pointed to a connection between the existence of the situational conditions and a positive attitude change within tourism settings. There is also indication that within tourism settings, the existence of certain situational conditions are more significant than others. Each of the conditions will be discussed in turn.

### *Equal Status*

The notion of equal status in contact situations stems from substantive research in the United States in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on contact between white and African Americans (Amir, 1969; Cook, 1978). Within such a segregated social system, as was in place at the time, equal status was judged of particular importance for the reduction of prejudice. Within tourism settings, in the current social climate, equal status appears to be a less essential factor in positive attitude change. There is no doubt that in many of the cases examined here, the economic status of the host community was far below that of the tourist. Examples include Cambodia, Russia and India. Kramer (in Amir, 1969:324) offers some explanation as to why this may not be a contributing factor. He suggests that equal status within and outside the contact situation need to be differentiated. It is only the relative status within the contact situation that is important and for most cases there was a perceived equal status between tourists and host community members, thereby satisfying the condition from the tourist's perspective.

There were, however, instances where the tourist had a perceived superior or inferior status, yet there was no noticeable affect on attitude change. In both instances, perceived inequality of status still related to positive attitude change. It may be inferred that within tourism settings, tourists do not place particular emphasis on status as a reason not to think positively of someone. In the 1950s, when contact theory had its origins, social status was of greater prominence. In today's interconnected society, where greater freedom to travel exists for a greater number of people, status may no longer be a central concern.

### *Common Goals*

What seems a more pertinent condition for positive attitude change is the sharing of common goals within contact situations. Occurring in all instances where positive change existed and lacking in those resulting in a negative change, common goals appears to be a central situational condition. Shared goals, that the tourist identified with themselves, such as religion and education, received the strongest positive responses. Sharing intrinsic goals seemed the most congruent with friendship development, a clear indication of positive attitude change.

Whilst sharing intrinsic goals was most valuable to positive attitude change, sharing more superficial goals appears consistent with satisfying the situational condition. For instance, in a number of cases, the common goal existing between tourist and host was intercultural exchange. Learning about the other and the other showing interest in the individual was a positive experience that aided attitude change. This situation was exemplified by one respondent who had spent time in Egypt. The respondent had developed a negative attitude towards Egyptians, due in part to the feeling of being exploited for his economic worth by the shop keepers. Despite this, there were instances when Egyptian shop keepers would participate in conversation with the goal of learning about the respondent's lifestyle, and in these instances the respondent felt a strong positive image of the Egyptian people was developed. Opportunities for intercultural exchange are abundant within tourism settings and appear to support the condition of a common goal.

### *Authority Sanction*

The notion of authority sanction was in existence in all of the examined cases and is an inferred condition of tourism in general. Interaction between host communities and tourists is generally accepted around the world. As with the condition of equal status, authority sanction is a throwback to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century when cultural segregation and apartheid were social norms and interaction between races was less acceptable. In today's world this is largely no longer the case but there are a number of notable exceptions. Some cultures, particularly those with strict religious restrictions, have certain stigma regarding interaction between males and females that would impede contact situations. Increased hostility between some Middle Eastern and Western nations may also contribute to a climate that is increasingly parochial and less open to intercultural exchange. However, it may be inferred from the instances reported here, that authority sanction is present in most tourism settings.

### *Voluntary and Intimate Contact*

The need for voluntary and intimate contact appears to be a situational condition that is of particular importance within tourism settings. Tomljenovic and Faulkner emphasised the importance of voluntary contact situations in noting that contrived contact situations 'will result in stress on both sides of the encounter, which will in turn result in a deterioration in intercultural understanding and reduced enjoyment in the trip' (2000:31). In the cases reported here, contact was voluntary in all instances except one. In that case, contact was not involuntary on the respondent's part, it was simply between the respondent and service personnel and did not lead to contact of an intimate nature. Although involuntary contact was not discussed by the respondents in this report, it is suggested in the work by Tomljenovic and Faulkner that without voluntary contact, intimacy is unlikely.

From the theoretical literature on contact theory, intimate contact is essential to positive attitude change with a number of authors citing superficial contact as having the opposite effect (Allport, 1954; Amir, 1969; Pizam, 1996). The evidence from the current research points to the same conclusion. In all instances where negative attitude change occurred,

intimate contact was lacking, while intimate contact was present in all but one of the cases resulting in positive attitude change. In that instance, direct intimacy was impeded by language barriers but the assistance of an interested third party enabled a decreased, yet existing level of intimacy. Furthermore, all three cases not resulting in positive attitude change described positive experiences where a higher intimacy level than usual was a situational condition.

Intimacy within tourism settings varied for each respondent but as a generalisation, conversations that transcended the usual pleasantries and tourist interaction were judged intimate. Discussions about the lifestyle and culture of the tourist and those of the host community developed a feeling of intimacy for the tourist with the host community.

### *Personality Structures*

The discussion of personality structures is difficult in that the influences on personality structures are both broad and varied. In the context of this report, negative personality structures were considered generally as feelings of anxiety, fear, frustration and anger. Factors affecting personality structures within this study included strong negative stereotypes held by the tourist (Allport, 1954) and factors affecting the trip itself such as quality of services (Tomljenovic & Faulkner, 2000). Amir's discussion of 'personality factors' (1969:335) is useful in understanding the concept.

Whilst many respondents acknowledged a positive change in attitude from a negative pre-trip position, it is argued here that no pre-trip attitudes were so extremely prejudiced as to constitute a negative personality structure. The two negative attitude change cases both described negative personality structures resulting from tourism; animosity (*interview 5*) and exploitation (*interview 3*). It is fair to assume that these personality structures had a negative impact on the respondents' attitudes. One respondent (*interview 4*) spoke of an incident of corruption that resulted in a negative attitude towards the countries regime but did not transfer to the people.

Counteracting the occurrence of tourism-generated negative personality structures is one of the major challenges facing tourism as a force for positive attitude change. Tourism has the potential to not only encourage negative elements within society such as crime and violence (Mathieson and Wall, 1982) but to generate negative attitudes amongst the host community in general (Doxey, 1975). It is widely held that responsible tourism planning will help diminish the occurrence of these issues (Pigram, 1992; Hunter, 1997) but they remain an influencing factor.

The effect of negative service quality was not observed in the cases studied in this report but the emphasis placed on the issue by Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000) suggests it is important within certain forms of tourism, particularly in what is regarded as mass tourism.

### **Attitude Change and Peace through Tourism**

From the studies undertaken in this current research, it seems possible to appreciate the dynamics behind positive attitude change within tourism settings. The sharing of common goals, voluntary and intimate contact and the absence of negative personality structures are integral in the development of positive attitudes for tourists. It must be stressed that this positive attitude change is amongst tourists and has not been evaluated for the other parties involved in the contact situation; the host community. Poorly developed tourism has a distinct ability to deliver positive outcomes to tourists at the expense of the host community and there is obvious scope for further investigation of positive attitude change for the host community as a result of tourism.

The other two situational conditions, equal status and authority sanction, appear to be of less significance since they are in general existence across a large majority of tourism settings. This is not to say that positive attitude change is possible without them, only that in today's society and within tourism settings, they are largely implied.

Having recognised the general situational conditions for positive attitude change, the next step is to apply these findings in context to fostering peace through tourism. The greatest contribution of tourism towards peace is from the opportunities for contact that tourism provides and this point should not be undervalued. Amir clarifies the importance of this point: 'If no opportunities for contact exist, or if these opportunities are minimal, no contact occurs, and obviously no change of attitude as a result of contact can be expected' (1969:322). If international arrivals are used as an indicator of opportunities for contact, tourism provided at least 808 million opportunities for contact in 2005 (UNWTO, 2006b). Considering that each contact situation contains at least two people, tourism provides the opportunity for the positive change of more than 1.6 million individual attitudes towards other cultures. This is not even taking into account the other positive impacts that D'Amore (1988a) argues that tourism can have - poverty alleviation and environmental protection – tourism's ability to generate good will amongst people is enormous.

Positive attitude change is an important factor but it cannot be taken in isolation if tourism is to be regarded as a genuine force for peace. It must work in conjunction with other strategies to alleviate the recognised negative impacts associated with tourism. Tourism might generate all the goodwill in the world but it will be of little value in developing peace if poverty, pollution and social domination remain rampant. Nevertheless, understanding how positive attitude change occurs is integral in developing experiences that assist tourism to become a force for peace.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

It is recognized that the research method used for this report is subject to a number of limitations. Most obviously, the sampling technique used diminishes the ability to infer the findings for the larger population. While this decreased representativeness has the potential to provide a biased respondent set, it was not the aim to represent the findings for a particular group. Contact theory is regarded as a universally adaptable paradigm

(Allport, 1954; Amir, 1969) and the research aim was to test the major conditions of the theory within tourism settings.

The second limitation is derived from the type of analysis used. Subjective analysis is open to particular amounts of researcher bias. It is argued here, however, that the narrative style interview combined with the relationship between respondent and researcher contributed to honesty in responses and a decreased likelihood of misunderstanding.

The majority of previous studies into peace through tourism have employed a quantitative approach (Ap & Var, 1990, 1998; Pizam, 1996; Kelly, 1998; Ap, 2001), while Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000) used a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods. However, themes such as attitude change and peace may be seen as subjective in nature, and Dixon, Durrheim and Tredoux (2005:701), in their analysis of contact theory, argue that with quantitative methods, '... participants' own concepts of contact are quietly subsumed (and) ... the meanings that participants themselves attribute to their encounters with others are translated into a set of general categories'. For instance, notions of voluntariness, intimacy and status are all subjective, and without qualitative research it is difficult to understand if these conditions have been met. Occurrence and relevance are best judged by the respondent explaining in their own way.

## **Conclusion**

The discussion of peace through tourism has never been more important than in the current global climate. With increased tensions involving major civilisations, peace is fast becoming a luxury item on the shopping lists of the world's population. However, international tourist numbers have sustained continual growth and are currently at record levels indicating that opportunities for contact are increasing. The challenge for tourism is to make those contacts count.

This report has focused on the mechanics behind attitude change contained in contact theory. It has long been argued that a number of situational conditions are required for positive attitude change; namely the perception of equal status between individuals, the existence of common goals, authority sanction, voluntary contact of an intimate nature, and the absence of negative personality structures. This limited study supports the notion that within tourism settings the five conditions are central to positive attitude change and their fulfilment is the first tangible step to fostering peace.

Whilst this research may have contributed to understanding of contact theory within tourism settings, it is only the first step with particular scope for further research existing. This research is in itself only a pilot study and suggests that a more extensive analysis is worthwhile. Having focused on attitude change of tourists, an analysis of attitude change on host populations is a logical complement to this line of research.

The aim of this research has been to increase understanding of how positive attitude change occurs but the ultimate goal is developing tourism that has the ability to foster

peace. By understanding the principles behind attitude change, it may be possible to put those principles into practice. In the words of one of the leading peace tourism theorists; 'It is likely that the ability of tourism to contribute to a more peaceful world by encouraging appropriate contact experiences may be enhanced by recognition of its potential to do so and by the purposeful implementation of actions directed to that end' (Kelly, 1998).

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## **Appendix: Interview Summaries**

### **Interview 1**

#### ***Trip Details:***

In January 2006, respondent visited India for a period of four weeks. Travelled with a group of six, mixed gender adults. Travel by trains, planes and automobile. Accommodation was mid range hotels. No strict itinerary. Key sights visited included Calcutta, Bodhgaya and northern India. Last travelled to destination in 2003.

#### ***Interview Summary:***

Contact with host community occurred mostly on the street, in shops and hotels, in taxis and trains and around tourist sites. In northern India, contact with Tibetan monks occurred in monasteries in addition to the other places.

Conversation generally revolved around people's lifestyles, state of development in addition to general topics. Similar questions were posed by the host community to the respondent. Conversation resulted in greater cultural understanding of one another.

People were generally keen to engage in conversation, if only to practice their English. Longest conversation lasted approximately 30 minutes.

People were generally of a lower economic status, but socially, status difference was not noticeable. People seemed contented and happy.

Trip ran relatively smoothly.

#### ***Tibetans:***

A common bond existed through common religion. An unstated understanding as being on the same path. With greater contact, respondent could perceive friendship developing. People were keen to converse, keen to make sure tourists were enjoying their trip. Respondent held a positive and sympathetic attitude towards the Tibetan people; they were not complaining despite the adverse economic and political conditions and were just getting on with life. Had previously met Tibetan people three years earlier in Nepal. Viewed Tibetans in a more positive light as a result of contact.

#### ***Indians:***

Had a positive impression of the Indian people, found them intelligent and interesting. More people are educated than on previous trips and therefore seem to hold a similar social status. Indians appeared happier towards tourists than three years prior, had a better understanding of tourists, and paid less attention to tourists. Respondent felt more comfortable with increased anonymity. Attitudes towards both groups, Tibetans and Indians could be generalised for the whole population.

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### **Interview 2**

#### ***Trip Details:***

Visited Singapore in October, 2006 for one week with boyfriend. Attended Buddhist course during the day and had open itinerary in the evening. Stayed in hotel in red light district. Trip ran smoothly.

***Interview Summary:***

Large amount of contact with Singaporeans at Buddhist course. Conversations revolved around Buddhist course, about Singapore and the tourist sites. People very willing to converse, natural feel to conversation. Average conversation about 15 minutes in length. Respondent found Singaporean people very friendly and giving. Very open and made respondent feel at home. With opportunity could envisage friendship developing. Felt Singaporeans held an equal social status although having a very traditional lifestyle. Respondent had visited Singapore when she was five years old. Prior to trip respondent held the view that Singaporeans were similar to Malaysians (respondent of part Malaysian ethnicity); open and friendly and family orientated. Particular bond developed with a local school teacher, Gina, acted as local guide. Contact opportunity limited by time constraints. Respondent held a positive attitude prior to trip that was reinforced by the trip. Felt now that she would be more willing to go back to Singapore in a tourist role than other countries such as Switzerland or New Zealand owing to familiarity of place and friendliness of host community. Attitudes could be generalised for Singaporeans as a whole. Respondent expressed feeling uncomfortable around hotel, within 'red light' district.

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**Interview 3*****Trip Details:***

Travelled to Egypt in February 1999 for 8 weeks. Travelled alone by trains, buses and boats with no itinerary staying in budget accommodation.

***Interview Summary:***

Contacts occurred mostly in shops and markets. Egyptians are very keen to get tourists to come in and sit down for a tea and a chat but generally, differing motivations exist. Large amount of shop keepers use contact as a means to sell their goods. These contact situations left a negative impression. Respondent felt as they were only there to be exploited. Occasionally, host community engaged in conversation for its own merit. Motivations were often to practice English and for general cultural exchange. Conversation involved discussion about each lifestyles, home country and views on Egypt. These situations, average contact lasting about 30 minutes. An equal status level was maintained, individuals spoke as friends with a keen interest on both sides. However, there was a noticeable cultural divide that could impede enduring friendship. Prior to the trip, the respondent had a neutral attitude as very little knowledge of Egypt existed. In those situations when contact motivation of host was genuine cultural exchange, a strong positive image was developed. People are easy going, open and making the most out of their situation, all positive attributes. Overall, could not generalise positive attitude for host population. Respondent acknowledged possibility that his opinion may have been swayed by negative image of Muslim culture portrayed in recent media.

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## **Interview 4**

### ***Trip Details:***

Visited Russia in January 2004 for one month to participate in a number of Buddhist courses. Spent nine days on the trans-Siberian railway before visiting, St. Petersburg, Moscow and northern Russia near the Finnish border.

### ***Interview Summary:***

Contact was predominantly with Russian Buddhists attending the course during break times or on the train. Ample opportunity for contact existed. Discussion involved predominantly Buddhist topics, how the Buddhist centres operated, the lifestyles in Russia and in Australia, Russian history. To a lesser extent general discussion of current affairs, language proved a minor barrier in certain situations. Respondent found Russian people to be friendly, helpful, well educated and the Buddhists were very outgoing. Friendships were developed. Respondent felt an equal social status existed between himself and the Russian people he spoke with, but almost inferior on an education status. Growing up in cold war Europe (Switzerland), respondent believed Russians to be a 'cold' people, not interested in cultural exchange. Russians were portrayed as being abrupt, not open or friendly. Respondent found the opposite to be true. Contact changed opinions massively. Respondent claimed he fell in love with Russia. "a place I would definitely go back to, because of the people". Respondent experienced problems with the government system, having a problem with his visa: overstaying in an area too long. A bribe had to be paid. Developed negative attitude towards the regime, very corrupt officialdom.

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## **Interview 5**

### ***Trip Details:***

Visited Bali, Indonesia in June 2004 for 12 days with girlfriend. Stayed in mid-range hotels.

### ***Interview Summary:***

Respondent held a mostly negative attitude towards Balinese people. Had the impression that host community were only interested in his potential as an economic source. Contact was generally in shops and hotels. Conversations were not of an intimate nature. Respondent felt antagonism from 'local young guys'. Felt they were belittling him. Respondent felt both a higher social and economic status than host community. Prior to trip, held the view that the Balinese people would be difficult to converse with but that they would be nice. Believed that the host community appreciated its role as a tourist destination and contact with community would be tourism based. Respondent held generally no interest in cultural exchange with Balinese people. Motivation for travel was to go surfing. Would go back to Bali, but not for the people. However, respondent discussed one contact situation that was positive. Met a couple of local guys in a surf shop, discussed surfing. Respondent was invited to go surfing with them on a boat the following day. Felt that these guys were genuine, cool, normal people. Put it down to the fact that they were a bit older – 30ish.

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## **Interview 6**

### ***Trip Details:***

Participated in a university exchange to Indiana, USA for six month in August, 2005. Stayed on campus in a shared room with an American room mate.

### ***Interview Summary:***

Respondent found American people to be extremely friendly. They were very hospitable, more so than she felt Australians were, taking her to their home for thanks-giving. Generally, they were mostly like the respondent. Respondent had above average opportunities for contact and contact was of an intimate nature. Generally, people were eager to converse but also to listen. Conversation comprised all manner of things but in particular there was an obvious interest in learning about Australia. Americans held a positive image of Australians. Found Americans to be, in general, an outspoken people and self opinionated but not in a negative context. Remained polite and well mannered in discussions. Respondent expressed enjoyment in being part of a university environment that everyone wants to be a part of, where everyone is focused on study, having similar goals, being part of a community. Developed a number of true friendships and has been subsequently visited in Australia and plans are in place possibly to travel again to visit soon. Prior to trip, respondent thought American people would be loud, arrogant and annoying. Visiting the north west of America, had the preconception that people would be "Rednecks". Travel confirmed some of the pre-trip presumptions to a degree but found the reality was not as extreme as expected. Respondent saw other positive qualities that she had not expected, felt lucky to have had the room mate that she did. Respondent felt many Americans realised the stereotypes that were held about them and endeavoured to prove them wrong.

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## **Interview 7**

### ***Trip Details:***

Visited Poland in December 2005 for two weeks with wife on his honeymoon. Stayed with friends and relatives of wife who is of Polish descent (first generation Australian).

### ***Interview Summary:***

Respondent found polish people to be welcoming, friendly and traditional. Conversation was predominantly through a third person (wife) as respondent only spoke basic Polish. Conversation topics included Polish culture and customs. Polish people were interested in Australia, respondent's lifestyle, work and hobbies. Polish were eager to converse and made a concerted effort. Language barrier contributed to the difficulty of the situation and as a result, conversations were less intimate in nature. The Polish people the respondent had contact with were of a comparable economic level to him. Most had a higher education level, felt that Polish contributed social standing to education but not that they acted superior to himself. Prior to trip, respondent had a basic understanding of Polish culture through his wife and her immediate family in Australia, otherwise had minimal knowledge about Poland. Although experiencing a noticeable culture shock, his expectations were confirmed. As a result of the trip, a positive attitude to the Polish

people in general was formed. Respondent gained respect for the people based on their difficult recent history, gained an appreciation of their lifestyle and a general sympathy for their hardship. Respondent felt that despite the language barrier, he had gained a greater appreciation of the people and their different way of life. Had developed a greater appreciation of his own circumstances. As a further outcome of his trip, respondent gained a better appreciation of diversity in general. Meeting people from different cultures helps to break down the stereotypes that are held, that one shouldn't jump to conclusions based on face value.

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## **Interview 8**

### ***Trip Details:***

Visited America in 2003 for 3 weeks with family and staying mid mid/upper range hotels. Sites visited included, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Hawaii. Trip was not a tour but contained a structured itinerary.

### ***Interview Summary:***

Respondent found Americans, on the whole, to be over the top but generally held a positive opinion. Contact was minimal, only within tourist settings and not at a personal level. Respondent only noted one free evening in Las Vegas but experienced no particular contact situations. While the overall attitude towards Americans was positive respondent clarified that the opinion was based on the absence of negative experiences not the existence of positive ones. Considering the settings (hotels, restaurants) this is expected. No friendship potential existed. Pre-trip, the respondent held general media installed stereotypes; loud, arrogant, in your face. As a result of the travel, no real attitude change occurred, but preconceptions were confirmed. Respondent would like to return to America but under different travel style, with more independence and with friends rather than family. Notable exceptions must be made for the time spent in Hawaii. Respondent found Hawaiians to be really friendly, laid back and very happy. Pre-trip, respondent held to internal differentiation between mainland American people and those on the Hawaiian islands, and this changed as a result of this trip. Respondent returned to Hawaii in 2004 with a friend for a week. This time she stayed in a house with Hawaiian people. Contact situations were extensive and conversations were in detail about lifestyles, Australia and respondents university study in particular. Respondent believes travel definitely changed her attitude towards Hawaiians in a positive manner. Expressed desire to return to Hawaii.

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## **Interview 9**

### ***Trip Details:***

Visited Scotland numerous times in 2002 to see Australian friends who lived there.

### ***Interview Summary:***

Respondent felt Scottish people were funny, great, full on, abrupt and upfront; All positive characteristics. Some traits she believed could be offensive without getting to know the people better whereby they become endearing. Found people in the north

particularly interesting. Contact was made through friends of friends, who in turn became friends themselves. Conversations entailed all manner of subjects including history, culture, music and the everyday including many references to the weather. People were on a similar level having similar interests. Scottish people were eager to converse and had a keen interest in Australia. Conversations could be classified as intimate in nature. Contact was made in people's homes, shops and bars in particular. Pre-trip, respondent thought Scots would be quite slobbish, indoorsy types, similar to the English and Irish. As a result of meeting people found them less slobbish than expected and quite adventurous. They were distinct from the English and quite patriotic.

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## **Interview 10**

### ***Trip Details:***

Visited Cambodia in March 2001 for one month with a friend. Accommodation was in budget, backpacker style guest houses. No itinerary.

### ***Interview Summary:***

Respondent felt Cambodian people were friendly, open and genuine but also troubled. Acknowledged the terrible recent history and that the 'value' of life was a lot less there. Contact occurred in shops, hotels, tourist sites and on the street. Respondent had a lot of free time and was eager to converse, a sentiment equally held by the Cambodian people. Conversations were about the Cambodian lifestyle, their culture, government system and general day to day stuff. Cambodians expressed an interest in respondent's culture and lifestyle. A number of in depth conversations were had including a lengthy situation where both parties spent considerable time trying to learn the others language. Personal tour guides provided excellent insight into Cambodian history and culture. Respondent acknowledged a perceived difference in general status level and an obvious difference in economic status. Respondent had the impression that the Cambodians viewed him as superior as he had money and was able to travel, believed Cambodians placed considerable emphasis on wealth as a status symbol. While the respondent had a number of intimate style conversations, he acknowledged a general wariness of Cambodian people. A lot of violent crimes take place, although seemingly none towards tourists, which are published in a fortnightly English newspaper in a classifieds format. Felt a deep sympathy for their violent past and understood why violence is entrenched in current lifestyle. With time could have developed friendship with some Cambodians. Prior to trip knew nothing about Cambodia, arrived after 5 weeks in Thailand and thought Cambodians would be similar to the Thais. Acknowledged noticeable difference between two groups, Cambodians seemed more interested to learn about respondent's culture and more genuine. Travel definitely developed a positive attitude towards Cambodians in respondent, gained a real understanding of the hardships they had been through and felt sympathy towards them. Was impressed by their lust for life and keenness to exchange information.