

Singapore and Indonesia – Summer 1990

The trip started on Friday, 13 July, with the train to Schiphol. At Schiphol I picked up my ticket from the travel agent's representative there and found a rather unpleasant surprise. My flight from Singapore to Jakarta was not to be the evening of my arrival in Singapore but the following day. Either I had misunderstood the travel agent or someone had screwed up. I had understood that he couldn't get me on the first flight following my arrival but only on the next one and that I was standby for the first one. Instead it was that next flight alright, but on the following day. Well, there was nothing I could do about it there except check with Singapore Airlines that I really was on stand-by.

The flight left Schiphol only 10 minutes late (at 17.25) but lost another 20 minutes in the stop at Zurich. That was the only stop, which meant an uninterrupted flight to Singapore. That had the advantage that you could get a good sleep, although it also meant that the crew could be rather leisurely with dinner. It was 4 a.m. Singapore time before we were done with eating. But the food and wine were both good. It is the first time in ages that airplane food has been really worth eating. The plane was completely full (at least in tourist class). My travel agent had succeeded in reserving my seat in advance so that I had a window seat, which I prefer for sleeping, and I slept pretty well.

Saturday, 14 July. We arrived approximately on time in Singapore at 2 p.m., about $14\frac{1}{2}$ hours after leaving Amsterdam. I waited about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours at the airport hoping that I could get a flight to Jakarta, using the time to scout around the 'tax-free' stores for a camera for Marc. The stand-by didn't work out. Fortunately there was no problem getting a hotel in Singapore. There was a hotel reservation desk in the airport and still a room in one of the least expensive hotels. For S\$1.20 I took the public bus from the airport into town, a distance of 20 kilometers or so. Had it been a non-air-conditioned bus it would only have cost S\$0.80. I just took the first bus that was available and it happened to be air-conditioned. I was rather glad, since the bus was rather full. It wasn't really all that hot, 31°C (88°F), but quite humid.

Singapore and Indonesia both had the advantage (this year at least) of offering no difficulty in remembering the conversion rate. Both the Singapore dollar and 1000 Indonesian rupiah were worth the same as a Dutch guilder within 1 or 2 percent, about US\$0.55.

The hotel was sort of a dump, but not too expensive (S\$55 + 10% service + 4% tax). There was no warm water on the washstand but there was for the shower. Actually the water from the tap was almost warm enough. And there was a thermos of ice water from the reception, which was most welcome. After a shower and shave I washed my shirt and socks and hung them under the air conditioner to dry. Then I ventured out to find a place to eat. I walked to Chinatown, wondering why there was such a place in a country that was 75% Chinese, and ended up eating chicken with cashews at a sidewalk table outside a hole-in-the-wall kitchen across a walking street from a McDonalds. It wasn't all that good but didn't cost all that much either.

Then I started visiting camera stores, and after trying a few and some hard bargaining, I bought a Minolta 300X single lens reflex camera for Marc (not as a present but on order). It wasn't all that much cheaper really, about 10% less than in Hamburg, but then I had it to use in Indonesia. I think it would have been cheaper yet in the U.S. This was my first introduction into Eastern bargaining, the practice of which is absolutely essential.

Sunday, 15 July. This morning it was almost cool with a light breeze and clouds. But soon the clouds flew away and it got warmer, and I started seeking the shady side of the street. I sort of covered the business-government section of town. It is very "English" in style, with street names like High Street and buildings that would not look out of place in London. They drive on the left and keep to the left walking. You have to get used to looking the 'wrong' way before crossing the street. Official signs and a lot of advertising are in English, frequently with Chinese too. The mixture of cultures is amazing. Singapore claims to be built on 4 cultures. The slogan is "4 nations, 1 Singapore". The population is about 76% Chinese, 15% Malay, 9% Indian, and less than 1% European. Later, walking around, I encountered within one block a Chinese Buddhist temple and a mosque. A couple of blocks further was a Hindu temple.

I had completely forgotten that it was Sunday until I saw that all the stores were closed. It was hard to find a place for breakfast. Finally I happened on a DeliFrance in a shopping mall of closed stores. I got a cup of coffee and a roll at what I considered rather exorbitant prices. Afterwards I saw

that there was a McDonalds around the corner. This illustrates something about Singapore: It is full of shopping malls, usually several stories high. Almost every franchise you have ever heard of is there: McDonalds, Burger King, A&W, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Long John Silver, Ponderosa Steak House, *et cetera ad nauseum*. The shopping malls are mostly filled with small stores, but there are also some large department stores, most of them European, *e.g.*, Marx & Spencer and Galleries Lafayette, but also Japanese. The department stores tend to have expensive U.S. or European name brands. You could just as well shop in London or Paris. And probably better in New York, Chicago or San Francisco.

I ate lunch at a collection of stalls along the river. There are tables and chairs and various vendors, each with his own little kitchen, and each preparing his own sort of food. You buy what you want from the different stalls. I had a plate of Indian fried rice, again not so good but certainly cheap (S\$2).

Downtown Singapore was a bit of a mess as they were trying to make it beautiful for the 25th anniversary celebration in a few weeks. So parks and lawns before and near the governmental buildings were all torn up being redone. The architecture of new buildings is modern and could be anywhere. It reminds me of commercial redevelopment projects elsewhere, *e.g.*, Boston's redevelopment around the Bay, except that it is much warmer.

The flight to Jakarta left on time at 5 p.m. and arrived on time in Jakarta. Again the food was good, this time a very spicy fish dish. After the beautifully modern Singapore airport, the Jakarta airport was a dump. There were long lines at immigration. However, I must say the immigrations officer was doing his best to be friendly, or so I will optimistically call it. He looked at my passport and asked if I had a visum, which as a tourist I didn't need to have. Half expecting a big hassle, I said that I had been told that tourists didn't need a visum. He said that for business I needed one. Suddenly afraid that I had checked the wrong box on the immigration form, I told him that I was a tourist. Yes, he said, but sometimes a tourist also has gotten a visum and so he was just asking. With a stamp in the passport I could proceed to the baggage claim area. The numerous TV monitors in the area, which I assume were supposed to tell you which baggage carrousel was for which flight, were all flickering with snow. But after some hunting around I found my suitcase and walked through the green channel of customs out of the air conditioning and into the humid heat and sweltering mob of hotel and taxi hawkers.

I knew however that there was a hotel reservation desk somewhere and after some searching I found it. Their list of hotels was far from complete, but the one which I had selected from the guidebooks was on it. But it was full, they said. So I selected another one which was also on my list, I thought. They made the reservation for me. Unlike in Singapore, there was no need to pay a deposit. Instead of taking an expensive taxi (Rp 20000), I took a public bus to the central station for only 3000 rupiah. Thus I ended up at the central station. By this time it was dark. (Sunset and sunrise are both shortly after 6.) That was my introduction to Indonesian driving – what a wild ride! It is probably a typical Third World phenomenon. Life is cheaper there and consequently the driving less safe. Once the driver narrowly missed a woman crossing the street only by swerving at the last second into the other lane. Fortunately there was at that moment no oncoming traffic, a very unusual situation. I was glad that I had already had a day's practice looking the 'wrong' way in traffic, since here too they drive on the left, and a mistake could be literally fatal.

From the station I just had to find the hotel. From the guidebooks I knew where it was and thought that it was not too far from the station. This was my first experience with the 'not to scale' maps in the guide books. Since it was dark I decided to play it safe by first walking to the large monument at the center of the 'square', called the Monas, a 137 meter high marble obelisk, symbolizing the unity of Indonesia, topped with a gold flame, which is supposed to symbolize the flame of freedom and commemorate the fight for independence from the Dutch. That added a kilometer or so to my walk. I felt like a young woman the way all the taxis slowed down and crept past me. But I ignored them. Finally I came to my hotel, only to learn that it was not my hotel but a different one with practically the same name. And it was full. They told me that my hotel was about 4 kilometers further and that a taxi should cost about Rp 2000. A taxi had let some people off at the hotel just as I emerged and so I asked him how much to take me to my hotel. He wanted Rp 5000 and wouldn't come down to 2000. So I said no and started walking. I then realized that on the way I would come very close to the hotel I had originally wanted and decided to stop and see if there was room. And there was one room left, which I took. They didn't think it was necessary to call the other hotel to say I wasn't coming. All in all it took about 3 hours to get from the airport to the hotel.

Monday, 16 July. Up at 7. The hotel is about the same quality as the one in Singapore, but a bit cheaper. Like many hotels in Indonesia, as an inflation hedge the price is quoted in U.S. dollars and

translated to rupiah at the current exchange rate. This one was US\$ 18, including breakfast. I had said the night before that I wanted breakfast at 7:30. When it hadn't come by 7:50 I went downstairs and had breakfast there, papaya juice, coffee, toast and jam. The juice was the best part. Back upstairs I found a tray with breakfast sitting on a small table outside my door. Out of courtesy I ate it too.

Then to the tourist office down the street for a map and to the post office to cash a Dutch postal check. Thanks to the old colonial connection the Indonesian postal service accepts them just like all of Western Europe. It didn't take too long.

Next a bus to Kota. But I took the wrong one. Fortunately I realized it almost immediately and could recover with a loss of only 30 or 40 minutes and the bus fare of Rp 350. Then I got the right bus, but got off of it where the conductor said to. I should have stayed on a while longer; it would have saved some walking. Riding the bus is an experience in itself. The drivers are maniacs. The buses have a conductor (sometimes two) who hangs out of the door yelling the destination and signalling to cars to let the bus cut in front of them. And yelling to the driver to go when the last passenger has one foot on the bottom step. They do not always completely stop. Nor do they always pull to the curb. But they are cheap and consequently packed. The guidebooks warn of pickpockets, and I heard some Dutch tourists at the hotel talking. One of them had lost his money and passport on the bus the day before.

Kota is the old Dutch section of town, *i.e.*, the Dutch city of Batavia, where the Dutch first settled. It was a swampy area and malaria killed many. The old harbor was supposed to be picturesque, and it was. With many wooden coastal sailing ships loading and unloading all by hand. The chief cargo seemed to be wood, brought I assume from other islands. In Kota there were several old Dutch buildings, now musea, and a beautiful old Dutch drawbridge, the style you see in Van Gogh paintings. But the real thing to see was how people live. And that was disheartening. The river leading under the beautiful drawbridge towards the old harbor looks and smells like an open sewer. Along the banks and built out over the river is one big shantytown. Along the streets you had to be careful not to trip over people sitting on the ground with a piece of cloth before them on which lay things they hoped someone would buy, trinkets, pencils, matches, all kinds of odds and ends. It was not as bad as I have heard that it is in India, but still not something pleasant to see.

By this time it was time for lunch. A guidebook had recommended a Chinese restaurant for dim sun, the assortment of dumplings which you sometimes can get at Chinese restaurants for lunch. So I decided to eat there. It was on a street leading back towards the center of town. I expected it to be in Chinatown, which is next to Kota. (Around 1740, after a lot of racial violence, the Chinese were thrown out of Kota). But no! It was a very long street and the restaurant was at the wrong end. It was 2 by the time I got there. At first I was a bit thrown off by the name, which included the words 'Night Club', but during the day it was just a restaurant. After saying about five times 'dim sun' with various pronunciations they understood that I wanted dim sun – "oh, breakfast". And indeed the guidebook had said it was only served until noon. But they still had some, and it was delicious.

Since there was not too much of the day left, I walked back to the center of town planning to visit the National Museum, forgetting that it was Monday and that the museum was therefore closed. There was, however, a small temporary exhibit of puppets, cloth, knives, and utensils, mostly from Bali, which was open and interesting. Then I walked around some more, clogging my lungs with exhaust fumes and being amazed at the ways people tried to make a living. Almost everything is done by manual labor; there are few machines. They were breaking down an old concrete building with picks and sledge hammers. The bicycle rickshaw (or *becak*) is a much-used form of conveyance for short distances. Things to eat are sold by people pushing hand carts with cold (by which I do not mean refrigerated, but rather not warm) dishes or warm dishes which they cook in the hand cart, which contains a wok with a charcoal fire under it, or maybe even a gas fire using a bottle of compressed gas. Each vendor usually has only one or two items: fried rice, soup, some kind of sweet, fruit. These are the sort of hawkers that used to be in Singapore too, but which now must operate in 'hawkers centers' like the one where I ate lunch on Sunday.

People are actually pretty friendly and helpful. Lots of people, especially kids, say "Hello, mister" and seem happy when I say hello to them. One group of laughing kids aged 7 or 8 said "Hello mister". I said hello to them, and then they asked "You have money? You have Indonesian money?" But from their laughter I don't think they really expected anything.

With still some time left in the afternoon and being too tired to walk any more, I went to the Sarinah department store, the biggest (only?) Indonesian department store chain, and looked around in their

batik department. I found a shirt for myself and a round tablecloth for our living room table, something we had been looking for for years.

It gets dark shortly after 6, and then appears the second way people eat, at sidewalk tables which seem to be put up each evening by people with push carts somewhat bigger than those I described above. And the air fills with the smoke of starting charcoal fires. I, however, went to a real restaurant a few blocks from my hotel and had a broiled fish and rice for dinner. I have no idea what the spices on the fish were, but it was delicious. I was glad that the guidebooks had warned me of the need of a flashlight; there are no street lights and the open drainage (sewage) ditches are a real danger.

Tuesday, 17 July. Up early and out of the hotel by 7:30. I caught a bus to the Cililitan bus terminal where I could get a bus to Bogor. The Indonesian system is to have the terminals for inter-city buses on the outskirts, or frequently quite far outside, of the city. It thus took longer to get to the bus terminal than it was to take to get from there to Bogor. But I did see a lot of the Jakarta suburbs, much of which looked very nice, large individual houses on reasonably large lots. What a contrast with the shantytowns and poor areas I had walked around the day before. I also observed a phenomenon I was to see many times again, also in Singapore, and which is apparently widespread in the Far East: The employees of a bank or some other office lined up in formation before the building to hear a morning speech by the director.

About a half kilometer before the bus terminal, the bus was reduced to a crawl by the mobs of people, taxis, and other buses. People started to get off, it being faster to walk than to ride. And other people got on in order to have a place to sit on the return journey. This was rather disquieting; I wasn't sure whether to get off too or to stay on. Since I had a pack and a suitcase, I decided to stay on as long as possible. By the time we actually got to the terminal I think I was the only one left to get off. And all the seats were taken and the aisle already half full.

A lot of people were outside the terminal hawking all kinds of stuff to eat and drink. To get inside the terminal you had to pay a tax, Rp 100, which was quite effective in keeping the hawkers out. There was no trouble finding the right bus. The bus conductors try to get their buses filled up as quickly as possible. So there were lots of guys asking "Where you go?" I only had to say Bogor, and they pointed me in the right direction. Amazing how well you can do with only a few words and some gestures. The intercity buses are large, *i.e.*, normal size, buses of questionable age and safety. They are privately operated. Once in the bus I had to wait until it was full. I was to learn that the buses hardly ever leave before they are full. But it was already almost full. So that did not take long, maybe five minutes. As the bus pulled out of the terminal and slowly worked its way through the congestion several more people boarded. By waiting outside and then jumping on the creeping bus they saved the terminal tax. Also lots of vendors climbed aboard to sell us bottled water, oranges, candy, nuts, *etc.* They all managed to get off just as the bus reached the edge of the crowd and started to speed up.

Bogor is only about 60 km. from Jakarta. The bus took the toll road, which meant that the trip did not take long. At Bogor the bus station was again on the outskirts. A young man said I should take a *becak* (pedicab or bicycle rickshaw) of which there was a large number waiting outside the terminal. However, according to my guide book it was only 10 minutes to the entrance of the Botanical Gardens, my only reason for stopping in Bogor. I felt that I could walk that. Unfortunately I started to walk in the wrong direction. The young man came running after me and again advised me to take a *becak*. I made it clear that I preferred to walk. He shrugged his shoulders and said he was walking that way anyway. And so I got onto the right road. He led me right to the park entrance, which turned out to be somewhat further than 10 minutes and rather hilly to boot. Unfortunately for him, I was not planning to stay in Bogor and so his repeated question of did I need a hotel received a negative reply.

I could leave my suitcase with the tourist office next to the entrance; on that the guidebook was correct. The gardens are quite large, 100 hectares (247 acres). They were laid out with the assistance of Kew Garden experts and opened in 1817. The Dutch developed many of the colonial cash crops such as tea and tobacco there. It is quite pretty, especially some of the old trees. However, there were few flowers in bloom, which was rather disappointing, and the orchid house was closed. Nevertheless it was pleasant to wander around. There were very few people there. At one point two boys, I would guess around 14 years old, called me to come look at something on the path. It was a scorpion. They told me that it was dangerous and wanted to practice their English with me. Apparently the park, which I paid (not much) to get into, could be entered freely by the 'locals'. The boys were apparently on their way back to school after lunch.

Next to the park is the President's summer palace, formerly the palace of the Dutch governor-general. It is a huge white building built in 1856 after the previous palace was destroyed by an earthquake. It is not normally open to visitors.

I picked up my suitcase and walked back to the bus terminal to catch a bus to Bandung. Again it did not take long for the bus to fill up. The trip to Bandung took 4 hours with a few real stops and lots of short stops to let people selling stuff, as well as passengers, on and off. I guess you could get on or off any place, not just at official stops (assuming of course that there really were official stops other than the terminals). Some of the scenery along the way was very pretty: volcanic mountains and tea plantations. But it was hard to look at the scenery with the wild driving and the dirty windows, although the latter really didn't matter too much since people generally pulled the shades over the windows to keep out the sun.

The bus station in Bandung was only about 1.5 km. from the train station according to the map in the guidebook. I wanted a hotel near the train station since I was planning on taking an early morning train when I left Bandung. By now I was getting rather used to walking long distances with suitcase and pack and so set off on foot. I was going to stop at the tourist office, about half way to the station, and ask them to find me a room rather than walking off my list of hotels. But the tourist office was closed. So on to the station area. The hotel I had picked as first choice was on the other side of the tracks. There was an overpass to get there. I am glad it was still daylight the first time I used it. The wooden steps were half rotten with pieces broken off and a few steps completely missing.

The first hotel was full, but the second still had a room. This was another step down in drabness and smallness of the room. It did not have air conditioning, but an electric fan. It was cooler than in Jakarta; so a fan was really sufficient. The hotel was laid out sort of like a motel except that there were only walkways instead of driveways for cars. Each room had a porch in front and in back a *mandi*. This was my first (and last) (almost-) real *mandi*. A *mandi* is a washroom. This one was only almost real since it contained a western toilet instead of just a hole in the floor (which we should not regard as so backward – you still occasionally find such facilities in southern European public toilets). But for washing it was real. There was a large basin full of water with some green moss or algae growing along the sides, a faucet to fill the basin, a plastic bucket with a handle to scoop up the water and throw it over your body, a drain in the floor, and a small mirror on the wall. There was also a dim electric light on the ceiling.

I must say I really didn't care much for the *mandi*. Shaving with cold water was not very pleasant, bathing by throwing cold water over yourself worse. But washing clothes with only a little plastic bucket and cold water is almost impossible. I resolved in the future to stay only at places with hot water.

At my hotel in Jakarta, as in Singapore, you got a thermos of cold (boiled) water from the desk. Here it was a thermos of hot water, or tea. I guess that then you know that it has really been boiled.

For dinner I went to a Sundanese restaurant recommended in the guidebook. It was just a little place, and they spoke little English. But that wasn't necessary since in a Sundanese (one of the major population groups of western Java) restaurant they have only previously prepared dishes which you eat 'cold', *i.e.*, at room temperature. They are spread out before you on small dishes and you just eat what you want. Afterwards you pay according to what you ate. The food was delicious, chicken, fish and vegetable dishes, all very spicy, but all differently spiced. And the restaurant had cold (well, cool) beer, as well as the glass of warm tea you get when you sit down.

Wednesday, 18 July. For breakfast you had the choice of Indonesian or Western, *i.e.* fried rice or a few slices of fluffy white bread and jam, and coffee or tea. I took the Indonesian breakfast. I planned to get an early start and go to a volcano. But first I went to the train station to reserve a place on the early train the next day to Yogyakarta. The guidebook had strongly recommended that you reserve. I wrote the name and time of the train on a piece of paper and went to a booth where I was pointed to another booth. There was no one there, but a friendly floor sweeper came and ticked on the glass. A man pulled the curtain aside; I showed him my sheet of paper; and he told me with 8 fingers to come back at 8 o'clock. There went my plans for an early start. After waiting about 40 minutes, exactly at 8, he opened again. By then there was a line of 30 or 40 people. I was fifth or sixth in line, not having thought to queue up immediately. In the meantime I had expanded my note with "tomorrow" and "2nd class" (which was the best class on that train, the other class being 3rd). He accepted the note and filled in a form which included the price of the ticket, Rp 5000, and gave it to me asking me to fill in my name,

which I of course didn't understand. The man behind me in line translated; people are very friendly and helpful. I paid and he gave me the paper.

Then I crossed the street to the colt station to find transportation to the volcano Tangkuban Prah. This turned out to be a mistake. I would have been better off seeing Bandung (zoo and geological museum). However I thought I would be back in time to do that too. To get to the volcano I needed to take a colt (or *bemo*), which is like a pickup truck with the back covered over and benches along the side, except that it is smaller than a pickup truck. The more modern colts are minivans, also with benches along the sides. Answering the usual question of where I was going, I was hustled into a *bemo*. The fare is collected in the *bemo*. The conductor usually hangs outside spotting for additional fares. Occasionally he collects money. From me he wanted Rp 500, which seemed a bit steep, especially when I noticed that other people were only giving him one or two hundred, but what can you do. But it was worse than that—he only went to Lembang. There I had to find another *bemo* (not difficult) to take me to the volcano. He charged Rp 1000, which seemed outrageous, but you can't get too worked up over 1 guilder. And that of course was only to the entrance. I still had to get to the top, another several kilometers. There were a couple of guys with minibuses who would do that for another 1000 rupiah. But they wanted to wait until the bus was full, and I was the first. Soon a Dutch couple arrived. That made three, but the driver of course wanted to wait longer. So we said we would walk. Then came some bargaining which resulted in immediate departure for Rp 1500 per person.

At the top, one crater with a lake at the bottom and a slight smell of sulfur. There were quite a number of tourists, including a number of Indonesians. It is a popular volcano to visit, being, according to my guidebook, the only one in Indonesia where you can drive right up to the rim of the crater. Accordingly there were available all the things the tourist expects: souvenir stand, fast food (Indonesian to be sure), and would-be guides to tell you everything you didn't want to know. Apart from the sulfur smell it was very pleasant walking around. It was not too hot, although the sun was bright—it was the top of a mountain after all. There were some trees twisted into beautiful shapes by the wind. Unfortunately it was, as usual a bit hazy, which made the views towards other mountains less spectacular.

After a time I walked down to the lower volcano. There were lots of enterprising Indonesians who wanted to act as guide. I set off down the trail (unmarked, but that was where I saw other people occasionally going (with or without a 'guide')). At first it was rocky, but it soon entered the jungle, which was quite beautiful and offered some shade in exchange for more humidity and loss of breeze. After 20 minutes or so I came to a refreshment stand with a nice outlook over a rocky area about the size of a baseball field with bubbling water pools and sulfurous smoke arising from fissures in the rocks. I drank some tea from my water bottle (filled at the hotel that morning) and enjoyed the view for a time. Then I proceeded along the jungle path. After another 20 minutes I reached the open area I had seen from above. It was hot! The white rock reflected the sun even better than sand at the beach, and the rock was already hot from the volcanic activity. Tourists with thin soled shoes were suffering. It was also interesting to experience the steaming hot water and sulfurous fumes bubbling up from small holes and fissures in the rock. But you can only take the heat so long. So after a short time I returned to the jungle hoping that my sun block was as effective as its label claimed.

Instead of returning to the top, I proceeded downhill through the jungle, eventually reaching the entrance. I refused the drivers who wanted to bring me to Lembang for Rp 1500 and waited maybe 10 minutes for a *bemo*. This time I negotiated a price before starting, Rp 500, half of what I paid coming. In Lembang it was similar; the price back to Bandung was Rp 300 instead of the 500 I had paid in the morning.

I got back to Bandung at 4, but I was too tired from the heat and walking to attempt to see anything more. So I just sat on my front porch, ordered a beer and set out to get my diary of the trip up to date. That effort was pleasantly frustrated by two of the boys from the hotel, who wanted to talk with me (free English lesson). That went not as smoothly as one might hope. When it got a bit difficult one of the boys went and got his Indonesian-English dictionary. If I understood correctly, one had finished secondary school and the other was still working at it in combination with his job at the hotel. He came from a big family, father old and half paralyzed, no money. He hopes to go to the university some day, but tuition is Rp 600,000, which doesn't sound so bad to us (Dutch universities are 2 1/2 times that, not to mention American ones), but is a small fortune for a poor family with lots of kids. And he seemed to be having problems with secondary school.

After recovering, I walked around Bandung a bit. Bandung is only slightly better than Jakarta. It is also big, noisy, and stinks of exhaust mingled with charcoal and kerosene smoke from all the food stalls.

In the evening I went to a Chinese restaurant to eat. It wasn't bad, but I ate an awful lot, the fate of someone eating alone and wanting to try more than one item. On the way back to the hotel I passed a night market and haggled over various items of fruit, ending up with a kilo of oranges for Rp 1000. These were small, green 'oranges', a bit sour and full of seeds. They would prove to be my lunch for most of the rest of my time in Indonesia; going to a restaurant was too much bother.

Thursday, 19 July. I was up early, 4 a.m., having arranged with the hotel to have breakfast early, in order to be at the station by 5 to exchange my reservation form for a real ticket and board the train. To my surprise there was no queue at the appropriate window. So I boarded the *Siang Ekspres* with plenty of time to spare, and it left on time at 5:25. I was in second class, which meant a car with ceiling fans. They were, however, not turned on until later when they were really needed. The seating was two on either side of a central aisle, and the leg room was reasonable. I didn't see what third class was like, but it was undoubtedly a lot worse. The boys at the hotel thought I must have been in third class when I told them that I was paying Rp 5000 to go to Yogyakarta. They called it economy class.

I was glad that I had taken an express. It didn't go very fast, and I hated to think what a non-express would have done. The track was so rough that you couldn't write and only barely read. Fortunately, the scenery was for the most part interesting: farm land (rice) and villages with volcanic mountains in the distance. Across from me was a man in his late 20's or early 30's who spoke a few words of English. Next to him was his mother (of indeterminate age), who slept most of the time, and next to me a woman who I supposed was his wife. They had a nice picnic lunch in an aluminum carry set as well as fruit. They offered me a piece of banana (a large one cut in pieces about 5 inches long). Later I offered them oranges, which only the mother accepted – a fair trade, I guess.

We arrived in Yogyakarta about 3:30, more or less on schedule. There is a tourist office in the station. I asked about hotels. The top two on my list were full. So I set out for the hotel area, followed by a *becak* whose driver couldn't believe that I didn't want to ride. It turned out that the hotel area was further than I thought—blasted 'not to scale' maps in the guidebook! It took an hour or more (glad I travel light, but wished I traveled lighter) to reach the area. I settled in at a new "guest house" which is trying hard to imitate an American motel. It had an excellent bathroom for Indonesia, comfortable beds, but no table or chair (the room was too small). There was also a swimming pool under construction ("ready next week"). I took a room without air conditioning, but with an electric fan, which proved to be more than sufficient to keep me cool and to dry my clothes overnight. It cost only Rp 15000 per night, including breakfast (fried rice or toast and fried egg). That was to be the cheapest of the entire trip, and also the best.

Yogyakarta, Yogya for short, is a large city (population 3 million) and is very touristy, at least along the main street, which runs from the train station to the sultan's palace (*kraton*), and the guest house area a kilometer further. In the evening I walked around a bit and booked a Rp 12000 tour to go to Borobudur and the Dieng Plateau the following day. The stores along the main street and the sidewalk vendors outside them were as full of junk and of tourists as any tourist trap elsewhere in the world. But a couple of blocks away there was hardly a tourist to be seen. I went to a little restaurant away from the tourist area, which was mentioned in a guide book and which clearly did not see many tourists: no English spoken, no menu. It was clearly just a little neighborhood restaurant catering to the locals. There were two people there eating. I indicated that I wanted to eat and was brought a plate with various spicy items on it. I don't really know what it all was, but it was tasty and very cheap.

Friday, 21 July. A tour was the only way I could possibly work the Dieng Plateau in, since according to my map it is 80 km from Yogya as the crow flies and considerably further by road. I could have done it by public buses if I had allowed a full day, but then I would not have had time for Borobudur, which was of course a must. And on the whole it was a success. A minibus picked me up at my guest house at 6:30. It was no problem getting up that early. The guest house was practically next door to a mosque and the dawn call to prayer a little before 6 (over a P.A. system) was an effective alarm clock. I was brought to the company's office after stopping at a few more places to pick up other tour customers. There we were divided among other minibuses depending on the tour. I joined nine others to fill a minibus and we were off for Borobudur, 42 km. away. The nine consisted of three Dutch in their 50's or 60's, a young couple of undetermined nationality (I couldn't recognize the language they were speaking—maybe Finnish), two English girls just out of college (chemistry, Oxford), and a Dutch couple around 30 (the wife was of Indonesian ancestry and could speak Indonesian pretty well).

The tour was really just transportation plus admission to Borobudur. Unfortunately it skipped two smaller temples, which together with Borobudur form a straight line and which are supposed to be well

worth seeing. Our bus was met at Borobudur by a guide who kindly explained that he could explain a lot but that he was not included in the tour and so if we chose to follow him it would cost so much per person. I chose to set out alone. My experience is that guides always spend either too much or too little time at any given place. Also his English was not that good, and I thought that I could probably learn more by reading a book. We only had two hours to spend at Borobudur.

To repeat a few facts about Borobudur: It was built between 778 and 850 and abandoned shortly thereafter when Hindus overthrew the local rulers. The square base of Borobudur covers 122 or 200 square meters, depending on which guidebook you read. There are 6 square terraces topped by 3 circular ones. To walk around all the terraces is a distance of about 5 km, according to one book, which seems to me to be exaggerating. The Buddhist pilgrim was expected to cover it all, as is the modern tourist. I did most of it, taking lots of pictures along the way. The terraces are covered with relief sculptures (nearly 1500 of them), starting with earthly scenes of daily life, sin, and punishment, progressing through the life of Buddha and more heavenly scenes as you come nearer to the top. There are also some 400 Buddhas sitting along the terraces gazing out over the countryside, which is indeed beautiful and well worth contemplating. On the round terraces at the top are 72 more Buddhas, enclosed in latticed stupas. By the time you reach the top you are pretty tired and hot under the strong sun. I had little time to enjoy the view, since the time was up. I hurried back to the bus and was the last one to arrive, trailing a number of post card, souvenir book, and souvenir vendors who didn't want to take no for an answer. I actually bought a few post cards, bargaining the seller down to about half his asking price.

A surprise awaited me on my seat of the bus, a snack in the form of a jelly sandwich and a small bottle of mineral water. The sandwich was almost inedible being of poor jelly on fluffy white tasteless bread. But the water tasted good, although I had, as always, my own bottle of hotel tea with me.

And so on to the Dieng Plateau. The road was narrow, full of curves and in some places rather steep, as might be expected of a road going up to a plateau at something above 2000 meters. The driver stopped at one place to let us enjoy a beautiful view of terraced rice paddies on the hill opposite and in the valley below. He also pointed out a bus which had gone off the road into a ravine below, as if to say that we would be wise always to take private vans rather than public buses. We were to see two more such buses before the day was over. We also passed a Buddhist funeral procession in a small village, the band preceding it sounding to Western ears like a bunch of kids banging on tin cans.

There remain only 8 of the temples; in the early 1800's there were still around 400. It was apparently a huge temple complex. These are among the earliest remaining temples of Java; the earliest inscription translates to 809 A.D. They are Hindu temples built to Shiva. They are not large, less than 15 m. high. Five of them are close to each other in a rather marshy field, the ground still being wet in the middle of the dry season. Boardwalks are built connecting the temples for the benefit of us tourists.

Besides these temples we also visited hot springs emitting sulfurous fumes and boiling water, rather similar to the lower area at Tangkuban Prahur near Bandung, but not as warm. There was also an interesting lake, the Many-Colored Lake, which is just that, a result of the sulfur and other emissions plus the temperature and resulting life forms. With all the geothermal activity, it was not too surprising to read that a geothermal power station has been built, although we did not see it.

On the way back the driver stopped at a restaurant (where he undoubtedly gets a kickback) in a small village. It was set up as a cafeteria; so you could choose what you wanted by the easy 'point' method. It wasn't bad nor particularly overpriced. However, none of us had been expecting it. Back in Yogya we were let off at our respective hotels. It was, of course long since dark. I did my wash and went to bed early to be ready for the next heavy day of sightseeing.

Saturday, 21 July. This was the day I wanted to go to the Prambanan plain to visit a whole bunch of temples. It is about 17 km. from Yogya. To get there I could take a local bus from the bus terminal. I had meant to get up early but had set the alarm for 6 pm instead of 6 am (24 hr. clock) and slept through the Muslim's call to worship, which probably shows how tired I was from the day before. As a result I didn't awake until 7. Again the maps mislead me and it took much longer than expected to walk to the bus terminal. There I had apparently just missed a bus since there were only a couple of passengers already on the bus to Prambanan, which is also the name of a village. After a couple of minutes a girl got on the bus and in spite of all the empty seats she came to sit next to me. There followed the usual conversation of "Where you from?", "How long here?", "Do you like it?", *etc.* It was rather enjoyable. She was in the last year of high school and, if I understood correctly, wants to go to the university to study biology, and is the oldest of four (or maybe it was five – I wasn't sure whether she

was including herself in the count). Because she and I were both going to Prambanan, it was impossible for the conductor to overcharge me. So it cost only Rp 250; coming back it would cost 300. Her English was pretty good. She asked me to correct her and wanted to know the meaning of a couple of words she often hears in songs: “wanna” and “gonna”. It took me a while to figure out what she meant. I explained that they meant “want to” and “am going to” and that they are not good English. Her hobby is corresponding, she said, and she asked for my address. I did not really expect her to write, and I still have not heard from her.

Although she got off a stop earlier, she had given the conductor explicit instructions that he was to make sure that I got off at the main temple complex. And that he did—right before the main gate. The main set of temples is enclosed and you pay a small admission fee. Apparently an entire village was moved to create this park when they decided to restore the temples. The word restoration is probably not entirely correct since it amounts more to rebuilding them. There are three main temples next to each other, one of which is still being restored and hence is under scaffolding, plus a few smaller ones in the same complex. Apart from Borobudur, these temples, built in the ninth century, were the most impressive that I saw. Unfortunately, due to my late awakening, I was late: tour buses were already in the parking area and more were arriving every minute. The place was getting rather full, worse than Borobudur. Nevertheless, it was extremely interesting. The temples are richly decorated, and I took a lot of pictures. Unfortunately, to my chagrin, I discovered that although I had brought my flash, I had left the batteries in my hotel. So no shots of the statues inside. It’s a pity.

There followed visits to a few temples, also within the park but some distance away. They were still being or still to be restored. It was interesting to watch the work at one site where fork lifts were carrying stones from a large field full of them to the temple where they were then set into the proper place. There was, as I had hoped, a back gate. Exiting there saved me a kilometer or so walking, since it let me out exactly on the way to some lesser temples in the area. Walking to them was extremely interesting, since the road was through fields and residential areas. Hence you could see how the people lived and worked. Houses were grouped in living areas of a hundred or so houses with open areas and sheds for oxen. Chickens ran loose. Most houses and sheds had walls of braided strips of bamboo (or palm?). People were working in the fields: rice and sugar cane. Banana trees lined the roads. Grain (rice, I think) laid on the ground to dry, also on the asphalt road. Kids on motor bikes just road through it, making no effort to avoid it! All the little kids yell “Hello mister”. And some want to pose for you: “Portrait mister?”, for which they would undoubtedly want some money.

At the entrance to housing compounds there is usually an archway. On some you see pictures or *bas relief*, generally of a government propaganda sort either promoting the military, which may have helped to build the compound, or the most important message of birth control. I saw the latter expressed in the form of a family of 4, parents and 2 children, well dressed and healthy looking with a nice cottage behind them. That was on one side of the archway. On the other side was a family with only one child. They were better dressed, had a bigger and nicer house and there was an airplane indicating that they also had nice vacations.

I walked back to Prambanan and headed on to some other ruins, *Kraton Ratu Boko*, a complex which was apparently a palace in the ninth century, a few kilometers the other side of Prambanan. Although it was hard to make much out of the ruins, the location atop a hill was beautiful. To get there I scorned, as usual, the eager *becak* drivers, who assured me that it was 4 km., neglecting to say that the last kilometer was along a steep path where you could only walk. After enjoying the views I walked back mostly along paths through the woods. I knew the general direction and figured I couldn’t really get lost. It was interesting to see the small houses apparently in the middle of the woods. They were certainly unreachable by car, and some not even by motorbike. Outside of one house an old man greeted me. To say something I asked him the way to Prambanan, which he pointed to and which was the direction I was going. He seemed very friendly, but spoke no English and I no Indonesian. The trip would certainly have been more enlightening if I could have spoken the language. It surprised me a bit to find so many houses there in the ‘middle of nowhere’ and reinforced what I had read about the over-population of Java.

I got back to Prambanan and caught a full bus to Yogya. It was almost dark by the time we reached Yogya and I was too tired to walk from the bus station to the hotel and so took a local bus from the bus terminal to near my hotel. I estimate that I had walked at least 20 km. in 35°C (95°F) heat. That night I just ate at a little sidewalk restaurant a block from my guest house which catered to tourists. It wasn’t that bad, but also not that good.

Sunday, 22 July. This was my day to see Yogya itself. I walked around Yogya and visited the *kraton*

(palace). At the *kraton* I saw a dance ‘rehearsal’ to gamelan music. To me it was a real performance. I think the only reason it is called a rehearsal is that ‘performances’ are only for the Sultan. The costumes were impressive and the gamelan music grows on you.

I walked around a lot of the back streets, which are much nicer than the main, traffic-filled, streets. I visited the bird market. Having birds is quite the thing. I saw one house with 5 tall poles ($2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high) with a bird cage at the top of each. The cages could be raised and lowered like flags. There were many houses with fewer bird poles.

Monday, 23 July. This was the first day of the new year of the Javanese calendar. I feared that this might mean that some things would be closed, but nevertheless caught an early bus (around 7) to Solo, 65 km. away for Rp900. I walked around a lot and managed to find the palace, Surakarta *kraton*. In the dance pavilion they had real rehearsals or maybe lessons, the dancers in normal clothes (jeans). There was a gamelan orchestra. The guidebooks said that Solo dances are more fluid than those of Yogya although I am afraid that I couldn’t see it. The dances they did all had songs which the ones in Yogya did not (except for a choir in part of one), but that could have been coincidence. Then I went through the audience room, which also serves as museum, of the *kraton*. There was the usual collection of palace bric-a-brac, jewelry for the dancers, and puppets. Then we saw the princess’ half of the living quarters: open-air living room, *i.e.*, ceiling but no walls, a garden, dressing room, bedroom, dining room. A nice way to live. The prince was apparently giving a New Year’s reception for the people of Solo that evening. Two of the daughters would be arriving in the afternoon. Among the photos of friends was one of Juliana and Bernhard.

Walking around town, it was clear that it was a holiday. Most of the stores were closed, though a large batik store was open. Aimed at tourists, it was air conditioned. I looked at many nice things and finally bought a shirt for Karl, which, it turned out, he likes.

There was lots of activity at a big market and the adjoining park, a large grassy area. I couldn’t figure out whether something was going to happen or whether it was just a lot of people enjoying a free day by shopping and snacking. Nearby was the second *kraton* of Solo. It belongs to the second ‘ruling family’, a prince instead of the Sultan. Unfortunately both palaces of Solo are only open in the morning. So I missed this one.

I ate lunch in a small restaurant and walked back to the bus station. It continues to amaze me how everyone finds it so highly unusual that a European, and an old one at that, prefers to walk rather than be pedalled in a *becak*. The bus, as usual, was packed.

Back in Yogya I ate dinner in a restaurant not far from the hotel opposite an amusement park. There were two other tables occupied, both by Europeans. Then a large group of Indonesians came in to eat before going to the amusement park. There were more people than places, but that didn’t seem to matter much. They doubled up where possible and some ate extra quickly in order to make room for others. They wolfed their food, which had been immediately set before them. Either they had been expected or what they wanted was already ready. They were all in and out before I was half through with my dinner. Although I must admit that I had about twice as much to eat.

Tuesday, 24 July. I had decided to escape the hassle of getting to and from the bus station with my baggage and so had booked a minibus, which goes from door to door for only a little more money. The minibus turned out to be a van with air conditioning which barely worked, the hardest seats I’ve ever sat on, and no head room. It picked me up first and then spent more than an hour picking up the other passengers. At least it made fewer stops along the way than a normal bus. But it still cost the entire day to get to Malang.

I had originally planned on only going as far as Blitar, since there was a temple near there that I wanted to see. But I was getting rather tired of all the hassle of finding a hotel and so decided to go all the way to Malang and to come back to Blitar on a day trip.

Malang is up in the hills a bit and so is cooler. It actually rained a few drops today. The hotel I wanted to stay at was full, but another, slightly more expensive hotel still had rooms. The post office next to the hotel was still open at 6 so that I could cash my second postal check of the trip and mail a post card. I went to Toko Oen for dinner. That is a tea shoppe-restaurant which is a relic of Dutch times. It has pastries and candies, typically Dutch, and Western as well as Indonesian food on the menu. You can even get an *uitsmijter*. And the beer is cold. I chose from the Indonesian menu, of course. The

waiters are dressed in white as in colonial times, but their manners are more modern. The hotel I had wanted to stay at was also supposed to be such a relic.

After eating I saw that a travel agent was still open and I reserved transportation to the Surabaya airport on Friday. I also asked about reconfirming my flight from Surabaya to Denpasar. They would do it for what seemed to me to be a rather exorbitant price. I decided to call myself from my hotel. The connection was terrible, the girl at the airline spoke very poor English, and the telephone call cost more than what the travel agent wanted. So, it was a bad decision. But I thus learned how expensive the telephone was. I could have taken a bus to Surabaya and back for less! Transportation is ridiculously cheap, but telephones cost even more than in the West.

Wednesday, 25 July. Breakfast in the hotel was a buffet from which you could eat as much as you wanted. There was fried rice, pieces of beef in a clear sauce to put over it, boiled eggs, pickled vegetables, and coffee and tea. There was also toast and jam for Westerners who couldn't stomach fried rice at 6 in the morning. After a hearty breakfast I was ready for a full day of sightseeing.

This was the day for the temples near Malang. To start with I had to get to the Blimbing colt station. According to the guidebooks there was a minibus station about 10 minutes walk from the hotel where I could get a minibus to Blimbing. The guidebooks showed it on their maps but didn't give its name. After utterly scouring the neighborhood I finally gave up and just walked to Blimbing. It had the advantage of letting me see a good deal of Malang.

Malang was a Dutch planters center and consequently it includes a couple of nice squares and some rather nice residential areas, or rather they look OK now but like they used to be very nice. After 4 or 5 kilometers I finally got to the *bemo* station of Blimbing.

I first took a *bemo* to Singosari to see the remains of a monument built around 1300 to honor the Hindu and Buddhist priests who died with the local king in a big war. A few hundred meters away are two *dwarapalas*, giant guardian statues supposedly from the original entrance gate to the king's headquarters. That sort of guardian statue was also at the *kraton*'s of Yogya and Solo as well as at the temples of Prambanan.

Then back to Blimbing where I could get another *bemo* to Tumpang, location of another temple, Candi Jago. Built in 1268, it is supposedly a memorial to one of the Singosari kings. It shows the mixture of religions present at that time, Hindu and Buddhist, plus lots of earthy scenes. Unfortunately it is in pretty poor condition. Across the street was a primary school. It was noon recess and the children were playing in the schoolyard. When they saw me climbing on the temple to look at the sculpture, they called and waved.

When I was done looking at Candi Jago, I walked to the center of town to look for the next *bemo*. Here I collected my next girl. She approached me as I was looking for the *bemo* and asked if she could help me. I told her that I wanted to go to Candi Kidal, and she walked with me to the *bemo*, made certain that I got to sit in the front seat instead of in back, and also asked how much it would be so that I didn't end up getting gouged on the price. She stayed talking with me until I left, which took some time since I was the first to get in the *bemo*. Her English was none too good, but still the conversation was interesting. She worked as some sort of administrative assistant at a school. She was about 20, wanted to study more, go to the university. That seemed to be more or less the story of everyone I met. Of course she asked for my address. And like all Indonesians, she was very surprised that I was travelling alone, without my wife and children.

Finally, the *bemo* was overfull and we could leave. I was sure glad that she got me a seat in front. We had 3 adults and 2 children on the front seat, plus the driver. And this in a car not much bigger than a *deux-chevaux*. The back was even more packed.

Candi Kidal is one of the, if not *the*, nicest temples I saw. It is in good condition, probably as the result of restoration, and is located in a beautiful setting next to a papaya grove. I was the only visitor. Like Candi Jago, it is a 13th century temple to a Singosari king. However, this one is tall and relatively slender, while Candi Jago was much broader. It is richly ornamented.

After seeing the temple, I had a choice of waiting along the side of the road for the next *bemo* or walking further towards the village of Kidal. I chose for the latter, since I could always flag down a *bemo* if one came along. None did. It was nice to pass all the houses. This was more out in the country than where I walked near Prambanan and the houses were more apart rather than in compounds. I had the feeling that I was a much stranger sight here than around Yogya. There was much less "Hello, mister",

more silent standing and watching. But if I nodded and said hello there were smiles and nods back. I also had the feeling that they were making jokes about me as I passed, especially the teenage boys, judging by their laughter.

In Kidal I found a *bemo* which was about ready to leave. It brought me somewhere where I had to change to another *bemo* which went to somewhere in Malang. The only problem was that I didn't know where. I started walking in what I hoped was a good direction and after quite a bit of wandering around finally found something I recognized.

The elevation really makes a difference. The hotel thermometer read only 28°C (82°F) when I got back in the afternoon. And it certainly wasn't bad walking around. It was cloudy most of the day and the evening seemed downright cool. I almost wished I had a sweater. I ate delicious spicy food at a Padang restaurant recommended by the guidebook and followed it with a beer at Toko Oen.

Thursday, 26 July. Having skipped Blitar on my way to Malang, I wanted to go back to see the Panataran temples. First, of course, I had to find the bus station. It seemed I spent half of my time looking for bus stations. I started walking in the direction indicated on the map and reached a nice residential neighborhood near the university. The houses reminded me of a residential area in California: nice lawns, one story, TV dish antennas. I was overtaken by an old man on a bicycle who greeted me in Dutch and finding that I understood Dutch proceeded to tell me his life story, which to tell the truth I could hardly understand. His Dutch was old-fashioned and not terribly fluent. At any rate it had been, and still was, a hard life. And anything I could do to help would be appreciated. After hearing 'no' a few times he gave up and pedalled off. We were walking the whole time and shortly thereafter the good neighborhood ran out and a particularly poor one began. I decided that I had missed the bus station. The question was whether to walk back the way I had come or to try something new. I chose for the latter. After a time I came to a large market, very colorful with lots of different vegetables and fruits. And not too long after that I recognized where I was—not far from my hotel. It was then that I noticed that the name of the bus terminal I was looking for was also the destination of one of the city minibuses. I decided that I still had time to go to Blitar, took the minibus, and after a rather long ride to the outskirts of town, I was in a big bus to Blitar.

The bus ride was no more hair-raising than most. And the haggling with the *bemo* driver in Blitar was also not exceptional: I refused the offer of a 'charter' and after a short wait we left. I don't think I paid more than twice the normal fare. In the hope of a quick fare back they brought me right up to the temple entrance instead of stopping in the village a half kilometer before. They wanted to wait for me at the temple or agree on a time to pick me up, but I told them not to bother since I didn't know how long I wanted to stay. I am not sure they understood: they waited for a while but were not there when I came out almost two hours later.

The Hindu Panataran temple complex was started around 1200 and built over a period of about 250 years. It is the largest group of temples in Eastern Java. The complex is nicely maintained and there were only a few visitors, which made it very pleasant. There are several temples with quite extraordinary decorations. In contrast to Western art, the development here was from three-dimensional to more two-dimensional sculpture as it became less representative and more decorative. The latest period included intriguing medallions where animals are almost hidden in geometric designs.

After seeing the temples I started walking back through the village until a *bemo* came along and took me back to the bus station. As usual, it was only a short wait before the next bus left for Malang. That evening I ate at another Padang restaurant and again followed it by a beer at Toko Oen.

Friday, 27 July. This morning I slept late, until almost 8, had breakfast and took a few pictures of Malang. Then I waited for my car to the Surabaya airport. Like all flights in Southeast Asia the flight to Denpasar was full.

Arriving in Denpasar airport I found that there is an hour's time change. So Bali has the same time as Singapore. There was a hotel reservation office at the airport. Unfortunately it had only a short list of hotels for Ubud. I recognized only one name from the guidebooks. And it was full. So I picked a couple more at random until there was one free. Fortunately there was an Australian couple also reserving a hotel in Ubud. I asked if they would like to share a taxi, which they agreed to. This was a big savings for me since a taxi to Ubud cost Rp 26000 and so I only had to pay a third of that instead of the whole price.

My place turned out to be one floor of a two-story cottage in the middle of rice paddies just outside of town for Rp 20000 per night. That included breakfast as well as coffee or tea whenever I wanted it.

The bathroom was nice, with shower and Western toilet. There was supposed to be hot water, but the heater didn't work. Fortunately I could move upstairs the next day; there the heater did work.

Sunset, which happened just as I got to the cottage, was extraordinarily beautiful. And from the front porch of my cottage I had the perfect view of the sun setting between the palms. Unfortunately, it did not last long and by the time I had been shown around the place it had degenerated too much to get a good picture. The location is very picturesque although the cottage is a bit primitive and not terribly clean. And it is quiet, except for the frogs. Actually a few more frogs would have been welcome since there were also mosquitoes. It was good that I had a flashlight. Otherwise I would have ended up in the paddies for sure.

Ubud is known as an artists colony and, like most such places the world over, has degenerated into a tourist attraction. There are many arts and crafts stores, souvenir stores, travel and tour agents, and restaurants serving Western food. It took some scouting around to find a restaurant with more or less authentic food.

Saturday, 28 July. In the morning I woke up with the sun, got dressed and admired the rice paddies. People were already at work, which means they must have gotten up even before the sun. The boy was there to fix my breakfast, a bowl of assorted tropical fruit and a pancake wrapped around a banana with shredded coconut and thick molasses. There was also a thermos full of hot water with which I could make coffee or tea. The coffee powder looked like instant it was so finely ground. It was delicious; I had to ask for more coffee the next day.

After breakfast I walked into town to find a *bemo* to go to Denpasar. It turned out to be a two-stage trip, changing to another *bemo* at a *bemo* station halfway there. In Denpasar, the capital of Bali, I first went to the Garuda office to reconfirm my flight to Singapore. It was packed with people trying to change reservations or get flights, practically impossible with everything fully booked.

Then I walked into town. First I went to the Bali Museum. Spread over several buildings built in the styles of various regions of Bali, it houses a nice collection of statues, masks, and costumes, including ceremonial knives and mock-ups of various Balinese ceremonies: wedding, cremation, tooth filing. There are also interesting displays of household implements. Everything is labelled in English as well as Indonesian, which certainly made things easier.

Next door to the museum is a Buddhist temple. I visited it, which meant I had to rent a Buddhist temple scarf (for Rp 1000) and tie it around my waist. There seemed to be no one there except for tourists and the caretaker (scarf renter). Many of the statues were draped with black and white checked cloths, the significance of which remained as hidden as the statues themselves.

I walked around Denpasar a while. Like all Indonesian cities, it is crowded, and the air is filled with exhaust fumes. The large covered multi-story market was colorful. There were Buddhist shrines everywhere you looked, which I was to discover was true of the entire island of Bali. This is rather like the small chapels along the roads in parts of France, but much more frequent.

Particularly amusing and interesting was the Catholic church built in Balinese style. You had to look carefully to realize that there was a cross on top and that the statues were Christian angels rather than Buddhist statues.

Back in Ubud, I walked around a bit and then went back to my cottage. The boy came to give me a new thermos of hot water and to pump (by hand) water from the well into the water tank on a tower next to the cottage. I moved upstairs and made use of the hot water to take a shower and get caught up on my laundry. Then I enjoyed looking at the rice paddies while drinking a cup of coffee. The boy made an offer to Buddha—incense and flowers—at the entrance to the garden in front of the cottage, I guess to protect the cottage from evil spirits. The workers all trooped home from the paddies, passing in front of my cottage, just before sunset. But the sunset was not at all like the day before. It had completely clouded over. And later when I walked to the restaurant it was raining—actually just a fine mist.

Shortly after dark the lights suddenly went out. A few minutes later the boy arrived on his motorbike with a candle and some matches. I decided I might as well go to eat. Eating by candlelight would have been romantic had I not been alone. The lights came back on as I was ordering, but later went out again. I walked home by flashlight.

The tourist profile here is quite different than on Java. There the Dutch predominated, but here there is a much more even mix of Europeans. There are quite a number of French, German and Italian. And of course many Australians.

Sunday, 29 July. It was raining when I awoke at 7:30, which explains why I slept so late. It wasn't raining hard, but too much to go out and play tourist, especially since I did not have an umbrella or a jacket. The sky was completely covered by clouds; there was no wind; it looked like it could last for days. The boy brought breakfast, a bowl of tropical fruit and French toast. I asked him if he thought the weather would clear up. He said maybe it would, but in a way that did not sound particularly encouraging.

Around 9:30 it looked like it might be clearing and I decided to chance it. I took a *bemo* to Gianyar and then another to Klungkung. There I took a wrong turn and shortly thereafter it really started to pour. I took refuge under a porch of what looked like a clubhouse. There was an open area outside where I supposed you could play games and a room where you could have meetings. There were some young men inside. Seeing me, they came out to chat. It did not take too long before the rain stopped and the boys pointed me in the right direction for the remains of the palace and "court house".

There is just one open pavilion of the palace. However it is very nice, being elevated and surrounded by water and hence called a floating pavilion. Nearby is another pavilion, smaller, where the judges used to hear cases. There are numerous statues around both pavilions. These are rather remarkable in that many are of Westerners, which you can see both by their features and by their clothing. Both pavilions also have remarkable paintings on the ceiling. Those in the "court house" include many scenes of heaven and hell, which were used by the judges to influence witnesses: "You see what will happen to you if you don't tell the truth."

I had wanted to go on to visit the "mother temple", *i.e.*, the central Buddhist temple for all of Bali. But it is in a rather isolated place and I could not find a *bemo* to take me there. Or rather, I could not find a *bemo* which went there. There were plenty who wanted to take me there, wait, and bring me back for a price. I decided to forego it and returned to Ubud the way I came. What was interesting was that it only cost about half as much going back. I got back to Ubud rather early. I read a book and tried to decide what to do the next day until it was time to go to eat.

Monday, 30 July. It was not raining when I got up and though a bit cloudy it looked like it could be a good day. I went to Bangli where there was a Buddhist temple which was interesting. It had been the state temple of the Bangli kingdom. It was a kilometer or so outside of town, an easy walk. There were lots of people selling things outside, including sashes. I of course had to buy a sash to go in. The woman wanted Rp2000. I said that was too much and she said to name a price. I guess I started too high with 1000, because she immediately accepted it.

The temple was indeed interesting. It was on the side of a hill with stairways lined with the most outlandish statues leading up to stone portals. Going through the portal you came to more stairs going up to the next level. There you found a number of small shrines, the various purposes of which I could not figure out.

I walked back to town and then 4 or 5 km. in another direction to where there was a hill, from the top of which the guidebooks said there was a wonderful view out over the southwest quarter of the island. The village at the base of the hill was small and not as used to tourists as most of the island. Most people stared, the school kids yelled "hello mister" and mothers pointed me out to their little children and babies, not all of whom were delighted to see this strange looking person.

The school kids pointed me in what I hoped was the right direction. A path lead along a bathing area—it looked like two areas, one for men and one for women—and uphill into the jungle. I am not sure if I should call it a jungle since large patches had been cleared for cultivation. I am afraid I didn't recognize anything that they were growing, although some of the plants looked similar to some indoor plants in Holland. It was steep climbing in some places with no clear path. I just headed 'up'. The view from the top was, I guess, worth it. On a clear day it would have been spectacular, extending over a long stretch of shoreline on the one side and views of the mountains of central Bali on the other. Unfortunately the haze partially masked the shoreline and almost completely hid the mountains. Still it wasn't bad. Getting back down was. The rain of the previous day had made the ground pretty muddy and slippery. At one point I fell—I think my bifocals caused me to misjudge the place of a tree root I was going to step on—and slightly sprained my knee. Not too bad, fortunately, and I could continue my way down the hill and back to Bangli.

There I had yet another temple to see, a Buddhist temple of death. The interesting thing was the carvings on stone panels showing the pleasures of heaven and the tortures of hell. But man is the same

the whole world over: the pleasures and tortures were very similar to those of medieval Christians, just the style of the sculpture was somewhat different.

I got back to Ubud before it started to rain, though not by much. It rained hard and my last chance at photos of a beautiful sunset drowned. It stopped by the time I went to eat. I chose a restaurant close by which was supposed to be good, though expensive. It was rather fancy with attentive service and the food was good. The diners were, I think, all Americans; I almost felt out of place. At Rp 15000 it was the most expensive meal I had in Indonesia, outdoing my fish dinner in Jakarta.

Tuesday, 31 July. It rained hard during the night and some this morning but stopped around 9. I paid for my stay and took my suitcase to the travel agent where I had booked transportation to the airport and left it there. Since it was so cloudy and looked so much like rain I had decided that sun cream wasn't necessary. That was to prove to be a huge miscalculation. I had planned to make a long circular walk through the rice paddies to a neighboring village where there was a temple and eventually end up back in Ubud in time to catch my minibus to the airport at 2.

I started out from my cottage along a path through the paddies. It was beautiful. People were working in the paddies transplanting seedlings. I passed small enclosures at the edge of paddies where people kept ducks and saw one man driving his ducks to a new place. There was also a small enclosure where someone kept his ox. The series of ditches and small dams to partition the flowing water among the various paddies was quite ingenious.

But my plan fell through when the path ran out. Maybe I could have walked down a steep path to a river, crossed it, and climbed up the other side, but I didn't dare try. The path was steep and slippery from all the rain and my sprained knee hurt if I did anything besides walk on level ground. So I walked back the way I had come. The sun came out in full force and it got pretty hot. I soon regretted my lack of sun cream.

I walked around Ubud, spending some time at the market, which was colorful, not the least from the flowers being sold for the offerings at the Buddhist temples. I had skipped the market on other days in my rush to go somewhere. This was an example of unspoiled Bali. Even though it was in the middle of a very touristy place, the market was completely Balinese. There weren't even many tourists gawking. The same was true if you ventured a couple of streets away from the tourist shops.

After a time I got to the Monkey Forest, a woods or jungle on the edge of Ubud. It lives up to its name: there is a colony of monkeys that lives there. Although wild, they are very tame. They ought to be, considering all the tourists and all the vendors of peanuts and bananas. By then I was pretty tired and beginning to feel that I was getting sunburned, a feeling that always comes far too late. So I went to eat a bit early and stretched that out until it was time for my shuttle bus.

The ride to the airport was uneventful, the plane was on time, and the Singapore Airlines food was again quite good. *BUT*, when I arrived in Singapore I found that my suitcase hadn't. Of course that made it easier to take the bus to town and walk the 4 or 5 blocks to my hotel. But no clean clothes! And it was to take 3 days before it showed up. It seems the suitcase was homesick and had gone straight back to Amsterdam.

Wednesday, 1 August. My hotel in Singapore was quite luxurious: a large room with the biggest bed (3-person) I have ever slept in, TV, refrigerator, nice bathroom, on the eighth floor giving a nice view. It was quite a change from the past three weeks, but now I wasn't paying for it myself. The conference was to start this evening with a reception. So I had the day free to wander around Singapore in my old dirty Indonesia clothes and badly sunburned face. I tried to be inside as much as possible, which limited me to shopping. I ran into several other physicists who had also arrived a day early.

Thursday–Saturday, 2–4 August. Parallel sessions the whole day. One evening was a reception at a museum where there was a special exhibit from China on the Han Dynasty, including some of the clay statues of warriors found at a burial place a few years ago. It was very interesting and perhaps the highlight of Singapore. My suitcase finally arrived from Amsterdam on 3 August, in the evening while I was at dinner. But they neglected to return the key, which I had had to give them so that they could bring the suitcase through customs. The key arrived the next morning.

Sunday, 5 August. The conference had organized a tour, which was rather worthless. It took us to the Chinese temple, which I had seen on my first visit a few weeks earlier. Then there was a stop at a factory making tourist junk. And finally a visit to the botanical gardens, very pretty and very well maintained. The afternoon was free and I walked around town seeing Chinese and Indian neighborhoods.

Monday–Wednesday, 6–8 August. Plenary sessions the whole day. One evening the banquet, a many (I lost count) course Chinese dinner with a floor show of dances. It was delicious. And unbelievable as we Westerners might find it, there was no rice. At big fancy banquets rice is apparently not eaten; it is too common.

Thursday, 9 August. This was my last day in Singapore. I had actually stayed an extra day in order to arrive back at Schiphol at the same time as Marc when he returned from the U. S. Also, this was the day of the 25th anniversary of the nation of Singapore. So it was a big holiday. I went to the zoo in the morning and wanted to have a nice meal early in the afternoon and see the parade before going to the airport. The zoo was small, but nicely laid out, and of course it had a somewhat different collection of animals than what I was used to. But just about everything went wrong for the rest of the day. Of all things, the restaurants on my list were closed for the holiday. By the time I had worked my way down to one that was open it was too late; they had stopped serving. So a not very good meal at another place.

Then I walked around and saw the preparations for the parade, and finally part of the parade itself. By then it was getting sort of late, and I picked up my suitcase at the hotel. But by this time the buses had stopped running since the entire center of the city was now closed to traffic. After being sent here and there by different well-meaning people, I concluded that there was no way to get a bus to the airport. Earlier in the day I had asked at the tourist office if it was possible to take the metro to someplace near the airport and then a bus, because I had foreseen that there might be trouble. But I was told that that was impossible and that I would be able to take a bus. Anyway, in desperation I went to the metro station and asked the attendant. He told me how to do it, and I just made it to the airport the advised 2 hours before flight. The plane took off only a few minutes late. The stop at Dubai took a bit longer than scheduled. Whether that had something to do with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait I don't know. It did interrupt my sleep. At Zurich the stop also took a bit longer. We finally arrived in Amsterdam about a half hour late. So instead of arriving 15 minutes before Marc, I arrived 15 minutes after him. He was already through customs and waiting for me with Patsy. It was nice to be home again.