

## THE ETHICAL BORDERS OF SLUM TOURISM IN THE MOBILE CAPITALISM: A CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION.

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### Abstract

*Though modern nation states appealed to slum-tourism as a valid mechanism towards pacification of slums or violent ghettos, less attention is given to detractors who observe contradictory results. This chapter critically explores the anthropology of poverty to expand the current understanding of slum tourism, the connection of capitalism and poverty as well as problems of policy makers to delineate sustainable programs of development in slums. Far from being a solution for the trouble, slum tourism not only aggravates the situation of exploitation slum-dwellers daily live, but falls in a deep-seated paradox. If poverty is commoditized in order to enhance profits in locals, it will be never reduced as the supporters of slum tourism preclude. At time community gains further profits from slum tourism, poverty tends to be replicated.*

**Key words.** *Slum Tourism, Pacification, Crime, Capitalism, Poverty.*

**JEL Classification:** *B25, F5, I3, P1*

### I. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of 21st century, a great variety of risks and dangers places tourism industry in jeopardy. From terrorism to virus outbreaks, policy makers face a great challenge in order for maintaining the competitiveness of their destinations. This is the reasons why security has recently turned in the bulwark of marketing and tourism management (Tarlow 2014). In parallel it is safe to say that new segments tourists defy the classic Sun and Beach product. The question whether the old concept of beauty has been replaced by the adrenaline of new experiences, is one of the main topics to be deciphered throughout this essay review. Tourists not only are seeking new sensations; they even place their life in risk to obtain authentic experiences. Although there is some controversy on the nature of statistics to reflect the growth of these new segment worldwide, some informal sources reveal that South Africa, India and Brazil are the main destination for this type of tourism (Medeiros, 2014). Besides, almost 40.000 tourists visit Favelas in Rio de Janeiro Brazil annually while 300.000 persons go to Cape Town, South Africa to be in contact with the life of slums. Rocinha, which is one international well famous Favela, receives 200.000 persons per year (Tourism Concern, 2016). The profits these products generate are estimated in USD 620 million dollars (Melik, 2012). Given in these terms, the discussion is oriented to what extent touring in spaces of poverty represents an ethical behaviour. New trends as war-tourism, dark-tourism or even doom-tourism seem

to be in the agenda of governments and marketing experts. Are we attracted by violence? are capitalism and poverty interlinked?.

As this question has been formulated, some voices have appeared in last years, highlighting the benefits of slum-tourism in pacifying ghettos or hot-spots where crime, violence and other pathologies coexist. States should contribute to expand these practices not only to improve the quality life of slum-dwellers, but also to disarticulate crime and cartels of drugs. The present chapter discusses to what an extent not only slum-touring is a fertile ground to revitalize the economies of relegated ethnicities, but also the pervasive role of tourists in gazing “dangerous Others”. Is poverty a commodity to be replicated by this new trend?, or can native live better adopting programs of slum-tourism?. The discussion on the conceptual framework on this matter remains fuzzy and unclear. The first sections of the chapter delve into the problem of poverty and the different treatment for economic waves. Finally, the concept of slum-tourism is placed under the lens of scrutiny to present alternative viewpoints to expand the current understanding of this slippery matter. Typically, visitors of slums areas once they are interviewed manifest their needs of taking distance of enclave tourism interacting with locals. Whereas for some scholars, it exhibits a sadist obsession for enjoying “the Other’s pain”, others think “this is a valid way” of learning a message that serves for their own lives. Here a point of entry in this discussion arises, what *is the true message of slum-tourism?*

## II. WHY POVERTY EXISTS?

Doubtless, capitalism represented an economic revolution resulted from a combination of factors, but three were determinants, the discovery and conquest of Americas which prompted a trade expansion, together the technological breakthroughs as well as a planned production that altered the conception of labor. From the inception of economy as an academic discipline, poverty was an eternal concern for diverse scholars. Paradoxically, the production or wealth of capital-owners equated to the limited opportunities for workforce (Heilbroner 1995); in terms of Lester Thurow (2001), a type of zero-sum society. In capitalized economies, any change in one direction produces counter-effects in other sectors which should be planned and corrected. However, the oil crisis in 70s decade reminded West the importance of energetic resources to keep a scale system of production and the problems they were no longer affordable. This suggests that the growth of GDP sometimes is not determined by a radical improvement of the living conditions or housing of lay people. As David Harvey (1989) puts it, postmodernism was a project originally created to replace the fordism that characterized America during decades. From that moment on, thinking economy in long terms was a utopia simply because the means of production changed to new decentralized forms. The oil's embargo posed by Arab countries generated collateral damages for Western economies; the rise of poverty and the end of labor. In this respect, worker unions not only weakened their capacity to negotiate with capital owners, but the social trust was undermined. As Taylor-Gooby (2004) clarifies; the welfare state has serious problems to protect the whole portion of citizens because of two main reasons. The adoption of new technologies to enhance the already system of production buttressed profits but reduced notably the number of arms necessary for the work. In parallel, this technology associated to the expansion of life-expectancy, resulted in rapid aging in economically active population. Modern nation-states were not only subject to the dilemma by fixing further taxes over labor force, but were unable to improve the labor conditions. Therefore, the decline of welfare state sets the pace to a new concept to alleviate the negative effects of financial crashes, *the theory of development*.

Within social science no consensus was reached according to the theory of development. In this respect, Phillip McMichael describes the ebbs and flows of development from the outset up to date. This global and all-encompassing view allows readers not only to understand the North-South dependency, but also the role played by "development" in such a process. The text is formed by ten brilliant chapters where McMichael shows

his erudition and familiarity with this issue. Instead of focusing on the protection of state, as it has been formulated by development theories, globalization emphasizes on "free-market" as the ideological conduits of politics. The protection of interests of global powers consists not only in securing the food production (in south) to be exported to North, but also in the set of loans to keep "the market integration". The key factor of neo-liberalism is "governance", which means the coordination of NGOs by accessing information and material resources to fulfill the gaps left by "failed-states". Today, corporate outsourcing is the crucial point Market used to determine the contours of states. Failure of development to achieve a fairer distribution of wealth implies the discussion of three major themes such as the manipulation of debts (debts crisis), the use of outsourcing to relegate the authority of state, and the problems of poverty and sustainability. Mc Michael reconsiders what specialists dubbed "the crisis of mass-consumerism and global capital" as well as posing new lessons to reduce the increasing levels of poverty world-wide. His main thesis is that Europe, by the introduction of "colonialism", established an ideological background for legitimizing their submissions to its overseas colonies. The exploitation of the non-European "Others" had a pervasive nature. The process of decolonization, centuries later, witnessed the rise of demands of periphery in order for central powers to allow an autonomous government. The rights of democracy becomes in a universal claim. Mc-Michael explains that imperial powers alluded to the theory of "development" to maintain the old colonial borders. Now violence sets the pace to financial dependency. The WWII end conjoined to Truman's administration led the United States to implement a wide range credit system to save the world from Communism. This program mushroomed to become in the development theory. However, this financial aid brought modification in the system of agriculture to more intensive methods. This ruined the condition of farmers who were pressed to migrate to larger urban cities. Furthermore, the imposition of new borders post WWII forced many ethnicities to live with others under the hegemony of nation-state. This resulted in a lot of ethnic cleansing, conflicts and warfare that obscured the original ends of financial aid programs issued by IMF or World Bank. Undoubtedly, the inconsistencies of World Bank in administering the development-related programs not only were admitted but also it triggered some nationalist reactions in the non-aligned countries. To restore the order, a new supermarket revolution surfaced: *globalization*.

This stage, characterized by a decentralized production, undermined the barriers of nation-states globalizing investments in those countries were

working condition were more convenient for financial elite. In this vein, two alarming situations were found. An increase in the unemployment and the decline of unionization in the North was accompanied with the arrival of international business corporations seduced by the low-cost of workers in South. The proliferation of slums and ghettos everywhere not only explains the failure of development-related programs, but also the inefficiency of officials to orchestrate more sustainable plans of social care.

Far from being solved, the problem of poverty as well as the ever-increasing protests against professional politics evinces not only his diagnosis is right, but the reasons why McMichael's book gives a coherent explanation on the impossibility of globalization as project. Methodologically, the McMichael's book overemphasizes on the study-case without paying heed to the conceptual background of capitalism. The configuration of "social Darwinism" that aggravated the competence among workers as well as the role of Predestination brought by reform is not coherently analyzed by author. What is well observed by our author, this means the economic asymmetries between a richer class and the creation of poorer under-classes is given by the ideological nature of Reform. In other terms, the archetype of "up-hill city" where few are salvaged, while the whole is condemned served as example replicated in the earth. Capitalism monopolizes the financial power in few hands, at the time the workforce is left to an extreme competence (survival of the strongest). As films as *Hunger Games*, even *The Big Brother* show the salvation of few entails the ruins of the whole. Since participants are not cognizant of their low probabilities to win (in a game that have a sole winner), all against all competition obscures the real goals behind exploitation.

### III. THE VOICE OF LIBERALISM

In *Bailouts or Bail-ins?* Economists N. Roubini & B. Setser alert on the problems of modern capitalism as well as the IMF intervention to rescue all economies once crisis takes hit. This opens the doorstep towards a great dilemma, if the country is left adrift a contagion effects may surface. Otherwise, there are not sufficient funds to help all countries which enter in recession. The role of IMF by expanding loans in 90s decade not only was unsustainable but also produced counter-productive effects.

*"The use of IMF loans can also cause confusion. Does IMF bail out a country or the government of that country?. The correct answer is both. The IMF helps a crisis country by lending to its government. An IMF loan often does rescue a country in trouble because its government is having difficulties in repaying its own debts. The additional*

*reserves from an IMF loan are used to avoid the default on the government's foreign currency debt. However, an IMF rescue loan has other potential issues. IMF lending to a crisis country's central bank can finance emergency lending to support a country's banking system, which otherwise would have had a trouble paying domestic depositors or international bank credits"* (Roubini & Setser 2004).

Then, despite the help of IMF, why not only poverty persisted along the time, but also was duplicated over the last decades?.

What are the claims of liberalism respecting to government interventions?. In his book *Capitalism and Freedom*, Milton Friedman says,

*"First, the scope of government must be limited. Its major function must be to protect our freedom both from the enemies outside our gates and from our fellow-citizens: to preserve law and order, to enforce private contracts, to foster competitive markets"* (Friedman p2).

The centrality of government, Friedman adds, should be effaced in favor of individual rights. Then, following liberal thinking, centralized-states run further risk to develop poverty and misery than liberal democracies. Here we have to be cautious at time of linking liberalism with democracy. Any government must avoid the effective ways of equality and welfare, or the paternalist views to intervene in the cycles of economies. Friedman starts his premise, populisms over last decades, claimed the hope of further equality to centralize their interventions. At some extent, liberalism has problems to explain the formation of monopolies. Even, as Friedman puts it, governments must delineate the legal framework for the gamers can compete, but avoiding any direct intervention to change the game's rules. So, how monopolies are formed during the evolution of free market?. Liberalism contends that monopolies are shaped by state in many cases. However, sometimes, the natural conditions of competence may create some inevitable private monopolies. This is the lesser evil in Friedman's doctrine.

In this vein, other liberal voices as Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) would respond that countries develop different institutions which are helpful to make the pertinent wealth distribution. Those nations which fail in reaching mature economies are often characterized by "extractive institutions" based on the exploitation of "the Other". As the previous argument given, development is given by the type of society and the quality of its institutions. The "extractive institution" signals to great concentrations of power in a small minority, which exploits the resources of society in its favor. These political institutions are based on non-democratic governments and the lack of private property. On contrary, inclusive institutions avoid to instill monopolies vesting the

power in a broader way, renewing administrations according to popular voting. Unable to extract the resources of others, this model encourages the competence to strengthen the market. As a result of this, wealth and prosperity must be inevitably reached by the citizenships. Democracy as a platform where agents can negotiate with others in an atmosphere of liberty would ensure a faster and fairer re-distribution of surplus (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).

As earlier noted, progress or failure of a nation is determined on two relevant aspects; democracy opens the doorstep towards competition, or creative destruction, which is vital for destroying any type of monopoly (private or public). All agents would compete in egalitarian conditions in favor of consumers. Competition among social institutions and bank system cemented the possibility to foster stronger networks that accelerated the growth in the democratic societies. Without “creative destruction”, our economists preclude, social institutions cannot be recycled to obtain the maximum efficiency in favor of the net of consumers. Those countries where democracy is an important cultural value are prone to the development of vigorous economies. Ethnic cleansing, civil wars, and corruption are cultural pathologies which not only balk development but a better distribution of wealth in the society.

It is not surprising that,

*“The reason that the United States has a banking industry that was radically better for the economic prosperity of the country has nothing to do with differences in the motivation of those who owned the banks. Indeed, the profit motive, which underpinned the monopolistic nature of the banking industry in Mexico, was present in United States too. But this profit motive was channeled differently because of the radically different US institutions”* (Acemoglu & Robinson 2012, p. 5)

Secondly and most important, history offers a good explanation to understand the socio-economic reasons behind prosperity. Spanish settled hosting the indigenous leaders, and once done, their attempts were aimed at creating new elite, which obliges the native to pay taxes and other tributes. The conquest in Americas was based on the idea that others should work for the Crown. Elegantly, this founding event marked forever the destiny of Latin America. Unlike, Anglo-world, Latin American elites organized the exploitation of their peoples in view of the monopoly of wealth, they expect to be returned. The British Empire, when arrived to Americas not only was not possibility to find gold and other precious metals, which were already occupied by Spaniards, but also was pressed to survive with their own arms. Labor and trade with others here played a vital role by configuring the political system of North America. The culture of exploitation was unknown, authors

add, for US and Canada, and therefore it was the reason behind the rapid adoption of democracy as the first form of governance (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). It is safe to see, as post Marxian scholars did, that liberalism is based on a great quandary which is posed by capitalism. Why do we over-esteem income over other cultural values?, is happiness associated to profits?.

Following these above questions, aboriginal tribes are pressed to accept certain cultural values that are fabricated by West, as income, tourism, leisure and heritage but in doing so, their living conditions is not enhanced. This means that cultural tourism as a practice should be reconsidered respecting the viewpoint of aborigines or even placing western beliefs under the lens of scrutiny. At the time they, natives, adopt the axioms of development as a sacred truth they inevitably are in a trap (Korstanje, 2012). This is exactly one of the points discussed by post-marxism.

#### IV. THE VOICE OF POST-MARXISM

In sharp contrast to liberals, Marxists denounce that poverty is not a problem of economy to solve with a planning calendar, but an irreversible sign of *the great theft* obscured by an ideologized capitalism. Marx acknowledged that modern economy expanded by the force of commodity exchange. Each product is fixed of a rate which exceeds the wage of workforce. This surplus is known as “*surplus value theory*”. At the time, economy grows, this does not entail further profits for workers, but for capital-owners. Ideology not only obscures the real tactics of exploitation but also gives to persons a conceptual framework to redirect their loyalties towards capital-owners (Marx 1967; 1973). Though he never supported “communism” nor any type of political praxis, his legacy still remains as the epicenter of numerous critique studies against capitalism. Paradoxically, at the time, communist countries developed their impossibility to mature in a long-term nation-building post-Marxism mushroomed over the last years. As Z. Bauman puts it, the success of capitalism was proportionally equated to its injustice for working classes. The capitalist ethos has changed the mind of citizens, who passed being part of the production machinery. As commodities, workers are exploited to congeal the mass-consumption encouraged by capitalism. The big brother is an example how people enter in competence, as commodities, to be selected and bought by others. Participants in this reality show know that only one will win, and the rest will die. Big Brother, for Bauman, emulates the life in capitalist societies which enhance the style of life of a small minority by producing pauperization for the whole. The modern state set the pace to the advent of liberal market to monopolize the sense of

security for people. This does not mean that states are unable to keep the security, but also the market is re-channelling the consumption by the imposition of fear. If human disasters as Katrina show the pervasive nature of capitalism which abandoned thousand of poor citizens to death, no less truth is that the “show of disaster” unbinds of responsibilities for the event. The sense of catastrophe, like death, serves to cover the inhuman nature of capitalism (Bauman, 2007; 2008). This society only has an answer to crisis, when its economic system is at risk. Since the real reason for disaster are ignored by the allegory of death, which persisted in the media and famous TV series where technicians and forensic experts look to solve the crime, the disaster comes sooner or later (Bauman, 2011). Most certainly, the original position of Marxism against capital paves involuntarily the pathways for its hegemony over others forms of production. This will be discussed in the next section.

#### V. AN ALTERNATIVE OPTION, FROM PRODUCTION TO CONSUMPTION

Unlike our grand-parents who lived in a productive society, we live in moment where consumption was the epicenter or main value of economic theory. K Donohue (2003) explains one of the factors that facilitated the expansion of capitalism was the passing from a productive to consuming society. Originally, the first liberal economists envisaged consumption and consumers from a pejorative perspective. Not only by the chaos and social disorganization that uncontrolled consuming generates, but also because it represents a way of destroying wealth. As senior lecturer Kathleen G Donohue acknowledges in her fascinating book *Freedom from Want*, this was until Franklin D. Roosevelt declared his four freedoms, (fear, speech, religion and want). The former one, freedom from want was not early addressed by Puritanism and Calvinism or by classical liberalism. The era of consumers and liberal consumerism was introduced by the belief the demand was more important than offer. If economy postulated the importance of human division of labor and production as the epicenter for the linear well-fare and progress of nations, modern consumerism upends the message. The attention was focused on poverty and its effects on social scaffolding. As Donohue writes,

*“Even the classical liberals turned their attention to eradication of poverty; they continued to emphasize production rather than consumption. If one was entitled to consume only what one had produced, then, classical liberal reasoned, the only way that government could eliminate poverty was by increasing productivity”* (p. 4).

Paradoxically, this paves the ways for passing from industrialism to consumerism. Not surprisingly, this paradox has questions respecting to those who would benefit from an productivity enhancement, they would be the capital-owners, who seek their multiplication of profits?, or work-force more interested in protecting their wages?. This point divided the voices into two main contrasting tendencies, liberal capitalism, which was a wave interested in protecting the interest of owners, and socialism more prone to coordinating unionization and worker claims. Elegantly Donohue said, it was unfortunate to see how both have failed to solve this paradox.

The frenetic quest for profits led societies to adopt consumer-oriented system of productions which produced what consumers needed. This qualitative view was of paramount importance to understand the radical change America was internally facing. In doing so the Keynesian policies which fit like a glove. Strong regulatory measures as well as well-fare programs disciplined the citizenship to understand the new dilemma of modern economy, consumerism is the only valid way in order for poverty to be eradicated. The classic mercantilist view of economy that characterized the “producerist” society from 1870 to 1900, established that consumption undermined the wealth of nation. In what forms?.

Starting from the premise that the wealth of nations was a question of equilibrium, economists thought that the only manner to boost the economy of a country was at the cost of another country. In this viewpoint, a strong commercial relationship among nations should be organized in view of trade. Whenever, exports supersede imports, the economy rises. Nevertheless, consumption was one of the main threats of well-being simply because it reduces the goods available for export. Here is one of the ideological pillars of modern capitalism. In the outset of XXth century, economists formulated a curious quandary to overcome the obstacle of poverty. Even if mercantilists conceived a “regulated consumption”, they neglected the thesis that consumption drives the tenets of economy. However a new liberal trend instilled the belief that consumption drives economy, in what resulted that the only pathways for expanding prosperity was enhancing production. To accomplish this task, societies should import and develop strong capital investment accompanied by modern technological machines. Subordinated to this logic, economy compelled to the formation of extractive institutions that protected the profits of elite, while the workforce was pressed to compete for ever-decreasing low-skilled positions. The first Marxists thought that the market gave interesting new opportunities for capital investment (by stimulating mass-consumption), but reducing the genuine growth of society.

After 1940, the freedom from want was related to one of human basic needs and expanded to the world as an unquestionable principle. This was undoubtedly possible because intellectuals have discussed in earlier centuries the importance of consumption as an efficient instrument to reduce pauperism. The financial crisis in 1930 paves the pathways for nations to embrace this paradigm without resistance. Liberals formulated “the new deal of liberalism” to transform American society, even mingling the discourse of consumption with democracy. As Donohue puts it,

*“This new liberal system was not without its detractors. Critics became increasingly concerned that freedom from want was being equated with a right of plenty. And they worried that material plenty was being treated as a precondition of democracy” (p. 277)*

Ideologically, Americans have felt “superior” to other nations because they are enthralled as the main democratic and prosperous society; although more egalitarian at the surface, American citizens are subject to more work and consumption but less leisure. It is important not to lose the sight that in a pro consumer society, workers are bombarded with emulation and advertising creating the needs to buy. This not only jeopardized their real liberty to choose, but affects seriously to democracy. Detractors of capitalism, left-wind scholars among them, who pushed their focus on the arbitrariness of producers, were involuntarily responsible or conducive to the formation of a global society of consumers. Those denunciations on an economy that protect the interests of producers as well as the needs to adopt consumption to break the material asymmetries among classes, were two guiding concepts to embrace a globalized version of capitalism, prone to mass-consumption. Donohue reminds not only the myopia of Marxism to interpret capitalist evolution, but also how its criticism offered new channels for a much deeper globalized economy, or at least, the passing from a society of producers to consumers.

## VI. REVIEWING SLUM TOURISM.

The problem of poverty, undoubtedly, is a moral disaster, which not only takes a chronic nature but also it is very hard to grasp. Zygmunt Bauman clarifies that capitalism seems to be an asymmetrical model where almost 90% of produced wealth is kept in the hands of a selective elite of 2% of total population. In what is a paradoxical situation, globalization opened the doorstep for mobilities, but not for all. While only the elite is financially invested to be mobile, which means visiting any geographical points in quest of cultural exoticism or multicultural encounters, migrants are subject to an extreme conditions of exploitation and

pauperism. They are surveilled in order not to move from ghettos where they dwell (Bauman 1998). Neither culture nor the ideology of mobilities does suffice to explain the uneven asymmetries between have and have-nots. Over recent years, some experts in tourism installed the discussion of poverty as a main obstacle to overcome. It was unfortunate that getthos and slums not only are being multiplied worldwide, but also poses serious risks for the smooth operation of industry.

Like many other segment as dark-tourism, doom-tourism or even disaster-tourism, touring on slums offered a great opportunity for state to take intervention of zones otherwise remained out of control. Likewise, some scholars started to see “slum tourism” as a fertile ground to expand not only political stability but the presence of states to peripheral neighbors which lacked of the necessary infrastructure to survive (Holst, 2014). Poverty was the key factors to generate attractiveness in first-world tourists who were interested or looked for more authentic connections than classical tourism (Meschkank, 2011; Frenzel & Koens, 2012; Dyson, 2012; Durr & Jaffe 2012; Mekawy, 2014). Self managed by locals, slum tourism becomes in a good opportunity to poverty relief and economic revitalization. Though from diverse perspective, specialized literature emphasizes slum tourism helps native in the following points,

- a) Enhancing attractiveness to have further investments which can be re-channeled towards infrastructure.
- b) Gives tourists a chance to understand or critically reconsider their own lives beyond the materiality of capitalism.
- c) Allowing more authentic inter-cultural encounters between hosts and guests.
- d) Alleviation of poverty or economic profits for local stakeholders.
- e) Further tolerance to ethnic differences.

Nonetheless, no less true is that he geographies of slums denote an extreme marginalization, racism and ghettoization respecting to the privileged urban landscape. In this vein, Emily LeBaron (2014) understands though slum tourism helps residents to better their economies, social exclusion is not reverted. In Brazil, Favelados (which means dwellers of Favelas) face certain financial independence respecting to central administrations, but they do not trust tourism would be a valid option to improve their living conditions. The marketing of Favelas that encourages slum-tourism pacifies an ever-conflictive zone, where drug-dealers and crime prevail as violent practices. However, this pacification does not escape to police’s corruption. Often, natives are pressed to pay for bribes and money in order for their businesses to prosper. Those who reject to collaborate with Police are hosted and jailed. Interviewees in this fieldwork

evinces, LeBaron adds, though tourism serves as a fertile ground to make from Favelas a more peaceful places, in practice this never happens. Not only *favelados* lack of original capital to conduct a tourist project, but external groups take direct control of the necessary resources to exploits the favelas image. As LeBaron points out,

*“Residents do note a few benefits to pacification, largely focusing on the opening up of opportunities to meeting people from other countries. This includes tourists – now people are coming here, there is an income for people because of tourism. But also researchers, NGO and other groups of people that exchange knowledge and culture with local communities. One resident explained to me that since she could not afford to travel, meeting people from other countries in her community was a way she could learn about the world”* (p. 275).

In accordance to this, F. Frenzel et al (2014) explain that slum tourism as a touring practice is divided into two main destinations in the global south, Brazil and South-Africa. Though its origin is not new, rather, it comes to middle of XIXth century, no less true is that poverty was commoditized in order for locals to experience a process of disempowerment respecting to tour operators. Neither the necessary conditions for tourist-care, nor the infrastructure given for visitors to avoid the risky reaction of other slum-dwellers, makes from this segment an option that cannot be commercialized by local operators. This appears to be one of the reasons why slum tourism still is being discussed within academic circles as paradoxical solution to poverty. As Tore Holst (2014) puts it, launching from our safer home to tour “unknown others” represents a serious challenge tourists cannot refuse. Gazed as a dangerous “Other”, slum tourism works in two directions, helping but surveilling poor slum-dwellers.

In this respect, B. Freire- Medeiros (2014) explores the conceptual dichotomies of slum-tourism by means of her empirical fieldwork in *Rocinha (Brazil)*. Far from being a solution to alleviate poverty, tourists replicate the conditions of exploitation local suffers in their daily life. In Favelas the nets of interactions lead to reify tourism as a mechanism to improve residents` lives but in doing so, it produces poverty. To understand this better let us explain that in classical economy commodities are the vital part of merchandise production. In slum-tourism, the infrastructure, transport, restaurants, tour operators, tour-guides, and every service are certainly based on the pauperization. Poverty plays a crucial role as a main attraction of these types of sites. As a field-worker, she produces not only her own theory respecting to slum tourism, but also poses the polemic question whether tourism may sanitize the violence of Favelas by the imposition of market, which

paradoxically reproduces poverty to attract others. Is slum tourism a result of late capitalism?

## VII.THE ECOLOGY OF DISASTERS

George H Mead, one of the fathers of symbolic interactionism, questioned why paradoxically many people are prone to read or listen to bad news presented by journalism, at the time they show preference by these types of news. What is our fascination for others` suffering? He assertively concludes that the self is configured by its interactions with others. This social dialectic alludes to anticipation and interpretation as two pillars of a communication process. The self feels happiness by others` suffering, because it represents a rite necessary to avoid or think in own pain. Starting from the premise that the self is morally obliged to assist the other to reinforce its sentiment of superiority, Mead adds, this is the ethical nature of social relationship (Mead, 2009). From our viewpoint, in the neo-liberal discourse life is portrayed as a trace. Few will be salved while the rest ruined. Ideologically this is not only the success of late capitalism to make people to compete with others in the market, but also this is the message of realities as Big Brother, where only one can reach the glory. This cruel competition is feasible because competitors keep the faith in their own skills. Whenever one fellow falls, we feel a strange sentiment of happiness. This does not mean we are sadist, but we are glad to stay in the race. Dark tourism sites, even slum tourism remind how the success of few goes around the ruin of the whole. Slum tourism seekers are not reaching a new more authentic experience, they need from the Other`s suffering to experience a sentiment of false happiness (Korstanje, 2013; 2014) delineating the boundaries of civilized society and backwardness. Tourists are there not to learn, but to reinforce a sentiment of supremacy which is ideologically given by “*the ecology of disaster*”. This will be explained with accuracy in next sections.

A wide range of studies have focused on tourism as a mechanism towards pacification or the cultural revitalization of locals and their communities (Jafari 1989; Bregha, 1989; Litvin 1998; Pizam 1996). In order for the industry of tourism grows, political stability should be ensured. Without some exception, by nature tourists are natural risk-avoiders (Korstanje, 2009; Fuchs & Reichel, 2004). As P. Tarlow (2014) pointed out, the tourist trip alternates two contrasting tendencies, the curiosity to experience new sensations with the sense of ontological safety. The biblical and other mythological sources reveal that the sacred space of leisure is constructed in basis of a positive precept that mandates the man to relax, but at the same time, its vulnerability increases. Ancient poets and philosophers emphasized on the fact anything can

happen at any time at a banquet, or public game. The rise of new modern risk and challenges for tourism industry is what Tarlow prioritizes as the most significant aspect to debate by policy-makers. Now we are subject to a set of globalized apocalyptic risks which range from natural disasters to terrorist attacks. The attacks to World Trade Centre in 2001 represented a turning point in the security fields of US and the world (Tarlow, 2014). However, this begs a more than interesting question, is risk perception a commodity used to generate attractiveness?.

Canadian journalist, Naomi Klein (2007) alludes to the term “disaster capitalism” to observe an uncanny trend. Media and policy makers, over the last decades, have implemented programs of recovery in post disasters contexts which not only recycled the resources of economy, but engendered circles of exclusions of victims who are resituated in peripheral neighborhoods. Far from coordinating efforts to solve those glitches that lead to a state of disasters, capitalism takes the opportunity disasters leaves to conduct an economy of destructive creation (following Schumpeter’s axiom). This new type of capitalism is not based on the old welfare state, it promotes disasters not only for elite gains further legitimacy, but also citizens accept those liberal economic policies otherwise would be rejected. In a world where economies are globalized, not surprisingly Klein adds, disasters offer better opportunities for businesses and profits.

In perspective, Rodanthi Tzanelli argues convincingly that globalization plays a pervasive role by subordinating peripheral economies not only to the interests of status-quo, but to a tourist imaginary produced externally to involving natives. The spectacle not only triggers emotional reactions, but confers an ideological message. See for example, the case of FIFA world Cup 2014 hosted in Brazil. She adamantly discusses media events often strengthen the social ties of communities by homogenizing the meaning developed by history but in a context of a traumatic past, such as slavery and oppression in Brazil. Two versions of the same fabricated mythology take place in the same structure (Tzanelli 2015). Following Reijnders (2009), Tzanelli clarifies that this corresponds with the logic “guilty-landscapes” that characterizes the consumption in Brazilian cities and their encounter with modernity.

*“I argue that within the same spatio-temporal frame Brazilian socio-culture become flexible interpreters of their own condition and the global standing. The book’s two World Cup avengement teach us that when a post-colonial culture finds itself in the late capitalism domains, it can produce different versions of the same social event in, by and for other groups” ( Tzanelli 2015; p. 11)*

This co-dependency between centre and its periphery can be perpetuated by an alternation of what Tzanelli dubbed as “cosmographies of riches and cosmologies of desire”. The premise is that centrality can be formed by a hierarchical system of symbols, thoughts, and beliefs consolidated by social networks. This remains even after post-colonial independence evoked not only by the needs of peripheral zones to be part of a sacred centre, but by a profound desire to get the foreign cosmographies of riches. Not surprisingly, this explains the periphery’s fascination for tourists coming from developed nations. The original Maussian gift is exchanged between civilized and uncivilized worlds (Tzanelli, 2015). To what extent can we affirm this gift-exchange is not producing violence?.

In earlier approaches, as *Cosmopolitan Memory in Europe’s Backwaters* Tzanelli acknowledges that globalization and local resentment are inextricably intertwined. Based on the study case of Greece and MAMA Mia’s destinations, she exerts a radical criticism to “crypto-colonialism”, which means the cultural encounter of first world civilized tourists with a great variety of ethnical disputes unchecked in former overseas periphery which was promoted by colonial legacy. Decades of exploitation over Third world prompted to “an economy of victimization” which paves the ways for the advent of romantic nationalisms. The political oppression conducted by Europe in XIX and XXth centuries, created radical politics based on resentment and a suicidal redemption (as the case of terrorism evinced). These nationalisms connoted the sense of a “national pride” that produced a dichotomy between them (the enemies of nation) and us the good peoples. The imposition of western archetypes by means of tourism, media and other visual allegories gives as a result a racialized habitus where the “Other” turns in a commodity (Tzanelli, 2011). She will overtly admit that

*“Neoliberalism’s entropic nature appears to induce a resentment that encourages venturing out individually and destroying neighborhood reciprocities, especially where neighborly relations have always precarious. The story of adversity which affirmed my hosts self-fashioned dual habitus as Orientalized sufferers and Western civil creators, was adopted by other local enterprises that maintain or are in the process of setting up individual web pages” (Tzanelli, 2011, p. 68)*

Though compellingly explained, Tzanelli’s argument leaves behind the role played by disaster not only in the process of victimization, but in the creation of national-being. Of course, as she noted, the dichotomy between they (bad) and we (good) introduces a discourse where the other is demonized. In this vein, ethnocentrism does not precede the ethnic violence, but it is determined by



a previous trauma. In other terms, moral or real disasters cause a sentiment of loss in victims who have not chosen what they face. By an arbitrary destiny, they were placed in a sad situation without their consent. The fate, god or universal forces aligned to cause a serious damage to the subject. So the immediate question is why me lord?. This question has not answer. Following a natural mechanism of resilience, community realizes after all the destruction elsewhere, there is another opportunity. Gods despise of the disasters have protected us, or we have survived because we are stronger, smarter, superior, or faster than other who perished. At a first stage this is natural, but if unchecked or regulated, it can wake up pathological chauvinist sentiments that lead community or peoples to xenophobia and ethnocentrism. This is a type of psychological narcissism produced by the disaster. If this pathological behaviour is not corrected, victims over-valorize not only their imaginary skills and potentialities, but also feel that happiness only can be reached through pain (producing the epicenter of ascetic personality). This was evinced in my last fieldwork conducted in disaster-spot in Chile (1973-1990) as well as some interviews over “descendientes de desaparecidos”, relatives of “disappeared peoples” during the last bloody dictatorship 1982/1976. Symbolically invested by a divine touch, survivors feel they are part of something important and this is the reason why romanticism or nationalisms resulted from deep stages of crisis or disasters. We agree that globalization or capitalism, enlarges some already-existent cleavages of peripheral nations exploited by the colonial legacy. To my knowledge the point of discussion lies in how late-capitalism instills this narcissism to weaken the social ties of community, recycling their forms of traditions and interactions in commodities. Once done, as Tzanelli observed, native are offered to international tourism demands as products. The concept of supremacy of one ethnicity over others is determined *by the ecology of disaster*.

In what way, disasters may be functional to the exploitation of cultural tourism?.

In this respect, Comaroff and Comaroff have denounced that cultural tourism is paving the ways for ethnic cleansing and genocides. Though they do not specify why, figure out a pristine aboriginal community which was subject to an unspeakable cruelty by main colonial powers. Now, they may gain financial independence of their current nation-state whether tourism is accepted as primary option of poverty relief. Secondly, West will develop a romantized imaginary of this exploited aborigines. They will develop this above described sentiment of ethnocentrism which will result in a direct struggle with nation-state for the monopolization of resources (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009).

However, as a project capitalism does not prosper whether social ties are undermined. Bauman did the correct by alarming that today consumers have irreversibly turned in consumed objects, commodities to be sold for those who can pay for that (Bauman 2007). Let’s explain this with clarity to readers in the conclusion.

## VIII.CONCLUSION

At some extent, beyond the criticism exerted on slum tourism we have to recognize what this paper is not. Of course, this is not an applied-research that gives information from primary sources, nor an ethnography which focuses on the subjectivity of slum-dwellers. However, the critical discussion resulted from the review of literature leads us to reconsider “slum tourism”, from a new angle, more associated to “dark tourism”. In fact, both (dark and slum touring) emerged recently in view of the advance of global capitalism. Empirical research in slum tourism is not enough to understand because of two main reasons. The first and foremost, not only interviewed peoples sometimes are not familiar with their internal emotions but in other conditions, they simply lie to protect their interests. Secondly, as Clare Croft observed (2015), the influence of ideology in behaviour is not expressed by what people say, but rather within the secrecy what people hide. Following the role of dangers as ambassadors during Cold War, Croft adds; this means that dancers (as tourists) can be used as diplomats of the US foreign policies highlighting all benefits of “being American”, without their expressive acceptance. In this vein, Lay-people behave following a cultural matrix, which is enrooted in the core of ideology. The same applies for slumming tourism, where people are encouraged to visit these types of places as a sign of real contact with the other, while in effect, they are not familiar with the perverse matrix of exploitation behind this industry. Slum tourism (as well as dark-sites) alludes to an ideological disposition to consume the others` pain (Korstanje & George 2015). This is the moot point where this essay review unfolds.

As this backdrop, capitalism should be understood as a cultural project, besides an economic system, which is based on two preliminary aspects; social Darwinism and the doctrine of predestination enrooted in the Protestant Spirit. Two scholars have explored with brilliant mastery on both, Max Weber (2012) and Richard Hofstadter (1944). While the former signaled to capitalism as a consequence of Protestant Reform that divorced from Catholic Church, the latter one envisaged that social Darwinism was the key factor to grant the competence necessary for market expansion. Social Darwinism was a theory coined by Sir. Francis Galton, whose interests were

oriented to adapt the concept “evolution of species” as it has been delineated by Charles Darwin into social world. However, Galton not only misjudged Darwin’s advances in the fields of biology but confused “the survival of the fittest”, with “the survival of strongest”. In contrast to Darwin, Social Darwinism observed that natural selections can be applied on social scaffolding. In the way, some species struggle with the environment to survive, humans struggle with others to reach success. In this token, the Anglo-race was placed on the top of social pyramid as the most evolutionary ethnicity respecting to other minorities. At the same time, this doctrine paved the ways not only for racist ideas in America that shaped capitalism, but also Nazism in Europe. In parallel, as Hofstadter puts it, the idea of a privilege race or dreams of uphill city, contributed to a discourse of superiority of Anglo-Saxons over other cultures, which sooner or later encouraged “the war of all against all”; Social Darwinism works because rank-and-file workers struggle with other workers by a job or better opportunities. While capital-owners monopolize their power into few hands, work-force is atomized to avoid the unionization. Those who have not developed adaptive skills to survive are considered “the weak”. After all, capitalism always grant the survival of the strongest, the best agent. In the fields of religion, Weber anticipated a similar landscape. Capitalism was the result of Protestant logic of “predestination”, which means that the soul’s salvation was pre-determined by Gods in the life-book. Only few will be gathered by the Lord in the bottom days. For wayward Protestants, the world not only is a dangerous place, but also the platform to show one deserves the salvation. The force of labor seems to be the sign marking the boundaries between doomed and saved souls. This is the main cultural difference between Catholics and Protestants.

In a recent book entitled *A Difficult World, examining the roots of Capitalism*, Korstanje has continued the discussion adding a new element, the ecology of disaster. Starting the premise that the times Hofstadter and Weber have gone forever, he said that capitalism has been enlarged to the contours of this world. Though social Darwinism remains in the core of markets, no less true is that disasters are conducive to the ultimate logic of capital. Tzanelli did the correct thing at confirming resentment was the symbolic core of national-being, but leaving out the role of risk-perception in the process. Disasters produce a clear victimhood, who are involuntarily situated in situation they would never choose. In order for overcoming the trauma, starting to the process of resiliency, survivors believe they have been protected by Gods, or have survived by their natural skills. Despite the extreme loss, they feel not everything is lost. And of course, they have survived because of their strengths.

Although this sentiment is natural during a temporal time-frame, whenever there is not direct intervention of therapists, chauvinists or xenophobic acts may surface. Not only is this the reason why media are strongly interested in covering news of disasters, but the rise of ethnicity conflicts. Capitalism disorganizes the social trust among citizens by the installation of the allegory of superman, a special personage whose powers make outstanding respecting to humans. Of course, poverty, in other words, is a chronic disaster which affects thousands of peoples who are daily relegated from this paradise created by Anglo-Protestant ethos where only few selected peoples can dwell on. This ways of thinking, however, creates serious asymmetries precisely in the contours. The hermeneutic circle between exploited and exploiters has been fulfilled by new trends of tourism, which stimulate the consumption of authentic cultures (Korstanje 2015). Slum tourism, far from giving a solution for the problem, replicates those conditions of exploitation that aggravates poverty. In the same way, Mead observed journalism captivated the attention of readers in order to strengthen their self-esteem (or sentiment of supremacy), slum-tourists reinforces their own sentiments of civility over the Barbarian World. As earlier discussed, the life is seen as a great trace where only one can be the winner. From *Big Brother towards Hunger Games*, this is the ideological rule that characterizes the postmodern world. Those stragglers who lag behind as slum-dwellers, are considered weak or unworthy of salvation in the same way, for converting workers into commodities, Capitalism needs to disorganize social trust. In so doing, the sense of uniqueness plays a vital role in leading towards narcissism. Contextually, slum tourism revitalizes “the needs to gaze Other’s suffering” to feel one might be so special. As earlier discussed, to what extent tourism or slum tourism are valid option to pacify conflictive hot-spots are a point which merits a much deeper research in the academy.

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