

# Tourism in Bali and the Challenge of Sustainable Development



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Edited by

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## PREFACE

MICHAEL HITCHCOCK

Some of the most thoughtful and original researchers to have considered the cultural ramifications of tourism on the Indonesian island of Bali have contributed to this edited volume. So what we have is a distillation of many decades of complex arguments concerning the relationship between tourism and ‘traditional’ culture on this very special island. The volume takes as its starting point the 1995 Charter for Sustainable Tourism, which was drafted in the Canary Islands. Interestingly, in both sets of islands (and it should not be overlooked that Bali is a cluster of islands) artists have played a prominent role in the sustainable tourism debate. In the case of the Canaries it was César Manrique who played a leading role in the creation of a Lanzarote brand that was designed to conserve what were seen as the island’s finite environmental and cultural resources. The debate seems to have occurred earlier in Bali with the Russian-German artist, Walter Spies, among others, expressing concern in the 1930s over the potential impact of the growing numbers of tourists on the traditional arts of Bali.

After a decline during World War II, tourism returned on an increasingly larger scale following the opening of the Bali Beach Hotel in 1966 and the expansion of Ngurah Rai Airport in 1969. As this volume points out, the focus on culture in Bali’s tourism development led to the Balinese becoming more self-conscious about their culture and what it meant to be Balinese. But the development of tourism did not initially live up to the expectations of foreign and local experts, and arrivals fell below targets until an upsurge in the late 1980s, after which tourism became the leading economic sector, surpassing agriculture. The wealth brought about by tourism also contributed to the rise of Bali’s middle classes, though by the 1990s there was growing disquiet about the growth of mega-projects, often with investment from Jakarta. Even the onset of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and the collapse of Suharto’s New Order regime the following year did not seriously impinge on tourism in Bali as the industry benefited from the severe decline of the Indonesian Rupiah. However, the relative good fortune of Bali at a time when Indonesia as a whole was

enduring a severe economic downturn was not necessarily a blessing, and it was in this already tense situation that bombs exploded on the island killing over two hundred people, many of them Indonesians. Tourists abandoned the island in droves and a severe economic depression ensued, illustrating the deep link between the island's prosperity and its dependence on this particular industry.

Bali is by no means unique in the way that it relies so heavily on one industrial or commercial sector and it is worth pointing out that the Canary Islands, where the charter on sustainable tourism was issued, remain heavily dependent on tourism. It is also worth pointing out that mixed economies like London and Paris are equally reliant on tourism, as well as many other destinations worldwide. Therefore the question posed by this volume is whether tourism in Bali could be a solution for sustainable development and has ramifications that go well beyond the confines of this cluster of Indonesian islands. Thus this collection comprises a very welcome addition to the body of literature critically evaluating the value of tourism and its relationship to 'traditional' cultures. What is also interesting is the fact that Bali is the site of considerable change in the character of tourism arrivals, with many Asian countries becoming the source of inbound visitors who do not necessarily share the tastes of Westerners who were once so dominant. For example, Chinese visitors are not as interested in sunbathing as their Western counterparts and it is worth bearing in mind that this unusual fashion, which is widely associated with Coco Chanel, is a relatively recent phenomenon even in the West and may not stand the test of time. Indonesian visitors also exert an influence on what actually happens within the context of tourism, with some young men not disguising the fact that watching scantily-clad foreign women is part of the attraction of the beach. As this volume illustrates, the different perspectives and activities associated with tourists from various parts of the world have led to a kind of territorialization by nation and geography of major beach resorts in southern Bali.

This volume contains a very careful scrutiny of the relationship between the various economic sectors, notably a relatively traditional form of agriculture and a somewhat hegemonic tourism industry. Here, it is worth pointing out that Bali's experience is by no means unique as various countries, notably Switzerland, have in policy terms had to deal with the visual appearance of the country and the expectations of tourists and have ended up subsidizing farmers to act as custodians of land, an experience that has not invariably been successful. In fact, one of the reasons that the downturn following the bombings of 2002 proved to be so devastating was

that the Balinese working in the tourism sector could not just turn their hands to agriculture as some opinion leaders prophesized as they simply lacked the necessary skills. It would appear that economic factors as opposed to cultural ones are having a marked influence on Balinese society due to the number of agricultural associations, known as Subak, declining as the amount of agricultural land shrinks, having given way to tourism usage. Jobs in tourism are also often much more attractive than those in agriculture, and thus a move away from the land is an ongoing concern.

One of the delights of this volume is how it captures the way these debates are illustrated in cartoons and photographs. For example, a rice terrace in the Bud area is festooned with the words “not for sale” which are clearly visible from a vantage point favored by tourists. There is also a terrific cartoon of an ogre-like investor munching on a snack in the shape of Bali. Readers with a penchant for statistics and comparative details will also not be disappointed as there are many charts, diagrams and maps illustrating how tourism is distributed throughout the island’s economy. In fact, this is probably one of the best illustrated books on the role of tourism in an island economy, and thus it makes not only a great research tool, but a fantastic teaching aid. Each chapter comes with its own bibliography and thus acts as a kind of standalone case study while making a contribution to the overall thrust of the book. And it is that overarching view that Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier takes in a beautifully written last chapter that will undoubtedly stand the test of time.

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# INTRODUCTION

## SYLVINE PICKEL-CHEVALIER

Since the emergence in the 1970s of new levels of sensitivity towards the environmental and social impacts of development (Saint-Marc, 1971; Serre, 1992; Deleage, 1992; Turner, Pearce and Bateman, 1994; Larrère and Larrère, 1997), tourism has often come in for criticism (Michaud, 1983; Knafou, 1992; Violier, 2008). Slated for its apparently negative effect on natural areas, such as on local populations, it has garnered a multitude of detractors. However, since the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro - following the creation of the concept of sustainable development defined as “a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, *Brundtland report*, 1987: 43) – tourism’s potential when it comes to meeting the challenges of sustainable development has been highlighted. The concept of "sustainable tourism development" has subsequently appeared. Defined as "tourism that takes full account of both its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"<sup>1</sup>, it has opened the field to new points of view. In fact tourism thrives on the ambiguous characteristics stemming from both the quality of the environment and local cultures, and which it inevitably helps to transform, as any human activity would (Knafou, 1992; Deléage, 1992; Pickel-Chevalier, 2014).

This first initiative was followed in 1995 by the ratification of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism (Canary Islands), which highlights both the virtues of tourism and its constraints. The Charter consists of an appeal to the international community - in particular governments, other public authorities, decision-makers and professionals in the field of tourism, public and private associations and institutions whose activities are related to tourism, and tourists themselves - to adopt 18 principles and objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP and UNWTO, 2005, *Making Tourism More Sustainable - A Guide for Policy Makers*, p.11-12, <http://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5>

The first of these declares: "Tourism development shall be based on criteria of sustainability, which means that it must be ecologically bearable in the long term, as well as economically viable, and ethically and socially equitable for local communities. Sustainable development is a guided process which envisages global management of resources so as to ensure their viability, thus enabling our natural and cultural capital, including protected areas, to be preserved. As a powerful instrument of development, tourism can and should participate actively in a sustainable development strategy. A requirement of sound management of tourism is that the sustainability of the resources on which it depends must be guaranteed."<sup>2</sup>

In 1999, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (UNWTO, Santiago) was ratified. This was intended as a framework for the rational and sustainable development of tourism at an international level, aimed at the governments of countries both receiving and generating tourism revenue, at both public and private stakeholders and at holidaymakers themselves. Tourism should in particular: contribute to mutual respect between people, promote heritage and encourage sustainable development etc. It also includes the assertions of "the right to tourism" and "freedom of movement".

However, over and above the proviso of these new issues and guidelines, the difficulty comes when transiting from the principle of good intentions to the reality on the ground, with the need to integrate the socio-cultural and economic plurality of the world. Also, this potential for tourism to become a spearhead for sustainable development has, since the 1990s, raised questions among researchers (Carter, 1993; Wall, 1997; Hughes, 1995; Hunter, 1997; Butler, 1999a & b; Miller, Rathouse, Scarles, Holmes & Tribe, 2009, Knafou & Pickel-Chevalier, 2011, etc).

Many of these researchers stress the need for tourism, despite its specific strengths, not to remain "parochial" or "tourism-centered", but instead adopt the general logic of territorial development and cohesion (Hunter, 1997; Sharpley R. & Telfer D., 2002). Cater (1993) identifies the three matrices of sustainable tourism as follows: "meeting the needs of the host population in terms of improved living standards both in the short and long term; satisfying the demands of a growing number of tourists; and safeguarding the natural environment in order to achieve both of the preceding aims" (quoted in Liu, 2010, 460).

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<sup>2</sup> *Charter for sustainable tourism*, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain, 27-28 April 1995, <http://www.gdrc.org/uem/eco-tour/charter.html>



Farrell (1999) meanwhile defines the "sustainable trinity" as the integration of economic, social and environmental issues. It seems unrealistic to believe in the existence of any development which does not generate inequality of wealth or well-being. As such, the question focuses more on the concept of "acceptability", in terms of equality or inequality, which remains difficult to establish because it depends upon the feelings of those people who rely on their cultural, historical, political and economic surroundings (Knafou & Pickel-Chevalier, 2011; Buckley, 2012; Evans & Pickel-Chevalier, 2014).

One of the ambiguities of the concept of sustainable development comes from its commitment to universalism, while it is forged on an eminently Western apprehension which is both societal (individualistic and egalitarian) and environmental (the preservation of a natural "object", defined by its foreignness to humanity), and which largely ignores the cultural diversity of the world (Pickel-Chevalier, 2014; Pickel-Chevalier & Budarmat, 2016).

Furthermore, we can not ignore the sometimes tangible opposition between ecological, economic and social interests. In this context, Hunter (1997) identifies a spectrum of possible sustainable tourism development, adapted from the spectrum of sustainable development set out by Turner, Pearce and Bateman (1994), ranging from "weak" to "strong" forms that can be summarized as follows::

- Very weak: "*Tourism Imperative*" model. It corresponds to an anthropocentric and utilitarian approach (the priority is economic growth, natural resources are primarily used economically). The needs and wishes of tourists and tour operators are prioritized. We can often see a correlation between poverty and environmental destruction, to meet the needs of immediate economic necessities.
- Weak: "*Product-Led Tourism*" model. It is also an anthropocentric and utilitarian approach, but one in which the environment is integrated into conservation policies. As such, the environment is considered to be a necessary component but remains secondary when compared to the development needs of tourism projects, since the well-being of the local population depends on the wealth generated by tourism. Preservation policies for nature are mostly confined to the maintenance of resources for tourism – this is the case for holiday destinations and resorts.
- Strong: "*Environment-Led Tourism*" model. It is dominated by the concept of the "ecosystem". It is characterized by the high value

given to the global environmental system, a desire to promote collective needs over and above individual needs and to reinforce inter- and intra-generational cohesion. The environment and nature become key centers of interest for travel tourism looking for adapted forms – nature-orientated products such as eco-tourism.

- Very strong: "*Neotenus Tourism*" model. It is an eco-centric approach. Preservationist policies dominate so as to minimize resource use, with the aim of reducing levels of development. This approach may only be suitable for tourism development in very restricted areas such as nature reserves.

Mowforth and Munt (1998) stress that these different approaches to sustainable development and tourism obviously depend upon the level of development of the country in question. While developed countries are likely to give priority to the environmental policies needed for their sustainability, developing countries tend to favor immediate economic imperatives to meet the tangible needs of their populations. In addition, the very concept of "nature" is a social construct which depends on one's historical, cultural and socially diverse interpretation (Pickel-Chevalier, 2014). Liu (2003, p.465) reminds us that "*the concept of resource is itself both functional and cultural. The resource is not an object but an interpreted value of this object. The perception of a resource does not only depend on these physical properties, but also on economic, technical and psychological factors.*" This also goes for the concept of "tourist attractiveness", which depends on the knowledge and technology acquired by society in a given temporality (Duhamel and Violier, 2009; MIT, 2011). As such, it is difficult to anticipate the needs and preferences of future generations (Liu, 2003).

It is therefore important to integrate the concept of *flexibility*, corresponding to the diversity of the world, in the concept of sustainable development, but also to not oppose tourism products which prove to be complementary. "Alternative" forms of tourism usually only involve, in essence, small groups of tourists in small anthropised areas. In this way, they are unable to generate real global economic development (Mieczkowski, 1995). According to Wheeler, "alternative tourism", such as ecotourism, offers only a "*micro-solution to what is in fact a macro-problem*" meaning a reconciliation of economic, social and global environmental issues (Wheeler, 1991, p.93). Even in international destinations identified for "eco-tourists", such as Costa Rica, Kenya and Thailand, the reality of ecotourism offers is in fact very restricted when compared to "mass" tourism developed in resorts near protected areas (Weaver, 1998). There, ecotourism

offers often represent one- or two-day excursions, in the context of longer tourist stays in a resort near a natural park (Ratel, 2013). Besides, in western and urbanized countries eco-leisure activities, developed close to urban centers or large resorts for day trips, are also growing as a diversification which gives priority to local micro-development and awareness of environmental issues (Barthon & Pickel-Chevalier, 2009).

As such, in order to achieve sustainable tourism development, it is important not to oppose the products and tools on offer by rejecting the so-called "mass tourism", which corresponds to the social distribution of tourism and the recognition of a population's right to tourism (Viard, 1982; Deprest, 1997; Rauch, 1998; Aron, 2001; MIT, 2002), once they have begun a process of globalization (Duhamel & Kadri, (Eds.), 2011; Violier et alii (Eds.), 2016). The purpose is instead to succeed in integrating, at various scales, its precepts in all tourism choices from large resorts to ecotourism options.

With this understanding of the issues of sustainable tourism, its ambiguities and limits, we will focus on its potential for implementation in a case study which concentrates specifically on the island of Bali in Indonesia. Bali is today a crossroads for domestic and international tourism which attracted over 7 million Indonesian visitors and more than 4 million foreign tourists in 2015<sup>3</sup>. The latter come from Western countries - particularly Australia, Europe and North America - but also from Asia - China, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea etc.

Bali has in fact benefited from over a century of tourism heritage (Picard, 1992; Vickers, 2012), which has helped to redefine not just its economy (Hitchcock & Putra, 2007), but also its societal organization (Picard, 2010). In fact, tourism there is encouraged by the cultural and religious uniqueness of Bali – a small Hindu island off the coast of the largest Muslim country in the world by population. Tourism has taken advantage of what is available but has also changed its essence (Pitana, 2013). Tourism seems to have helped Bali's move towards modernity and globalization, but with significant effects on its social, cultural and religious organization, as well as on its environment. As such, we will focus, in the context of this book and following the international conference in 2014 dedicated to Tourism in Indonesia and particularly in Bali, on the potential for tourism to meet the challenges of sustainable development, as defined by its contribution:

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<sup>3</sup> And 8.6 million Indonesian visitors and 4.9 million foreign tourists, in 2016.

- to the development of host populations' well-being by supporting their local economies;
- to the involvement of host populations and the continuation or development of social cohesion;
- to the promotion of exchange and intercultural understanding;
- to the provision of a positive experience for local populations, tourism businesses and tourists themselves;
- to the promotion of environmental awareness, but also policies of conservation and environmental protection, respect for wildlife, flora, biodiversity, ecosystems and cultural diversity.

The objective of this work is to offer a cross-analysis of the development of tourism in Bali, combining research which is international and intercultural (from Indonesian, French, Australian and British researchers), but also interdisciplinary (Geography, History, Sociology, Anthropology, Arts and Economy) and inter-generational (from emeritus Professors to young researchers). It will focus firstly on the social effects of tourism in Bali. Has it contributed to the strengthening of social cohesion by helping to highlight Balinese cultural uniqueness? Does it, conversely, pose a threat to the conservation of its traditional originality? Through the cross-sectional analysis of Michel Picard and Adrian Vickers, we will observe how tourism has for almost a century participated in the construction of Balinese society, connecting resistance, assimilation and transformation, and involving a dialectic between Balinese and Western perceptions of the Island. We will discover how “cultural” tourism has made the Balinese become self-conscious about their own culture, provoking their desire to perpetuate it, but at the same time questioning what it means to be Balinese.

After the study of tourism magnitudes on the host society, we will focus on their social effects on the tourist populations, through the cross-sectional analysis of French and Indonesian researchers, namely Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier, Philippe Violier, Asep Parantika and Ni Putu Sartika. We will question if the globalization of tourism in Bali has led to a homogenization of practices by imitation. Or, can we on the contrary observe the development of new models by syncretism, resulting from complex processes combining transfers and cultural specificities?

Therefore, we will analyze the economic consequences of tourism, interrogating its potential for promoting better living conditions for the Balinese population. Within this framework, we will study first, with I Komang Gde Bendesa and Ni Made Asti Aksari, how tourism led to a

major change in the Balinese economy, moving from an agricultural- to service-dominated system. We will question if tourism is the main cause of this economic revolution or if it is an answer to the globalization that necessarily weakens the traditional rural system.

From there, we will analyze, with Putu Devi Rosalina and I Nyoman Darma Putra, the ability of this tourism-based economy to generate fair or, on the contrary, new and unbalanced development, creating or increasing division between regencies. In order to answer this problematic, we will come back first to the analysis of the inequality characterizing the tourist development of the Balinese regions. From this global observation, we will then study more specifically the possibility of a re-emergence of tourism in Northern Bali, and its reinvention through some pioneering experiments in the Buleleng regency.

Finally, we will study the potential for tourism to boost Balinese natural and cultural heritage. To do so, we will come back, with Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier, to the ambiguity of the concept of sustainable development based on a Western definition of society and of "nature" which we will compare to the Balinese cultural and spiritual concept. Therefore, we will interrogate the ability of the tourism dynamic to favor an adaptation of the global paradigm to the needs of local uniqueness, through a process of interculturalization.

In this context and to finish, we will focus with Budarma Ketut on the study case of an innovation relative to tourist hotels which are trying to reconcile international expectations and Balinese holistic beliefs: the Tri Hita Karana Awards. We will question whether this integration involves, essentially, more general "green washing" marketing policies or if it allows the emergence of a unique adaptive model.

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**PART ONE:**

**TOURISM, AS AN AGENT OF SOCIAL  
RESTRUCTURING IN BALI:  
BETWEEN RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION**

## CHAPTER ONE

### BEING BALINESE IN THE FACE OF TOURISM

MICHEL PICARD AND ADRIAN VICKERS

Rice-fields, bare breasts and fanged demons are the sediments of Bali's tourist history, yet they are not images with which the Balinese readily identify. The history of such images of Bali is part of a politics of tourism, so that while some images have been pushed into the background, others have come to dominate both Balinese and foreign ways of viewing the island. Examining this history involves first an understanding of how Bali's tourist industry is a product of the dialogue between Balinese and Western ways of talking about the island. Secondly, such an examination requires a conceptualization of interests, especially interests in conflict. Bali may indeed be the paradise of tourist dreams, but it is a paradise where the Balinese struggle to maintain control over their fate.

The dominant image of Bali as a paradise is not innate; prior to the second decade of the twentieth century it did not exist. Rather, Bali was presented to Western eyes in two ways: primarily it was described by travelers as a wild and unkempt place, full of *keris*-wielding, amuck-running warriors. Secondly, Bali was a museum of the Hindu-Buddhist culture that Islam had chased out of Java (see Vickers 2012a). Both these images were current at a time when Bali was a set of independent kingdoms, over which both Dutch and British colonizers cast covetous eyes.

Both these Western views of Bali connected to Balinese self-perceptions, albeit obliquely. Those who ruled Bali were the heirs of the powerful medieval Javanese kingdom of Majapahit. Their arts were preoccupied with realizing the ancient Indian legends of Rama and Arjuna on Bali, enacted through sets of ceremonies by which gods such as Surya, Siwa and Wisnu came down into the bodies of priests and kings. Besides the ancient myths and imported gods of India, the Balinese were also preoccupied with stories of princes and princesses from Java who

represented their ideals of prowess in battle and bed, as well as more quotidian folk tales representing specifically Balinese values of family and community.

### **Colonial image construction**

Western views of Bali changed in the second decade of the twentieth century. The Dutch conquest of South Bali (1906–1908) required something more congenial to the new colonial possession. In the process of what was, in Dutch eyes, the pacification of Bali, Western artists and travelers began their sojourns on the island. The first Dutch artist to visit Bali was W. O. J. Nieuwenkamp, who accompanied the military, but returned a number of times (see Carpenter 1997). In 1912 the American artist Maurice Stern also made a visit, and produced the first images of topless women, something that was to be a preoccupation of Westerners for the next four decades (Vickers 2012b:126). Colonial officials had already expressed their fascination with women's bare breasts some decades before, but in the twentieth century, toplessness became a major draw-card for visitors (Figure 1.1). Stern's contemporary on the island was a German medical doctor, Gregor Krause, whose photograph books presented a range of aspects of Bali, from naked women and men, to village life and cremation ceremonies.

Although tourism in the first part of the twentieth century was on a small scale relative to the present day, reaching only to the thousands in the 1930s, the pattern was clearly laid out for later imaginings. Over the decades following Stern and Krause's sojourns, visual and written images piled up, but within a narrow range. The interest in aspects of ritual extended to a view of the Balinese as practicing the arts in abundance, harmonizing nature and culture. Western artists from different parts of Europe passed through, some living many years, others staying only briefly. They belonged to the colonial school of art derisively christened *Mooi Indië* or "Beautiful Indies" by the father of modern Indonesian art, nationalist S. Soedjojono. Soedjojono quickly honed in on the complicity between scenes of "mountains, palm trees and rice fields", and colonial proprietary interests (1946: 5). It suited the Dutch administration to have their colony presented as an idyllic alternative to urban European life, even if sometimes the bohemian artists did not conform to Calvinist propriety.

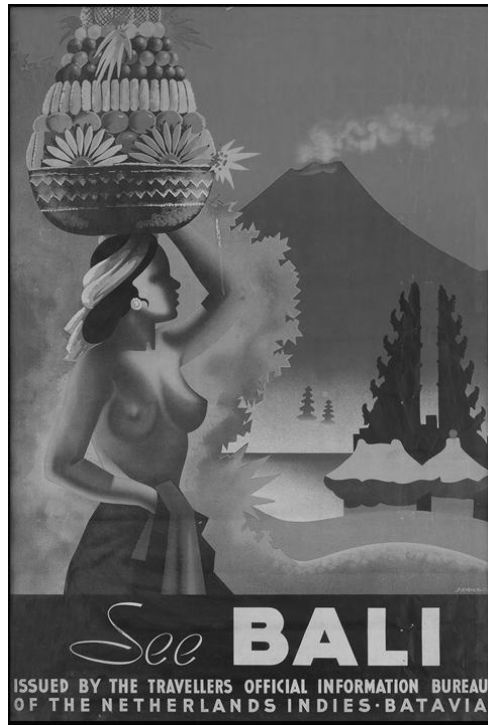


Figure 1.1: Construction of the image of Bali, through a combination of nature, culture and topless women. Travel poster from the 1930s, from the Travelers Official Information Bureau of The Netherlands Indies (copyright holder unknown).

The small group of expatriates on Bali tended to mix socially and reinforced each other's views of the island, promoting the idea of Bali as the world's "last paradise" (Powell 1930). Most famously, Mexican cartoonist Miguel Covarrubias produced the definitive book on Bali, *Island of Bali* (1937), for the major leading U.S. publisher Knopf. Covarrubias, who wrote so engagingly, explored different aspects of Bali. While he was also concerned with geography and history, it is the convergence of art and religion that shines out in his book. Drawing on a long tradition of scholarship, Covarrubias' interaction with German painter and musician Walter Spies played an important role in the gestation of the book. Spies was one of the few artists on Bali with real talent, and one of the only real modernists. While Spies's images were still of ploughing peasants (Figure 1.2), he delved deeper into Balinese art,