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The Role of the Tour Guide in Transferring Cultural Understanding

by

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1. Introduction

Given the ubiquity of the tour guide in most areas of industrialised tourism, it is somewhat surprising that it has received so little attention from the academic tourism community. In the relatively few pieces written on tour guides it is again surprising that little has been written on the role of the tour guide in transferring cultural understanding. This lack of academic activity is of long standing. In 1985, *Annals of Tourism Research* devoted a special issue to the role of tour guides, under the guest editorship of Erik Cohen, but, this did not result in an explosion of knowledge on the topic. As Jafar Jafari (1985, p.1) explained in the editor's page of the issue: 'this Special Issue of *Tourist Guides* faced an added problem: many promises of contributions did not materialise. This perhaps has to do with the theme itself, a subject that has received little attention in tourism research.' Little has changed since 1985, as a search of the literature shows. For example, the recently published textbook *Tourism: Bridges Across Continents* (Pearce *et al.*, 1998) gives a comprehensive description and analysis of all facets of the international tourism industry but does not devote one sentence to the role of the tour guide in industrialised tourism.

The tour guide function is likely to influence the level of satisfaction tourists obtain from their tour experiences. Lopez's (1980) work, Conversely, suggests that an ineffective guide may have adverse effects on tourists' enjoyment of their holiday experience.

In this paper the limited literature on the role of the tour guide in transferring cultural understanding is examined, followed by a discussion of the training and education considered necessary to effectively undertake this task. The results of a survey of National Tourist Offices on the international situation with regard to training and accreditation are presented. The paper continues with an examination of the role that tour guides working for day-tour companies in Sydney play in the transmission of understanding of Australian culture, and an evaluation of their effectiveness in this role.

As Samovar and Porter (1995) point out 'the multi-faceted nature of culture and communication makes it difficult to arrive at a single definition for them'. However, to simplify the discussion, *culture* in this context is defined as a historically derived *design for living*, shared by a discrete group of people. The people, in this instance, are of course, the Australian people, comprising the indigenous Aboriginal people and the descendants of the immigrants to the country, firstly from the British Isles and then, after World War II, from Northern, Eastern and Southern Europe and, more recently, from South East and East Asia. Their culture comprises the mainstream Australian culture and the many ethnic and social sub-cultures that make up the social mosaic of Australia.

A 'design for living' includes such diverse activities as culinary habits, architecture, political system, social structure, popular and elite entertainment and recreational activities, working habits and structures of employment, and the natural and built environment in which this activity operates. As Greenwood remarked (1982:27), Australians are continually in the process of 'making themselves up', or, in other words, the Australian culture, like all cultures, evolves over time to construct a unique 'Australian way of life'. In this paper it is argued that an important, if not the principal, role of the industrial tour guide, is to be the interpreter and disseminator of information about this way of life to international tourists.

2. The role of the tour guide in the transference of cultural understanding

In the above mentioned special issue of *Annals of Tourism Research*, Cohen's (1985) seminal article on the tourist guide showed that the contemporary tourist guide comes from two antecedents: the *pathfinder* and the *mentor*.

In the contemporary context of tourism the pathfinder role is still extant in that the tour's itinerary 'shows the path' to tourists wanting to discover more about the place they are visiting, or as Cohen (1985, p.7) puts it, 'through a socially defined territory to which they have no access'.

Pearce (1984, p.136) supports this proposition when he points out 'that in cross-cultural settings...many tourists still need a guide since such visitors frequently break social rules and intrude upon others privacy'. In addition, the pathfinder role gives the tourist a sense of security in a strange environment, a precursor to a successful tourist destination region, as Leiper (1996) has noted.

While the original role of the mentor was one of spiritual and intellectual guidance, the contemporary mentoring role can be considered to be one of transmission of information and the interpretation of that information. The one constant in the evolution of sightseeing, as Adler (1989) observes, is that of discourse between the tourist, the mentor and eminent people encountered during the tour. As tourism has become a mass phenomenon, opportunities for discourse with eminent people have lessened somewhat for the great majority of tourists. The discourse of discovery of information now is mainly between the tour guide and the tourist and, if done well, results in a transference of cultural understanding between guide and tourist.

Cohen (1985) proposes that the mentoring role of the contemporary tour guide is made up of four components.

1. *Selection:* The itinerary of a tour is firstly chosen by the management of the tour company with varying degrees of input from the tour guide. In terms of the transferring of cultural understanding, these items of interest would include more than just examples of the natural and built environment of interest to tourists, but also examples of housing, gardens, recreation activities, entertainment, shops and markets, subcultural groups and many other 'designs for living'. As Cohen points out, this selection process also involves what is *not* shown. The tour company and tour guide can therefore give a misleading view of a tourist destination's culture by selecting only those examples that they think their customers wish to see and experience, or that they consider to be an acceptable face of the destination.

2. *Information:* Cohen (1985) states that the dissemination of correct and precise information is considered by many to be the kernel of the guide's role. This is supported by two of the very few published training texts for guides - Barry (1991) and Mancini (1990). It is interesting to note that Mancini (1990, p.63) states: 'tourists are hungry to learn things, it's one of the main reasons they travel'. Cohen's proposition is reflected in the meagre literature on tour guides, including Nettekoven (1979, p.142), who states that ... 'professional tour guides are ... the most important informants about touristic as well as social conditions of the destination', and Gurung *et al.* (1996), who claim that 'a well managed guiding program can allow for the integration of local knowledge about cultures'. Pond (1993), the author of a fine text on tour guides also states that information dissemination is integral to the guide's effectiveness. Again the selection of information is seen to be crucial to the transferring of cultural understanding. For example, an Australian tour guide may or may not choose to inform tourists that, until the late 1960s, Australia had an immigration policy that discriminated against non-Europeans, or that Australia has an Aboriginal population that many claim were unfairly displaced, facts that have had a large effect on Australia's contemporary culture.

3. *Interpretation:* It is Cohen's (1985, p. 17) view, shared by this author, that 'interpretation and not the mere dissemination of information, is the distinguishing communicative function of the trained tourist guide'. The many who have made similar observations include Moscardo (1996, p. 382), who stated that 'interpretation is trying to produce mindful visitors; visitors who are active, questioning and capable of reassessing the way they view the world'. In other words interpretation of information can give tourists new insights and understandings of the culture of the area they visit. This makes the tour guide a culture broker between the cultures of the host and guest or, in other words, a person who is familiar with and knowledgeable on all aspects of the host culture and who has some understanding of the culture of the guest (Nettekoven, 1979, p. 142; de Kadt, 1979, p. 57; Holloway, 1981; Hughes, 1991, p. 166).

To use the contemporary argot of the media, tour guides are the 'spin-doctors' of tourism as it is through their interpretation of facts that tourists form impressions and understandings of the host culture. For example, there are many different ways that a tour guide can interpret the fact that, while there are many examples of Aboriginal rock art to be found around Sydney Harbour and the inlet of Pittwater in Sydney's northern region, very few Australians of Aboriginal ancestry live in these areas. This fact can be interpreted by referring to the history of European-Aboriginal contact and the resulting death from infectious diseases of the local Aboriginal population. This can then be described as a sad accident or as genocide, depending on the perspective of the guide and the impression the guide wishes to make on that aspect of Australian culture.

4. *Fabrication*: Fabrication is outright lying as opposed to interpretation. Cohen refers to guides who present fake antiques as if they were genuine, or who take tourists to a location and falsely claim it is the place promised in the tour brochure. Ko (1996) reports a contemporary Australian example of fabrication, with guides taking Korean tourists in Sydney to certain souvenir and duty free shops, where they are encouraged to spend by being told these shops offer excellent value. The guide receives high commissions from the shopkeepers, unknown to the tourists. It is practices such as these that result in calls for the regulation of tour guides in many tourist destinations.

From this description of the tour guide's role it can be seen that the role of bridging between two cultures is of some importance. As Hughes (1991, p.166) points out, 'inappropriate commentary content and communication style have been shown to ruin an entire holiday'. Inappropriate can mean a recitation of a list of names and dates that remind tourists of a school history lesson, rather than transferring understanding of the host culture.

All of this is based on the premise that tourists are motivated to travel for, amongst other reasons, a better understanding of the culture of the place visited. Supporting this premise is Quiroga's (1990) study of tourists experiencing guided coach tours of Europe, which reported that 45% of respondents gave 'to broaden their cultural horizons' as their motivation to travel. The next highest response was 20% for the motive 'to increase opportunities for social interaction'. Additionally, 35% of her sample of tourists mentioned cultural enrichment as a specific reason for satisfaction at trip's end. The premise is also supported by Ryan and Glendon's (1998) study of the motivations of British holidaymakers. The 'pull' motivations of 'discover new places and things' and 'increase my knowledge' scored second and sixth respectively out of thirteen motivation variables. Both these variables are concerned with the transfer of cultural understanding as defined here. Ryan and Glendon's (1998, p176) study also reports that the motivation: 'gain a feeling of belonging' has a relatively low score before going on holiday, but this increases significantly in value after returning home. It can be argued that this occurs because respondents now have a better understanding of the culture of the destination region, and thus feel a greater sense of identity with that region.

The Australian experience is no different. Brokensha and Guldberg (1992) quote an Australian Tourism Commission study of potential visitors from the United States that shows that 40% of potential tourists to Australia seek as their main travel benefit 'cultural immersion', with another 8% seeking 'sophisticated cultural immersion'.

3. Training and licensing of tour guides

It can be concluded from this discussion that, to be effective in their role as a cultural bridge, tour guides must be expert in the culture of the destination and have a good understanding of the culture of the tourist. This training requirement can vary from one that is tightly regulated, for example in Cyprus, where the Cyprus tourism organisation controls tour guides, to Australia, where anyone can set up as a tour guide without any qualifications.

Andronicou (1979, p. 251) states that in Cyprus only Cypriot nationals can become a tour guide, they must be 'of decent character, have an appropriate educational background, and have graduated from the school for guides, which teaches Cyprus history, archaeology, art and culture. He states that the culture broking role of the tour guide is seen as vitally important, which is why their professional requirements are so high.

This is in contrast to the situation in Australia, which has no licensing requirement for guides. The industry sector association, the Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia (ITOA), has an accreditation scheme for guides, but according to Zoe Cook of ITOA (pers.comm. 29/9/98), this accreditation is not mandatory. As this is a fairly new scheme, guides currently working in the tourism industry are given accreditation based solely on their on-the-job experience as a tour guide (of at least one year). People wishing to enter the industry as tour guides and be accredited by ITOA must complete a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) college certificate of 242 hours of contact time, or one semester full-time. Subjects studied include cultural relations, customer service, safety and security, preparing commentary, tour co-ordination, indigenous tourism, presenting commentary and arrival/departure formalities.

It would seem appropriate that, to enable the transference of cultural understanding described here, the curriculum for tour guide education should also include:

- studies of the history and culture of guest countries;
- national and local history of the region;
- social history of the region;
- social structure of the region;
- physical and human geography of the region.

Naturally, aspects of these studies would be included in the commentary. However, a good knowledge of these topics is necessary to enable tour guides to answer questions from tourists about the host culture, and thereby enhance the touristic experience.

To put the subject of training and licensing into a worldwide context every National Tourism Office (NTO) in Sydney, Australia was asked to complete a questionnaire and return it by fax (see Appendix 1). Eleven of the replies were from European countries, 19 from the Asia/Pacific region, two from Africa, and six from the Australian states. The response rate was nearly 80 %, a high figure for a survey of this type. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1. Tour Guide Licensing, Training and Importance

| <i>Area</i> | <i>Licensed Guides</i> | <i>Training</i> | <i>Professional association accreditation</i> | <i>Importance of competent tour guides*</i> |
|-------------------|------------------------|--|---|---|
| Europe | 91% of countries | Some university 100% college on-the-job | 91% of countries | 1.1 |
| Asia/ Pacific | 85% | 70% college 30% on-the-job | 50% | 1 |
| Africa | 50% | 50% college 50% on-the-job | 50% | 1 |
| Australian States | ACT only | College available but not mandatory 100% on-the-job | Available, but not mandatory | 1 |

* 1= very important 5 = not at all

The only exception to licensing and professional association accreditation in Europe was Poland, which is surprising since it has only recently changed from a centrally planned economy, in which it would be assumed the tourism industry was heavily regulated. It is also significant

that, of all the respondents, only Poland gave the importance of the tour guide a rating of less than 1. A number of the largest tourist destination countries in the world, such as France and Britain, have licensing systems for guides and their education takes place at either university or a college, as well as on-the-job training.

As Australia is a federation, the regulation of tour guides is a matter that falls under the jurisdiction of the six state and two territory governments, whose policies can vary. Of these eight governments, only one licenses guides – the Australian Capital Territory government. Most of the states now have courses for tour guides offered by Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges, while the remainder rely on on-the-job training. The ITOA accreditation scheme, discussed above, is open to all Australian guides, but is not mandatory.

In the Asia/Pacific region it is noticeable that only New Zealand and its former colony the Cook Islands have opted for the deregulated, on the job training approach. Another former colony, Western Samoa licenses guides but does not provide formal training. Countries with large inbound tourism flows, such as Thailand, People's Republic of China, the Republic of China, India, Singapore and Korea, all have formal training and licensing of guides. The sole North American respondent, the Alberta Tourism Partnership, advised that their guides are licensed and college trained.

A significant aspect of this survey is that the great majority of tourist destination regions both license and provide appropriate formal training for tour guides. The major exceptions to this are the South Pacific countries of Australia, New Zealand and its former colonies, and Fiji. This confirms the early work of Smith (1961), who conducted a similar survey with similar findings. Her conclusions were that licensing or accreditation were normal procedures and required demonstration of knowledge of those things in which tourists were interested. More recently she reported that the United States of America, which was one of the few countries in 1961 not to train and license guides, still did not in 1996, but Canada had started a program of training and licensing in 1994 (Smith, pers. comm. 29/5/96).

It is difficult to understand why, of all countries with large numbers of inbound tourists, only the USA, Australia and New Zealand do not license tour guides. ITOA is lobbying Australian governments to legislate for an Australia-wide compulsory accreditation scheme (Cook, pers. comm. 29/9/98) under its management. Judging by the actions taken by countries experiencing large tourist inflows, and the demonstrated importance of tour guides in providing a satisfying touristic experience, this seems a worthwhile endeavour.

4. Tourist satisfaction with tour guides in Sydney

Several companies conduct guided half and full-day tours of Sydney and its environs, that include Sydney's popular attractions, such as Manly or Bondi beaches, Sydney Harbour and its surroundings, zoos featuring Australian fauna and areas where the 'rich and famous' live. The tours generally include a commentary given by the coach driver. The driver therefore doubles as the guide and generally has had no formal training in tour guiding and is not accredited. Similar sorts of tours are offered on many, if not most, major tourist destinations.

Experiencing these tours is one of the means by which visitors to Sydney might gain an understanding of the culture of the Australian people in general, and the residents of Sydney in particular. In order to ascertain the level of satisfaction tourists derived from these tours, a survey was undertaken.

Customers of these tours were interviewed on completion of their tour in January and February 1997. Subjects were randomly selected as they disembarked from the tour coaches and interviewed using the interviewer-completed questionnaire shown in Appendix 2. Customers of

all tour operators were interviewed, as the product is virtually the same. Over 60 individual tours were surveyed. Demographic details of the respondents are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample characteristics

| | | <i>Sample</i> | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| <i>Variable</i> | | <i>No.</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Age | <18 | 3 | 1 |
| | 18-28 | 73 | 22 |
| | 29-39 | 57 | 18 |
| | 40-49 | 51 | 16 |
| | 50-59 | 74 | 23 |
| | 60+ | 65 | 20 |
| Gender | Male | 153 | 48 |
| | Female | 170 | 52 |
| Residence | UK | 88 | 27 |
| | Other Europe | 44 | 14 |
| | USA/Canada | 72 | 22 |
| | Australia | 53 | 16 |
| | New Zealand | 9 | 3 |
| | Asia | 51 | 16 |
| | Other | 5 | 2 |
| Education | High school or < | 76 | 24 |
| | TAFE/junior college | 39 | 12 |
| | Univ. degree - undergrad. | 174 | 54 |
| | - post grad. | 30 | 10 |
| Income (\$A) | \$0-24,000 | 49 | 15 |
| | \$25,000-50,000 | 101 | 31 |
| | \$51,000-76,000 | 94 | 29 |
| | \$77,000 + | 70 | 21 |

As can be seen in Table 2, respondents were a representative sample of visitors to Australia and Sydney, with two exceptions. New Zealand is Australia's largest source of international tourists, making up 16% of all visitors in 1997. The reasons for the low proportion of New Zealanders in the sample may be that, as many have friends and relatives living in Sydney or are frequent visitors to the city, they have no need of the guided tour. The second exception is the low proportion of Asians, who comprise 49% of visitors to Australia (NE Asia 33%, SE Asia 16%), in the sample. As the survey was restricted to coach tours offering commentary in English, only English speaking Asians would utilise these tours. Japanese, Korean and Chinese tourists would use tours with guides speaking these languages. Reisinger and Waryszak (1994) studied whether Australian tour guides met the perceived service quality of tourists visiting from Japan and concluded that as the guides were all Japanese nationals, cross cultural understanding was somewhat inhibited.

The other somewhat surprising finding is the high level of education amongst respondents. Some 65% of respondents have a university degree or better. This figure may be a result of respondents artificially boosting their educational status to the interviewers, undergraduate university students, or it may be factual. For example, half of the Australian residents claimed to have a university degree, whereas in the Australian population as a whole, only 15% of Australians have a degree. A similar figure was given for UK residents and the figure for USA/Canada was 75% of respondents had a degree. These figures suggest that their level of

education might make respondents more aware of the world and curious about its workings, and therefore interested in discovering more about the culture of the host city.

The median income of Australians in February 1997 was around \$30,000. The income figures suggest that a majority of respondents enjoy a high standard of living, which is understandable, as travel to Australia is relatively expensive.

5. Influence of guides on tour satisfaction

Respondents were firstly asked to rate the quality of the tour they had just completed on a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 was excellent and 1 was poor. The numerical scale was then recoded as 1-5, 'less than satisfactory', 6-8 'satisfactory' and 9-10 'more than satisfactory'. The results, shown in Table 3, suggest that, in the main, respondents were satisfied with the quality of their tour.

Table 3. Rating of tour

| | % of respondents |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| More than satisfactory (score 9-10) | 38 |
| Satisfactory (score 6-8) | 51 |
| Less than Satisfactory (score 1-5) | 11 |
| Mean score (SD) | 7.9(1.9) |

Respondents were then asked how they rated the quality of the tour and the influence of the guide on the experience. The results, shown in Table 4, illustrate the importance of the guide to the coach tour experience. The negative scores for the tour guide are much less than the negative scores for the tour as a whole, which suggests that ITOA has a persuasive case for training and accreditation.

Table 4. Effect of Tour Guide on Tour Experience

| | % of respondents |
|---------------|------------------|
| Very Positive | 41 |
| Positive | 38 |
| No effect | 18 |
| Negative | 2 |
| Very negative | 1 |

The consistent theme that emerged from the open question on how the guide influenced the tour was, as the literature suggests, the quality of the information imparted.

Positive comments included the following.

- Knowledge of area, explained routes taken, detailed information, good explanations, unique information - 41% of respondents.
- Humorous, good fun, good rapport with passengers, good personality, good speaker, clearly spoken – 33% of respondents.
- Interesting commentary – 15% of respondents.
- Easy to understand, well structured commentary - 5% of respondents.

Negative comments included: Not much commentary, not enthusiastic, not personable (3% of respondents); and: Couldn't understand accent, difficult to understand (3%). These figures suggest that a knowledgeable, well-structured commentary delivered in an interesting manner is an essential ingredient of coach tourist satisfaction. What is also worthy of comment is that the respondents, by definition would not have much knowledge of any of the places to which they were taken and therefore could not make a realistic judgement of the quality of the information given. However, the fact that the Australian resident respondents rated the cultural aspects of the information as high as or higher than the international tourists, suggests that the information was appropriate.

6. Information given by the guide

Respondents were asked various questions about the quality of the information given by their guide on matters of Australian culture. Respondents were asked to rate this aspect of their tour on a Likert scale, from 1 being 'exceeded expectations' to 5 'fell below expectations'. The results are shown in Table 5, which displays the percentage of respondents for each item of the Likert scale.

Table 5. Ratings of cultural information given by guide

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>Exceeded expectation</i> | <i>Above satisfactory</i> | <i>Satisfactory (3)</i> | <i>Less than satisfactory</i> | <i>Below expectation</i> | <i>Mean rating</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| | <i>s (1)</i> | <i>(2)</i> | | <i>(4)</i> | <i>s (5)</i> | | |
| | % | % | % | % | % | | |
| Special sites | 49 | 34 | 23 | 1 | 2 | 1.9 | 0.9 |
| Geography | 32 | 32 | 29 | 4 | 3 | 2.1 | 1.0 |
| History | 42 | 28 | 23 | 5 | 2 | 2.0 | 1.0 |
| Current events | 20 | 30 | 35 | 10 | 5 | 2.5 | 1.1 |
| Landmarks | 45 | 29 | 23 | 2 | 1 | 1.8 | 1.0 |
| Recreation | 14 | 28 | 43 | 10 | 4 | 2.6 | 1.0 |
| Shopping | 14 | 29 | 38 | 15 | 4 | 2.7 | 1.0 |

Superficially, this data suggests that the respondents are more than happy with the cultural interpretive information given by the guide. However, as Ryan (1995) observed and Weiler and Crabtree (1998) confirmed, customer satisfaction surveys of tourists are notoriously favourable. This probably occurs because respondents are loath to state they have not enjoyed a service that they have freely chosen. However, some of the comments made by respondents may be useful.

There is a clear difference between the scores given to information about special sites, history and landmarks on the one hand and shopping and recreation on the other. It can be hypothesised that the information about landmarks and sites added to the tourists' understanding of the Australian culture, whereas information about shopping and recreation opportunities was seen as urging visitors to spend on unwanted goods and services to enrich the tour company.

It is also worth noting that 'information on current events' received a relatively poor response across all educational groups. A description and analysis of current events give tourists insights into a country's political, economic and social systems. All are important aspects of its culture. Interestingly, the ratings given by Australian residents is almost the same as the sample as a whole, which suggests that those with a presumed greater knowledge of Australian current events also found this element of the tour lacking. These data might suggest that tourists utilising coach tours do want to discover more of a region's culture.

When asked to rate how easy the information presented was to understand, respondents answered as shown in Table 6. Some 17% of respondents had some difficulty with understanding the information disseminated by the guide. This suggests that cultural misunderstandings would be commonplace.

Table 6. Ease of Understanding Guide

| | <i>% of respondents</i> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Easy to understand | 72 |
| 2 | 11 |
| 3. Neutral | 9 |
| 4 | 5 |
| 5. Difficult to understand | 3 |

7. The pathfinder role

As discussed above, tour guides also have a pathfinder role. It can be assumed that one reason why tourists spend time and money on guided tours is to become familiar with the topography of their destination, and to achieve a 'sense of belonging'. Table 7 shows how successful the tour operators were in this aspect of the guide's role.

Table 7. Rating of pathfinder role

| | <i>Answer to request for directions</i> | <i>Confident of ability to find way</i> |
|---|---|---|
| | <i>% of respondents</i> | |
| 1. Answered extremely well/confident | 38 | 25 |
| 2 | 24 | 30 |
| 3 | 37 | 37 |
| 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 5. Answered not at all well/not confident | 0 | 4 |
| Mean | 2.0 | 2.3 |
| SD | 0.88 | 1.02 |

Again, these figures are superficially quite flattering. However, given the propensity of tourists to be overly positive in customer satisfaction surveys, 45% of respondents giving a neutral or worse rating suggests that this aspect of the guides' role needs further attention.

8. Conclusions

In this paper an attempt has been made to show that an important aspect of the tour guide's role is to facilitate cultural understanding of the host culture by visitors. If, as it is often said, that tourism is a path way to world peace, then that can only come about by visitors to a destination region gaining some sort of understanding of the host's 'design for living' and how that design differs from their own. More prosaically, it has also been shown that gaining an understanding of the host's culture is an important determinant of visitor satisfaction. For many tourists, the most important medium for this transference of cultural understanding is the tour guide. Though the data presented in this paper shows a high degree of satisfaction with tours of Sydney which are operated, in the main, for overseas tourists, there is still cause for concern

Those elements of the commentary that reflect the host's culture tended to rate lower than other aspects of the tour. This suggests that the tours may need some improvement in this aspect of their operations

It appears somewhat strange that virtually all elements of the tourism industry in Australia are regulated, with the exception of tour guides. Airline pilots, coach drivers, taxi drivers, cruise boat and yacht charters are all licensed. Restaurants, hotels, cafes and bars are regulated, as are tour wholesalers and travel agents. One of the few elements of industrialised tourism that is not, the tour guide, may have the greatest impact of all on the satisfaction of an international tourist to Australia. Education and training in cultural transference may well be the answer.

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Appendix 1. National Tourist Office Questionnaire

I am pleased to assist your research into tour guides around the world. The data for the area of are shown below.

1. Are tour guides regulated by governmental authorities YES/NO

How are tour guides trained: University/College/On the job

3. Is there a professional association of tour guides who accredit guides YES/NO

How important do you think competent tour guides are to the touristic experience in your country.

| | | | | |
|------|---|----------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very | | Somewhat | | Not at all |

Many thanks

Appendix 2. Tour Guide Satisfaction Survey

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

Survey: The Role of the Tour Guide

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is excellent and 1 is poor, how would you rate the quality of this tour? _____

2. Did the tour guide have an influence on your experience?
(please select one number on the scale)

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------------|
| Extremely Positively | | No Effect | | Very Negatively |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. How did the guide influence your experience?

4. Did the *information provided* by the tour guide meet your *expectations* in relation to the following?

| | Exceeded Expectations | | Satisfactory | | Fell Below Expectations |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Australian customs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| History | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Geography | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e.g. pattern of city development) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Current events | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Recreation facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Special sites (eg. The Rocks) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Landmarks (eg. The Opera House) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. Was the information presented easy to understand?

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------|---|----------------------------|
| Easy to understand | | Neutral | | Difficult to understand |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. How well did the tour guide satisfy your request for directions?

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---|----------------|---|--------|
| Extremely well | | Satisfactorily | | Poorly |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7. How confident are you in your ability to explore the city since completing the tour?

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---------|---|-------------------------|
| Extremely confident | | | Neutral | | Not at all confident |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |

8. How effective were the tour guide's attempts to encourage social interaction with your fellow passengers?

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---------|---|------------------|
| Extremely effective | | Neutral | | Not effective |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. Do you see this aspect as being an important part of the tour experience?

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---------|---|-----------------------|
| Extremely important | | Neutral | | Not very important |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. What is your state / country of residence? _____

11. What age group are you in?

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Under 18 | 18-28 | 29-39 | 40-49 | 50-60 | 61+ |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|

12. Are you male or female? M F

13. What level of education have you achieved?

| | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|--------|
| High School | TAFE qual. (or equivalent) | University | Post Graduate Degree | Degree |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|--------|

Other? _____

16. What is your approximate level of annual household income?

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 0 - \$24,000 | 4. \$77,000 - \$102,000 |
| 2. \$25,000 - \$50,000 | 5. \$102,000+ |
| 3. \$51,000 - \$76,000 | |

Many thanks for your help in making Australian tourism better able to meet the expectations of its visitors.