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Terror and Tourism: Charting the Ambivalent Allure of the Urban Jungle

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In the early 1960s *National Geographic Magazine* commissioned a series of articles from a California couple exploring the roadways and waterways of Asia on *Tortuga II*, an amphibious jeep purchased from a World War II surplus depot. The couple's first installment recounts their floating and roading adventures on and along the Ganges, where *Tortuga* would sometimes carry them "to venerable cities and princely palaces" and other times serve as their "campsite in the countryside, where the only wealth was in the stars" (Schreider and Schreider 1960, 445). Their next installment, published in May 1961, chronicles the couple's travels through Indonesia. As the article's subtitle heralds, this leg of their *Tortuga* adventure transpires in a "young and troubled island nation." Their essay opens dramatically, with their arrival in the capital city of Jakarta, a little over a decade after Indonesia's independence from the Netherlands:

Djakarta's traffic swarmed around us: I made my turn with more than usual caution. Crack! A rifle flashed close by, and a cordon of soldiers materialized. In minutes we stood in the office of an army commandant. "But all I did was make a wrong turn," I protested. "Your sentry could have blown his whistle—he didn't have to shoot!"

The commandant smiled in apology.

"Forgive us," he said, "but Indonesia is in a state of emergency. Even here in the capital, one sometimes shoots first and asks later."

—Schreider and Schreider (1961, 579)

Encapsulated in the opening paragraph of this Indonesia travelogue is a theme central to this chapter, namely, the imaging in global travel media of

certain insular Southeast Asian locales as danger zones, inspiring aversion and allure for armchair travelers and intrepid adventurers. This chapter is broadly concerned with danger zone travel to insular Southeast Asian cities. Whereas safaris to untamed wildernesses caught the fancy of elite thrill-seekers in colonial times, in the contemporary postcolonial era “urban jungles” are developing a new allure for a certain breed of Euro-American adventurers. In the pages that follow, I examine the touristic imagery and cybercelebrity of these postcolonial urban jungles. Through this exploration, I seek to highlight some of the ways in which danger zone tourism embodies an array of paradoxes that are illustrative of the experience and dynamics of modernity. Most prominent among these is how danger zone tourism paradoxically marks locales like Dili as both global metropolises and untamed urban jungles.

Much has been written on the ways in which Southeast Asian cities have been undergoing touristic (re-)imagining, (re-)structuring, and (re-)framing in the postcolonial era, as nations once relegated to the fringes of Euro-American consciousness now pursue a dual quest for foreign capital and global celebrity (cf. Cartier 1998; Chang 1997; Kahn 1997). With cities such as Paris, London, and New York hailed as central nodes in transnational economic, technological, and media networks, some Southeast Asian governments have begun strategizing to add their capitals to the list of “preeminent global cities,” with the aim of thereby infusing these capitals with a different sort of capital. As governments and planners strive to transform their Southeast Asian cities into international “command posts” for finance, technology, markets, media, and creative genius, a relatively consistent theme has been the re-imagining and touristic promotion of these cities. Paradoxically, for a number of Southeast Asian cities, becoming a destination for international tourists appears to simultaneously contribute to and underscore one’s status as a so-called “global city.” Witness Singapore’s recent campaign to reinvent itself as a “Global City for the Arts,” capable of attracting and retaining foreign businesses as well as international tourists (cf. Adams 2003b; Chang 2000b). Likewise, Indon.com’s (a leading Internet company representing Indonesia in the international Internet community) “Welcome to Jakarta” Web page celebrates Indonesia’s capital as follows:

Home to over 10 million people, Jakarta is always bustling, from the sound of the wheel of government turning to the sight of the economy churning. Skyscrapers, single story residential houses, modern apartment complexes, survivalists’ shanties—all coexist in this city. So why should you visit Jakarta? Well, for the same reasons you would visit New York, or London, or Paris, or Singapore or any other big city. Because you can find everything there! (www.indo.com/jakarta/tourism.html, downloaded 20 December 2001)

In short, for some, a city's touristic magnetism underscores its status as a so-called "global city," worthy of joining the ranks of New York, London, or other global cities. That is, the ability to transmit an alluring image as a cultural center and draw international tourists can be seen as an accoutrement of a global city. But what of the dynamics in tumultuous times, when images of these cities as sites of rioting and violence are projected around the globe on nightly CNN reports? How do mayhem and the threat of urban violence unsettle conventional assumptions about the trajectory to "global city" status?

There is a growing literature on the effects of political instability and violence on tourism to urban Asian destinations (cf. Gartner and Shen 1992; Richter 1992; Parnwell 1998; Bishop and Robinson 1998). To date, the predominant focus of research on tourism and political instability has examined political unrest in destination cities in terms of tourist flows, economic impact, or image management (cf. Pizam and Mansfield 1996; Wilson 1993; Gartner and Shen 1992). However, surprisingly little scholarly attention has been directed to the ironic ways in which urban violence rearticulates touristic images, conceptions, and fantasies about postcolonial Southeast Asian cities. Moreover, the forms of urban tourism that thrive in tumultuous times have been largely ignored. This chapter explores these themes in Indonesia and East Timor, drawing on ethnographic data collected in Indonesia in the 1990s, interviews with returning "danger-zone tourists" encountered in Singapore and the United States, analysis of blogs, and postings to travel-oriented Internet sites. I suggest that this underexplored genre of tourism has the potential to reconfigure perceptions of Southeast Asian cities in paradoxical ways: danger-zone travelers are not merely innocuous observers of political clashes but can play a role in the reshaping of sensibilities about distant urban sites. I argue that the narratives and electromagnetic images produced by urban danger zone travelers ironically both inscribe cities such as Dili and Jakarta as global metropolises, and simultaneously mark them as wild urban jungles. Tracing the specific historicity of travelers' images of Dili underscores the centrality of the electromagnetic sphere in concomitantly globalizing *and* disenfranchising Dili as a ruinous city scarred by its legacy of violence. I also suggest that urban danger zone travel offers a lens for understanding Dili and other tumultuous urban Southeast Asian destinations as "futural cities," harbingers of the total urban mobilization depicted by Armitage and Roberts (2003). In short, the dynamics of danger zone tourism reveal (post-)modernity's ongoing morphology.

This chapter is organized into four sections. First, I begin by delineating the category of "danger-zone tourist" as a quintessential form of modern tourism, embodying many of the paradoxes of modern subjectivity. Next, I turn to outline the imagery of danger-zone tourism in postcolonial Southeast Asian cities.

Following this section, I examine the context for urban danger-zone tourism in Indonesia, and sketch the array of images (both subjective and objective) propelling this genre of tourist. Finally, I focus on the case of the city of Dili, capital of East Timor. As one of the world's newest postcolonial cities, with historic roots in the spice trade, years of Portuguese and Indonesian colonialism and, more recently, as a much-televised urban site of turbulence, suffering, and destruction, Dili offers a unique lens for viewing the interplay between historicity, geopolitics, and global communications networks. Whereas in colonial days, Dili drew traders seeking Timor's sandalwood and offered a stopover for vessels en route to the Spice Islands, today's postcolonial Dili has become an urban magnet for not only reporters and international aid workers, but also a particular breed of danger zone tourists who chronicle their adventures in this "war-scarred city" on the global electromagnetic stream.

DEFINING DANGER-ZONE TOURISTS

As Malcolm Crick observed, sun, sand, sea, and sex, are the four "S"s often perceived as the essence of a developing nation's touristic appeal (Crick 1989, 309). And as Linda Richter added, "a fifth 's' is even more critical: security" (Richter 1992, 36). However, these ingredients tend to be irrelevant or even antithetical to one genre of tourist generally overlooked in the tourism literature. While tumultuous Southeast Asian cities have frightened off many package tourists, they have emerged as alluring destinations for what I term "danger-zone tourists."¹ Danger-zone tourists are travelers who are drawn to areas of political turmoil. Their pilgrimages to strife-torn destinations are not for professional purposes but rather for leisure, although in some cases the professional identities of danger-zone tourists are related to their leisure pursuits.² The desire to vacation in an urban riot or war zone may strike some as peculiar to relatively maladjusted individuals, but I would suggest that danger-zone tourism is simply an extreme form of modern tourism. It embodies the epitome of the paradoxical dynamics found in other genres of tourism (as discussed in the introduction of this volume), and offers a unique lens on modernity. Danger-zone tourism is driven by the modern infatuation with authenticity and, as we shall see, entangled with processes of commodification.

The backpacker traveler in Thailand featured in Alex Garland's recent novel, *The Beach*³ (1996), captures the mindset of many danger-zone tourists when he reflects,

I wanted to witness extreme poverty. I saw it as a necessary experience for anyone who wanted to appear worldly and interesting. Of course witnessing poverty

was the first to be ticked off the list. Then I had to graduate to the more obscure stuff. Being in a riot was something I pursued with a truly obsessive zeal, along with being tear-gassed and hearing gunshots fired in anger. Another list item was having a brush with my own death. (Garland 1996, 164)

A similar mentality pervades “Fielding’s BlackFlag Café,” a Website devoted to travelers returning from and planning visits to dangerous places. The site’s by-line explains its unique orientation:

Looking for fun in all the wrong places? Well you’ve found the nets [sic] only hangout for hardcore adventurers, travel junkies, DP’ers [dangerous placers] and just about anyone who runs screaming from glossy brochures, backpacker guidebooks and Robin Leach. So let’s get busy. Got a tip? Just came back from the Congo, just heading off to Albania? Let us know and don’t be surprised if the staff of Fielding, the authors of DP [Dangerous Places] or the CIA drops you a line. (Anon., Fielding’s BlackFlag Café Website: www.fieldingtravel.com., downloaded 15 January 2000)

BlackFlag Café frequenters appear to have varying levels of experience with danger-zone travel, though all seem to share an intense interest in adrenalin rush travel. While some of the BlackFlag Café visitors are armchair danger zone travelers, others are actively engaged in touring the world’s hot spots, often beginning with risky off-the-beaten track destinations and working their way up to battlefields and war zones. As one recent BlackFlag Café posting reads,

A traveller in many ‘soft’ DP [dangerous place] countries over the past ten years, I have decided it is time to go for my first war zone. Armed with my clippings, letters of intro and mas bullsh**, where should I go for my first ringside view of armed conflict? Should I dive into the thick of it “Chechnya?” or should I find a good “intro” hotspot? (Andre, “My First War,” Fielding’s BlackFlag Adventure Forum: www.fieldingtravel.com., posted 10 February 2000)

Among the Asian destinations suggested by repliers were sites of civil strife in Indonesia and the war zone in Afghanistan.

The BlackFlag Café Website is an outgrowth of Robert Young Pelton, Coskun Aral, and Wink Dulles’s popular travel guide *Fielding’s The World’s Most Dangerous Places* (1998). Hailed by *The New York Times* as “one of the oddest and most fascinating travel books to appear in a long time” (Pelton, Aral, and Dulles 1998, cover), the 1998 edition of this volume features chapters on Cambodia, Myanmar, The Philippines, as well as shorter entries on Indonesia (Timor) and Laos. With its fourth edition published, the book has enjoyed cult popularity among both armchair travelers and American danger-zone

tourists. The brisk sales of this and other related guidebooks, as well as the touristic popularity of T-shirts with slogans such as “Danger!! Mines!! Cambodia!!”⁴ not only suggest the allure of danger-zone travel but also illustrate the commodification of this emerging genre of travel. The paradoxes of modern tourism are particularly salient in this commodification of desire. These war-zone guidebooks and souvenir apparel celebrating close brushes with peril testify to the danger-zone traveler’s need to essentialize and objectify the world (rendering it comprehensible and orderly—the task of guidebooks) while preserving the subjective experience of difference, discovery, and risk.

While the numbers of danger-zone tourists appear to be rising, the allure of touristic forays into politically risky regions has a long history, as do danger-zone travel entrepreneurs. According to Mitchell (1988, 57), as early as 1830, French entrepreneurs were ferrying tourists to North Africa to witness the French bombardment of Algiers. In more contemporary times, educational tour organizers have marketed trips to Indonesia to explore the religious strife between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia and the U.S.-based “Reality Tours” has offered group trips to politically volatile events and destinations in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Likewise, an Italian travel agency has organized groups equipped with doctors, guards, and combat gear to usher tourists to the edges of battle zones in places like Dubrovnik and the south of Lebanon (Phipps 1999, 83, cited in Diller and Scofidio 1994, 136). Such touristic expeditions to “the places shown on the television news” can have hefty price tags: the aforementioned Italian tours were sold at US\$25,000 per person (83). While many danger-zone tourists are low-budget travelers, the fact that some are willing to spend extravagant amounts for their travels prompts questions concerning the compelling allure of this genre of travel.

In his exploration of the relationship between tourist discourse and tourist death, Phipps (1999) ponders the appeal of risk travel. Drawing on the work of Albert Camus, he suggests that fear gives value to travel: “[t]his threat of death and danger is something that tourism relishes so as to retain its imaginative power as a space for reconnecting with the ‘real’ which remains so elusive . . . in this order of highly stratified, regulated and abstracted capitalist postmodern society” (Phipps 1999, 83). While the promise of ‘so-called authentic’ encounters and experiences is intrinsic to danger-zone tourism, I believe that there are also issues of class and social differentiation at play. Inspired by Bourdieu (1984) and Featherstone (1987), Munt (1994, 102) has suggested that the consumption of unique travel experiences has increasing salience in defining social distinction. Munt argues that, in striving to establish distinction from the touristic practices of classes below them, the new middle classes have embraced a number of new forms of travel (Munt 1994, 119). Travel to Third World destinations, says Munt, is one of the major ex-

periences embraced by the new middle class to establish and maintain social differentiation, a practice that separates these “adventurers” from the masses of package tourists. In writing on the broader topic of risk tourism, Elsrud (2001) makes a related observation. She suggests that risk narratives are a form of traveler’s capital; they play into a hierarchical value system positioning travelers vis-à-vis one another and vis-à-vis their stay at home friends. The insights of Phipps, Munt, and Elsrud resonate with my perceptions of the appeal of danger zone travel.

Wayne Pitts is one of the few scholars to have made passing note of this genre of tourists, which he terms “war tourists” (Pitts 1996). In his discussion of the impact of uprisings in Chiapas (Mexico) on the tourist economy, he comments, “Just like drivers on the interstate stretching their necks trying to get a glimpse of ‘what happened’ at a wreck scene, these individuals [war tourists] wanted to be a part of the action” (Pitts 1996, 221). As Pitts later adds, the “war tourists” in Chiapas were there “to experience the thrill of political violence.” One magazine reported a Canadian woman explaining her reasons for visiting Chiapas were “journalism, a tan and a revolution” (cited in Pitts 1996, 224). Likewise, while researching the broader topic of risk creation in travel narratives, Torun Elsrud reports that she has come across interviewees who say they are looking forward to riots in Indonesia as it is “cool to have seen/been in one.”⁵ These descriptions hint at some of the varied activities and motivations of the genre of tourist that are drawn to tumultuous urban sites in Southeast Asia.

In spite of the precedent set by Pitts, I prefer to employ the term *danger-zone tourists* instead of *war tourists*, as I believe this particular form of tourism necessitates distinction from the broader category of “war tourism” discussed by Valene Smith (1996). In her exploration of war tourism, Smith focuses on the commemorative dimension of tourism to the sites of *past* wars—battlefields, cemeteries, military re-enactments, monuments, and so forth.⁶ My interest here, however, is not tourism pertaining to *past* wars, but rather tourism to tumultuous urban locales, cities that are not necessarily the sites of declared wars but are nevertheless sites of *ongoing* political instability, sites where there is at least an imagined potentiality of violent eruptions. Likewise, I have not adopted the term *risk tourism* embraced by some writers (cf. Elsrud 2001), as this term covers a broader array of activities including physically challenging hinterland enterprises such as whitewater rafting in Sarawak. For these reasons pertaining to precision, in this chapter I adopt the expression *urban danger-zone tourism*. One final point merits underscoring: a wide array of motives and interests fall under the heading “danger zone tourist”—from humanitarian/activist tourists, to adrenalin-rush pursuers, to those seeking firsthand journalistic experiences—as becomes evident in our

discussion of urban danger zone tourism in Indonesia. In discussing urban danger zone tourism, I am not arguing for an essentialism of this genre of tourism, but rather advocate the need to attend to the image-trafficking manifest in urban danger zone travel.

THE IMAGERY OF URBAN SOUTHEAST ASIAN DANGER-ZONE TOURISM

Fielding's The World's Most Dangerous Places, the definitive guidebook for danger-zone tourists, devotes chapters to several Southeast Asian nations and their cities. In the 1998 version of this handbook, as in the corresponding Website, Cambodia and Myanmar (Burma) figure prominently. As tourists develop images of their vacation destinations long before they depart, through media images and guidebooks, and as they draw on these glossy images in assessing their experiences in these destinations (Adams 1984), it is apt to begin our discussion with an examination of the urban danger-zone imagery found in such guidebooks and travel advice Websites.

In logging onto Fielding's Website devoted to dangerous places (www.fieldingtravel.com), one immediately knows one is in a different sort of travel zone. The background wallpaper for pages devoted to Cambodia, Myanmar, and the Philippines features cartoon-like images of rifles, shields, and spears in crossbones positions and dynamite time bombs. Likewise, each chapter of the book version of *Fielding's The World's Most Dangerous Places* (Pelton et al. 1998) is decorated with a comic image of a sunglass-sporting skull toting a baseball cap adorned with the DP logo. The chapters themselves are illustrated with smaller cartoons of exploding demonstrators, bazooka-carrying troops, burning dynamite sticks, and fierce killer bees. These comic images seemingly "tame" the terrors of riots and warfare, offering the subliminal message that dangerous travel can be something entertaining. Even the danger-themed photographs accompanying each chapter have lulling dimensions. The Myanmar chapter, for instance, opens with a shot of artificial limbs dangling decoratively from tropical vegetation. Other images in this chapter include two plump toddlers holding whimsically decorated guns, and troops trotting in front of a thatched-roofed pavilion. While smiling gunmen and helicopters make frequent appearances in the pages of this book, there are no images of corpses or actual warfare. In a paradoxical fashion, this and other similar books render danger-zone travel inviting yet thrilling.

The narrative "Cambodia—In a Dangerous Place" underscores these themes of unpredictable danger for the unaware and excitement for the savvy traveler. As the writers recount,

We went to Cambodia on a lark. These days, Cambodia is not necessarily the most dangerous place in the world, or even a nasty place, but it is an exotic, very inexpensive stop that every traveler to Asia should make. Is it safe? Well, if you stay inside the tourist ruts (literally), don't venture outside the ill-defined "safety" zone and watch where you step, Cambodia can be safe. Cambodia can also be brutal if you pass through the invisible safety barrier and end up in the hands of the Khmer Rouge. Just remember the advice of your first grade teacher, "Don't color outside the lines. . . . One tourist can fly into Phnom Penh and Siem Reap on a modern jet, stay in a five star hotel, and see the temple complex, complete with cold Pepsis, an air-conditioned car and a good meal, followed by an ice-cold beer at one of the many nightclubs the U.N. soldiers used to frequent. Another tourist can find himself kneeling at the edge of a shallow, hastily dug grave, waiting for the rifle butt that will slam into his cortex, ending his brief but adventurous life. The difference between the two scenarios might be 10 km or lingering a few too many minutes along the road. (Pelton et al. 1998, 364)

Southeast Asian cities in Cambodia and Myanmar, in particular, receive dramatic danger-zone profiling in the 1998 edition of Robert Young Pelton's book. In a section of the Cambodia chapter entitled "In a Dangerous Place," Pelton devotes two pages to describing a typical evening in Siem Reap. His narrative could easily have been drawn from the script of a Chuck Norris film, encompassing guns, seedy discotheques, insipient violence, a brutalized police officer, and danger-habituated bar hostesses:

That night back in Siem Reap we go to a nightclub. The sign outside says "no guns or explosives." The music is pure sing-song Khmer played at ear-damaging levels. . . . Wink [Pelton's fellow danger zone travelers and co-contributor to the volume] decides to get up and jam with the band. The audience is dumbstruck and stares open-mouthed for two songs. The dance floor clears out and the Cambodians don't know if they should clap or cover their ears. Wink finishes up to a round of applause. After Wink sits down, it seems not everyone is thrilled with the impromptu jam session. We are challenged to a fight in a less than sensitive manner. An elbow not once, not twice, but three times in the back—hard. We decide to split. This would not be a John Wayne punch 'em up. But probably a good ole' sloppy burst of gunfire. (Pelton et al. 1998, 368)

They change venues and have yet another close call with the nightly violence of Siem Reap:

Sitting outside to avoid the chilling air conditioning and deafening noise inside, we are interrupted as a Cambodian cop comes flying out of the glass entry doors, followed by shouting, punching and kicking patrons. The girls sitting with us immediately react, jump up and drag us around the corner and down an alley. They plead with us to "Go, go, run! Please, before you are shot! . . . We push

past them and are in time to watch the cop being kicked and beaten and slammed unconsciously into the back of a pickup truck. The girls explain that we are lucky (a term we are hearing a lot here). Usually, there is gunfire . . . I laugh . . . The sad look in her eyes tells me I am being far too casual about a very real threat. With a sense of resignation, she says, "This is a dangerous place. You should not be here." (Pelton et al. 1998, 369)

By 2000, Siem Reap has begun to lose its cache for danger zone travelers. One returnee from a trip to Siem Reap posts his advice on Pelton's BlackFlag Café Website, warning other danger zone travelers to give Siem Reap a pass, as it had ceased to be a danger-zone destination—it had become a "TOURIST TRAP." As he grumbles, "Its no longer adventurous, dangerous, fun etc. to go there—every tourist in Cambodia goes there. Go to Burma" (Mike 'Cambodia' Fieldings' BlackFlag Café, www.fieldingtravel.com. www.zinezone.com/pubbin/login, posted 5 February 2000).

As such postings hint, danger zone tourism has fickle tendencies: as destinations become perceived to be calmer and draw growing numbers of 'ordinary' travelers, danger zone pilgrims move on to new sites of tumult. Mirroring the paradox of mainstream tourism whereby the presence of other tourist hordes "spoils" the destination, for danger-zone tourists, places like Siem Reap lose their attractiveness by becoming too safe. The various editions of *Fielding's The World's Most Dangerous Places* attest to the rapidity with which destinations move in and out of vogue with this genre of traveler. Dangerous cities spotlighted in one edition are often absent from the next, replaced by new war-torn sites currently featured on CNN reports. When Pelton et al.'s volume includes dangerous destinations that are not active war sites, they are often depicted as camouflaged tinderboxes. For instance, the 1998 edition of Pelton's book devotes copious pages to Burma/Myanmar and includes a lengthy section on the city of Yangon. Here, as elsewhere, we find the theme of superficially "normal" urban scenery masking lurking dangers:

Yangon has a slightly cosmopolitan feel. The sidewalks are packed with a mish-mash of races in the colorful garb denoting their ethnic blueprints: Indian, Burmese, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Shan. They stroll past the washed-out aqua, yellow and pink pastels of apartment buildings and businesses and the restored, grand buildings of British colonial days.

During rush hours, Yangon's streets rival those of any other Southeast Asian capital; traffic crawls at the pace of democratic reforms here. But not at the pace of hotel construction; five-star caravansaries are shooting skyward in all parts of the city like a seismograph in Riverside County, California. . . . The streets of Yangon are clean, curbs freshly painted . . . lawns, parks, and even road medians are meticulously manicured and landscaped. There are few beggars. People dress remarkably well. . . . Comparisons with Singapore come to mind. In fact,

a visitor here is struck with an indelible sense of Yangon being a prosperous city-state rather than a Third World capital.

Unless one is accustomed to hanging around dictatorships, the causal visitor won't get it. . . . But dig a little deeper and the observer will be shocked. (Pelton et al. 1998, 613–14)

The contributing author, Wink Dulles, goes on to compare the city of Yangon to a library, where if one talks at all, it is in hushed voices. Noting that the topic of politics will instantly clear a room, he adds, "Ask a shopkeeper in Yangon why barbed-wire barricades have been set up on the street in front of his establishment and he'll answer 'to slow traffic.' Ask what kind of traffic and you'll be asked to leave" (Pelton et al. 1998, 614). Dulles proceeds to chronicle his evening adventures in the streets of Yangon, the time most favored for observing the "viscera" of this particular urban danger zone.

I picked a delightful March evening for a stroll through the capital. . . . I first dined on curried roadkill down the street. . . . A troop transport truck rolled up to the corner; a half dozen rifle-toting soldiers jumped to the street and made themselves conspicuous. The rest of the patronage paid their bills. I did so as well and headed in the direction of the mosque, where three other troop transport trucks, packed to the stakes with soldiers, had set up shop for the night. I walked past; the soldiers all wore the same expression—like the way the Green Beret guy with the bloody hands stares at Martin Sheen when he arrives at Col. Kurtz's kingdom in "Apocalypse Now." (614–15).

Eventually Dulles finds himself questioned by a sinister character in charge of the troop movements. He claims to be merely a tourist out for a smoke, and his disbelieving interrogator gruffly sends him back to the confines of his hotel. Noteworthy here, as at the BlackFlag Café Website, is the allusion to Hollywood images as prior texts for processing travelers' adventures in dangerous destinations. Peppering the narratives of some danger zone travelers are references to *Apocalypse Now*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, and *The Beach*.

Having briefly surveyed some of the pre-travel Southeast Asian urban imagery offered to budding danger-zone tourists, I turn now to examine danger-zone tourism in the urban Indonesian context. As the Indonesian case illustrates, the range of urban danger-zone tourists is varied, as are the images they produce of Indonesian cities.

URBAN DANGER-ZONE TOURISM IN INDONESIA

Since mid-1998, Indonesian tourism promoters have struggled against mounting negative imagery due to political, economic, ethnic, and religious

unrest. As a September 1999 on-line article headlined “Indonesian Tourism Industry Battered by Images of Violence” reports, “Indonesia has been plagued by image-problems in recent times—from last year’s economic crisis and related unrest to this year’s militia rampage in East Timor and riots in Jakarta” (Minitier 1999). Likewise, increasing numbers of independent travelers sharing advice on the Web are painting a tableaux of Indonesia as a land of travel traumas, urging fellow travelers to opt for the Thailand or Malaysia’s more predictably peaceful isles. Such negative imagery has taken its toll: in 1998 the number of foreign visitors to Indonesia shrunk by 18.6 percent (to 14.4 million), with Bali being the sole Indonesian destination to record an increase in foreign visitors. Following the 2002 Bali disco bombing and news reports of Al Qaeda cells throughout Indonesia, tourism has fallen off dramatically in Bali, as well.⁷ It is precisely in this sort of context that danger-zone tourism emerges.

Indonesian danger-zone tourism comes in various forms, reflecting the varied orientations and motivations of danger-zone tourists. At one end of the continuum are the independent budget travelers who make their way to cities like Dili and Banda Aceh, priding themselves on slipping into off-limits destinations. At the other end of the spectrum are the “reality tours” packaged by operations such as Global Exchange and even Indonesian travel houses. Interviews with independent travelers, examinations of danger-zone travel narratives, and perusal of advertisements for Indonesia “reality tours” suggest a number of themes in the imagery of urban danger-zone travel. These include the promise of having authentic encounters with grassroots actors, the potential for enhancing one’s personal identity as an activist or humanitarian, and the allure of a unique, “exciting” travel experience that will distinguish the traveler from the growing hoards of ethnic and cultural tourists that now voyage to most corners of the globe. Let us turn to examine this imagery.

My awareness of danger-zone group tours to urban destinations in Indonesia was first prompted by a newspaper advertisement for a planned March 1998 “Reality Tour” to Java billed as “Democracy and Culture of Resistance in Indonesia: Suharto’s Last Term?” The tour was organized by Global Exchange, a San Francisco-based group. The imagery of authentic grassroots encounters is a recurrent theme in their Web page. As it explains, their “Reality Tours” are designed “to give people in the U.S. a chance to see firsthand how people facing immense challenges are finding grassroots solutions in their daily lives” (Global Exchange 1999, 1). Moreover, “Reality Tours provide North Americans with a true understanding of a country’s internal dynamic through socially responsible travel” (Global Exchange 1999, 2). Here, then, we find the image of the politically correct traveler. For US\$2,150, tourists were invited to sign on for a group trip to Jakarta to witness the goings-on of

the March 1998 pre-elections. The initial itinerary promised conversations with former political prisoners (including as a possibility the celebrated Indonesian writer Pramoedya), factory workers, and human rights activists. The piece de résistance, however, was to “dialogue with Indonesians and observe the election day atmosphere in the capital.” The repeated use of the word “resistance” and the emphasis on the tentative nature of the itinerary “due to circumstances beyond our control” offer a subtle background image of potential danger, as befits this particular special-interest market.

I Gede Ardika, Indonesia’s Director General for Tourism, was quick to pick up on this special interest market. On March 5, 1999, he told reporters that several parties have welcomed the plan to turn the general election into a tourist attraction. For US\$200 a day, three Indonesian travel agencies were selling the “general election tourism package” which promised not only the latest update on the national election process, but a “close look” at the election process (Asia Pulse 1999). Not surprisingly, the theme of danger receded from the Indonesian packaging of the elections tours, however, the theme of accessing an exciting political event to which only few foreigners are privy remained.

The co-mingling of politics, idealism, and the rare opportunity for authentic face-to-face dialogues with Indonesians about potentially explosive issues does not only manifest itself in elections-watch tours to Indonesia’s capital city, but also in a religion-focused tour sponsored by the Hartford Seminary. Entitled “With Muslims and Christians in Indonesia,” this 1999 tour offered a first-hand experience that would “deepen participants’ awareness of the state of Christian-Muslim relations and peace-making in the region by seeing the issues through the eyes of the indigenous communities” (Hartford Seminary 1999, www.hart.sem.edu/macd/events/Default.htm, accessed in July 2000). Addressing recent upheavals in various cities in Indonesia, the Web-page tour advertisement promised that “close attention will be given to the social, economic and ethnic reasons behind the recent unrest, and the role religious communities are playing, especially in relations to dialogue and understanding between Muslims and Christians” (Hartford Seminary 1999). As in the elections watch tours, here, too, we find the imagery of “first-hand” dialogues with local communities. In this case, however, the imagery of humanitarian and spiritual activism is even stronger.

Such “reality tours” to Indonesia’s capital, where participants risk close-up encounters with political riots and religious violence, spotlight Jakarta as a member of the matrix of global cities. In essence, these danger tours underscore Jakarta’s position as a political center worthy of the world’s attention. Moreover, these political and humanitarian tours’ Web-based imagery of potential urban violence and lurking unrest project perilous images of Indonesia’s

capital city. These Internet-propelled images, as well as returning participants' slide shows and travel tales, have the potential to subtly shift Euro-American sensibilities concerning the quality of urban Southeast Asian life.

Ironically, such danger zone tours both herald Jakarta's arrival as a global city, and simultaneously reify it as an unruly urban jungle. Having sketched Jakarta's paradoxical imaging as global city/global jungle, I turn to Southeast Asia's newest postcolonial capital city, Dili (East Timor), where I trace the traffic of danger zone images of this city.

DILI, EAST TIMOR: A COLLAGE OF TRAVELER'S IMAGES, FROM INSALUBRIOUS FEVER TOWN TO SLEEPY OUTPOST TO SCARRED CITY

While Chinese and Javanese traders seeking sandalwood and beeswax visited East Timor from as early as the thirteenth century, travelers' mentions of Dili are scant prior to the era of Portuguese colonialism. Portuguese explorers and traders began visiting the island in the early sixteenth century (around 1515 AD). One of the earliest European maps and accounts of the island derives from Pigafetta, the son of an aristocratic Vicena family who joined Magellan as the chronicler of his voyage (Lach 1965, 163). Following Magellan's demise in the Philippines, Pigafetta sailed to the Timor archipelago with Magellan's successor, Captain J. S. de Elcano. They landed in Amaben (on Timor's north coast) in January 1521, seeking provisions. While Pigafetta recounts learning of Timor's white sandalwood and wax, no mention is made of Dili in this account of their travels. By 1556, a small group of Dominican friars had established Portugal's first outpost at Lifau. It is not until much later, however, that Dili becomes the seat of Portuguese Timor and gains a growing place in the imagery of Eastern Indonesia.

The English naturalist Alfred Russell Wallace offers one of the first images of Dili to be imparted to a wider European readership. Writing of his visit to Dili in the 1860s he conveys a miserable image of a lonely outpost town:

Delli [Dili] is a most miserable place compared with even the poorest of the Dutch towns. The houses are all of mud and thatch; the fort is only a mud enclosure; and the custom-house and church are built of the same mean materials, with no attempt at decoration or even neatness. The whole aspect of the place is that of a poor native town, and there is no sign of cultivation or civilization round about it. His Excellency the Governor's house is the only one that makes any pretensions to appearance, and that is merely a low whitewashed cottage or bungalow. Yet there is one thing in which civilization exhibits itself—officials in black and white European costume, and officers in gorgeous uniforms abound

in a degree quite disproportionate to the size or appearance of the place. The town being surrounded for some distance by swamps and mudflats is very unhealthy, and a single night often gives a fever to newcomers which not unfrequently proves fatal. (Wallace 1869)

Apparently Wallace's dismal imagery of Dili and Portuguese Timor lodged in the imagination of other nineteenth-century British travelers. From 1878 to 1883 the British naturalist Henry Forbes traveled in Eastern Indonesia and offers his "field notes made during [his own] wanderings to be considered in light of an *addendum* to . . . [Wallace's] model book of travel" (Forbes 1885, 5). As Forbes submits in his preface, his publication represents the first detailed account of the inhabitants of the interior of Timor. Indeed, it offers not only a wealth of early images of the island's inhabitants but of the town of Dili, as well. Accompanied by his wife, Forbes arrives in Dili by steamer in late 1881. His initial impressions are hardly positive:

Landing [in Dili] later in the day, we perambulated the town, which wanted much before it could be termed neat or clean or other than dilapidated, but when we afterwards came to know how terribly insalubrious it is, we were surprised that the incessant fever and languor which made life on the lowlands an absolute burden left a particle of energy in anybody to care for anything. The supreme evil of Dilly⁸ is its having been built on a low morass, when it might have stood far more salubriously on the easily accessible slopes close behind it. (Forbes 1885, 286)

The sapping fever and pestilence of the city are steady themes in Forbes's subsequent commentary on Dili. Upon returning to Dili after a foray to the Moluccas, Forbes is horrified by the emaciated countenances Dili has produced in his European acquaintances.

In all of them the notorious Dilly fever had killed down the cheerful vivacity, buoyancy of spirit and bright eye with which they had stepped ashore in the month of May. With the utmost kindness commodious apartments were offered to us in the Palace, but it was perfectly evident that if I wished to accomplish any serious work in Timor, it could not be from Dilly as a center, constantly exposed to the pestilence that nightly rises from the marshes surrounding the town. (Forbes 1885, 415)

Forbes's text also offers glimpses into the ways in which his vision of Dili is refracted through Alfred Wallace's prior text:

The town, though vastly improved since Mr. Wallace's visit, was still disappointing in many respects, and its Hibiscus-lined streets looked poor and uninviting. The lack of money to carry out efficiently the necessary municipal

arrangements was painfully evident. . . . had the necessary resources been at [the local officers'] disposal, Portuguese Timor might have caught the tide of prosperity she had long waited for. (Forbes 1885, 286)

Forbes's recordings convey not only his aversions to the city but also some of its appeal to European naturalist-explorers. He is unabashed in his fascination with the city as a crossroads of peoples, languages, and cultures:

In going into the various offices and shops I was struck to find all business conducted not, as in the Dutch possessions, in the *lingua franca* of the Archipelago, Malay, but in Portuguese. . . . In the different quarters of the town native police posted in little encampments are always on guard, and during the still nights it was curious to hear from Timorese throats the *Alerto sta!* at the stroke of every hour. Besides the official staff very few Europeans live in Dilly; the entire trade of the island being conducted by Arabs and (chiefly) by Chinamen.

The streets of Dilly itself offer to the traveller a fine studio for ethnological investigation, for a curious mixture of nationalities other than European rub shoulders with each other in the town's narrow limits. . . . Tall, erect indigenes mingle with Negroes from the Portuguese possessions of Mozambique and the coasts of Africa, most of them here in the capacity of soldiers or condemned criminals; tall lithe East Indians from Goa and its neighbourhood; Chinese and Bugis of Makassar, with Arabs and Malays and natives from Allor, Savu, Roti, and Flores; besides a crowd in whose veins the degree of comminglement of blood of all these races would defy the acutest computation. . . . The shop of Ah Ting, Major of the Chinese, was my favorite study-room while in Dilly, for there during the whole day came and went an endless succession of these nationalities for the purpose of barter or simply to lounge. (Forbes 1885, 417–18)

Forbes's sojourn in Portuguese Timor was ultimately cut short. After several months of ornithological and ethnological work, Forbes's wife became violently ill with "Dilly" fever and so, five months after their arrival, they fled Dili on a mail steamer.

For almost a hundred years following Forbes's account, travelers' images of Dili rarely surface in widely viewed media. A 1943 *National Geographic* article profiled Timor as a "key to the Indies" (St. Clair 1943), conveying the perception of the island as being of great strategic importance in World War II. However, it is not until 1962 that American readers are treated to a new set of adventurers' images of the city. This time, the images come via a final *National Geographic* installment of the Schreiders' amphibious jeep trip across the Indonesian archipelago (Schreider and Schreider 1962). The Schreiders arrive in Dili following a harrowing stormy night crossing the sea between Alor and Timor. Eerily, the tone of their danger-laden arrival in Dili and their

description of the city with its “scars of war” foreshadow some contemporary danger zone travel narratives:

At the end of nine hours we were desperate to reach land. In spite of the ever-growing metallic cadence from the engine, I again increased our speed. Slowly details became distinct through the binoculars: first a lighthouse, then the red roof of a military post, finally the rows of trees marking the road to Dili, capital of Portuguese Timor.

When the last swell pushed *Tortuga* ashore, we knew how Captain Bligh must have felt when he ended his own small boat journey on this same island 173 years ago.

Dili was still rebuilding from World War II. Despite Portugal’s neutrality, Timor had been occupied by the Japanese and had suffered heavy bombardment. By the end of the war its sandalwood—long a lure for traders—was gone, its coffee plantations were overgrown, its cattle herds decimated, and most of its white Portuguese population dead of starvation, sickness or reprisals. Only the newly rebuilt residential area, clinic, church and government building gave evidence of what Dili would become. (Schreider and Schreider 1962, 275–76)

In the years until 1974, when images of Dili surface in adventurers’ travel accounts, they are generally that of a quiet colonial outpost, or a regional crossroads. It is not until the tumultuous events of the mid-1970s that Dili bursts into global consciousness once again, setting the stage for it to become a magnet city for international danger-zone travelers.

DILI: AN URBAN DESTINATION FOR DANGER-ZONE TOURISTS

Today, as in the post–World War II period, the dominant image of Dili is once again that of a “scarred” city. Following a military coup in Portugal in 1974, East Timor was poised for Independence when Indonesia invaded. An estimated two hundred thousand people perished in the ensuing battle and famine. By July 1976, amid international controversy, East Timor was declared Indonesia’s twenty-seventh province and Dili its capital. For most of the twenty-four years that East Timor was occupied by Indonesia, the area was closed to foreign travelers, as Indonesian troops attempted to suppress the Fretilin⁹ resistance movement. However, for a brief period in the late 1980s and 1990s, Indonesia opened the city to foreign tourists. During this window period, Dili becomes a featured city in Eastern Indonesian tourist guidebooks and Web-based travel accounts. The imagery of these tour books is notably tame in contrast with travelers’ Dili diaries. One officially sanctioned guidebook from this period spotlights Dili as “A Slowly Awakening

Capital City,” “super-clean and yet soul-less” (Muller 1995, 230): a city of “ruler-strait one-way streets” boasting the largest cathedral in all of Southeast Asia. Another Web-based guide describes Dili as a

quiet, clean town with a very colonial feel, the long sea front road is littered with old Portuguese mansions and offices. Many of the streets behind are strewn with old bond houses and sailors’ quarters and give a quick idea of the large export business the Chinese and Portuguese ran from here. With its large supermarkets, hip clothes’ shops, traffic lights and wide streets it exudes a wealth and sophistication unlike any other city in this part of Indonesia. (members.tripod.com/balloon_2/dili.htm)

While this Web-based guide to Dili Regency goes on to note the large military and police contingent in Dili, it downplays the theme of touristic danger. Indeed, most Indonesian-government sanctioned guidebooks of this period avoid accentuating that Portuguese colonialism had been replaced by Indonesian colonialism. Instead, the officially approved tour books of the late 1980s and early 1990s touted the colorful vestiges of Dili’s Portuguese colonial history, or hailed Dili’s recent emergence as an urban hub of Eastern Indonesia. Dili is scarcely linked to danger in the pages of these books. In contrast, a number of banned guidebooks and travelers’ Web-based chronicles of their adventures in Dili draw heavily on the imagery of threat and imperilment. For instance, a Canadian’s Web journal entry describes his and his wife’s trip to Dili as follows:

At the first road junction we encountered, just before coming into Dili, there was a check point where we had to get out of the bus and go into a police post. The plainclothes man there took down all our particulars. We were on our way back on to the bus when we were called over to the military post on the other side of the road . . . where we were surrounded by soldiers in full battle dress armed with M16s, while they again took down all our particulars. It was a little tense. (www.infomatch.com/~denysm/indon913.htm.)

Accompanying this writer’s account of this trip are excerpts from *The Jakarta Post* and other newspapers on the violence that had transpired in Dili just weeks before their arrival. The writer’s friends at home and other curious Web surfers were thus offered journalistic “proof” of these intrepid travelers’ brushes with danger.

A New Zealand traveler’s Web-based account of his 1998 visit to Dili paints a similarly militaristic image of the city. Again, as with some of the entries in *Fielding’s The World’s Most Dangerous Places*, we find the initial imagery of tranquility yielding to that of incipient violence:

It was a beautiful morning as the boat approached the Dili port. The sea was calm. In the distance stood the prominent Motael Church and other old Portuguese buildings visible through the scattered trees. In the background were the browned hills. All of this created a sense of tranquility. Not exactly the feeling I expected to be having on arrival in East Timor. It was short-lived, as on the wharf stood armed uniformed soldiers and a handful of police. Like thistles on a golf course, soldiers nullify a tranquil environment. For the next eleven days spent in East Timor, I observed how thoroughly permeated the Indonesian military and police force are in East Timorese lives. In the main part of Dili there are several barracks. Out towards the airport in Comoro, two large military trucks full of soldiers from Battalion 744—all wearing bullet-proof vests and guns deliberately visible—came thundering down the main road. . . .

The Indonesian government appear [sic] to be promoting tourism in the country, but in reality they don't want foreigners there. More chance of their crimes being exposed. But it is beneficial for East Timorese that more travelers visit their country. . . . It presents an opportunity to disclose their situation to more foreigners. And also it would make it easier for human rights activists and journalists to enter and move around the country. (Sudgen 1998)

By the late 1990s, as global pressure for East Timor's independence intensified, and tensions and violence mounted, Indonesia cracked down on tourist visas to the region. It is in this period that urban danger-zone travelers' interest in Dili intensified. The imagery in the narratives of some of these independently traveling danger-zone tourists parallels that found in the elections watch group tours to Jakarta discussed above, where potentially explosive urban destinations commingle with the travelers' self-images as activists, humanitarians, or travelers seeking journalistic first-hand experiences. As one Australian male planning a 1999 adventure in Dili and East Timor explained to me,

The reason that I'm going [there] is as much for the adrenalin as it is for the ethical side that is if I can do something, anything, to help then I'm obligated to. The crew that I'll be traveling with and myself are all environmental activists in Australia and for me that is my full-time job. Living in and touring the forests of Oz in a kind of bourgeois, middle class, pacifist, guerrilla war gives me as much satisfaction for doing "the right thing" as it does for providing me with the rush of doing illegal stuff in the middle of the night in the forest. You see the same crew at the camps all over Australia, most are transients and all do it for the reasons that I have just mentioned. (personal communication, August 30, 1999)

Clearly, the allure of urban danger zone travel is complex. For some, humanitarianism intermingles with addiction to adrenalin rushes while for others the

desire to witness news-in-the-making is paramount. As an American applied social science researcher in his mid-30s told me when he learned of my interest in danger travelers and Dili,

I went to Dili for a long weekend, just to see what was happening there. That's how I spend my vacations, going to places like Kosovo and the Balkans. For a while, a few years back, I even toyed with the idea of starting a hot-spot travel agency. There are a lot of people like me, interested in experiencing these places . . . and understanding first-hand what is going on. (personal interview, August 25, 1999)

As the news of East Timorese resistance movements became more prominent on the global electromagnetic stream, Dili drew increasing numbers of activists. Their Web-postings further enhanced Dili's appeal to urban danger zone travelers. An Australian university student's Web-based journal of his early 1998 trip to Dili to meet members of the East Timorese resistance offers a sample of an activist's portrait of the city:

Thursday. Arrived in Dili. Everything on the ground hot and dry. Taxi driver soothed our jangling nerves with loud Billy Ocean tunes. . . . Stopped in a café for a warm lemonade. Three police armed with automatic rifles sat next to us. Got spooked by the guns and had to leave. Tried to look like bank clerks rather than student activists. . . .

Friday. . . . Wandered by the University—the scene only two months ago of the shooting of students during their mid-year exams. Made our first contact with clandestine student operatives. Told to return tomorrow. In the afternoon we climbed Christ the King, the second largest statue of Christ in the world, kindly donated to the “liberated peoples of East Timor” by Suharto. The statue stands 27 metres high (to symbolize East Timor as “Indonesia's 27th province”) on an ocean cliff top facing Jakarta with open arms. (www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/7112/essay_01.htm)

In other danger-zone travelers' accounts, activist and humanitarian interests take a back seat to the imagery of fearless ventures to a life-imperiling site. As one Australian male who had visited Dili commented in an e-mail to me,

I've got some friends over there now in a non-work capacity. They had to sneak in as no tourist visas are being offered. The sh** is really going down there now and caucasian [sic] people are being targeted. The scenary [sic] is great and ordinary people are cool but unless you are like my friends who are there for an adrenalin rush then your timing sucks. Keep in mind the Indonesian people (yes I know the Timorese are a hugely different ethnic group) invented the word amock [sic] ie. Run amock [sic] and in Indonesian it means to spontaneously

lose control in a frenzy. I've been around when this has happened before. (Personal e-mail communication, September 2, 1999)

In late August, just days before the above e-mail was sent, an historic election organized by UNAMET (United Nations Mission in East Timor) resulted in 78.5 percent of East Timor's population voting for independence from Indonesia. The celebration was short-lived: within days of 4 September 1999 announcement of election results, armed militia groups backed by the Indonesian military had tortured and killed tens of thousands of East Timorese and had torched much of the city of Dili. Eventually, UN forces suppressed the slaughter and the Indonesian government agreed to grant autonomy to East Timor. Through much of late 1999, nightly CNN telecasts transmitted images of the ravaged capital of Dili round the globe, and newspapers worldwide featured front-page accounts of the devastation. By October, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was established to oversee East Timor's transition to independence. Foreign aid workers and entrepreneurs flooded into the country, and volunteer political observers and still more danger-zone travelers have followed. Their accounts of their harrowing, haunting, frivolous, and daring experiences are prevalent on the Internet, in the form of diaries, reports, and postings to danger-zone Web pages. A sampling of the titles of these postings conveys the predominant themes: "Terror and Fear on the Streets of Dili,"¹⁰ "Dilly Dally,"¹¹ and "Tempest in Timor."¹² While varied in content, one Australian adventurer's Web journal of his April 2000 visit to Dili conveys a number of salient images and offers a new take on the history, layering, and structuring of the global in newly postcolonial Dili:

We catch a bemo back to Dili. After a ten minute ride I'm in one of the most depressing places I have ever seen. I have never been in a war zone before and the sights are quite shocking. Now all the destructions are on a much larger scale, multi-story buildings are deprived of everything but their outer shell, block after block. Only a couple are repaired, one is a huge white palace-like structure, the governor's or government palace, with big UNTAET signs on it and the roof (corrugated iron) being painted green right now. That's the place that first had Portuguese in it, then the Indonesians, now the UN. To the average Timorese it's perhaps just the change of some meaningless sign anyway. Soon the CNRT will take residence and the big black Volvos will replace the Landrovers. At the moment, Dili has probably the population of Darwin and that's the end of the comparison. . . .

We . . . walk around the town a bit. It is not a pretty sight, although most of the rubble has been cleaned up. There is still the occasional rampaged building with all the debris inside, a couple recently renovated—a hotel a Telstra office, but the overall impression remains. And on top of that there are the vehicles—lots of

4WDs, the ever-present bemos,¹³ scooter and bicycles, and occasionally a sedan, usually big ones—Mercedeses, Fords, curiously enough some Lancias, the black Volvos of the CNRT. The plates are a real Babylon, from all over the world, making Dili the most cosmopolitan place to be. If you're a car plate. It's time to go back to the airport. I'm utterly depressed by the sightseeing and just want to get out of here. (Unfolding Timor, www.geocities.com/utimor/7/7.html, downloaded 12 November 2000)

FINAL RUMINATIONS

A pervasive theme in these Internet diaries and in recent danger zone traveler's images is that of Dili as a shell of a city—a scarred city. In a physical sense, after the destruction of 1999, Dili is an anti-city, a city of spaces where buildings once were. But these spectral memories lend it all the more salience as a postcolonial global entity. Dili's terror scars have drawn the international media, and international curiosity seekers. The city's scars are filmed, televised, photographed, and reproduced in newspapers and on the net, transporting the idea of Dili (and independent postcolonial Timor) into living rooms and studies around the world. And yet, ironically, these Dili images circulating through the global electromagnetic stream are only visible in the living rooms of the most privileged of Timorese today. Those Timorese without homes, roofs, or electricity are obliged to haunt actual ruins, rather than view virtual ruins from the comfort of their armchairs.

Meanwhile, entrepreneurs, global marketers, United Nations staff, international consultants, and danger zone tourists continue to flock to Dili. The wealthiest among them, however, need no longer stay amid the scars of the city: As of October 2000, a deluxe Thai-owned floating hotel has been docked in the Dili Harbor (Anon 2000). The Central Maritime Hotel, a former cruise ship, is outfitted with hundreds of rooms, a swimming pool, speedy Internet connections, and other assorted business and leisure services.¹⁴ In essence, this floating hotel (and the floating offices in the white government palace of Dili) may well be harbingers of the “mobile city of hypermodernity” (see Armitage and Roberts 2003). Dili shares traits of what John Armitage and Joanne Roberts have termed a “gray zone of total mobilization,” a city divorced from the temporal and territorial, characterized by “emergency and disintegration,” based on a “mentality of total mobilization.” In this sense, danger zone tourism offers a lens for understanding Dili and other Southeast Asian urban danger destinations as futuristic cities in other ways, as well. In broader terms, danger-zone tourism embodies an array of paradoxes illustrative of the experiences and dynamics of modernity.

Urban danger zone tourism is very much a product of the global era. (However, as the examination of earlier imagery of Dili suggests, there is a parallel in earlier colonial eras. Then, as today, adventurers harvested new experiences in what they considered exotic outposts and marketed these novel tales back in the homeland.) CNN news coverage of the world's hot spots, worldwide networks of activists, and Internet danger zone travel sites have fueled the global traffic in images of postcolonial (and futuristic) "urban jungles" such as Dili, facilitating the blossoming of urban danger zone tourism. Danger zone tourists are generally fueled by global politics, their itineraries inspired by the imagery of nightly news reports from the world's tumultuous zones. As I suggest in this chapter, urban danger zone tourism has the potential to subtly shift nontravelers' sensibilities concerning the quality of urban Southeast Asian life. Their adventure tales are recounted, and their Web-based travelogues with images of urban strife zones are read and amplified by cybervoyagers round the globe. Danger zone travel, then, paradoxically both inscribes cities such as Dili and Jakarta as a global metropolises, and simultaneously marks them as wild urban jungles.

NOTES

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1. For a fuller exposition of this concept, see K. Adams (2001).
2. A number of public policy planners, social science teachers, and activists were also among the danger-zone tourists I interviewed.
3. The film version of *The Beach* was released with great hoopla in early 2000. In this version the British hero of the novel has been transformed into an American backpacker traveler. In both versions, however, the action is set in Thailand and the hero is a young man who deliberately targets dangerous, off-the-beaten-track destinations believing that risk-packed experiences would make him more worldly and interesting.
4. Torun Elsrud notes that while in Thailand conducting field research, she observed tourists sporting war-related T-shirts with slogans such as "Beware of Mines-Cambodia" or "Saigon" with an image of a gun. As Elsrud comments, "It appeared

quite a few travelers and other tourists took a few weeks in Cambodia or Vietnam and at least some returned to Bangkok with these t-shirts as a symbolic expression of their trip” (personal e-mail communication, 1999).

5. Torun Elsrud, personal e-mail communication (1999).

6. For related explorations of forms of war tourism, also see de Burlo (1989), White (1997), Yoneyama (1995), and Young (1995).

7. According to Mary Hennock (2003), prior to the bombing Bali was receiving approximately 5,000 tourists daily. In the month following the bombing Bali received 800 tourists a day. And six months later, in February 2003, only 2,000 tourists were arriving daily. As she noted, “many of Bali’s 35,000 hotels remain shuttered” and, in a reversal of past patterns, hotel workers are relying on their family members to support them.

8. The older orthography of Dili.

9. The Frente Revolucionario de Este Timor Independente (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor).

10. www.geocities.com/CapitalHill/Lobby/9491/pub/etimor/jerald.html

11. www.gonomad.com/caravan/0105/javins_worldtour2.html

12. www.etan.ca/winnipeg/louise.html

13. A minibus often used as a form of public transport in Indonesia and East Timor.

14. As the Lonely Planet Travel News Review notes, the hotel “seems to have a penchant for anchoring luxury tourism in dubious destinations, as it was previously floating in Yangon, Myanmar” (Anon 2000).