

Humane Tourism

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This article is a clarification of the release on UGM page dated July 29, 2011, entitled *Making Poverty a Tourist Attraction*. This article is also a response to the objection of Hendrie Adji Kusworo (lecturer of Department of Social Development and Welfare Faculty of Political and Social Sciences and Tourism Studies Department, UGM Graduate School, researcher at the Center for Tourism Studies UGM), to the article and readers' comments about it. The article which has been abstracted from direct interview or written report is expected to facilitate a more productive discussion (article's link: <http://www.ugm.ac.id/en/?q=news/making-poverty-a-tourist-attraction>)

1. Reason of objection?

There are three things that get less attention in the release. First is the oral introduction before I presented the paper entitled *Living Atrocity Tourism: Revisiting Motivation Towards Institutionalization of Poverty Tourism* in scientific discussion at the Center for Tourism Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada. Second is the basic thoughts of the paper distributed to participants. Third is the context of the discussion that occurred after it. Before exposing the main ideas which reflects my intellectual position, verbally I explained that this paper is small part of the big effort to understand and explain the links between poverty and tourism. This paper is a part (chapter) of a paper entitled *Poverty Alleviation Through Tourism, An Institutional Entrepreneurship Perspective, Contexts, Actors and Innovation*. In another section I review the ethical dimensions of poverty and the paradox of tourism which I discuss limitedly in the introductory discussion.

2. What is the urgency of the topic/ study?

This topic is important because besides the fact that poverty is now seen as a social problem that generally should be eliminated, it is also viewed as a tourist attraction. Tourism and the elimination of poverty has long been a concern to me. In addition to ethical issues which I believe to be an integral part of this topic, in particular, the paper examines the phenomenon of poverty tourism (poorism) - tourism that makes the phenomenon of poverty with all its attributes as a tourist attraction. It is important to note that the current tourism activities have been greatly developed over the early days of its development. Among tourists, there is ongoing psychographic and demographic change in character. In the past vacation was related to recreation and hedonism, currently it is also related to life enrichment and even the expression of voluntarism and altruism. It is also important to note that among the tourism entrepreneurs, spirit of social responsibility is growing. In the community - including the poor, it is the empowering spirit which gives more space

to self-actualization (internality) before the concern of tourists and tourism entrepreneurs (externality). These changes can find momentum acceleration and interaction in the area called poverty tourism. Although with the pros and cons, the phenomenon of poverty tourism emerges such as in India, Brazil and South Africa, which now becomes an undeniable phenomenon of civilization and humanity. In this context, I see the urgency of poverty tourism studies.

3. Poverty tourism in Indonesia?

In limited intensity, the phenomenon of poverty tourism has emerged in Indonesia. In smooth format and packaging, I witnessed implementation of this poverty tourism in several cities. This has led to the pros and cons. There are statements of rejection and support to the development of tourism poverty from Minister of Culture and Tourism and several groups, including social workers and operators of tourism activities. In the midst of the changes that I have already said, it is not likely this phenomenon will develop. Considering the characters of poverty tourism and people of Indonesia, I suspect the debate will go on. Those are the things that prompted me to study and find alternative solutions to the problems that arise.

4. Theoretical explanation of poverty and tourism linkage?

In tourism, there are two important areas: front stage (the front area - easily accessible by tourists in general) and back stage (back area - in general, relatively hidden from the tourists). So far, poverty was placed in the back stage, apart from tourism activities. In addition to the general theory of the emergence of poverty as what we get in textbooks on social problems, there is a critical explanation which believes that poverty is caused by tourism activities. In the economic realm, rising commodity prices driven by the high purchasing power of tourists, the commercialization of resources for tourism activities, procedures for the tourism industry which is congruent with other industries and the exploitation of resources in the free market scheme become the basis of this argument. On the other hand, the phenomenon of a multiplier effect through backward linkages and forward linkages as well as the ability to encourage the distribution and redistribution of income become the basic argument that tourism is a tool to fight poverty - whatever the reason. In the context of conventional tourism development, although the recognition of poverty is plural, it is hidden from the view of tourists because it indicates the squalor and discomfort. The phenomenon of poverty tourism reflects the new position of poverty in the front stage. It is no longer a secondary phenomenon that is hidden but the primary - as a tourist attraction that is displayed. The cause of processes and implications of this change is certainly very complex. Scientific discussion and debate should be directed also to understand this new position.

5. Your position?

Currently, I'm reviewing the concepts related to poverty tourism and more specifically tourist motivation. In the limitation of information, I offer alternative approach and concept which are

concerned with issues of humanism to accommodate the dimensions of responsiveness and nowness. The concepts widely used in poverty tourism discussions today are black-spot tourism, thana tourism and dark tourism. This concept is generally associated with the tomb (grave), violence and mortality (death) as static attraction. Although born in the discourse (built) of heritage tourism, atrocity tourism concept that clings to the suffering and trauma in my view is more appropriate to describe the phenomenon of poverty tourism. I added the word 'living' in front of atrocity tourism to summarize the dynamics and dialectics accent on the puller side. On the pushing side, tourists' motivation to visit atrocity tourism sites that includes entertainment, curiosity, self-identification, education and empathy I consider is more appropriate. At this level the concept of voluntarism, altruism, empowerment, self-actualization potential, awareness and social responsibility can interact. The phenomenon of traveling in the affected areas can be explained from this viewpoint. If poverty tourism at the end is an undeniable phenomenon of civilization progress, the concept of living atrocity tourism can continue to integrate the human dimension in development theory and praxis.

As a person who studies Leisure and Tourism within the framework of Social development and welfare, I have long believed that the study and development of tourism should be linked with the welfare to complete humanity of its actors both as tourist (guest) and host. The result of my little research about the School and Tourism in 1999 and the paper for discussion entitled "Who is going to teach us, anyway?" that I presented in the ATLAS-ASIA inaugural seminar in the same year is a concern and complaint to our conventional view on tourism. My interpretation up to now is that we are positioned by the state and tourism education merely as a host that must cater to tourists (foreign) for and on behalf of the Regional Government's economic target and foreign exchange. The doctrine of "Sapta Pesona" (Seven Appeals) and the curricula of tourism education in Indonesia is proof of this premise. My view is that in addition to the importance of continuing facilitating the community to be a good host, it is important also to facilitate them to be good tourists. I am sure both sides will produce a synergy. Don't forget, we are tourist creatures. When we want to travel, but who gets facilitation from the state and tourism education to become tourists so they can gain psychological, sociological, cultural, religious and economic experience and benefits worth their money, time and energy? In connection with the poor, I am interested and suggest the intensification of efforts to understand them in the two positions and formulate appropriate policy. My current personal agenda is to find new possibilities through institutional innovations that provide opportunities to the poor to obtain the additional value from tourism activities. Surely, this is if they see tourism as an option to increase their welfare level.

6. Its praxis in Indonesia?

I have not seen its significance. Indeed, academic discussion and praxis of tourism development have given attention to domestic tourists, but more driven by market diversification argument. The *Let's Go Traveling* movement as a crystallization of the program is still very economic. I have long actively promoted the creed of tourism for human and humanism. I believe the critical paradigm by placing tourism not only as an instrument of regional income and foreign exchange (economic

development) - which is sometimes consequential dehumanization, but also an instrument to complete humanism (social development and welfare). Only the double-track tourism development is able to realize the ideals of the welfare of Indonesian society.

7. Expectation?

First, I hope this interview can explain my views. I suspect that the commentary following the article - which contains objections and even personal assessments, occurred because the commentators did not read the paper or read but not carefully, nor listened to the presentation, nor heard the introduction and discussion, but only read the article. With the role of UGM page as intellectual dynamics facilitation, I hope that the uploading of this interview can restore the spirit of mutual sharpening through productive discussions for human development and humanism - UGM noble ideals. Secondly, with regard to substance, I am gladly willing to have a discussion with those who are interested in this topic. Tourism, poverty and poverty tourism are multidisciplinary area open to a variety of thoughts, perspectives, knowledge and expertise that exist at UGM. In connection with this interview, I thank the manager of UGM page who has provided me room for clarification.

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