TOURISM AND DECOLONISATION: LOCATING RESEARCH AND SELF

Donna Chambers (University of Sunderland, UK)
Christine Buzinde (Arizona State University, USA)

Abstract: This paper critically explores decolonial theory and its relevance for tourism studies. We suggest that while postcolonial and related critical theoretical perspectives furthered understandings of the consequences of colonisation, such critical theorising has not provided an epistemological perspective of tourism which legitimises the cosmologies of, and actively empowers, traditionally marginalised groupings. We review published tourism research which adopts critical and postcolonial perspectives, and argue that while these have been valuable in terms of exposing the existence and effects of dominant discourses and practices in tourism, their emancipatory objectives are limited because tourism knowledge is still predominantly colonial. Epistemological decolonisation is thus presented as a more radical project which can provide an 'other' way of thinking, being and knowing about tourism.

Keywords: colonial; decolonisation; decolonial theory; de-linking; epistemological; postcolonial

1. INTRODUCTION

It can hardly be denied that over the past few decades we have witnessed significant advances in the development of our knowledge about tourism. Recent articles in *Annals of Tourism Research* point to transformations in our understanding of the sociology of tourism through the application of novel theoretical approaches such as the mobilities paradigm and the concept of performativity and actor network theory (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). We have been encouraged as tourism researchers to seek to apply new developments in psychology to issues in tourism such as motivation, memory, satisfaction and personal growth (Pearce & Packer, 2013). We have also been urged to break through disciplinary 'straightjackets' to embrace interdisciplinary perspectives which could, for example, provide a more interpretive understanding of the relationship between tourism and oil that goes beyond economics (Becken, 2011).

Earlier in 2006, Coles and Hall in an interesting treatise have sought to promote the value of post-disciplinarity in studies of tourism, which they argued could lead to an "abandoning of the shackles of disciplinary policing" (2006, p.312). They went on to indicate that a "post-disciplinary outlook…encourages more flexible modes of knowledge production and

consumption that are able to deal with" the complexity of contemporary tourism related issues (Coles & Hall, 2006, p.313). It is also increasingly acknowledged within the tourism academy that our existing knowledge about tourism is Eurocentric and therefore ignores and negates those knowledges which emanate from other cultures and from traditionally marginalised groups (Hollinshead, 1992, 2013; Platenkamp & Botterill, 2013; Teo & Leong 2006; Tribe 2006, 2007; Whittaker, 1999). Of note within this context is what has been deemed the recent *critical turn* in tourism studies, which seeks to disrupt the dominance of Western ways of thinking, knowing and being to argue for the privileging of indigenous knowledges.

The main architects of this *critical turn* in tourism have devised a new concept known as *hopeful tourism* defined as a "values-led humanist approach based on partnership, reciprocity and ethics which aims for co-created learning and which recognises the power of sacred and indigenous knowledge and passionate scholarship" (Pritchard, Morgan & Ateljevic, 2011, p.949). Thirteen key tenets were outlined for hopeful tourism, which include self-reflexivity, emancipation and transformation. It would be difficult to argue with an approach to tourism research and scholarship that has such venerable and worthwhile aims. However there have been some critiques of this critical turn from tourism researchers including Chambers (2007), Bianchi (2009) and Higgins-Desbiolles and Powys Whyte (2013). Chambers (2007), in reflecting on the philosophical underpinnings of critical tourism studies discerned a tension between its apparent ontological relativism and its methodological aim of emancipation. According to Chambers (2007) critical tourism researchers appeared hesitant to embrace "the political underpinnings and normative values inherent in a critical realist perspective" (2007, p.116) and she surmised that an expressly political agenda might be 'unfashionable' in the context of a tourism academy, which had seemingly embraced ontological relativism.

Bianchi (2009) has argued that the critical turn in tourism through its focus on the "discursive, symbolic and cultural realms" (p.487) has neglected to engage with structural analyses of power and inequality in tourism which are inherent to global and neo-liberal capitalist structures. Bianchi takes a neo-Marxist approach and in his discussion suggests that through redirecting attention to "historical materialist methods of enquiry" (p.487), the critical turn in tourism can therefore move beyond being merely an *academy of hope* to a "project that is emancipatory in substance" (p.498). This apparent absence of an activist agenda in critical tourism studies is further taken up by Higgins-Desbiolles and Powys Whyte (2013) who indicate

that hopeful tourism has failed to engage with the problematic nature of researching oppressed and marginalised communities from a position of privilege. They also question how (in a practical sense) the hopeful tourism agenda can be achieved. Some of the other pressing questions they ask about hopeful tourism are: "Where is the activism in tourism academia? How many of the self-declared critical tourism scholars come from communities of colour?" (2013, p. 431-432).

We have noted, somewhat worryingly, that the critical tourism voices emanate primarily from Western scholars and it is not yet readily apparent that there is engagement with indigenous and local peoples and epistemologies in the co-creation of tourism knowledge. Indeed does hopeful tourism as a philosophical approach and as a course of action for tourism research and scholarship actually emerge from a dialogue with indigenous or traditionally negated subjects? Whose 'hopefulness' is it? Perhaps as Alcoff has claimed rather contentiously "speaking for others is arrogant, vain, unethical and politically illegitimate" (1991, p.6) and according to Spivak (1998, p.280) it results in "epistemic violence". We would like at this point to include a rather lengthy quotation from Brazilian writer Paulo Freire in his seminal text *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that was first published in Portuguese in 1968 but which we think still has relevance in discussions of the current critical turn in tourism scholarship and which should be reflected upon:

> ...the fact that certain members of the oppressor class join the oppressed in their struggle for liberation, {moves} from one pole of the contradiction to the other...theirs is a fundamental role, and has been throughout the history of this struggle. It happens, however, that as they cease to be exploiters or indifferent spectators or simply the heirs of exploitation and move to the side of the exploited, they almost always bring with them the marks of their origin; their prejudices and their deformations, which include a lack of confidence in the people's ability to think, to want and to know. Accordingly, these adherents to the people's cause constantly run the risk of falling into a type of generosity as malefic as that of the oppressors. The generosity of the oppressors is nourished by an unjust order, which must be maintained in order to justify that generosity. Our converts, on the other hand truly desire to transform the unjust order; but because of their background they believe that they must be the executors of the transformation. They talk **about** the people, but they do not trust them; and trusting the people is the indispensable precondition for revolutionary change. A real humanist can be identified more by his [sic] trust in the people, which engages him [sic] in their struggle, than by a thousand actions in their favour without that trust (Freire, 2006, p.60, emphasis added).

Western self-reflexivity can be intuitive and cathartic but it is still complicit in the profane conventions of Enlightenment thinking and a failure to acknowledge the limitations of this condition means that it is hardly possible for any sort of effective intervention in emancipatory discourses (Majid, 1996). It is against this background that we present the central argument of our discussion which is that despite the mentioned advances in tourism research and scholarship our knowledge about tourism is still predominantly 'colonial'. By saying that tourism knowledge is colonial what is meant is that in tourism there is still a privileging of Western epistemologies. The concept of Western epistemologies, simply put, refers to those knowledges which have been produced in, and disseminated by the former colonial powers (predominantly in Europe). These ethnocentric knowledges became universalised through a complex web of exploitative power relationships and systems which were necessary to sustain colonialism. Western epistemologies thus serve to foreground Western culture while concomitantly negating and denying legitimacy to the knowledges and cosmologies of those in and from the South (*i.e.,* the former colonised territories). It is this dismissal of other ways of knowing that provided the fundamental logic which informed the colonial project and which ignored the systems of knowledge built over centuries by for instance indigenous groups such as the Mayans. In the context of tourism the coloniality of tourism knowledge means that the peoples from and in the South, where much international tourism takes place and where many of its impacts are felt, are still largely the *objects* of tourism research rather than the *producers* of tourism knowledge.

Where voices from the South do manage, in a very limited way, to breach this exclusion zone, their knowledges are seen as particularistic, as localized, or as having no wider legitimacy. Indeed, borrowing from Argentinian scholar Walter Mignolo, it appears to be the case still in tourism that "the first world has knowledge, the third world has culture" (Mignolo, 2009, p.1). This suggests the existence of a binary opposition between knowledge and culture with culture assuming the subordinate role. Pritchard and Morgan (2007) spoke of the necessity for academic decolonisation, which they saw as a responsibility for tourism scholars. They indicated that "if we are to create new tourism knowledge we must be willing to learn from every knowledge tradition, from Africa, Asia and from indigenous peoples around the world" (p.25).

Hollinshead (2013) has similarly argued for the "decolonization of tourism studies' conceptual vocabulary" as he indicates that it is still colonised in two respects:

> First it tends to be the product of the disciplines that have traditionally influenced thinking on tourism…Second, our conceptualizations of tourism tend to be overly informed by the cosmologies of the societies from which tourism scholars have traditionally hailed – what we might clumsily call 'western' ways of understanding the world (2013, no page).

In this paper we wish to further this undertaking of the decolonisation of tourism studies by introducing decolonial theory and its radical project of epistemic de-linking from colonial ways of thinking. This, we believe, can provide an other way of thinking, being and knowing about tourism. Further, our discussions are interspersed with some self-reflexivity on the authors' own journeys as tourism researchers. Both authors are black women, one from the Caribbean (now residing in the United Kingdom) and the other of African decent (now residing in the United States).

We have recognised that even in our own research on tourism we have not sufficiently acknowledged the relevance or moreover, the legitimacy of knowledges and cosmologies from the South. We have rarely sought to investigate whether concepts and theories from the South might provide insights, which can help to advance knowledge in and about tourism. It is in this sense that we recognise that we also engage in 'colonial thinking' in so far as in conducting research, we tend to privilege critical theoretical approaches emanating from the West in order to understand tourism phenomena. In other words our *epistemic* location is predominantly Western. We do not wish to suggest that Western perspectives have no value and should therefore be summarily dismissed, but that we have *privileged* these perspectives and have consequently subordinated and even silenced other knowledges from the South, which have equal legitimacy. So in this paper we aim to first present a review and critique of postcolonial theory specifically from the perspective of decolonial thinking which illustrates the dialectic between the two schools of thought. Having presented the key tenets of a decolonial perspective we then articulate an agenda for tourism's epistemological decolonisation which demonstrates the way in which a decolonial perspective can enable us to envisage other ways of thinking, being and knowing about tourism.

2. FROM POSTCOLONIAL TO DECOLONIAL THINKING

Within tourism studies, postcolonial theory has often been seen as an apposite approach to understand the way in which tourism has developed in the South and the unequal and often exploitative relationship between Western and other cultures and cosmologies in tourism. Indeed, there has been a proliferation of tourism research that has adopted postcolonial perspectives (Caton & Santos, 2008; d'Hauteserre, 2011; Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Hall & Tucker, 2004; Jacobs, 2010; Phillips, 2008; Tucker, 2010; Tucker & Akama, 2009; Wearing & Wearing, 2006). Both authors of this paper have also been significantly influenced in our research on tourism by prominent postcolonial theorists from the South including the three foremost postcolonial critics - Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak. These theorists have sought to demonstrate how Western epistemologies and ontologies have dominated understandings of colonial societies and the effects of this domination (see also Mbembe, 2008 for further discussion on what constitutes postcolonial thinking).

Decolonial theory, a view that we have come to acknowledge, is based on the premise that postcolonial theory has done much to open up our understanding of the normalising effects of Western ways of thinking, being and knowing.. However, decolonial theorists argue that while many key postcolonial theorists have their origins in the South they have nevertheless privileged Western epistemologies, such as postmodernism and post-structuralism, as central theoretical frameworks. Edward Said in his seminal text *Orientalism* which, arguably, inaugurated postcolonial theorising within academia, drew on the notion of discourse articulated by French historian, philosopher and poststructuralist theorist Michel Foucault. Homi Bhabha who was strongly influenced by Said's work in his coining of terms such as hybridity and ambivalence also drew on poststructuralism including the works of other French intellectuals namely Jacques Derrida (deconstruction) and Jacques Lacan (psychoanalysis).

Similarly, Gayatri Spivak has drawn on the work of Karl Marx and Jacques Derrida in her articulations on the 'subaltern.' According to Tlostanova and Mignolo (2009, p.141) "postcolonial theories and/or postcolonial studies entered the US carrying in their hands the books of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan". The Africa Institute of South Africa has suggested that:

> Debates...regarding African issues are often filtered through epistemic approaches that are products of other (largely Western) contexts. From economics to sociology, from philosophy to history, it was the depth of endogeneity that gave the canonical western works their vibrancy. As much as many may think of economics as a science, for instance, we cannot understand

> the distinction between David Ricardo and Friedrich List, outside of the specificity of their locales; neither can we understand the profundity of the scholarship of Max Weber or Emile Durkheim in sociology, outside of the depth of their endogeneity (cited in Arowosegbe, 2008, p.24)

Indeed, it has been argued that postcolonial writing and critique was born in the West with the main audiences at the beginning being the West itself as these writings constituted a pivotal element of the struggle to encourage greater democracy for immigrant and indigenous minorities in the context of a liberal-capitalist Western world order (Chakrabarty, 2005). Further, postcolonial theorists have been criticised for focusing unduly on historic forms of ideological hegemony while having limited discussions about its 'contemporary figurations' (Dirlik, 1994, p.356). Dirlik (1994, p.356) goes on to describe postcoloniality as the 'condition of the intelligentsia of global capitalism' and questions whether given the class position of most postcolonial theorists in global capitalism, they can "generate a thoroughgoing criticism of [their] own ideology and formulate practices of resistance against the system of which [they] are a product" (p.356). He emphasises that postcoloniality inherently sidesteps the current crisis of global capitalism and postcolonial intellectuals are complicit in this occlusion as they are not its victims, but rather its beneficiaries (Dirlik, 1994).

It is against this background that Mignolo (2007, 2009) has argued plausibly that postcolonial theory has not undergone an epistemological de-linking from Western ways of thinking. Anouar Majid praised Spivak and Said for "steer[ing] the course of Western cultural criticism away from its historically parochial confines" but he critiqued their…"familiarity with the most arcane and inaccessible philosophical and literary traditions of the West" which he argued rendered them suspect to some non-Western groups (Majid, 1996, p.9-10). Majid continued his critique of postcolonial theory in 2001 when he wrote (and this is worth citing at length) that:

> …as established and practised in the Anglo-American academy, postcolonial theory has been largely oblivious to the non-Western articulations of self and identity, and has thus tended to interpellate the non-Western cultures it seeks to foreground and defend into a solidly Eurocentric frame of consciousness. Postcolonial theory thus operates with the paradoxical tension of relying on the secular, European vocabulary of its academic origins to translate non-secular, non European experiences. Despite brilliant attempts to elucidate (or perhaps theorize away) this dilemma, the question of the non-Western Other's agency remains suspended and unresolved… (Majid, 2001, no page).

Majid further questioned whether the subaltern will be allowed to speak, even in postcolonial studies. We are certainly not denying the important contributions made by postcolonial theorists that provided a platform and conceptual framework through which to unveil and critique the numerous manifestations of the colonial legacy. However useful, this critique occurred without giving voice to the subaltern (Spivak, 1988). We realised that we had ourselves, perhaps too uncritically, embraced postcolonial theory as we had found it extremely valuable in helping us understand tourism phenomena through the identification and deconstruction of (neo)colonial discourses. However, we recognised that while there was a strong family resemblance between postcolonial and decolonial theories, decolonisation represented a more radical project and we had not yet decolonised or fully de-linked from Western epistemologies.

Embarking on a decolonial trajectory requires scholars to acknowledge the ubiquity of the (neo)colonial agenda and it requires them to question "how whole nations get trans-or (dis)figured when articulated through Western frames of knowing" (Grande, 2008, p.234). Decolonial theory urges scholars to think of the possibility of an other way of knowing about and being in tourism that does not privilege Western epistemologies. Certainly decolonial theory has numerous disciplinary tentacles but there exists a conceptual cranium that informs its inquiries. According to Puerto Rican academic Ramon Grosfoguel (2007, p.212), decolonial thinking requires one to "take seriously those epistemic perspectives/cosmologies/insights of critical thinkers from the South thinking **from** and **with** subalternized racial/ethnic/sexual spaces and bodies" (emphasis in original). Mignolo (2007) suggests that postcolonial theory is aimed at transformation **within** the context of the dominant Western academy. Alternatively, decolonisation is visualised as a more far-reaching project that seeks to change both the **terms** and the **content** of the conversation, to develop a different "epistemic grounding" rather than pursuing change within the context of prevalent Eurocentric paradigms (Grosfoguel, 2007, p.212).

According to Maori anthropologist Linda Tuhiwai-Smith (1999) decolonisation is a "process that critically engages, at all levels, imperialism, colonialism, and postcoloniality. Decolonizing research implements indigenous epistemologies and critical interpretive practices that are shaped by indigenous agendas" (p.20). It is the adoption of inquiry, which "involves performance of counterhegemonic theories that disrupt the colonial and postcolonial" (Denzin,

Lincoln & Smith, 2008, p.xi). Swadener and Mutua (2008) state that the decolonisation project entails the "valuing, reclaiming, and foregrounding of indigenous voices and epistemologies" (p. 31). Emphasis within decolonising research is placed on "forging cross-cultural partnerships with, between, and among indigenous researchers and allied others" (Rogers & Swadener, 1999, p.31) as well as the creation of joint projects that draw "on common goals that reflect anticolonial sensibilities in action" (Swadener & Mutua, 2008, p.31).

Decolonial theorists like Grosfoguel emphasise that it is necessary to acknowledge the *geo-political* and *body-political* location of the speaking subject (Grosfoguel, 2007). By geo-political location he means the regional and cultural location of the speaking subject and by body-political location he is referring to the ethnic, racial, gender, sexual and embodied position of the speaking subject. Grosfoguel (2007) suggests that there is an *ego-politics* inherent in Western knowledge, which has consistently ignored the geo-political and body-political location of the speaking subject. Through this occlusion, Western knowledge is thus able to articulate a myth of knowledge as Truthful and as universal (or as 'God-eyed') and it is this view that has enabled Western knowledge to be represented as the "only one capable of achieving a universal consciousness [thus dismissing] non-Western knowledge as particularistic" (Grosfoguel, 2007, p.214).

The following reflections by both the authors of this paper on their epistemological journeys serve to illustrate the universalising nature of Western knowledge. The first author's experience of the system of education in the Caribbean where she grew up and attended university was one which implicitly assented to a 'God-eyed' view of Western knowledge, a view that continued when she enrolled on degree programmes in the UK. She reflects below on her educational development as a student at various universities:

> *<u>Author 1</u>: As an undergraduate student of political science at university, the writings of Karl Marx were a key influence as was that of sociologists such as Emile Durkheim. It was inconceivable that one could study key disciplines such as politics and sociology (even within a Caribbean context) without drawing on the works of seminal Western theorists. Indeed at university disciplinarity was important. One needed to locate oneself in a particular discipline and a failure to understand and to cite key Western theorists within the context of a particular discipline was akin to heresy.*
>
> *At that time there was little attempt to question the very notion of disciplinarity itself as a Western construct, as inherently imperialistic, as a system of normalisation and as serving to not only colonise our minds but also our imaginary i.e., knowledge and being (Mignolo, 2007). I undertook my first Masters degree in international relations at*

the University of the West Indies and here again the research that I conducted was underpinned by Western epistemologies particularly those that privileged objectivist approaches and we were discouraged from writing in the first person if we wished our work to be taken seriously. Valid and rigorous research involved a decoupling of one's subject position from one's epistemic location. So, fully schooled in colonial ways of thinking I embarked on another Masters degree in the UK, this time in tourism management where it seemed apparent that one could not fully understand tourism without drawing on seminal writings from predominantly Western academics (who were overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, male).

These included Richard Butler (the Tourism Area Life Cycle), Brian Archer (the tourism multiplier), John Urry (the Tourist Gaze) and Valene Smith (Hosts and Guests). In my doctoral studies in the UK I once again drew predominantly on Western epistemologies (this time in the form of Michel Foucault's discursive approach) in order to understand the relationship between heritage and the nation. While I knew implicitly that my interest in this subject was influenced by my subject position as a Black Caribbean woman in the UK I did not 'write myself' into the text. Further, it did not even occur to me at the time to explore the work of Caribbean or African scholars and writers who might have provided equally legitimate insights into the questions of heritage and national identity that I wished to explore.

The second author's educational experience is similar to that of the first author in terms of the occlusion of non-Western knowledges within tourism curricula. However a marked change occurs for the second author during her doctoral education that orients her to other knowledges:

<u>Author 2</u>: I was born in Africa, raised in Cyprus (Greek part of the Island), migrated to Canada as a youth with my family and currently hold a faculty appointment at an American institution of higher education. My life trajectory may vary in geographical scope but in many ways a common thread and motivating factor that led to my parents' exodus from Africa was the pursuit of 'good' educational opportunities for their then young children. In Cyprus, a former British colony, my formative years in education entailed pedagogical content that promoted an aggrandizing perspective of all things European, particularly as related to endeavours undertaken by the British and the French and an annihilation of non European accounts.

The educational frames promoted in the institutions of higher education I attended in Canada were akin to the ones I was exposed to in Cyprus. However it was at this juncture in my postgraduate educational odyssey that my interest in critical approaches to societal issues, especially as they relate to marginalised populations peaked following exposure to these issues in an undergraduate anthropology class. My adoption of the critical theory school of thought, which invariably entailed the critique of dominant culture would later form the foundation of my Master's thesis and led to the recognition (and acceptance) that I was traversing a trajectory that disrupted the status quo within tourism studies. At the time, it had not occurred to me nor had I been oriented to the option of grounding my research in similar scholarship undertaken by scholars from and in the South.

> *During my doctoral program in the United States, I had the great fortune of taking a cultural studies class taught by an erudite scholar, Dr Cameron McCarthy, which exposed me to the fact that epistemological theories are neither ahistorical nor acultural and are in many ways partial in their offering of particular perspectival constructions. This was a critical moment at which I realised the existence of deleterious patterns in tourism studies, even within critical tourism scholarship, wherein a hierarchy was maintained in which Western knowledge constantly served as the key referent. Armoured with scholarly knowledge that supported the change I wanted to see in the world I embarked on an often solitary (given its critical approach) yet existentially fulfilling academic journey of what could be loosely characterised as a nascent decolonial thinker. It would only be through active collaborations with scholars whose educational and research trajectories were founded on decolonial frameworks that I would, years later, attempt to transform decolonial thinking into praxis* (Buzinde and Osagie, 2011; Osagie and Buzinde, 2011; Semali et al2007).

These reflections by both authors also demonstrate Grosfoguel's (2007) distinction between a social and an epistemic location. According to Grosfoguel

> the fact that one is socially located in the oppressed side of power relations does not automatically mean that he/she is epistemically thinking from a subaltern epistemic location. Precisely the success of the modern/colonial world-system consists in making subjects that are socially located in the oppressed side of the colonial difference to think epistemically like the ones in the dominant positions (2007, p.213).

In this context we have recognised the rather ambivalent and hybrid nature of our own identities not only in terms of our social location and relationship with Western knowledge but also in terms of our own current geographical location within institutions of power within the West. Dirlik (1994: 343) in referring to postcolonial intellectuals in the West argued that they are 'ensconced in positions of power not only vis-à-vis the "native" intellectuals back at home but also vis-à-vis their First World neighbours'. Mishra and Hodge (1993: 277) question whether in the context of postcolonial critiques 'one can ever totally remove the stains of complicity with Empire.' In our decolonial journeys which require us to de-link from Western epistemologies we have thus struggled with the concept of hybridity and with adopting a more cosmopolitan approach which we feel perhaps 'requires us to transcend our identities by downplaying the significance of our situatedness' (Moya, 2011:81). We find this problematic given that we believe that all knowledge is situated and that there are no universal truths independent of historically and culturally specific contexts. We do not wish to become as it were 'identity neutral' (Moya, 2011:81) yet we recognise our own positionality as academics straddling the

translocal space betwixt and between the West and our social and cultural origins. However we also acknowledge that it is this very positionality which unapologetically situates us as active participants in an agenda of political resistance and liberation through which a decolonial project can be imagined and realised. A decolonial project requires that we now celebrate and legitimise those aspects of our identities which have been and can be sources of knowledge production but which we have previously devalued, and indeed ignored, in our epistemological journeys through tourism.

Such incorporation of Other knowledges within tourism studies requires a critical review of how indigenous and colonised communities are involved in tourism related research processes and knowledge production. Problematising Eurocentric ways of knowing and doing research Tuhiwai-Smith (1999) calls for the decolonisation of research methodologies and for a new agenda for indigenous research. This new agenda dismantles views of indigenous communities as data plantations "that serve the researcher" and exploit members of the community, "without sustained relationships being built or reciprocal possibilities explored" (Swadener & Kagendo 2008, p.35). According to Rhoads (2009) when research does not involve meaningful interaction and involvement of indigenous groups and/or when it is not based on mutuality it results in charity and is regarded as operating within an imperialistic and colonialistic framework.

Research of this nature can indeed replicate colonial ideals through its approach, its creation of knowledge and its production of histories (Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999). These colonial ideals can also be reproduced simply by not acknowledging the power of the researcher and not recognising the transference of Western knowledge to indigenous and colonised communities. Furthermore, such research endeavours silence the voices of the colonised and their descendants, in part, because the goals and purposes of research are conceived within Western contexts, abide by Western principles of research and as such operate within Eurocentric parameters. Today we seriously question whether in privileging Western epistemologies in our own tourism research we have ourselves done *epistemic violence* to knowledges and cosmologies from the South. How were we then different in an epistemological sense from the colonisers? We want to suggest that there is a dearth of evidence of decolonial critique emanating from tourism scholars and practitioners **in** and **from** the South. Rather, as we have mentioned earlier, critiques of colonial/Eurocentric thinking emanate largely from Western researchers, who write **about** tourism in the South, often with little interaction with, and from indigenous and local peoples.

The words decolonial, and declonis/zation have scarcely been used or critically explored in tourism research and where they have, this has been predominantly with reference to the political phenomenon of independence which engulfed most of the countries of the South after the second World War. For instance, Patil (2011), in an article about the contested space of India's Northeast as represented in tourism websites, uses the word 'decolonization' evanescently and in a political sense to refer to post independent India. Similarly, Sanchez and Adams (2008) mention the word 'decolonization' in their article on the Janus-faced character of tourism in Cuba but again only in a political sense. Other examples of this use of the term decolonisation can be found in publications including those by Brohman (1996), Teye (1986), and Weaver (1998).

Decolonisation in an epistemological sense has not yet been fully explored in discussions in tourism research and scholarship. Certainly postcolonialism, poststructuralism and postmodernism are today not uncommon in tourism research but there is still a dearth of decolonial thinking and writing. That said, the spirit of epistemological decolonisation in the context of tourism studies is perhaps implicit in publications, which adopt the *critical turn* in tourism studies (already referred to earlier but which we have indicated still contain colonial tendencies) and in related publications, which focus on indigenous tourism. In the latter regard, a special edition of the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* titled 'Beyond the Margins (Critical Tourism and Hospitality)' published in 2012 sought to further critical approaches to tourism and hospitality research, and there were a number of discussions about the need for alternative methodologies in tourism and hospitality which celebrate and privilege the voices and knowledges of indigenous peoples and which calls for the need for greater reflexivity especially amongst Western tourism scholars.

Specifically, articles in this special edition point to: the under representation of indigenous peoples themselves in indigenous-driven research (Nielsen & Wilson, 2012); the need for reflexivity by White researchers who seek to engage in research with and about indigenous people (Russell-Mundine, 2012); and, the need for reflexivity as a practice (Fullagar & Wilson, 2012). Interestingly only one of the publications in this special edition involved an indigenous researcher (Peters & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2012) and here the discussion surrounds indigenous persons as tourists rather than as objects of the hegemonic non-indigenous tourist gaze. Certainly Peters and Higgins-Desbiollles have continued a nascent concern within tourism

geography, which seeks greater theoretical engagement with the destinations and tourists of and from the South (Hammett, 2012). Unfortunately, the notion of epistemological decolonisation is not explored in any of the papers in this publication.

So there has so far been limited evidence of any explicit knowledge of, or engagement with, decolonial theory in tourism studies or importantly any evidence of decolonial theorising from tourism scholars from or in the South. There are however a very few notable exceptions. These include the work of Osagie and Buzinde (2011), who wrote an article on culture and postcolonial resistance drawing on the writings of Antiguan- American author Jamaica Kincaid in her novel - *A Small Place* and also the article by Amoamo (2011), a Maori researcher who uses a Maori methodology (Kuapapa Māori) in her study of tourism and hybridity. Kuapapa Māori might be deemed to be a "counter hegemonic approach to Western forms of research and currently exists 'on the margins'" (McNicholas & Barrett, 2005, p.393). It is interesting to observe however that both of these articles, despite their explicit support for a decolonising agenda, utilise postcolonial theory as a key analytical framework rather unquestioningly thus failing to recognise its inherent epistemological inconsistences.

3. AN AGENDA FOR TOURISM'S DECOLONISATION

Having acknowledged the plausibility of decolonial theory and its epistemological critique of colonial ways of thinking, we have begun our own journeys to (re)discover epistemologies and cosmologies from the South which can enable an other understanding of tourism to emerge. We believe that it is time, as Majid (1996, p.30) has said to "reclaim our resources **ourselves**" (emphasis in original). So in our decolonial epistemological journey we are cognisant of the way in which Caribbean, African, Asian and Latin American theorists have been dispossessed of their intellectual labour (Arowosegbe, 2008) and their potential contributions to tourism knowledge production. Some of the ideas that have been considered as 'new' in the context of tourism have previously been articulated by theorists from the South but these have not gained currency in tourism studies as a result of the coloniality of tourism knowledge. So we have begun "the painful ordeal of recreation" (Osha, 1999, p.162) by reading again the writings of key decolonial theorists and writers from the South including, but not limited to, *Franz Fanon*, *Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Louise Bennett-Coverley*, and *George Lamming*.

These are writings that we had perhaps filed away rather too readily a long time ago in our embrace of the 'Truth' of Western epistemologies without fully appreciating their normalising effects. Fanon presented his radical agenda for decolonisation as early as the 1950s long before postcolonial theory became fashionable in the social sciences and later in tourism. As a psychiatrist Fanon argued for the psychological liberation of the colonised from colonial ways of thinking as a precursor to a more activist liberation agenda. Fanon has hardly been drawn on in tourism scholarship although there are a few exceptions. For example Higgins-Desbiolles (2007) has suggested that a reading of Fanon can help countries in the South recognise the extent to which they have been disadvantaged through an inequitable global tourism system and this recognition of their oppression is a necessary 'prologue' to their liberation and to enabling them to regain their humanity. Hoppe (2010) uses Fanon's visions of humanism and solidarity to demonstrate how an altered form of tourism could be beneficial for countries of the South. So that while Fanon's writing are admittedly not unproblematic (see Lazarus 1993 and Young, 2001 for discussions of critiques of Fanon's work), they still have resonance and practical implications for the peoples of the South where tourism has borne significant responsibility for implicating their countries more deeply into a Eurocentric neo-liberal agenda which has now practically become global and which has not served to lift these societies out of poverty

Louise Bennett-Coverley, a Jamaican poet, playwright and folklorist had important insights into the issue of human mobilities (this is long before mobilities became popular in tourism studies) when she witnessed the waves of emigration from Jamaica to the UK during the 1950s and 1960s. Miss Lou (as she was affectionately called in Jamaica) wrote a satirical poem published in 1966 about this migration called *Colonisation in Reverse* in which she pondered the effects on English society of the phenomenon that she termed as the 'reverse colonisation' of England. It is interesting that since these reflections by Miss Lou, history has again been turned on its head with another kind of mobility from England to Jamaica this time in the form of tourism. Certainly there is further scope in tourism for a fuller understanding of these changing historical mobilities and their effects on the societies involved from the perspectives of the former colonised.

Derek Walcott, Saint Lucian poet and playwright who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992, made some important observations in his Nobel Lecture about tourism in the Caribbean

in terms of how it has been represented. We believe that Walcott's writings are worth probing in greater depth so that we can further open up understandings of this industry from the perspective of local and indigenous epistemologies. Walcott suggested that Western tourists regard the Caribbean as a ludic playground with an abundance of culture but no knowledge. This representation of the Caribbean interestingly enough is also perpetuated by the Caribbean itself in order to make itself more palatable to the Western gaze:

> Visitors to the Caribbean must feel that they are inhabiting a succession of postcards...for tourists, the sunshine cannot be serious. Winter adds depth and darkness to life as well as to literature, and in the unending summer of the tropics not even poverty or poetry...seems capable of being profound because the nature around it is so exultant, so resolutely ecstatic, like its music. A culture based on joy is bound to be shallow. Sadly to sell itself, the Caribbean encourages the delights of mindlessness, of brilliant vacuity, as a place to flee not only winter but that seriousness that comes only out of culture with four seasons. So how can there be a people there, in the true sense of the word? (Walcott, 1992, p.4-5).

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o has been particularly influential in terms of his articulations of the inextricable link between language and culture. Language is said to be integral to people's culture and where one loses one's language one also loses one's culture. Majid (1996) suggests that the "voice of the West's Other, spoken in indigenous idioms, must therefore be reasserted in order to force the complacent Western intellectuals who define themselves as progressive into a genuine multi-lingual dialogue" (p.29). In 1986 wa Thiong'o wrote what he deemed his 'farewell to English' in his book *Decolonising the Mind* and thereafter did most of his writing in his native Gikuyu language. He indicated that for Africa, English is a 'cultural bomb'. wa Thiong'o writes that in his native Kenya when he was growing up English was the language of formal education and all other languages had to "bow before it in deference" (1986, p.11).

According to wa Thiong'o, students caught speaking the native Gikuyu on school premises were subject to corporal punishment. The point about writing in Gikuyi for wa Thiong'o was not about harking back to traditions or about a need to remain fixed in the past but it was about being empowered to communicate in the present. Nevertheless the fact that wa Thiong'o consented to having his Gikuyu language publications translated into English so that he could "continue dialogue with all" (wa Thiong'o, 1986, p.xiv) has been seen to undermine his project. Gikandi (1991) speaks of the *epistemology of translation* in which he suggests that the act of translating wa Thiongo's texts defeats "his intention of restoring the primacy of the African language as the mediator of an African experience. The act of translation is hence a

double-edged weapon: it allows Ngũgĩ's texts to survive and be read, but it is read and discussed as if it were a novel in English" (Gikandi, 1991, p.166).

Indeed, in reflections on Annals after 40 years of publication, Xiao, Jafari, Cloke and Tribe (2013) indicate that the rationale behind publishing abstracts in French while it did not reduce the language problem "was intended more as a statement that Annals recognises that language is a major obstacle in communicating research and understands the 'pain' of those whose native language is not English" (p.356-357). Hall (2013) in a review of the state of tourism geography also underscores the importance of language in knowledge creation when he states

> No matter how important local and national knowledge is within a specific spatial context, unless it is conveyed in English it has little chance to enter the global marketplace and be reproduced and circulated. Somewhat ironically, given the desire to give voice to local and indigenous perspectives unless that voice can be spoken in English it is likely not to be heard' (Hall, 2013, p.608).

In tourism we need to take on the challenge of engaging more fully with tourism epistemological perspectives which emanate from scholars from the South whose language is not English as surely that would open up wider understandings of tourism than we have until now been exposed to.

Part of the epistemological project of decolonisation in tourism also needs to be a transformation of our educational systems such that native knowledges and practices become integral to the tourism curriculum rather than as part of optional or specialist courses. Additionally, the dismantling of views that Western and non-Western knowledges are not compatible is necessary because although these two knowledge systems function independently, they can certainly benefit from creative interconnectivity which decolonial theorists argue should occur within "an ethical space" (Ermine, 1995, p.102). Willie Ermine, a First Nation's scholar based in Canada, regards this ethical space as a necessary locale within which meaningful convergence of knowledges (western and indigenous) that inform the creation and negotiation of a new order of research and approach to development can occur.

For instance, Marglin (1995) discusses the work of a group of Peruvian indigenous intellectuals who came together to form a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which developed a postgraduate course, accredited by two Peruvian universities and aimed mostly at technocrats of rural development. The NGO called *Proyecto Andino de Tecnologias*

Campesinas (PRATEC) was part of a transformational pedagogical programme in which students were taught indigenous Andean knowledges and practices, which served to deconstruct the notion of the universality of Western knowledge. Similarly, the Mpambo African Multiversity based in Uganda is another example of ways in which indigenous groups are drawing on local capacities such as indigenous knowledge to inform knowledge production. Mpambo African Multiversity is "a community-based centre of higher learning, dedicated to the advancement of indigenous knowledge and scholarship…for the purposes of broadening the catchment area of the reservoir of knowledge available to humanity" (Wangoola, online).

Indigenous knowledge is valued in the aforementioned examples due to its perceived "transformative power" which is needed to explore how "such knowledge can be used to foster empowerment and justice in a variety of cultural contexts" (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999, p.15). Journal editors and reviewers in tourism must also play their part in the epistemological decolonisation of tourism studies. In the context of human geography journals, Hammett (2012) has argued that these journals have called for more research from academics from the South in order to develop a more inclusive discipline. However he goes on to suggest that when research articles are submitted which have to do with issues facing countries and peoples from the South they are asked by reviewers for more extensive background detail and context for the readers of the journals who are predominantly from the West. This practice, he argues serves to:

> Reinscribe the subordinate position of the 'periphery', to shift the balance of the paper from a theoretical, pedagogical discussion towards a descriptive narrative, and to place responsibility on the 'periphery' to write **for** the 'core' rather than demanding that the 'core' make efforts to be more informed about the periphery (Hammett, 2012, p.943) (emphasis in original).

Other possibilities for a decolonial agenda for tourism studies could entail an adoption of insights from decolonial theorists like native Argentinian scholars Walter Mignolo and Enrique Dussel who have articulated the notions of critical border thinking and trans-modernity respectively. Mignolo defines the 'border' as being the "exteriority created by the rhetoric of modernity" (2007, p.462). In other words it refers to those positionalities which have been traditionally subjugated and negated by the project of modernity (seen as inextricably linked with coloniality). Included in these borders are (undocumented) immigrants, migrants, workers, refugees, and women. It is from these borders that critical reflections on modernity *qua* coloniality should and can emerge. Critical border thinking therefore refers to the knowledges

created from these geopolitical locations. In the tourism context, critical thinking about tourism development for example could emerge from the peoples in the developing world (who exist on the borders) who have thus far not been involved in the production of knowledge about tourism. It is recognised in the concept of critical border thinking that in these border spaces there is pluriversality. In other words, there are different knowledges occasioned for example by different cultural contexts and differences in terms of the impacts and effects of the modern (colonial) world system. However, what these spaces have in common is 'the fact that they all have to deal with the unavoidable presence of the modern/colonial world and its power differentials' (Mignolo 2007, p.497). Mignolo sees the possibility of connecting these plural border spaces to create a 'new common logic of knowing: border thinking' (ibid). So that for Mignolo, "critical border thinking" means "thinking otherwise" it means, creating a "space for an epistemology that comes from the border and aims toward political and ethical transformations" (2001, p.11). It is important to note though that Mignolo is not suggesting that there is either a homogenous imperial or colonial experience. Instead he argues that critical border thinking implies "both the imperial and colonial differences" (2007, p.498).

Similarly, Dussel also sees modernity and coloniality as inextricably intertwined, as two sides of the same coin, and envisages his project of trans-modernity as involving the negation of modernity by thinking about it from the perspective of the excluded other (Dussel, 1996, 2000). According to Dussel (2000), trans-modernity is a "worldwide ethical liberation project in which alterity, which as part and parcel of modernity, would be able to fulfil itself" (p.473). According to Grosfoguel (2006, p.179), "Dussel argues for a multiplicity of decolonial critical responses to Eurocentred modernity from the subaltern cultures and epistemic location of colonized people around the world". Indeed Dussel argues for a ***horizontal dialogue amongst all cultures*** (Grosfoguel, 2006)(our emphasis).

Dussel (2012) has articulated a strategy for a trans-modern project which involves first, the self-valorisation of one's own previously negated culture (which Dussel refers to as the negation of the negation); second an internal critique of one's own cultural values but from within the context of one's own culture or one's own hermeneutical possibilities; third that it must be recognised that the trans-modern project takes a long period of time of studying, reflection and a return to the "symbols and constitutive myths of one's culture" (ibid, p.47) and

fourth that the trans-modern project should first involve critical intercultural dialogues between members of the periphery first before extending into North-South dialogues.

Interestingly, both Dussel's trans-modernity and Mignolo's border thinking do not argue for a replacement of existing hegemonic epistemologies as they will continue to exist and will remain sites for continued critique. Rather, they call for a different kind of hegemony, a different kind of universality that embraces diversity, plurivocality, polycentricity and multiplicity and in which peoples and communities "have the right to be different precisely because 'we' are all equals" (Mignolo, 2000, p.310-311). Dussel states cogently that trans-modernity is not about developing an "undifferentiated or empty universal cultural identity, an abstract universality, but rather a trans-modern ***pluriversality*** (emphasis in original) with many similarities (European, Islamic, Vedic, Taoist, Buddhist, Latin American, Bantu, etc), one which is pluricultural, and engaged in a critical intercultural dialogue" (2012, p.50).

Discussions of trans-modernity as a philosophy of liberation have rarely been seen in critical tourism studies with the exception of Ateljevic (2009) who discusses Dussel's interpretation of trans-modernity as one of a number of other similar philosophical approaches. The focus in Ateljevic's discussion is certainly on liberation and furthers the *hopeful tourism* agenda. However she does not sufficiently explore the continued coloniality of knowledge within tourism studies. Yet another tool through which epistemological decolonisation may be achieved is via the fundamental transformation of the researcher. According to Denzin, Lincoln and Tuhiwai-Smith (2009), any effective attempt to address the problems endured by the groups of the margin first and foremost requires a critical view of the research process and the localised knowledges by which it abides but also our role as researchers. Such a process requires one to decolonise self and critically ponder how the institution has moulded him/her into who s/he is (McLaren, 2009). What is left after one seriously goes through this process is a human form that unites humanity; one that is constituted by emotions, acknowledgement of common goals and struggles, and, cognisance of the interconnectedness of the universe.

Epistemological decolonisation for tourism scholars will also require a revisitation of the role played by emotions in the research process, particularly as regards to how one positions himself/herself with regard to his/her academic role/research. Cognisance of emotion and engagement in reflexivity can enhance the meaning making process during the encounter between the researcher and how s/he comes to know the researched (see Tucker, 2009).

Decolonial thinkers, much like activists, have to ascribe to "an ideological commitment to social and personal change" (Askins, 2009, p.4). Accordingly, the decolonial thinker has to undergo what King (2005), in her scholarly contributions on activism refers to as deintegration – a process whereby individuals divorce themselves from the norms and values associated with dominant society in order to cultivate a sense of self borne out of a process of emancipation and reflexivity (Hochschild, 1979; King, 2005).

For decolonial thinkers, liberation involves freeing oneself from the *emotional* shackles that connect us to dominant society. The maintenance of the state of liberation necessitates constant *emotional* reflexivity, particularly to remedy moments of dissonance in which one's cognitive and emotional transformations do not occur concurrently (Hochschild, 1979). This emotional reflexive process is certainly not a means to an end but rather an iterative act that requires the researcher to constantly be aware of his/her role not only within academe but also within society. The tools for epistemological decolonisation proposed by authors such as Dussel, Mignolo, Tuhiwai-Smith and Grosfoguel can perhaps be more meaningful after this self-critique has taken place.

4. CONCLUSION

In 2005 Denzin and Lincoln claimed that the decolonisation of the academy had occurred because of the contribution of women, postgraduate students, non-native born faculty members and faculty of colour. However while it might well be the case that traditionally excluded subjects are now having a presence in academia in the West this is not the same as saying that academic research has been decolonised. This is because, despite one's social location decolonisation requires one to be thinking from a subaltern epistemological location (Grosfoguel, 2007).

The effects of this 'myth' about the decolonisation of the academy serve to obscure and to make invisible its continued coloniality. In this discussion we have critiqued postcolonial theory for its failure to change the terms of the epistemological conversation. However, we acknowledge that key postcolonial theorists such as Said, Spivak and Bhabha were themselves victims of the colonial project (Majid, 1996) as were we, and this makes the project of epistemological decolonisation an especially difficult and arduous journey. But it is clear that after decades of postcolonial and critical theorising, the conditions of peoples in and from the

South have not been materially altered in a significant way, so there is a need for an other way of thinking. We have thus presented decolonial theory as a more radical project which seeks an epistemological de-linking from Western ways of thinking.

While we have outlined in this paper the principal arguments of decolonial theory this is not to say that this represents a homogenous theoretical school of thought. Indeed there are differences and tensions amongst those scholars who advance decolonial thinking. Maldonado-Torres (2011) suggests that decolonial theory should be regarded as a "family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem in the modern (as well as postmodern and information) age, and of decolonization or decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished" (2011, p.2). As Black women in tourism we are certainly socially located on what Grosfoguel (2007) has referred to as the 'oppressed side of power relations' and we have also not fully managed to de-link from Western epistemologies. What we are arguing in this discussion is that tourism scholars in and from the South (and here we of course include ourselves) need to undertake an epistemic de-linking, which requires a rejection of Western epistemologies about tourism as representing the 'God -eye' view thus enabling spaces to open up for other ways of thinking, being in and knowing about tourism.

Such a de-linking requires an approach which goes beyond existing disciplinary boundaries which are themselves Eurocentric in order for knowledge to be decolonised. Mignolo, Dussel and other decolonial theorists have called for the 'undisciplining of the social sciences" (Escobar, 2007) and a consequent acknowledgement that there are "worlds and knowledges otherwise" (Escobar, 2007, p.179) in the context of tourism knowledge production. We need to be cognisant that, as Caribbean-American writer Audre Lorde stated, the "master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (Lorde, 1983, p.98) so we need to create a different logic rather than seeking transformation within the context of existing Eurocentric tourism paradigms. However, epistemological decolonisation also requires us to traverse our parochial horizons and also to avoid uncritical adulation of local knowledges as obtained in Eurocentrism, which essentially promoted the parochialism of Europe as universalism. Further, it cannot be assumed that 'insiders' necessarily have a more erudite and apposite approach to understanding the realities of their own societies as to do so could lead to a "fall into the fallacy of Third Worldism, and a potentially reactionary relativism" (Sidaway, 1992, p.406). Recall here Grosfoguel's (2007) argument that a social location does not necessarily imply a similar

epistemic location. It is this kind of internal critique of our own positionalities that is required by trans-modernity and critical border thinking. Importantly, both schools of thought, through their focus on the integral role of cross cultural dialogue seek to develop a world in which pluriversality becomes the new universal and as such can provide useful tools for achieving an 'epistemological decolonisation' of tourism studies which is necessary and urgent in order to journey beyond the existing frontiers of tourism knowledge.

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