

1990

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Recommended Citation

Towner, John (1990) "Tourism and Cultural Exchange: An Historical Perspective," *Visions in Leisure and Business*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/visions/vol9/iss1/4>

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TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines aspects of cultural exchange between Britain and Europe (particularly France, Italy and Greece) from the 16th to the 19th century. This relationship was partly associated with British tourists. The nature of the cultural exchange reveals the changing attitudes of the tourists and their images of the host countries; from admiration of contemporary cultures to a feeling of superiority; from veneration of past cultural achievements to sentimental views of existing societies. Themes also include the social networks between hosts and guests and cultural transfer from Britain to Europe aided by tourism. These considerations lead to wide political and economic relationships and thus the role of tourism in promoting understanding between Britain and parts of Europe. A perspective is provided on tourism's contribution in these areas today.

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INTRODUCTION

All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean.

A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority.

These well-known quotes from Dr. Johnson emphasise, even after the passage of 200 years, the intellectual and artistic debt that has long been felt by the British for the countries bordering the Mediterranean sea, particularly Italy and Greece. The ideals of the Greek and Roman classical worlds and their reinterpretation during the Renaissance were considered to form the foundations upon which British culture stood. Modes of thought and styles of art and architecture have sought to echo the past achievements of southern Europe from the sixteenth century to

the present day, while the fashionable and sophisticated societies of Italy and later France were long imitated by the British social elite. Britain, which had for centuries lain on the periphery of Europe's cultural development was gradually drawn into the mainstream of European thought and taste.(11, 18, 22) In time, innovations in these fields shifted northwards and, by the early nineteenth century, Britain was contributing her own distinctive forms of feeling and expression in the form of the Romantic movement.(26)

This transmission of culture from Europe to Britain was greatly facilitated by the growth in travel to the continent by wealthy Britons, often for periods of several years. From a small beginning in Elizabeth I's reign, the numbers travelling to France and Italy in particular, increased substantially. By the eighteenth century, this movement was clearly recognised as forming the "Grand Tour"; an institution for the landed classes of Britain. By the end of that century, the growing wealth of Britain enabled the middle classes also to travel abroad in greater numbers. Furthermore, the range of countries visited had widened to include Greece and the Near East.

The aim of this paper is to examine the attitudes of the British tourists towards Italy, France and Greece; the countries whose cultural impact on Britain may be considered to have been greatest. These were tourists who were abroad for considerable lengths of time and they were not insulated from the local host society by an all-embracing tourist industry. Did their attitudes towards these countries change over time, both to the past achievements of those societies and to the contemporary cultures and people that they encountered? In other words, is there any historical evidence to support the theme that tourism provides a valuable channel for communication and understanding between different cultures and values?

The answer is, of course, extremely complex, relying as it does on particular types of historical data which will be outlined below. Attitudes to countries varied through time and between individuals and any generalisations should be treated with great caution. Perhaps the most useful theme which emerges from this historical survey is that any efforts made to enhance tourism's role in promoting understanding between peoples will need to overcome problems in host-guest relationships which stretch back many hundreds of years. Negative aspects, so often seen as a result of modern mass tourism were, in historical terms, also associated with small numbers of elite tourists. Thus, Smith's typology of tourists which relates the numbers of tourists to their adaptation to local norms and suggests that small quantities of elite tourists fully adapt to local customs, requires modification when viewed in a longer time scale.(55) Attitudes relate to a whole complex of dynamic political, economic, social and cultural relationships between host and guest countries. Xenophobia is not confined to the modern mass-packaged tourist.

THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND THEIR NATURE

In assessing the attitudes of British tourists to countries in

Europe it is necessary to outline the historical material upon which judgements must be based.

The main body of primary data is the diaries, journals and letters of the tourists which record their travels. Other sources include guidebooks and references to travel in magazines and other literary productions.(61, 64) As the diaries and journals are the main source of information they have to be treated with particular caution. Whether in original manuscript or published form, these accounts of travels can give the impression of immediacy, conveying the reactions of the tourist during his journey. These sources, however, suffer from a number of limitations which can distort our understanding. In fact, a number of writings on tourism history have been based on an uncritical acceptance of the primary data, perpetuating a stereotyped picture of what tourism was like.(25, 32, 42, 65) The problems of the data must be appreciated if only to highlight the tentative nature of any enquiry of this type.

The diaries and journals were often edited and re-written after a tour, either as a manuscript or for publication. This may have been done to create a more entertaining account for either friends or the general public. Tobias Smollett's Travels Through France and Italy (56) appeared in 1766 and achieved a certain notoriety at the time chiefly because of the highly critical comments made about the French and Italians. Smollett's work gives the impression of being a series of letters written when he was on his tour but they were actually composed after his return to England.(5) Journals often omitted embarrassing personal mishaps particularly if they were written by a tourist's tutor.(61) The image conveyed in many accounts of a scholarly tourist somewhat detached from the full range of social encounters with the local population can be very deceptive. James Boswell's candid revelations of his activities on the Grand Tour provide a rare glimpse of what was perhaps the reality of many tours.(9)

Plagiarism is another difficulty affecting both manuscript and published journals. Often, whole parts of guidebooks with their endless details of monuments, buildings, paintings etc., were copied into travel accounts, thereby creating a false image of worthy diligence. This is particularly noticeable for seventeenth and early eighteenth century accounts, when tourism was supposed to be a serious activity. John Evelyn (touring from 1643 to 1647) incorporated material from other works which were, themselves, based partly on earlier writings.(61) Travel and travel books became so popular that wholly fictitious tour accounts were published, usually written by literary hacks in London.(1, 5)

Further problems relating to these sources include their inherent bias towards the older and more serious traveller; someone who would take the trouble to write down his impressions during a tour. How typical of the average tourist were these writers? Also, most works reflected the literary conventions of the age. Batten claims that "established literary convention often dictates the subjects that authors discuss far more surely than does personal taste".(5) Thus, although we can trace the changing tastes and attitudes in society as reflected in tour writing, these conventions may often hide significant details. Travel accounts of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century often omit personal impressions and attitudes. The fashion then was for a more

"objective" presentation with the writer remaining detached from the scene. From the later eighteenth century, however, the Romantic and Picturesque movements called for greater stress on personal opinion and the impression conveyed by scenes encountered by the traveller. Were these later tourists more sensitive to local colour and contemporary ways of life than their earlier counterparts or were they too merely following literary convention?

The final major difficulty in using these forms of data to try and understand past attitudes and relationships in tourism is the apparent absence of significant material generated by the host societies. There exists an abundance of data (however flawed) detailing the views of British tourists about the countries through which they travelled but very little is known about how their hosts reacted to them. What did local people think of the wealthy British tourists? What impact was made on the local society? At most there is anecdotal evidence used as cautionary propaganda against the excesses of young travellers abroad by commentators back in Britain.(67) For example, "Golden asses" was a term used by Italians to describe the young wealthy milords who would pay high prices for worthless art fakes (52) but there is no large body of material produced by the host communities that can be examined in detail.

This fundamental imbalance in the historical data means that an appreciation of the use of British tourism in Europe in the past and its role in promoting greater understanding between peoples must remain inadequate. Any conclusions are highly conjectural and cannot include what local societies thought about the British. This is not to say that the exercise is impossible but rather to emphasise the limitations about what can be deduced from tourism in the past.

A SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONDITIONS IN BRITAIN AND EUROPE FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The views that British tourists expressed about the countries through which they travelled have to be placed within the context of the broader economic and social conditions prevailing at the time. The following is a general outline of some major trends.

When Elizabethan travellers journeyed to Europe in the sixteenth century, economic power was centred in the countries of the south, including Italy. Gradually, however, the balance of economic power shifted northwards; to France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and increasingly to Britain by the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.(30, 52) This meant that for British tourists the relationship with their host communities changed from being the representatives of a relatively poor and backward nation to being visitors from the leading economic power. As Jenkyns suggests, by the nineteenth century, the gap between northern and southern Europe was probably greater in economic terms than at any time before or since. The northern industrial revolution meant that "as the Englishman journeyed south he seemed to travel backwards in time".(30) Thus, while the Elizabethan traveller Fynes Moryson could gaze in wonder at the wealth and power of Venice, "a great concourse of all nations" (44), John Ruskin, in the Victorian era,

saw Italy as "a wreck, and a viciously neglected one".(30)

A further result of the shift in economic power northwards was the widening social class of the British tourists. Although generally drawn from the wealthier sections of society, the landed classes of aristocracy and gentry, increased national prosperity meant that some of the middle classes could afford to travel abroad from the later eighteenth century.(63) The length of time they could afford to spend on a tour and the types of society they could mix with were obviously different from those of their more leisured countrymen.

There were also important cultural changes in British and Europe from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The ruling classes of sixteenth century Britain were increasingly influenced by the ideals of classical antiquity and the Italian and French Renaissance. Skills in statecraft and the accomplishments of a courtier and gentleman could only be obtained by travel to France and Italy.(18, 22, 34, 36, 46) A familiarity with classical and Renaissance culture reinforced the elite's power and social standing in a country experiencing great social mobility.(11, 27, 59) Britain's own cultural heritage, the medieval world of the Gothic, was associated with isolation from Europe's major advancements and it is notable that travel within Britain was less common than travel abroad.(62) For the early British tourists, "it was a unique and exhilarating experience to visit Venice or Florence where they could find a society far more sophisticated than anything they knew at home".(52)

By the eighteenth century, this feeling of inferiority to most cultural developments abroad had modified. Although the classical past was still venerated and art treasures voraciously acquired, prosperous Britons felt themselves to be the inheritors of the classical tradition in their own "Augustan Age".(50) Furthermore, during the later eighteenth century, the British were among the originators of the north European Romantic movement; a taste which owed little to ideas from the south. The new emphasis on emotion, feeling and subjective taste resulted in a re-interpretation of the peoples and landscapes visited during a tour of the continent. Eventually, the Romantic movement began to wane to be replaced by a sober realism generally associated with the growing dominance of a middle class culture.(24) Thus, a further re-evaluation of countries took place:

The more matter-of-fact Victorians did not take long to discover that the place (Italy) was not quite the earthly paradise that Romantic poets had made it out to be and contained not only moonlit ruins, but squalor and mosquitoes as well.(52)

THE CHANGING ATTITUDES OF BRITISH TOURISTS TO ITALY, FRANCE AND GREECE

Italy and France

The response of British tourists to the societies and cultures which they encountered in France, Italy and Greece must be divided into two main themes. First, there were the attitudes towards the past cultural achievements of that society, especially those of classical antiquity and the Renaissance. Second, were the attitudes towards the contemporary society in that country; the cultural, political and economic condition of the various social groups encountered. This distinction between what a society was perceived to have achieved in the past and its present condition was a key element in determining the views of a country, especially in Italy and Greece.

For much of the period being considered, travel focused on France and Italy. Greece, under Turkish rule, was virtually closed to western travellers except for a certain amount of trade.(57) It was not until the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century that British tourists began to explore the eastern Mediterranean in any appreciable numbers.

The diaries and journals left by travellers to Italy and France in the sixteenth century indicate a great admiration for both past and present achievements by those societies. These countries were still very much the driving force of the later Renaissance. They provided the setting for new styles of art and architecture and possessed sophisticated social groups. When tourists visited Rome in this early period, figures like Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590) were still adding to the city's grandeur, while in Florence, Vasari's Uffizi was only completed in 1574. Universities, such as Padua, had a European reputation for their learning. This renown for scholarship lasted into the seventeenth century. John Milton, travelling in Italy in the 1630's, visited many academies such as the Umoristi in Rome, Otiosi in Naples and the Svogliati and Apatisti in Florence. In the latter city he was "a constant attendant at their literary parties" meeting learned men including Galileo.(3)

These early tourists were also impressed by the political and economic strength of certain areas, making detailed notes on the size of armies and the lay-out of fortifications. Thomas Coryat observed of the Arsenal in Venice that it was "the richest and best furnished storehouses for all manner of munition of all the world".(13)

This desire to visit more "advanced" countries was sufficient to overcome the considerable religious barrier which existed between Protestant travellers and Roman Catholic hosts. Early visitors to Italy were in some danger from capture and imprisonment. Yet, it is significant that in spite of the importance of religious belief during the whole period considered, bigotry and prejudice did not dominate relationships.(7) The dangers of conflicting religious thought were, however, used in arguments against the "siren song" of Italy, particularly by Puritan adherents in the first half of the seventeenth century. The "Italianate Englishman" became a despised figure, likely to

bring home "a naughty conscience, an empty purse, and a weak stomach".(33) Fear of Italian influence resulted in a stereotyped view of that country. Thus in a treatise on "The Sublety of the Italians"; they were accused of using travel as a means of corrupting and ruining other countries, setting social classes and nations against each other through their cunning and as a means to "fish for their riches and dignitaries".(33)

Another constraint that might have been thought to have clouded relationships was warfare between states. However, visits abroad would resume immediately after hostilities were concluded and there were few signs of lingering hostility between, say, the British and the French.(62) When warfare was more confined to opposing armies rather than populations, its influence was geographically limited and problems ceased when peace was declared. Given the theme of this conference, the alacrity with which British tourists would flock abroad immediately after a war ended (for example in 1763 following the Seven Years' War and in 1802 with the Peace of Amiens) is a notable feature of tourism in the past. Certainly, if Britons were not directly involved in a conflict they could tour in an area where fighting was taking place.(62) Thus, in Italy in the 1730's:

The King of France hath sent orders to all his generals in Italy, to take care that none of the English noblemen and gentlemen, that are upon their travels, receive any molestation or injury whatever, but that they upon all occasions do pay them all the respect imaginable.

During the seventeenth century the regard for contemporary society shifted north from Italy to France.(33) Rapidly growing political and economic power and the sophistication of the French court, especially under Louis XIV, attracted those from Britain who wished to shine in their own society. Dancing, riding, fencing and the French language were studied in Paris and at centres on the Loire such as Saumur.(19) Contemporary Italian society, on the other hand, was seen as increasingly decadent. Bishop Burnet, (admittedly, a hostile witness), considered that Venice, in the 1680's, was a place where "true and innocent pleasure is the least understood (and) as for the pleasures of friendship or marriage they are strangers to them".(39)

Further south, the poverty in the Papal territories around Rome was seen as a direct consequence of a corrupt and inefficient government. Unfavourable comparisons were increasingly made with the prosperity and political stability found at home. During the eighteenth century these views came to be applied to France also. In the 1720's, the tourist John Breval, felt that British architects were not superior to French and Italian after his experiences abroad and although Versailles was "splendid and great enough", he found some of the fountains dried up and considered the place to be in decay.(10)

For Italy, during this period, the tourists' reactions were now

almost entirely devoted to a veneration of the country's classical and Renaissance past. When Joseph Addison was in Rome he could "scarce see an Object that does not call to mind a Piece of a Latin Poet or Historian" and the "greatest Pleasure I took in my Journey from Rome to Naples was in seeing the Fields, Towns, and Rivers, that have been describ'd by so many Classic Authors".(2) Italian society was mixed with for pleasure rather than for instruction. Paradoxically, as Italy's contemporary fortunes waned, its influence on British art and architecture was at its height. The stately homes and landscape gardens of the tourists reflected the classical and Renaissance scenes surveyed during their travels.(29, 37, 38, 60) Gardens, such as Stourhead, attempted to evoke an imagined classical idyll as found in the paintings of Claude and Poussin.

The society with which wealthy travellers mixed in France and Italy was remarkably homogeneous.(23) The upper classes of western Europe shared a common culture based on the classics while French was the universal language of polite society. As the diaries and journals clearly show, a member of the landed classes could easily gain access to the "best society" in the towns and cities that were visited.(62) Purely pleasurable social contacts became increasingly important during the eighteenth century; Mrs. Piozzi compared the assemblies in Rome and Naples to those in Bath and Tunbridge.(48) These contacts were facilitated by letters of introduction acquired before leaving or during a tour and by the assistance of local British envoys and ambassadors. Pre-eminent in Italy were Horace Mann, the envoy in Florence and Sir William Hamilton, the minister in Naples. Samuel Sharp noted in 1766 that at Mann's 'conversazione' one always met the "best society".(53) There is some evidence that the British would tend to stay together rather than mix with local people.(31, 35) One Englishman in Naples had a weekly meeting for his fellow countrymen "from which he endeavours to exclude the Italians, though with little success, since they sometimes do not wait for invitation".(21)

By the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the views of many British tourists to countries and societies abroad were coloured by the influence of the Romantic movement. For its devoted followers, fashionable society was to be shunned. William Beckford quickly tired of Florentine society:

You ask how I pass my time. Generally upon the hills in wild spots I have bidden adieu, several days ago, to the dinners and glories of the town, to visits and conversaciones, and only come thither in an evening.(6)

Sensitive portraits were penned of the local 'picturesque' peasant societies and pleasure was derived from the sense of decline and decay.(4, 43) In 1819 Maria Graham visited the peasant societies to the east of Rome accompanied by the artist Charles Eastlake. Her account is full of descriptions of the "quiet, simple people" she met, while Eastlake provided sketches of their costumes.(20) Travel accounts by this time were full of such passages.(15, 58) A dilemma, referred to earlier, is that it is never clear whether these descriptions reflected a

genuine change in the sensibilities of the tourists or whether they were a literary device in the search for novelty in the travel book market.(5) There does seem, however, to have been an increase in taste for a wider variety of experiences by some tourists: the classical past, the medieval past, the Renaissance past as well as the condition and customs of local inhabitants.(8,17, 47, 50,54)

In a recent work, Mullenbrock (45) has noted a shift in the views expressed in British travel literature during the eighteenth century. There was a gradual change to a more tolerant attitude towards foreign countries which related to a growing self-confidence. But the social class of the tourist complicates this picture. While wealthy Romantic tourists might sympathise with conditions that they found abroad, the more down to earth middle class visitors were possibly less generous. Personal prejudice is another factor. Matthew Arnold attributed Italy's position to a lack of "back-bone, serious energy and the power of honest work".(52) Charles Dickens, on the other hand, travelling in Italy in the 1840's, wrote a passage which seems to confirm that tourism can promote understanding between peoples:

Let us part from Italy, with all its miseries and wrongs, affectionately, in our admiration of the beauties, natural and artificial, of which it is full to overflowing, and in our tenderness towards a people, naturally well-disposed, and patient, and sweet-tempered. Years of neglect, oppression, and misrule, have been at work, to change their nature and reduce their spirit but the good that was in them ever, is in them yet, and a noble people may be, as one day, raised up from these ashes.(16)

This kind of sympathy found expression in British support for Italian re-unification.

While attitudes to countries in general appear to have changed to some degree over time, reactions to the direct providers of tourist services: innkeepers, coach drivers, guides, and the like, tended to be a catalogue of familiar grumbles and hostility that have changed little over the centuries. Poor images of an area very often stemmed from experiences relating to travel and accommodation. Unflattering stereo-types were the result. Fynes Moryson observed in the sixteenth century:

The Italian Hosts are notable in fawning and crouching for gain, so as they meete passengers at the Cities gates, and emulously invite them to their houses, with promise of all dainties, as if they would give them for nought, but when they are once come into the houses, all things threaten famine.(44)

Other grumbles include price rises geared to the presence of

tourists (35, 47) resulting in some centres, such as Montpellier and Naples, being more expensive than others. These comments, however, are so varied in nature that it is very hard to generalise from them. In a period when all travel was uncomfortable and slow and much accommodation primitive, few journeys were likely to be pleasant experiences. Clearly, the difficulties of a travel infrastructure, not geared primarily to the use of tourists, was an aggravating factor in influencing reactions on a journey. From the later eighteenth century, some centres, such as Florence, showed a marked improvement in the standard of their accommodation (62) and the views of tourists do become more favourable.(40, 41) Whether the more tolerant opinions about some continental areas can be related to the general development in standards of accommodation and transport is of course, a debateable point. What is clear, however, is that by the 1820's an embryonic tourist industry, providing services exclusively for the tourist, was beginning to appear.(63) One consequence of this is that the prolonged contact with the host society which obtained in earlier periods, was now being curtailed. Travelling in Italy in the 1860's, William Howells commented:

We do not nowadays carry letters recommending us to citizens of the different places No, we buy our through tickets, and we put up at the hotels praised in the handbook, and are very glad of a little conversation with any native, however adulterated he be by contact with the world to which we belong.(57)

Greece

Italy had long been regarded as the inspiration of the ideals of classical antiquity and the Renaissance.(57) Together with France, it formed the main hub of the Grand Tour. Greece, on the other hand, was little known with scant appreciation of the region's role in western civilisation. Indeed, during the sixteenth century, the word "greek" was a derogatory term indicating loose habits or a confidence-trickster and there was a very low estimation of both ancient and contemporary Greece.(57)

Although knowledge of the region increased during the seventeenth century, it was really from the mid-eighteenth century that travel in the eastern Mediterranean became more common, helped by British naval power. The Earl of Sandwich sailed around the shores in the late 1730's collecting mementoes and with an artist to record some of the scenes. The really significant event in the British discovery of Greece, however, was the arrival of Stuart and Revett in 1751. Sponsored by the Society of Dilettanti (patrons of the arts who had been on the Grand Tour) to record the antiquities in Athens, their illustrated volumes with descriptions did much to awaken an appreciation of the Greek classical heritage and its role in western civilisation. What is also notable is the favourable accounts of the modern Greeks and their inclusion in the engravings as part of the landscape. Readers were told that the modern Athenians had more vivacity, more genius and a politer address than any

other people under Turkish rule. They had great courage and sagacity in opposing any further burdens that the government tried to lay upon them. Thus:

All those who appreciated the publications of the Society of Dilettanti for the sake of 'Grecian taste' were also made aware of the life of the people who dwelt around and among, and sometimes inside, the architectural glories of antiquity.(57)

Other words by travellers such as Robert Wood (66) and Richard Chandler (Chandler 12) combined accounts of antiquities with observations on the present inhabitants. These twin interests evolved into the movements of Hellenism - a love of the ancient Greeks and Philhellenism - a love of modern Greece and its people.(39) Travellers of the Romantic era began writing of local people and their customs, just as they were doing in Italy. In the 1790's J.B.S. Morritt was exploring little-known parts of Greece writing glowingly of people who "Retain the spirits and character of Grecians" and praising their hospitality and goodness.(57) Frederick Douglas published "An Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance Between the Ancient and Modern Greeks" following a tour of the country in 1811. The work is full of humane comparisons between ancient Greece and the unfortunate condition of its modern inhabitants. In Corinth, he laments the contrast between the "seat of all that was splendid, beautiful, and happy" with the "wretched stragglng village" to which it had then been reduced.(57)

In addition to travellers' writings, enthusiasm for Greece was stimulated by the arrival in London of the sculptures from the Acropolis in Athens acquired by Lord Elgin. These were purchased in 1816 by the British Museum. They helped to inspire the whole Greek Revival movement in Britain where so many important buildings reflected the classical style.(14) This fascination for Greece reached its high point with the involvement of Byron in the Greek struggle for independence (1821-1830). Hellenism and Philhellenism went hand in hand with an association between the ancient Greeks and 'liberty' and their contemporary conflict against the Turks.(30) British political support for Greece no doubt stemmed in part from the influence of a classical education and travel in that country.

Thus travel and tourism helped to establish British sympathy and understanding for a country which a hundred years previously had been felt to be outside the mainstream of European culture. Greece, in Swinburne's words, was the "mother-country of thought and art and action".30)

CONCLUSION

This paper has explored the relationships between tourists from one country and their host destinations in an historical context. It has sought to examine the role of tourism in promoting understanding between peoples over a three hundred year time period in order to highlight some of the factors which seem to influence such links. Stress has been placed on the inadequacy of the data, especially the imbalance which exists between host and guest source material. Nevertheless, some

general conclusions can perhaps be drawn from an historical survey of this kind.

One impression gained is that attitudes towards a country and its people could be influenced by the nature of the tourist industry. This, however, was not a fundamental factor in relationships. Favourable or unfavourable opinions towards Italy, France, and Greece fluctuated during an era when the travel infrastructure remained poorly developed. General improvements in standards and the creation of an elementary tourist industry during the early nineteenth century, may have led to more tolerant attitudes but this should not be overstressed. There was, none the less, an increase in the isolation of the traveller from the host society. Yet clearly, problems between generating and receiving countries do not stem from the advent of the mass tourist industry. Narrow-mindedness was a characteristic of a wealthy English milord travelling on the continent for several years as it is of the modern tourist on a short packaged tour. Francis Russell commented after his continental tour in the 1780's:

I will never return to the Continent, or any other country, from my own; as I am happy to have learnt, by conviction, that it far exceeds any other in the world - for its Constitution, Beauty, and Delights of Life. (51)

A more important conclusion is that any understanding of the views expressed by the tourists can only come from an examination of the wider context of changing economic, political, social and cultural environments of which tourism forms one element. The reaction of British tourists to France, Italy and Greece, for example, was related to the growing power and self-confidence of Britain and the changing fortunes of the host countries. If tourism is to form a bridge of understanding then these wider issues need to be addressed.

Another feature that emerges is that admiration for the past achievements of a society could be very important in colouring the attitudes of travelers. Sometimes, unfavourable comparisons were made between the contemporary state of the inhabitants and their heritage but sympathy and support for progress could also be the result. This seems to have happened in the cases of Italy and Greece where veneration of their classical heritage possibly underlay positive attitudes towards re-unification for the former and independence for the latter.

The importance of cultural heritage continues with tourism today. Such are the changes in the fortunes of nations that it is Britain herself who now draws large numbers of visitors to view her past achievements. Does this interest in Britain's past lead to a greater understanding of contemporary Britain and her people or is there a stereo-typed image of royalty, stately homes and thatched cottages? Conversely, do the British have a greater understanding of the countries from which these visitors come?

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