CHAPTER VII

Balinese and Westerners

Since mass tourism to Bali began in the late 1960s, Balinese writers have regularly written about interactions between Balinese and Westerners.¹ The Western characters are usually tourists who come to Bali on holiday, although in the end it is often disclosed that some of them are not genuine holiday makers. The Balinese characters take the roles of tour guides, journalists, students, or simply ordinary people who want to meet tourists for work, to learn English or for other personal reasons. Their encounters take place on beaches, at tourist attractions, or at local traditional events such as cremations. In male-female relationships, the encounter between a tourist and a Balinese person often continues into romance and they promise to marry. In real life, mixed marriages between Balinese and foreigners are quite common and socially acceptable, but in fiction by Balinese writers such unions are avoided either by revelations that the relationship is based on a falsehood or by killing off the Western character. Rather than passively reflecting a social reality about mixed marriage, Balinese writers seem to offer an ethnocentric interpretation of the way relationships between Balinese and Westerners should function.

This chapter examines Balinese literary works that draw on the theme of interactions between Balinese and foreigners in the context of tourism. The works discussed here were published between the

¹ Parts of this chapter were previously published as 'Global-local encounters' in *Tourism, development and terrorism in Bali* by Hitchcock and Putra 2007:75-94. For a detailed bibliography of short stories and plays discussed in this chapter, see Appendix F.

1960s and the 1990s (see Table 10), a period when tourism developed rapidly. The analysis focuses on how Balinese relationships with Westerners are represented, and the motives that inform the formation, development and termination of each relationship. It also examines Balinese writers’ perceptions of Westerners, their tendency to stereotype Westerners as the ‘Other’, how writers deal with the significance of these interactions in the context of the Balinese social system, and the implications for Balinese identity.

Table 10. Literary works based on interactions between Balinese and Westerners

Balinese and Westerners	Title	Genre	Date	Author	Feature(s)
1	Sahabatku Hans Schmitter (My friend Hans Schmitter)	short story	1969	Rasta Sindhu	A friendship between a Balinese villager and a German tourist
2	Sanur tetap ramai (Sanur is still crowded)	short story	1970	Faisal Baraas	A romance between a Balinese man and an American tourist who agree to marry but fail in the end
3	Saya bukan pembunuhnya (I am not his killer)	short story	1972	Rasta Sindhu	International police shoot an American criminal posing as a scientist in front of his Balinese tour guide
4	Tiba-tiba malam (Night falls suddenly)	novel	1977	Putu Wijaya	A Western tourist forms a friendship with a Balinese man and tries to influence him to reform his village customs

5	Liak ngakak
(The laughing
<i>léak</i>)	novel	1978	Putra
Mada	A relationship
forms between
a Balinese sailor
and an Australian
woman studying
black magic in Bali
6	Tugu
kenangan
(Memorial)	short
story	1986	Ngurah
Parsua	The romance
between a Balinese
man and an
Australian student
who dies in a plane
crash in Bali
7	Suzan	novelette	1988	Aryantha
Soethama	Romance between a
Balinese journalist
and an American
girl who is shot
by an American
business rival
8	Dasar
(Typical)	short
story	1993	Putu
Wijaya	A Balinese man
and an American
man who lives in
Jakarta fall out
through mutual
misunderstanding
9	Don't forget
John!	short
story	1995	Ngurah
Parsua	An American
tourist befriends
a Balinese man
and then commits
suicide because
he is actually a
criminal about to
be caught
10	Lukisan Rinjin
(Rinjin's
painting)	short
story	1996	Aryantha
Soethama	A local arts broker
exploits both a rich
American tourist
and a poor local
artist

11	Apakah Anda Mr Wayan? (Are you Mr Wayan?)	short story	1998	Wayan Suardika	A young American girl comes to Bali to meet her Balinese father and declares her intention to become Balinese
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In Balinese cultural discourse from the 1960s to the 1990s, 'Westernization' and 'globalization' have been major themes, and many of the authors cited here are attempting to come to terms with these concepts through the theme of interaction with foreigners. This discussion also seeks to answer the question of what kinds of cultural awareness Balinese authors seek to create or reproduce in depicting the interactions between Balinese and foreigners. A brief description on the relationship between Balinese and foreigners is given as background.

Early encounters between Balinese and Westerners

Close contact between Balinese and Westerners started before colonization began in the mid-nineteenth century and has continued since then, intensifying with the development of mass tourism in the late 1960s. The experiences of artists, anthropologists and other foreign scholars who conducted research in Bali in the first half of the twentieth century included many positive interactions. Painters such as Walter Spies and Rudolf Bonnet in the 1930s, Antonio Blanco in the 1950s, and Arie Smit in the 1960s were accepted into the Ubud community. But these positive responses coexisted with overtly negative Balinese images of Westerners. Many Balinese painters and sculptors depicted Europeans as *raksasa* (demons), while others showed them as ambiguous figures of fun (Vickers 1998).

During the struggle for independence in the 1940s, the expression *bojog putih* (white monkey) became a general expression to describe Westerners, a very negative one that implied that they were magically dangerous, since white monkeys are associated with witches

(Wirawan 1995:102; Vickers 1998:2). The term 'Westernized' has had negative connotations in Indonesia since the 1950s, and the anti-Western ideas propagated by President Sukarno during a campaign attacking the United States with the slogan 'Go to hell with your aid' in the 1960s added to this (Vickers 2005:150).

Sexual contact and marriage is another important dimension of these interactions. Sexual liaisons between Balinese and Westerners have been a reality since before the colonial period (Lindsey 1997:29-34), but to maintain a division between colonizer and colonized, mixed marriage was officially disapproved (Maier 1993:44). K'tut Tantri's widely translated autobiography *Revolusi di nusa damai* (Revolt in paradise, 1982 [1956]) describes how the Dutch colonial government discouraged Western women from having close contact with native men.²

Once mass tourism was underway, more opportunities were created for Balinese and Westerners to meet, love and intermarry. The usual term for a marriage between a Balinese (or other Indonesian) and a Westerner is a *pasangan kopi susu* (white coffee couple) because of the contrast of their skin colours. Although mixed marriages were one of the noticeable results of the social and cultural changes of the 1970s, a small number of such marriages had already occurred in the colonial and national revolution periods. An early example is the 1935 marriage between a Belgian painter named Le Mayeur and a Balinese dancer, Ni Pollok, who had been his model for three years.³ Another is that of the dancer Ni Rondji and the Spanish painter Antonio Blanco.⁴ Because these two relationships were open and

² K'tut Tantri 1982:36-8. This book was first published in 1956 (with the old Indonesian spelling) and has been translated into many languages. In this study, I refer to the new Indonesian version, reprinted by Gramedia in 1982, which appears under the title *Revolusi di nusa damai*.

³ Ni Pollok's romantic life with her Belgian husband can be read in a biography *Ni Pollok, model dari desa Kelandis* (Ni Pollok, a model from Kelandis, 1976) written by Yati Maryati Wiharja.

⁴ The life of Blanco and Ni Rondji was shown in the television series *Api cinta Antonio Blanco* (The burning love of Antonio Blanco) in 1998-1999. This film won a number of awards at the Festival Sinetron Indonesia (Indonesian TV Film Competition) 1998, including the category for best music arranged by a Balinese musician. See Ruscitadewi 1999.

publicly acknowledged, they could be referred to as the 'legendary' mixed couples who paved the way for such marriages in Bali.⁵

By the late twentieth century, marriages between Balinese and foreigners had become quite common and more socially acceptable than ever before, but there was widespread recognition that not all these marriages would succeed, as differences in culture and identity, as well as divided loyalties, could be potential sources of friction. A marriage that grew out of a holiday romance was seen as particularly fragile, especially when it involved a young man from Bali (or elsewhere in Indonesia) moving to the bride's country of origin, only to discover that he had lost the social standing that he had taken for granted in his homeland. The popularly held belief is that marriages between foreign men and Balinese women generally succeed much better.

Given tourism's intense intrusion into Balinese social and cultural life, it is not surprising that themes and sub-themes relating to tourists and the results of their behaviour have become a powerful source of inspiration for modern Balinese writers. This applies equally to Balinese prose writers and poets. Social interactions originating from tourism form the basis of many short stories and novels by Balinese writers written during the peak period of tourism in the 1980s and early 1990s. Their work reflects the impact of Western culture on Bali's social and cultural life, and also reveals how the Balinese see foreigners and find another source of identity formation through the 'Other'.

Relationships between local people and foreigners have long been a staple of the Indonesian novel and short story, as is seen in the work of Abdul Muis, Nh Dini, and Titie Said, but the context in which their characters meet is usually not connected to tourism. However, in fiction by Balinese writers tourism provides the main background for the contact. Here, 'foreigners' refers specifically to Westerners – Australians, Europeans and Americans. Asian 'foreigners' are rarely portrayed in recent prose, but an earlier example can be found in

⁵ 'Kawin campuran di Bali', *Bali Post* 15-9-1978:4. This article reports on the issues raised by mixed marriages – both between Indonesians from differing ethnic groups and between ethnic Indonesians and foreigners – from a positive point of view.

Sukreni gadis Bali (1983 [1936]) by Panji Tisna, which has an Indian journalist Chatterjee as the 'Other', although his character is really introduced to facilitate a discussion about Hinduism and the caste system. Since it has little to do with tourism or the general ideas discussed in this chapter, this novel has been excluded. The major concern of this chapter will be short stories and novels published between the 1960s and 1990s, which discuss tourism-driven meetings between Balinese and foreigners.

Between friend and intruder

Fiction by Balinese writers depicting specific meetings between Balinese and Westerners presents a more complex picture than occurs in public discourse. The writers mentioned here use tourism as the main conduit for close encounters with Westerners. The main Western characters in these works are always tourists, not government envoys, crews of expeditions or traders. Some of the characters may be researchers (university students, intellectuals), but these still fall into the category adjudged 'tourist' by the Balinese characters. This is probably related to the fact that the initial contact with these Westerners generally occurs at locations such as art shops and beaches, or at public events such as cremations and wedding ceremonies.

The different locations, atmospheres and backgrounds of the meetings and the status assigned to characters are used to suggest different motives and intentions. While encounters occasioned by colonialism and commerce involve relations of profit, those originating from tourism contain additional motives ranging from pleasure and desire for friendship and love to specifically sexual motives, which are highlighted from the Balinese side. Although the works chosen for this study deal with many aspects of close contact between Balinese and Westerners, they vary in their focus and intensity and their handling of the interactions. Some stories focus primarily on personal relationships involving friendship or romance, while others use tourism simply as a backdrop for narratives driven by themes of corruption, modernization, cultural commercialization and religious practice.

The first short story from the 1960s that depicts Balinese-Westerner interaction is *Sahabatku Hans Schmitter* (My friend Hans Schmitter) by Rasta Sindhu, published in *Horison* in July 1969. At the time Rasta Sindhu was a young journalist who occasionally wrote feature-stories on the impact of tourism on Balinese people and their culture. This story must have been based on his experiences of meeting ordinary tourists in the course of his work. The Balinese character here is an unnamed first-person narrator and the Westerner is a German tourist named Hans Schmitter, bearded and long haired, a 27-year-old botany student at a German university. Although rough and very hippy-like in appearance, Hans is highly educated. His travel to Bali is part of a three-year holiday that is more an adventure for him than an act of leisure. The narrator and Hans first meet at Badung cemetery in Denpasar, where both are watching a cremation ceremony. During this encounter, the narrator invites Hans to his house for a conversation.

The relationship between the two characters flows smoothly, starting with their mutual interest in language learning: the narrator wants to learn English, while Hans wants to learn Indonesian. This form of 'barter' enables the relationship to develop warmly. The same motive is also used in other stories, such as Aryantha Soethama's novelette *Suzan* (1988) and Ngurah Parsua's short story *Tugu kenangan* (Memorial, 1986), which are discussed below. Hans becomes so familiar with the narrator that he is treated like a member of his family.

And I brought him home to chat. After that Hans often came to my house by himself. Sometimes he came just for the day, because he needed to do his washing at my house. For the whole day he lay down in the back room reading. Or sometimes we would chat on throughout the day while learning each other's language.⁶

⁶ Dan ia kuajak pulang ke rumah untuk sekadar cerita-cerita. Dan semenjak itu pula Hans sering pulang ke rumahku. Kadang-kadang ia pulang hanya untuk sehari saja, sebab hari itu dia mau mencuci di rumahku. Dan seharian itu pula ia tiduran di kamar belakang, membaca-baca. Atau, terkadang pula kami sering ngobrol-ngobrol di siang hari. Sambil belajar bahasa masing-masing. (Sindhu 1969.)

There is no reason apart from language exchange to explain why the two characters should become so comfortably close, but their conversations touch on all kinds of issues – Indonesia's wealth of natural beauty, poverty, the *budaya korupsi* (culture of corruption) and especially music. For Balinese at that time, Western music by, for instance, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan symbolized what was interesting, new and exciting about Western culture. The discussion about various social issues is the most important part of the story, as it gives the narrator the opportunity to criticize social and political conditions in Indonesia. Eventually, Hans blends into the Balinese scene, and the two are described as very close:

And the atmosphere of taking snacks together was so pleasant, that none of us ever gave much thought to the fact that we were being so friendly with Hans, a Westerner from Germany, whose attendance in the midst of traditional ceremonies was something that went without notice, we had become so friendly and close.⁷

When Hans leaves, the narrator gives him a piece of authentic Balinese fabric as a memento, in return for a camera that Hans had given him. The fabric can be read as a symbol of tradition, while the camera is a symbol of modernity, and this exchange of gifts gives this cross-cultural encounter meaning. Their parting is described as a small tragedy, marked by tears dropping from Hans's eyes.

This story was written in 1968. The year is significant, as it coincides with the rapid onset of mass tourism, whose major precursors were the opening of the famous ten-storied Bali Beach Hotel in 1966 and the opening of the Ngurah Rai International Airport in 1969 (Picard 1990:5). During the late 1960s, the total annual number of tourists to Bali rose from 10,000 to 23,000 (Vickers 1989:186; MacRae 1992:xii). Young Westerners, generally known as 'hippies' in Southeast Asia, also began to discover Bali at that time and many of them preferred to live with Balinese people and

⁷ Dan suasana makan-makan kecil itu begitu meriah, dan kami tidak menyangka bahwa persahabatan kami dengan Hans seorang kulit putih berkebangsaan Jerman yang terkadang kami lupakan kehadirannya di tengah-tengah upacara adat seperti itu, menjadi betul-betul rapat dan akrab. (Sindhu 1969:216.)

experience the culture directly.⁸ Besides the attractions of its culture and natural beauty, the low cost of holidaying in Bali at that time was a major factor that drew many hippies to the island (Vickers 1998:20). Some characteristics commonly associated with them were long hair, strange clothing, an unkempt appearance, and frequent use of drugs (McKean 1971:21-2). Apart from any association with drugs, Hans fits this stereotype well.

The hippy phenomenon sparked a controversy in Indonesia. In March 1971, the Indonesian government announced that visas would not be granted to these so-called hippies (McKean 1971:21). In addition, they put up posters displaying the appearance of a typical hippy and announcing that they were not allowed into government offices or any other government buildings, as was the case in other parts of Southeast Asia (Vickers 1998:2). One of the government's worries was apparently that ever since hippies had started arriving in Bali, many local young people had started to socialize with them – befriending them, acting as their tour guides or becoming their lovers. They therefore considered hippies a danger to national morals (Picard 1996:79, 226). Between the late 1960s and the 1980s the *Bali Post* contained various reports with negative images of hippies, using phrases such as 'nauseating gangs', 'penniless guests', 'drug addicts' and 'practitioners of free sex'.⁹

Balinese poets adopted the same negative images of hippies, with Raka Pelayun's *Kuta* (1979) connecting hippies to drugs, and Ngurah Parsua's *Kuta* (1975) and Ketut Landras Syaelendra's *Di pura Tanah Lot; Bersama Aix* (1994) portraying hippies as having alien attitudes and wandering about topless or naked. Made Sanggra's Balinese-

⁸ McKean 1971; MacRae 1992. The term 'hippies' is problematical. There have been few works that deal with the impact of the international backpacker phenomenon that reached a peak in the 1970s and 1980s. An entire generation of popular travel writing has grown up around this. One of the most prominent success stories in the genre has been the Lonely Planet publishing company. At the same time few critical works to date deal specifically with the growth of backpacker tourism, leaving it as an area which deserves further study. Some important works on the impact of travellers and tourists on the construction of local identities include Picard (1996) and Vickers (1998).

⁹ Images of 'hippies' as 'nauseating gangs' are discussed in 'Bali dan pembangunan', *Suluh Marhaen* 10-9-1969; 'penniless guests' are discussed in 'Kuta yang pernah dihebohkan tamu-tamu tak berduit' published in the *Bali Post* in 1972.

language poem *Denpasar sane mangkin* (Denpasar nowadays, 1978) contains similar subject matter, with images of hippies who roam the streets of Denpasar in inappropriate dress and engage in un-Balinese behaviour dominating the images disseminated by the government.

Rasta Sindhu dissents from this generally unremitting negative view of the hippy presence in Bali. His character Hans is to some degree a 'hippy' but he is depicted positively, lacking any association with drugs or sex. This positive image was reinforced by Rasta Sindhu's newspaper articles, such as 'Kuta yang pernah dihebohkan tamu-tamu tak berduit' (Kuta in unprecedented uproar over moneyless guests) and 'Mereka telah bersahabat' (They became friends), both published in the *Bali Post* in 1972.¹⁰ In these articles he argues that in spite of their appearance, many young travellers were well-educated people and could even be millionaires in their own countries.

Moreover, Rasta Sindhu praises hippies for their friendliness and as people who liked to socialize with ordinary Balinese. To stress his point, he criticizes high-class tourists who stay in luxurious hotels and behave arrogantly. Although his arguments – particularly those related to the economic and social background of hippies – are not really convincing, they were clearly intended to challenge the negative stereotypes of hippies propagated by the government and the public.

His articles also reinforce the positive view of the hippy phenomenon that he projects in his short story. The friendship between Hans and the narrator in *Sahabatku Hans Schmitter* represents mutual friendship between a hippy and a Balinese man in which neither sees the other as a threat. Although the narrator becomes close to Hans, he maintains his identity without in any way becoming 'Westernized'.

On the other hand, Putu Wijaya's novel *Tiba-tiba malam* (Night falls suddenly, 1977) provides a contrasting image of a Westerner by showing a Western man as a threat. This novel illustrates the

¹⁰ I found a file of Rasta Sindhu's manuscripts at Balai Penelitian Bahasa Denpasar (The Denpasar Language Centre) which had commissioned the re-typing of all his works. Unfortunately, the publication details are not always included in the re-typed copies of published articles.

changing dynamics of a village society in Tabanan (southwest Bali) that has to confront the intervention of 'new, Western, foreign, different or critical' values introduced by foreign tourists. Subali, who is holding a wedding for his son, meets David, a foreign tourist of unspecified origin, who has a clear agenda for changing Bali from a traditional to a modern society. David imbues Subali with new values, to the point where he neglects such traditional village values as *gotong-royong* (cooperation), and asks his Balinese friend to reform village society. Subali is the only character in the story with a positive attitude towards David, while his children and the other villagers are suspicious of David's behaviour. Here the Western character is shown as an intruder who imposes Western values upon Balinese traditions, resulting in a symbolic conflict between traditional and modern values.

This novel is of considerable interest in that the conflict is multi-layered but still focused on a villager who is so carried away by foreign influences that he is finally excluded from his village. Because of David's influence, Subali becomes lazy about performing his village duties, failing to go to the temple and to take part in village communal work. When the village is carrying out communal work, David takes Subali to Denpasar and persuades him to *ayahan* (pay a fine) instead of working. For the Westerner this is related to the fact that the village is poor and underdeveloped – someone has to open up the minds of the villagers and be a hero of progress by abandoning traditions and customs which are not profitable. David wants Subali to become the agent of this reform in his village.

Subali, an ambitious man who is frustrated because of his failure in business and has even considered transmigration, foolishly does exactly what David tells him to do. He often stays at home and never actively participates in village events. A crisis occurs when the village is carrying out another project. David again takes him to Denpasar. To show off, they deliberately pass the villagers who are doing the work.

Subali slowly approached the head of the village. When he spoke, his voice was very soft, but almost everybody could hear him. 'I am really sorry for not being able to take part in the community project. I've got

something to do in Denpasar, I'm ill and I have to get some medication there. Now I'd like to pay the fine.' He handed over the fistful of money that David had put in his pocket. The head of the village was stunned. Everybody was stunned.¹¹

This event shows traditional values and the social system of a particular village being undermined by external influences through the power of money. Subali has lied; he is not ill. While in Denpasar, he becomes a tourist at David's expense, going to Sanur and Kuta, eating at restaurants, getting drunk and seeking out prostitutes. Just when Subali has become fully engrossed in this new life, feeling free of traditional burdens, David disappears, returning to his home country. David's departure constitutes a significant plot shift. Subali is alone again and often reflects on what David has said.

He thought again about what David had said. There was a lot that he could agree with. The words of this foreigner were always in his mind – he was just like his guru. For a long time he had really wanted to do something in that village. Start reforms. Because it was too difficult to preserve the traditions, while daily needs were getting greater and greater.¹²

The village community, however, rejects the proposed reforms. Due to his antisocial behaviour, Subali is expelled from his community. He is not allowed to use the village facilities – the waterspout, streets and cemetery. His family members are also subjected to the extreme social sanction of *kasepèkang* – no one may talk to them, which means the village community considers that Subali's family does not exist. Anyone found speaking to them will be fined. The saddest outcome is that when Subali's wife dies, the village community refuses to bury

¹¹ Subali perlahan-lahan mendekati Kepala Desa. Waktu ia berbicara, suaranya lirih sekali, tapi hampir semuanya bisa mendengarkan. 'Maaf sekali ini saya tidak bisa ikut bekerja. Ada keperluan di Denpasar, saya sakit saya harus berobat ke sana. Ini saya membayar uang ganti diri saya bekerja.' Ia mengeluarkan segenggam uang yang tadi disisipkan oleh David. Kepala Desa terpaku. Semua orang terpaku. (Putu Wijaya 1977:81.)

¹² Ia memikirkan kembali kata-kata David. Banyak yang bisa ia setuju. Makin lama ia makin masuk ke dalam pikiran orang asing itu – seakan-akan mendapat seorang guru. Sebenarnya sudah lama ia ingin melakukan sesuatu di desa. Membuat perubahan-perubahan. Karena terlalu sulit untuk mempertahankan adat, sementara kebutuhan hidup makin berat. (Putu Wijaya 1977:107.)

her and will not allow the family to bury her in the village cemetery. This major tragedy is the fate of a family who abandon the social norms and customs of the society they live in. Social sanctions such as the ones faced by Subali and his family are still imposed in some villages in contemporary Bali, as has been reported in the *Bali Post*.¹³

One of the distinguishing features of Putu Wijaya's prose is the use of shock tactics to rethink or deconstruct certain accepted social assumptions. Through the characters of Subali and David, he calls into question the tradition-based harmony of the village community by confronting it with new Western values. Despite the fact that Putu Wijaya can freely criticize aspects of this communalism through David and Subali, in the end he crushes the new values that he has introduced through the characters by illustrating how deeply traditional values are entrenched in Balinese society and how strongly they are adhered to (Mohamad 1994). From this viewpoint, Putu Wijaya's *Tiba-tiba malam* can be read as a critique of progress which has originated in the West and is not based on indigenous values – another important ongoing issue in Balinese discourse.

Depicting different kinds of relationships, both *Sahabatku Hans Schmitter* and *Tiba-tiba malam* share the view that in interactions with Westerners, Balinese should never try to become Westerners nor should they in any way become Westernized. They can be open-minded towards Western influence but at the same time, and more importantly, they must maintain their Balinese identity.

Stereotyping and changing perceptions

Balinese writers always stereotype tourists – they are generally represented as having a lot of money, even if they are not really

¹³ In 2002, in a village in Bangli, a family was not allowed to bury the body of a family member because they had been excluded from society after failing to meet community obligations. The family kept the corpse at home for about a month before the community finally granted them permission to use the public cemetery upon the payment of compensation. See 'Pengabenan Nengah Prapti terkatung-katung', *Bali Post* 12-4-2002 and 'Akhirnya, jenazah prapti dikubur di Banjar Lebah', *Bali Post* 27-4-2002.

wealthy or affluent people. These images are reflected in much Balinese literary writing that employs a combination of Balinese and Western characters as its subject. In *Tiba-tiba malam*, David represents the affluent tourist. Regardless of his undisclosed agenda for reforming Balinese tradition, he is sufficiently financial to be able to have his holiday in Bali while also creating a new lifestyle for Subali by paying his community fines and all his expenses while he is behaving like a tourist in Denpasar. During Hans Schmitter's holiday in *Sahabatku Hans Schmitter*, Balinese or other Indonesians that he meets often ask where he got the money to pay for his holiday, a question that reinforces the stereotype of tourists as wealthy. This exposes a cultural gulf in that the questioners cannot conceive ordinary people having enough to live on without obviously working.

The character Anderson in Aryantha Soethama's story *Lukisan Rinjin* (Rinjin's painting, 1996) is another example of the rich Western tourist stereotype.¹⁴ *Lukisan Rinjin* is a story that uses the development of the tourist industry as its background. It details the relationship between a gallery owner (Ketut Geria) and a Balinese painter (Wayan Rinjin). Like many of his fellow painters, Rinjin is dependent on gallery or art-shop owners like Ketut Geria who have the capital to control the price and marketing of paintings. Geria buys Rinjin's painting for US\$50 and resells it for US\$800 to Anderson, an American computer businessman. Wayan Rinjin only receives Rp 125,000 from Geria, equivalent to US\$50 using the exchange rate applicable at the time the story was written (1996). In this story, the Western character is depicted as affluent and also a person with a good appreciation of art and of Balinese artists. When Anderson makes the purchase he asks about the artist, but Geria meanly feigns ignorance despite the artist's presence.

'What's his name [English in the original]?'

Geria thought for a moment. He almost didn't have the wit to lie, because he felt Rinjin's eyes boring into his back. 'But I'm the rightful owner of

¹⁴ The short story *Lukisan Rinjin* is included in both the Indonesian and English versions of Vern Cork's collection *Bali; So many faces* (1996a:95-102) and *Bali behind the seen* (1996b:109-20). This short story was also included in Aryantha Soethama's own short story collection entitled *Mandi api* (Bathed by fire) published in 2006.

this work', he said to himself, 'I have control of it now.'
 'Sorry, I forget his name. But if you would like to order another one, you can do it through me.'¹⁵

Wayan Rinjin, a struggling artist, is left sad and badly hurt. The true alienation of artists from their art is represented here, and the artist is shown as a figure oppressed by the cruel commercial structure of the tourist industry. Tourists who are willing to pay a high price for Balinese art are also found in short stories written in the Balinese language, such as *Tukang gambar* (Painter, 1974) by Made Sanggra, and *Togog* (Sculpture, 1978) by Nyoman Manda. These images of tourists are contrasted with commercially-oriented Balinese art-shop owners and tourist guides who have a purely exploitative attitude towards art and artists. *Lukisan Rinjin* is a critique of the commercial pressure to which Balinese culture is subjected. But the Balinese art shop owners and guides are the greedy agents of capitalism here, and the Balinese artists are the ones oppressed during this process. The Westerners involved are relatively innocent. They are also being financially manipulated, and dispense money freely, but at least they show an appreciation for the artists which the over-commercialized Balinese do not. In these stories it is automatically assumed that the tourists are wealthy.

Contrasting with the generally positive, rich and affluent image of tourists, there are a small number of stories with negative, criminal tourists such as a bank robber and a member of drug syndicate. These include *Saya bukan pembunuhnya* (I am not his killer, 1972) by Rasta Sindhu and *Don't forget John!* (1996) by Ngurah Parsua.¹⁶

Saya bukan pembunuhnya is a story about an unnamed American tourist posing as a zoologist who is in Bali to do fieldwork on local

¹⁵ 'What's his name?' Geria termenung sesaat. Ia hampir kehilangan akal untuk berbohong, karena dirasanya mata Rinjin menusuk bokongnya. 'Tapi ini kan milik saya yang sah', kata harinya lagi. 'Saya yang berkuasa akan lukisan ini.' 'Maaf saya lupa namanya. Tapi kalau Mister Anderson hendak memesan lagi, cukup lewat saya saja'. (Cork 1996a, 1996b; Soethama 2006.)

¹⁶ This is the original title. This story was originally entered in a short story writing contest held by the newspaper *Nusa Tenggara* in 1995. Failing to win a prize, it was later published in *Bali Post* in 1996. In this analysis, the unpublished text is used.

animals.¹⁷ He is travelling around the island with a large sum of money and accompanied by a tour guide. The images of this American tourist as a scientist and a wealthy person presented throughout the story are all revealed to be false, because he is in fact a criminal, a bank robber. This duplicity is not exposed until the end of the story when he is shot dead by international police who have pursued him to Bali.

Similarly, John in *Don't forget John!* is initially portrayed as a rich person, as evidenced by the exclusive bungalow he rents in an expensive area of Kuta beach. However, at the end of the story, John commits suicide by throwing himself into the Indian Ocean and drowning. The Balinese character, who witnesses this act, knows nothing of John's motive for committing suicide, until he is told by police that John was a member of an international narcotics syndicate who has also been tracked down by international police. The interpretation of these two stories can be either that Bali is a safe hideout for international criminals or that Balinese people should be encouraged to be more vigilant when socializing with tourists whose identity is unclear.

Harmonious relationships between Balinese and Westerners are a characteristic of all the stories discussed above. The absence of cross-cultural conflict between characters in those stories means that they fail to convey the true complexity of relationships between people from very different cultural backgrounds. Only two works, both written by Putu Wijaya, the novel *Tiba-tiba malam* and the short story *Dasar* (Typical, 1993), emphasize conflict between the Balinese and Western characters.

Putu Wijaya's story, *Dasar*, details the relationship between an American man, John, who lives in Jakarta, and a Balinese, Wayan, who lives in Bali. They are old friends. When John is holidaying in Bali, Wayan accompanies him around the tourist spots. John even stays in Wayan's house and is considered part of Wayan's family – a close friendship that resembles that between the narrator and the German tourist in *Sahabatku Hans Schmitter*.

¹⁷ This story was published in *Kompas* 12-8-1972.

Knowing that John will be returning to America, Wayan invites him to come to Bali for a farewell visit because Wayan cannot afford to come to Jakarta. John does not have enough time to come to Bali so instead he invites Wayan to come to Jakarta and buys him an airline ticket. When Wayan comes to Jakarta he brings his nephew as well, without informing John—an act that is socially unacceptable according to Western standards. John is disappointed, and then shocked when Wayan asks him to pay for the nephew's ticket. To avoid conflict, John pays for the ticket and accepts the uninvited guest. He tries to be a good host, but Wayan is so occupied with his nephew while he is in Jakarta that he completely forgets that the purpose of his visit is to farewell John. John is patient and would like to be rid of Wayan, but Wayan insists on remaining in John's house for a few more days as his nephew, who is also his prospective son-in-law, still wants to visit several other tourist attractions in Jakarta.

Conflict between the two arises not only because of different expectations, but also because Wayan begins to exploit John. While in *Tiba-tiba malam* the source of the conflict is the incompatibility between traditional and Western values, in *Dasar* it is mutual misunderstanding. At the end of the story, John forces Wayan to leave his house by giving him one overnight bus ticket. On his way home, Wayan curses John: “*You ugly devil* [Balinese in the original], John. You're a typical white and you always will be. You want to be the boss and walk all over everybody and get your own way”, Wayan cursed as he sat in the bus.¹⁸

The expression of ‘*leak barak*’ (ugly red devil) in Balinese is used to express disappointment or anger. Meanwhile, at his house, John is also complaining: ‘*My God* [English in the original], how could anyone behave like that! He's a typical native! A typical ex-colonial! He's still got the mentality of a slave!’¹⁹

This story represents a change in perceptions and stereotypes, particularly in regard to the Balinese character. The image of the

¹⁸ ‘*Leak barak*, si John! Dasar bule, tetap saja bule! Mau jadi tuan! Mau menjajah! Mau enaknya sendiri’, umpat Wayan dalam bus. (Translation is taken from Lingard 1995:98.)

¹⁹ *Oh my God!* Kok ada orang begitu? Dasar pribumi! Dasar bekas jajahan! Tetap saja berjiwa budak! (Translation is taken from Lingard 1995:98.)

Balinese as always friendly and helpful, as advertised in the world of tourism, is here negated by this picture of stubborn deceitfulness. But criticism is also directed at the Westerner who, although having lived in the country for some time, still fails to understand Indonesian or Balinese culture. As in *Tiba-tiba malam*, in this story Putu Wijaya emphasizes the formula 'East is East, West is West': good relations are simply not possible.

In the article 'Dari etsa sampai zat' (From etching to essence), published in *Horison*,²⁰ Putu Wijaya writes that 'Balinese people are basically very receptive to outside influences' (quoted in Allen 1999b:123-4). While in the fields of art and technology his opinion may hold true, the two works discussed here put forward opposing views. Subali in *Tiba-tiba malam* represents those Balinese who accept Western influence too easily. In Subali's case this causes his community to exclude him. By contrast, the protagonist Wayan in *Dasar* represents the kind of Balinese person who finds it too difficult to adapt to Western social behaviour. This, in turn, epitomizes the Balinese who show an unwillingness to enter the globalized world. By refusing to change, they remain ethnocentrically Balinese.

Romantic relations and the possibility of intimacy

Language exchange and mutual assistance also constitute the initial reasons for tourism bringing Balinese men and Western women together. However these relationships generally progress beyond linguistic barter and develop into romantic situations, yet despite the resulting sexual contact, marriage is always avoided. Separation and death are often used as narrative devices to prevent assimilation. There is one story, *Apakah Anda Mr Wayan?* (Are you Mr Wayan?, 1998) by Wayan Suardika, in which children result from a sexual encounter, but here again no formal marriage has taken place. In this story, both the complexity of interactions between Balinese men and Western women and the problems involved in determining the identities of children born out of wedlock are explored.

²⁰ The original article was published in *Horison* 18/19 (1984):289-306.

The first story that depicts a romantic relationship between a Balinese man and a Western woman is *Sanur tetap ramai* (Sanur is still crowded, 1970), written by Faisal Baraas. This story was originally published in the popular Jakarta-based magazine *Varia* (1970) and later included in the author's short story collection *Léak* (Baraas 1983:47-53). It describes a relationship between a Balinese man, I Wayan Sumerta, the narrator, and a Western woman, Joice. Sumerta is a university student who is spending his holiday as a freelance tourist guide to practise his English. Joice is a university student from the United States who has come to Bali with Karla, her lesbian lover, to conduct research. She is interested in Balinese culture, history, and tourist attractions that warrant visiting but the story does not explicitly mention the area or the topic of her research, suggesting that the meeting between the two is more important.

The story begins with a flashback to the original meeting and romance between Sumerta and Joice two years earlier as Sumerta reflects on meeting Joice again. Their first encounter takes place in Sanur, and in the opening scene, Sumerta demonstrates his sophistication by driving a car to the Hotel Bali Beach and being mistaken for a Jakartan by the hawkers at Sanur beach who invite him to buy souvenirs. He regards the hotel as *megah* (luxurious), a common impression among Balinese since the hotel is both modern and also the tallest building in Bali. Sumerta offers to assist Joice in conducting her research as a way of improving his English proficiency. The contact between Sumerta and Joice develops quickly and smoothly, with no cultural or linguistic hindrances. But here, the whole relationship is romantic. Joice declares her wish to become a Balinese, which Sumerta is pleased to hear, because he loves her.

The writer explores the details of the sexual relationship between Sumerta and Joice. Sumerta sees Joice as another 'Western woman who is free, open and pleasing' so he cannot understand why his sexual overtures are rejected. Once he realizes that Joice has lesbian tendencies, Sumerta changes the way he approaches her. Rather than being masculine, he projects the softness of a woman. Eventually, Sumerta and Joice consummate their relationship and she rejects lesbianism.

You're not just my *guide* [English in the original], you are my doctor. You made me understand the reality of life. You have cured me of my illness. I was a victim of modern American life. Lesbianism is just like an epidemic there. Lots of women, like me, are attracted to it. And that night, you surprised me, then I realised, that this is the truth, this is what is simply natural.²¹

The relationship between the two becomes very close and they agree to marry in two years time, because Joice has to go back to America to finish her studies, while Sumerta plans to return to university to do the same. They agree to meet at Sanur beach, at the place of their first encounter.

Two years later, they make their separate ways to Sanur beach with serious doubts, as they have both married since their last meeting. As Sumerta sits on the beach he is thinking, 'She would be a complete fool to come here as we promised. Love has to give way to reality: it's too difficult for East and West to meet.'²² Joice and her sister can see him from the seventh floor of the Hotel Bali Beach as he leaves. 'He would be a fool to wait for me as we agreed',²³ thinks Joice to herself, having been told by her sister that Sumerta was waiting for her. He is in fact going back to his wife and child, while Joice has a husband in America.

This relationship between a Balinese and a Westerner, which starts as a harmonious friendship, develops into a romance. Although they are supposedly deeply in love and prepared to marry, they go their separate ways. Perhaps, in spite of everything, it is just a holiday romance and this 'love' is superficial. Here we see Western culture presented as corrupt and decadent through the writer's naive view of lesbianism. The ending has a cynical feeling and the two women

²¹ Bukan *guide* saja. Kau dokter saya. Kau membuat saya mengerti tentang realitas hidup ini. Kau telah berhasil mengobati penyakit saya. Saya adalah salah satu korban dari kemelut kehidupan modern di Amerika. Lesbianisme bagaikan wabah di sana. Banyak gadis-gadis menyenangkannya, termasuk aku. Dan malam itu, kau telah membuat kejutan yang tiba-tiba padaku, sehingga aku menyadari, itulah yang benar, itulah yang wajar. (Baraas 1983:51.)

²² Alangkah bodohnya bila Joice benar-benar datang ke sini untuk janji dulu. Cinta memang harus tunduk pada realitas: antara timur dan barat menang sulit bertemu.

²³ Alangkah bodohnya ia, bila menantiku tadi, karena janji yang dulu.

looking down from the height of their luxury hotel symbolize a vast material and cultural gap which cannot ultimately be bridged – the hope of bridging it, and Sumerta's own hopes of gaining material benefit, come to nothing.

In early 1970s the main tourist centres, particularly Sanur and Kuta, became well known for offering sexual opportunities to young Balinese men (Sabdon and Danujaya 1989:163-7). In that period, 'free sex' was associated with Westerners, and Western women were regarded as much 'easier' than their Balinese counterparts. This concept was reinforced by the film *Bali connection*, made in 1978,²⁴ which portrays a 'free sex zone' populated by Kuta gigolos who seek out Western girls. Balinese village men who come to Kuta to find jobs but instead find that they become gigolos or sex workers are also depicted in *Aksara tanpa kata* (Characters without words), a *sinetron* made and televised in the early 1990s. The image of Kuta as a place to seek out Western tourists for sex remains very strong even now, and this behaviour has also emerged in other coastal areas of Bali, such as Lovina in the north.²⁵ In *Sanur tetap ramai*, Faisal Baraas seems to be offering a cautionary tale about the limits of such new found sexual freedoms.

Romances between Balinese men and Western women are dealt with in a number of other works such as *Tugu kenangan* (1986) by Ngurah Parsua and a novelette by Aryantha Soethama, *Suzan*, originally serialized in the popular women's magazine *Sarinah* in 1988. This novelette was republished as a book in 2002 with the new title *Wanita Amerika dibunuh di Ubud* (An American woman killed in Ubud), which seems to reflect the content of the story more closely.

²⁴ "'Bali connection" mulai digarap di Bali', *Bali Post* 18-3-1978:3.

²⁵ Jennaway 1998. For an in-depth coverage of the gigolo phenomenon in Kuta in an Indonesian publication, see the magazine *Tiara* 41 (8-12-1991):52-60. In this issue, the magazines published five articles on gigolos such as 'Kuta, Wisman and Gigolo Bali', 'Pengkuan Gigolo Bali', and 'Bibit-bibit Gigolo Bali'. For a comment that rejects the negative image of 'Bali Gigolo', see Agung Gede Dhyana Putra 'Gigolo di Bali hanya faset remontik' in *Nusa Tenggara* 2-3-1996:6. In this article, Putra argues that money or payment forms only one element in the relationship between local men and Western tourists, since most of them turn their relationships into marriage. But this is the social environment in the 1990s, an environment different from that which existed in 1970s when marriages were far less common.

The romances in *Suzan* and in *Tugu kenangan*, like that between Sumerta and Joice, end in separation.

Tugu kenangan describes a love affair between Sudarma, a medical school dropout, and Elizabeth Yane, an Australian student holidaying in Bali. They meet at Kuta beach. Motivated by sexual desire and love, Sudarma makes the initial approach, impressed by Elizabeth's beauty.

She's a young girl whose beauty really hits you right between the eyes. 'I'm sorry, but I can speak only a little English' [English in the original] I replied awkwardly. She laughed, while I stared at her with my heart pounding. This white-skinned girl looked even more beautiful with her smile and lively laughter.²⁶

Sudarma's passion and spirit might not have been so ardent if Elizabeth had not been so beautiful. Nevertheless, they quickly fall in love, develop a trusting and passionate relationship and decide to marry. However, Elizabeth is killed in a plane crash, so this marriage never takes place. The plane crash mentioned in the story and the memorial built to remember its victims recall the crash of a Pan-American airliner in North Bali in 1972 which killed all 107 passengers on board. They are commemorated by a memorial built at Padanggalak beach, north of Sanur.²⁷ At the end of the story, Sudarma is shown visiting the monument, indicating that he still loves Elizabeth although she is dead. The writer of this story is unwilling to allow a Balinese and a Westerner to marry, even though they love each other – and is willing to go to dramatic extremes to prevent it.

In the novelette *Suzan*, a Balinese journalist, Bram, and an American posing as a detective holidaying in Bali, Suzan Hayes,

²⁶ Nampaknya ia seorang gadis muda yang berparas cukup menggiurkan hatiku. 'I am sorry, but I can speak only a little English,' kataku dengan ucapan bahasa Inggris yang kaku. Ia tertawa. Ketika gadis itu tertawa aku menatap dengan perasaan gairah yang menggebu. Gadis kulit putih itu bertambah cantik dengan senyum dan tawanya riang. (Parsua 1986c.)

²⁷ Even though the crash happened in North Bali, the memorial for the victims was built in the south of Bali at Padanggalak, the place where some of the bodies recovered from the accident came to be buried. I cannot ascertain why Padanggalak was chosen as the site for the memorial since at that time (1974) it was a still a quiet, largely empty town 'outside' of Denpasar.

form a complex relationship. They too fail to realize their dream of living together. Bram meets Suzan for the first time when, as a tourist, she comes to watch a cremation. In exactly the same way as Sudarma in *Tugu kenangan*, Bram is motivated to make an approach to Suzan both for sexual and romantic reasons and to learn English from her. Indeed, one of Bram's friends sees assistance with language acquisition as the primary role of Western women. Most of the first part of the narrative describes Suzan's beauty and the appeal that she radiates, and how much Bram is attracted to her. Suzan is attracted to Bram because he seems like a suitable companion. As a 'detective' it suits her to be with a journalist, a fellow investigator. After their initial meeting, they continue their relationship in Ubud, where they finally make love: 'Her hand goes under my shirt, caressing my chest. Her fingers start to play, slowly scratching softly. "Bram", she whispers in my ear, "Are you sleeping?" I pretend to stretch for a second and then stay quiet again. Suzan kisses my neck.'²⁸

At the peak of their intimacy, Bram has to accept the crushing reality that Suzan is actually a member of an American weapons smuggling syndicate. An American business rival assassinates her and once again, the reader witnesses a writer's apprehension about allowing Balinese and Westerner characters to come together permanently. They are shown as being capable of love but there is always an impediment to marriage – personal decisions, accidents or murder. Ultimately the relationships are deemed inappropriate and fate has to intervene. From another point of view, the deaths of the criminal American characters like John, the bank robber and Suzan are linked to the theme of *karma*, already mentioned in relation to the two early novels of Panji Tisna (see Chapter VI).

The death of Suzan does not end the story, as it followed by the revelation of her identity by a local police officer, a close friend of Bram, who is in charge of the investigation into her death. It transpires that Suzan studied anthropology and went on an expedition to Irian

²⁸ Tangannya menelusup masuk ke bawah bajuku, mengusap-usap dadaku. Jarinya bermain-main, menggaruk-garuk tak pasti. Pelan-pelan. 'Bram', bisiknya dekat telingaku. 'Kau tidur?' Aku berpura-pura menggeliat sesaat. Lalu diam lagi. Suzan mencium tengkukku. (Soethama 1988.)

Jaya when only eighteen years old. This experience made it possible for her to get a job in an American intelligence agency at the age of twenty. She then worked as a spy, travelled abroad and supplied information to the intelligence agency. After this, she became involved in a syndicate supplying weapons to various countries undergoing internal conflicts such as Cambodia, Libya, Nicaragua and the Philippines. During her journey to Bali, she was followed by someone from a rival syndicate. By providing such detailed personal information, the narrator seems to suggest that the identity of foreign tourists, particularly women, cannot simply be judged from their beauty and sex appeal, or from their willingness to become practice partners in English conversations.

The narrator also uses the death of Suzan to introduce two relevant yet crucial contemporary issues related to Balinese custom and religious practices. The first is whether people who are not Balinese Hindus can be given a Balinese cremation. Suzan has left a will with some money (US\$500) for Bram and wants her body to be cremated as though she were Balinese. She has already mentioned this in a sentimental way at the time of their first meeting at the cremation ceremony. Here the significance of the cremation ceremony watched by Suzan at the beginning of the story is revealed and it becomes an important plot element.

To mediate the discussion, the writer introduces a new character, a modernist Hindu priest who believes that the more people wish to be cremated as Hindu adherents, the more they will feel that Hinduism is a religion providing a peaceful way to heaven. Most of Balinese society believes that only Hindu adherents can be cremated in the Balinese way, but the writer uses the supposedly authoritative character of the priest to challenge this orthodoxy. However, there is evidence of a cremation ritual for a prominent foreigner being accepted. Rudolf Bonnet, the Dutch painter mentioned earlier, who set up Pita Maha with Walter Spies and a group of Balinese artists in the 1930s and founded the Puri Lukisan Museum, was cremated alongside Tjokorda Gde Agung Sukawati from Puri Ubud in 1979. Balinese Hindus saw this cremation for Bonnet as a way to pay tribute to his lifelong dedication to Balinese arts and culture (Vickers 1989:113). Perhaps drawing inspiration from Bonnet's cremation, in

the story Aryantha Soethama goes further by suggesting that anyone who wants to be cremated in the Balinese way should be welcomed.

The other issue relates to the cost of cremations and the amount of labour involved. Cremation is the most costly and labour intensive ritual in Balinese tradition and often leaves families in debt. The process can last for several weeks or months and is felt by most Balinese to be a burden imposed by tradition. A movement whose aim was to simplify Balinese rituals while still complying with Hindu teachings had begun in the colonial period, pioneered by intellectuals who published articles in *Surya Kanta*. After independence, this movement continued with the promotion of two strategies: the promotion of standardized holy references and religious procedures for cremations and encouraging the public to perform collective cremations (Connor 1996). The movement would enable the cost for cremation to be minimized and shared between those involved, but while it has received widespread acceptance this has not stopped the traditional performance of massive and elaborate cremations among the affluent classes who see the ritual as a way of asserting and maintaining their prestige (C. Geertz 1980:177).

In the story, the author has Bram perform a simple cremation ritual for Suzan officiated over by a priest with her parents and her former husband in attendance. It is possible for Bram to perform this small scale cremation for Suzan because she was not a member of a local community who would normally all attend a Balinese cremation. But, if the story is read as part of the ongoing debate about Balinese ritual practices, Aryantha Soethama's *Suzan* is a critique of laborious and costly Balinese rituals and also suggests the need for Balinese society to reinterpret the relationship between the Hindu religion and Balinese custom and tradition in the context of the inevitable arrival of globalization.

The focus of these three stories, *Sanur tetap ramai*, *Tugu kenangan*, and *Suzan*, is the impossibility of intimacy between Balinese and Westerners developing into a permanent relationship. The encounters all begin with indications that friendship is already there, and that such friendships can rapidly develop into romance. But in the end the characters have to accept the bitter reality of separation. Although marriage between Balinese and foreigners, both Westerners and

Asians, is common, Balinese writers seem unwilling to allow their Balinese characters to marry Western characters. This suggests that Balinese writers are less interested in analysing assimilation between Balinese and Western cultures than in exploring other social and cultural issues.

Are you Mr Wayan?

In the late 1990s, there was a change in the representation of foreigners in narratives about Balinese and Westerners. This change is important and inseparable from improvements in global communication and the advent of commercial television. Wayan Suardika's story *Apakah Anda Mr Wayan?* (1998), the short story that features children resulting from intimate relationships between a Balinese man and foreign female tourists. Its theme makes it distinct from the others discussed above, particularly in its depiction of exchanges between Balinese and Westerners. Although there are children resulting from these relationships, marriage between the Balinese man and a foreign woman is still avoided. The male protagonist of the story is Wayan, a 45 year-old Balinese writer who works as a cultural guide for foreign students doing fieldwork in Bali. He is clearly a womanizer. However, it is not his sexual activities which are the focus of the story, but the meetings between Wayan and the children resulting from these encounters.

Apakah Anda Mr Wayan? begins with the question 'Are you Mr Wayan?' put to Wayan in his house in Denpasar by a teenage American girl from Chicago, Anna Winslet. This is a somewhat ironic question, since Wayan is an extremely common name in Bali. Anna introduces herself to Wayan as his daughter and recounts all the details of the personal relationship he had with her mother, from their first meeting in a gallery in Ubud up to their one intimate encounter in his room 18 years ago. Wayan is completely surprised by this strange girl but it is hard for him to deny her account.

'Is it all true?' she asked, seeking confirmation of the story about me and her mother.

'Whatever', I [Wayan] replied, still doubting.
 'Why?'
 'So many foreign women have been my friend...'
 'Not just your friend, but your lover?'
 'Yeah something like that.'
 'Wow! I didn't know my father was so interesting!' she exclaimed, and then smiled, whether sincerely or in mock, or I don't know. Then she embraced me again.
 'Whoever you are, you are still my father. At least I have a father. All my life in Chicago, how I have missed you!'²⁹

Finally Wayan accepts Anna as his daughter. As Anna shows her intention to be a Balinese, Wayan takes her to his home village where a series of traditional Balinese ceremonies are initiated for her as if she is a newborn baby. She is quickly accepted as a member of the family, but her grandparents continue to refer to her as 'tourist', an identity that has been universally applied to white people by the Balinese since the rapid upsurge of tourism in the 1970s.

As soon as they return to Denpasar, Anna invites her father to stay in a hotel at her expense – another affluent image of a Westerner – but Wayan wants her to stay in his house with him, to demonstrate his responsibility to his daughter. While both of them are at home, a Japanese teenager comes to see him and asks him the same question that Anna posed: 'Are you Mr. Wayan?' The story does not explain the identity of this Japanese girl or her relationship with Wayan. But, the implication of her arrival and the nature of her question is that she is probably also Wayan's daughter from one of his other lovers.

In addition to dealing with the romantic aspect of the relationship, the story explores issues surrounding the identity of its characters, particularly the Western protagonist. Anna's identity is shown as rather problematic, especially from the Balinese point of view. For while Anna is accepted as a Balinese woman; she is still considered a 'tourist' largely because of her physical appearance, which obviously cannot be changed. This ambivalent view is shown through the

²⁹ This quote is taken from the English version of the story, translated from Indonesian by Emma Baulch and published in *Bali Echo* 38 (December/January 1998/99):74-7. I am unable to locate the Indonesian version of the story. While it is clear that the translation lacks fluency, it is still useful in gaining an understanding of the theme of the original story.

character of the grandmother who conveys the strongly conventional view of the Balinese towards Western people. Anna, however, is shown to be firmly committed to changing her identity from American to Balinese, as reflected in the following dialogue between Anna and her father:

'In essence', I replied straight away, 'do you want to be Balinese or American?'

'I want to be the first one', she answered firmly.

'That's what your grandparents want.'³⁰

As a Balinese woman, she is expected to be able 'to dance and make offerings'. Here it is shown how closely Balinese identity is associated with art and culture. In fulfilling these requirements, particularly dancing, Anna has an idea that allows her a promising compromise. In America – as it happens – she had learned ballet and now she wants to do 'something experimental by combining Balinese dance with ballet'. How Anna realizes her intention of becoming a Balinese is not explored further, but the story clearly shows the willingness of a Westerner to become Balinese, rather than the reverse. Thus, Wayan Suardika not only shares the view of the other Balinese writers discussed here who are unwilling to marry their Balinese and Western characters but also affirms the superiority of a Balinese identity over a Western identity.

Romance and magic

Another pattern of romantic relationship between a Balinese man and a Western tourist appears in the novel *Liak ngakak* (The laughing liak, 1978) written by Putra Mada. Unlike the stories already discussed, the romance in *Liak ngakak* between a Balinese man and a Western woman takes place in an unusual context: namely, in the

³⁰ This quote is taken from the English version of the story, translated from Indonesian by Emma Baulch and published in *Bali Echo* 38 (December/January 1998/99):74-7.

tension between black and white magic. *Léak*³¹ is a transformation performed by people who practise black magic. The *léak* can take the form of a demon, a fireball, a monkey or a pig. It may also appear as a bodiless face or in other terrifying forms. Stories about *léak* can be found in a large number of both modern and traditional Balinese texts, but *Liak ngakak* appears to be one of the most interesting of these because it has a Westerner as its central character. As this figure in the story is seeking and practising black magic, it reinforces an image of Westerners as fire-breathing demons or white monkeys.

A belief in magic (black and white) is central to Balinese belief systems (Covarrubias 1937; H. Geertz 1994) and both *kesaktian* (sorcery) and *léak* play a part. Although this belief dates back many hundreds of years and infiltrates most aspects of Balinese life, it still retains significant mystery. Issues surrounding magic are full of contradictions. Ordinary people often avoid talking about *léak* because they believe it could be very dangerous, but they always enthusiastically watch whenever traditional performing artists perform a story on black and white magic, partly out of curiosity.

The novel *Liak ngakak* tells of an Australian woman, Catherine (Cathie) Dean, who comes to Bali to investigate *léak* after studying the Indonesian language for two years in Yogyakarta. Her ambition is to publish a book that will disclose all the secrets of Balinese black magic to the world at large. At a party in Denpasar, she meets Pusaka Mahendra, a Balinese man who lives in East Java and works as a sailor – as did the author. He then helps her to find a *léak* guru. Both Cathie and Pusaka are identified as adventurers, so they share interests and personalities. From the beginning, very little hinders their relationship. Cathie needs Pusaka to help her to find a *léak* guru, while Pusaka is attracted to Cathie's charm and beauty. Love and romance between a Balinese man and a Western woman adds an additional level of interest to a story about *léak*.

Within two days, under the guidance of the *léak* guru – an old woman from Sanur – and with some help from Pusaka, Cathie is already able to transform herself into a *léak* taking the shape of a pig, a bird, a monkey and a fireball. Here is Cathie's description of her

³¹ *Léak* is sometimes also spelt *liyak* or *liak*.

feelings after transforming herself into a fireball, one of the most popular forms of *léak*.

I feel that I am sitting on top of the fireball, but I don't feel any heat. Strangely, I can control the movement of the fireball as I like. I can drive it backwards, forwards, up and down, flying, gliding, diving, in short it all depends on what I want to do.³²

The relationship between Cathie and Pusaka develops into a romance. During the day, they go around Bali behaving like tourists. Pusaka and Cathie agree to avoid sightseeing in Sanur, Kuta and Nusa Dua because hippies populate those beaches. This reflects the reality of the tourist world in Bali in the 1970s, when the novel was written, and also makes a passing negative comment on the hippie phenomenon.

To help develop the cohesiveness of the plot, Pusaka and Cathie are shown on one occasion during their touring watching a *Barong* dance, a performance for tourists that depicts the unending war between black and white magic. During the night, while Cathie goes out to practise black magic with the guru, Pusaka sneaks a look at the *léak* lesson to assuage his curiosity, a dangerous thing to do as the *léak* guru may attack him. To protect himself, Pusaka consults his grandfather who is an expert in both black and white magic but who has chosen only to practise the latter. After this discussion, Pusaka becomes fully convinced of the existence of *léak*, and his knowledge of the secrets and dangers of black and white magic has increased. His grandfather gives him a *keris* (mystical dagger) for self-protection.

The contrasting powers of the two characters – black and white magic – then overshadow the romantic relationship between them. This unusual state of affairs forces Pusaka to ask himself whether he should maintain his love for Cathie. When his official leave finishes, Pusaka returns to Surabaya, and leaves Cathie in Bali. As in the other stories cited, the romantic relationship between a Balinese man and a Western girl in this story is temporary. At the end of the story, Cathie

³² Rasanya aku duduk di atas sebuah bola api yang berpijar namun aku sama sekali tidak merasa kepanasan. Yang lebih ajaib lagi bola api itu dapat kukendalikan sesuka hatiku. Bisa kuatur maju mundur, naik turun, terbang, meluncur, menukik, pokoknya bergantung sepenuhnya kepada kemauanku. (Mada 1978:133.)

dies as a *léak*. Pusaka accidentally kills her and her guru, when he has actually come to save her life when both are struggling and unable to resume their human forms, because their bamboo shrines have been swept into the sea following heavy rain. These shrines are an essential element in the process of transformation from human being to *léak* and back again.³³

This novel was made into a film in 1981 by a Jakarta-based film producer under the title *Mistik, punahnya rahasia ilmu iblis léak* (Mystique, the extinction of the secret of black magic) and was widely watched in Bali. The film differs from the novel in some scenes. In the novel, Cathie and the guru are killed by Pusaka, while in the film they die in a fight against a witch-doctor, Pusaka's grandfather, who is supported by Pusaka and a crowd. The presence of the crowd and their help in attacking the *léak* in the film stresses the idea that black magic is the people's enemy and should be destroyed. Cathie's dream of writing a book about Balinese black magic has come to nothing, an indication that she is merely used by the narrator to disclose certain aspects of the Balinese belief systems regarding white and black magic.

The plot of the novel is full of repetitive events. These events, however, are represented from different points of view without disturbing the flow of the narrative. The process of transforming into a *léak* is shown through the eyes of both Pusaka and Cathie. When Pusaka is spying on the lessons, we are given his description of how Cathie transforms herself into a *léak*, what she looks like, and what she does before and after the lesson. At this point, Cathie herself has not explained what she does and readers do not have access to what she feels. Cathie relates her version of the session to Pusaka later, during the daytime when they are sightseeing as tourists. Her way of describing the experience suggests that she is unaware that Pusaka already knows of the previous night's events. The dialogue between Pusaka and Cathie is not simple repetition but provides

³³ There were frequent images of *léak* dancing before a bamboo shrines during the process of transformation in traditional Balinese painting by Batuan painters of the 1930s, works which were collected by Margaret Mead. For the publication and discussion of these paintings and the issue of sorcery, see H. Geertz 1994.

the narrative structure around which the story continues to develop.

The repetitive plot is suited to this novel, because it can adequately present the complex process of becoming a *léak*, as well as providing space for the main protagonist to relate her experiences, giving readers first-hand information such as detailed step by step accounts of learning how to become a *léak*. In the film, this element – and the fighting between more than one *léak*, and between a *léak* and the practitioner of white magic – become much more effective scenes. For a Balinese audience, these are the most anticipated parts of the story – they are impossible to see in real life since *léak* cannot disclose facts about their practices. Two demonstrations of how a man becomes a *léak* were attempted; one during the 1930s and another in 1997, but both were unsuccessful.³⁴ Although the transformation scenes are the most interesting and entertaining aspects of both the novel and the film, the story has a meaning which far transcends these mechanical details. At a surface level the novel can be read as a primer for young Balinese who do not initially believe in the ‘existence’ of *léak*. Its most important feature, however, is the description of *léak* and Balinese black magic through the eyes of a Western woman. This is a strategic act of representation, as it circumvents violation of the law of *ajawera* (literally ‘powerful lore cannot be disseminated’). *Ajawera* means in practice that people are not free to talk about certain topics such as *léak*. Fewer complexities occur when the writer uses a Westerner as the *léak*’s pupil, rather than a Balinese, as by doing so the writer can easily manipulate the *ajawera* law as it applies to foreigners – should the law take effect, the Westerner will be the victim, and no Balinese will be harmed. This device is familiarly known within social science literature as ‘projection’, in which unacceptable feelings about the self are projected on to other ethnicities.

³⁴ In the 1930s, as noted by Covarrubias (1937:322), a *léak* demonstration was going to be carried out and people had to pay to see it. This demonstration failed because a spectator retained his flashlight, something that frightened the *léak*. A similar accident occurred in 1997 in Bangli, where the demonstration failed because of the flash of a tourist’s camera. A few days after that, a rumour spread that the same *léak* was going to do another demonstration, but this rumour was denied by a local government official. See also ‘Tak benar ada demonstrasi “*Léak*” di Bangli’, *Bali Post* 5-8-1997:3.

The novel, however, goes much further than this since it illustrates an underlying unease about tourists' interest in Balinese traditions and their ability to understand them. Cathie's death not only illustrates the dangerous consequences of practising black magic and tampering with a Balinese secret but also reflects unwillingness on the part of Balinese writers to accept that foreigners might master one of the most specifically Balinese traditions. This is a central message of the novel. It emphasizes that the Balinese must defend their traditions, and with them their identity, since globalization and contact with the Western world are unavoidable. The author acknowledges that it is impossible to reject all external influences and that the Balinese do need to catch up and modernize, but also that specific local traditions that underpin identity need to be defended at all costs, even if the price is distraught friends, heartbroken lovers and the occasional dead Westerner.

The absence of Balinese women characters

Most of the principal characters in the stories discussed above are Balinese men and Western women, while Balinese female characters are largely absent. Minor exceptions occur in the stories *Liak ngakak* and *Apakah Anda Mr Wayan?*. However, even here the Balinese women are not the protagonists of the stories. They are either marginal figures, like the grandmother in the story, *Apakah Anda Mr Wayan?*, or negative characters, like the *léak* guru in *Liak ngakak*, who meets a tragic death at the end of the story. In the works discussed in Chapter VI, female characters are central to the narrative, but this is not the case in stories about Balinese and Westerners interacting within the context of tourism. In order to understand why Balinese writers prefer to use Balinese men rather than Balinese women characters in such stories it is important first to examine the involvement of Balinese women in the tourism industry, which provides them with a space to make contact with Westerners.

During the early development of the tourist industry in the late 1960s, the number of women working in the industry was relatively small. This absence was related to social and moral issues. Jobs in

tourism, especially those that involved work as waitresses, room-maids or tour guides were considered by the public to be socially and morally unsuitable for women. Women who worked in the industry were regarded negatively, as if they were immoral, or as if their interaction with foreigners would lead to sexual contact.³⁵ By the early 1980s, when tourism had become one of the biggest job providers, more and more people, men and women, found themselves working in the industry. Now that it has become common for women to work as waitresses, hotel room-maids and tour guides, the disapproval once surrounding this work has gradually disappeared.

All the works discussed above are written by men. The dominant featuring of men, having more access to the modern world through activities related to tourism and having the ability to protect themselves from pernicious or undesirable Western influences clearly reflects a strong gender bias. This literature clearly suggests that Balinese men are the true guardians of Balinese culture during the process of modernization, a competence not attributed to Balinese women. In other words, the ability of Balinese women to enter the modern world is underestimated in literary representation. This in itself may reflect the structural social realities relating to the greater restrictions that are placed upon women in accessing not just the tourism industry but the public domain in general.

This view is not new in the world of Balinese literature because it was almost universal among Balinese short story writers of the 1950s. In their work, Balinese women were discouraged from pursuing progress or becoming modern people. Women characters were always depicted as being unable to protect themselves from the negative impacts of Western values. In their struggle to gain equal status with men in modern society, they were depicted as being eventual victims of their ambition (see Chapter VI). Although Bali has become an increasingly modernized society now that we are entering the twenty-first century, unequal perceptions of

³⁵ Ni Wayan Taman, interview, Denpasar, 10-7-2004. Ni Wayan Taman (b. 1937) is a professional woman in the tourism sector. She began to work in the industry in the 1960s as a tour guide and then went on to establish and manage her own travel company. In 2004, she was presented with an award by the Bali Provincial Government for the significant role she has played in the development of tourism in Bali.

gender roles and the position of women in modern affairs remain a very strong current flowing through Balinese social studies and literature.

Balinese identity and the 'Other'

This analysis of Balinese literary fiction by writers who examine Balinese-Westerner interactions involves several forms of stereotyping which either reinforce or counter the prevailing images. Balinese characters are portrayed as outgoing and ready to cope with change and new experiences in these interactions. On the other hand, Westerners, particularly men, are stereotyped as hippies and Western women as beautiful, charming and sexually seductive. In poetry, the image of the Westerner as a hippie closely associated with drugs and sexual pleasure also makes an occasional appearance. All of these images are far more complex than the term *tamu* (guest, visitor) reflects. This is the term usually used by tour guides and hoteliers and others employed in tourism to refer to foreigners who deserve a particular service.

Meetings between Balinese and Westerners begin and develop smoothly despite differences in language and culture. The relationships are full of excitement and surprise. They often start with the Balinese character being motivated by a desire to learn English, but as events proceed, friendship turns into romance, intimacy and sexual contact. One striking aspect of male-female relationships is an authorial tendency to kill off the female characters when the relationship approaches permanence, Suzan in Aryantha Soethama's story, Elizabeth in Ngurah Parsua's story and Catherine in Putra Mada's novel are all examples.

The consequence of these sad endings is not just the end of the friendship and romance, but also of any prospects of marriage. It is clear that in Balinese fiction, marriage between Balinese men and Western women is an event to be avoided. Friendly relations between male characters are also not long-lasting, ended either by the departure or death of the Western character. Balinese writers never allow their Balinese characters to assimilate Western characteristics

either through the direct passing on of values or through marriage. Separation truly finalizes the story.

Numerous literary works by Indonesian writers that deal with the subject of relationships between Indonesian and Western characters do allow them to reach marriage. This can be seen in Abdul Muis' *Salah asuhan* (The wrong upbringing, 1928), Nh. Dini's *Pada sebuah kapal* (On a ship, 1973) and Titie Said's *Selamat tinggal Jeanette* (Goodbye, Jeanette, 1986), among others. Although these marriages end in separation for various reasons such as adultery and unresolved cross-cultural conflicts, the temporary unions between Indonesian and Western characters make it possible for the writers to explore, and therefore for readers to comprehend, the complexities and limitations of the meeting between two different sets of cultural values.³⁶ Separation in these novels is nevertheless unavoidable, so the eventual outcome is similar to that of most of the stories by Balinese writers discussed here.

Why are Balinese writers so unwilling to allow Westerners a place in Balinese society? Why are they so keen to kill off their Western characters when the relationships become too intimate? In order to answer these questions, we should ask why Balinese writers are interested in depicting Balinese-Westerner interactions in the first place.

Balinese writers from the 1960s onwards have wanted to comprehend and at the same time respond to the new phenomenon of mass tourism and its impact on their society. Mass tourism has meant that Westerners, as the first and most prominent group of tourists, have been the focus of Balinese debates about the consequences of modernization through tourism. According to Picard (1996:185), over this period an official discourse has arisen about tourists as a group who must be managed, a discourse beginning with anxieties about 'hippies' as a source of cultural debasement. Picard regards the official discourse as being one of 'us' – Balinese and other Indonesians – versus 'them' – Westerners.

³⁶ For a discussion of *Salah asuhan*, see Hunter 2002, *Pada sebuah kapal* see Teeuw 1979:176-7, *Selamat tinggal Jeanette*, see Foulcher 1990.

The writers examined here show how this discourse has entered into other cultural forms, but not all of them necessarily convey ideas which fit neatly into Picard's analysis. His view of the official discourse posits a single hegemonic language of tourism which is specifically Indonesian. In these stories we move between Indonesian, English and Balinese, with some of the stories in Indonesian making use of Balinese language expressions at strategic points, such as the expression '*léak barak*' (red devil) in *Dasar* and '*bojog putih*' (white monkey) used in every day conversation. *Sahabatku Hans Schmitter*, for example shows how the meeting between people of different language backgrounds can create a harmony of its own which is quite outside any official view of hippies or Western culture.

Balinese writers have chosen Balinese-Western interactions as a vehicle for evaluation, criticism and response to issues in Balinese culture. The Western characters created by the writers largely function as instruments for articulating conservative views on Balinese customs, traditions and culture. Rasta Sindhu uses his character Hans Schmitter to raise many issues, including corruption, backwardness and poverty. Putu Wijaya uses his character David to pit traditional values against ideas of progress, although ultimately it is the forms of 'progress' which become the problem. Putra Mada uses his Australian female character, Cathie, to disclose Balinese black magic, one of the most mysterious aspects of Balinese culture.

In Balinese culture, criticism, or even compliments from other Balinese, are not considered to be polite or a normal part of discourse. People are taught that they should not make comments about themselves, as in a line from the well-known traditional poem *Gaguritan basur*: '*eda ngaden awak bisa, depang anake ngadanin*' (Do not judge yourself, let others do it for you). Using an 'Other' to present such views is much more meaningful and appropriate, so foreigners – who are considered outspoken, if not gauche – provide a vehicle for saying what Balinese characters cannot say. It is important then that English-speaking Westerners are used in these works because they are at a greater cultural distance than members of other cultures such as Asians or members of other Indonesian ethnic groups.

Thus, despite the recent high number of Japanese tourists who have come to Bali – including people who have married Balinese –

there are as yet no works of fiction depicting Japanese characters. Likewise marriages between Westerners and Balinese which have occurred and which have lasted for long periods of time are outside the frame of reference of these stories – that is, the depiction of their reality does not necessarily accord with the ‘realities’ of Balinese life. Balinese-Western interactions in fiction are not about acculturation or even marriage but are part of a process by which Balinese authors try to comprehend what is good about Balinese culture or what is good for Balinese culture. The objective is not to understand, let alone to promote Western culture, because their authority to depict Western values through their characters does not necessarily bear close scrutiny – as in Faisal Baraas’s simplistic view of lesbianism. In several of these works the characters are very artificial, and their role as instruments for the writers to express their personal and social ideas and experiences is obvious.

Hence, what is more important in fictional Balinese-Western interactions is the process by which Balinese people comprehend and interpret their culture, rather than issues pertaining to the unity of Balinese and Westerners. There is a common view among these writers that ideal Balinese are those who are open in their socialization with Westerners, but who do not become Westerners. In short, Balinese writers want the Balinese to preserve their Balinese identity.