

PART VII. Maximiliano E. Korstanje's Contribution to Tourism Education: Global South Perspectives, Critical Pedagogy, and Climate Change Challenges

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Abstract

This paper examines Maximiliano E. Korstanje's contribution to tourism education by analysing how his interdisciplinary approach challenges conventional models of tourism knowledge and pedagogy. Moving beyond the dominant managerial and economic paradigms that have historically shaped tourism curricula, Korstanje conceptualizes tourism as a complex social phenomenon connected with power relations, globalization, inequality, risk, hospitality, coloniality, and cultural transformation. The paper explores how his scholarship contributes to the positioning of Global South perspectives within tourism education by questioning Eurocentric assumptions and advocating a more critical understanding of mobility, development, and sustainability. Particular attention is given to the relationship between tourism education and climate change, arguing that Korstanje's emphasis on uncertainty, vulnerability, and systemic crises provides valuable theoretical tools for preparing future tourism professionals to address environmental challenges. By connecting tourism education with critical pedagogy, decolonial perspectives, and sustainability debates, this study argues that Korstanje's work expands the role of tourism education from vocational training toward a transformative social practice. His contribution lies in encouraging educators and students to understand tourism not only as an industry but as a field where questions of ethics, justice, environmental responsibility, and global inequality are negotiated.

Keywords: tourism education; Maximiliano E. Korstanje; Global South; climate change; critical pedagogy; sustainability; decolonial tourism.

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1. Introduction: Rethinking Tourism Education Beyond Vocational Training

Tourism education has traditionally developed around the needs of the tourism industry. Since the expansion of international tourism after the Second World War, universities and professional institutions have frequently designed tourism programs according to managerial priorities: hospitality operations, marketing, destination management, economic development, and customer service. This approach contributed to the professionalization of tourism but also generated important epistemological limitations. Tourism education often became oriented toward producing workers and managers rather than critical thinkers capable of understanding tourism's social, cultural, political, and environmental consequences.

Maximiliano E. Korstanje's contribution to tourism education emerges precisely from this tension. His scholarship challenges the assumption that tourism should be taught primarily as an economic sector. Instead, he argues that tourism is a social phenomenon that reflects the contradictions of modernity, including globalization, inequality, insecurity, cultural commodification, and ecological vulnerability (Korstanje, 2018). This perspective has important implications for education. If tourism is understood only as an industry, students are trained to maximize efficiency and competitiveness. If tourism is understood as a social institution, education must also address questions of ethics, power, history, identity, and sustainability. Korstanje's work therefore contributes to the transformation of tourism education from a purely professional model toward a more critical and reflective form of learning.

2. Tourism Education and the Challenge of Knowledge Production

Tourism education has historically been influenced by knowledge produced in Europe and North America. Major theories of tourism development, destination management, and tourism planning have frequently emerged from institutions located in the Global North and have often been applied globally. Korstanje challenges this universalization of knowledge. Coming from Argentina and working within Latin American academic traditions, he highlights the importance of considering historical and geographical contexts in tourism research and education. This contribution aligns with broader

discussions about the **coloniality of knowledge** developed by scholars such as Aníbal Quijano (2000), Walter D. Mignolo (2011), and Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014). These authors argue that colonialism did not disappear with political independence but continued through systems of knowledge that privilege certain perspectives while marginalizing others. Within tourism education, this means that curricula frequently present tourism models developed in wealthy countries as universal solutions. However, tourism realities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia are shaped by different histories of colonialism, dependency, inequality, and environmental vulnerability. Korstanje's work contributes to questioning these assumptions by emphasizing that tourism knowledge must be socially and historically situated.

3. Korstanje and the Global South: Tourism Education from the Periphery

One of the most significant aspects of Korstanje's contribution is his insertion of Latin American perspectives into global tourism debates. The Global South has often been represented in tourism studies as a destination space: a place visited, consumed, and interpreted by external actors. Korstanje challenges this passive representation by emphasizing that societies of the Global South are producers of tourism knowledge, theory, and critique. His work contributes to reversing the traditional relationship between the Global North and Global South in tourism education. Instead of seeing Southern countries only as laboratories where tourism models are applied, his approach encourages educators to examine how local histories and experiences generate alternative understandings of tourism. This is particularly relevant in countries where tourism development has been connected with:

- colonial histories;
- extractive economic models;
- indigenous displacement;
- dependency on international corporations;
- environmental degradation;
- unequal access to mobility.

Tourism education in the Global South must therefore move beyond preparing students to serve international visitors. It must also develop the capacity to critically analyse the structures that shape tourism itself. Korstanje's work provides theoretical support for this transformation.

4. Tourism Education as Critical Pedagogy

Korstanje's approach has strong connections with critical pedagogy, particularly the work of Paulo Freire (1970). Freire argued that education should not simply transmit information but should develop critical consciousness (*conscientização*), enabling students to understand and transform their social realities. Applied to tourism education, this means that students should not only learn how to manage hotels, attractions, or destinations. They should also question:

- Who benefits from tourism development?
- Who controls tourism narratives?
- Who experiences tourism as opportunity and who experiences it as displacement?
- How does tourism affect local communities?
- What environmental responsibilities does tourism have?

Korstanje's scholarship supports this critical orientation because his research consistently examines hidden dimensions of tourism: fear, inequality, hospitality, security, death, and vulnerability. His concepts encourage students to analyse tourism beyond surface-level images of leisure and consumption. For example, tourism students studying international mobility should examine not only the freedom of tourists to travel but also the restrictions faced by migrants, refugees, and citizens of poorer countries. Similarly, students studying hospitality should explore not only customer satisfaction but also the ethical relationship between hosts and guests.

5. Tourism Education, Risk, and Uncertainty

A major contribution of Korstanje's work to tourism education is his emphasis on risk and uncertainty. Contemporary tourism operates in a world characterized by terrorism, pandemics, political instability, natural disasters, and climate change. Traditional tourism education often approaches crises as technical management problems. Korstanje argues that crises reveal deeper social structures. His research on tourism and terrorism demonstrates that risk is not only an objective condition but also a social construction shaped by media, politics, and collective perceptions (Korstanje & Clayton, 2012).

This insight has important educational implications. Future tourism professionals must understand not only crisis management techniques but also how societies interpret and respond to uncertainty. Climate change makes this approach increasingly relevant. Tourism educators must prepare students to understand complex risks that involve environmental, social, economic, and political dimensions.

6. Climate Change and the Transformation of Tourism Education

Climate change represents one of the greatest challenges facing contemporary tourism. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, sea-level rise, biodiversity loss, and changing ecosystems directly affect destinations and tourism activities.

Traditional tourism education has often addressed sustainability through operational approaches: reducing waste, improving energy efficiency, or promoting environmentally friendly practices. While necessary, these approaches may not be sufficient. Climate change requires a deeper transformation of tourism knowledge. Korstanje's emphasis on systemic crises provides a useful framework because he argues that tourism must be understood within broader social and historical processes. Climate change is not simply an environmental issue affecting tourism; it is a challenge to the dominant model of mobility, consumption, and economic growth upon which modern tourism depends. Tourism education must therefore address questions such as:

- Is unlimited tourism growth compatible with planetary boundaries?
- How should destinations adapt to environmental uncertainty?

- Who suffers the greatest consequences of climate change?
- How can tourism contribute to climate justice?

These questions require a critical educational approach.

7. Climate Justice and the Global South

Climate change introduces a major ethical dimension into tourism education because its impacts are unevenly distributed. Many destinations most dependent on tourism are located in vulnerable regions of the Global South, including small island states, coastal communities, and biodiversity-rich areas. These communities often contribute relatively little to global greenhouse gas emissions but experience disproportionate consequences. Korstanje's emphasis on inequality and global power relations helps tourism educators analyse this imbalance. Climate change education in tourism cannot focus only on technological solutions. It must also address questions of justice:

- Who produces environmental damage?
- Who benefits from tourism consumption?
- Who pays the costs of ecological degradation?

This perspective connects tourism education with climate justice scholarship (Schlosberg, 2013; Whyte, 2017).

8. Decolonizing Tourism Education Through Sustainability

The intersection between decolonial thought and climate education represents another area where Korstanje's contribution is significant.

Many sustainability models used in tourism education originate from institutions in the Global North. While valuable, these models may overlook indigenous knowledge systems and local understandings of environmental relationships. Decolonizing tourism education requires recognizing alternative ways of understanding nature, community, and development. Indigenous approaches often challenge the separation between

humans and the environment that characterizes industrial modernity. Korstanje's critique of dominant tourism paradigms supports this broader movement by questioning assumptions about progress, consumption, and globalization. A transformed tourism curriculum should therefore include:

- indigenous perspectives;
- local environmental knowledge;
- community-based tourism;
- ecological ethics;
- postcolonial approaches to development.

9. Tourism Education After COVID-19: Crisis as Learning Opportunity

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the vulnerability of global tourism systems. International mobility stopped almost completely, revealing the dependence of many economies on tourism. Korstanje's previous research on risk, uncertainty, and crisis became particularly relevant in this context. The pandemic showed that tourism education cannot prepare students only for growth and expansion; it must prepare them for disruption and transformation. Future tourism professionals need competencies related to:

- resilience;
- adaptation;
- ethical decision-making;
- crisis communication;
- sustainability;
- social responsibility.

The pandemic also reinforced questions about whether tourism should return to previous models of mass growth or develop alternative forms of mobility. Korstanje's critical approach encourages educators to question rather than simply restore existing systems.

10. The Legacy of Korstanje for Tourism Education

Korstanje's contribution to tourism education can be summarized through several major transformations:

From industry training to social understanding

Tourism education becomes a way of understanding society, not merely preparing workers.

From universal models to contextual knowledge

Tourism theories must consider historical and cultural differences.

From economic growth to ethical responsibility

Tourism development must be evaluated according to social and environmental consequences.

From crisis management to critical reflection

Students must understand why crises emerge, not only how to respond.

From Global North dominance to knowledge plurality

The Global South becomes a producer of theory rather than only a tourism destination.

Conclusion

Maximiliano E. Korstanje's contribution to tourism education lies in his effort to redefine what tourism knowledge should represent. By challenging economic reductionism and introducing sociological, anthropological, and philosophical perspectives, he expands tourism education beyond vocational preparation toward critical social learning. His work is particularly relevant for the Global South because it questions dominant tourism paradigms and highlights the importance of historical context, inequality, and alternative forms of knowledge production. Through his analyses of globalization, hospitality, risk, and crisis, Korstanje provides valuable theoretical resources for understanding tourism in an era marked by climate change and uncertainty. The challenge for contemporary tourism education is therefore not only to

train professionals capable of managing tourism systems but to educate citizens and leaders capable of transforming those systems. In this sense, Korstanje's legacy is the idea that tourism education must become a space for critical reflection, ethical responsibility, and global dialogue.

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