



## ***Interactive comment on “The calamity of eruptions, or an eruption of benefits? Mt. Bromo human-volcano system a case study of an open risk perception” by S. Bachri et al.***

### **Anonymous Referee #2**

Received and published: 31 October 2014

I apologise for the lateness of this review.

This is a very interesting paper that provides some great insights into the cultural practices around Mount Bromo. The data is novel and adds an important case study to the global literature on volcanic hazard impacts. However, there are two areas in which the paper should be improved prior to acceptance. First, the authors should discuss the concept of "open risk" in more detail and with reference to the hazards geography literature. Secondly, the written English needs quite a lot of attention. There are many sentences in the paper that lack grammatical sense to the point where they are difficult to understand. I recognise and admire that the authors are not writing in their first

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language, but I don't want the sense of the paper to be lost.

The call to "open up" the view of risk that prevails in volcanology (the "technical-rational" model) is not new. Social scientific studies of volcanic eruptions and the affected populations have long called for greater focus on the cultural interpretation of volcanoes - and there is also a considerable body of literature that examines the role of volcanoes in national identity. Some of this literature is cited in the paper, but there are also some important omissions - notably the work of Greg Bankoff and Kevin Hewitt in hazards geography. The final section of the discussion in particular needs reframing in light of this literature. In the social sciences, the contingency of risk is well known. The contribution that this paper makes is not in trying to redefine risk. It is much more about the relationship between people and land and identity. Another perspective on this would be through the lens of cost-benefit analysis: the authors state that the Tenggerese regard the good risks as compensating the bad risks. This is very similar to the cost-benefit approach. The difference lies in the cultural basis of the reasoning.

On the issue of identity and volcanoes, there is a 2013 book by Sean Cocco entitled "Watching Vesuvius" that seems to be relevant here.

The earlier part of the discussion identifies five "socio-cultural benefits" of volcanic eruptions. This is interesting, but it would be useful to have some more details as to how the authors arrived at these themes. The link between their study and the literature is not entirely clear. It would also be interesting to have some more details on the cosmology of the people on Mount Bromo - there is a lot about cosmology in general in the discussion, but again the links are not completely clear.

Finally, the language of the paper is problematic throughout, but particularly in parts of the discussion, where I cannot make sense of some of the sentences. The manuscript requires extensive copy-editing.

Other note: I am still uneasy about whether or not interviewees can be identified in this MS - if there is only one "head of the village", then surely they can be identified?

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