

Project: Mediation and redefinition of the meanings of poverty during the slum tour around Kibera in Kenya, refer to the research on tourism in the poor urban districts in the countries of the so-called Global South. According to the researchers, the tours around Kibera have been organised since 2007, and although it is hard to believe, the inhabitants of this slum also count among their organisers. The general research purpose of the project is an anthropological interpretation of a slum tour around the Kenyan Kibera (the biggest slum of its capital city – Nairobi), organised by its inhabitants as a space for negotiation of meanings of poverty and for construction of identities of the poor.

The project is a continuation of the field research in Kenya launched by the applicant in January 2014 (until now: 5 months in 2014 and 2015). The principal research methods include participant observation and interviews. The applicant lives in the slum with the family of one of the guides. She observes the functioning of a few social organisations engaged in the tours and participates in the tours organised by different entities and attended by tourists from different countries of the world. The applicant also conducts narrative interviews with the inhabitants of Kibera who are most involved in the organisation of the tours, and partly structured interviews with the visitors which, in the case of a larger number of persons, take the form of a group discussion.

Slum tourism is a phenomenon which raises increasing interest of the researchers from different fields of science and also of the public, both in the countries where the tours are organised and in the countries which the visitors of the slum come from. Despite the increasing interest, it is a phenomenon which has not as yet been studied in depth. In particular, there is no ethnographic research which would allow to answer the basic question: what are slum tours exactly? This project aims at presenting this phenomenon from the perspective of the inhabitants of the slum who are very often marginalised. In order to disseminate the project results, the applicant plans to publish articles in scientific journals, deliver speeches during conferences in Poland and abroad as well as create a website: www.imagesofkibera.com.

The applicant graduated from the Faculty of African Studies (University of Warsaw) and is currently a PhD student in the Graduate School for Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Science (PAN). As part of her African studies, she studied at the Institute Nationale des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) in Paris. She also graduated from postgraduate studies entitled Development Cooperation Policy and Management at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (SWPS), and complementary studies in sociology at Lancaster University. It is also worth to emphasise that since 2007 the applicant has been working in different countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (until now: Kenya, Cameroon, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda) implementing developmental aid projects.