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Tourism for the *emancipation* of the oppressed: towards a critical tourism education drawing on Freirean philosophy

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A B S T R A C T

Drawing on the work of Paulo Freire (e.g., 1970; 1972; 1973), the aim of this paper is to reconsider the potential impact that critical pedagogy could have on tourism education. Specifically, the authors consider the democratic and emancipatory potential of applying Freire's work, and opportunities for implementing a critical pedagogical approach across tourism curriculum. Joining Hall and Smyth (2016) we engage in a process of critically questioning pedagogical practices in an effort to dismantle dominant structures. This paper establishes the importance of Freire's work to tourism education, supported by a conceptual framework. It proposes ways to implement emancipatory practices, supporting the reconceptualisation and reorientation of tourism curriculum and emphasising the generation of social value.

Introduction

It was the 15th of March 2015 when significant political protests against both government corruption and the president Dilma Rousseff occurred in Brazil. Millions of people took to the streets of the country's biggest cities, voicing their political beliefs and discontent with the current government (BBC, 2015). Interestingly, what caught the attention of many across the world was a banner reading, 'Enough Paulo Freire', as well as the constant attacks on online platforms against his contributions to education (Silva, 2018; TeleSur, 2016). Freire was subject to such criticisms due to his left-wing ideological position. Surprisingly, in Freire's own country, his fellow Brazilian nationals were protesting against him and the use of his theories in the educational curriculum of Brazilian schools. This barrage against Paulo Freire and his theories has been the subject of two bills proposed at the Brazilian legislative houses, PL867/2015 and PL 193/2016, aiming to support a programme for 'School without Party', which would render educational curriculum non-partisan and anti-ideological, a position conflicting directly with the educational movement proposed by Paulo Freire (Guilherme & Picoli, 2018). Freire is recognised as one of the most influential educational philosophers and the father of critical pedagogy (e.g., Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003). Accordingly, such actions seemed not only cruel but also unfair. The 'popular' disapproval of Freire and his contributions to education influenced the aim of this paper, which is to reconsider the potential impact that critical pedagogy could have on tourism education. Specifically, this paper considers the emancipatory potential of applying Freire's work, and opportunities for implementing a critical pedagogical approach across tourism curriculum.

Critical pedagogy "is fundamentally committed to the development and evolvement of a culture of schooling that supports the empowerment of culturally marginalised and economically disenfranchised students" (Darder et al., 2003, p. 11). Moreover, critical pedagogy needs to address "the democratic potential of engaging how experience, knowledge, and power are shaped in the classroom

in different and often unequal contexts" (Giroux, 2011, p. 5), which may aid in the transformation of classroom structures.

While examining the nexus between critical pedagogy and tourism is not new (e.g., Belhassen & Caton, 2011; Fullagar & Wilson, 2012; Higgins-Desbiolles & Powys-Whyte, 2013; Mair & Sumner, 2017), there is currently a paucity of research in the field of tourism specifically exploring critical pedagogy based on Freirean philosophy. The lack of research drawing on the contributions of Freire, in conjunction with higher education's neoliberal overtones, makes this contribution critical now. Our intention is to join Hall and Smyth (2016, p. 22) in their interrogation of higher education and interest in building "a curriculum that is engaged and *full of care*", where scholars and students "no longer simply learn to internalise, monitor and manage our own alienation inside, but work explicitly outside". Thus, we aim to collectively engage in a process of critical questioning, motivating us to reconsider our pedagogical practices, resisting and dismantling dominant structures as a means to reconceptualise higher education (Hall & Smyth, 2016). The proposal presented in this paper aims to delegitimise specific forms of alienation rooted in ongoing historical and material misconceptions, prejudice, and oppression in tourism, and open up the possibility for counter-narratives. The intention of this paper is to illustrate the potential relevance of Freire's work for contemporary tourism education, paying particular attention to common misappropriations and critiques of his work. Furthermore, we highlight opportunities for contributing a fresh approach to tourism curriculum based on critical pedagogy and emancipatory *praxis*, supported by a conceptual framework drawing on the work of Freire.

The paper will initially contextualise, discuss, and explore the development of Freire's work on critical pedagogy before linking it to tourism studies and to tourism education. Based on these considerations we move on to propose what we view as the necessary developments for a curriculum, and tourism agenda, focusing on an emancipatory process of being and becoming human (humanisation) in Freire's terms (Freire, 1970), through the incorporation of critical pedagogy as a foundation for the curriculum. It is worth emphasising that the aim of this paper is not to develop a research agenda as such, but rather to propose a fresh approach to tourism curriculum based on critical pedagogy – and Freire's work in particular, which has been overlooked in existing tourism scholarship.

Critical theory, Paulo Freire, and the oppressed

Critical pedagogy emerged from early critical theorists including Marx, Gramsci, the Frankfurt School, and Freire. At the heart of critical pedagogy is the recognition that educational institutions reinforce capitalistic ends through reporting metrics, the way knowledge is tested, and the emphasis placed on vocational training. Therefore, critical pedagogy implicitly questions the notion of 'who benefits?' (Popkewitz, 1991). From here, critical pedagogues are concerned with the transformation of such realities resulting in social justice, and thus broadening the scope of human possibilities (Burbules & Berk, 1999).

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator, philosopher, and advocate of critical pedagogy. Freire's theoretical and philosophic ideas, and work, focused on advocating critical literacy (McLaren & Leonard, 1993), leading educators (e.g., Giroux, 2011) and social theorists to recognise him as an influential educator. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire's (1970) most widely recognised and influential book, outlined many of his central ideas regarding education and society but opened Freire to critiques. This will be explored in detail later. It is important to consider its temporal and geographical contexts. The 1960s were years of intense political conflict in Latin America following the Cuban Revolution (1959–1961), with the first symptoms of a 'crisis of hegemony' among the bourgeoisie becoming perceptible (Torres, 1993). This period witnessed a move from oligarchical states to industrial hegemony, and a *coup d'etat* was 'needed' to restore bourgeois order against progressive changes that were viewed as a communist approach (Torres, 1993). In this context, Freire developed his ideas regarding the dehumanisation of people and potential responses to this – and found an audience for them.

Contemporaneous with these events in Latin America, an Italian communist Antonio Gramsci (imprisoned for much of his life by the fascist dictatorship of Mussolini) recorded in thirty prison notebooks his widely influential ideas regarding 'hegemony' and the 'manufacture of consent' (Gramsci, 1971). To Gramsci, hegemony meant dominant groups maintained power over society producing particular ideologies and an accepted worldview (Bocock, 1986). Gramsci viewed civil society as a public sphere influenced by the bourgeois state, in which ideas and values were formed. The cultural life of bourgeois hegemony was reproduced through societal structures recognised as the media, parliament, universities, and religious institutions in modern capitalist societies. These structures were/are responsible for 'manufacturing consent', thus serving to legitimise power (Heywood, 1994). Such insights regarding how power is constituted in the domain of ideas and knowledge, through consent rather than force, have given rise to the utilisation of explicit strategies designed to contest hegemonic norms of legitimacy. Popular educational practices introduced by Freire (1970) were as follows: rejecting the banking approach to education seen as "an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (Freire, 1970, p. 64); respecting the experiences students bring to the classroom and building on their knowledge; educating through problem-posing; teaching dialogically; and emphasising reflection and action. Such strategies posed by Freire (1970) resist power. The possibilities of such strategies in tourism education will be discussed later in this paper.

First Gramsci and later Freire were central to the development of critical approaches that foregrounded education as a process of humanisation. For Freire (1970, p. 85), education and "the movement of inquiry must be directed towards humanisation […] the pursuit of full humanity, however cannot be carried in isolation or individualism, but on fellowship and solidarity […] No one can be authentically human while preventing others from being so". However, the constant fight of the oppressed should go beyond losing their own authentic subjectivity, through being objectified by the oppressor, and include avoiding the process where authoritarian and oppressing attitudes can be developed in themselves.

Freire initially conceived the concept of education for humanisation as relevant to a Latin American reality of oppressive dictatorial regimes; however, Giroux (1993) has illustrated that Freire's work transcends the realities of 1970's South America, possessing clear relevance to the work of contemporary educators in North America and elsewhere. For example, Giroux's (2016; 2018) critique of the current political approach in North America highlights the contemporary application of Freire's work, where critical

pedagogy becomes even more necessary to protect the democratic state and the practice of freedom. On the other hand, Giroux (1993) has critiqued the misuse of Freire's work in such contexts; "what has been increasingly lost in the North American and Western appropriation of Freire's work is the profound and radical nature of its theory and practice as an anti-colonial and postcolonial discourse" (p. 177). Too often Freire's work has been reinvented and appropriated by liberal academics, teachers, and adult education workers, stripping it of the political, historical, and colonial contexts that situated, informed, and oriented Freire's ideological underpinnings of pedagogy (Shor & Freire, 1987). Stygall (1989) argues that the under-theorisation of Freirean pedagogy problematises the application of Freire's methods developed in pre-literate populations. Accordingly, it is imperative for us, as educators, to consider how we can appropriately adjust and apply Freirean (and other critically oriented) theory and practice to the times, contexts, and relevant circumstances in which our contemporary work and pedagogy occur.

Giroux (2009) discusses the tendency towards a reductionist approach to Freire's work, in which, denuded of its radical political foundations and orientation, it becomes merely a pedagogical technique or method, wherein terms such as problem-posing, dialogical teaching, and critical consciousness education are employed without fully realising Freire's revolutionary pedagogical practice. Consequently, Giroux (2009, p. 80) argues that Freire's "work must be read as a postcolonial text and North Americans must engage in a radical form of border crossing" that involves problematising relevant politics of location and situated privilege, focusing on productive dialogue. As such, to appropriately use Freire's work as an educator, one must be aware of these dangers - and consciously deconstruct one's own politics of privilege and location - otherwise we may unconsciously reproduce forms of domination and oppression deeply rooted in legacies of colonialism (Brady, 2002): the very dangers Giroux describes. According to Aronowitz (1993) the frequent appropriation of Freire's work in the United States has ensured that its use has not, as Freire would have intended, contributed to significant positive changes to power relationships between students and teachers. In many cases, claims have been made for 'Freirean'-based education, when the practice in question amounts only to the application of a method, a de-politicised attempt at greater interaction. For example,

> An attempt to structure class time as, in part, a dialogue between the teacher and students; some even mean to 'empower' students by allowing them to talk in class without being ritualistically corrected as to the accuracy of their information, their grammar, or their formal mode of presentation.
>
> (Aronowitz, 1993, p. 8)

Such interpretations of Freirean education, as a mere method, do little to challenge the imbalances of power and the hierarchies between student and teacher. However, if scholars consciously shift the locus of learning through empowering students, central to Freirean-influenced practice and critical pedagogy, we may begin to address the imbalanced power dynamics in our classrooms. As Aronowitz (1993, p. 9) put it, "no genuine learning can occur unless students are actively involved, through praxis in controlling their own education". Unfortunately, flipping the power dynamic is not yet the norm in higher education, given financial priorities and developed corporate logic and pedagogy of neoliberal educational institutions (see Giroux, 2016).

For Freire (1970) humans are beings of praxis, meaning that their activities - based on action and reflection - should always be oriented to achieving the (radical) transformation of the world: 'Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action' (Freire, 1970, p. 125). Freire highlights the necessary centrality of informed and reflective action to education and struggles aimed at transforming society. He argues that 'discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action' (Freire, 1970, p. 65). The kind of critical reflection, theorisation, and action Freire proposes is centred on his concept of dialogue – and an approach focused on ongoing dialogues with (and for) the oppressed. At the root of Freire's notion of dialogue is the claim that human beings are not made to be silent, but rather to engage "in word, in work, in action-reflection" (1970, p. 88). Participating in critical dialogue and intervention and engaging people in the fight for their own liberation are at the root of Freire's proposals in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. What is problematic for Freire is when these elements are disconnected: when there are leaders who perform the role of *thinkers*, and the oppressed are led to be simply *doers*, who are not permitted and/or encouraged to think about, and reflect on, their actions. Freire (1970) holds that it is absolutely essential for the oppressed to *actively* participate in the revolutionary process, to develop and evolve "an increasingly critical awareness of their role as Subject of the transformation" (p. 127), and he emphasises the need for care to ensure that revolution does not become a means for future domination, but rather the means of achieving genuine liberation and freedom.

For such genuinely revolutionary practice to occur, Freire (1972, p. 51) believed that it is essential for humans to not only be *in* the world, but to be *with* the world. Human beings must "fulfil the necessary condition of being *with* the world because they are able to gain objective distance from it. Without this objectification […] man [sic] would be limited to be *in* the world, lacking both self-knowledge and knowledge of the world".

While Freire has been essential in the development of critical pedagogy, his ideas have not gone without criticism. His work has received significant critique from scholars and students in regard to the language he used to articulate his ideas; the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has received particular scrutiny. One critique in Brazil presented by Fischman and Gandin (2007) reflects their students' scepticism and rejection of Freire's ideas suggesting that they were dreamlike, utopian, and incapable of actually aiding teachers in their professional development and improvement of their curriculum. The authors reflected that such disbelief likely emerged from students' own educational experiences and "their lack of knowledge about other ways of teaching and learning and their difficulties of imagining that other school is possible" (Fischman & Gandin, 2007, p. 210). Another concern about Freire's work regards the level of difficulty used in the language through which he express his ideas; such language was perceived as elitist and arrogant (Schugurensky, 1998). Freire (1981) responded to such concerns, arguing that writing should be simple but not simplistic.

Feminist scholars have articulated concerns about Freire's use of language. Specifically, Brady (1994) has been critical of Freire's "over-emphasis on class struggle" (p. 143). Brady (1994) views this as superseding all other forms of domination inhabiting social

reality, such as social struggles experienced not only by feminists, but also minority populations, and ecologists. The notion of difference is a concern purported by Weiler (1991) in response to Freire's pedagogy. Based on the writings of lesbians and women of colour Weiler (1991) put forward that no single woman's experience should be considered universal. Furthermore, the use of the male referent in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has been criticised (Weiler, 1991), as feminist pedagogues have noted that Freire's work has missed problematising gender (Kenway & Modra, 1992) - especially white feminists, who, according to Bell Hooks (1994), "feel they must either dismiss or devalue the work of Freire because of sexism" (p. 50). However, while Bell Hooks (1994) has similarly pointed to the use of sexist language in Freire's work, and indicated that Freire's language functioned as a "blind spot in the vision of men who have profound insight" (p. 49), she argued "I never wish to see a critique of this blind spot overshadow anyone's capacity to learn from the insights" (Bell Hooks, 1994, p. 49). As such, Bell Hooks (1994) reminds readers that Freire's work summons critical interrogation.

Freire acknowledged critiques related to sexism raised by educators (in Freire & Macedo, 1987), and in his text *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation* (Freire & Faundez, 1998). As such, he mutually recognises feminist critiques of his work, and his role in feminist movements. While remaining conscious of the various critiques of Freire's ideas, we wish to relate the above discussions to our concerns in this piece, focusing on the practices of tourism. Therefore, it seems necessary to ask: What can we learn from Freirean philosophy and how may his works inform a more humanising direction for tourism education? What is required in order to support Freirean pedagogy in tourism education? How may Freire's work challenge tourism educators to reconsider power imbalances in the classroom and inform best practice? In practice, what strategies may facilitate student control in their learning? What are the potential contributions in contextually applying Freire's works, philosophy, and views of society in the radical reorientation of tourism?

Tourism and Freire's view of society and politics

To Freire (1973, p. 3) "to be human is to engage in relationships with others and with the world". Tourism in its philosophical context is about engaging in relationships with the world around us, with other cultures, with other human beings, and consequently it is an act that makes us 'humans'. Freire (1973) argued that humans must relate to their world in a critical way and not doing so may be seen as a source of dehumanisation and oppression. As such, the critical perception needs to be there in order to make humans human, and to help them realize their own temporality. To Freire (1973, pp. 3-4) human beings "can reach back to yesterday, recognize today and come upon tomorrow […] Men exist in time". Exactly because humans are 'temporal-beings' their relations with the world become infused with consequence, going beyond passive presence in the world, to be active with the world and to change it.

In this context, it is essential to the philosophy of Paulo Freire to understand the human capacity of *integration*. Freire (1973) believes that integration means to adapt to situations and realities with the critical capacity to reflect, make choices, act, and transform that reality. It is this capacity to transform reality that should be based on emancipatory praxis. Such praxis is similarly echoed in notions of critical theory. Specifically, Higgins-Desbiolles and Powys-Whyte (2013) put forward the need to deconstruct power and privilege so that an emancipatory praxis may be co-developed with communities and peoples suffering oppression - oppression that in many cases is promoted by tourism practices.

Emancipatory praxis should be based on *consciousness of* and *action upon* reality. However, in the words of Freire (1970, p. 53), "consciousness is impossible without the world which constitutes it". Consequently, "it is equally true that this world is impossible if the world itself in constituting consciousness does not become an object of its critical reflection". Considering humans as beings of praxis, the process of transforming and 'humanise[ing]' the world is constant, "but does not signify humanisation" unless it is engaged in critical reflection (Freire, 1970, p. 55). Often the process of transforming the world without critical reflection can lead to dehumanisation, the abuse of power, and colonial practices. This is similar to what we will argue next regarding tourism and its practices. However, tourism with critical reflection may lead to *Cultural Action for Freedom* (Freire, 1972), but tourism without critical reflection and emancipatory praxis may support new colonial practices, increasing oppression and reinforcing practices of dominance and power imposition.

The tourism paradox: tourism as a tool for *oppression* and *education*

Tourism has been seen as a tool to 'know' the world but also as a strong element in the oppressive strategy of colonial approaches (McGehee, 2012). Postcolonial works, such as Edward Said's (1978, 1993, 2003) writings, have helped to call attention to the colonial discourses that continue to dominate representations of the Global South. It is based on postcolonial theories that we may start to understand the use of tourist practices as oppressive tools against socially excluded groups (e.g., Chambers & Buzinde, 2015; Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Osagie & Buzinde, 2011) including indigenous and aboriginal communities (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2003; Ryan & Aicken, 2005). Significantly, the insurmountable behaviors and practices in the tourism industry globally highlight the imperative of critical thinking in order to advance sustainable practices (Boluk, Cavaliere, & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2017). Opening a dialogue about the oppressive potential of tourism as an industry may help begin to address some of the theoretical pitfalls in the appropriation of Freirean teachings in the North American context, as identified by Shor and Freire (1987) and Stygall (1989). Indeed Freire (1970), even if not referring directly to tourism, explores the notion of cultural invasion. For example,

Cultural invasion, which like divisive tactics and manipulation also serves the ends of the conquest. In this phenomenon, the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group, in disrespect of the latter's potentialities; they impose their own view of

the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression.

(Freire, 1970, p. 152)

In this context, tourism can be seen as a tool for oppression and re-enforcement of postcolonial practices. Moreover, prioritising the desires of tourism businesses at the cost of perpetuating inequality in relation to peoples and environments has set the scene for discussions on global citizenship (Higgins-Desbiolles & Blanchard, 2010). As such, tourism is perceived as a tool for education, learning, and emancipation (Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011). Along the lines of education and learning, Belhassen and Caton (2011) put forward the benefits of incorporating critical pedagogy in tourism education as a way to promote individual freedom, social justice, and business productivity. Blanchard and Higgins-Desbiolles (2013) draw on Freire's critical consciousness in relation to developing a *Peace Through Tourism* course. Tribe's (2000, 2001, 2002) work has critiqued the business leanings of much tourism curriculum and promoted liberal reflection in line with critical pedagogy.

Sheldon, Fesenmaier, and Tribe (2011) propose a need for changing the way tourism studies are taught to respond to the challenges faced by the industry. Ateljevic, Morgan, and Pritchard's (2013) call for a 'critical turn' in tourism studies has articulated the need for our curriculum to better respond to contemporary problems. Distinct to the above work and making a case for tourism critical pedagogy in the classroom, Carnicelli and Boluk (2017) provide a number of extracurricular service learning examples, which reflect transformative critical pedagogy and cultivate student social agents. Similarly, Mair and Sumner's (2017) work on tourism as public pedagogy further supports the role of critical pedagogy outside of the classroom. Specifically, the authors assert that finding a space or experience to cultivate the skills needed for critical pedagogy is imperative. Such research echoes Pritchard et al.'s (2011) recognition of tourism as a tool for education, learning, *and* emancipation.

We advocate the use of critical pedagogy proposed by Freire, specifically drawing on relevant and real world experiences as a way to critically empower students rather than supress them. As such, we hope to join fellow scholars who argue that change to tourism curriculum is needed in order to revolutionise the tourism industry and its unsustainable approaches. With this paper, we argue that such change and a reorientation in the way we design and deliver tourism curriculum is required in order to optimise social value and move away from oppressive and dehumanising practices in the industry. Despite the international reputation of Freirean philosophy, his work has not been central to the development and/or delivery of curricula (Macedo, 2000). This may come as a surprise given the responsibility of educational systems to not only prepare the next working generation (Macedo, 2000), but also prepare students to be engaged citizens.

One concern about the implementation of Freirean philosophy is that it has been done in a 'half-way' attitude. Macedo (2000) put forth that there are many pseudocritical educators who ultimately borrow the essential ideas of the essence of Freire but they may not transcend beyond the walls of the classroom, and fail to appreciate the epistemological relationship of dialogue. Dialogue and reflection on that dialogue are a significant part of Freire's work. The work of Jafari (1974) and Mbaiwa (2005), among others, has explored the damaging socio-economic-cultural effects of tourism, as well as its problematic impacts in local communities. Tourism education based on Freirean critical pedagogy may change this scenario. Freire was interested in how education could help in the process of humanisation and social equality. Could the tourism industry, tourism education, and tourism educators similarly support this same process of humanisation?

Tribe (2000) explored the importance of an emancipatory tourism curriculum that was 'liberal' instead of vocational. This open-minded emancipatory curriculum should then offer key teachings on critical theory that would "draw upon other modules so as to integrate with the curriculum" (p. 21). The content of the critical theory module should be partially based on sociology. This would include issues such as ideology and social influences, and the effects of tourism, and philosophical concerns, such as "examining concepts, evaluating assumptions, contemplating ethical issues of tourism" (Tribe, 2000, p. 21). Accordingly, it seems that, following Freire's concepts, the starting point should be a process of deepened consciousness - a de-alienation movement that will re-transform people from objects back to subjects. This is connected to Krippendorf's (1991, p. 105) suggestions regarding what the industry needs: "not different ways to travel but different people". Krippendorf (1991) argues that only a new society and a new everyday situation can produce a new tourist, advocating that progress will come once stakeholders assume responsibility for their actions. As such, we believe that changes can only come if we start with the education of tourists and future tourism industry professionals. Freire (1970) asserted that changes in society (and, as a consequence, in tourism) should have as a point of departure the "men and women in the 'here and now', which constitutes the situation within which they are submerged, from which they emerge, and in which they intervene […] they must perceive their state not as fated and unalterable, but merely as limiting – and therefore challenging" (p. 85). Bell Hooks (1993) believes that Freire's contribution goes beyond 'conscientisation' as an end in itself, to consider it as part of meaningful praxis. Freire wished to verify in praxis what is known in consciousness. In this scenario the 'praxis' becomes part of the development of critical thinking and critical inquiry, leading to a Freirean 'see-judge-act' student-centred method that should also be fundamental in tourism education.

Emancipatory *praxis* and tourism curriculum

Our aim with this paper is to propose a conceptual framework (see Fig. 1) for the tourism curriculum in higher education, based on critical theory, consciousness, and emancipatory praxis supported by the work of Paulo Freire. According to Smith's (1996) conceptualisation, curriculum is a body of knowledge to be *transmitted*, an attempt to achieve certain ends in students, and thus a *product*, a *process*, and *praxis*. Research so far on tourism curricula explores mainly the topics that should be included (e.g., e-tourism and sustainability) and the characteristics of the curricula (vocational, academic, and liberal). This paper focuses on curriculum as a process and praxis. Specifically, we emphasise pedagogical approaches that advocate the importance of emancipatory practices that
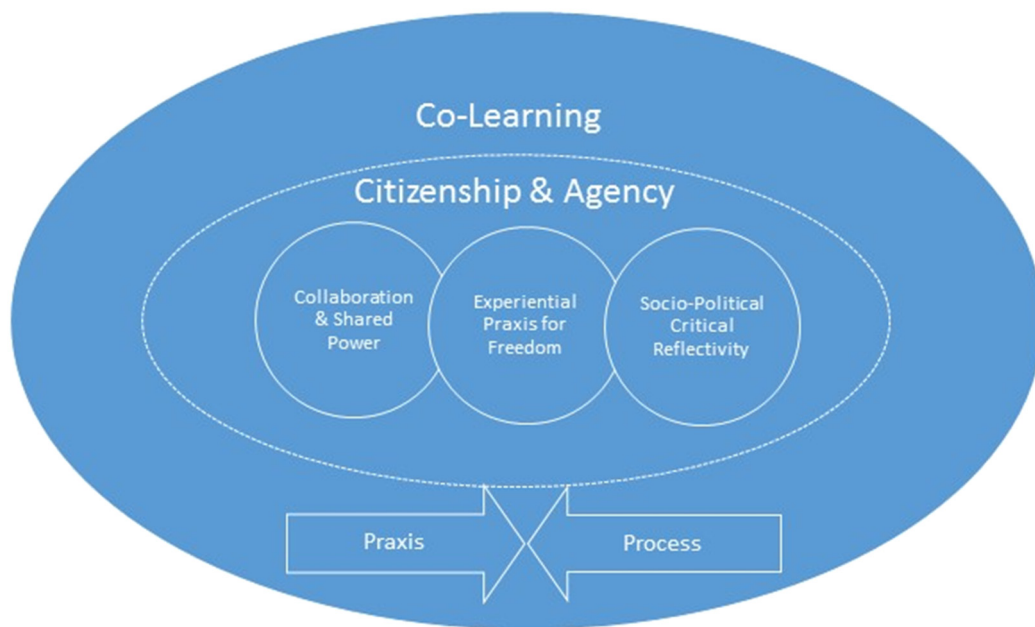
Fig. 1. Emancipatory approach for tourism curriculum.

should be embedded in the curriculum.

An emancipatory curriculum establishes that education should play an important role in contributing to a just and democratic society. An emancipatory tourism curriculum should focus on the essential epistemological decolonisation of tourism studies, as suggested by Chambers and Buzinde (2015), and should be connected to the process of questioning the "colonial legacies reproduced in the governance, design, delivery and assessment of the curriculum" (Hall & Smyth, 2016, p. 18). An emancipatory curriculum should nurture the mutual analysis between students and teachers of political and social issues and the consequences of social injustice (Nouri & Mahdi, 2014). Such critical analyses may result in the realisation that, as Kincheloe (2007, p. 20) puts it, "suffering is a humanly constructed phenomenon and does not have to exist". The learning experience is negotiated between the teacher and student based on their dialogue, which prioritises engagement, collaboration, and authenticity (Nouri & Mahdi, 2014); the curriculum "emerges from the systematic reflection of those engaged in the pedagogical act" (Grundy, 1987, p. 103). Therefore, the curriculum develops through the interaction between the knowledge shared by teachers and students, bringing human well-being, emancipation (Smith, 1996), and self-actualisation to the centre of the process. Praxis is also an outcome of the dynamic relationship between action and reflection. Accordingly, critically reflective practice is required in the process of curriculum development (Fraser & Bosanquet, 2006). Thus, drawing on the work of Paulo Freire, the following model prioritises Citizenship and Agency as the over-arching principle for an emancipatory curriculum in tourism. Our model then engages with three essential pillars which should be embedded within, and guide, the emancipatory approaches of tourism curriculum: Collaboration and Shared-Power; Experiential Praxis for Freedom; and Socio-Political Critical Reflectivity.

The principles of citizenship and agency

Implementing critical pedagogy may result in the mutual liberation of students and teachers and the realisation of one's potential influencing societal change. To Giroux (1988) we need to empower our students to be *critical citizens* who are actively engaged in challenging notions of quality of life in which everyone benefits. Realising one's potential is required both within the communities we live in and identify with, and in our tourism engagement. Specifically, it is necessary to stimulate curiosity about life in the classroom, as well as provide opportunities to deliberate on instances to demonstrate active responsibility for this education, and for one's role as citizens (Shor, 1992). Students need to be equipped with the tools to "fight for a quality of life" that will bring benefits to all (Giroux, 1988, p. 214). Places of education are therefore important spaces in which to foster critical citizens who may take risks and challenge their own personal actions and the actions of others who can drive positive outcomes for the larger community (Giroux, 1988).

Freire's response to the lack of possibilities supporting experiential and active learning was a *problem-posing* education where students would learn based on their participation and inquiry, supporting liberation in praxis, demonstrating the "process of humanization" (Freire, 1970, p. 66). Acknowledging the human element opposes the antidemocratic processes of the traditional model of education recognised in Freire's work. A problem-posing education involves students by encouraging reflection on key questions they have about the subject matter, in our case tourism. Such questions or issues may be positioned as a starting point for discussion (Shor, 1992). This approach contrasts the perception of curriculum as a product prescribing what students *need* to know (Smith, 1996) and what should be learnt – a product which is influenced by management thinking. Cooperative learning is another approach

supporting problem-posing education, requiring a process of individual writing followed by small-group discussion leading to whole-class dialogue (Shor, 1992).

Dialogue is democratic because it is a mutually created discourse "which questions existing canons of knowledge and challenges power relations in the classroom and in society" (Shor, 1992, p. 87). As such, dialogue can create a space of shared authority between both students and teachers. While lecturing can be a safer more reassuring way to teach, keeping students at a distance, it is more challenging to share authority. Dialogue can prepare one via reflection to take action, positively impacting the community in which we are a part. This is a second responsibility we believe universities, scholars, and students should assert.

Freire (1973, p.43) defined education as a "'horizontal' relationship where people talk mutually, instead of the teacher talking at students or down to them". Freire aligned "horizontal dialogue with a set of emotional values" as student-teacher camaraderie, challenging the alienation that develops in traditional classrooms, as well as love, hope, trust, and being humble (Freire, 1973, p. 43). In this democratic discourse, the lecturing voice of the teacher is kept in check. The hope is that students will experience education as something they *do* rather than as something *done* to them. Further, students who are involved in praxis, meaning the construction of their education with the teacher, may have a chance to develop the critical thinking and democratic habits needed for active citizenship in society. Dialogue is simultaneously structured and creative, initiated by a critical teacher but democratically open to student intervention (Shor, 1992).

Dialogic problem-posing is a pedagogy Freire called "cultural action for freedom" (1972, p. 43). Within a classroom setting, dialogue can influence individual thinking, as students hear alternative perspectives. This may influence behaviors and cultivate intellectual and emotional development through the cultural domain of education. It is important for students to hear alternative points of view both within and outside of the classroom. In dialogue, students can develop critical re-perception of their powers, conditions, language, knowledge, and society, which they may not have previously critically considered. Furthermore, this reflective process creates possibilities for new thinking, feeling, and acting once people examine received knowledge and the status quo, as well as their predictable ways of living and learning (Shor, 1992).

To Freire, dialogue is an instructional method, a theory about discourse and learning, and a politics for cultural democracy. Specifically, dialogue is part of the historical process of becoming human beings, reflecting on reality as we make, and remake, it. Moreover,

> to the extent that we [...] communicate to each other as we become more able to transform our reality, we are able to *know that we know*, which is something more than just knowing [...] We also know that *we don't know*. Through dialogue, reflecting together on what we know and don't know, we can then act critically to transform reality.
>
> (Shor & Freire, 1987, pp. 98–99)

Dialogue is significant in tourism studies, as it has the potential to challenge the impacts the industry is responsible for. Dialogue encourages students to be active, rational, and critical individuals with conscious goals, cultivating *thinking citizens* and co-developers of their education, equipped with the tools to make positive contributions to their communities. Tourism instructors should consider, alongside their students, social conditions in which they collaboratively promote action upon reflection. This may lead to developing agency strategies that can create change as a consequence of their critical thinking, as well as fostering democratic dialogue.

Collaboration and shared-power

Collaboration and co-learning for emancipation involves different groups co-determining common paths to develop and learn. It is about working together "for meaningful solutions to problems and answers to questions that emerge in particular contexts" (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1993, p. 393). Collaboration and co-learning is about finding solutions together by creating new knowledge that will challenge dominant discourses, ideologies, and practices. This collaborative praxis needs to focus on a participatory education that does not aim to teach participants various facts but to critically reflect on their everyday experiences and the social-political systems in which they are immersed (Castelloe & Watson, 1999). This approach will essentially require a shared-power situation between the actors. According to Blanchet-Cohen, Linds, Mann-Feder, and Yuen (2013, p. 322),

> shared power implies that youth and adults have an equal say in what and how decisions are made about necessary changes or ways of functioning. It often entails youth acting on the power that they have, and adults relinquishing some of their power in providing for more balanced decision-making. It can include exploring the multidimensional aspect of power including power over, power under, and power with, and identifying different forms of leadership. It is about seeking to establish dialogue that is guided by principles of mutual respect and commitment.

Our model further supports Shor's (1992) notion of an empowering education focused on critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change. The goals of this pedagogy are to relate personal growth to public life.

Tourism curriculum in higher education should be essentially collaborative and based on a shared-power approach. Using this approach, the backgrounds, experiences, and levels of knowledge of each co-learner are taken into consideration, enriching the educational environment with examples from experience and reality that can be further discussed based on a reflective approach. This approach will also facilitate joint decision-making processes stimulating democratic principles. Moreover, a curriculum that is based on shared-power, mutual respect, and commitment may contribute to translating those values into tourist praxis. Co-learners should be in control of their learning experience so that they can be responsible for the outcomes as a community and social group.

Experiential praxis for freedom

An essential element in the theory of Paulo Freire is the search and conquest of freedom. To Freire (1970, p. 47),

The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man [sic]; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion.

According to Freire (1970), freedom will emerge from informed action (praxis) with a balance between theory and practice.

To Giroux (2010, p. 715) classrooms in neoliberal times resembles "'dead zone[s]' where any vestige of critical thinking, self-reflection, and imaginations quickly migrates to sites outside of the school only to be mediated and corrupted by a corporate-driven media culture". Freire's notion of education as a project of freedom, and a political process encouraging self-reflection and critical agency, challenges the oppressive tendencies of neoliberalism. For this reason, we argue that one of the approaches to be included in the tourism curriculum should be the Experiential Praxis for Freedom. This will encourage students to take informed actions that will lead them to self-reflection and to contest economic modes and models in which freedom signifies consumerism. Giroux (2010, p. 717) argues

Critical pedagogy, unlike dominant modes of teaching, insists that one of the fundamental tasks of educators is to make sure that the future points the way to a more socially just world, a world in which the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equality function to alter, as part of a broader democratic project, the grounds upon which life is lived.

We argue that considering the destructive potential of the tourism industry on economic, environmental, social, and cultural levels in the curriculum will shape the learning, thoughts, and actions of its future members, and should be one of the anchor points for critical agency.

Socio-political critical reflectivity[1]

To Dewey (1933, p. 6) "reflection is an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds supporting it and future conclusions to which it tends". This reflective process is essential in Freirean theory; human-beings need "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1970, p. 36). We argue that this reflective approach should be included in tourism curriculum in order to offer co-learners the possibilities to review their role in the society they live, as well as their role in the society hosting them as tourists. Without this careful consideration of who they are, where they came from, and what may be the impact of their actions, co-learners will never challenge the oppressiveness of the act of tourism.

Critical reflectivity helps to situate people's thinking, beliefs, and values within a political, economic, and social context. This becomes essential when considering the cultural differences between co-learners. Critical reflectivity requires a continuous questioning of classroom practices as highly contextual and complex acts (Durden & Truscott, 2013). According to Gay and Kirkland (2003), without a critical consciousness and reflective approach, there is a risk of justifying and imposing personal actions and beliefs that could be culturally and educationally harmful to students. In a diverse context such as tourism education, elements of critical reflection help to review the presuppositions on which our beliefs have been developed. Critical reflection becomes essential for transformative learning to take place, where people can make new or revised interpretations of experiences. These revised interpretations transform problematic frames of reference, such as assumptions and expectations (Mezirow, 1991). It is only with critical reflectivity that co-learners can challenge their own political, economic, and social beliefs and values in order to be more inclusive and open to cultural differences.

Co-learners

The overarching concept of 'co-learning' in Fig. 1 signals Freire's (1970) idea for equal representation of students and scholars, collaboratively learning and teaching. This mutual position of learning and teaching encourages engagement, action, and respect. Co-learners are conscious of the political agendas of higher education institutions and of patriarchal ideology. Students and instructors can resist these structures, demonstrating change while working in the system. In this way we echo Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006, p. 282) sentiments when reflecting that, in a truly emancipatory curriculum, the "power resides with the students as learning takes place within a community of scholars, with the ultimate aim of empowering them to be effective as individuals and members of society". Identifying co-learning in Fig. 1 as an umbrella concept under which the three pillars are couched allows us to illustrate our goal to be part of an integrative learning environment without the dividing barriers of student-faculty hierarchical positions. Freire (1970) referred to the separation of teachers and students as the first barrier to learning. As such, co-investigation through dialogue can facilitate what Freire (1970, p. 67) refers to as teacher-students with students-teachers, who then become "jointly responsible for a process in which all grow".

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[1] It is important to point out that some scholars have discussed the differences between the concepts of Critical Reflectivity and Critical Reflexivity (see Cunliffe, 2004). However, as this paper aims to follow some of the concepts presented by Paulo Freire, we have deliberately used 'Reflectivity'.

One of our goals here is to consider how we (as co-learners) may think critically about ourselves and our role within the communities of which we are a part. Our critical reflection has resulted in a shared understanding of our responsibility to other co-learners and our communities. To Freire, problem-posing education maintains that we are in a constant "process of becoming" and thus we are "unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 72). With this understanding, we appreciate the limitations of the traditional models of education. Specifically, teacher-talk, the one-way discourse of traditional classrooms, results in the alienation of students, undervalues their achievements, and "supports inequality in school and society" (Shor, 1992, p. 85). Promoting reciprocity in sharing information and co-creating knowledge is thus one of our priorities.

In order to acknowledge our position, it is imperative that we confront the existing hierarchy existing between 'scholars' and 'students'. Shor (1992, p. 35) asserts that a critical education supports students and teachers to "redefine their relationships to each other, to education and to expertise". Students are faced with negotiating and democratising authority, which are lessons for both inside and outside of the classroom. Democratising authority within the classroom may begin with the co-design and co-development of curriculum, which may feature shared educational ownership (Shor, 1992). Engaging in dialogue supports Freire's participatory and active pedagogy, which may challenge students to acknowledge power constructs, reflect on their own thinking, and participate in discussions around identified personally meaningful points of interest contributing to critical thought processes. Our model illustrating an emancipatory approach for tourism curriculum is our call to the scholarly community within the fields of tourism, hospitality, recreation, and events to motivate scholars to adopt an inclusive, engaging, and mutually beneficial learning experience for all.

Advocating for an emancipatory curriculum

Researching youth engagement Blanchet-Cohen et al. (2013) identified four main strategies to implementing emancipatory approaches in education. According to the authors, collaboration, shared power, co-learning, and transparency in youth-adult relationships are essential values for the development of emancipatory education and could be implemented through strategies involving mentoring, creativity, sense of belonging, and reflection. We advocate that these four strategies should be used in the development of an emancipatory tourism curriculum together with the suggestions made by Higgins-Desbiolles and Powys-Whyte (2013) about the necessity of engagement and meaningful contact between those privileged and those oppressed.

According to Blanchet-Cohen et al. (2013), mentoring helps with the sharing of experiences, to overcome fear, to imagine new possibilities, and to take actions. Indeed mentoring here is not recognised as a teaching and learning strategy but as the development of a constructive and challenging line of communication where different experiences are valuable to develop knowledge and foster critical thinking. Blanchet-Cohen et al. (2013, p. 323) also identify creativity as a way to aid in the discovery of different forms of knowledge, noting that it "opens up the possibility of finding much needed answers to the social and environmental challenges of our time". According to Freire (1970) and Shor (1993), creativity is an essential part of developing critical pedagogy and the 'Utopia of Freedom' (Freire & Macedo, 1993, p. 173), together with political commitment and participation. However, in order to allow a safe environment where creativity and participation may flourish, it is important to develop a sense of belonging and community among co-learners. Such belonging radically contrasts with the concept of exclusion and resists the consequences of oppression and power imbalance. To develop a curriculum that fosters a sense of belonging enhances opportunities for engagement and provides room for reflection.

Mair and Sumner (2017) suggest creating spaces for an emancipatory scenario. Cultivating reflective spaces may support human beings to

> question themselves and the systems within which they operate. Both internal and external dialogues are important because change can be destabilizing; so it is necessary to be grounded, which in turn can help in working through the challenges that will arise when things are neither clear nor certain.
>
> (Blanchet-Cohen et al., 2013, p. 323)

Without the implementation of opportunities for meaningful reflection and dialogue, an emancipatory education cannot be achieved. Higgins-Desbiolles and Powys-Whyte (2013) emphasise the importance of dialogues that acknowledge and interrogate privilege in a critical way in order to reach 'out to those in positions of colonized/marginalized subjectivities for developing an emancipatory praxis in collaboration' (p. 431). Therefore, the engagement with oppression and marginalised people resulting from tourism/tourist practices needs to be part of the implementation of a truly emancipatory curriculum. We believe that such discussions could be implemented in areas such as sustainable and responsible tourism but with praxis taking central place in the learning and emancipation process in those modules/units/courses.

Finally, not developing an emancipatory curriculum based in critical pedagogy may fail to challenge privileged students in their understandings of globalisation and neoliberal approaches and agendas as oppressing forces. Higgins-Desbiolles and Powys-Whyte (2013, p. 431) remind us of the following:

> true change will only come when those in power and privilege have meaningful contact with those who experience oppression that yields transformation. Such a path leads to transformation from distant observer fully embedded in the self-other dichotomy to empathetic co-experiencer of pain and oppression which should raise emotions of indignation and thus empathy, resistance, and solidarity.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to illustrate the importance of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and explore its relevance for curriculum enhancement, with an emphasis on praxis in tourism higher education. As stated at the outset the authors join Hall and Smyth (2016) in their interrogation and critique of higher education under the influence of neoliberalism. Our conceptual framework (see Fig. 1) and reflections on Freirean philosophy offer a starting point for the inclusion of critical pedagogy in tourism curriculum, emphasising the possibilities for students when they leave our institutions. It was not our goal to follow a product model of curriculum delivery, but rather, consider curriculum as a process, which may lead to praxis. We therefore put forward mutual engagement in critical thinking, alongside our students, as well as dialogue and negotiation resulting in action. Prioritising process and praxis in curriculum development and delivery is a way that we, as scholars, may collectively dismantle dominant structures and reconceptualise higher education in tourism studies. Furthermore, this paper proposes ways to conceptualise critical pedagogy in the tourism curriculum.

Our reconceptualisation of the tourism curriculum leads us to believe that the future of tourism education should be based on the over-arching principle of Citizenship and Agency and three main areas: Collaboration and Shared-Power; Experiential Praxis for Freedom; and Socio-Political Critical Reflectivity. Only when such elements are embedded in the curriculum and its modules/units/ courses will we be able to observe a transformative tourism education based on critical pedagogy. Before that, we may see sporadic attempts to include an emancipatory praxis to tourism in isolated parts of higher education, diluting the impact of a critical approach that may be transformative to the field. As such, our conceptual framework positioned in this paper is our call to our fellow scholars interested in reflecting alongside our students considering curriculum as a process (Smith, 1996, 2000), as well as acting on our reflection, considering curriculum as praxis (Smith, 1996, 2000). Therefore, to advance our thinking on how we may reconceptualise tourism curriculum, scholars should respond to our call for the rigorous application of our overarching principle and pillars within their courses and observe both within and outside of the classroom ways in which transformations and critical praxis occur.

Many are the unveiled cases of exploitation and oppression in the tourism industry, including published cases of slum tourism (Steinbrink, 2012), sex tourism trafficking (Jeffreys, 1999), and volunteer tourism (McGehee, 2012). However, we believe that tourism practices may be changed if more people in the industry are educated to mutually think critically and understand issues such as tolerance, diversity, democracy, power relationships, and oppression. In the attempt to influence the tourism industry towards an emancipatory agenda, we believe education should play a central role. As argued by Giroux (2011, p. 3),

> Education is fundamental to democracy and no democratic society can survive without a formative culture shaped by pedagogical practices capable of creating conditions for producing citizens who are critical, self-reflective, knowledgeable, and willing to make moral judgements and act in a socially responsible way.

Only a curriculum that allows and encourages students to interrogate institutions, their social relationships, and ideologies that dominate the power structures of society (and the tourism industry specifically) can deliver the changes needed to emancipate tourists and the victims of their anti-democratic behaviour. Future research could offer some practical examples of such activities and curriculum development to the field of tourism. While it was not the aim of this paper to present practical approaches for implementation, readers may be interested in seeking inspiration in regard to what may be possible from Blanchard and Higgins-Desbiolles (2013), Boluk and Carnicelli (2015), and Carnicelli and Boluk (2017). A conceptual underpinning for the integration of critical pedagogy within tourism curriculum was the main contribution of this paper. Citizenship and Agency are the core principles that support experiential praxis, shared-power relationships, and socio-political reflectivity. Implementing these principles in teaching may create a curriculum that hopes to produce engaged and politically active citizens. Citizens who make social action and democracy possible could protect tourism from neoliberal oppressing agendas.

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