



# The ongoingness of imperialism: The problem of tourism dependency and the promise of radical equality

Freya Higgins-Desbiolles \*

University of South Australia, UniSA Business, Australia  
University of Waterloo, Canada



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## ABSTRACT

Recent work in development studies asked: “whatever happened to the idea of imperialism?” This article will analyse the ongoingness of imperialism in order to illuminate sources of injustice and inequity in tourism. It will also delve into historical understandings of the capacities of tourism in a time when revolutionary, decolonising leadership looked to build a New International Economic Order. The outcomes from such an exploratory, critical analysis will offer a moment of truth-telling in tourism with a view to making links between colonial histories and practices, racialised inequalities and global conflicts and crises which shape our world and constrain our future. It is possible to imagine a different, more equal global order and accompanying forms of tourism that offer better futures.

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## Introduction

*“The greatest and most significant achievement during the last decades has been the independence from colonial and alien domination of a large number of peoples and nations which has enabled them to become members of the community of free peoples” (United Nations General Assembly, 1974, p. 1).*

The period from 2019 has been a turbulent era with a swirling vortex of crises. In addition to a crippling global pandemic, we have been concerned with climate change, reemergent right-wing extremism, resurgent nationalism and a threat of major economic implications from many of these phenomena. These crises call for considered attention and action. But what would be the implications if we have our attention focused on the symptoms rather than the problem itself? Narayan and Sealey-Huggins (2017, p. 2387) recently asked “whatever happened to the idea of imperialism?” Indeed, recent work by Hickel et al. (2021, p. 16) demonstrated continued “patterns of imperial appropriation that remain a dominant feature of the world economy”.

Vijay Prashad argued: “Our political world is impoverished by the lack of the category ‘imperialism’. Academic and media languages have succeeded in consigning it to history” (Prashad, 2017, p. 2536). Prashad's (2017) work argued that analyses of neo-liberalism and globalisation have obscured the ongoing nature of imperialism in the world today. Narayan and Sealey-Huggins (2017) invited critical thought on the nature of imperialism in the contemporary context in order to gauge its ongoing relevance.

\* University of South Australia, GPO Box 2471, Adelaide, SA 5001, Australia.

E-mail address: [Freya.HigginsDesbiolles@unisa.edu.au](mailto:Freya.HigginsDesbiolles@unisa.edu.au) (F. Higgins-Desbiolles).

Additionally, Maldonado-Torres (2007, p. 253) argued the problem of modern Western civilisation is “the suppression of the understanding of coloniality...”. These interventions open gateways for critical questions for tourism scholarship.

Considerations of “tourism as imperialism” have fallen out of favour since Nash’s (1989) exploration. One rare exception is a quantitative study in Jamaica that sought to gauge residents’ attitudes to tourism and related this to political, economic and cultural imperialism (Sinclair-Maragh & Gursoy, 2015). This work was focused narrowly, offering quantitative assessment, however. This article proposes to take a more macro, structural justice view in order to understand the ongoing impacts of imperialism. In this vein, the work of Goldstone (2001) entitled *Making the world safe for tourism* is an important analysis in understanding manifestations of imperialism in tourism and has arguably received insufficient attention in tourism studies. It offered insights into how contemporary tourism was founded on the US domination of the global sphere in the aftermath of the World Wars of the 20th century.

There has been promising work on decolonisation in tourism, demonstrating an awareness that we are not yet in a “postcolonial” situation (e.g., Aquino, 2019; Chambers & Buzinde, 2015). However, as Mowatt (2022) noted, such works seldom engage with issues of imperialism and therefore fail to get to the heart of why injustices and harms continue in and through tourism. The outcome of this decolonising approach is we focus too early on the seemingly positive processes of decolonising before we have adequately accounted for the historical and ongoing structural injustices of imperialism, conducted adequate truth-telling and estimated and enacted the reparations that are needed to reset the relationships (Mowatt, 2022). Tourism development in such a context of unaddressed and unreformed imperialism, manifests in exploitation, abuse, dispossession, commodification and many other sorts of injustices and inequities. Examples can be found from around the globe (see Devine & Ojeda, 2017).

In this exploratory, conceptual article utilising an international relations lens, firstly we consider the argument of the ongoingness of imperialism. We then investigate the historical proposed New International Economic Order and investigate why it was not implemented. Following that, we examine the symbiosis between tourism and imperialism. We then briefly consider specific cases of tourism developments under decolonising leadership which demonstrated tourism could have been developed in more just and equitable ways. This brings us to considerations of tourism dependency and ideological underpinnings of supremacy and hegemonic modernity. Following critical scholarly practices, this article particularly prioritizes and listens to voices and scholarship from the Global South and those working in resistance in the Global North.

This work takes heed of Spivak (2015, p. 92), who explained: “Part of our ‘unlearning’ project is to articulate that ideological formation – by measuring silences, if necessary – into the object of investigation”. This is thus a project of “unlearning” and relearning in tourism. This work has implications for tourism studies’ disciplinary knowledge, pedagogies and praxis. The thesis is that imperialism in its current manifestation has ushered in approaches based on ongoing inequality and corresponds to forms and processes in tourism that are unequal and oppressive. This article argues that the structural injustices that surround, structure and permeate tourism are determinate of the possibilities to shape tourism for better futures. This analysis may also lay stronger foundations for work considering alternative political economy and diverse economies approaches in tourism studies in search of more equitable and sustainable futures (Gilman, 2015, p. 11).

## The ongoingness of imperialism

In an era when the terms “postcolonialism” and “decolonisation” are gaining traction in academic disciplines, including tourism studies (e.g., Chambers & Buzinde, 2015; Hall & Tucker, 2004), it would seem that imperialism is an era in the past. Common sensical understandings would suggest the time of the recognised great empires is over as the United Kingdom (UK), France, Spain and others have transitioned into ordinary nation-states in an unfolding nation-state system. We overlook the fact that there remain 17 officially recognised, non-self-governing territories that were once slated for full independence. There are also those that remain largely unrecognised such as Hawai’i (Kajihiro, 2022). These examples are not insignificant, despite the fact they rarely receive attention. The United States is a nation that has denied being imperialistic and yet there are more cases than just Hawai’i to hold in evidence. As Cooley (2012, p. 6) noted, some view the: “...vast overseas networks of bases and troop deployments as the U.S. Empire and compare it to the peripheral holdings of previous imperial empires”. These span the globe from Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, to Okinawa in Japan, to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. But the ongoingness of imperialism is more than just these cases of imperial holdover.

It would be helpful to be precise in terminology. Kohn and Reddy (2017, n.p) described:

Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another... the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin.

“The term imperialism draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control” (Kohn & Reddy, 2017, n.p). Imperialism is related to colonialism. As Native Hawaiian scholar and activist Haunani-Kay Trask (1999, p. 251) explained imperialism is: “A total system of foreign power in which another culture, people, and way of life penetrate, transform, and come to define the colonized society. The function and purpose of imperialism is exploitation of the colony”. Loomba (2004) made clear that, while there have been many historical conquests and empires, “these newer European travels ushered in new and different kinds of colonial practices which altered the whole globe in a way that these other colonialisms did not” (p. 1101). In particular, this latter form enabled capitalism and capitalist penetration through globalisation (Loomba, 2004). Kwame Nkrumah (1965), Ghana’s first president, argued that

neocolonialism was “the last stage of imperialism”, confirming that colonialism (and its varieties) and imperialism are intimately connected. Reading Edward Said, *Caton* (2012, p. 123) asserted: “imperialism is still alive and well in the ideological legacies colonialism left behind”. This article asserts that imperialism is ongoing, naming it as such matters and revisiting it has importance.

*Bhabha* (1994, p. 70) illuminated the ideological aspects to colonialism and imperialism when he argued that colonial discourses characterise the colonised as a “population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction”. One of the foremost anticolonial thinkers, Aimé Césaire (1972, p. 21), argued “Colonization = thingification”. By this he meant that the value of the “old societies” was dismissed as of no value and the people made inferior and subservient. These discourses of superiority and inferiority are key aspects of imperial dynamics. These remain also the bedrock of interventions for development and modernisation in so-called “developing countries”. *Bhabha* (1994, p. 171) explained: “ideological discourses of hegemonic modernity ... attempt to legitimize uneven development and differentiated and often unbalanced histories of nations, races, communities, and peoples”.

There are those that view colonialism as overall a good thing and argue that colonial dynamics are still needed. For instance, in 2005 the French National Assembly passed the French law on colonialism which required high-school teachers to teach about the “positive values” of colonisation (*Lotem*, 2016). In the academic domain, “the case for colonialism” was asserted when *Gilley* claimed: “it’s high time to re-evaluate [the] pejorative meaning” of colonialism, because in this estimation “countries that embraced their colonial inheritance, by and large, did better than those that spurned it” (2017, p. 168). This was originally published in *Third World Quarterly* and then retracted after serious controversy. *Gilley* argued:

The case for Western colonialism is about rethinking the past as well as improving the future. It involves reaffirming the primacy of human lives, universal values, and shared responsibilities - the civilizing mission without scare quotes - that led to improvements in living conditions for most Third World peoples during most episodes of Western colonialism. It also involves learning how to unlock those benefits again. Western and non-Western countries should reclaim the colonial toolkit and language as part of their commitment to effective governance and international order (*Gilley*, 2018, p. 167).

This corresponds to what *Spivak* (2015, p. 94) described as “Imperialism’s image as the establisher of the good society...”. But as much as *Gilley* (2018, p. 174) wanted to champion the cause of colonialism, he equally was concerned to oppose the efforts of those described as “anti-colonial”. He stated:

It is hard to overstate the pernicious effects of global anti-colonialism on domestic and international affairs since the end of World War II. Anti-colonialism ravaged countries as nationalist elites mobilized illiterate populations with appeals to destroy the market economies, pluralistic and constitutional polities, and rational policy processes of European colonizers. In our “age of apology” for atrocities, one of the many conspicuous silences has been an apology for the many atrocities visited upon Third World peoples by anti-colonial advocates.

The editor of *Current Affairs*, Nathan *Robinson* (2017, n.p), responded with “A Quick Reminder of Why Colonialism Was Bad,” in which he called the downplaying of colonial-era atrocities “not only unscholarly” but “morally tantamount” to Holocaust denial. As *Robinson* (2017, n.p) argued this debate matters: “One would think this revulsion [against colonialism] was now universally shared. But that is far from being the case. The majority of British people are still proud of colonialism and the British Empire”. *Robinson’s* analysis focused on the fallacies of *Gilley’s* argument, demonstrating that the article was unsound and should not have been published in a peer-reviewed academic journal. For our purpose here, the controversy indicates how the forces of imperial exploitation and the anti-colonial resistance are still relevant despite the fact it is no longer common to speak in such terms.

Indeed, imperial dynamics of wealth extraction from the colonised world have accelerated in recent years, suggesting that imperialism is still operative. *Hickel et al.* (2021, pp. 1–2) recently carried out a project to “...quantify the value appropriated from the global South through unequal exchange since 1960, demonstrating that the wealthy nations of the global North continue to rely on extraction to finance economic growth and sustain high levels of consumption”. They argued this pattern of extraction is evident throughout the “postcolonial” period since 1960, but particularly pronounced in the era of neoliberal globalisation, with an estimated aggregate value transfer during this period of \$62 trillion – a sum that could have ended extreme poverty around the world (*Hickel et al.*, 2021, p. 5). Such valuable data offers insights that raise critical questions on why imperialism seems to have fallen away from our attention and spotlights the need for dedicated “unlearning” as per *Spivak* (2015). The next section addresses how imperialism has been obscured through the forgetting of an important historical moment when anti-colonialism offered the possibility of a more equal and thereby more just world order.

### The New International Economic Order and its derailment

There is an important historical context within which to situate this discussion. In the aftermath of World War II, at the time that mass tourism was taking off, a movement for decolonisation gathered momentum as old imperial powers lost their hold on their colonies. Due to the dynamics of the Cold War, when the United States and the Soviet Union vied for the support of these emerging states, there were campaigns and agendas we have largely forgotten today.

This included a movement for decolonisation that occurred with the end of the war and the creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1947. At that time, 750 million people (nearly one-third of the world’s population) “lived in territories that were dependent on colonial powers” (UN, 2021). This resulted in the emerging nations of what is now called the Global South forming groupings such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 to resist Western dominance, foster multilateralism in international

affairs and push for their interests (see [Morphett, 2004](#)). To address fair trade and development concerns, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was formed (a permanent UN body despite the nomenclature).

Part of the vision developed by these emerging nations was a transition to a New International Economic Order. [Gilman \(2015, p. 1\)](#) described it as intended to: “complet[e] the geopolitical process of decolonization and create[e] a democratic global order of truly sovereign states. It was, in short, a proposal for a radically different future than the one we actually inhabit”. Its agenda came from the Algiers conference of the Non-Aligned countries in 1973. The New International Economic Order's call for a world order “based on equity [and] sovereign equality” was intended to “correct inequalities and redress existing injustices” ([UN General Assembly, 1974, n.p.](#)). The UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and its accompanying program of action on 1 May 1974 ([UN General Assembly, 1974, n.p.](#)). In addition to the calls for equity and equality, the declaration also noted that recognition of state sovereignty empowered states to nationalise assets within their boundaries, that colonised territories had a right to “restitution and full compensation” and the right of decolonised states to regulate transnational corporations operating in national territory ([UN General Assembly, 1974, n.p.](#)). These provisions and its many more were all intended to redress the damages and injustices of the era of imperialism.

The New International Economic Order's agenda included addressing debt by changing the international financial system, addressing poor terms of trade in commodities, supporting resource transfers (financial and technological) and South-South cooperation (see [Bhagwati, 1977](#)). As tourism analyst [de Kadt \(1979, p. 38\)](#) explained at the time: “more and more it is realised that major institutional and structural adjustments will be needed in the industrialized countries if the poor nations are to achieve their development goals”. In recognition of this fact, the wealthy countries were urged to commit 0.7% of gross national income to development aid funding for countries of the Global South (an official UN target from 24 October 1970; see [OECD, 2016](#)). Thus, the focus of this agenda was global structural reform renouncing colonial supremacy in favour of radical equality, emancipation and self-determination.

There was a view in the decolonising countries that the Global North owed the Global South aid, technology and fair-trading terms because of the damages of imperialism, slavery, forced labour and exploitation. “To reread all the speeches delivered on behalf of the NIEO is to be struck by the hopeful idea that the north could be reasoned into accepting the moral necessity of abandoning its privileged position in the geopolitical hierarchy” ([Gilman, 2015, p. 6](#)). This view is backed up by [Hickel et al. \(2021, p. 2\)](#) who explained:

The historical record demonstrates that, during the colonial period, Western European nations depended for their development on extraction from other parts of the world... it is impossible to understand the industrialisation of high-income countries without reference to the patterns of extraction that underpinned it.

There was a concerted effort to derail this radical agenda in the interest of the nations of the Global North. As [Morphett](#) explained:

The formation in 1975 of the Group of 7 [G7] (the largest market economies) to discuss Western macroeconomic policies outside the UN was deliberately removed from this process. It marked Western disenchantment with aspects of multilateral diplomacy increasingly controlled by the global South ([Morphett, 2004, p. 526](#)).

The death knell for these calls for multilateralism and redistributive justice through the New International Economic Order and the fora of the UN arrived with the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan in the USA and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the UK. At the North-South Summit convened in Cancun in 1981, Reagan told the attending heads of state that private investment and free markets were the “path to development, prosperity, and, yes, democracy” ([Franczak, 2019, p. 887](#)). With the 1982 debt crisis, Global South solidarity was shattered, and many of these countries entered a “lost decade of development” ([Franczak, 2019, p. 889](#)). There has been recent revisiting of the history of the New International Economic Order in development studies in a clear understanding that this moment mattered even if analysts held differing views (see [Gilman, 2015](#)). [Gilman \(2015, p. 2\)](#) argued that it did not present a coherent strategy:

While everyone involved might have agreed that the goal of the NIEO was to improve the economic position of the global south in relation to the global north, there was no consensus about the ultimate political ends, much less about the best way to achieve those ends.

What is not disputable is that neoliberal globalisation arrived with all its attendant practices of privatisation, financialisation and global economic restructuring. In terms of the concerns of the Global South, a key development was the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programmes by the World Bank & International Monetary Fund which disciplined these countries to the new reality. Additionally, terms of trade were imposed by the World Trade Organisation through agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the General Agreement on Trade in Services. [Anghie \(2015, p. 155\)](#) explained: “It might be argued that the NIEO essentially failed because whatever the validity of its moral claims or its economic analyses, it simply lacked the real economic and political power necessary to change the system”.

[Hickel et al. \(2021, p. 15\)](#) have explained the outcomes of this process as a missed opportunity for endogenous development for the Global South:

Unequal exchange represents a loss for the South. But it is not a loss relative to exclusion from the world-economy; rather, it is a loss relative to an alternative world of fair-trade. The closest we have come to such a world was during the 1960s

and 1970s, when the Non-Aligned Movement was on the rise and international prices (as measured by ERDI) were relatively equal.

Hickel et al.'s analysis argued that if this fairer trade system had been enacted, the Global South could have financed its own development and therefore followed self-determining policies. It also showed that imperialistic exploitation remains active and maintains gross inequalities that preclude development in the Global South today. The Global North has been able to undermine the efforts to create a New International Economic Order and instead have created the current neoliberal, "free" trade system that works to their advantage. Together with an imposed ideology of inferiority, backwardness and subservience during the imperial/colonial era, many of the nations of the Global South have been forced to act as supplicants on development aid largesse, to grow dependent on international tourism and take what they can get rather than act collectively for more equal multilateral global structures.

In this milieu, tourism has been promoted as a path to development by the UN and these development bodies as part of this neoliberal agenda resulting in harmful levels of tourism dependency, in some cases through almost monocultural approaches (see Mowforth & Munt, 2003, pp. 49–57; Wearing et al., 2019). To better understand the significance of this, it is necessary to investigate the synergies between tourism and imperialism and what various research studies have determined.

### Tourism and imperialism

The relationship between tourism, imperialism and colonialism has been underscored in a number of tourism analyses. As Grimwood et al. (2019, p. 1) argued: "Tourism's entanglement with colonial power is deeply rooted and complex. Research has recurrently demonstrated how the production and consumption of tourism (re)inscribes colonizing structures, systems, and narratives across time and space". Jamaica Kincaid's (1988, pp. 36–7) poetic exploration of tourism in the colonised context of Antigua in her book *A Small Place* helps historicise the tourist-local encounter:

Do you know why people like me are shy about being capitalists? Well, it's because we, for as long as we have known you, were capital, like bales of cotton and sacks of sugar, and you were the commanding cruel, capitalists, and the memory of this is so strong, the experience so recent, that we can't quite bring ourselves to embrace this idea that you think so much of.

Insights can be gleaned from the analyses of postcolonial thinker Edward Said (1995) on "Orientalism", which investigated how the West has created the East as an "Other" through which it posits its own superiority. Said (1995, p. 203) noted how "Orientalism" is both an academic tradition and "an area of concern defined by travelers, commercial enterprises, governments...to whom the Orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples and civilizations". These amount to judgements about character, qualities and status of peoples inhabiting the "Orient", who become relegated to a position of inferiority vis a vis the "West". It is important to note that Said includes "travelers" in these power dynamics of Othering and subordinating. This carries over into modern tourism.

Linehan et al. (2020), p. 1) examined what they termed the "vital and contested connections between colonialism and tourism" through a descriptive survey of the ways colonialism and tourism have historically and currently reinforce and benefit from each other. Focusing particularly on tourist' motivations, Boniface and Fowler (1993, p. 19) argued:

Tourism feeds on the colonial impulse. Part of the appeal, the frisson, of travelling to strange lands, is the opportunity that it may afford to patronize the poor native unfortunates who may know no better way of life than that of their homeland. Tourism, in many ways, is a sort of colonialism.

Hutnyk (1996) provided similar insights through his study of poverty-gazing backpackers in India "...who can live like Rajas in Indian towns at low financial costs" (pp. 9–10).

This expression of imperial and colonial dominance through tourism is also seen in the relationship between tourists and workers. In fact, the ideology of superiority that Bhabha (1994) identified is mirrored in the tourist – service worker relationship seen in some forms of tourism. Robinson (2017, n.p) asserted that "One of the cruelest aspects of colonialism is the way it forces the colonized into servility and obedience". Such servility has been readily harnessed in tourism settings such as the multinational-dominated cruise tourism sector, which is premised on the exploitation of Global South workers for its profit model (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). As Jaakson (2004, p. 178) argued with reference to cruise tourism:

A cruise ship is the ultimate example of neocolonialist tourism in a Champagne Glass World [unequal], where the West and the Rest come into direct contact as passengers from developed countries are served by workers from developing countries. Passengers, who are overwhelmingly white, are served by mostly nonwhite workers.

Wong (2015, n.p) addressed tourism development in Caribbean Island nations and argued it was premised on the plantation slavery period:

It is common practice in many tourist hotels that their staff members are often dressed purposely in fake colonial costumes to project the rich agricultural heritage. The practice of stooping and bowing in the provision of services to tourists becomes mandatory. In this context, black-skinned hotel servants are obviously preferable.

Additionally important to understand is the way colonialism shaped the engagement of nations of the Global South with the international tourism market. For instance, Akama (2004, p. 145) explained how tourism development in Kenya was built on colonial structures: “the initial development of tourism in Kenya was colonial in orientation and mainly served the social and economic interests of the expatriate community and international tourists”. After independence, the Kenyan government pursued foreign investments and this set Kenya on a trajectory of foreign ownership and management of its tourism industry by foreign and multinational companies (Akama, 2004, p. 145). In the case of Tanzania, Melubo and Doering (2022) explained how local dispossession featured in the creation of some of the well-known conservation areas: “Colonial and postcolonial governments have been advocating for the relocation of people from such areas for decades, indicating that conservation and the tourism trade have enjoyed privileged positions in Tanzanian politics” (p. 80). In another example, Kajihiro (2022) explained how the occupation of Hawai'i has been unjustly incorporated into the international tourism system and how locals are resisting this occupation through “decolonising tours”, DeTours, which interrupt these forces.

In the context of India, Swamy (2017) documented how coastal commons were seized in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami in the Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu areas. This led to the dislocation of coastal fishers in the interest of tourism and other developments. Swamy (2017, p. 356) employed ecological exchange theory to explain “how political ecological relations and conflicts at the local level relate with the political economy of production-consumption accumulation on the scale of the world-system”. Swamy (2017) explained that states such as India:

...have had to aggressively adopt strategies that privilege export-oriented production and foreign direct investment as necessary conditions for development, leading developing countries like India to further entrench themselves within the world-system as taps [for natural capital] and sinks [for wastes] for the accumulation needs of global capital, and in doing so intensifying assaults on local populations seen to stand in the way of a new market-oriented forms of development that prioritizes the needs of private capital (p. 356).

With these examples, we can identify how tourism furthers the goals of imperialism in taking away the wealth, resources and autonomy of local populations as their governments have succumbed to the pressures to engage with the global market seeking foreign investments despite the rigged system of unequal exchange.

There are those that question the assertion that imperialism remains operative in tourism dynamics. This is illustrated by Hall and Tucker who claimed:

However, the extent to which power is able to be exercised, and hence development is controlled in any nation or destination by an external agency is somewhat problematic as a more complex notion of globalisation has replaced simplistic ideas of imperialism (Hall & Tucker, 2004, p. 6).

However, such a view is challenged by Prashad (2017) who explained how the discourse of globalisation has been wielded to obscure the continuation of imperialistic exploitation. This is only reinforced by the data presented by Hickel et al. (2021) demonstrating the continuance of imperial extraction through the current global economic system. In furtherance of the effort to reveal forgotten/silenced histories and missed opportunities, we next turn to examples of tourism under decolonising leadership in nations of the Global South. This will demonstrate that simultaneous to the undermining of the New International Economic Order's agenda with its vision of radical equality there was a concomitant impact on the tourism sphere.

## Decolonisation and reimagined tourism

As national liberation leaders led their communities to freedom from imperialism and colonial rule in the aftermath of the Second World War, some considered what role tourism might play in their pathways to self-determination. Despite the fact that tourism in colonial contexts was often viewed as demeaning, oppressive or not developmental, there were cases where this did not diminish insights that indeed tourism could be harnessed for the emancipatory and empowering agendas of these decolonising nations. For instance, Jamaica used domestic tourism to build ties of solidarity “for the ‘new’ society that the socialist regime sought to build” (Chambers & Airey, 2001, p. 98). In addition to Jamaica, we will briefly consider illustrative examples from Ghana and Tanzania.

Engmann's (2020) work offered insights into the formation of heritage tourism in Ghana catering to African diasporic communities generated by the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This case of African diaspora travel shows a multi-layered engagement and re-empowerment as Ghana led decolonisation efforts in the Global South. Through its slave heritage tourism offerings, Ghana connected with African diasporic communities to help them in reviving their identities and African connections to overcome the legacies of Western enslavement. Through invaluable interviews with revolutionary leader and former President of Ghana Jerry Rawlings, Engmann (2020) captured a time when tourism could be seen as part of the global movement for decolonisation. Rawlings explained:

Ghana was seen as a place where the black man had every reason to feel proud and was not exploited by neo-colonialism, so that was something in and of itself...In our case... [it] is a connection to blackness, to “Africanness”. We were one country that exhibited defiance to exploitative relations. Ghana had experienced some serious setbacks. But the 1979 revolution restored a sense of justice that led to a very energetic society (cited in Engmann, 2020, p. 9).

Prime Minister of Jamaica Michael Manley led a similar effort to break dependency when he was alleged to have stated: “we set out to break the old elitist pattern in which tourist hotels were like enclaves, shut away from the local population by psychology as much as by price” (cited in Chambers & Airey, 2001, p. 109). Chambers & Airey (2001, p. 118) described the socialist era of Jamaican tourism policy between 1972 and 1980:

... adherence to the political ideology of socialism and its attendant economic philosophy of dependency meant that the government linked the tourism industry to subservience and racial and class conflict at the same time that it admitted the industry's pivotal role in the island's development.

This leadership pursued a policy direction of “development focused on what was termed the ‘Jamaicanisation’ of the tourism industry” (Chambers & Airey, 2001, p. 99). This policy set objectives for worker participation, promoting indigenous values and increasing domestic tourism (as well as typical economic objectives of increasing employment and tourism foreign exchange values) (Chambers & Airey, 2001, p. 100).

The case of Tanzania is also instructive where colonisation brought hunting and safari forms of tourism (Melubo & Doering, 2022). At independence, leader Julius Nyerere ushered in a socialist government and was a significant leader in the decolonisation movement previously discussed. His socialist governance emphasised self-reliance under the precepts of the 1967 Arusha Declaration and operated under the traditional African values of *ujamaa*. Nyerere's conceptualisation of *ujamaa* entailed: “the recognition of their mutual involvement, respect of one for another; the common ownership of all basic goods; and the obligation of every member of the community to work” (Mettrick, 1969, p. 171). In addition to promoting this form of autonomous development, Nyerere was a central catalyst to the formation of the Organisation of African Unity which fostered pan-African unity as a bulwark to imperial power interventions.

In this context of implementing socialism in Tanzania, tourism came in for debate sparked by an article written by university students claiming that tourism would “reinforce the existing colonial and neo-colonial social, cultural and economic relationships... [and bring] the dangers of commercialization of our culture which would make it incompatible with socialism” (Shivji, 1973, p. 1). The critical point addressed in this debate was what role can the tourism industry play in building a socialist, self-reliant economy that can be independent of the colonial and capitalist economies of Europe and America (Kanywanyi, 1973, p. 60). While the debate indicated diverse views in newly independent Tanzania (see Shivji, 1973), Tanzania did for a period of time provide one example of a socialised approach to tourism development, with many tourism assets coming under government ownership and tourism policy supporting the autonomous development agenda (see Curry, 1990).

While some today might view Tanzanian socialism as a failure, its example of communal solidarity is still hailed (see James, 2014). It offers lessons in attempting transitions to radical equality, local empowerment and using traditional values to shape contemporary futures. However, Tanzania was only to be brought back under external influence with concomitant popular disempowerment as Structural Adjustment Programmes were imposed due to indebtedness in the mid-1980s. As Chachage (1999, p. 16) explained, foreign investments were encouraged by organisations such as the World Bank and tourism assets were privatised with guarantees provided to foreign private investors against risks of currency transfer restrictions and expropriations.

These three examples, Ghana, Jamaica and Tanzania, reveal how decolonising countries were reforming their people's engagement with tourism as they freed themselves from imperial domination and sought more radically equal futures. Just as the New International Economic Order was undermined so were some of these more radical ideas on tourism and the result of both was a continuation of imperial processes of extraction from the countries of the Global South. With the exposition in the next section, we show that the results of the ongoingness of imperialism is a dependency on tourism that works against the abilities for the communities of the Global South to achieve just, fair, self-determining and sustainable futures.

### The critical issue of dependency that arises

*...the value of our old societies. They were communal societies, never societies of the many for the few. They were societies that were not only ante-capitalist, as has been said, but also anti-capitalist. They were democratic societies, always. They were cooperative societies, fraternal societies. I make a systematic defence of the societies destroyed by imperialism (Césaire, 1972, p. 23).*

Writing four decades ago, de Kadt (1979, p. 37) claimed: “The study of tourism in developing countries has not, on the whole, taken much notice of the more general issues addressed in recent years by those concerned with development”. That has left it to the work of political economists and development studies scholars to address the issues and vulnerabilities of dependency on tourism as a path to development. As Scheyvens (2002, p. 28) explained, for instance, “dependency theory positions tourism as a new form of imperialism”.

It is useful to first begin with an articulation of what has been lost in the pushing of the development agenda based on Western/Eurocentric models. This has been built on what Bhabha (1994, p. 171) called the ideology of “hegemonic modernity” and is predicated on pressing a belief of inferiority and backwardness on the part of those on whom development is to be enacted. As far back as the 1970s, Césaire's passionate and partisan writing intended to combat such ideological narratives and expose imperialistic agendas:

I am talking about natural economies that have been disrupted – harmonious and viable economies adapted to the indigenous population – about food crops destroyed, malnutrition permanently introduced, agricultural development oriented solely

toward the benefit of the metropolitan countries, about the looting of products, the looting of raw materials (Césaire, 1972, p. 22).

Britton (1980) showed in detail how colonisation made “underdeveloped” regions into peripheries of capitalist economy through an in-depth analysis of the case of Fiji. Britton (1980, p. 251) explained:

The penetration by western capitalism of the pre-capitalist world laid the foundations for an externally oriented, distorted and dependent form of development. This occurred through the subordination of indigenous societies and the highly selective exploitation of local resources by foreign capital.

In Fiji’s case this resulted in ongoing racial disparities, uneven development and urban/rural divides that still exist today. As well as a sugar producing industry and mining, tourism was central to these developments and was heavily promoted by the colonial state in the 1950s and early 1960s (Britton, 1980, p. 268). Wong (2015, n.p) wrote of the tourism dependency that most Caribbean Island states have succumbed to and explained the critical concern: “Indeed the economy of many Caribbean island states is now organized and re-configured to provide goods and services to these ‘wealthy’ tourists”.

Today, after COVID-19 has brought tourism and travel to a virtual standstill, the concern with tourism dependency has returned. A report from UNCTAD and UNWTO (2021) noted: “Developing countries dependent on tourism might consider how they can diversify resources away from tourism” (p. 19). This is indeed what tourism dependent communities have had to do in an effort to survive the aftermath of this extraordinary crisis. Reports from Bali quoted one local chief Dewa Komang Yudi welcoming tourism workers’ return to their villages:

Deurbanization abruptly occurred due to the pandemic. There are extra individuals now in north Bali than in south Bali as a result of a lot of them returned to their villages. This is what now we have been dreaming about...People are depending on it [tourism] like opium. Tourism is fragile, and we have gone too far. We have been abandoning the fundamental things that mobilize the economy (cited in Laula & Paddock, 2020, n.p).

Scheyvens and Movono (2020) explained that Pacific Island nations highly dependent on international tourism have also been severely impacted by COVID. They described how “People are coping in the short term by reviving subsistence farming, fishing and bartering for goods and services” (Scheyvens and Movono, 2020, n.p). Even more important is the reconnection to traditions and land that the pandemic has enabled:

...in order to survive when they lost their tourism sector jobs, many people in the Pacific left towns near to tourist areas in order to return to their villages where they had customary land. This return to ancestral lands is significant because, as well as providing the basis for everyday sustenance through agricultural activities, the land carries deep meaning to Pacific peoples in terms of connecting past, present and future generations (Scheyvens et al., 2021, p. 14).

Additionally, some countries in the Global South have found the value of promoting and supporting domestic tourism as a way to compensate for the loss of the international tourists. Examples include the Lumi Tugeda tourism programme in the Solomon Islands (Ariki, 2021) and the Mauri Experience programme in Kiribati (Manufofau, 2021) which helped address the temporary vulnerability of dependency, but also helped salaried people in the capital connect with rural communities and may be found to help build greater solidarity within these nations.

Such examples invite critical questioning on the dynamics of tourism which has imposed circumstances that cannibalise traditional economies for the growth and development of corporate tourism and prioritise international visitors at the expense of domestic tourism solidarity. Global activist network the Tourism Alert and Action Forum seized on the unique moment of this UNCTAD and UNWTO (2021) statement recognising the perils of tourism dependency:

UNCTAD was originally the voice of the nations of the Global South to strive to create a more just and equal world order in the era of decolonisation from global imperialism from the 1960s. We know it is their influence that saw to it that such an extraordinary statement has been made... After COVID, communities and nations have an opportunity to wean themselves from such damaging dependencies on tourism and create more self-sustaining futures. We do not suggest this will be easy, but it is necessary (Tourism Alert and Action Forum, 2021, n.p).

Some analysts will dismiss this discussion of dependency and instead champion modern mass tourism as bringing benefits in terms of economic development and as a pathway to modernisation (e.g., Butcher, 2003). But what such arguments obscure is just how much of this value is extracted from the economy (through leakages, lost tax revenues, subsidies, etc.) and indeed the wider costs of these choices. While tourism of course brings some value, it should also be assessed in terms of Hickel et al.’s (2021) analysis for its role in perpetuating unequal and vulnerable exchange that keeps the nations of the Global South in imperial servitude.

### **Ideological underpinnings**

Key pillars of ongoing imperialism are the ideological underpinnings of supremacy that has justified domination and the accompanying vision of hegemonic modernity. Wijesinghe (2020, p. 1) argued: “Since European colonialism (and American neo-



colonialism) was grounded on the doctrine of cultural hierarchy and supremacy, exclusion continues to occur across various asymmetries of power, such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, culture, and episteme". Ricky characterised this as "white supremacy" and argued for understanding it "...as the global superstructure" (Ricky, 2001, p. 469).

In their discussions of tourism and coloniality, Linehan et al. (2020), p. 9) stated: "Ultimately, tourism dwells on the feelings of tourists rather than the toured objects where colonialism is viewed as symbol embodied with imagery, expectations and powers". This is telling, where the local people become objectified and dehumanised as "toured objects" and the servants of tourism. This inequality is also particularly evident in voluntourism's "white saviour syndrome" and the implicit mindset that the Global South is incapable of ensuring its own development. Bandyopadhyay and Patil (2017, p. 652) explained:

The historic roots of racial inferiority/superiority are further perpetuated by contemporary neo-colonial aid relationships in volunteer tourism ... The colonial narratives are retold through modern discourses of volunteer tourism and development, where those in the global South come to believe that they have lower capacity for development augmented by inferior science, technology, and resources....

These works reveal the ways in which the peoples of the Global South may be disempowered through their engagement with tourism and how tourism as a development pathway may perpetuate dependency and vulnerability.

It is also important to reveal how these ideologies manifest as violence against colonised and racialised peoples. Anti-colonial analyst Frantz Fanon (1967, p. 254) identified the worst damages of European imperialism to be "committed in the heart of man, and consisted in the pathological tearing apart of his functions and the crumbling away of his unity". What Europe brought to its colonies were "differentiations, the stratification and the blood thirsty tensions fed by classes; and finally, on the immense scale of humanity, there were racial hatreds, slavery, exploitation and the bloodless genocide which consisted in the setting aside of fifteen thousand millions of men" (Fanon, 1967, p. 254). "The imperial attitude promotes a fundamental genocidal attitude in respect to colonized and racialized people. Through it colonial and racial subjects are marked as dispensable" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 246).

Tourism has been revealed as a force for the continuation of these attitudes and practices. Devine and Ojeda's (2017) special issue on tourism and violence provides multiple and in-depth evidence of tourism's relationship to what they term "(neo)colonialism" revealing insights onto tourism as extractivism, enclosure of the commons, erasure, commodification and destructive creation. They assert: "(Neo)colonialism flags the ways in which tourism has been, and continues to be, deeply implicated in racialized projects and practices of imperialism, as well as tourism's ongoing role in capitalism's colonization of space" (Devine and Ojeda, 2017, p. 611). Even supposedly benign forms such as ecotourism become tools of dispossession and disappearance, as evidenced in Devine's (2017) study in Guatemala. This special issue also documented the resistance to such imperialistic tourism practices in the Global South, still colonised places like Hawai'i and also in the metropolitan imperial centres. An example of the latter is the decolonial praxis in the heart of empire described by Boukhris (2017, p. 15): "The Black Paris project opens interstices within the dominant tourism imaginary and becomes an arena to debate the status of racialized minorities and the monolithic conception of French society".

If we are to address such dynamics in the interests of equity and justice, decolonising the academy through the welcoming and privileging of diverse knowledges is essential (Chambers & Buzinde, 2015), but is not sufficient (Wijesinghe, 2020). As Grosfoguel (2007) argued, "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" (p. 213). Wijesinghe (2020), p. 8) has demonstrated that building a decolonial approach requires moving beyond "Euro/Westerncentric fundamentalism" through the development of critical consciousness. It also requires critical historical grounding and engagement with wider structural contexts and so tourism studies would benefit from more transdisciplinary work with critical history and international relations (see Snyder, 2021). We also might consider how we could develop a "connection-making consciousness" (said of Audre Lorde in Turner, 2020, p. 22) so that we better understand the injustices in tourism. As Mowatt (2022, p. 122) explained:

In proposing a more organised programme centred on truth in tourism, an emphasis here on establishing studies of histories situates the context of racial violence and ultimately the cleansing of populations to create more narratives that are essential to creating more meaningful societies.

This article has worked to support this truth-telling agenda in tourism and illuminate some key learnings from forgotten histories. As some advocate rethinking tourism in the aftermath of COVID-19 (e.g., Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020), we must clearly address manifestations of the ongoingness of imperialism and ideas of supremacy if we are to effectively secure more just and sustainable futures.

We see these manifestations erupt today at their crudest when former US President Trump referred to Haiti and African nations as "shithole countries" (Kindi, 2019). This expression of white supremacy has material impact in communities around the world and can be linked back to ongoing imperialism. It is also seen in the fact that some 90% of Africa's cultural heritage is reportedly held in Europe (Reuters, 2022). But more importantly these legacies play out today in the failures to secure international cooperation on crises of global proportions including climate change (Gilman, 2015) and the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be the peoples of the Global South who are going to be disproportionately affected, thus confirming them as the "dispensable" peoples that Maldonado-Torres (2007) described. It is noteworthy that the World Tourism Organization, a UN body, has had nothing to say to date about vaccine equity instead focusing on travel mobility aids such as vaccine certificates, thus aligning itself with the interests of the privileged rather than the peoples of the Global South. These examples demonstrate that the failure of the

New International Economic Order's agenda has reverberations today, but still its promise is not completely extinguished (Gilman, 2015). Its example may support revived thinking on equity, solidarity and a more just global order. All indications are that we need these if we are to address wicked problems such as global climate change, future pandemics and other challenges.

## Conclusion

Ateljevic et al. (2007, p. 5) encouraged critical scholars to: "...try to examine critically the purpose of our research and ask whether our knowledge has served to enhance social justice or whether it has simply served to reify historical power and social relations". This article has explored an almost forgotten history in tourism studies that sheds light on the prevailing injustices and unsustainability of contemporary tourism. Had the revolutionary and decolonising forces of the 1960s succeeded in their efforts to secure decolonised, self-determining futures and the New International Economic Order's agenda, we might have been treated to a very different form of tourism. In examining the historical examples of Jamaica, Ghana and Tanzania, we can glimpse tourism forms more responsive to local community rights and needs, where multinationals were to be circumscribed and governments geared tourism to public good goals. Instead, imperialism as it currently manifests has supported continued inequality and forms and processes in tourism that are unequal and oppressive. This work demonstrates that the links between colonial histories, racialised inequalities and global crises matter and deserve further analysis.

There are limitations to this conceptual work. It is a broad overview using an international relations lens to examine the historical and ongoing relationships between tourism, imperialism and dependency pathways imposed on the nations of the Global South. It has not addressed nuances that may occur in particular forms of tourism such as niche market or special interest tourism. Nor has it charted how these forces take particular forms in different national contexts. These are important topics that will yield detail and nuance to discussions of the ongoingness of imperialism. Nonetheless, this article has filled a noticeable gap in attention in tourism studies to the New International Economic Order and the outcomes from its derailment. It has also listened to the expertise of the Global South on these concerns in order to better understand power and privilege from a subaltern view.

As Gilman (2015, p. 11) explained: "Once-conceivable alternatives to our current global order are of more than passing interest to those who seek historical bases for alternative political economies". Thus, this analysis may also support renewed attention to diverse economies in tourism and support approaches that emphasise local livelihoods rather than seek foreign investments. Wijesinghe (2020, p. 8) discussed the development of critical consciousness in her analysis of tourism academic decolonisation: "It is a process that requires the researcher to 'learn' and 'unlearn' history". The need for tourism academic decolonisation is a compelling one and promises to unleash much-needed innovation. Additionally, as we uncover these forgotten histories, we may unlearn the neoliberal mantra that "there is no alternative" that shapes both current economies and tourism; that would also grant opportunities to relearn more radical forms of equality to shape global order and tourism (see Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006, 2008).

Decolonisation is not finished, with 17 non-self-governing territories listed on the Special Committee on Decolonisation's agenda still (UN, 2021). But as this article has argued, the ongoingness of imperialism is much bigger than this. Ideas of supremacy leading to domination and exploitation are at the root of many of the global crises we now face. While the New International Economic Order might be viewed as just an interesting history of a radical push for equality against imperialism, we should also recognise that its failure in part explains why we seemingly fail to secure vital multilateral cooperation on current crises such as the pandemic and climate change. This also explains in part why tourism manifests as vulnerable dependency and exploitation. Revisiting these histories offers insights into how we might (re)imagine tourism for more radical equalities.

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Freya Higgins-Desbiolles is an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in Tourism Management, Business Unit, University of South Australia and Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo. Her work focuses on social justice, human rights and sustainability issues in tourism. She has worked with communities, non-governmental organisations and businesses that seek to harness tourism for sustainable and equitable futures.