

## **Draft ASA Conference Paper**

### **Cultural Perceptions of Tourism and Terrorism**

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#### **Introduction**

Michel Houellebecq's controversial novel 'Platform' (2002) manages to combine an account of sex tourism with an horrific terrorist attack in Thailand. Whatever the merits of the book, which was originally published in French in 1999, the author is eerily prescient about how tourist resorts could become terrorism targets in Southeast Asia. Houellebecq may be concerned with Thailand, which has suffered attacks on nightclubs and centres of entertainment, but has not experienced the same level of terrorist violence as other Southeast Asian countries, notably the Philippines. There the militant Islamic group Abu Sayyaf took 21 hostages, including 10 foreign tourists, from a diving resort in the Malaysian state of Sabah. The kidnap earned Abu Sayyaf US\$ 20 million, reportedly paid by Libya (Rabasa, 2003: 54). The worst outrage to date occurred in Bali in 2002 where over 201 people lost their lives when three bombs were ignited. In this case the bombers were rounded up relatively quickly and on admitting their guilt were quick to point out why they had acted as they did. Thailand, however, is arguably one of the most iconic of tourism destinations and the fact that the real terrorist outrages have happened elsewhere does not detract from one of the main messages of the book: tourists are easily attacked and some of what they engage in may be used as a justification for attacking them.

Houellebecq is of course a novelist and a very opinionated one according to some of his critics, but he does investigate the cultural ramifications of terrorists attacking tourists. He is of course not alone in examining the question of terrorism and its relationship to tourism, the issue having been examined from a number of disciplinary standpoints. Angel Rabasa, for example, who specialises in regional security, has included tourism in his work on terrorism, though his remit is much wider. In his work he tends to stress the political underpinnings of the material he has analysed, which in his case relates to Southeast Asia, and concerns attempts by terrorists to re-organise the modern borders of South-East Asia to create a substantial Muslim Caliphate (Rabasa, 2003), a position steadfastly opposed by the governments of the region, including the country with the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia. Terrorism networks with local agendas that converge with those of al-Qaeda have surfaced with the arrests in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia of militants associated with *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) and thus South-East Asia has emerged as a major battleground in the war on terrorism, which has major implications for the region's important tourism industry.

#### **Literature Review**

There is also a growing body of literature from the perspective of tourism management or tourism studies, which understandably focuses on the implications of terrorism for developing and maintaining this important economic sector. There is a widely held view among tourism analysts that international visitors are very concerned about their personal safety (Edgel, 1990:119) and that "...tourism can only thrive under peaceful conditions" (Pizam and Mansfield, 1996: 2). It thus follows that political stability and buoyant tourism thus go hand in hand and, though tourism is perceived as being particularly vulnerable to international threats such as terrorism (Richter and Waugh, 1986: 238), analysts accept that it may be

impossible to isolate tourists completely from the effects of international turbulence (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996: 120). Security and peace may be crucial for tourism and international travel, but national and supranational organisations concerned with tourism have little influence on peace and security agendas (Hall, Timothy and Duval, 2003).

In view of tourism's sensitivity to crises, it is also widely held, particularly by tourism promotion boards, that the press has a particular role to play in helping alleviate the fears of travellers. In this respect the media is seen as being a major force in the creation of images of safety and political stability in destination regions (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996: 107). Not only are obvious threats to tourism such as the press coverage of terrorism seen as a cause for alarm, but so is negative reporting in general. For example, following the on-set of the Asian monetary crisis in 1997, Thailand became so alarmed about the future of its tourism industry in the wake of the poor publicity that it sought to counter the flood of bad news by the positive promotion of the country as a cost-effective destination (Higham, 2000: 133). Thailand's use of tourism simultaneously to boost its image and offset its budgetary deficit at a time of crisis is widely hailed as a success story, and the country has remained very sensitive about its image as a tourism destination.

### **An Emerging Anthropological Contribution**

Anthropologists have also been part of this debate and it comes as no surprise that cultural issues feature prominently in their analyses. One of the first, if not the first, anthropologists to consider this issue was Heba Aziz in a much-cited paper concerning attacks on tourists in Egypt. The publication date (1995) is significant since it came out well before the widely publicised attack in Luxor in 1997 that left 58 foreign visitors dead. The paper notes that tourists had become targets to advance certain religious and political causes since the early 1990s at least, and that according to the Ministry of the Interior, had killed 13 of them, as well as 125 members of the Egyptian security forces, since 1991 (Aziz, 1995: 91). The paper examined the relationship between Islam, hospitality and the concept of tourism and pointed out that Islam does not reject tourism per se. It was, however, the nature of tourism development, especially in Upper Egypt, that provoked acts of violence. The paper questioned whether tourists were the real targets of these attacks and argued that it was the tourism industry, the government and the developers, as well as the tourists, who were responsible for this undesirable situation. The paper moreover argues that the violence was a reaction to irresponsible tourism development and that clamping down on Muslim activism was merely damage limitation and not a solution, and that terrorism and xenophobia in Egypt were an indicator of a problem rather than a problem in its own right (Aziz, 1995:95).

Another anthropologist to have written a substantive analysis of a terrorist attack on tourists is Sally Ann Ness. She has likened the attacks in Bali to a terrorist incident at Pearl Farm Beach on Samal Island in the Philippines, which she sets apart from more economically related incidents of tourism related violence that have occurred in the Philippines and elsewhere. She also notes the 'family resemblance' of the Pearl Farm assault to the Marcos-era outbreak of arson attacks on luxury hotels in the 1980s by the politically-motivated Light-a-Fire Movement, as the activists came to be known (Ness, 2005:119). This movement at times combined economic motives with political ones, as could well have been the case with the Pearl Farm attack, but the motives of the Light-a-Fire Movement were not only concerned with generating revenue for dissident groups. Ness makes the point that the Pearl Farm attacks that the Pear Farm attack was more closely related to none economically related forms of violence on tourism than with other forms, such as banditry (ibid.). This kind of violence may

understood as Ness characterises the Pearl Farm attack as a form of locational violence directed against a particular kind of place and not a particular person or collection of individuals. Ness argues that tourism landscapes with their consumption oriented treatment of space of pre-existing cultural places can create a kind of disorientation that invites locational violence but as this paper argues the bombings in Bali were concerned as much with place as with certain kinds of people.

## **Methodology**

The first leg of the research was undertaken with funding from the British Academy in two main blocks of about a month's duration in July 2003 and July 2004, though work continued intermittently in between. Work resumed on the issue of terrorism in 2006, following the second round of bombings in 2005. Because of the sensitivity of the issues explored, it was not possible to administer a questionnaire, in the manner of previous studies (e.g. Cukier and Wall, 1994), and all informants remain anonymous. The research on the formal sector comprised semi-structured interviews (n = 30), usually in the informant's office, with Balinese tourism officials, the leaders of Indonesian trade associations and general managers of hotels. In contrast the work on the informal sector the work was conducted through the spontaneous questioning of street traders and shop and restaurant employees, as well as expatriates living in Sanur, one of Bali's main resort areas. The language barriers were minimal since Balinese is spoken by the Balinese co-author, and both researchers speak and read English and Bahasa Indonesia, the national language. The authors also attended workshops designed to help the recovery of Bali's tourism industry, which were attended by representatives of local government, industry, NGOs, academia and the media. The Minister of Tourism and Culture, I Gde Ardika, has described these constituencies as the main stakeholders in Bali's tourism industry (Ardika, 2000). The authors also had access to the trial transcripts of the alleged Bali bombers and studied the web-site reports of journalists who claimed to have interviewed the bombers.

Use was made of the local media, especially the island's most popular newspaper, the *Bali Post*, which is read by comparatively well-educated islanders. And though it cannot be said to be genuinely representative of popular discourse on the island, but it does serve as a valuable record of the dates of events and the activities of officialdom, and provides insights into the perspectives of the island's opinion leaders. Picard has characterized these people as personnel of the provincial government and the intelligentsia at large - academics, journalists, bureaucrats, technocrats, entrepreneurs and professionals - and though they do not necessarily share the same opinions, they do tend to live in and around the capital, Denpasar. These opinion leaders mediate between the village and the state by speaking on behalf of the Balinese to Jakarta, and by conveying the national capital's ruling to the province; by doing so they simultaneously affirm their Balinese identity and Bali's integration within the Indonesian state (Picard, 1997:207).

## **The 2002 Bali Bombings**

Because the trials of the Bali bombers were held in public and because professional journalists were able to interview the bombers it is possible to examine many of their motives with some clarity. The bombers initially claimed that they were attacking Americans, though

the largest number of victims turned out to be Australians and the second largest, Indonesian. Despite this error what should also not be overlooked is that the American Consulate in Bali was also targeted that night. Placed around 100 meters from the USA Consulate office, the bomb caused no casualties, but served as a warning to the USA that it was the target. As the casualty figures emerged a range of other political justifications were offered, such as an alleged statement by Osama bin Laden that it was indeed Australians who were being targeted because of their alliance with the USA. The motives may have been political but the outcome was also economic and Erawan, has argued that the bombings of 2002 had by far the biggest impact on Bali's economy of any recent crisis (2003: 265): in 2000 the tourism sector contributed 59.95% of provincial GDP, but in 2002 it had fallen to 47.42%.

On 12 October 2002 three targets were bombed in the Indonesian island of Bali: the Sari nightclub and Paddy's Bar in Kuta and the American Consulate in Denpasar, not far from the former Australian Consulate office. The consulate bomb was largely ineffective, but the ones in Kuta were devastating. The bomb at Paddy's Bar did not at first appear to have had a great impact, but it had a deadly side effect. It drew people on to the streets so that when the next bomb at the nearby Sari Club went off more people were exposed. The explosives had been packed into a van that had been parked outside the packed nightclub, which was almost entirely destroyed by the blast and raging fire that ensued.

The victims represented twenty-two nations, but the brunt of the tragedy was borne by Australia with eighty-eight dead. The second largest loss of life with thirty-five dead was experienced by Indonesia, the majority of those who perished being Balinese islanders. What should also not be overlooked is that many of the Balinese dead were Muslims, drawn from a minority on the largely Hindu island of Bali. The third largest toll was suffered by the UK, which lost twenty-three of its citizens in the explosion. Not only are Americans (7) and many European countries (Germany, Sweden, France, Denmark, Switzerland, Greece, Portugal, Italy and Poland) recorded in the list of victims, but also so are Canada, South Africa and New Zealand. There were also other Asian victims (Taiwanese, Japanese and South Korean), as well as South Americans (Brazilians and an Ecuadorean) (see Table 8.1).

Approximately a year later, the world's press was stunned when one of the alleged bombers, Mukhlas, reacted with delight when his death sentence was read out in the court in the island's capital of Denpasar. His response mimicked the ecstatic reactions of his brother, Amrozi nicknamed the 'smiling bomber' by the press, who had been sentenced earlier and who had claimed that there were many people in Indonesia willing to take his place should he die. Mukhlas was the third bomber, along with his younger brother and the operation's mastermind, Imam Samudra, to be sentenced to death for inspiring his followers to attack Westerners supposedly to avenge the oppression of Muslims.

A noteworthy feature about Mukhlas and his followers is that once charged they did not seek to deny that they had been the perpetrators, even to the extent of correcting the judges to make sure that the record was accurate. With the exception of Ali Imron, who confessed that the bombings had been against his Muslim teachings, the bombers claimed to be proud of their achievements. Presumably to draw attention to their religious motives, the alleged bombers donned Muslim-style clothes to attend court and were photographed carrying out their devotions. In contrast, Ali Imron wore a suit and tie in court, behaving politely and expressing remorse and even weeping a couple of times in public. Ali Imron also gave a press conference

to describe how the bombs were made, demonstrating a filing cabinet similar to the one that was used in the bombings and other related equipment. He also rebutted claims that this was the work of foreign nationals and said that the bombers undoubtedly had the ability to make these explosive devices.

### **The Bombers' Motives**

Seemingly satisfied with the number of foreigners killed, the bombers appeared to be unconcerned about the deaths of their own fellow citizens, many of whom were Muslims. Amrozi simply offered to pray for the dead Balinese, but the belief that he had done something worthwhile remained unshaken, expressing disappointment that had not killed: more Americans. In particular, Amrozi was quite open about what motivated him to conduct the attacks, claiming that he had learned about the decadent behaviour of white people in Kuta from Australians, notably from his boss while he was working in Malaysia. The Malaysian connection was important in another respect since he had worked alongside French and Australian expatriates in a quarry and had thus learned about explosives. Amrozi also maintained that it was these people who revealed to him what an easy target Bali and he claimed to have become incensed about their stories of drug taking and womanising.

By 1996 Amrozi had convinced himself that it was the Jews who sponsored Westerners and that they were intent on controlling Indonesia. He began to hate Westerners and became convinced that violence was the only way to get these people out of Indonesia since diplomatic means had proved ineffectual. Amrozi revealed that the bombers comprised a core group of nine who were united in their hatred and were experienced in carrying out bombings. He claimed to have been involved in attacks in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital, and in the strife-torn regions of Ambon. Amrozi also maintained that he had participated in the Christmas Eve attack in 2000 in Mojokerto, Central Java that claimed 19 victims and admitted that he had had a hand in the attack on the Philippines Embassy in Jakarta and had actually mixed the explosives.

Kuta was selected as a location because there were a lot of foreigners there and when Amrozi heard that many of them had been killed he claimed to have felt very proud, though he prayed for the Muslim victims. Amrozi's hatred of Westerners may have been nurtured by his experiences in Malaysia, but he seems to have been open to other influences. For example, he attended the Lukman Nul Hakim pesantren, traditional Islamic college, in the 1990s in Malaysia where Abubakar Ba'asyir was one of the teachers, but it remains unclear what he studied. Amrozi's hatred could have been underpinned by radical Islamic teaching, but not all the bombers shared precisely the same outlook. Imam Samudra seems to have been more motivated by religious hatred and learned to manufacture bombs in Afghanistan. Also known by other aliases, Imam Samudra was trained as an engineer and had a university education.

The prosecutors in Denpasar alleged that Imam Samudra had selected the targets and organised the planning meetings and had remained in Bali for four days after the bombings supposedly to monitor the start of the police investigation. Imam Samudra was also suspected of being involved in a series of church bombings across Indonesia. On giving evidence at the separate trial of Abubakar Ba'asyir, Imam Samudra said that the bombings were part of a *jihad*, though he denied any connection with the militant group, Jemaah Islamiah. He responded to a question about the Christians who died in those attacks, by saying that "Christians are not my brothers." Imam Samudra is also the author of a 280-page book

(2004), which he wrote in prison under the title *Aku Melawan Teroris* (I Oppose Terrorism). He cited the Koran in legitimising his attacks and a *jihad* in Bali and reaffirmed that his target was the USA and its allies. According to his interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, these enemies could, be killed wherever they could be located. In his book, he refers to the Americans and their allies as “nations of Dracula.” Searching at random, Imam Samudra discovered the Sari Club and Paddy’s Pub in Bali contained the largest homogeneous target of Americans and their allies (2004: 120). Referring the large number of dead Indonesians, Imam Samudra wrote that it was “human error” (English is in the original) and that he much regretted it (2004: 121).

The bombers may have responded differently to questions about their motives, but one who has offered a clear political explanation is Mukhlas. He was not only the eldest and most experienced of the three brothers, but was a veteran of Afghanistan where he claimed to have met Osama bin Laden.

“Osama bin Laden. Yes, I was in the same cave as him for several months. At the time, he wasn’t thinking about attacking America. It was Russia at that time.” (NineMSM, 23 May 2003)

In an interview recorded by Sarah Ferguson in prison nineteen months, Mukhlas’s reasoning was given in an English translation:

“I want the Australians to understand why I attacked them. It wasn’t because of their faults, it was because of their leaders’ faults. Don’t blame me, blame your leader, who is on Bush’s side. Why? Because in Islam, there is a law of revenge” (NineMSN, 23 May 2003).

This could well be a post-event rationalisation given the bombers’ earlier claims that they were attacking Americans, but may represent their motives accurately

The bombers also justified themselves by arguing that they were taking part in a *jihad*, a struggle to establish the law of God on earth, which is usually interpreted as meaning holy war ([www.parstimes.com/history/glossary.html](http://www.parstimes.com/history/glossary.html)). The *Jihad* is sometimes called the ‘sixth pillar of Islam’, a reference to the famous ‘five pillars’ that underpin the identity of a Muslim. The *Jihad* has two meanings, the first being the ‘greater *Jihad*’, a struggle of any kind, particularly a moral one, such as striving to be a better person, a better Muslim, the struggle against drugs, against immorality, and against infidelity, etc. The second interpretation is the holy war itself, which is embarked on when the faith is threatened in accordance with Islamic law, Shari’ah and only with the approval of the appropriate religious authority ([faculty.juniata.edu/tuten/islamic/glossary.html](http://faculty.juniata.edu/tuten/islamic/glossary.html)). The bombers do not appear to have had the necessary authority to carry out their attacks and after careful considering Ali Imron confessed in court (15 September 2003) that the bombers had broken the terms of *Jihad* and contradicted Imam Samudra’s position. Ali Imron went on to say that “...whatever the motive behind the Bali bombings, the act was wrong because it breached the rules”.

Discussion on the meaning of *Jihad* was at the time of the first Bali bombings fairly limited in Indonesia, but this changed after the second round of bombings on 1 October 2005 when videos of the suicide bombers’ confessions recorded before the attacks were circulated, compelling religious leaders to comment. The majority of religious leaders in Indonesia spoke against the practice of suicide bombings and argued that the instigation of *Jihad* was only

acceptable when the nation was under attack. In contrast to what was happening in Iraq, they argued that *Jihad* was not acceptable in Indonesia because there was no national threat.

### **Tourists as Targets**

Since the bloody upheavals of the mid-1960s, Bali had been one of the safest islands in Indonesia, and remained untroubled by the violence that occurred during the Asian Crisis. Given the economic hardship that is widely experienced in the sprawling cities of neighbouring Java, it is perhaps not surprising that Bali's comparative security and prosperity may have encouraged a certain amount of envy. On top of this, many Balinese appear to have been unaware of potential threats from close at hand with many believing that theirs was a 'sacred island' that was protected by God from evil. This outlook seems to have been reinforced by an earlier experience of a failed bombing dating from the 1980s when a bomb from Java that was destined for Bali exploded on a bus before it reached the island. The rioting and bombing that took place elsewhere in Indonesia did not appear to be a problem in Bali and this may have led to complacency among the security services.

What also enhanced Bali's desirability as a target was its status as a renowned tourism destination with a truly global profile and thus any attack on it was likely to generate a high level of media interest, not least because of the presence of Western interests and Western tourists. The combination of its profile and prosperity may have made Bali a tempting target, but what seems to have made it compelling was that it was an easy target. This was compounded by the fact that other potential targets were becoming much harder to attack, especially in Jakarta. In response to the widespread strife that followed the fall of Suharto security measures were tightened to protect embassies and government institutions, making it more difficult to attack them. Tourist resorts and other visitor facilities in Bali were by comparison much easier to target and the tourists themselves, who were often present in large numbers, were difficult to protect without curtailing their freedom. They also had the advantage of following predictable behaviour patterns and a tendency to cluster

Tourists are valuable in another way since there is often less of a local backlash when they are attacked because there are fewer 'innocent local victims, something backfired in the case of the Bali bombings because of the high death rate among Indonesians. The presence of large numbers of Westerners moreover meant that any major disruption would attract foreign interest and thus publicise the terrorists' cause. The deaths of foreign nationals would not only attract attention, but would also generate external publicity that the government could not suppress. Interestingly, what has emerged from the trials in Denpasar is that tourists *per se* were not supposedly the intended victims, but Westerners and possibly Christians. These people were targeted because they were perceived as being associated with attacks on Muslims, and Amrozi made clear that he felt no remorse about killing them.

“How can I feel sorry? I am very happy, because they attack Muslims and are inhumane.” (*Asia Times*, 3 June 2003)

The bombers anticipated that there would be more Americans in the club and bar, but when informed that the majority of their victims were Australians, one of them quipped

“Australians, Americans whatever – they are all white people.”

This indifference to the victims may reflect the anger rage about the alleged abuses of the West, but it also seems to be couched in terms that appear racist. The Indonesian words used to describe a person by their physical attributes can be ambiguous and can range the culturally neutral '*orang putih*', literally 'white person', to the more controversial '*bulē*', which means 'albino'. In Indonesian usage 'albino' can be used relatively neutrally and often crops up in humour, but when applied dismissively as in the quotation above it can convey notions of inferiority. When interviewing Amrozi on 23 May 2003, Sarah Ferguson, recorded him making apparently dismissive comments about whites, but in the translation the word 'whities' was used and it remains unclear what was actually said in Indonesian. Significantly, the widely used term for tourist, *turis*, which is often used to refer to white people only, does not appear to have been used in these interviews, which suggests that it was the victims' Western or white attributes that caught the attention of the bombers.

### **The 2005 Bombings**

The island was attacked for a second time on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005 when cafes along Jimbaran Bay and Kuta were attacked, leaving 20 dead including three suicide bombers, most of whom were Indonesian citizens (see Tables 8.2 and 8.3). The first explosion was at Raja's Restaurant in Kuta Square at 7.45 pm local time and was followed a minutes later by two bombs blasts at cafes along Jimbaran Bay, south of Bali's international airport. This time the bombers killed fewer people, but the bombs were more advanced and contained ball bearings, some of which found in the bodies of injured victims.

It took the police less than two days to announce that the bombings were the work of not only terrorists, but also suicide bombers. The police reached this conclusion after receiving a video recording from an Australian tourist who, with his friend and family, happened to be outside Raja's Restaurant photographing the nightlife of Kuta. The Australian accidentally recorded a man with a backpack, who was walking faster than ordinary people, entering the restaurant seconds before the attack. At a press conference held in Kuta General I Made Pangku Pastika, the Bali police chief, showed journalists how a suicide bomber carrying a backpack could be seen walking through guests having dinner in the restaurant, which was followed seconds later by an explosion. The victims were identified relatively quickly and the police took away the remains of the three chief suspects whose body parts and heads had been found on the sites. By circulating a poster with pictures of the three suicide bombers in colour the police hoped that they would be able to identify the bombers holding the investigation, but it did not work out like that. Several weeks passed and because little progress was made with regard to identifying the bombers the pictures were revised and clarified by removing the blood and debris on their bombers' faces. The police distributed more posters, but once again the public response was minimal. Since no family members or friends came forward to admit that they knew the bombers, the Indonesian public in general and the tourism industry in particular started to become very worried. It began to occur to the police that perhaps Indonesian citizens were simply unable, as opposed to unwilling to identify the bombers, and this time there appeared to be signs of foreign involvement. The police and media opined that the bombs were the work of two Malaysian fugitives from the Bali bombings of 2002, Azahari and Noordin M Top and that a new generation of bombers was involved.

Perhaps because of fears of a more global dimension to the attacks the 2005 Bali bombings enquiry was more secretive than the investigation of the bombings of 2002, which was rather open to the media. The police held daily and frequent press conferences, but the public

received no significant information on those responsible for the latest round of bombings. The police only stated that there were no significant developments, and that they were continuing to question witnesses, whose number rose above 700. Alongside these enquiries, the police launched silent operations shaking out alleged Jemaah Islamiyah suspects throughout Java, although no arrests were announced until after the storming of Azahari's safe house in Batu in Malang, East Java. Azahari and one of his followers were killed during the raid and the police found dozens of vest-bombs, VCDs, books, and a plan for a 'bomb party' for Christmas and New Year. Noordin remained on the run and as of mid-2006 had still not been apprehended.

According to the International Crisis Group South East Asia Project Director, Sidney Jones, Noordin Top now called splinter grouping 'al-Qa'ida for the Malay archipelago', although he still regarded himself as the leader of JI's military wing. According to Jones, Noordin and the people around him are adhered to the al-Qaeda tactic of attacking the US and its allies and, being close to Indonesia, Australia was a prime target (Radio Australia, *AM*, 6 May 2006). The funding to mount attacks could have come from various sources, including al-Qaeda, as well as from the group's own activities. For example, prior to the Bali bombings of 2002, some of Imam Samudra's men robbed a gold shop in West Java and the proceeds helped to defray the expense of the attack. These costs included an estimated Rp 3-4 million to make a vest bomb, the rental of premises and the costs of surveying the target.

The details of the October 1, 2005, attacks were found in notes found at the scenes of the bombings and in the hiding places of those taken into custody. The notes reveal how JI members traveled to Bali to survey potential targets before reporting back to JI's master bomb-maker Azahari. They surveyed nightclubs, temples, shopping areas, sports venues, fast food outlets, souvenir shops and the airport. They concluded that Jimbaran Bay, the eventual scene of two attacks, was a good target because 'Insya Allah' God Willing – they estimated that there would be at least 300 people there (Wockner, 2006a). One of out of four suspects of the 2005 attack, Mohamad Cholily said he was with Dr Azahari when they heard news of the bombings on BBC Radio. He claimed that Azahari had shouted, "Allahu Akbar" (God is Greatest) and "Our project was a success". Cholily, who was learning bomb making skills from 'the demolition man' Azahari, was arrested one month later. It was Cholily who led police to the safe house in East Java where the famous fugitive was hiding (Wockner, 2006b).

Azahari was killed in the raid but this did not alleviate the public's fears a great deal, largely because of the existence of the plan for the 'bomb party'. Even though the police confiscated numerous vest bombs, it was widely believed that Azahari must already have recruited dozens of people who were prepared to conduct suicide missions. Anxieties were also heightened by the video footage recovered in the operation because they contained the pre-recorded confessions of the three suicide bombers who attacked Bali: Salik Firdaus, Aip Hidayatullah, and Misno.

Widely circulated in the media, both in Indonesia and abroad, the confessions sent out the horrifying message that further attacks were possible. The Australian government responded by issuing additional travel warnings, leading to a decline in visitor arrivals, but there were important differences as compared with the 2002 attacks. For example, the massive exodus of tourists that had followed the 2002 bombings did not re-occur and it looked at first as if the tourism industry would not be so adversely affected. Eventually the numbers began to drop drastically due to the combination of the travel warnings and the televised confessions of the suicide bombers. Terrorism in its global context also appears to have exerted an influence as Indonesians were shocked by coverage of a female Iraqi suicide bomber who succeeded in

bombing a wedding party in Amman. An Indonesian musician was included among her victims.

## **Conclusion**

Both Aziz and Ness link the manner of tourism development to attacks by terrorists, but this study of Bali shows that certain tourists were the intended targets. The 2002 bombers offered different variations of the main reasons for their attacks ranging from a simple desire to hit back at Westerners for their supposed attacks on Muslims to a more politically sophisticated attack on John Howard's support for President Bush and Australian intervention in East Timor in 1999. Some of their explanations have been couched in terms of what appears to be racial hatred, though these threats and statements are somewhat vague. What is clear is that they decided to bomb a tourist resort because it offered a relatively soft target, but not because the victims were tourists *per se*, but because their numbers were likely to include large numbers of foreigners whose deaths would attract publicity to the terrorists' cause. Some disapproval over the alleged behaviour of tourists in Indonesia has been expressed, but it was the intended victims' nationality and perhaps racial type, their invaluable foreign-ness, that appears to have been upper-most in the bombers' minds. Tourists are also useful because they create more publicity than when only locals are involved. Such publicity is moreover difficult to suppress, thereby enabling terrorists to make their various causes known more widely. The tsunami disaster of 26 December, 2004, seems to reinforce the notion that foreign tourists make for more media attention than say the terrible disaster in Darfur or previous disasters in China involving only nationals.

Despite the caveats, tourists were the main targets, perhaps not because they were tourists, but because their behaviour is predictable and they have a tendency to cluster. Their value is enhanced since ordinarily there is less back-lash to attacking tourists than to indiscriminate bombing, which produces more 'innocent victims'. Bali seems to have been doubly attractive because any local victims would be likely to be Hindu and not Muslim. As it happened, the bombers miscalculated and ended up killing significant numbers of their co-religionists.

After the 2005 Bali attack police found a document called the 'Bali Project', which contained the reasons for targeting. The documents began with the question 'Why Bali?' to which the answer was: "Because it is the attack that will have global impact. Bali is famous all over the world, even more famous than Indonesia. The attack in Bali will be covered by international media and the world will get the message that the attack is dedicated to America and its allies." (Wockner, 2006b). This turned out to be an accurate prediction since media worldwide covered the Bali attacks immediately.

The impact of the Bali bombings of 2005 on the island's tourism sector seems to be far worse than that of 2002. After the 2002 bombings, multinational investigations and support from the international community helped to speed up the investigation and restore Bali's image as a safe destination. Tourism arrivals recovered quite quickly once the island seemed secure again. But after the 2005 bombing less help from the international community was evident due to a combination of factors: compassion fatigue in the aftermath of the tsunami, especially with Australia which contributed generously, and a general stretching of resources in a generally less safe environment. Possibly because the 2005 attacks had a limited direct effect on Australians, less help with police work was offered to Indonesia; a wide range of

considerations, including the identity of the victims, would appear to complicate the recovery of tourism from a terrorist attack.

The common feature of both the attack in Thailand imaged by Houellebecq and the real attacks in Bali is that they occurred in mass tourism resorts and that terrorists exploited the opportunities that this kind of tourism provides: relatively easy targets, large numbers of potential victims, relatively small numbers of co-religionists, the publicity value of foreigners and the alleged hedonism of tourists that could be exploited rhetorically as a justification for killing them. What would be worth investigating is whether other kinds of tourism (e.g. cultural tourism, eco-tourism etc.), which are often hard to disaggregate precisely from mainstream tourism, are less vulnerable to such attacks and thus politically and economically more sustainable, are in any way less vulnerable to terrorism?

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