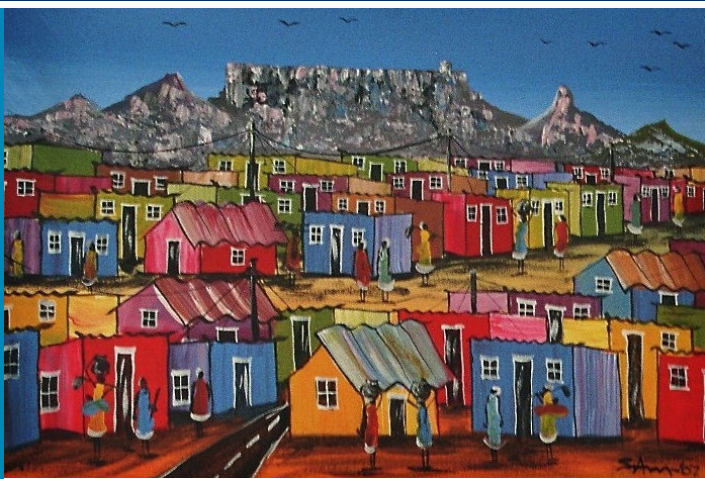# Universität Potsdam

Manfred Rolfes | Malte Steinbrink | Christina Uhl

Townships as Attraction

An Empirical Study of
Township Tourism in Cape Town

Praxis Kultur- und Sozialgeographie

Manfred Rolfes | Malte Steinbrink | Christina Uhl

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Preface and Acknowledgement

A group of geography students of the University of Potsdam has conducted an empirical research on township tourism in Cape Town (South Africa) in February and March 2007. This report presents some of the results. It is also meant express our gratitude to our partners in Cape Town, who provided valuable support during the research. Special thanks go to Linda Mase (Cape Town Routes Unlimited), who helped us establish contact with the operators of the township tours. Also, we'd like to thank Ntuthuko Mchunu of Cape Town Tourism for important information and organisational assistance. Furthermore, we owe many thanks to numerous helpful persons in the townships as well as staff and owners of the tourist companies, who agreed to be interviewed, especially to the tour operators, who allowed us to take part in their tours. We thank the operators of the following companies: Hylton Ross, Roots Africa, Zibonele Tours, Cape Capers, Inkukuleko, Nthuseng Tours, Ilios Tours, Babi´s Tours and Transfers, Sam's Cultural Tours, Camissa and Ezizwe Tours, "Khayelitsha Jenny", and Africa Moni in Imizamu Yethu and Charlotte Swartbooi of Nomthunzie Tours in Masiphumele Finally, we thank our two interpreters Shai and Patience Booi for their excellent work, Noligwa Ndabeni for the tour through Masiphumelele, Mandy and Bonita, who allowed us to conduct interviews in the District Six Museum, and Prof. Wolfgang Thomas (International Centre for Tourism Research on Africa, Cape Technikon) and Fabian Harms, who sacrificed their valuable time to help us establishing contacts and who contributed a lot of important ideas.[1]

The recommendations given at the end of this report are addressed to those persons who "draw" the picture of the townships – and thereby a picture of South-Africa – in their professional life. They have a responsible task to fulfil.

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[1] We'd like to thank Ralf bei der Kellen for his valuable assistance in translating and emending the first version of this report.

1 Background of the Project

In the mid-1990s, a form of tourism has been established in metropolises of several so-called "developing countries" or "emerging nations". The essential part of this tourism is a visit to the most disadvantaged parts of these cities. It is mainly organised in form of guided tours through those areas, often called "slums". Today a lot of the tours are operated and marketed by professional companies. But a large number of informal businesses also exist. Slum tours are offered on a relatively large scale in the South African cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town, the Indian metropolises Calcutta, Mumbai and Delhi as well as Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, to name the most important places. Target group of these tours are primarily international tourists. The number of slum tourists is constantly increasing: It is estimated that 40,000 visit Rio de Janeiro each year, while in Cape Town the figure is even assumed to be around 300,000. Guided tours into the slums are slowly becoming a standard in the city tourism of the "developing countries" or "emerging nations".

The terms used to describe this phenomenon are very disparate. In academic articles, some authors call them "social tours" or "reality tours", because a number of these tours are explicitly presented by their operators as being "authentic" and as possessing strong interactive features. They promise the tourists experiences "off the beaten path".[2] Other authors tag these tours as a form of "cultural tourism" or "ethnic tourism" and often emphasize their educational aspect.[3] Here, the possibility of a cultural exchange is highlighted. On the other hand, terms like "poverty tourism" and "poorism" express the morally dubious socio-voyeuristic aspects. The term "slumming" is also used in the context of critical tourism research. Especially reports in the media often criticize the valorization and marketing of marginal settlements, slums, favelas or townships as tourist attracttions.[4]

So far, only a small number of empiric studies of this phenomenon within the tourism industry exist.[5] These analyses focus mainly on the tourists' motivation for visiting these districts. A basic interest in a country's culture and the residents' living conditions are exposed as the tourists' main motifs. Secondly, some empiric studies consider the question in how far tourism can offer a potential for economic development of deprived urban areas. In this context, the studies generally resort to concepts of sustainability and "community based tourism". Against the backdrop of these concepts, "slum tourism" is often directly supported by city councils, regional administration or (inter-)national NGOs. Thirdly, some of these studies also examine the question, how the residents of the deprived districts perceive the tours.

Further empiric studies of this phenomenon are required. It is also needed to consider the question why in our present modern and globalised society a market for sightseeing tours to slums could develop.

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[2]Cf. Freire-Medeiros (2009).

[3]Cf. Ramchander (2004).

[4]Cf. Weiner (2008); Gentleman (2006); Danielzik, Khan (2006).

[5]Cf. for Brazil: Freire-Medeiros (2007 and 2009), Menezes (2007); for South Africa: Ludvigsen (2002); Ramchander (2004 and 2007); Rogerson (2004); Margraf (2006).

Our study tries to make a contribution to the answering of this question. It approaches the topic in the context of South Africa, using the example of Cape Town. Township tourism has been a booming business there for more than a decade. Guided tours, which are supposed to give international visitors an insight into the history, the culture and the living conditions of township residents, constitute the main segment of this sector of the tourist industry. These township tours were the subject of a geographical field study, which was undertaken in the course of a student research project of the Potsdam University. The research did not aim at a market analysis, nor at clarifying the local socio-economic effects of this form of tourism. Its concern was rather to analyse, what concepts of townships the international tourists have and in how far their expectations affect their strong interest in these „places". Furthermore, we were interested in the question as to how the existing ideas were broadened, modified or confirmed during the tours.

2 Tourism in Cape Town

Since the end of Apartheid and South Africa's reintegration into the international community, tourism has increasingly gained in importance for the national economy. Since 1994, a growing number of international visitors have come to South Africa. The number of arrivals in South Africa has increased from 3.6 millions in 1994 to 7.6 millions in 2005 and 9.1 millions in 2007.[6] The following figure illustrates the rapid development of tourism industries in South Africa:

Figure 1: International Arrivals in South Africa

International Arrivals in South Africa 1966-2007

first democratic elections

Nelson Mandela released from prison and end of apartheid legislation

International sanctions

9,1 Million arrivals in 2007

Arrivals (in Million)
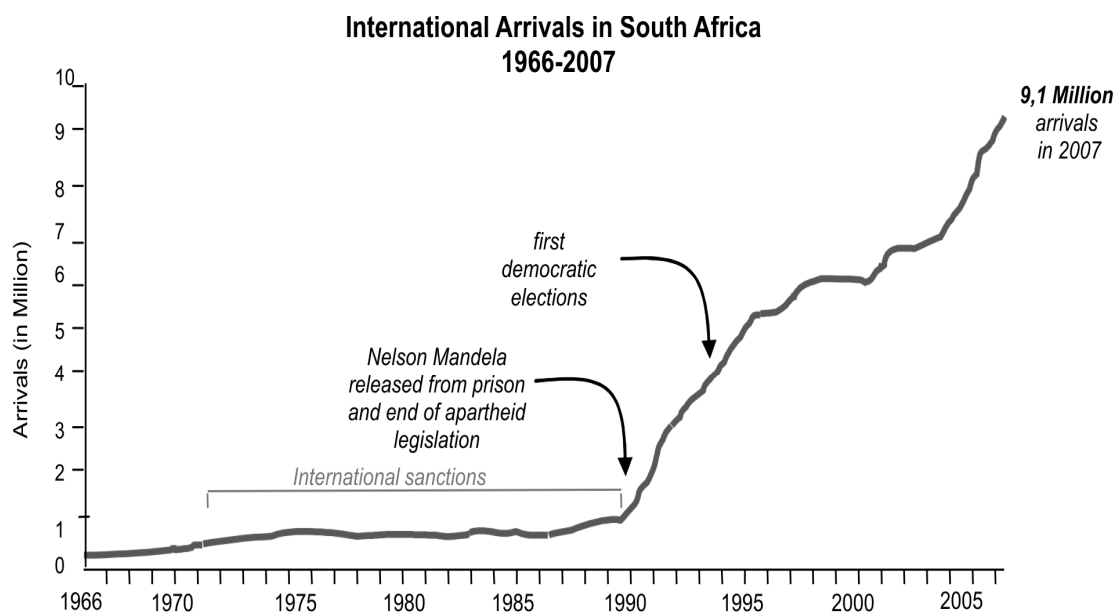
Source: Steinbrink/Frehe (2008)

At present, tourism has more weight in the national economy than the gold-mining sector which used to be South Africa's economical back bone for decades.[7]

Cape Town has benefited greatly from the expansion momentum that tourism in South Africa experienced since 1994. The city has become the anchor in the tourism economy of South Africa. This has two main reasons. First, the city historically has always occupied the prime position in the national tourist business. It still holds the status of the 'tourism icon' of South Africa. The vast majority of South Africa's most popular international tourist attractions are situated in the wider Cape Town Area (see Table 1). The second reason is the massive promotion Cape Town has received through national marketing agents as well as through foreign tourism producers since the end of the Apartheid-Era.[8]

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[6]Cf. South African Tourism (2006).
[7]Cf. Krüger (2006).
[8]Cf. Cornelissen (2006).

Table 1: South Africa´s ten main international Tourist Attractions

Ranking	Attraction	Location
1	Victoria and Alfred Waterfront	Cape Town, Western Cape
2	Table Mountain	Cape Town, Western Cape
3	Cape Point	Cape Town, Western Cape
4	Wine-Route	Wine-lands, Western Cape
5	Garden Route	Western Cape
6	Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden	Cape Town, Western Cape
7	Ostrich farms	Little Karoo district, Western Cape
8	Robben Island	Off Cape Town coast, Western Cape
9	Sights in Pretoria, e.g. Union Buildings (site of government)	Pretoria, Gauteng
10	Kruger National Park	Mpumalanga Province

Source: South African Tourism (2000), (cf. Cornelissen, 2006: 7).

Cape Town is the main destination for overseas tourists in South Africa. More than one million international tourists visit Cape Town per year. This means that more than half of all overseas tourists visit the city during their stay in South Africa. The majority is from Europe, with the United Kingdom and Germany being traditionally the two largest source markets.[9]

Cornelissen (2006: 8–10) mentions three major trends in tourism development in Cape Town:

(A) Large-scale expansion of tourism in Cape Town leads to a high degree of investments in tourist infrastructure. For example, 40 new hotels were built in the period of 1996–2002. The expansion of the international airport, several newly established golf estates and the erection of a large convention centre also have to be seen in this context. The Soccer World Championship in 2010 will further boost this overall trend.

(B) Tourism development has a profound influence on the redefinition of the urban landscape. A clear tendency towards gentrification – especially in the affluent parts of the city – is noticeable. The best examples for this trend are the Waterfront complex and the post-modern shopping complex known as Century City. They have both become important centres of tourism consumption and growth. These developments can be described in the context of the global trend of "Disneyfication" of the urban landscape. Marks and Bezzoli (2001) argue that the architecture of developments like the Waterfront and Century City is socially exclusive, because they imitate a

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[9]Cf. Cornelissen (2006: 6–7).

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colonial style and portray a neo-colonial cultural theme, which seems inappropriate regarding the history of Apartheid and the identities of the majority of the city's population. Goudie et al. (1999) also criticise these developments because of the romanticising and distorting, racially stereotyping, and as a result disempowering character.

(C)   The third major trend put forward by Cornelisson (2006) is the emergence and con-solidation of distinct tourism niche markets. She mentions three examples for this trend:

a. the growth of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibition) tourism,

b. the development of gay tourism,

c. the phenomenon of township tourism.

For point a. and point b. Cape Town can be looked at as an outstanding example: With the erection of the International Convention Centre (ICC) Cape Town has grown to be the most popular MICE destination with the highest number of inter-national meetings in Africa. Also on behalf of gay tourism, Cape Town has develop-ped to be one of the world´s leading "gay cities". Within the city, the expansion of the gay tourist market spurred a process of gentrification. The best example is the deve-lopment of De Waterkant, an upmarket gay quarter.

In 1999, Goudie et al. still depicted township tourism as a marginal component of tourism development.[10] Barely ten years later, this assertion no longer holds true.

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[10]Cf. Goudie et al (1999).

3   Township Tourism

There is hardly another country in the world where economic disparities are as significant as they are in the Republic of South Africa. The country's Gini-coefficient[11] amounts to 68 %. Generally, already a Gini-coefficient of 40 % is regarded as alarming. This means that South Africa is one of the world's most unequal societies in terms of economy. This becomes manifest in a distinct spatial pattern of inequality that is probably unparalleled in the world. This pattern is a structural heritage of the Apartheid system. On the urban level, the townships (located on the fringes of the cities and metropolitan areas of South Africa) stand almost symbolically for the inhuman planning approach that was based on racist classifications.

Even today – 14 years after the first democratic election – there is almost no sign that the spatial pattern of inequality is dissolving. A large part of South Africa's urban population is still living under poor (and in part also extremely poor) living conditions in the townships. And the inhabitants of the townships still belong almost exclusively to "previously disadvantaged" segments of the population (members of segments of the population which used to be classified as "non-white"). In spite of governmental efforts, neither have the living conditions in the townships significantly improved, nor are processes of desegregation taking place to an appreciable extent. So it might not be too exaggerated to state that racial Apartheid has been superseded by economic Apartheid, with the disadvantaged segments of the population remaining largely the same now as then. Also, the spatial demarcation of inequality has barely shifted.

Being the most disadvantaged urban areas, the townships are usually perceived as the main problem for South African urban development planning. Meanwhile, though, they have developed into an important resource of the tourist industry: Townships have become tourist attractions.

Originally, the potential for tourism in South Africa was primarily seen in the country's climate and its natural attractions (National Parks, spectacular mountains, beaches, winelands etc.). Already in the early 90s, however, a new kind of tourism started to develop in Soweto (*South Western Township* of Johannesburg): Township tourism, i.e. guided tours through the residential areas of the black population. The first township tours were already conducted during the era of Apartheid. These served mainly as politically motivated propaganda tours for the Apartheid regime.[12] With the end of Apartheid and a growing international tourism, a change took place towards a more socio-critical and increasingly also a *cultural* focus.[13]

What started as a niche market for travellers with special political interests, who wanted to see the sites of the freedom-fight against Apartheid, has now become a mass-phenomenon. According to official information, more than 300,000 tourists took part in township tours in Cape Town in 2006 alone, which amounts to 25 % of the visitors.[14] This report will

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[11]The Gini-coefficient is a measure which among other things indexes the uneven distribution of income within a region (with values between 0 and 1 or 0 % and 100 %). A large Gini-coefficient (approaching 1 or 100 %), is a sign for vast inequality.

[12]Cf. Ludvigsen (2002).

[13]Cf. Margraf (2006).

[14]Source: Afrika-Verein der deutschen Wirtschaft.

show that for most of the international tourists a township tour has already become a "Must-do" during their stay in the city (just like trips to Table Mountain and Cape Point, a Waterfront visit and a wine testing tour). So township tourism has become a booming and highly lucrative sector within the tourist industry. More and more companies push into the market in order to meet the growing demand for this kind of tours. In the early days of this development, the tours had been organized by the residents of the townships themselves. In later years, the big and interregional operating ("white") tour and travel companies also adjusted their offers to this development and included township tours into their (hitherto conventional) product range. A large part of the tour companies in Cape Town which were interviewed for the survey were founded between 2001 and 2005.

Considering the future potential of township tours, a further growth in this segment of the tourism industry is to be assumed. Travel organizations interviewed by Aderhold et al. (2006: 144f) anticipate that the wish for "cultural and study elements" as well as for chances to encounter local residents will increase. The township tours promise the fulfilment of these wishes, as we will show.

4 Aims of Research and Methods

From the point of view of tourism geography, township tourism is an interesting pheno-menon, because it seems to contradict common ideas about tourists' activities. The desire to experience something *different* can count as a basic motif for travelling (especially for long-distance travelling). But, tourism research usually interprets "something different" in the sense of beauty and repose (i.e. something beyond the tristesse of daily life) or as a cultural enjoyment (especially in the case of city tourism). The search for beauty and repose, though, does obviously not explain why people go on township tours.

In a first theoretic and conceptual approach, township tourism can be understood as a specific form of city tourism. According to Pott (2007:107), "*culture*" is the dominant modus of city tourism. In the specifications of township tourism we have discussed above, culture has been introduced as a relevant category. From a system theoretical perspective, "culture" is *a mode of observation for the observance of differences as cultural differen-ces.*[15] Culture – as well as space – is conceived of as a social construct of the observer. Therefore, within this study, cultural as well as spatial observations and categories respectively have to be taken into special consideration.

Our studies in Cape Town were characterized by an open methodological approach. Basi-cally, it was our astonishment which served as a starting point of the research project. The phenomenon of township tourism seemed to run counter to conventional ideas of what people are doing on their holidays.[16] The initial question of the study was: *Why do so many and increasingly more tourists take part in township* tours*?* The question inevitably following was *"What do they want to see there?"* – Which made it clear that the tourists were to be a target group for our studies. In addition to this, the guiding question pushed us straight into an interesting theoretical field of research and right into the centre of a current debate within the field of social geography – that one on the constructivist con-cepts of space. The question what is it the tourists *want to see* is directly linked with what they are *expecting to see*. Therefore, it is at the same time linked to their (fore)-knowledge about their destination before their departure and therefore with their "image of the space" (in this case, their image of the township) and their "image of (South)-African culture".

Township tourism has been recognised as medium for the construction of space and cul-ture by the study group. Thus, the tourist industry has to be identified as being directly involved in this process of construction. It offers a product, which aims at satisfying a demand. Seen from the perspective of the market economy, "the township" is also a pro-duct, which is to be marketed.

Destination-marketing tries to supply images of space and culture, which are to arouse a buying desire and meet the anticipated demands respectively. Economically seen, this is a marketing strategy of the tour operators. And this of course has a direct influence on how

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[15]Cf. Pott (2005).

[16]The wish to get away from day-to-day life is generally considered to be a vital motif for going on holiday. In order to make this come true (i.e. to see and experience something else or at least to see or experience differently) is what tourists aim for. Within tourism research, this notion of difference or „the other" has mostly been equated with something beautiful or recreational, but also with something cultural (mainly in city tourism). The search for something beautiful and recreational is apparently not adequate for the explanation of township tourism, whereas the search for a cultural "other" seems to be a more valid explanation.

township tourism is advertised and on the selection of what is shown during these tours. Therefore, the tour operators and the actors in the townships also had to be included into the research design.

After preliminary research, the guiding question was formulated more precisely and the constructivist level added: *Which images and ideas of "township spaces" are being created, modified or reproduced in the context of township tours?* And in how far do the parties involved contribute to this (re)production process? Thus, the study conceives of "space" in the sense of a constructivist paradigm as a result of social construction and seeks to grasp the principles, the background and the consequences of this process of construction.

The student research project was supervised by Prof. Dr. Manfred Rolfes (Potsdam) and Dr. Malte Steinbrink (Osnabrück). The empirical data were collected between February 10th and March 3rd 2007 in South Africa by 14 students in 6 working groups. The data were analysed in the course of the summer semester 2007 and project reports were written. This final report summarizes central results.

The aims of the survey called for a multi-perspective-approach and a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods: We went with township tours for direct observation and written records. We conducted qualitative interviews with tour operators as well as with agents within the townships. We also examined single townships as case studies and interviewed tourists by using semi-standardized questionnaires.

The experiences and the preliminary results of the study were regularly shared and exchanged by the participants of the project during the stay in South Africa. Also, the participants constantly reflected their role as researchers as well as their own concepts and images of the townships.

The issues mentioned above were dealt with by the students. In particular, the following surveys were conducted:

(1)   Evaluation of township tours in respect to route, destinations and choice of the different stops on the tours (Vanessa Lüke, see chapter 5)

(2)   Expert interviews with tour operators concerning the overall conditions, planning, arrangement and aims of the tours (Cora Lang, Benjamin Melzer, see chapter 6.1)

(3)   Expert interviews with community members in different townships concerning the effects of township tourism in their residential area (Morten Becher, Madlen Kunath, Mandy Moll, see chapter 6.2)

(4)   Case studies concerning the status, constraints and potentials of township tourism in the townships Masiphumele (Christina Uhl, Nico Herzog) and Imizamu Yethu (Patrick Frommberg, Ullrich Geller, see chapter 6.2 and Box 2)

(5)   Semi-standardized interviews with tourists about their expectations before the tour and their perceptions during and after the tour (Magdalena Blaszkiewicz, Michael Palloks, see chapters 7 and 8)

(6)   Semi-standardized Interviews with tourists in the District Six Museum before making a township tour (Anke Klaunig, Juliane Thormeier, see chapter 7)

This report especially focuses on the results of the last two teams.

5   Informations on Township Tours in Cape Town

The township tours can be seen as the socio-cultural outside representation of the Cape-tonian townships. The tours reflect the ideas and targets of the tour operators and in part also those of the township residents involved in the tours. The design of the tours (i.e. order of events and choice of sites and sights shown) reflects what tourists are to be shown[17] and what they are *not* to be shown.

It is difficult to clearly quantify the number of companies offering township tours in Cape Town. According to our estimation it ranges between 40 and 50 companies, very different in profile and degree of professionalism.

During the field study in Cape Town, the student teams went with different township tours. A total of 20 tours offered by 12 different companies were analysed. The route, the stops, special observations and noticeable occurrences were recorded.

Figure 2: Visited Townships in Cape Town:
Tours lead from the District Six Museum (Inner City) to the Townships

Source: Cartography: U. Dolezal, Universität Potsdam, Institut of Geography.

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[17]Cf. Conforti (1996).

The median duration of the tours was about four hours ('*Half-Day-Trip*'). Average costs were around 200 Rand per person. The number of participants varied significantly; it ranged from two persons in a mini-bus to 30 tourists travelling in a coach. In the smaller townships outside of Cape Town (Imizamu Yethu and Masiphumelele) the tours were organised as walking-tours. All tours were lead by tour-guides, most of them claimed to live in a township themselves.

Although the tours were carried out by 12 different operators, they were very similar in structure: Most of the companies offered to collect their customers at their accommodations near the CBD ('*pick-up-service*'). Almost all of the township tours started out with a visit of the *District Six Museum*[18] (duration of stay: 30–60 minutes) and scheduled a stop in the *District Six Area* afterwards. In these places, the history of Apartheid is explained to the tourists, especially the history of Apartheid urban planning and of South African townships.

Most of the tours went to the "black" townships of *Langa, Gugulethu* and *Khayelitsha.* There are a very small number of township tours that go to the residential areas of groups formerly classified as "coloured". Almost all tours visited the specific sights that are to be found in these townships:

Table 2: Central Destinations in the Townships

Langa	*Gugulethu*	*Khayelitsha*
• Tsoga Environmental Ressource Center	• Memorial "Gugulethu Seven" (for the political activists shot dead by the police in 1986)	• Vicky's Bed & Breakfeast
• Gugas-Thebe Cultural and Art Center	• Market	• Look Out Hill (View on Khayelitsha from a hill)

Source: Own research 2007.

Irrespective of which township was visited, the tours usually combined very similar elements:

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[18]The District Six Museum documents the history of the development of the district of the same name. In 1966, the "non-white" population of this before then multicultural district had been expelled and forcibly removed to townships. At the beginning of the 1980s all building in this area were demolished. The land has lain waste ever since. (cf. http://www.districtsix.co.za, accessed on July 7, 2008).

- Visitation of migrant hostels

- Visitation of pre-school institutions (sometimes including singing or dancing performances of children)

- Visitation of various residential areas and different types of housing (e.g. RDP-Houses[19], New Flats, Beverly Hills of Langa, informal settlements)

- Visit of a *sangoma* (traditional healer), including the possibility of consultation

- Visit in a *shebeen* (informal pub), where usually *umqombothi* (traditional beer) is offered to the tourists

- Visitations of private homes.

During the township tours, the tourists were offered different possibilities to buy souvenirs or (local) art and craft. Moreover, they were offered opportunities to donate during the visits of social institutions. Though contacts to residents were possible at every stop, these contacts were almost exclusively observed during the visits in the shebeens.

Tourists making tours to townships outside of Cape Town met their guide at the entrance of the township. Thus the visit to the District Six Museum was left out. Historical backgrounds were explained during the tour. Apart from this, these tours consisted of the same elements like the tours in Cape Town (s. above).

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[19]The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is an ample government`s strategy implemented in 1994. Therein, one of the principles is meeting basic needs by developing the infrastructure, which includes a programme to build up basic sanitation and housing for the population.

Photo 1: Tourists in front of Vicky's Bed & Breakfast in Khayelitsha, Cape Town[20]

Photo 2: Curious tourists taking pictures in a township of Cape Town[21]

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[20]Photo: Patrick Frommberg.
[21]Photo: Vanessa Lüke.

Photo 3: Memories of real Africa are sold on the Green Market in Cape Town: Paintings of townships[22]
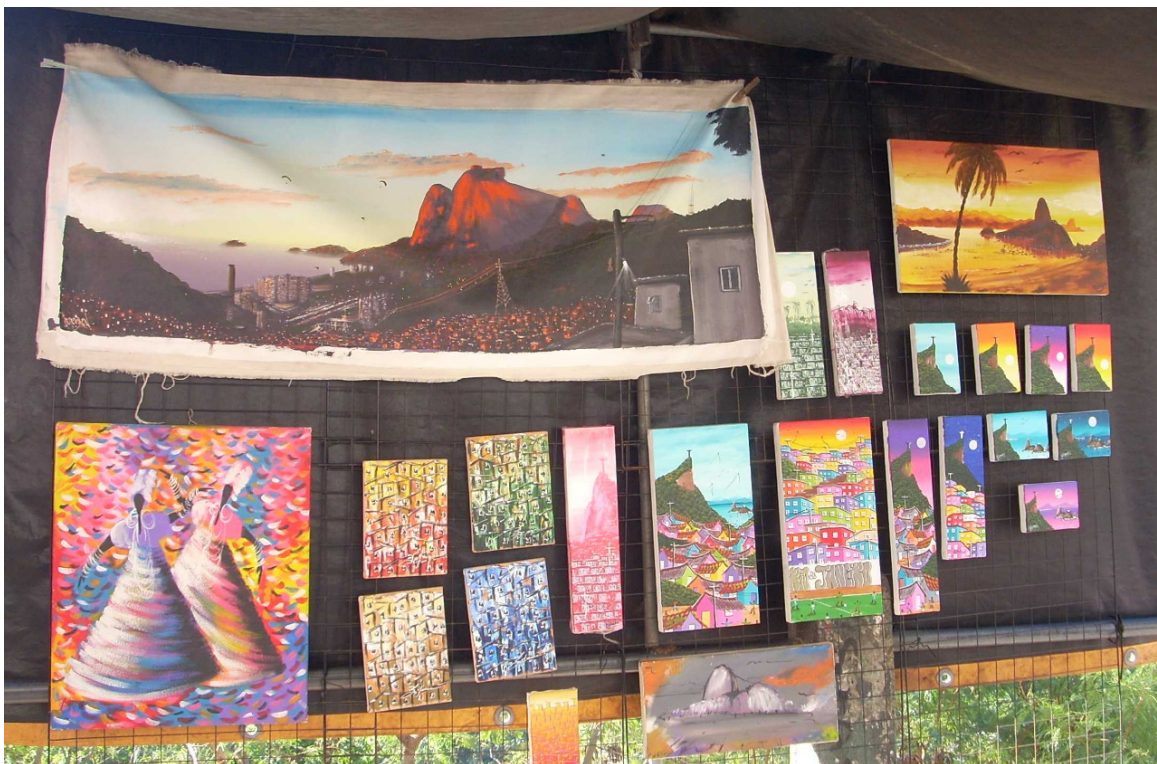
Photo 4: Like in Cape Town: Memories for tourists in Rio de Janeiro: A mixture of culture, colour, and Favela[23]

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[22]Photo: Manfred Rolfes.
[23]Photo: Manfred Rolfes.

Photo 5: A favourite picture motif: Children posing for tourists[24]

Photo 6: Part of a township tour: Tourists visiting a workshop in Langa[25]

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[24]Photo: Cora Lang.
[25]Photo: Cora Lang.

Photo 7: Tours often include views over the townships or favelas: Subsidized housing in Khayalitsha, Cape Town[26]

Photo 8: Tourists marvelling at the view over the favela Rocinha, Rio de Janeiro[27]

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[26]Photo: Vanessa Lüke.

[27]Photo: Meagan Williams.

Photo 9: Fascinated tourists watching a traditional healer, a "Sangoma", who gives a demonstration of his knowledge[28]

Photo 10: The house of a Herbalist in Masiphumelele: Offers of treatments for everyone[29]

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[28]Photo: Cora Lang.
[29]Photo: Christina Uhl.

6 Township Tours from the Perspective of the Tour Operators and the Communities

In this section, results of the interviews with the tour operators and the actors in the communities are presented. These results are primarily founded on expert interviews and our own observations. In the course of the research project we conducted expert interviews with the representatives of five smaller companies (Africa Moni, Nomthunzie Tours, Babi's Tours and Transfers, Zibonele Tours, Camissa), one middle-sized company (Sam's Cultural Tours) and three large companies (Hylton Ross, Cape Capers, Roots Africa). The classification of "small", "middle-sized" and "large" companies is based on data concerning the number of employees, the approximate capacity and the number of busses. Small companies are mostly one-man/woman-companies. All of these operators offer township tours for smaller groups, but some of them organize tours in big coaches as well.

6.1 The Operators

Motifs and Aims

The tour operators were asked about their motifs to offer township tours. As expected, commercial motifs were ranked at the highest position. The tour companies have to work profitably in order to hold their ground in the market. In this context, the interviewees highlighted the increasing demand for township tours. Particularly the larger companies referred to the fact that township tours are an important extension of their range of products.

In addition to economic motifs, a number of other – rather idealistic – reasons were stressed. Some operators emphasized that their tours were supposed to show what life is like in the communities, to convey knowledge about African culture and history and to give an 'authentic' insight into what they themselves called the "real life" in South Africa. These goals were primarily mentioned by the owners of small companies, who live in townships themselves.

Furthermore, all of the interviewed tour operators accentuated the developmental relevance of township tourism and expressed their intention to initiate positive social and economic processes in the townships. Some of the operators also remarked that they wanted to use a share of their profit to support particular projects in the communities.

What the Tourists are assumed to expect

As stated by the tour operators, the customers are tourists from Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia and the United States mainly. We asked the tour operators about their conception of what these tourists expect from the tours. A large part of the interviewees emphasized that the tourists were mainly interested to get know township residents and to *"interact with the locals"*. Apart from this, the operators assumed the tourists to be curious about poverty and developmental processes. The tour operators supposed that tourists in general had an interest in South African daily life and culture and that this could best be shown in the townships. In the opinion of the operators, many tourists want to see "the far side" of Cape Town and search for a "complete" or "real" picture of the city or of South Africa.

Box 1
Township Tours as Cultural Tours

Authentic Township Tour
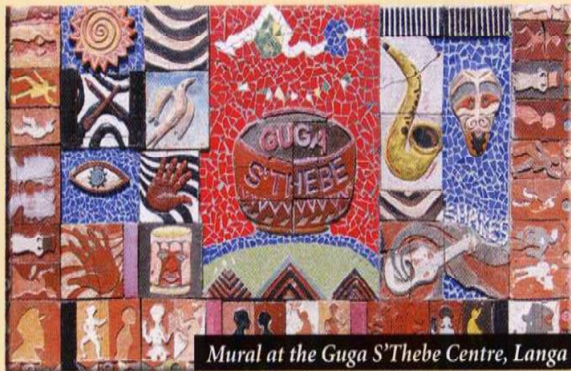
Mural at the Guga S'Thebe Centre, Langa
© John Bennett

Meet the proud people of **Langa**, **Gugulethu**, **Nyanga** and **Khayelitsha**. Hear the stories of their struggles and experience the vibe as you quench your thirst with *umqombothi* (African beer). **Traditional healers** and **sangomas** will throw their bones to see into your future. During the evenings, you will feel the rhythm and dance to the **jazz music** of the townships that will capture your soul. This amazing tour will enable you to experience the diverse culture that Cape Town has to offer. The tour will take you to Langa (the first township established in 1927), **Mzoli's Open Meat Market** in Gugulethu, the **craft market** and **Lookout Hill** in Khayelitsha as well as a visit to an HIV/AIDS centre and other places of interest.

If we look at the extract of the brochure, we recognize the way in which tour operators try to meet the demand for authenticity (see heading). It becomes obvious that the tours focus on the culture of townships. In the text, the idea of township culture is strongly equated with an essentialist idea of African culture. If we look at the cultural aspects mentioned in the text, and at what we learn about the culture of the township residents, we see what kind of an idea about African culture is conveyed. We read about proud people who have succeeded in struggles, we read about people who keep their traditions, who are superstitious and practice occult ceremonies (they "throw their bones"), and we read about people who dance and live their lives to the rhythm of music. These aspects remind us of old stereotypes and clichés of colonial origin.

The territorialization of African culture in the townships is a means for homogenizing and essentializing. It creates an image of the residents as urban noble savages.

By territorializing an essentialist concept of African culture in the township areas of South Africa, Africans are assigned their place geographically as well as socially.

Extract of a brochure of Nthuseng Tours, an agency that offers Township tours as well as tours to the Winelands or to Cape Point

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Does the Tour-Programme reflect the assumed Expectations?

The township tours are arranged according to the assumed motifs of and beliefs about the target group. Due to the fact that their time schedule is usually very tight, the programmes include specific stops, particularly such that are assumed to exemplify typical properties of "black townships" and "the black community", like e.g., a *sangoma* or a *shebeen*. In some tours, places of historical interest are included in the programme (e.g. memorials for political activists and migrant hostels). In most cases, the tourists are also taken to public institutions or community projects (health centres, schools, and crèches). Children play an important role in many tours. During school visits they often sing and dance for the tourists. Also in the streets children almost frequently surround or follow the visitors, who like to use these situations as opportunities to take photographs. Children are the most favourite motifs for photographs during the tour.

During the interviews it became obvious that different motifs exert a strong influence on the tour-programmes. Some operators choose their stops in order to explicitly present the resident's poverty to the tourists and to offer possibilities to improve the situation (e.g. by donating to projects). So the tour operators intentionally show the poverty and the developmental potentials of the townships at the same time. In their view, the tours have to show the bad living conditions in the townships, but also the positive changes. Others put the focus mainly on the 'positive sides' of the townships and consciously omit badly developed areas, so that the tourists' picture of the townships will be as good as possible. These operators rather focus on displaying "cultural heritage". Some of the interviewees emphasized that they go to great lengths to keep the tourists away from irritating or shocking experiences and to avoid any humiliation of the township residents (e.g., HIV-infected persons).

Furthermore, all of the tour operators made it clear that their customers' safety was their highest priority.

6.2   Actors in the Communities

During the study project the students also conducted interviews with those actors in the townships who profit directly from the tours, e.g. owners of shebeens, restaurants and spaza-shops, as well as artists and souvenir traders. The questions referred to their perception of, and experience with township tourism.

These interviews also revealed how townships are characterized in the eyes of the interviewees. The fact is that persons with very different languages, different religions, and cultures live together, and that the social network of friends, family, and neighbours functions so well was mentioned as a positive aspect. Moreover, the townships are – according to the residents – distinguished by their historical richness; they keep "African tradition" alive. It was repeatedly stressed that South African townships have been making significant developmental progress in the last years.

That the townships are mainly perceived as "problem areas", characterized by poverty and unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, street gangs and crime was mentioned as a negative aspect. In this context, a number of successful prevention activities were referred to. The interviewees usually aimed at correcting the common ideas of townships and their living conditions – which in their perspective are portrayed too negatively.

In the opinion of the interviewees, the tourists are primarily interested in the positive aspects of the townships, whereas negative aspects are interesting to them only if things are already changing to the better.

In general, many of the interviewed persons believed, that the tourists were especially attracted by the "different way of life" in South African townships. They stated, that tourists wanted to see how people lived in the townships and get to know things that do not exist in their home country (e.g. sheebens, sangomas, local art and craft, music and dances, foreign food and beverage), and that they wanted to learn about the culture and history of townships.

Most of the interviewees claimed that the tours had the support of the communities. In their view, the residents are even eager to get in contact with the tourists and to talk about their personal experience and life situation. They stated that this also serves the purpose to correct and improve the negative image of the townships conveyed by the media. Moreover, there is a strong economic interest in tourism. The interviewed actors are conscious of the fact that there is a developing market, which could create more employment and better income opportunities. Our interview partners expected only positive developmental effects on the local communities.

The survey did not examine, if the views represented here are shared by those residents who do not benefit from the tourist industry. Our observations give rise to the belief that the majority of the residents do not seem to feel disturbed by the visitors, and, in principle, appreciate the interest in their daily life and their way of living.

Box 2
Shaping tourism: The example of township tours in Masiphumelele

Township tourism in some townships outside of Cape Town differs from those in the bigger Capetonian townships like Khayelitsha and Langa. This special type of township tourism is going to be presented using the example of Masiphumelele.

Masiphumelele (Xhosa word for "we will succeed") is a township situated 20 miles south of Cape Town on the road to Cape Point. It is a semi-formal settlement that grew during the post-apartheid era. Masiphumelele (formally known as 'Site 5') was originally planned for 5,000 residents in the beginning of the 1990s. By now almost 30,000 people live in the area, which still makes it a small township. Mainly Xhosa who migrated from the former Homelands of the Eastern Cape live there. They are searching for an income and a better life in the city. Most of the residents live in very crowded and often deplorable conditions. Parts of the settlement are equipped with basic sanitation, electricity, and brick houses, but in other parts, such as the Wetlands in the northern section, the housing conditions remain extremely poor.

In 2006 there were two guides who conducted tours through Masiphumelele: Charlotte and Pumlani. Charlotte Swaartbooi is a certified tour guide, who works independently in her own one-woman-enterprise. She lives in Masiphumelele, where she is an important and well known member of the community. Charlotte works within a network of friends and colleagues, who support each other, since they have the common interest in broadening tourism in Masiphumelele in order to create more job opportunities, and to lure income into their township. With the purpose of attracting visitors who pass the township on their way to Cape Point they are trying to establish a tourist centre at the entrance of the township to attract visitors who pass the settlement on their way to Cape Point. The tours Charlotte offers are organised as walking tours of 1 to 3 hours.

Rarely shown part of Masiphumelele: The Wetlands.
Photo: C. Uhl

The main problem for Charlotte's business is that only a small number of tourists visit the township. This is due to various reasons: First of all, the location and the unknown name of the township don't attract potential costumers, as Masiphumelele hasn't got the same degree of popularity as e.g. Khayelitsha. Furthermore, Charlotte doesn't have sufficient resources for successful advertisement and marketing. Also for Charlotte's partners, new entrepreneurs with small businesses, it is hard to reach the formal requirements of the administration. This slows down the development of tourism in Masiphumelele. Charlotte's most important partner, Zukie, who is owner of a Bed & Breakfast in the township, has been working since 2003 to fulfil the standards in order to be promoted by Cape Town Tourism, a step that would help to gain the attention of more tourists. But she still hasn`t succeeded.

Pumlani is the second guide who operates township tours through Masiphumelele. He also resides in the settlement. Economically, Pumlani does not completely depend on tourism, since he works as a manager of a social project in the township. A travel agency from a neighbouring town sends groups of tourists to take walking or cycling tours with him. Since Pumlani hasn't passed the exam to become a tour guide yet, he is always accompanied by an additional guide of the travel agency. Interestingly, the working ideologies of Charlotte and Pumlani differ a lot.

The ideology of Charlotte Swaartbooi is to show the good and more developed sides of the township.

She wants to demonstrate that townships are not as miserable as the media in the western world likes to show. About her tour Charlotte says: "I do a slow walking tour in the community where I explain to them what is happening, the history, and it's kind of an interactive walking tour … I thought maybe they [the tourists] are just interested. They want to see what is going on in a township, especially they want to know things about the township, how we live, what we eat, basically what is really happening, because when you see in the newspaper it's oh, the people suffering, and they are so poor, but when they come here they see another picture, you know." Therefore she skips some less developed parts and concentrates on education (e.g. school, crèche, library), arts and handcrafts within the township. An important feature within her tour is Zukie's Bed & Breakfast (see above). Here the guests can have lunch or stay overnight. By giving the tourists this opportunity, Charlotte and Zukie also want to demonstrate that the township is not as dangerous as it is assumed to be. Another reason why Charlotte seeks to show exclusively positive things is that township tourism is her only income. Therefore, she seeks to attract as many tourists as possible, and she hopes to see them leaving the township, and remembering the tour with positive feelings. And she hopefully awaits the day they will return.

Pumlani pursues another way to present his township to strangers. He prefers showing the less developed parts of the settlement and facilities and welfare services that are in worse shape than the buildings Charlotte shows. For example, instead of visiting a well equipped, clean crèche, he leads the visitors to a crèche which is in a very poor condition. His experience is that tourists sometimes come back to these places to donate, and therefore help to ameliorate the living conditions. Unlike Charlotte, he also guides his customers through the Wetlands, which are characterized by very bad and crowded housing conditions, as well as by a very poor sanitary situation. Pumlani's aim is to show this part of Masiphumelele to the tourists in order to present the grievances and to gain the tourists' support. Pumlani himself lives in the Wetlands, which makes his explanations even more credible and emphatic. Obviously his programme is deliberately designed to explicitly shock the visitors from Europe or North America and to give them a wake up call or to tug at their heartstrings.

As we can see, the two tour guides design their tour programmes according to their priorities. They choose the sites, sights, people, facilities and organisations they want to show, and therefore they channel the tourists' expenses and donations. The working ideologies of Charlotte and Pumlani differ a lot and therefore the things they show on their tours also differ. Both guides shape the tourists' perceptions, as well as the ideas and pictures of the townships they take home. They play an important role in the construction of the townships' image. Both guides live in the settlement, and obviously both know the township very well. Each of them claims to convey an "authentic" picture of Masiphumelele. But now, that it is apparent that these images depend on the tour guide, it is also apparent that the concept of authenticity is very blurred.

Students of Potsdam University exploring Masiphumelele.
Photo:
P. Frommberg

7 Before the tour:
Townships and Township Tours from the Tourists' Perspective

The time frame of this field study did not allow us, to research the development of pre-judice or preconceptions of tourists about Africa, South Africa or the townships. It can be assumed that media coverage, knowledge conveyed at school, and individual travel experiences play a vital role. As Poenicke (2001: 12ff) shows in her study about the portrayal of Africa in schoolbooks, and in Germany, reports on wars, coup d'etats, famines, corruption, crime, and diseases (especially HIV/AIDS) dominate the public media. The image of Africa which has been "edited" for tourist marketing can be characterized by exotic wildlife, myths of discoverers, and adventurers, and a original, untouched and wild nature. The image of Africa conveyed in school books is still coined by a Euro- and ethno-centrism pervaded by colonial thinking, countless generalizations and oversimplifications. Africa is often depicted as a continent being in need of help on a basic and general level.[30] Also, the nativeness of the "noble" and "savage" nature of Africans and their cultural contexts appear in part as fragments of the tourists' image. Here, the "premodern exoticism" is appearing as a central modus. In this paragraph, we can only outline the main features of the tourists´ images. On the subject of projection and reproduction of eurocentric images of Africa and the Africans (with special focus on the coverage in German mass media).[31]

The Sample

This section is an analysis of the responses of 179 tourists which were obtained by the use of a standardized questionnaire just before they entered the township. The questionnaire was filled out in the District Six Museum in Cape Town (usually the first stop of the tours) and in the busses shortly before the beginning of the tour. A total of 100 questionnaires were filled out in the museum and 79 in the busses.

34 % of the 179 tourists hailed from Great Britain, 17 % from the U.S.A., and 13 % from Germany. The remaining 36 % included mainly persons from Norway, Sweden and Ireland. So at large, 80 % of the respondents were Europeans. 62 % of the persons were female and 38 % were male.[32] The tourists in the sample can be classified into three age groups: 40 % were between 30 and 49 years old, the percentage of people younger than 29 was 31 %, and 29 % were older than 49 years. The average duration of their stay in Cape Town was seven days; the average stay in the Republic of South Africa was 14 days. 52 % of the tourists came to South Africa for the first time. 48 % respondents were staying in hotels, 13 % in guesthouses and 12 % in backpacker-hostels.

Choice of the Tour Company

The tourists were asked questions concerning the tour operators. The 179 tourists took part in tours of 17 different companies.[33] At first the tourists were asked why they had

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[30]Cf. Poenicke (2001).

[31]See also Krems (2002).

[32]Our project could not come up with a satisfying explanation for this irregular distribution.

[33]Significant statements about single tour operators are not possible, since the number of responses is too small.

chosen this particular company. 35 % answered that they got the information from a guide book, 28 % had read leaflets or brochures of the operators[34] and 14 % had their attention called to the company by word-of-mouth advertising. Roughly one third of the respondents had compared offers of different companies and decided for one of the tours on this basis.

Townships as Attractions in Cape Town

The tourists were asked to choose from a list of six attractions of the Cape Town region (Table Mountain, Cape Point, Robben Island, Wine-lands, Waterfront, and Townships) not more than three sights that they regard as most important or attractive to visit. The following figure shows the results:

Figure 3: Townships as Tourist Attractions in Cape Town[35]

percentage of responses in %
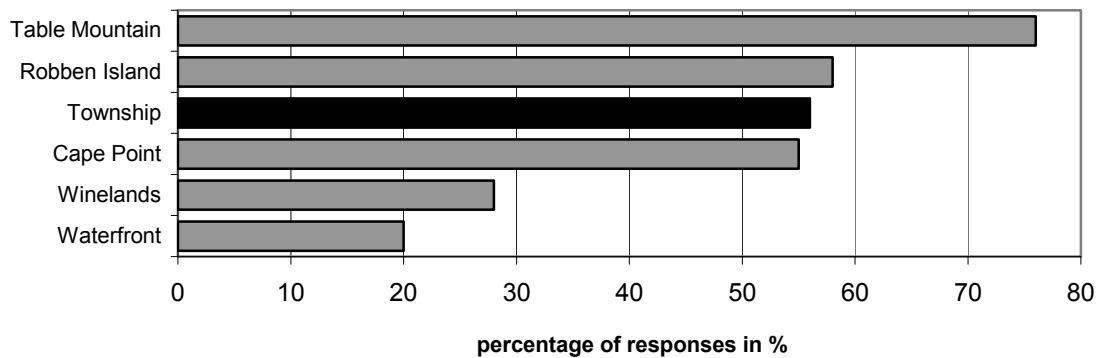
Source: Own research 2007.

It can be seen that a trip to Table Mountain is considered the most important destination, followed by Robben Island (58 %). The third position already is taken by the townships (55 %). This high percentage is hardly surprising, bearing in mind the fact that all of the respondents were township tourists. Yet, it is remarkable that the tourists rank the townships as more attractive than the classic tourist magnets Cape Point, Wine-lands, and Waterfront. So for these tourists the township tour is not just something to do if everything else is already ticked off the list, but instead ranges on a high position in the priority ranking.

Pictures and Ideas of the Townships before the Tour

The survey was also supposed to find out what pictures and ideas of townships the tourists have before they embark on a tour. For this purpose it was asked what notions the

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[34]Brochures and leaflets are usually to be found in the accommodations, or in the tourist information.

[35]The question read: "In the following there is a list of six tourist attractions in Cape Town. Which ones would you choose if you had to visit three of them?"

tourists associated with "township". Figure 4 illustrates that 65 % of the 152 tourists asso-
ciated "poverty". Further associations, with significantly less responses, were: "black/Afri-
can population", "Apartheid", "crime", "poor housing", etc. It becomes apparent that
negative associations clearly dominate the semantic field of the term "township".

Figure 4: Township-Associations[36]
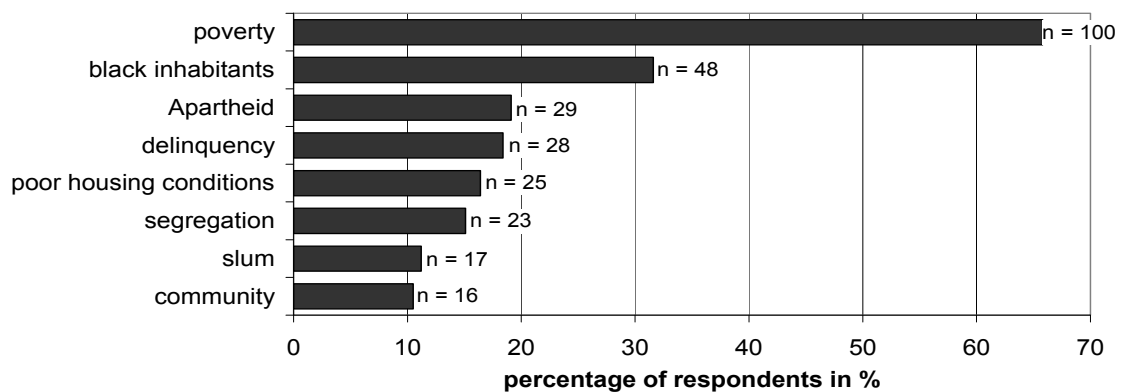
Source: Own research 2007.

If one interprets these results on the basis of the plausible hypothesis that what the tou-
rists *expect* to see and what they *hope* to see is largely identical[37] – then township tourism
appears to be a specific form of "*negative sightseeing*" (Welz 1993).[38]

This could lead to the assumption that township tourism is essentially a kind of social
bungee jumping. With it, the bourgeois *thrill seeker* – driven by a certain appetite for fear –
wants to directly experience a social divide in order to sensually fathom the height of a
social fall – but without running a real danger of a hard landing.

Reasons for going on a Township Tour

In a further open-ended question, the tourists were asked to state their reasons for taking
part in a township tour.[39] 162 persons of the 179 interviewees gave a total of 209 answers.
The classified statements are presented in figure 5.

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[36]"What associations do you have, if you hear the term 'township'?"

[37]Cf. Urry (1990).

[38]Welz (1993) examined the phenomenon of slumming using the example of Harlem tourism in New York
during the 1920. This is also where she locates the historic-cultural roots of the term. Koven (2006) on the
other hand sees its roots in 19th century Victorian England. He describes the practice of *Slumming* as a
leisure activity of members of the upper class and the upper middle class at the close of the 19th century.

[39]15% of the 179 respondents had seen a township before. Most of them had been to Soweto, Johannesburg,
probably the best-known township of South Africa.

Figure 5: Reasons for Participating in a Township Tour[40]
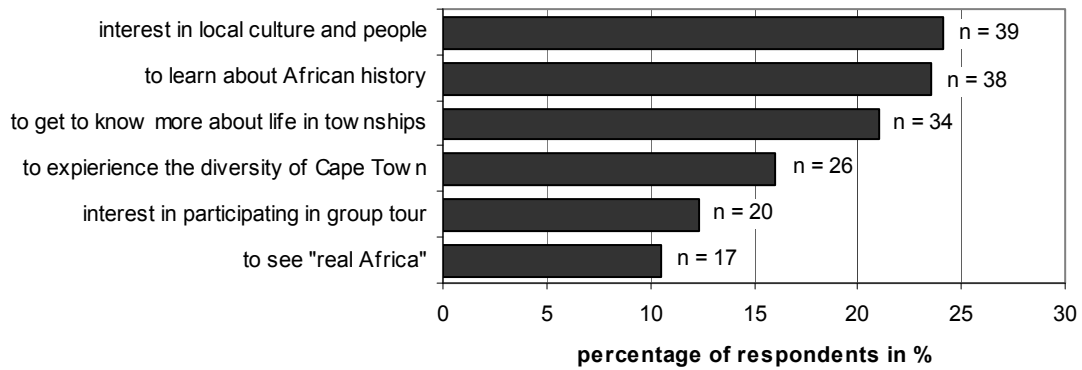
Source: Own research 2007.

The interest in local culture and people was the commonest reason put forward by the tourists (24 % of 162 persons). Almost as many believed that during the tour they would learn more about the history of the Republic of South Africa (23 %). Furthermore, the tourists wanted to know more about the life of the township residents (21 %). At the same time, they wanted to experience the diversity of Cape Town (16 %).

The closed-ended question as to the importance of specific aspects of the township-visit was answered by all of the 179 tourists. The tourists were asked how important certain facts about a township tour seemed to them. They could choose between "very important", "rather important", "partly/partly", "rather unimportant", and "very unimportant". In figure 6 the results are presented; the responses "very important", and "rather important" as well as "rather unimportant", and "very unimportant" have been summed up.

Figure 6: Importance of Specific Aspects of a Township Tour[41]
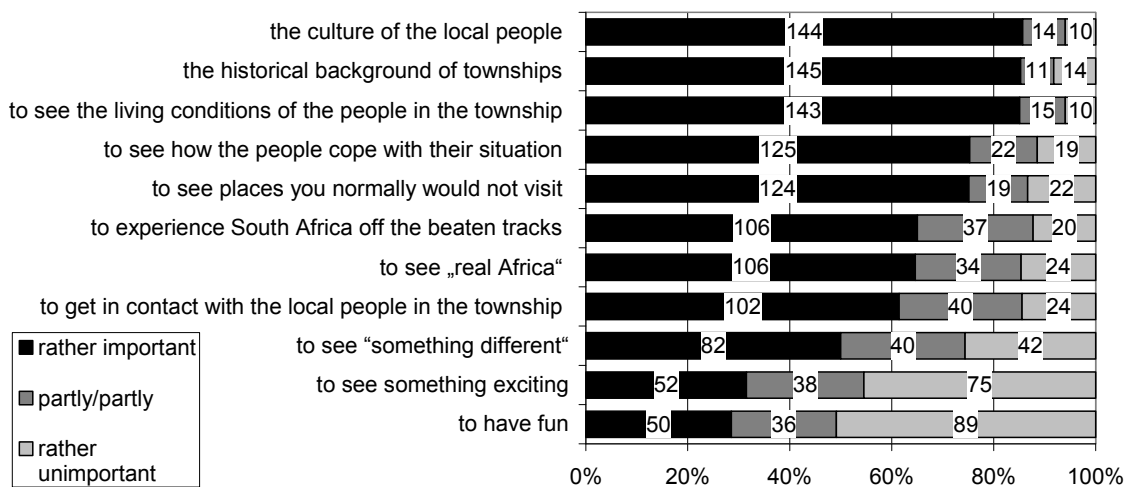
Source: Own research 2007.

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[40]"Why did you decide to make a township tour?"
[41]"How important are the following aspects of the township tour for you?"

These results correspond with the reasons for visiting a township mentioned before. Gaining knowledge about the culture and the living conditions of the residents was ranked as very or rather important by 84 % of the township tourists. To learn something about the historical backgrounds of townships was regarded as very or rather important by approx. 83 %. Furthermore, a vast majority of the persons (approx. 75 %) wanted to see how people in the townships cope with their situation. To more than 60 % it is very or rather important to experience "real Africa".

Noticeably, the major part of the respondents regarded "having fun" or "experiencing something exciting" as rather unimportant or even very unimportant. These responses do not appear typical for tourists. On a vacation trip, priority is normally given to repose, exciting experiences or fun. During the visit of a township, though, the tourists seem to distance themselves from these aims. This might point to the fact that any expectation of – or even demand for – amusement in an area, that the tourists assume to be mainly characterised by poverty and precarious living conditions, is regarded as morally or politically incorrect. The respondents profess to understand the township tour rather as an opportunity to get an insight into local culture. Therefore, when asked about their demands, the tourists are inclined to restrict their responses to aspects of educational and cultural interests.

Figure 7: The Tourists' Ideas of Townships before the Tour[42]

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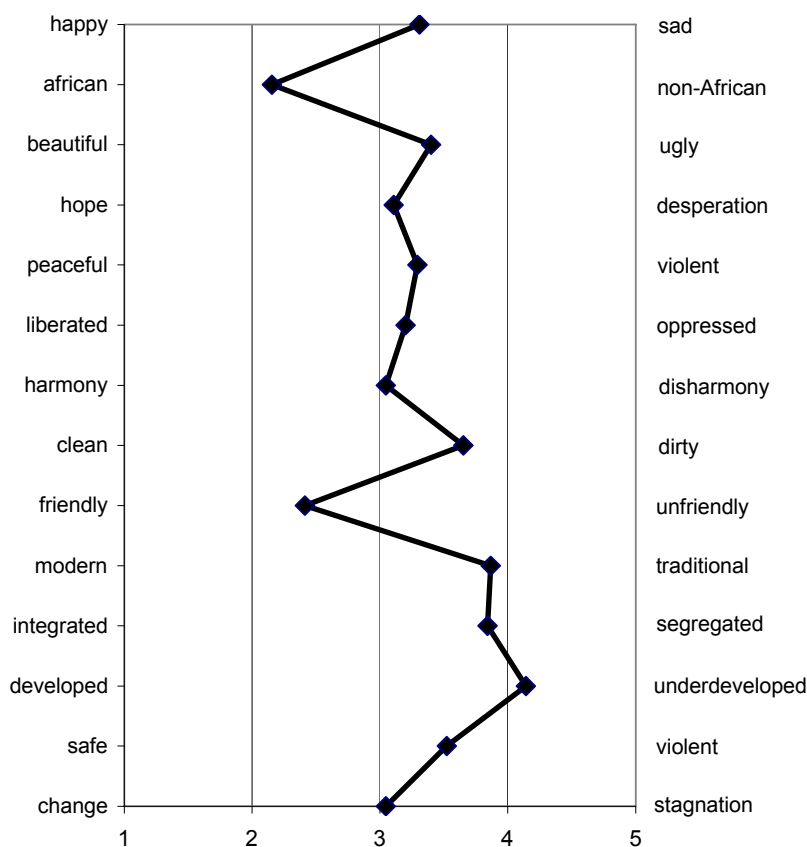
[42]"Here is a list of pairs of contradicting words. Tick spontaneously which of the following words do better describe your idea of townships."

To allow for a refined description of the tourists' image of the townships, they were asked to fill out a semantic profile before the beginning of the tour. In the questionnaire, dichotomous word pairs were presented, which were supposed to serve as scales for the tourists' perception of townships. The 179 tourists were asked to decide which word fits better with their own ideas of a township. In this way, a specification of the tourists' expectations (images) was rendered possible. The results are summarized in figure 7.

Once more it proves to be the case that "township" has a rather negative connotation in the tourists' perception. The predominant notions before the beginning of the tour were "dirty", "dangerous", "underdeveloped", "ugly", "violent", and "sad". At the same time, "friendly", "traditional", and "African" were expected. The tourists put the townships in a place between harmony and disharmony, between hope and desperation, and between change and stagnation. So the respondents expected very different, sometimes even contradicting things (e.g. the townships are distinguished as "friendly" and at the same time as "dangerous" or "violent").

Box 3
My Encounter with Sam on the Green Market Square

The Green Market, located in the heart of Cape Town, is one of the main attractions for international tourists visiting. The traders that work there come from all over the African continent and offer mainly souvenirs, handicraft, and curiosities from their regions of origin.
There, I met Samuel, a trader who calls himself Sam. For marketing reasons he poses as South African, even though he is a refugee who fled from war in Sudan. He offers 'self painted' oil canvases. One of his main motifs is the "Township-scenes" (see Photo 3 on page 25).
I stopped at Sam's stand to admire his paintings with curiosity. When he noticed my interest he came up to me, and we had the following short conversation:

Malte: *Who buys these pictures?*
Sam: *Tourists – like you. Especially the ones who did a township tour in the Cape Flats.*
Malte: *Why do they buy these pictures?*
Sam: *Because they want to remember what they have seen here in Cape Town.*
Malte: *What do the tourists want to see, when they do the township tour?*
Sam: *They want to see the real Africa. You know here, the Green Market Square, this is not real Africa, its European! But the townships are the real Africa.*
Malte: *So this here, is that real Africa?*

[I pointed at a picture in the upper left corner of a canvas showing a township-scene]

Sam: *Yes, that is real Africa.*

Then I pointed at another painting that was hanging right below the Township-scene. In blue colours it portrayed a rural idyll in a calm evening ambiance, with the sun setting behind a baobab tree and thatched round huts.

Malte: *And this here?*
Sam: *That is even more real Africa!*

We both started laughing, because we were very pleased with what we just discovered. And after that, I took photos of the 'real' and the 'even more real' Africa – happy to be able to take both of them home with me.

On the Green Market.
Photo: M. Rolfes

8 After the Tour:
Townships and Township Tours from the Tourists' Perspective

The tourists who took part in the township tours were also asked to fill out a standardized questionnaire *after* the tour. This survey focussed on two aspects: On the one hand, we wanted to examine what the tourists' image and perception of townships was like after the tour. More specifically, we wanted to know if their image of the townships had been broadened, modified or confirmed by the tour. On the other hand, the tourists were asked to evaluate specific aspects of the township tour. The analysis is based on the responses of 79 persons.

8.1 Perception and Images after the Tour

After the township tour, the tourists were asked what observations they had made in the course of the trip and what it was that had impressed them the most. To this question we received 85 responses from 62 of the 79 persons (cf. figure 8). Many of the visitors were especially impressed by the friendliness of the township-residents; more than 30 % of the respondents mentioned this point. 20 % mentioned the comparatively high standard of public and commercial infrastructure as a surprising characteristic. That these two aspects were striking to so many of the tourists can obviously be ascribed to the fact that they did not expect such high standards. After all, two thirds of the visitors associated the township with "poverty" before the beginning of the tour. Given such expectations, it is no surprise that happy people and developed infrastructure (and technology) are particularly surprising to the visitors.[43]

Figure 8: Impression of the Tourists after the Tour[44]
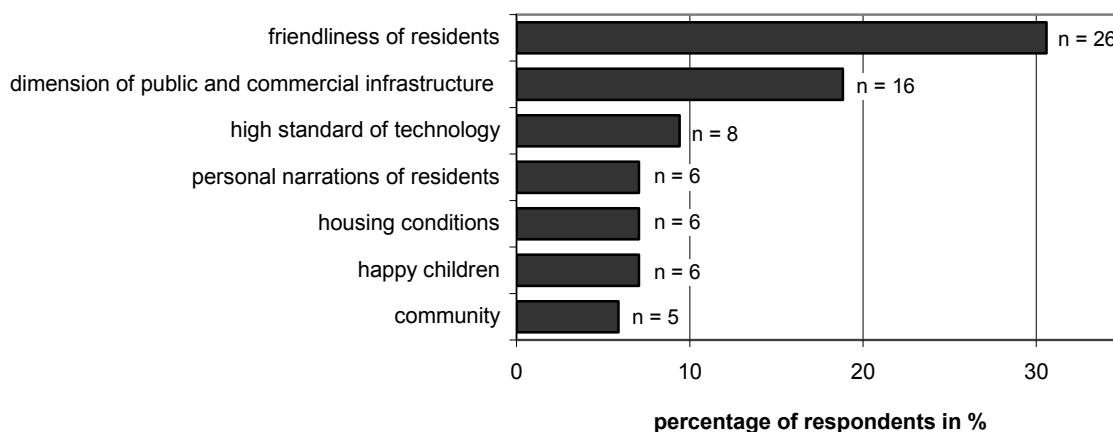
Source: Own research 2007.

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[43]Of the 179 interviewees only 79 were interviewed before and after the tour.
[44]"Please write down words describing your impressions about your township tour."

The predominantly positive feelings of the tourists during the visit in the township confirm these results: In a closed-ended question, they were given five word pairs meant to express how they felt in the township (cf. figure 9). The figure shows that most of the interviewees felt very comfortable, welcome and safe; most of them saw themselves received as guests as well as observers. Negative perceptions were mentioned in a few cases only.

Figure 9: Feelings of the Tourists during the Tour[45]
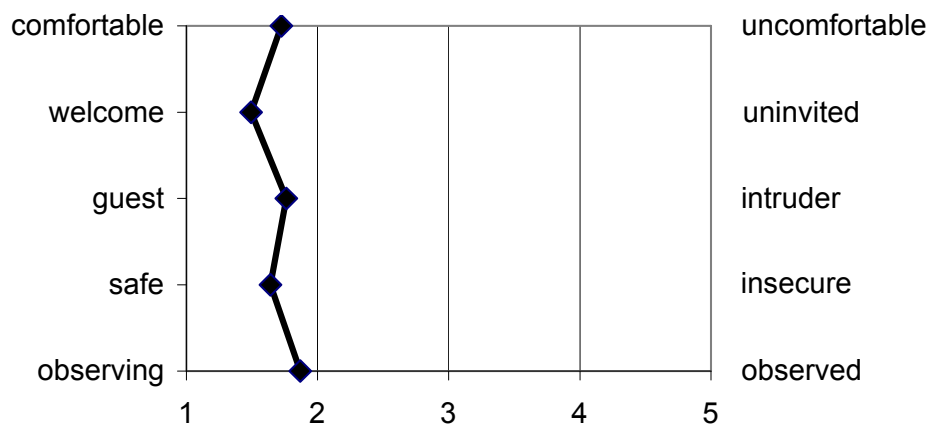
Source: Own research 2007.

More than 90 % of the tourists reported to have had personal contact with township residents during the tour. According to our observations, most of the contacts, though, were limited. Longer dialogues between visitors and township-residents developed rarely. This can mainly be attributed to the fact that the stops are rather short. The best opportunity to interact with residents is the mandatory visit to the *shebeen*. (It should be mention that the residents in the *shebeen* represent only a certain selection of the township-residents).

These results already are a strong indicator for the fact that the tourists' perception of the townships changes during the tour. A comparison of the semantic profiles before and after the tour elaborates further on this point. Figure 10 illustrates how the responses before the tour (black line) differ from those after the tour (grey line).

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[45]"How did you feel in the township?"

Figure 10: Evaluation of Specific Aspects of the Townships before and after the Tour[46]
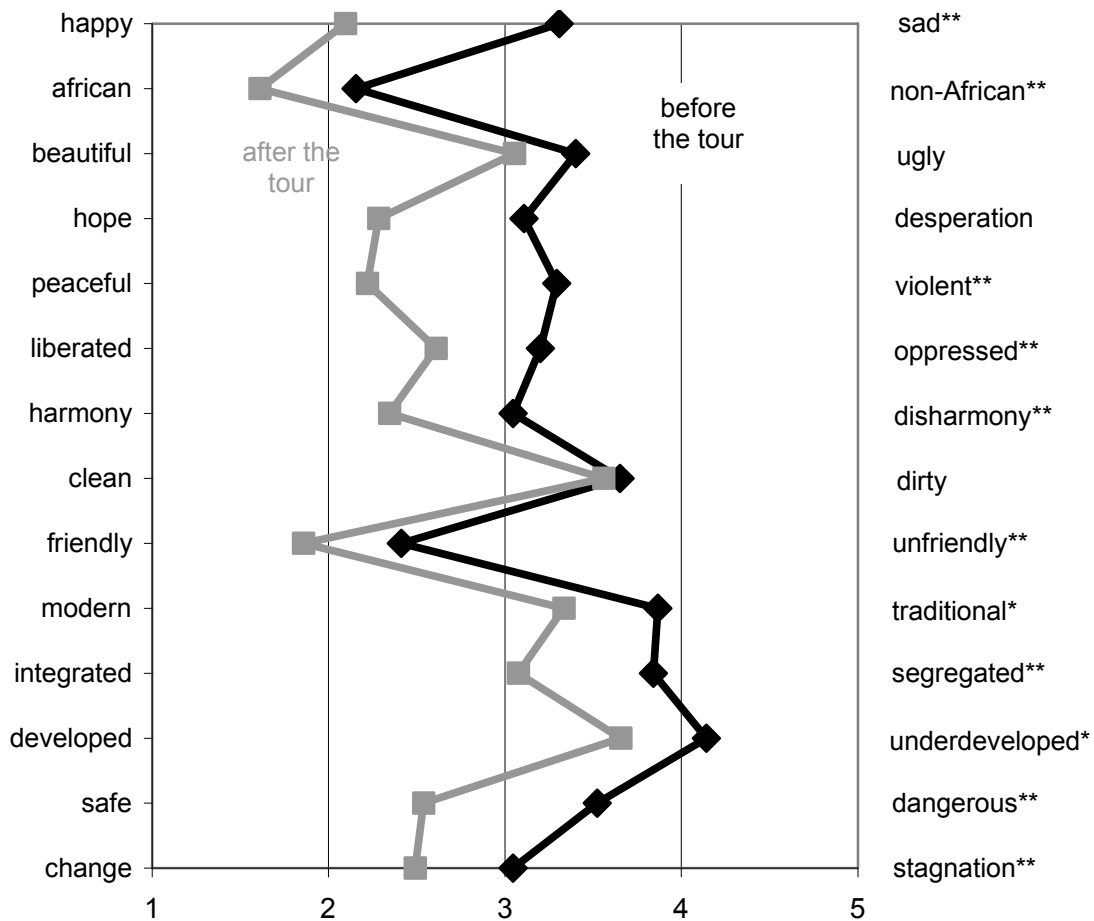
Source: Own research 2007.

It becomes obvious that the ratings have changed remarkably. For the most part, the differences are significant (5 %-level*) or even highly significant (1 %-level**). Interestingly, there is a tendency to give more positive evaluations after the tour in the case of all word-pairs.[47] Once more it becomes apparent that persons who took part in a tour connect the townships much more often to "happy" and "friendly". The tendency changes from "sad" to "happy". The same holds true for the notions "hopeful" and "peaceful". Here, the expectations of a high number of respondents were more negative before the tour. In addition to that, the percentage of tourists who classify the townships as rather "dangerous" is significantly lower after the tour. In the case of this item-pair, the evaluation inclines more to *safe*.

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[46]"Here is a list of pairs of contradicting words. Tick spontaneously which of the following words do better describe the township." – In order to test the significance of the differences, the U-Test was applied (* = 5 % -level, ** = 1 % -level**).

[47]This does not refer to the word pairs "modern/traditional" and "African/ not African", as these do not include an intrinsic positive/negative-connotation.

The following statements briefly describe the tourists' perceptions, and particularly how they changed in the course of the tours:

- Contrary to expectations, townships (i.e. the residents of the townships) are perceived as being rather happy and hopeful, instead of sad and despaired.

- Contrary to expectations, townships are perceived as being rather safe and peaceful, instead of dangerous and violent, and rather harmonious than disharmonious

- Townships are perceived as being more integrated, more modern and liberal than expected, and not as underdeveloped as expected

- Townships are perceived as being more „African" and the population as being even friendlier than expected

- Townships are perceived as rather ugly and dirty, just as expected.

From the analyses, it becomes apparent that the visits have brought about significant changes in the tourists´ perception of the townships. The choice of sights and sceneries are presented by the tour operators and the agents within the townships have apparently not missed the intended goal (i.e. improving the image of the townships). The picture that used to be dreary and grey has become more multifaceted, and at times even bright and rosy. A further analysis of the inquiries after the tour and interviews with individual tourists show that cultural categories gain in importance for the majority of the tourists.

8.2 Evaluation of the Township Tour

Immediately after the end of the tours, the tourists were asked about their impressions. 57 of 79 answered this open question, which yielded a total of 147 responses. These referred either to the situation in the townships (88 responses, 75 of which were positive and 13 negative), to the quality of the township tour (36 responses: 33 positive, 3 negative), or to personal feelings and emotions during the tour (23 responses, 15 positive, 8 negative). It turns out that the interviewees primarily emphasize positive impressions and experiences.

The following Figure 11 lists the impressions of the tourists. 40 % of the respondents emphasized the informative and educational character of the tour. The positive aspects of the townships that the respondents remembered best are, firstly, the friendliness of the residents, secondly, the social networks and the sense of community and, thirdly, the positive development trends in the townships. However, bad living conditions and poverty were mentioned as well. Some of the interviewed persons expressed uncomfortable and depressed feelings because of the living conditions in the townships. But all in all, the impressions of the township visitors were mainly positive.

Figure 11: Impressions of the Tourists shortly after the Township Tour[48]

percentage of responses in respect to the respondents in %
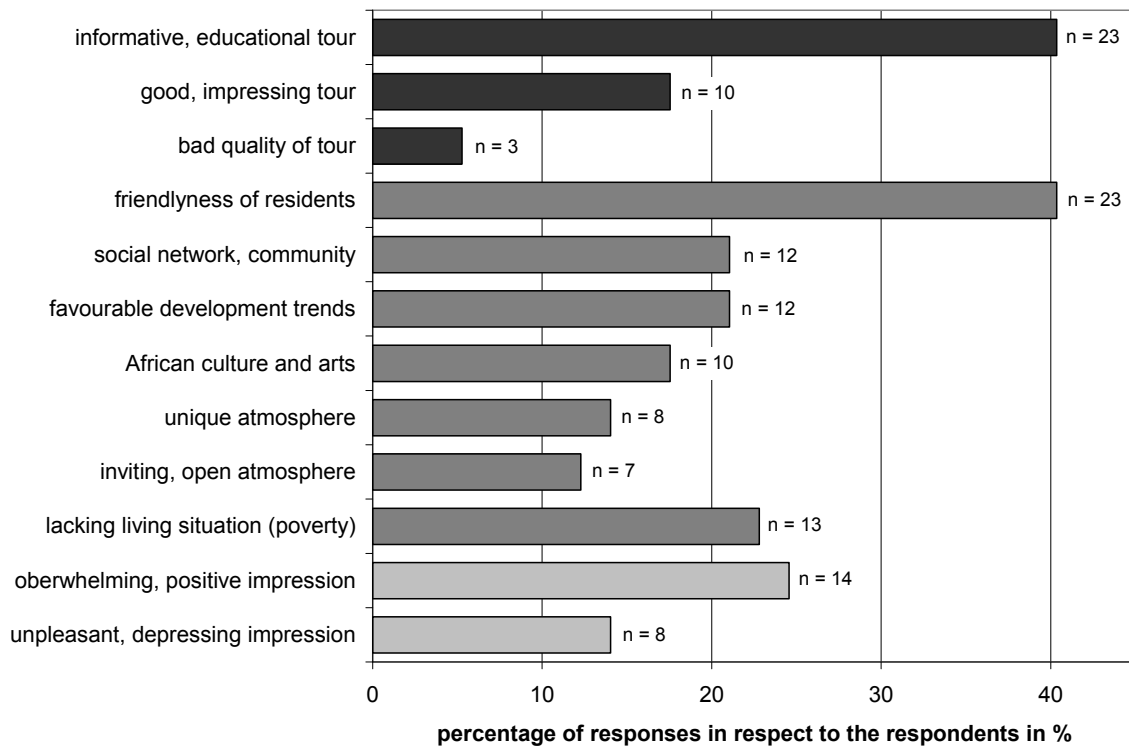
Source: Own research 2007.

A remarkable number of tourists obviously start their township tour with rather mixed feelings and expectations. Yet after the tour, the impressions are predominantly positive.

Considering the mainly positive experience, it does not come as a surprise that the vast majority of the interviewees, namely 71 % (54 respondents), were very satisfied with their township tour. 26 % of the tourists were after all satisfied, and only 2 respondents were just partly satisfied or unsatisfied with the tour. Accordingly, 95 % of the sample (70 persons) would recommend the tours. More than 70 % were even interested in taking part in another township tour (they explained that they would like to widen their range of experience). Many tourists also expressed their interest in the developmental changes within the townships and wanted to make further township tours in order to follow up that process.

The respondents were asked to evaluate different aspects of the tour. The results are summed up in figure 12. They confirm the respondents' high degree of satisfaction.

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[48] "Is there anything you found very impressing or anything you didn't expect?"

Figure 12: Satisfaction of the Tourists with different Aspects of the Tour[49]
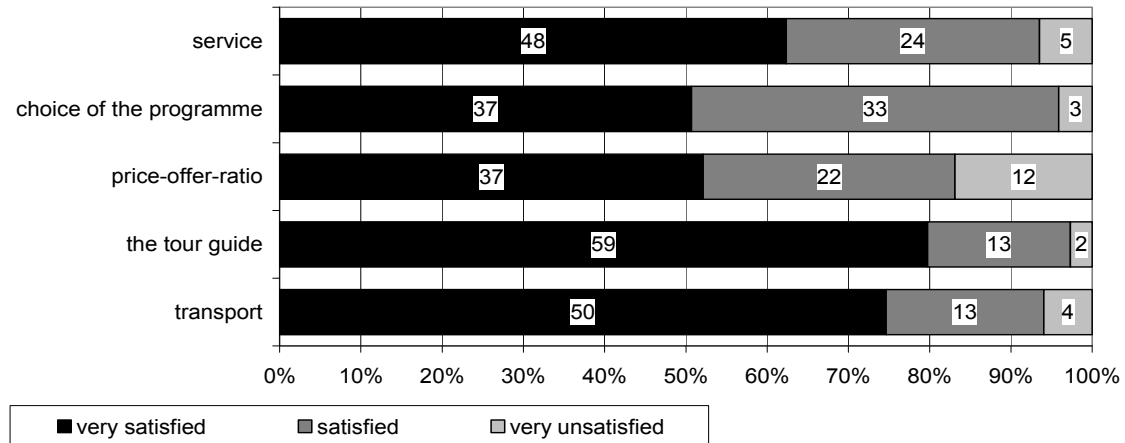
Source: Own research 2007.

The majority of the tourists is very satisfied with the transportation as well as with the tour-guide. A bit lower, but still on a high ranking, ranges the satisfaction with the price-performance-ratio, the choice of the programme of the tour and the service.

In an open-ended question, the tourists were asked to state what they thought the main focus of the township tour was. The results can be seen in figure 13.

Figure 13: Main Focus of the Township Tour from the Tourists' Perspective[50]
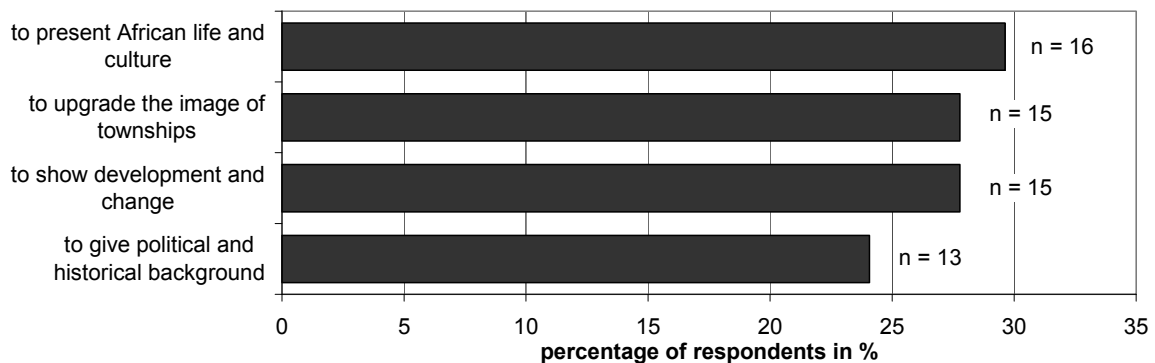
Source: Own research 2007.

According to the tourists, the tour mainly focussed on showing African life and African culture. Furthermore, the tourists thought that the tours were supposed to improve the image of the townships. The tourists also assumed that the programmes aim at showing

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[49]"How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the tour?"
[50]"What do you think was the main focus of the tour?"

positive development trends and changes in the townships and at explaining the political as well as historical backgrounds of the townships.

Additionally, the tourists were invited to evaluate the tour by responding to three open-ended questions. They were asked to state what they liked about the tour, what they did not like and what modifications they would suggest. Figure 14 shows the most important points that the tourists liked. In sum, 70 respondents made 131 statements that referred to positive aspects of the tour.

Figure 14: Perceived positive Aspects of the Tour[51]

Source: Own research 2007.

Almost a third of the respondents evaluated the profound knowledge of the tour guide as positive. Roughly the same percentage of persons especially appreciated the insights into township-life and the interactions with the residents.
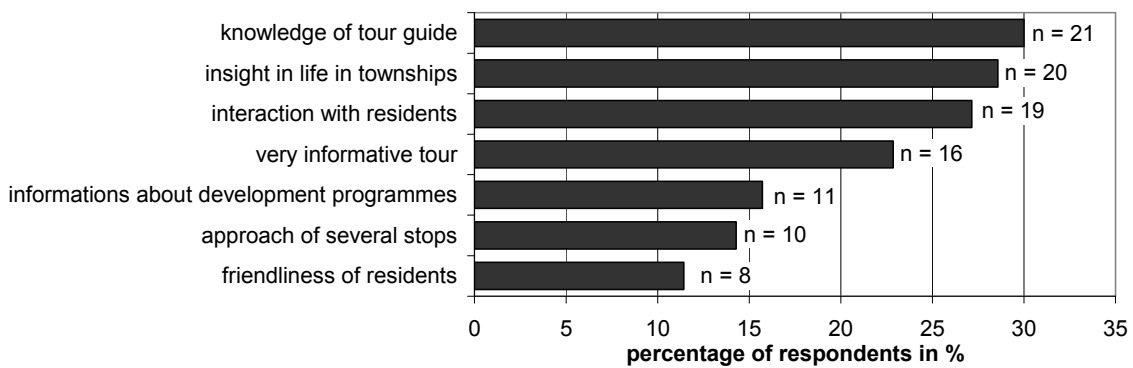
Negative aspects were expressed more rarely. Only 32 respondents mentioned just 39 aspects. The very tight time schedule was criticized most often (8 responses). Also criticised were the voyeuristic elements (especially the intrusion into private spheres, 7 responses), the poverty which became obvious during the trip (5 responses), and the performances of the sangomas (4 responses), which were perceived as too artificial or staged.

Due to the fact that the respondents uttered only little criticism, the number of suggestions for improvement was quite small. Only 30 of 79 respondents made 36 suggestions as to how the tour could be improved. 13 respondents called for (more) financial support for the communities from the tour operators. Five respondents wished for a more intensive interaction with the residents in the townships. Some respondents also proposed to change the time schedule.

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[51]"What did you like about the tour?"

9 Theoretic Re-Constructions

The empiric results show that the different parties involved in township tourism (i.e. tour operators, actors within the townships and tourists) convey very different images and ideas of the townships. If one conceives the township as a constructed space, i.e. as a social construct, then the people offering these tours, as well as the involved residents of the townships, are important agents in this process of construction. However, a distinction has to be made between constructions which refer to the image of townships the residents themselves have, and spatial constructs which are the result of (either deliberately or unconsciously) staging for tourism. In this context, striking distinctions and selections can be observed. On the township tours, positive developmental changes, ethnic and cultural diversity and self-help potential are fore-grounded and praised, for example. The sense of community within the urban quarters is also highlighted.[52]

It becomes obvious, that cultural categories are being introduced into this construction process while historicising perspectives are also embraced. Hereby, the tour operators as well as the agents within the townships expect to enhance "authenticity". This striving for authenticity of the portrayal also becomes apparent in the fact, that all tour operators stress the autochthonous origin of the tour guides.

The introduction of cultural categories and pretensions of authenticity are the main principles in the construction of townships and/or in charging the space-oriented semantics of the township.

From a perspective of theory of space, these practices have considerable consequences. The tourists´ prejudices are being altered, while the spatial construction of "township"-receives a modification. From the tourists' perspective, a differentiation of existing spatial homogenizations takes place.

Townships stop being just homogenous slums mainly characterised by poverty. It is made clear that significant differentiations, considerable local disparities and spatial division of functions exist within the townships. Township tours offer insights into the living conditions of the residents. The lack of knowledge about the socio-economic circumstances is decreased. The tourists recognize a socio-economic complexity, which is usually reduced by an oversimplifying spatialization. Through this, the tourists are confronted with their inability to connect their experiences to the (often spatially coded) expectations and prejudices prevalent before the tour.

Before the tour, a large number of tourists only had a very limited and often trivial knowledge on the subject of townships. Through the information they gained on the tours – and which they perceived as "authentic" – their hitherto one-dimensional view of townships has been at least partially disrupted.

In the course of trying to understand the phenomenon of township tourism, the study reveals significant results by showing that the process of construction takes places within a specific and seemingly paradox field of tension, which results from the different motifs and interests of the parties involved in this process: On the one hand, a considerable amount of the townships'-appeal as a tourist attraction results from their negative image ("*negative*

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[52] On the term of authenticity in tourism research and the distinction between *staged* and *true* authenticity cf. MacCannel (1988).

sightseeing"). On the other hand, tour operators and the involved township residents express the explicit goal to improve exactly this image with the help of these tours. The tours are supposed to aim at the representation of a *positive sight*. It can be assumed that the introduction of culture as an important category of observation serves exactly this purpose. By stressing "the cultural", the potential for disappointment of the *negative sightseers ("it's not that miserable")* is decreased to a certain degree. The potential disappointment when not being faced with the most disturbing and horrifying pictures is being balanced by a staging of positive "cultural experiences".

The analyses have shown that cultural categories are being introduced by the operators specifically in order to induce a "cultural view" among the tourists. Rarely do the tourists´ expectations before the tour directly refer to *something cultural*. Initially, social and above all economic differences are in the focus of the tourists´ interests ("watching the poor", "looking at the shacks"). Culture or the cultural heritage becomes a centre of attention only during the tour. The way in which this happens partly reinforces old stereotypes and clichés of colonial origin ("African superstition", "poor but happy"). From this perspective, a correspondence between poverty and the cultural "other" is easily produced in the context of township tourism. Thus, an exoticisation of deprivation takes place which entails an aesthetic configuration or culturalization of poverty. Together with the sense of insecurity (put into perspective by the security of the minivan), the socio-voyeuristic wants of bourgeois "thrillseekers" are satisfied.

Considering all that has been stated before, the almost coercive question arises, whether township tourism contributes to process of de-problematization, as well as de-politicization of global poverty.

10 Conclusion and Recommendations on an Applied Level

The strong interest of international tourists in South African townships is one of the characteristics of present developments in Cape Town's tourism business. This becomes manifest in an increasing demand for township tours, which have become an important element of the local tourism industry. At present, a large number of companies is offering guided tours into the townships of Cape Town.

The curiosity moving the tourists to visit a township can only be rooted in the knowledge and images the tourists have before they embark on a tour. The results of the survey show that the tourists at this point have a very negative picture of the townships and the living conditions there. Their image is strongly shaped by ideas of violence and crime as well as by notions of poverty, segregation and precarious housing conditions. Since most of the respondents had not been in a township before, the negative image cannot have been formed by immediate experience. Thus it must have developed mainly on the basis of the representations in the international media. Consequently, it has to be assumed that the negative connotations of the townships provoke the tourists' curiosity and influence their decision to go on a township tour to a great extent. This can be interpreted as the zest of negative attractions ('*sensational aspect*'). On the other hand, however, the results can be interpreted as showing that, *in spite of* negative anticipations, the tourists are willing to be confronted with the living situation of the residents in order to learn and understand ('*educational aspect*').

In any case it is noticeable that the image the tourists have before the tours significantly changes to the better afterwards. Most of the respondents do not find their negative pictures confirmed to the extent they expected. In many instances, the living conditions are evaluated as being better than expected. Moreover it can be stated that positive elements are added to the image or that these elements become more important (especially a sense of community, social networks, rootedness in tradition, happiness, and friendliness). Thus it can be concluded that the tours clearly contribute to improve the image of the townships. This of course should not amount to the assertion that the tourists have a 'realistic' notion of the living conditions, the population or the 'culture' in the townships after having made a tour. The picture that the tours convey will show the complex social world of township life only in a selected, reduced and stereotype form, because the arrangement always includes a process of selection in the course of which the tour operators or the actors in the townships decide what to show and what to leave out.

The choice of what is shown in the townships and how it is presented has to be regarded as economically successful. The results show that the tourists usually are very satisfied and leave the townships with positive feelings. Also, the price-performance-ratio is rated as adequate by most of the respondents. So commercially, the offer meets the demand in a satisfying way. As the tourist industry is basically a commercial domain, it is neither surprising nor should it be criticized that the tour operators are motivated by financial interests, i.e. offer their products in order to earn money. Nevertheless they should be aware that beyond economic concerns they also have political and cultural responsibility.

There is a risk of tour operators primarily trying to present what they assume their customers expect. If that is the case, the conveyed township-image would mainly reflect the stereotype pictures of townships (or of 'Africa' as a whole). As it is, the tendency of

tour operators increasingly offering a kind of standardized programme is already noticeable.

The townships in South Africa are no Disneyland but living environments of a major part of the country's urban population. It is exactly for this very reason that the tour companies have the political responsibility not to let the gap between the township as a product of the tourism market and the township as a living space of real people get too wide. Tour operators should withstand the temptation to arrange tour-programmes that only confirm those Eurocentric stereotype clichés about Africa, some of which are as old as the history of colonialism itself (e.g. "*Poor but happy*"; "*African people dance and sing and believe in ghosts and witches*"). The operators should instead accept the challenge to show things that *do not* correspond to the expectations. To show something unexpected and more complex does by no means have to disappoint the tourists, but can broaden or modify the images they have. In this way, the tourists might also be confronted with their own picture and be urged to reconsider it.

Above all, township tourism should be educational tourism, and – according to our opinion – the tourists are willing to face up to the diversity, complexity and the continuous cultural change in the townships. The operators should respond to this.

The concluding recommendation of the research group can therefore only be that a strong involvement of the township residents into the tours has to be achieved. The interaction between residents and tourists is definitely a central aspect. But (intercultural) communicative exchange should not be restricted to the routine visit of a *shebeen*, since the tourists will only meet a "selected" minority of the township-population there (basically the drinking unemployed males). And this definitely does not represent the communities as a whole.

Beyond the aspect of interaction, the communities should participate in the decision as to what will be shown and how they present themselves to the outside world. The operators should not choose the programme of their tours solely in respond to the demands. A strong and wide-ranged participation of the population will help to rule out that the townships residents are forced into the humiliating role of extras in a township-presentation. And only the participation of the community can prevent the gap between what is being sold as "authentic" to the tourists and the actual life of the residents from getting too wide. This can only serve the purposes of the tourists, since one of their chief aims is "*to experience real township life*". In our view, the residents of the townships themselves should decide what the tourists shall experience as "real".

The promotion of alternative, "community based tourism" and "pro poor tourism"[53] has become a focus of tourism policy in the City of Cape Town (see White Paper on Sustainable Tourism Development and Promotion in the Western Cape, 2001).The research group is convinced that this is generally to be welcomed. But the City of Cape Town should take care that the concept of "pro-poor tourism" will not only be part of a political lip service. Instead, the concept should be institutionalised and implemented on a comprehensive basis. And there is still a great need for action.

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[53]The concept of "pro-poor tourism" focuses on the poorer sectors of society and seeks to strengthen the benefits for the poor. (See Ashley and Ntshona, 2002).

The promotion of "community based tourism" could not only stimulate economic development by opening up commercial opportunities in the disadvantaged areas, but it could also serve to strengthen the population's participation in the "production of images"' (which are, after all, the images of their own living environments). This would amount to a participation of *(formerly) disadvantaged people* in an important political process – the process of intercultural dialogue.

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Since the end of the Apartheid international tourism in South Africa has increasingly gained importance for the national economy. The centre of this PKS issue's attention is a particular form of tourism: Township tourism, i.e. guided tours to the residential areas of the black population. About 300,000 tourists per year visit the townships of Cape Town. The tours are also called Cultural, Social, or Reality Tours.

The different aspects of township tourism in Cape Town were subject of a geographic field study, which was undertaken during a student research project of Potsdam University in 2007. The text at hand presents the empirical results of the field study, and demonstrates how townships are constructed as spaces of tourism.

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