BALI AS ICON:

TOURISM, DEATH, AND THE PLEASURE PERIPHERY

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The Bali bombings have been a turning point. Carefree tourists and honeymooners have long flown to Bali from Australia and many other countries. They have been looking for a holiday with a difference and a brief taste of Asia in what has been a safe haven away from violence in other parts of the region ... Now that has changed. Kuta Beach, its night-clubs, bars and cheap shopping are no longer an attractive lure for many young people and probably won't be for some time to come. And it may be a long time before other tourists return to sample the island's rich Hindu traditions, temples, breathtaking scenery and the legendary friendliness of its people.¹

INTRODUCTION

Imagine a map so huge and intricately drawn, so exquisitely rendered, that it forms an exact reproduction of the territory it represents, its details blending seamlessly with the ground depicted, its topographical precision erasing any signs of difference between the land and the cartographic analogue. In his fictional fragment 'Of Exactitude in Science', Jorge Luis Borges describes such a map. Drawn by the finest cartographers of the empire, this map is of the same scale as the territory described, and so

detailed that every curve and form of the landscape coincides with its two dimensional representation. Forming a copy of the ground itself, the map ends up covering the territory exactly, overlaid like a huge imaginary landscape of signs and traces as a substitution for the real.

Over the years though, the map gradually loses its appeal and is eventually abandoned. As if unable to withstand the burden of representation any longer, the discarded map begins to age and wear, fraying around the edges, growing thinner and lighter until it tears into shreds and gradually reveals the ground beneath. In ruins it collapses, leaving a few traces scattered here and there over the landscape, a few tattered shreds discernible in the sands of the desert, offering shelter for the occasional roaming animal or nomad.²

I am, of course, not the only one who has been fascinated by the story of the Borges map. In his article 'Simulacra and Simulations' Jean Baudrillard describes the Borges tale as the 'finest allegory of simulation', an entry point into a world of simulacra: a world of models and fakes without recourse to stable referents, copies forever severed from the origins and originals to which they once deferred. In his own take on the Borges story, Baudrillard desires to go beyond all claims to any kind of coextensivity

between the map and the territory – the ‘second-order simulacra’ of imitations, maps and doubles. Instead, in this third order simulacra (the *procession* of closed and self-referring systems of semiotic exchange), it is the actual territory which no longer holds any guarantee of privileged access to the solid ground of reality. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it; rather, it is the map which now ‘engenders’ the territory. The map, with its intricate pattern of codes, produces the ground, the land, the real, simply as an effect of the system of signs that it generates. And, continuing this logic, in Baudrillard’s version it is now the territory that, unable to bear the pretence of reality, begins to fall away in shreds, its tattered remains and vestiges rotting away here and there across the face of the map.³

Baudrillard’s elaborate use of the Borges story is a useful point of entry for thinking about tourism, and in particular, international tourism’s mapping of the globe as tourist space. It is also relevant for thinking about the various hyperreal performances or ‘stagings’ of culture, ethnicity, and place that tourism both produces and encourages.⁴ Tourism, after all, is very adept at creating something which never before existed but which we come to think of as true.

Moreover, the metaphor of the map seems highly appropriate for considering a tourist destination such as Bali, where the massive development of tourist infrastructure and promotion, and the sheer volume of tourists visiting the island, have, at different times, led to fears that continuous expansion would inevitably lead to its ruin, the decline of its physical and cultural splendors, and the eventual disappearance of tourists altogether. Comprehensively mapped by the cultural imagination, Bali has been

known variously as a ‘garden of Eden’, as a ‘touristic Shangri-La’, the ‘enchanted isle’, ‘the last paradise’, and ‘one of the world’s great romantic dreams’. In the 1950s film *South Pacific*, Bali was deterritorialised in the most literal of senses, and was fictionalised as ‘Bali-Hai’, the dream island of American servicemen, a utopian respite from the horrors of war in the Pacific. Through a deft geographical displacement not uncommon to Hollywood, Bali became a generic icon of paradise in the South Seas, with every image of tropical island life rolled into one. Even Nehru, first prime minister of India, and hero of the newly-emerging ‘post-colonial’ globe, participated in this *branding* of Bali when, as he was guided around the island by his host, Indonesian nationalist President Sukarno, he called it ‘the morning of the world’. Over the three centuries that the West constructed its complex and monumental iconography of the island, Bali’s hyperbolic reputation appeared to grow at the same speed as the pace at which it edged ever closer to overexposure and collapse. But, it was not only the Western powers, Europe and America, who invested in the island’s reputation; by the time of Nehru’s visit, Bali’s image was ‘international property’.⁵ In this sense then, decades of colonial appropriation and assimilation, anthropological investigation, nation-state driven image-making, tourist promotion, travel writing and popular culture have created a symbolic edifice that, just like Borges’ map, does indeed bear down on the territory of the island, appearing to cover it completely.

In the early 1970s, for example, Bali received around 50,000 tourists a year, and by 1976 the number had reached 113,000. In the 1980s around 400,000 tourists a year visited, and in 1990 the number increased to more than half a

million, growing at an annual rate of about 20%. In Bali's long history of tourism Australians have been the largest single group of nationals to feature, comprising over one-quarter of all tourists. In fact, the island has consistently attracted the largest number of Australians travelling internationally for short-term trips over the last two decades, and a special kind of mythological relationship has developed between Australia and Bali largely through this process of tourism exchange. One of the results of this has been an almost symbiotic connection between the two places, whereby, for example, a trip to Bali has become established as a crucial rite of passage for one's national identity *as an Australian*. Conversely, for the Balinese, Australian tourism has become an integral part of Balinese culture, and has contributed extensively to the shaping of that culture. We can cite as an example (and at the same time also illustrate Baudrillard's world of *fully-blown* 'third order simulacra' in which the abstraction of the map begins to produce the territory in its own image) the construction, by both Balinese and Australians, of a particular version of Australian culture in well-known and heavily touristed sites around Kuta, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s. The image of Australian culture that circulated at the time—beer drinking, surfing, and nearly always ethnically Anglo—an image frozen and static in the manner of all synchronic models, actually worked to produce a concrete reality which thereafter would be lived out by some (often unfortunately so, especially for many Balinese) as 'real Aussie culture'.

Yet irrespective of whether the relationship between the two places is seen in terms of national stereotypes and conformity (*I've been to Bali, too!*), in terms of simulacra, or, in terms of economic coop-

eration and benefits, it has given rise to a complex cultural and geographical synthesis that unsettles conventional understandings of cartographic space and the usual distinctions between inside and outside, here and there, centre and periphery, and 'ours' and 'theirs'. As a consequence, Bali has come to occupy a uniquely symbolic, *iconic* position in the Australian national imaginary. It is also undoubtedly a relationship defined by reciprocal advantages and influences. But the complex, overlapping, spatial system in which this relationship occurs and finds meaning is by no means stable, isomorphic, uniform, or even consensual; rather it is characterised by highly unequal relations of cultural and economic power, and highly uneven and disjunctive relationships between institutional structures.⁶

So, while still bearing in mind these most immediate metaphorical trajectories, I would like now to take the idea of the map in another, slightly different, direction. I would like to use it to talk about the nation-state, colonialism, transnationalism, and in particular, the kind of nation-state driven *neo-colonialism* that is still structuring the relations between Australia and its neighbours, even within the reconfigured context of intensified interconnectivity and globalisation. I would like to think of these neo-colonial relations as indeed a kind of *imaginary map* that stretches over territory, superimposed upon it, and collecting everything within its embrace. Indeed, it is a fundamentally colonial impulse that imagines that there could in fact be such a map, extending out and wrapping all geographies within the one empire of influence.

But I am also interested in what happens when the map begins to fray and tear, just like it does in the story, when

it collapses and is left in ruins, changing completely the Empire's until then confident extension and embrace of, and relationship to, the territories around it. I don't want to labour this metaphor too much, but I think this is exactly what has happened in the aftermath of the Bali bombings, which took place on 12 October 2002. When the two bombs exploded in the centre of the club and bar district of Kuta Beach, Australia's relationship to Bali, and indeed to the whole region, was significantly altered. The event catalysed a period of deep mourning and grief for the 88 Australians, mostly young people on holiday having a good time, who lost their lives. But it also caused a reassessment and rethinking of our place in the region. The bombs that exploded in Paddy's Bar and the Sari Club—an event that quickly became known as Australia's greatest peacetime disaster—seemed to indicate for many, that an identity and history that had long been shaped by the 'tyranny of distance' had well and truly been replaced by the tyranny, and also terror, of proximity.

Rather than focus on the actual events of the bombings though, what I would like to do here is try to find a way of talking about Australia's relationship with Bali, and other places (Nauru, Christmas Island, Manus Island) that could also, like Bali, be seen as imaginary peripheries of the Australian nation. I also want to consider Bali's reputation as an icon of Australianness, where one can still find the familiar images and trappings of a national culture that many thought had already disappeared from the Australian nation itself. I also want to explore the development of Bali as a tourist icon, a role forged first by the Dutch colonial administration and later the nationalist practices of the Indonesian government, where its continued promotion as

a site of global pleasure is based on the continued repression of its own tragic and violent past. Finally, I will consider alternative mappings of the nation appropriate to the present experience of globalisation, ones that move from neo-colonial appropriation and exploitation towards a greater sense of transnational connection and responsibility.

MAPPING THE EMPIRE

The process of cartography, of mapping, drawing boundaries, measuring distances, and naming places, is central to the imperial enterprise. It is through the cartographic project of establishing spatial and geographical coordinates, of classifying and naming, that territories and spaces are transformed into countries and places, and specific histories are brought into being.⁷ As such, maps are instruments of power, and always embody the spatial intentions and imaginative economies of those who first employed them.⁸ This process is disclosed in the very term 'geography' (geo-graphy: literally, *writing the earth's surface*). Geo-political entities such as 'East' and 'West', 'Asia' and 'Europe' are, from this perspective, not just geographical sites but ideas: mythological and imaginary forms produced from a system of geographical classification, shaped by a Eurocentric imaginary, and haunted by the legacy of the colonial encounter and the violent conquest of various and far-flung 'others'. In this way, cartography and the mapping of the world relate to what Heidegger termed 'the gigantic': the elimination of distance and the ability to represent and reproduce at any time a picture of unfamiliar and distant places and their location.⁹ Within the gigantic, all other realities and all other spaces become merely knowable dimensions of the one world.

This is a process that can be readily identified with the project of European imperialism and the mapping of the globe as an exploitable resource. But, the colonised world was also exhorted to reproduce European values and ideologies: namely, the universalisation of the nation-state as the most desirable form of political community. Exported from Europe, the nation-state form became the geo-political normative premise by which Europe interacted with 'elsewhere'. In this way, the mapping of territorial boundaries and the definition of highly-integrated spaces of national identity and identification as a means of legitimisation were the political and military technologies fundamental to European economic expansion. As Hardt and Negri state,

Imperialism was really an extension of the sovereignty of the European nation-states beyond their own boundaries. Eventually nearly all the world's territories could be parceled out and the entire world map could be coded in European colours: red for British territory, blue for French, green for Portuguese, and so forth. Wherever modern sovereignty took root, it constructed a Leviathan that overarched its social domain and imposed hierarchical territorial boundaries, both to police the purity of its own identity and to exclude all that was other.¹⁰

Cartography was central to this process, with the technology of the map functioning not only to embody colonialism's territorial ambitions but also to reinforce the relations of geographical division and symbolic identity that went hand in hand with it. Mapping functioned, therefore, both strategically and literally, as a means of spatial containment and systematic organisation, and consequently,

as a form of 'cartographic discourse, whose patterns of coercion and containment are historically implicated in the colonial enterprise'.¹¹ But the boundaries that colonialism created were often arbitrarily drawn, establishing artificial borders between peoples, linguistic entities, and cultural and political communities that functioned along very different lines of coexistence and connection prior to colonisation. Before colonial rule, territorial arrangements and attachments to land were frequently fluid and relative, with political and sovereign entities often defined not by state or geographical boundaries, but rather functioning as multiple spaces composed and recomposed through wars and the mobility of people and things. As exemplified by the slave trade, highly complex scales of measurement established correspondences between persons and things, and also led to an interlacing of allegiances and connections through trade routes. The imbrication of social ties that resulted from such overlapping spaces of exchange meant that identity was often not reducible to religion, family or kinship relations in any singular way.

The histories of Bali, and the Indonesian nation-state that contains it, can serve as typical examples of this form of colonial mapping. The territory of Indonesia is an archipelago of thousands of islands, scattered over a vast area between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, and Bali is a small island within this expanse. Europeans first visited Bali towards the late 1500s, but the island was officially 'discovered' in 1597 by the first Dutch expedition to the East Indies, as this area was then known. By the early 1600s the Dutch East India Company had established a major trade empire, with the Javanese capital, Batavia, at its centre. Bali fascinated the

Dutch: ruled by a King and royal family, the island was irrigated and densely populated, militarily strong, astride a major trade route, and importantly, in contrast to its Islamic neighbours, maintained the Hindu religion. At this time, the Balinese empire stretched from east Java to the island of Sumbawa. The Dutch had wanted to incorporate Bali into the imperial map of the Netherlands from the time of their first presence in the region, and had sought the Balinese as allies against the region's Islamic radicalism. However, religion was an insufficient basis on which to forge political alliances or enmities for the Balinese, and the island successfully resisted colonial rule for decades. From 1846 until 1908 the Dutch conducted seven separate military expeditions in an effort to subjugate and eventually defeat the Balinese; the island was one of the last regions of the Indonesian archipelago to be incorporated into the colonial empire of the Netherlands East Indies.¹²

In contrast to its contemporary image as a peaceful paradise populated by gentle and generous people, the island's reputation at this time was centred on its warlike nature and noble savagery. In fact, Bali was known for the almost constant warfare between the various kingdoms and their rulers, and one of the main aims of the European colonial powers was to 'civilise' the uncivilised island and its barbaric practices. Among these, the practices of *sutee* (widow burning) and the sacrifice and execution of slaves were well-established, and indeed became dominant motifs of the European image of Bali as a place of brutality and tyranny. The Balinese slave-trade, a major export economy during the 17th and 18th centuries, also contributed to this image: Balinese slaves were sold throughout the world, to Batavia, the

West Indies, South Africa, and to islands across the Pacific and Indian oceans. Although the Balinese had sold slaves prior to the arrival of the Dutch East India Company, the new trading conditions enabled the slave trade to flourish. At the same time, the Dutch also reorganised the established trade routes of the region to suit their own interests. Bali was situated on the periphery of these changed routes, and its trade with the spice islands of Maluku was disrupted. The expansion of the slave trade, however, quickly followed in its wake and was assisted by the global networks of the Dutch East India Company. Despite being outlawed though by the Dutch and other colonial powers, the practices of slavery and *sutee* continued.¹³

In 1846, frustrated by what (conveniently) looked like disrespect for the international law of free trade, and keen to secure their control of all trade routes, the Dutch invaded one of Bali's kingdoms. Using Javanese military traditions, including the indigenous form of warfare known as *amuk* (hence the Orientalist expression *running amuk*), the Balinese launched a formidable defence that would become characteristic of their sustained resistance to the imposition of Dutch rule. After a series of defeats, the Dutch were finally able to establish a colonial administration in parts of the island. After the massacres of 1906 and 1908—the two *puputans* (a traditional practice marking by death the ending of a kingdom), in which Balinese royalty and their followers marched into battle and advanced straight into the gunfire of the Dutch forces—the whole island came under full colonial rule. This military conquest was a source of international embarrassment to the Dutch, and the subsequent colonial policies directed towards the preservation of Balinese

culture and its promotion as a tourist attraction were seen as attempts to make amends for these events.

The violence of these centuries receives little or no mention in contemporary images and accounts of Bali. The Dutch colonisers themselves hastily tried to put the violent past behind them, as they effected a swift transition from an image of 'savage Bali' to an image of the island as an exotic paradise and tourist destination for the international elite. Almost as soon as the Dutch gained control, they began crafting a new iconography for the island, one that included the dominant images of a sensual, erotic, female Bali (bare-breasted maidens and dancing girls) and a cultured Bali (arts, literature, music and temples). This iconography tended to use highly sexualised representations to construct the island as part of the mysterious, mystical East, a place of exotic and 'pure' sexuality and native life. The explicit orientalism of this iconography established a theme that would recur in later tourism promotion materials, and is an image of Bali as a site of erotic pleasures that still persists today. As such, the discourses drawn upon by the Dutch to construct the tourist image of Bali as ineffable, as an object of both Western curiosity and fantasy, are of course the main features of Orientalism, whereby the West both names and fixes the identity of the East, while simultaneously exploiting it as a source of fascination and longing.¹⁴

At this stage, the Dutch focus on understanding, and also controlling, Balinese life meant that 'culture' and 'tradition' were gradually disembedded from the history and lived experience of the Balinese, and became distinct categories through which to organise certain cultural practices so that they could be performed and consumed by both Balinese

and non-Balinese. The Enlightenment values that the Dutch brought with them and fostered, emphasised education, literature, and the arts, and the harmonious idea of a modern society and progressive cultural development. Adopting this framework, the Balinese used the languages, epistemologies, and philosophical systems of the West to make sense of their own cultural values and religious practices, which could then be presented as consciously articulated culture and tradition. The establishment of 'authentic' traditional culture through this process led to an elevation of the island's Hindu religion and artistic and cultural life that provided autonomy and legitimacy for the Balinese, but also attracted expatriates, colonial scholars, anthropologists, and of course, tourists, and which in turn led to further appreciation and growth. After the state-sponsored cultural policy launched in the 1920s known as the 'Balisation of Bali', the Balinese began to describe themselves as a 'people', as a singular entity, and as a particular ethnic group with its own religion and customs.¹⁵ Ironically, it was these newly constituted ideas of Balinese identity and traditional culture that provided a basis for the nationalist movement and to calls for independence from the Dutch.

The period of Dutch colonial rule ended with the Japanese invasion in 1942 and the Pacific War. During the struggle for independence after the war, many of the conflicts focused again on questions of how Balinese culture and society were to be defined, and who was to control the island. These conflicts continued after the Indonesian Revolution, and became increasingly intense when Bali officially became part of the Indonesian Republic. The view of Bali as a 'living museum', a museum of ancient Hindu-Javanese civilisation (largely created by

the Dutch colonisers), was continued by the Republic's founder, President Sukarno, and employed within Indonesian state mythology and processes of nation-building. In his efforts to construct a unified Indonesian nation-state and identity, Sukarno combined modern concepts of nationalism with references to tradition and heritage, with the aim of synthesising Indonesia's extremely diverse regional cultures. Widely disparate ethnic, religious and cultural traditions became sets of abstract principles that were assembled to construct an image of 'unity in diversity' (the national motto).¹⁶

An abortive coup in Jakarta in 1965 led to Sukarno's replacement by Suharto as President of Indonesia. The deaths of prominent army generals during the coup were blamed on the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), and reprisals led to massacres of communists throughout the country, events that were particularly extreme in Bali. Under Suharto's 'new order' regime a period of sustained international tourism promotion began. Primarily initiated to address a national balance of payments deficit and to attract important sources of foreign currency, the government, assisted by the World Bank, targeted the province of Bali as the focus of development. Tourism policy was, in effect, removed from the provincial government and directed by the central government, and also became part of the strategy for fostering national unity and integration. During the period from 1970 to 1995, both accommodation facilities and tourist numbers increased dramatically, with the total number of hotel rooms growing from less than five hundred to thirty thousand.¹⁷ By 1995 international hotels and hotel chains had appeared, and investments in tourist infrastructure had substantially shifted

property ownership away from local businesses to large corporations, many of which were either based in Jakarta or overseas. At Sanur more up-market tourism began, signalled by the construction of the Bali Beach Hotel; at Seminyak, the beachfront Oberoi, one of Bali's first luxury hotels, and designed by Australian architect Peter Muller, was situated well away from noisy, brash Kuta.¹⁸ More recently, luxury villas, completely self-contained and protected from intruders by armed guards, have also appeared; like the Udayan Military base which has jurisdiction over East Indonesia, including Timor, they are largely insulated from the tourist regions.

PARADISE LOST

The 1975 edition of Lonely Planet's *Across Asia on the Cheap* declares, 'Bali: rapidly becoming one of the world's premier tourist attractions and equally rapidly going downhill. See it now!'¹⁹ In the early 1970s the island had become an increasingly popular destination for Australians. Bali was one of the main stops on the 'hippie overland trail' across Asia, and groups of 'world travellers' arrived in search of cheap lodgings, drugs and mysticism; surfies soon followed. With the arrival of cheap airfares and package tours, ordinary, working-class Australians were suddenly visible in Bali. And as mass tourism increased, the budget-style accommodation of Kuta and Legian was gradually replaced by a concentration of hotels, restaurants and bars, often with names such as Koala Blu and Norm's Bar. Australian beers displaced the local Indonesian beer on 'genuine Australian pub crawls'.²⁰

After decolonisation, Australia's relationship to Indonesia changed dramatically. The Australian Government's

support for the Indonesian revolution had signified, in former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating's words, a new kind of engagement in the region and 'our effective resignation from the Colonial Club.'²¹ Yet in many ways this new kind of engagement with Asia, and in particular Indonesia, appeared not to be substantially different from the earlier version, and for many, the colonial club was still very much intact, and indeed well-frequented. Historically, Australia's relationship to Asia has tended to oscillate between either threat or opportunity, and the connections with the region have been overwhelmingly explained and evaluated in terms of their potential economic, cultural, or political benefits. As such, 'decolonised' Indonesia was increasingly seen as a place where greater material opportunities were both possible and potentially profitable.

This exploitative and opportunistic relationship to South-East Asia has resulted in considerable economic benefits for the Australian nation. It is a relationship that has been reinforced by a geographical imagination that has conceptualised the country as a bounded and isolated island-continent surrounded by a sea of Asian otherness, and precariously placed on the 'edge of empire'.²² This spatial imaginary has been reflected in the isolationism of the White Australia policy, and the protectionist policies (both economic *and* military) of Fortress Australia. Both the 'frontier image' and the idea of the 'perilous periphery' work to contain the familiar and exclude the alien and incomprehensible. To a great extent, the structural racism that in both the present and the past has so deeply troubled regional, national and local political processes, stems from this spatial imaginary conceived in terms

of frontiers, boundaries, and peripheries.²³ It has also resulted in a persistent neo-colonialism in which these various peripheries cannot be considered in any other way except in terms of threat, pleasure, or profit, and subsequently, as sites that must in some way be either incorporated, or rejected, from the Australian geo-political imagination. For example, an article by the journalist Paul Kelly on the first anniversary of the Bali bombings, 'Brought Back to the World', was especially telling in this respect. Kelly wrote that 'Bali has touched our soul and revealed our character'. He then continued, 'For years we thought that engagement with Asia was about profits, holidays and the conference circuit in a mutually beneficial embrace'.²⁴

But quite apart from the period of reflection that the Bali bombings precipitated, over recent years a number of different sites at Australia's periphery have become crucially implicated in the domestic politics of citizenship, sovereignty and identity within the Australian nation. Bali, Christmas Island, Manus Island, Nauru—Australia has had, and continues to have, complex relationships with these 'peripheries'. Usually exploitative in one way or another, the relationships with these places have fulfilled important roles for Australia's sovereignty and citizenship; for example, in defining the limits, and therefore the political conditions, in which people can enter Australian territory and claim refuge. Similarly, when John Howard adopted the role of Deputy Sheriff, and took responsibility for policing South East Asia, including raising the option of launching pre-emptive military strikes, he not only asserted a particular kind of Australian national identity, but also reinscribed a conventional mapping of Australia's position

Figure 1: 'Brought back to the world', *The Australian*, October 8, 2003.

of superiority in the region. Moreover, given his electoral success in 2001 with the anti-asylum seeker 'We Decide' campaign, it appeared that this was an image of both national and spatial identity that most Australians supported.

In this sense then, these peripheries are actually *symbolically central*. While Bali is claimed as a *de facto* part of Australia (a paternalism that has come through strongly in the media coverage of the Bali bombings and subsequent anniversaries), Christmas Island is excised from the Australian migration zone and turned into a convenient component of border control, maintained through millions of dollars of coastal surveillance. But they're central in another way too: they have provided the raw

materials and resources by which the nation has produced and reproduced its very centres and foundations. In the case of Nauru, for example, it was through the exploitation of the small island's resource of superphosphate, which was mined to the point at which it seemed the very core of island had been removed. Nauru was left devastated, and without a secure income stream, until the Australian government set up detention centres and immigration processing facilities, and one important economy (agricultural fertiliser) was replaced by another (border control). This is leaving aside, of course, the Russian mafia's discovery of Nauru's usefulness for money laundering. But that is a very different, though not unrelated, story. At present, Nauru

is essentially bankrupt and is negotiating with the Australian government's Department of Finance on the best plan of settlement.²⁵

One of the key reasons there has been such outrage and disbelief over the Bali bombings, I would argue, is that Bali, actually part of another nation, has indeed been considered an adjunct, *de facto* territory of the Australian nation-state. Although Bali is part of Indonesia, it is rarely referred to as either Asian or Indonesian. Instead, the island is often described by, thought of by, Australians as 'ours'. As one journalist noted, it has commonly been described as 'Australia's backyard, a second home for surfers and backpackers, Kuta as a bit of Bondi in Bali ... a tropical Earls Court'; in other words, as 'our tourist colony'.²⁶ Additionally, most references to the place in tourist guide-books and promotional materials simply refer to 'the archetypal resort island of Bali'. The fact that some Australian tourists have no idea Bali is actually part of Indonesia, or that it is a largely Hindu enclave in the world's most populous Muslim country, is confirmation here.²⁷ Bali is imagined then as part of Australia not only because of its geographical proximity and status as a popular tourist destination, but because many areas of the island have actually been created for tourists as fantasy 'Australiana' zones, where the way of life is more *extremely familiar* than the usual *extremely different* experience of tourism.

A newspaper article on Australian tourists in Bali, published before the bombings, suggested that the appeal of places like Kuta for many tourists was because it was not foreignness, the authentic or the exotic which was encountered, but rather what was already known, familiar and 'homely': Australian culture. In Kuta, it appears, a version

of Australian culture had been recreated as a tourist paradise, a version that was very much pre-multiculturalism, pre-Paul Keating's adventure of internationalisation, and very much a throw-back to that era of an Australian identity defined by Anglo monoculture, sport, beer and BBQs. Australian tourists visited Kuta, the article argued, because it was indeed a 'home away from home'. As the article stated: 'Victoria Bitter is everywhere; it's just as easy to get hamburgers, toasted sandwiches and chips as it is *gado gado*. The Kuta street sellers ... speak their English with an Aussie accent ... the bars have satellite television beaming AFL and ARL games'. And rather than visits to temples, museums, and sightseeing excursions, the entertainment and tourist activities include listening to Indonesian bands playing Midnight Oil songs, and Sunday dinners of roast chicken with pumpkin and potatoes followed by beer-drinking competitions.²⁸

This creation of a bastion of 'Aussie culture', permanently circa 1983, signals a curious sense of geographical displacement that extends far beyond specific individuals; rather it forms part of the larger collective identity and spatial imaginary of Australia as a far-flung outpost of Europe on the edge of Asia. As the *Economist* wrote, 'More was shattered than lives and families. Australia has lost, perhaps forever, its happy sense of security as a relatively isolated country'.²⁹ Considering this construction of Bali as an imaginary periphery of Australia (and therefore symbolically central to national identity), it is unsurprising that the Bali bombings led to a time of both introspection and sustained contemplation of the issues of security and vulnerability. As one critic commented, 'After the Bali bombing, no outsider could fail to notice the sense of an inno-

Figure 2: 'A pamphlet calling for Australians to boycott travel to Bali. Distributed at a public rally supporting Australian intervention in East Timor after the vote for independence from Indonesia in 1999, Author's collection.

cence being betrayed and punished ... As if the Australians had been somehow "out of it", and are now being cruelly dragged into the world, made just like the rest of it'.³⁰ Using similar language, Australian Prime Minister John Howard described the event as a 'brutal awakening'. He added that 'the Bali atrocity has left its mark on the consciousness of our nation – we understand that this was an attack on our values, our way of life. The threat posed by global terrorists may have changed the world we live in, but it will never change who we are'.³¹

If, post September 11, the assertion 'we are all Americans' became a frequent reprise, 'after Bali', our own moment of international terrorism, a similar mobilisation of defensive national identity ('we are all Australians') also began to appear.³² Occasionally, individual voices also expressed a feeling of ontological insecurity that obviously resonated on both personal and political scales: for example, in a *Four Corners* program on the Australian victims and survivors, a number of young people said, again and again, that what they feel they've lost is a sense of safety and security, not only in relation to overseas, but here at home, 'here in our own home', they repeated.³³ This refrain that, after the Bali bombings, 'everything had changed', was constant in the media coverage of the event and its aftermath. Commentators struggled to come to terms not only with Australia's reconfigured status in the region, but the fact that terrorism had shattered its happy isolation and produced another era of perilous proximity. Some pointed to the parallels between the events and Michel Houellebecq's novel *Platform*. Written two years prior to the bombings and ending with an attack on a tourist beach-resort by Muslim terrorists, the novel

was interpreted as a kind of 'cultural pre-emptive strike'.³⁴ Few though, connected the novel's analysis of the global sex and tourist industry with what had happened in Bali. One of the central themes of the book is the consequences of the instrumentalisation and extension of the liberal freedoms of the West, especially in the context of the financial and sexual exploitation of the third world. Yet the few non-Western critics whose commentaries managed to make their way into the Western media, focused precisely on this point. A few days after the bombings, Malaysian writer Rehman Rashid wrote about the Sari Club:

Filthy place. Reeking of beer and sweat; the air thick with smoke and jagged with Strine; packed out and heaving into the night at the scummy end of the Legian-Kuta strip, down past the Gado-Gado, Hard Rock and Peanut ... Everybody knew the Sari Club. It had been there about 15 years, sopping up the dregs of the Kuta night ... If you couldn't score anywhere else, you could score at the Sari Club. To that rickety firetrap would lurch the last of the night's purblind drunken foreigners.³⁵

Similarly, Balinese academic Luh Ketut Suryani commented on the detrimental effects of mass tourism, mentioning that it brought to Bali not only financial rewards but also 'prostitution, gambling, paedophilia, drugs', and had undermined much of the traditional culture. While condemning the attacks, she nonetheless hoped that they would force a rethinking of the instrumental processes of cultural exchange characteristic of mass tourism.³⁶ Another critic asked 'how many learned that the two flattened nightclubs, the Sari Club and Pad-

dy's Irish Bar, let tourists in for free but turned away Indonesians unless they paid a special fee?³⁷

CONCLUSION

When I went to Bali in the early 1990s, I arrived completely unprepared for the version of 'little Australia' to be found around Kuta Beach. Of course I knew about the continuous traffic of Australians to Bali, but still I had no idea of the extent to which Australian suburban life (which, ironically, I'd been desperately trying to escape for years) had so successfully transplanted itself in this tropical setting of coconut palms and warm seas. Bali was indeed a popular destination for people from the particular suburban environment which, in my youth, I was eager to leave: Sydney's Sutherland Shire, known iconically simply as 'the Shire'. In fact, seven young women from the Shire died in the bombings, and a monument to their loss has been erected at Cronulla Beach.

Anyway, after a university education that had involved much discussion of Indonesia and international politics, I was very curious to find out what I could about Balinese perspectives on Sukarno and Suharto, and the massacre of suspected communists in Bali around the time of the coup in 1965. I arrived, for example, already knowing that the death toll for Indonesia as a whole reached somewhere in the vicinity of half a million people, and that for Bali alone it was estimated that around 100,000 people were killed between December 1965 and early 1966. When you know that the country you are visiting has in its recent past witnessed such a tremendous loss of life, you can't help but imagine how and where it took place. You walk around

wondering if the people you meet in the street were involved, or if they lost family and relatives. And in Bali all you can really do is imagine: there are no monuments, no museums, no official historical records about the massacres and where they took place. There are no traces of the destroyed villages or the mass graves. The only historical account I could find was the sketchy potted-history given by my *Lonely Planet* guide.

Years later I heard that much of the tourist accommodation in Kuta, including the many luxurious five star beach-side hotels that I had seen on my visit, were in fact built on top of mass graves of communists. This accommodation was constructed by the government in the early 1970s to encourage mass tourism (at exactly the same time as *Lonely Planet's* lament 'see it now!'), and then soon after privatised. Denis Bryne's own account of looking for 'Traces of '65', as his article is called, mentions a story, told to him by a friend, of the five-star Oberoi hotel, and the ghosts that were known to inhabit the grounds when she herself lived there in the 1970s.³⁸

Whether there really are ghosts at such sites, or whether this is just a way of coping with the utter terribleness of the recent past, is beside the point. Derrida, for example, has called these kinds of stories a 'global *Hauntology*', 'the ghost that goes on speaking'. Across the borders of our nation-states, these spectral effects, this *hauntology* of histories and memories, unsettles the neo-liberal regime of globalisation. The 'euphoria of liberal democracy and of the market economy', is haunted by the return of the ruined and dispossessed in all kinds of ways. Haunting, he says, belongs to the structure of every hegemony.

Icons, after all, are nearly always

haunted by the wider contexts and histories that they not only embody and represent, but from which they stand apart. For Walter Benjamin, icons such as 'cultural treasures' have without exception 'an origin which [one] cannot contemplate without horror'. As one of his most famous maxims states, 'There is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism'. But few citations of this truism also include the sentence that follows it, 'And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which was transmitted from one owner to another'.³⁹ As Byrne argues, the 'structures of forgetting' which the Indonesian state has put in place to cover the massacres of 1965-66 had a counterpart at the international level in the way nations such as Australia, quickly turned away from, if not openly condoned, what was going on.

To return then, to the metaphor of the map with which I began. If the imaginary map extending over these peripheries has begun to disintegrate, what kind of relationship will develop in its wake? The relationships Australia has with these places will become more rather than less important as globalisation intensifies and accelerates. The transnational trajectories of the nation state, and the vectors of transnational connection, will continue to multiply and to become entangled and ever more complex. Within a globalised world, places and sites are increasingly interconnected, tied as they are into a complex global network of interdependencies and movement. If nations are constituted as much by their peripheries as by their centres, a map that relies solely upon a notion of a cartographically ordered space, of clearly circumscribed distances and dif-

ferences, is compromised. In a world where people and objects are constantly configured and reconfigured in terms of relative mobility and stasis, static dichotomies of difference and distance, of home and abroad, First and Third, centre and margin, metropolitan and periphery, start to collapse like the map of the empire in Borges fable, slowly dissipating until only remnants and threads remain, waiting again to be rewritten.

But, rather than an imaginary map of colonial or neo-colonial relations, what is needed is a framework in which such trajectories are recognised and understood, and where, instead of neo-colonial embrace and export, transnational responsibility is taken for the nation's peripheries and what goes on there, activities which are of course carried out most always in the name of the nation. Rather than focusing on the enemies massing at the frontier, and the terrors, real and imagined, that are always 'elsewhere', we could start by looking at the contradictions that lie within, especially within the very form of the nation-state itself. And, rather than rejecting the difference of others, and simply increasing the fortifications against external attacks or threats, in whatever form, we could recognise the interrelations and connections that compromise our national imaginaries of isolation and containment. Essentially, the nation-state must be considered in relation to its 'outside', and to the kinds of vectors which exist beyond its apparent borders. This would be a move that would also recognise the unevenness of the mobilities and power relations at these peripheries. It would appreciate that within this transnational network of interconnected regions, some sites are constructed as 'pleasure peripheries' where transnational citizens move

freely, able to consume the signs of difference that tourism offers (or in the case of Bali, the signs of familiarity and sameness), while others are constructed as peripheries of persecution, exile, and detention.

To not take responsibility for what occurs at the nation's peripheries, at places like Nauru and Christmas Island, is to continue a distancing which itself is a form of violence. To not question and challenge what is carried out in the name of the nation and the nation's sovereignty is also to continue this distancing. This makes it crucial to establish a framework that not only decentres the nation as the privileged unit or object of analysis, but also firmly connects what happens at its edges and beyond to the kinds of national narratives, histories and stories we tell. This is also to recognise and acknowledge the rights and responsibilities both derived from, and owed to, peoples and objects that lie outside the doctrine of national sovereignty and the boundaries of the nation state. This will perhaps provide the possibility of inventing a new image of the relations of connection and reciprocity between national communities, and a reinterpretation of the world map, 'not as a means of spatial containment or systematic organisation, but as a medium of spatial perception that allows for the reformulation of links both within and between cultures'.⁴⁰

On Sunday, October 12, 2003, John Howard and Opposition Leader Simon Crean, along with the families and relatives of victims and survivors, attended the commemorative services in Bali to remember the 88 Australians who died in the bombings. Indonesians, mostly Balinese I believe, suffered the second-highest loss of life, with 37 people killed. However, Indonesian President Mega-

wati Soekarnoputri did not attend, and the memorial service was designed, to a great extent, to be an exclusively Australian event. Yet unlike the complete erasure of traces of the 100,000 Balinese murdered in the anti-communist massacres, this time there was a monument. It wasn't actually finished in time for the ceremony, but still, the space of remembrance was well and truly marked out.

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