

Monkey: Its Habitat and Stories for Tourism Support

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Abstract: At Wendit Recreational Waterpark, Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency, thousands of monkeys occupy the area which potentially become a unique and interesting tourism asset besides the physical presence of its natural attraction. The ethnography approach aims to discover the natural and cultural prosperity behind the presence of those monkeys so it can be organized as a tourism attraction from different point of views. The findings reveal that first, the presence of thousands of monkeys at Wendit has a historical background and myths implying meaningful messages and significances for the current and future generations. The histories and myths also show the prominence and interrelation of the past great kingdoms in the archipelago. Second, the presence of thousands of monkeys has evoked interest of society to contemplate the extraordinary phenomenon of the origin of those monkeys, their survivals, and humanity values that should be developed reflecting from the lives of the monkeys.

Keywords: monkey and its habitat, natural tourism destination, history and myths of monkey, monkey and humanity reflection

1 Background

In the current tourism development, cultural tourism has been an integral part of either natural tourism or artificial tourism development. Cultural tourism is no longer an exclusive object for the exclusive society, but it has been a community general attraction because it has merged to other types of tourism [1]. This is clearly seen in the tourism in several cities in Indonesia such as Bali and Yogyakarta. Nearly all tourist destinations in these two cities have cultural performances that almost always appear to show a distinctive tourism atmosphere in the form of dances, songs, attires, languages, and even unique regional rituals that can attract many local and foreign audiences. Even some cultural performances have become icons of destinations that are sought and awaited by tourists [2].

Some of these cultures can be performed directly, but some others are still in the form of potential so that to be able to display them. Therefore, it will take thoughts and hard work to make it presentable as attractions in tourist destinations [3]. This second cultural group has a hidden attraction that requires a creative touch from the community. There are other important elements that need to be considered, such as elements of empowerment, preservation, and cultural development [4].

Wendit tourist destination is a natural tourist destination that relies on historically and culturally abundant spring. The nuance of this natural tourism is livelier with the presence of thousands of monkeys that roam around the tourist area. In the context of developing cultural tourism, many things can be explored and developed from the natural resources that have existed there. The history of Wendit, especially the existence of the spring, is extraordinary. There must be many

legendary stories that develop in the community. Those things can be explored and processed as tourist attractions [5].

The presence of monkeys as one of the tourism assets here is a separate focus that can be developed as a tourist attraction because of its unique and comical presence. They invite spontaneous reactions of tourists because of their nosiness that attract attention. All this time, the presence of monkeys in Wendit Recreational Waterpark has given abundance of tourism contribution but actually there are many more to be explored to enrich the tourism treasure of this destination [6].

To transform the aspiration, this study was conducted under the title "Greeting the Monkeys to Explore the Richness of Wendit Recreational Waterpark, Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency Towards the Concept of Excellent Cultural and Environment-based Tourism." The exploration of various community stories, both stories of monkeys' encounters and various developed myths, is the focus of this study.

The results of the study show some interesting information regarding the existence of these monkeys. There are some interesting questions from the public about the process of birth and death of these animals that cannot be traced and understood physically. At birth and death, it is difficult to find physical traces regarding the continuity of their life and death processes. These questions are understandable because it is generally known that monkeys have some things in common with humans, especially in terms of behavior [7].

In the case of birth, there is a process of marriage and pregnancy that can be caught, but the rest seems to be missing. After sometimes, they return to the public already holding their babies. The secrets of the birth process invite interesting questions; are there certain 'ethics' that they have and is there a process of midwifery between them which is a special secret and even they have to be kept secret as their own that no one should know? [8]

In terms of death, there is a big question in society about their process of death; Are there rites or specific ways to deal with and solve problems at the end of death? These questions arise because there is not a single trace found by the community regarding their death. No bodies or carcasses were found scattered about and no bones indicated that a member of the monkey group had died [9].

Questions from the community that have not been answered even tended to be unanswerable make people then like to return to prehistoric times to find answers through mythical stories [10]. This study aims at discovering some of the community's concern about this reality. Field data exploration targets the stories from the community and attempts to collect scientific information regarding monkeys' life cycle and its characteristics especially the birth and death phenomena as balancer to understand the pattern and cycle of monkeys' life. So, as a result of this research, scientific and non-scientific information are presented as a prosperity of people's ways to understand their world. This information is expected to become interesting data to design "something different" as a unique tourism consumption in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark. Research on monkeys as primates must have been widely carried out in various perspectives, especially in biological studies [11], forestry, agriculture, and husbandry. Meanwhile, specific research on monkeys from a cultural perspective have not been widely done. Exploration was carried out carefully to show the position of this research and especially as a form of accountability for the authenticity of this research.

So, as a first step, I try to explore the possibilities of research on monkeys from a cultural perspective. After that, I retry the exploration on a wider scale with to the previous studies about other animals in a cultural context as a comparison of cultural studies with animals as the subject.

A study by [12] regarding cumulative culture discovers that the claim of cumulative culture which so far perceived as humans' turns out to be overlooking that matters in the Japanese monkeys' group (*Macaca Fusc Ata*). This conclusion was drawn after conducting research on the tradition of washing food (tubers) in non-human creatures. A careful ethnography study on Japanese monkeys found that there is an increase in complexity and efficiency of food washing among them from time to time.

The similarity of the current study and Schofield is on monkeys as object of study. The two studies explore the cultural and civilization potential through the existence of monkeys and its relation with the study of civilization and culture in the past, in the present, and in the future. The difference is that Schofield observed specific behavior in monkeys, namely the behavior of washing food in monkeys as a test material for cumulative cultural claims that have so far been considered to only belong to humans. Thus, Schofield's study is more specific on extracting data as a comparison material with the results of previous studies. The locus of the study was Japanese monkeys. Meanwhile, the current study focuses on the study of stories (myths) that are constructed by society to seek explanation of the cycle of birth and death, which still leaves many questions. The data exploration is directed to its utilization in the context of cultural tourism development in Wendit Recreational Waterpark, Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency.

The relationship between humans and monkeys to assess and manage the potential for pathogen transmission in the Padangtegal monkey forest in Bali, Indonesia and the Gibraltar Nature Reserve in the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar was investigated in [13]. The results of the study show relationship pattern between humans and monkeys which at the same time illustrates the differences in human behavior with different cultural, demographic, and local as well as non-local backgrounds. These differences turned out to have an effect on monkey interaction patterns based on the types of food provided by the visitors.

The similarity of the two studies is that both studies utilized monkeys as research subjects. Both studies also looked at monkey behavior patterns as an entry point for pursuing their respective research goals. However, Fuentes is focused on health interests to find out the level of disease transmission, while the current study is focused on tourism interests to reveal unique stories, both real and mythical experiences to be used as part of tourism attraction.

Monkeys are examined to see and investigate the meaning of motions and the origin of human movement culture [14]. In this study of monkey groups in Africa it was found that the movement of the monkeys in Africa showed links to cultural origins in this region. The similarity with my study is that both investigate monkeys as a medium to learn about humans. The difference is, [14] focuses on finding out the origin of the culture of human movement, while this research is more about efforts to uncover various invisible aspects behind the presence of monkeys to be utilized as tourism consumption.

The pattern of human-animal relationships in the concept of wildlife conservation is examined [15]. In a study in Northern Morocco, it was found that efforts to preserve species from extinction are often driven by ecological data and interests to date. But this study shows that the threat of extinction of wildlife is also mostly caused by human intervention or better known as anthropogenic activity.

What the two studies have in common is they discuss wildlife conservation efforts. The difference is, Waters focuses on conservation efforts by building human awareness to reduce anthropogenic activities, while my research focuses more on preserving animals by raising various stories about animals to be preserved in different ways. Waters is concerned with preserving the physical life of animals, while I am more concerned with preserving the value behind the presence of these animals.

2 Research Method

This research as a whole employed ethnographic qualitative method. It means the stage of data collection, data process, or data analysis up to conclusion employed ethnographic methods.

In the process of data collection, there are two main methods being used, namely in-depth interviews and observation [16]. With the in-depth interview, the researcher first determined the key informants as the entry point for data collection. Next, it can be developed in the snowball sampling principle, which means that the number of informants grow. Thus, the process of data collection would flow during interaction with key informants [17].

The key informants are the Mangliawan Village officials as the people who are closest to taking responsibility for cultural preservation in this region. They did more opening interviews about doors or ways to get collect information. The following informants are the administrators and members of the H3 community (*Hurup, Hurip, Handar Beny*) as the most intense community with cultural preservation activities in this area. Initial information about stories or myths surrounding the existence of monkeys in Wendit Recreational Waterpark can be obtained from this community.

From them, the informants may develop according to the situation in the research field. Apart from individual informants and separate from each other, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also held to fill in information in a structured and directed manner. In addition, other informants involved in this research were tourism managers from the tourism and culture department of Malang Regency to get the direction of Wendit's tourism management in the context of its scale. Discussions with them was done by FGDs for some formal information about tourism management.

The following groups of informants are the residents of Mangliawan Village who were randomly selected to retrieve stories of the life of the monkeys in this place from day to day. The information from them can also be directed to get an overview of information about various stories about the existence of monkeys. The answer to the story that is expected can be in the form of an experience story or a mythical story that develops over time. The final informant is of course local and foreign tourists to get another perspective on this tourist spot as well as their impressions and messages about monkey attraction as part of this tour.

The next method is observation. Through this method, researchers rely on observations in collecting qualitative data. This method is more reliable to collect information about the dynamics of the life of the monkeys. The first goal is to clarify public information about the lives of these primates regarding birth, life, and death. The results of this observation act as a means to finding new information and clarifying existing information [18]. In the data processing stage, the method used is data classification to determine which data can be used and which data irrelevant to this study. After this process, the report writing process began based on existing and available supporting data.

3 Results And Discussion

Discussion on monkey primates is a conversation that points to a common phenomenon that in other places, especially dense forest areas close to water sources, almost always found large communities of monkeys that live and breed in the area- particular area. Thus, the discussion of the origin or the beginning of monkey community in someplace cannot be localized as a typical conversation. It needs to be understood in the context of monkey habitat as studies conducted by experts in the field of primate studies [19].

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the presence of a monkey community in each place must also be inseparable from special stories that give a distinctive picture of them in a particular area. By reflecting on the various dynamics that exist in each place, there must be unique events and reflections that arise that need to be considered carefully to give a different picture of monkey community life from one place to another [20]. Not only a shared common picture, but it also needs special things that give it a different color. So, from the findings in this study in Mangliawan Village. The significant things that are interesting to look at in a balanced way are the lifestyle and life of the monkey community in general on the one hand and the lifestyle and life of the monkey community that is uniquely in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark, Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency.

This search provides two big pictures of the existence and life of the monkey community in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark, Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency. First, it provides an overview of monkeys in the daily stories of the people of Mangliawan Village and, second, the description of monkeys in the historical stories and myths of the people of Mangliawan Village. The illustration obtained in this study can be processed to be part of the development of tourism materials. The idea is simple; utilizing existing natural resources as tourism consumption. Thus, monkeys as a tourist assets of Wendit Recreational Waterpark doesn't only provide raw materials for the presence of thousands of monkeys that welcome the arrival of tourists, but also a variety of primate knowledge, history, and culture.

3.1 Monkeys in the Daily Stories of the Mangliawan Village Community

The presence of monkeys in the tourist area of Wendit Recreational Waterpark, Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency has attracted the attention of almost all community groups, both government and private, both individuals and groups or communities to participate in fulfilling the meals of these wild animals. As part of the responsibility for managing tourist destinations, the Malang Regency Tourism and Culture Office through the UPTD Wendit Recreational Waterpark has the main responsibility to budget the meals of the monkeys. According to Harry, one of the UPTD employees, the monkeys' daily meals are met by feeding them regularly twice a day, at nine in the morning and three in the afternoon. Harry also said that the provision of meals is carried out by paying attention to the daily lifestyle of the monkeys. The monkeys already live in groups and this becomes a guide for officers in managing the distribution of meals.

“These monkeys live in colonies. The way of life of the group is closely guarded, namely the upper courtyard colony, the bathing pool colony, and the boat pond colony. The inhabitants of each colony feel troubled if their territory is invaded by the inhabitants of another colony. They fight to protect their respective colonies. The division of the colony also served as a guide for officers in distributing food rations. There are pluses and minuses in each colony. In the upper courtyard, the residents get food more often because if visitors who want to eat spontaneously while passing through the tourist area can immediately give it to the monkeys around the roadside courtyard. On the other hand, for the inhabitants of the boat pond colony, they have the farthest reach so they get what is provided by the UPTD officer. It is because they are far from the reach of tourists. The residents of the bathing colony are also lucky because they can still get deliveries or gifts

of food from tourists who are roaming around the bathing pool. So, actually this colony division condition is sufficient because it supports an unbalanced diet,”¹

Harry added that the feeder operators have thought about arranging the feeder volunteers to comply with the feeding rules so the monkeys get fair portions. However, considering that this has not been realized so that the condition of the needs of the colony group that lacks food supply has not been resolved.

The food supply which is routinely carried out twice a day by the UPTD is not enough. Each colony gets a portion of half a sack of banana or cassava pieces. This shows that the number of feedings on a regular basis has not referred to the ratio as the ratio of feeding. Not to mention there is a custom among monkeys that when it comes to eating, their official or king must first enjoy their food. After they are full, the other monkeys get their turn to eat. It is fortunate if there are still some left. Sometimes it becomes the subject of fighting by tens or even hundreds of other monkeys.

“That is why, it is not surprising that sometimes the monkeys go to people residential area to search for food. Fortunately, the residents around the Wendit Recreational Waterpark understand the situation so when they meet monkeys in their village area, they are not angry and nosy with the animal, but instead have compassion for feeding the monkeys. This condition, in the past, led to the occurrence of monkeys being killed by residents because they were disturbed. Now, it never happened again. People understand that monkeys are also creatures that need to eat and will breed if their food needs decrease,”²

Mr. Orin, one of the cultural activists in Mangliawan Village added that after all, monkeys are wild animals. This can be seen clearly from the look in their eyes that they always want to attack. This makes the public or tourists scared so that when feeding them there is a suggestion to just throw it away without paying attention to the proper place to feed these primates.

“This is one of the concerns of H3 cultural community. We are thinking of making an altar as a suitable monkey spot. The altar functions as a place to feed the monkeys, whoever feed the monkeys will be directed to give it in the space provided. This is in line with the idea of UPTD to provide a community food handler so that tourists who enter this area have certain eating rules that are chosen in certain places. With this, there will be a lesson for all. For tourists there is a lesson that even feeding animals, there needs to be manners. For the monkeys themselves, the habit of feeding in certain places prevents them from acting on tourists or people who enter the tourist area. So, there is a learning moment for all. I think this can be a special attraction for tourists,”³

Regarding the monkey population in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark, according to Mr. Orin, this is a unique thing in itself. According to him, almost every day a baby monkey is born. The female monkeys, almost every day carry their babies, but the public, both officers and tourists, rarely find corpses or carcasses of dead monkeys. Mr. Orin admits that despite these conditions the monkey population at Wendit bathing tour has no significant disturbance. This means that according to Mr. Orin, the population has remained the same from the past until now. There is no trace or clue about where the corpses of the deceased monkeys were buried except that once

¹ Results of interview with Mr. Pak Hary, employee of UPTD Wendit Tourism, Malang Regency

² Results of interview with Mr. Taufik, a member of monkeys' observer community at Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency

³ Results of interview with Mr. Orin, a member of H3 cultural community at Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency

bones were found in a place under a tree burrow. Mr. Orin added, the carcass of the monkey that was shot had been found, but it was found outside the tourist area. The rare discovery of monkey carcasses in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark is a mysterious thing in itself to this day.

3.2 Monkeys in Historical Stories and Myths of the Mangliawan Village Community

A herd of monkeys at Wendit Recreational Waterpark is located in Mangliawan Village, Malang Regency, which is only about eight kilometers from Malang City. In the world of *wayang*, *Mangliawan* is the name of a mountain which is equated to *anoman* or better known as the mountain of white *kethek* or white monkeys.

Regarding the origin of the monkeys in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark, the people of Mangliawan Village have a story from generation to generation that the monkeys were originally soldiers of the two kingdoms who always fought each other, namely the soldiers of the Singosari and Majapahit kingdoms. Because they always fought, the two soldiers received a curse word from *Pendhito Ratu* (Priestess Queen) to become *Bedhes* or monkeys that exist until now. The legacy of the two groups of soldiers can still be seen in the behavior of the monkeys in the tourist area of Wendit baths to this day. The herd of monkeys in the tourist area of Wendit baths consists of two large groups, namely; inner group and outer group. The 'inner' group controls the area around the pond and the area within the tour, while the 'outer' group controls and resides in the area outside the tourist wall.

In its development, they are now identified as three groups or colonies. In addition to 'inner' and 'outer' colonies, there are also colonies that inhabit the boat pond area. The existence of these colonies is very visible when one member of the colony passes or enters the territory of another colony, then they must fight not individually, but as a colony. The division of this colony is a distinct advantage for the tourism manager and the feeding offices to determine the feeding zone.

On the other hand, according to the Tengger community, the monkeys in Wendit Recreational Waterpark are sent from Tengger to protect the Wendit spring which is believed to be a source of holy water for their rituals. As stated in the previous section, the Tengger community are so concerned about the Wendit spring because they believe that water infiltration from Mount Bromo and its surroundings (Tengger region) leads to the Wendit spring.

4 Conclusions and Suggestions

This study tries to raise several things that can be a description of a herd of monkeys in bathing tours, both generally and specifically. Generally, this study was found in the literature of existence and life of monkey primates, monkey social life, monkey eating behavior and expansion problems. Specifically, this study tries to reveal the monkeys in the life of the people of Mangliawan Village and the rich history, myths, and culture behind the monkeys. A further goal of this study is to support Wendit Recreational Waterpark tourism.

The discovery of the general context of existence and the life of monkeys in this study is intended to provide an overview of the characteristics and uniqueness of monkey primates wherever monkeys live and breed. The description of monkeys from the results of this study is incomplete and far from perfect so that other studies are suggested to conduct more in-depth and comprehensive to provide an overview of the existence and life of monkeys.

About the particularity and uniqueness of the existence and life of the monkeys in the Wendit Recreational Waterpark, this study documents its mythical, historical, and cultural point of view. However, the research team realized that these findings are still far from perfect. They also need to be followed up to find more comprehensive and complete results.

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