Afterimages

Constructing a counter-archive of south Bali histories through moving image

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Leyla Stevens declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Creative Arts at the University of Technology Sydney, in the School of International Studies and Education, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution. This research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program.

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FORMAT OF THIS THESIS

This practice-led doctoral thesis is comprised of a creative component and a written dissertation. The creative component was realised through three iterations of a moving image project, each framed by the research concerns of this thesis and were the primary contribution to my field of knowledge. The outcome of each iteration was a public exhibition at a Sydney-based art gallery including: *Of Love and Decomposition* (2016) a solo presentation at Firstdraft Gallery; *John Fries Award* (2018) a selective group exhibition at UNSW Galleries; and *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2019) at UTS ART. The structure of this written dissertation comprises four chapters that move through a theoretical framework, the genealogy to my visual arts practice and analysis of my moving image project.

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ABSTRACT

In the past three decades the archive has been a significant site of engagement internationally for artists questioning how forms of history have been privileged and legitimised. In Indonesia, contemporary artists who engage with contested national histories have generated forms of counter culture against state controlled discourses and have given spaces of representation for marginalised perspectives. This thesis builds upon this questioning of histories within Indonesian contemporary art: extending upon a mode of practice that can be thought of as the counter-archive. It does so by extending the concept of archive to place: considering South Bali and its imaginary and material fragments as a living archive. Reading 'place as archive' is important because it recovers some of the island's hidden histories that have been erased by the mainstream imaginary of Bali as an exotic paradise.

This practice-led thesis constructs a south Bali counter-archive through a multi-channel video installation and an exegesis. The creative component builds upon a genre of lens-based practices that respond to histories of place; but rather than documenting historical events as they happen, it aims attention to their afterimages and traces. The thesis examines two historical trajectories that continue to inform and contest the geography of Bali today. The first trajectory is the troubling legacy of Indonesia's 1965–66 mass killings of alleged communists and the haunting residue of unacknowledged gravesites that lie underneath tourist geography. In the second narrative, the project draws from the romance of the early surf odysseys that occurred in the 1970s. It examines the legacy of this early tourism through the lens of transculturation and and considers how surf narratives sanitised geographies of trauma from 1965–66.

This thesis interweaves these two contesting narratives – 1965 memory and surfing stories – through a critical re-reading of Bali's prevailing narratives. Drawing from feminist methodologies of correction and contrapuntal strategies, this thesis posits that we read histories tangentially: connecting disparate narratives as a method of reframing historical knowledge. The findings from the analysis of my creative practice, and the larger context of Indonesian contemporary art, support an expanded approach to what constitutes an archive. It posits that an archive of place, reframed as artworks and creative practices, offers alternative forms of historiography.

INTRODUCTION

Starting place: Orientating south Bali

This thesis began as a response to two geographical starting points. The first is a stretch of coastline that runs from the village of Kuta, down through to the Bukit peninsula, and ending at Uluwatu—the southernmost tip of the island of Bali. This coastline sits within Bali's Badung regency, the island's most heavily touristed and populated region. It is arid land that makes for poor farming, and pre-tourism it was predominantly known as a series of fishing villages. The southern Bukit peninsular is made up of limestone, forming steep cliffs leading down to rocky beaches. The string of beaches that forms this coastline are distinguished for their white sand and for idyllic surfing conditions. What connects this stretch of west facing beaches is a history of early surf tourism and western travellers in the 1970s that foregrounds imaginaries of Bali as an island paradise. Contained within this coastline are formative images of Bali as a series of white sand beaches, coconut trees, sunsets over the ocean and peaceful coastal villages that continue to sustain current tourist economies.

The second geographical point is a banyan tree. This tree sits on the edge of a parking lot of a local soccer field and borders a busy road that leads out to the main highway artery connecting south Bali. Buried underneath the stretch of road that the tree sits along is a hidden mass grave from state sanctioned anti-communism killings in 1965–66 where an estimated 500,000 to one million people died. It was my father who first revealed to me the presence of a mass grave at the banyan tree site. He remembers witnessing as a boy a large deep hole being filled with bodies. It was only as an adult that I first heard him share this memory of his. In that revealment an ocular shift occurred for me, where seemingly ordinary landmarks, in places deeply familiar to me, were brought into sharp focus. More than that, it also revealed to me literal gaps of knowledge in south Bali's geographies. These sites registered as blind spots, where the presence of the missing dead had been rendered invisible and silent within vernacular spaces of the village or along urbanised tourist topographies. In this particular site, what we do have is a tree that acts as a signal in the landscape to the hidden mass grave. Banyan trees are significant to Balinese perspectives around the unseen and the immaterial. These trees are thought of as attractors of spirits and are respected landmarks. I have come to think of this banyan tree as a guardian to this site and as an alternative archive of 1965–66 histories in Bali.

The connections and contestations between these two sites have produced the primary questions that govern this thesis. What we have are two disparate histories of Bali that are embedded within current geographies. One relates to the romance and nostalgia of Bali as experienced by a generation of south Balinese youth and foreign travellers in the early 1970s. The other relates to a history that has been surrounded by a politicised amnesia and subject to further loss and trauma. Most significantly I explore these histories and the memory of 'present pasts' (Huyssen 2003) as a spatial question. I primarily respond to marginalised memory around 1965 in Bali and surfer histories through an engagement with place and its representations. Thinking through theory that connects concepts surrounding place, image, memory and history, I explore the ways these narratives reverberate within current geographies. As I address later in this introduction, my theoretical approach has been to focus upon place as an archive, and my practice-based research has been to recover marginal connections and stories contained within this archive.

Underscoring these two landmarks (a tree and a coastline) is a larger geography that I delineate as 'south Bali'. My central focus is upon coastline geographies and excludes the capital city of Denpasar that sits in the central south. What I focus upon are tourist geographies: starting with Kuta, north to Legian and Seminyak, south to the Bukit peninsula and east to Sanur and Nusa Dua. This is an amorphous map with unofficial borders. Primarily I respond to the imaginary of the 'south' in Bali that has been sustained through histories of colonialism, tourism, as well as Balinese cultural cartographies. Additionally this focus upon south Bali has been instigated by my own position and family history that is intertwined with this region.

As a place, south Bali has occupied shifting imaginaries that have oscillated between desirability and undesirability. This is most exemplified by the evolution of Kuta, which pre-tourism was known as a poor fishing village and now is defined through mass tourism. During the colonial period Bali's southern coastlines were considered marginal to the centres of power that were associated with Bali's central, northern and eastern kingdoms, although it did contain a natural harbour port essential for trade, including seventeenth-century Dutch slave trade (Vickers 2012, p. 31). There is also a symbolic demarcation of cultural space in Bali where the south is understood as a profane and even impure place. Much of how cultural space is mapped in Bali tracks the flow of water across the island, from mountain springs in the north, trickling down to rivers, streams, subak irrigation systems and eventually the ocean in the south. The symbolism of this directional line maps

a connection between the sacred north (*kaja*), which is aligned with Mount Agung, and the profane south (*kelod*), which is aligned with the sea. This north-south axis is a symbolic trajectory that governs the design of a village, the architecture of the family home and is a meridian line that runs through the body, from the head (north) to the feet (south). However these cardinal directions are also relative to Agung, whose true position lies in the north-east of the island. If you live in the regions north of the mountain, *kaja* becomes south and *kelod* lies north towards the Bali Sea. In Balinese cartographies, 'south' is thus always orientated towards the ocean, which is understood as a liminal and dangerously powerful edge.

Bali's early surf tourism that developed in the 1970s and 80s caused a fundamental shift to how the south and the ocean were understood. South Bali's white sand beaches were now considered more desirable than the black volcanic sand beaches predominant to most of Bali. Its dangerous oceans were reconceived as idyllic surf breaks. Poor fishing villages were reframed as havens for Western hippy backpackers. Surf tourism reshaped Kuta from an undesirable margin into a lucrative and desirable centre. During the 1990s Kuta became the gateway to Bali's mass tourism destinations: where shopping malls, restaurants, resorts and nightclubs have become the dominant landscape over coconut fields and empty white sand beaches, and which now exist as desired imaginaries.

Now, once again, the position of Kuta has come full circle, where because of mass tourism it is considered undesirable by the very industry that instigated these changes. For many foreign tourists who seek a more idyllic version of Bali, Kuta registers now as being inauthentic, often referred to as 'not the real Bali'. Increasingly it sits outside of Bali's cultured or luxury tourism and is often framed as cheap, crass and an uncultured tourist destination, predominantly visited by pleasure seeking Australians on short term holidays. Current anxieties around Kuta can be understood through James Clifford's concept of a salvage paradigm (Clifford 1989): where notions of an idyllic traditional past are posited upon a ruined modern future (a point explored in Chapter Four). The nostalgic version of Kuta in the 1970s, as a peaceful coastal village, hovers as a spectral imagination upon current manifestations of place. Kuta is thus a haunted place marked by a deep ambivalence, where conflictions of desirability continue to map its terrain.

Finally, this study is instigated from my own connection to Kuta, which is where my father's family is from and continues to live today. My own family history is embedded in

the evolution of Kuta and my family were active agents in this early period of tourism that generated fundamental changes in the village's social and economic structures. What is important to note about the development of tourism in Kuta is that it was driven by local entrepreneurial activity that occurred outside of official government plans for tourism building (Hussey 1989). While official government efforts concentrated on developing Sanur into large gated hotels, what occurred in Kuta in the early 70s was a direct response of local Balinese engaging with this new wave of surfers and their fellow types of travellers. As I explore later in this thesis, this era of tourism is a study of transculturation, where uneven encounters also enabled a shift in power and status for local south Balinese. During the 1970s my family built *losmens* (small accommodation) for foreign travellers on their family land. They initiated *warungs* (small restaurants) with menus catered for Western tastes. There was also romance with foreign travellers, marriages and a new generation of multiracial families. Early tourism history in south Bali is thus my own history: when my Balinese father met my Australian mother. My own position as an Australian-Balinese serves as a point of reflection throughout this thesis and I apply this transcultural perspective upon the histories and geographies that I engage with.

By engaging with Kuta's tourist geographies, the other impetus of this project was to think through how my own family histories were entangled in 1965 events. What was revealed to me through my father's stories was how none in Bali remained separate to these events, and how the impact of even being a simple bystander to the killings, becomes over time, an intergenerational concern. In turning my attention to traces of 1965 in current landscapes, I wanted to not only locate 1965 memory through survivor perspectives, but also within less defined narratives from those who acted as unwilling witnesses to these times. As in the case of my father, for the majority of his generation, 1965 sits as troubling memories that they wish to avoid. The sustained political rhetoric around 1965 has created an enforced forgetting around the killings within both public and private memory. Part of my initial research into this project was thus to learn how 1965 is remembered today intergenerationally and to talk to surviving relatives of victims. The people I spoke to were either friends of my family, friends of friends, or in one case, an extended family member. The stories that were shared to me were from the perspective of those who had a family member killed during 1965 and whose families subsequently suffered social stigmatisation and curtailment of civic rights. The ways in which each person remembered their story was varied. Most notably, those coming from a younger generation had shared their story before and felt keenly the injustice of their family's persecution. For others, there was less

certainty around their understanding of events, and a reticence to be identified as a victim. In speaking to people directly impacted by the killings, 1965 was no longer a terrible event that occurred in an abstract past. Instead, 1965 trauma was revealed as actively present within living bodies and a continuing communal concern.

As discussed later in this introduction and in Chapter Two, 1965 discourse has been well established in international scholarship and a recurring theme within Indonesian art. It can be assumed from an international perspective to think that 1965 narratives have been embraced as public knowledge in Bali, however outside of these intellectual and artistic circles, the topic of the killings for most Balinese remains suppressed and continues to be thought of as a dangerous subject. The significance of this project has been to think through alternative methods of reparation and discourse around 1965 through an artistic practice. What I have come to reflect is that by listening to the initial stories shared with me and by shaping new stories through video artworks, I am continuing the lineage of being a witness to these events. Yet instead of being an unwilling bystander, witnessing here speaks to the directing and framing of vision, of redressing blind spots. Through a lens-based practice, this project extends upon modes of looking and remembering, to offer alternative archives around 1965 memory.

Research question

To frame my enquiry into south Bali as a place, I pose the research question: *How do contesting histories in south Bali register in current geographies?* Through a creative-led research practice, an extended question is: *How can a moving image artwork create an archive of place?* This thesis asks what connections can be made between a coastline and a banyan tree and their implicit and explicit histories. In doing so, I map geographies of power, where dominant narratives of place lie as topographies over marginal or erased histories. Both the coastline (surfer histories) and the banyan tree (1965 memory) have been overlaid with master narratives that erase their complexities and the possibility of these histories evolving in the present. What this thesis explores, through a creative-led practice, are methods of recuperation that make space for alternative representations around south Bali.

There are several implications around this proposition of 'contesting histories' that need to be considered. It is not a new idea to point out the 'darker' history that underlies Bali's status as an island paradise (Robinson 1995). As key anthropological studies have shown, Bali as a tourist imaginary was implemented through colonial agendas and developed

through nation-building efforts (Picard 1996, 1997; Vickers 2012). Other scholars have also addressed how international surf tourism is implicated in erasing Bali's histories of political violence (Laderman 2014). Additionally we can track this notion of Bali's 'dark side' through international media portrayals that pitch Bali's ongoing environmental and social issues, as well as high profile crime cases, as a refute against its image as a peaceful paradise.[1]

The point of this research however is to stretch out the nuances of overly easy binaries made between 'dark' and 'paradise': to find out how these contradictions operate now in the messy south, whose geographies are ever under construction and in contradiction from transcultural relations and global flows. Additionally it introduces a critical framework to redress lasting nostalgia for Bali as a paradise, where realities of urbanisation, traffic, crime, waste and inequalities are positioned as exterior to a notion of an 'authentic' Bali that lies intact.

The significance of this research project is that it builds upon existing literature around Bali's contradictions through a visual arts practice. Through my theoretical approach, I propose significant connections between Balinese perspectives of place with key concepts in discourse surrounding the archive and place. What emerges throughout this thesis is the strength of artworks to recuperate marginal stories that lie outside of dominant understandings of place, to present these stories as continually unfolding and with complexity.

Theoretical approach

This thesis is situated within a field of contemporary art practices that engage with the politics of representation and memory surrounding historical events. Central to this field of practice is a critical engagement with the archive and the discursive systems of power that the archive is produced through. Starting with key poststructuralist thought, the archive not only refers to historical documents, photographs and materials, but also to institutional and discursive canons of knowledge. What emerges throughout this thesis is a notion of the archive as master historical narratives that continue to operate in places affected by the aftermath of colonialism and authoritarian regimes. This thesis thus

1 A quick search reveals an international media focus upon Bali's environmental or crime problems that dispute its image as a tourist beach holiday destination. See for example Wright (2016).

approaches the archive as a form of storytelling, where those who are contesting neutral claims of history are positing new stories with alternative narrative structures.

Feminist and decolonial approaches to the archive have provided this thesis with key concepts and methodologies to disrupt master narratives. I draw from the work of feminist art historian Griselda Pollock and her interrogation of Western masculine art canons. Pollock proposes to read back in the archive for alternative connections between disparate art history periods, media and genre. She disrupts the idea of history as a forward-facing progression and instead conceives of history as a relational network of images and events, 'jostling' in space (Pollock 2007, p. 9).

Parallel methodologies can be found in postcolonial studies that critically address the implicit ways Western culture sustains Western hegemonies. Edward Said's notion of 'counterpoint' is another key method that this thesis drawn from. Counterpoint refers to a critical mode of reading back into the archive for hidden subaltern perspectives (Said 1993). What feminist and decolonial methods around the archive have in common is that they connect what appears to be discrepant experiences to reveal marginal identities and histories. In other words, they rupture the self-evident claims of the archive to insert alternatives that were never represented at that time.

In the context of this project, feminist methods of interrogation and Said's method of counterpoint have proved instrumental in moving outside apolitical and ahistorical notions of Bali. This theoretical approach also aids to disrupt New Order shaped narratives around 1965 that continue to vilify communists and present a rhetoric of heroic nationhood around the killings. These methods allow me to read back into south Bali's narratives of island paradise and recuperate stories that fall within the margins of official and state-sanctioned knowledge.

The decision to frame this thesis through archive discourse is reflective of current prevailing themes in contemporary art and surrounding art discourse. An alternative theoretical framework would have been to draw from memory and trauma studies, and there are indeed times that these concerns overlap with this project.[2] However, approaching

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2 Maurice Halbwachs' seminal work on collective memory (Halbwachs 1925, in Farr 2012) and Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* or sites of memory (Nora 1996) are founding contributions to memory scholarship. One key debate that emerges through Nora is the scholarly tension between what differentiates memory (personal, subjective) and history (representational, discourse).

south Bali's histories through an archive lens has enabled me to address, more specifically, issues of visual representation when it comes to historical narratives. Additionally, I am able to speak to the function of artworks, which produce what this thesis names as counter-archives to master narratives. To frame a notion of the counter-archive as a mode of art practice I establish a genealogy of artworks that reclaim alternative narratives around Indonesia's histories of human rights abuses.

The other significant theoretical move of this thesis is to apply concepts of the archive in relation to place. I primarily do this by drawing upon place-based theory that allows for a connection to archival methods and thinking through place as living history. To start circumnavigating some of the existing binaries (idyllic past versus modern ruin) around south Bali, I draw upon the work of Doreen Massey, who in the field of social geography advocates for an understanding of place as a complex unfolding of coeval social relations, narratives or what she names *trajectories (*Massey 2005). Significantly, this refutes essentialist imaginations around the local, allowing for a sense of place that is ever under construction and informed by global connections (Massey 1994). Furthermore, Massey's theory provides this thesis with an approach to history and memory as a spatial concern. Building upon this approach, the work of historical geographer Tim Cresswell has provided me with the concept of 'place as a living archive' (Cresswell 2012). This enables me to read south Bali's coastlines and the site of the banyan tree as material archives. Also in this vein of thought is Andreas Huyssen's proposal for place as a palimpsest, where visible topographies overlay spectral histories (Huyssen 2003). Huyssen's theory has proved important to this thesis in that it connects my research with studies that address the after-effects of national histories upon place.

My approach to this thesis is thus through this interdisciplinary approach. There are several subsections to this thesis where other theories weave their way into the story and provide additional critical concepts. However the key methods that act as a barometer to my archival discussion are feminist methodologies of correction and Said's notion of counterpoint. Furthermore, I approach questions of the archive as a place-based concern, drawing from a wide breadth of theory that offers diverse concepts of place.

Research methodology

This thesis is a creative-led research project that centres upon my moving image practice. It analyses a series of moving image artworks and video installations made between 2016 –

2019 that were created for this thesis and guided by my theoretical framework surrounding the archive, historical memory, place and counterpoint. Drawing from an understanding that creative practice generates new knowledge, the artworks produced for this thesis are analysed in relation to the research questions that frame this thesis. This thesis is thus written through what Ross Gibson has named the 'dual consciousness' of scholarly observation and artistic experience (Gibson 2010). Feminist theorist Nina Lykke has also highlighted recent turns towards self-reflexive and experimental writing voices in feminist research which push against traditional academic writing styles that present a bodiless and decontextualised author (Lykke 2010, p. 164). Building upon these ideas, I have allowed for disparate identities to emerge throughout this written dissertation. One is from the position of the artist, engaging with my creative process and the outcomes of this process, which also folds back in reflexive motions to my transcultural position as an Australian-Balinese. The second method has been to inhabit the voice of a researcher: to engage with academic theory, historical studies and fieldwork methods. Switching between the two means for different cadences of writing to intermingle: where reflective, personal and informal expressions are merged with more traditional academic modes. I have allowed this weaving of different voices to emerge, and while at times this presents a disparity in tone, it also speaks to the switching modes of research that govern this thesis.

Through a visual arts practice this thesis provides a counter-archive to south Bali and its surrounding imaginaries. I focus upon representations around the ocean, coastlines and the natural world. Additionally I stage performances that speculate on spirits and spectral activity. I am interested in what a moving image practice might offer in terms of thinking about alternative forms of the archive and histories of place. It is important here to note that rather than simply interpreting my creative practice through my theoretical framework, these are the concepts that have guided my creative methodologies and practice itself. Accordingly, an analysis of my video artworks is based on the premise that creative practice is a form of research and where the final exhibition expands upon a set of research questions rather than offering fixed artistic statements.

Contextual histories: Remembering 1965

Here I provide a historical context to concepts of 1965 marginal memory and trauma that run through this thesis. This section looks at how the events of 1965 have been alternatively reclaimed and re-censored in public discourse in post-authoritarian Indonesia. Drawing from leading Indonesian scholar Ariel Heryanto and his post-structuralist framing

of the New Order's discourse around 1965 as a master narrative, I look at how alternative 1965 histories remain as contested memory (Heryanto 2006).

The political context of the 1965–66 killings, and the extent of the abuses that transpired, lies beyond the scope of this thesis and is well covered by a number of important accounts on the subject.[3] To give a brief overview: 1965 as an event was instigated by a controversial attempted coup referred to as *Gerakan Tiga Puluh September* (30 September Movement or G30S for short) where seven senior military men were kidnapped and murdered as part of a shadowy attempt to overthrow the government.[4] The attempted coup was swiftly countered by the military, led by the then general Suharto, and the communist party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or the PKI) was subsequently held accountable. This unleashed state sanctioned persecution and mass killings across Indonesia of not only those associated with the PKI but anyone considered a political threat including: those with leftist affiliations, progressive women's groups such as *Gerwani*, artists, intellectuals and ethnic Chinese. An indicator of how difficult it is to reclaim historic insight into the killings is shown in the uncertainty around the official number of victims that can be claimed, as numbers oscillate between 500,000 to one million lives. In addition to the killings, thousands of people were subject to torture and/or imprisonment for decades without trial, while countless others suffered political exile or continued stigmatisation and curtailment of basic civic rights. This thesis thus cites the term '1965' to not only reference the killings between 1965–66 but the extended history of human rights abuses that occurred.

The attempted coup and mass killings were pivotal events that marked the shift of power between Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, and the start of president Suharto's New Order (*Orde Baru*) regime which lasted for over thirty years – until 1998.[5] During his many years of power, Suharto positioned himself as the strong leader upon which

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3 I draw my understanding of the killings primarily through (Cribb 1990) and (Robinson 1995).

4 According to Robinson (2018), theories around who was behind the coup vary from being masterminded by Suharto himself to long reaching strings pulled by American CIA operating within Cold War political agendas.

5 The political conspiracies that enabled Sukarno, revered hero of Indonesia's Independence movement, to be ousted by Suharto is subject to debate. For those unfamiliar with Indonesia's national histories, what is important to note is how the fall of Sukarno marked a profound shift in the political ideologies that governed Indonesia as a nation. Sukarno's system of Guided Democracy was based upon socialist policies and his allegiance was to the PKI party. Part of the mythology of Sukarno's early years as president was his denouncement of the West and his positioning of Indonesia amongst a global network of newly emerging nations shaking themselves from European colonial powers. In contrast, Suharto's New Order was aligned with American based capitalism and opened up the country to foreign investments, raising the country's economic wealth and allowing for a comfortable middle class to emerge (see Vatikiotis 1998).

the political and economic stability of the nation depended. Underscoring this narrative was the violence of 1965 as a silent reminder of what the military was capable of doing to those who expressed dissent against Suharto's authority. As scholars of this era have pointed out, the New Order produced a generation of citizens that perceived any form of socialism or leftist intellectualism to be a threat to the Indonesian people (Heryanto 2006, pp. 1-32). The master narrative of 1965, as constructed during the New Order, suppressed any historical complexity to the events of 1965 and produced a single unchallenged version of events. In this narrative, communists were casts as evil and violent agitators, lacking in moral codes and a threat to religious belief.[6] The uncertain events of G30S are remembered in official Indonesian historiographies as filled with bloodshed and torture, where the murdered generals' bodies were sexually mutilated by female *Gerwani* members. This fabricated account was taught as Indonesia's official history and reinforced through government issued propaganda.[7] The New Order anti-communist agenda superimposed a master narrative of heroic nationhood over the silenced killings and atrocities. It was a narrative that was also an effective way of silencing other potential forms of political or social dissent, where even the accusation of communist-like tendencies held harsh consequences.

The important point that Heryanto makes in his theorisation of New Order's state terrorism was that this master narrative was not simply a case of those in power dominating and silencing its citizens. He names it a 'mode of dominance' where ordinary citizens also partook in enacting self-censorship and self-oppression (Heryanto 2006, p. 194). For those who have sought recognition of 1965 violence from survivors' perspectives, they have had to begin by actively interrogating this dominant narrative of 1965 that is deeply engrained in public memory. In the early years of the *Reformasi*, within an awakening of public debate surrounding 1965, personal memory and testimony become powerful tools at refuting sanitised versions of state history. Public awareness of the '*peristiwa enam lima'* ('65 incident) was being reframed through newly uncensored media, along with a groundswell of emerging NGOs, grassroots activists groups and many survivors sharing personal testimonies (Pohlman 2016; Zurbuchen 2002; Zurbuchen

6 To identify as an atheist or a non-God believer is a serious accusation in Indonesia. See recent controversy and imprisonment of Ahok (Osman & Waikar 2018).

7 The government sponsored film, *Pengkhianatan G30S/PKI,* (The treason of the 30th September Movement) that all school students growing up within the New Order were required to watch on the anniversary of the alleged communist coup, is an example of how this narrative was continually re-enforced.

2005).[8] Yet despite the community based initiatives that have since arisen across the country, to date there has been no official national recognition or accountability over the killings.[9] The failure to account for 1965 abuses in post-Suharto Indonesia has meant that survivor perspectives have been further re-erased and re-censored from official narratives.

Given the lack of restorative justice on a national level, grassroots activist groups have remained the best hope of enacting social repair around '65 traumas. Such campaigns have provided important counter-narratives to 1965 through the collecting of oral histories and personal testimonies. They provide space and opportunities for truth speaking at a communal level. Yet many of these projects have been coupled with public dissent, often voiced from leading Islamic organisations who reignite the fear of communism as fundamental threat to religious belief. At times this opposition to 1965 advocacy groups has culminated in violence, re-enacting the trauma of 1965 for victims (McGregor 2012).[10] If we consider how anti-communist sentiment continues to haunt public debate today it is debatable how much progress has been made.[11]

The further Indonesia moves into a post-Suharto era, the greater danger is that '65 histories will be forgotten all over again. This time not by political agendas but simply through the loss of memory, as a remaining generation of survivors pass away. This thesis looks at how

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8 For a good overview of human rights campaigns since the end of the New Order see Hearman (2018). See Pohlman (2016) for the *Year of Truth* initiative in 2013 that saw dozens of organisations come together to provide oral testimonies on 1965. In Bali, the community space, Taman 1965, initiated by Agung Alit and Degung Santikarma has afforded public discussion of 1965 survivor stories.

9 The beleaguered fate of the truth and reconciliation commission legislation, initiated during former President Abdurrahman Wahid's administration, is indicative of the failure of Suharto's successors to initiate true democratic reform or accountability over state crimes. In 2012 the government rejected a report containing substantial evidence on 1965–66 state crimes by The Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM), the independent body set up to investigate human rights abuses (Amnesty International 2012). International attempts at formal truth-seeking such as the 2015 International People's Tribunal at The Hague have also met with ambivalent results, with the Indonesian state refusing to participate or be held accountable (International People's Tribunal 1965 2016).

10 The contested reburial of exhumed bodies from a PKI mass grave in Kaloran, Java in 2001 is often referenced in 1965 memory studies. The first successful exhumantion of a mass grave from 1965 had taken place in 2000 in Situngkup Forest, near Wonosobo, central Java. Coordinated by Yayasan Penelitian Korban Pembunuhan 1965/1966 (Investigation Foundation for Victims of the 1965/1966 Massacre), a prominent survivor organisation comprised of mostly Jakartan intellectuals, including the novelist, Pramoedya Ananta Toer, it resulted in twenty-six bodies being exhumed and six of those were identified by their respective families for reburial. However the reburial which was to take place in Kaloran was violently blocked by protesters from a local Islamic organisation (McGregor 2012).

11 As Budiawan notes, even those who were loudly denouncing Suharto in the early years of Reformasi fell quiet at recognising the violence committed during '65 as an official crime. A telling example of this is the controversy Budiawan cites over ex-tapols naming themselves 'victims' of the New Order regime. This was despite the fact that many ex-tapol were imprisoned for decades without trial, in harsh prison camps such as Buru Island. To consider them victims would be inconceivable because to admit this would also admit the illegitimacy of the 1965 master narrative (Budiawan 2000).

artists have offered alternative modes of remembering '65 and how art projects are capable of providing important counter-archives that redress master narratives. Because artists are operating outside of conventional truth-seeking processes they are able to critically engage with the past and offer open-ended narratives: allowing for the multiplicity and the complexity of contesting histories.

Contextual histories: The peaceful island

In Bali, efforts to reclaim 1965 narratives within public discourse have encountered opposition not only from the expected state sources, but have been seen as oppositional to continued imaginations of Bali as a peaceful paradise. Until the 1990s there was a conspicuous gap in scholarly discourse on Bali addressing the island's histories of political violence, especially those relating to 1965 abuses. The scholarly reluctance to address the 1965–66 killings in Bali during the following decades becomes suspect, given the scale and intensity of violence that occurred. An estimated 80,000 anti-communist killings were carried out in Bali, which represented five percent of the population at that time (Robinson 1995, p. 1). This number also represents up to a tenth of the purported total deaths across Indonesia, a disproportionately large amount considering the size of Bali. Yet in many significant studies on Bali, this pivotal historical period has been made absent or reported upon as an isolated incident of violence. Important contributions such as Geoffrey Robinson's *Dark Side of Paradise* (1995), which have since addressed Bali's political histories, have highlighted a larger problem within key anthropological studies of the island that implemented an image of Bali as ahistorical and apolitical. Robinson's critique, which is important to this thesis, is that there is a lineage of cultural studies on Bali where political violence is posited as intrusions upon traditional village life, rather than a direct result of localised conflict.[12]

Master narratives of Bali as an Eden-like island have been shaped not only by scholarly discourse but formed through the island's long history as an object for the Western gaze. This point is further explored in Chapter Four of this thesis, which explores touristic nostalgia for an authentic Bali. What is important to emphasise here is how touristic romancing of Bali constructed an engrained image of the island that is at distance from politicised discourse: where iconic imagery of ricefields, *legong* dancers and *gamelan* hold no

12 See for example Robinson's critique of Clifford Geertz whose seminal work *Interpretation of Cultures* makes only a brief mention of 1965 events despite Geertz being present in Bali during the killings (Robinson 1995, pp. 8–9).

larger context of capitalism, politics or globalisation. This image of Bali as apolitical and ahistorical has further complicated accountability for past 1965 abuses.

There is a complexity to this master narrative of Bali in the ways it has been internalised by many Balinese and intertwined with the island's major source of income. A comparative response to politicised violence can be made through the 2002 Bali bombings, where 202 people died, the majority of who were Australian victims. The Balinese scholar, Degung Santikarma, who in collaboration with Leslie Dwyer has made significant contributions to 1965 scholarship on Bali, problematises the politics of representation of violence in Bali (Dwyer & Santikarma 2003; Santikarma 2005). Santikarma critiques the difference in Bali's response to the bombings, which provoked swift commemoration of victims and international aid, compared to the silencing of mass killings from 1965 (Santikarma 2005). In comparison to the sustained amnesia around the 1965 killings, Balinese were active participants in the public discourse around trauma and healing that the bombings elicited. More tellingly, Balinese authorities were quick to shift the agenda to protecting Bali's image and repairing the negative impact upon tourist capital (Fischer 2006).[13] The government initiated project of 'restoring Bali's image' in the aftermath of the bombings, re-enacted familiar inter-ethnic tensions where Hindu Bali was victim to Javanese Muslim terrorism. In other words, political violence was a tragedy that 'happened' to Bali but did not dispute its idyllic image.

Yet as Santikarma identifies, the critical difference in Bali's response to the 2002 bombings as opposed to 1965 killings lies not in an anxiety around tourist economies, but an inability to account for violence in Balinese society (Santikarma 2005, p. 318). For many Balinese, violence is seen as external to their own cultural identity. Violence perpetrated by Balinese is rarely reported upon or acknowledged in public discourse.[14] When media attention is directed to Balinese incidents of violence, it can be reported upon as *kasus adat*, or a customary law dispute, restraining crime to a matter of traditional or village

13 The memorialisation of the 2002 bombings through the highly publicised commemoration of two cleansing ceremonies initiated by Balinese authorities, aimed at restoring what Clare B. Fischer names as, the 'global memory of Bali as peaceful paradise' (Fischer 2006, p. 129).

14 Narratives of Balinese violence have long been popularised for touristic consumption, such as the 1906 *puputan* massacres or the frenzied trance of a *kris* dance (Santikarma 2005, p. 315). Yet as Santikarma notes, commemorations of Bali's violence must still be contained with an unthreatening narrative of cultural exoticism. The heroic puputan narrative is important to note as it enshrines a particular mythology around the Balinese character, where otherwise peaceful people will burst into justifiable violence if provoked. We see this notion resurface in suggestions that the 1965 killings were the result of a 'frenzied' trance (Robinson 1995, p. 2).

law (Santikarma 2007). To redress the crimes of 1965, Balinese would have to invert the familiar narrative of being victims to external politics or ethnic outsiders and account for perpetrators within their own lineages. One reason cited behind the lack of formal truth-seeking in Bali is that perpetrators of ’65 killings were not always clearly aligned to the military. Ordinary citizens were equally complicit in carrying out violence towards their own neighbours and, even in some cases, their own family. This has sustained intergenerational trauma around 1965 where families of victims continue to live in the same village as perpetrators. What this research suggests is that to begin reparations around 1965 in Bali, the master narrative of peaceful island would have to be redressed internally.

Thesis structure

Structured through four chapters, this thesis moves between theory and creative practice to explore relationships between contemporary artworks, the archive and place. Chapter One establishes my theoretical framework to this thesis, navigating an interdisciplinary approach to concepts of the archive and place. Key definitions are established around methods of feminist corrections, counterpoint, trajectory and palimpsest. Additionally I link this discussion with contemporary art citations around the archive. I highlight artistic strategies around archival recuperations that are significant to my practice and establish a definition of the counter-archive as a mode of practice.

Chapter Two establishes a genealogy of my creative practice and to a notion of the counter-archive within contemporary Indonesian art. I first address how the counter-archive as a mode of practice can be traced through the history of social and politically engaged art in Indonesia. I then analyse examples of artworks that speak to marginal positions within Indonesia’s history of human rights abuses formed during the New Order or reaching back to colonial legacies. Within this chapter I provide two extended studies. The first addresses a video installation by the artist Tintin Wulia, which offers a speculative archive to the events of 1965. The second addresses a recent site-specific project, 900mdpl curated by Mira Asriningtyas. This project offers a parallel case study of artworks that approach place as a living archive.

In Chapter Three I turn to my own creative practice. I focus upon the spectral traces of 1965 in Bali and I do this through an analysis of my moving image artworks that address the implicit presence of mass graves in the landscape. Drawing from theory surrounding aftermath photography, I explore the boundaries of representation when it comes to

documenting sites of trauma. What emerges throughout this chapter is a reflection on this tension of vision produced through my work: between what can be made visible by the camera and what eludes the camera. This speaks to the problematic remembering of histories that remain marginal or erased in official archives. What this chapter introduces are Balinese cultural perspectives around the unseen that offer an alternative archive to 1965 trauma. What I propose, through a series of moving image artworks, is that directing attention to what we cannot see is important to recuperating marginal narratives. Finally, I address my artworks that offer a performative remembering and reparative healing around 1965 memory.

Chapter Four explores a counterpoint history to 1965 trauma, that of early surfer narratives during the 1970s. Here I primarily address a moving image artwork of mine, *A Line in the Sea* (2019) that stages a feminist retelling of an Australian cult surf film, *Morning of the Earth* (1971). Framed within the place-based concerns of this thesis, I explore how *Morning of the Earth* and the subsequent surf tourism initiated, superimposed touristic imaginaries of peaceful island paradise upon south Bali's coastlines. Two narratives are explored here through an analysis of my creative practice. First, that surfer trajectories in Bali suppressed the memory of 1965 political violence. Second, that an emerging generation of Indonesian women surfers is a transcultural counterpoint to the masculine Western hegemonies on which surfing tourism is founded.

The first half of this thesis thus sets up the theoretical framework and genealogy for my practice, while the second half proposes a response to my research questions through an analysis of my practice. Central to this research is an understanding of master narratives around south Bali as a peaceful island paradise and artworks that pose ruptures to these dominant representations. Through a moving image practice, this thesis builds upon an understanding of south Bali's geographies as shaped by diverse histories that unfold and contest in the present.

1

THE ARCHIVE

Figure 1 *Javanese srimpi dancers at the court of Bandung in central Java, 1863,* Image credit: Pictures from History / Granger.

Introduction

Consider the dancer as she performs the Javanese court dance, *Srimpi*. Her body, as the centre in which the dance revolves, moves in ritualistic slowness. With graceful precision she performs a dance that has become synonymous with the exotic and peaceful vision of the classical female Indonesian dancer (see Figure 1). Yet, as the Indonesian dance scholar Rachmi Diyah Larasati hauntingly reveals in her book, *The Dance That Makes You Vanish* (2013), these classical court dances, toured around the world as part of the New Order's endorsement of national cultural arts practices, rested upon the violent repression of women's groups associated with Javanese communist movements of the 1960s (Larasati 2013, pp. 1–2). In her book, Larasati recounts her time as a state-endorsed Indonesian dancer who came from a politically 'unclean' family lineage of female dancers associated with Gerwani, the progressive women's movement during the time of Sukarno. Her book gives voice to the many female dancers who were persecuted, killed or vanished during the anti-communist led violence of 1965–66, and reclaims their legacy through her own memories and once silenced oral histories.

Larasati's study provides me with an entry point to read back into the archive and for critical strategies that interrogate the archive. More specifically, her study introduces a criticism of New Order legacies that sustain vilification of communists in public memory. Throughout this chapter, I evoke the image of Larasati's dancer to allude to a way of re-reading official histories for those who have been concealed or erased. In Larasati's study, classical Javanese court dances are not an archive of cultural tradition, but of forgotten women's histories and genealogies. When watching her female dancer perform we are witnessing a somatic citation of past bodies and repressed histories. Traditional dance is a repository of past gestures: through every retelling there is an evocation of past bodies and iterations. Larasati's dancer, as she re-performs traditional court dances, speaks to the spectral conditions of the archive where future bodies are haunted by the trace of past bodies. This chapter thus draws from Larasati's positing of the dancing body as an archive: that the archive is a living text, to be re-performed, evoked, subverted or fictionalised through artistic practice. Furthermore, that by making connections between seemingly disparate histories (classical dance and 1965 state-led violence), counterpoints are made within dominant narratives.

My research also confronts archives in extended and animated forms. In this chapter I present the approach, methodology and background to this research project by focusing

on the archive as a theoretical concern. There is much at stake when we talk about a critical encounter with the archive. The material traces that a historical period or culture leaves behind have proved important in shaping who we think we are now and who we can become in the future. Even more so, the archive speaks to inclusions and exclusions in our past and future imaginations. The archive has been a site for debate not only within museum and history studies, but as a discourse spans philosophy, political and social sciences, art criticism and cultural studies (Manoff 2004). What emerges across this debate is that the archive is not simply a reference to the material and technological process of recording and storing the past. It is intimately connected with forms of collective memory and as material residues of histories of colonialism, violence and war, it often becomes repositories of trauma. Archives, as storehouses of knowledge, are also a reflection of dominant hegemonies upon which history is written (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995; Foucault 1972). It serves as an integral instrument of study in discourses surrounding history and memory, and while some have argued that we have reached a 'memory fatigue' in academia (Huyssen 2003), the archive continues to be evoked across diverse fields that seek to recuperate those who have been made marginal or erased from dominant histories.

It is in the field of contemporary art practices and its related criticism that the archive continues to be a source of urgency. While there can be several 'archival turns' noted throughout modern and postmodern art lineages, the archive is once again a prevalent theme in contemporary practices that, broadly speaking, offer revisionist histories. While this study focuses primarily on contemporary Indonesian art practices of the archive, parallel studies could equally be drawn from a set of global art practices that engage with historical narratives. Artists who speak to forms of power, to sustained systems of Western imperialism and colonialism, who seek to decentre prevailing narratives of Western hegemony, operate in the archive. They either do this through a direct engagement with archival materials or by reconstructing and reimagining the archive.

I begin this chapter by establishing an intellectual lineage to archive theory. I first look at poststructuralist frameworks by Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, and then turn to postcolonial engagements with the archive through Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Ann Laura Stoler. Building upon this founding theory, I then address critical methodologies that inform my approach to the archive. I draw specifically from feminist interventions in the archive developed by Griselda Pollock in her book, *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum* (2007). Parallel to feminist modes of re-reading the archive, I then address Edward Said's

notion of counterpoint, which is a decolonising method. Extending from counterpoint, I also bring into focus the concept of transculturation, which bridges the place-based theory fundamental to this thesis. Drawing from place-based theory I establish the groundwork for my approach to *place as an archive*. Finally, I look at how the counter-archive is a mode of practice within contemporary art. In particular, I consider artistic methods of resampling, speculative fictions and memorialisation. This chapter establishes an analytical framework to analyse the Indonesian artists cited in Chapter Two, and later on in the thesis, my own practice.

Theories of the archive: Establishing a framework

This section introduces key theories surrounding the archive that provide a genealogy to archive discourse in both feminist and contemporary art theory. This section first grounds discussions of the archive within a poststructural lineage starting with Foucault and Derrida. I then turn my attention to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay *The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives* (1985), which introduces a key postcolonial text on the archive. This leads into Ann Laura Stoler's studies around colonial archives, contributing to theory that posits the archive as an instrument of power.

Contemporary archive discourse builds upon the theoretical ground that Foucault initiated in his concept of the archive and Derrida's subsequent evolving of the term. It is useful here to first outline how Foucault and Derrida destabilised the evidentiary claims of the archive. Foucault's definition of the archive is articulated in his treatise, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1968) on historical epistemologies or what he refers to as 'discursive formations that define their own truth criteria' (Manoff 2004, p. 18). As other authors have noted, Foucault's concept of the archive is complex and holds a different signification depending on what context he cites it in (Eliassen 2010). In *Archeology of Knowledge*, the word 'archive' is deployed as a highly conceptualised term that does not refer to material documents or texts, but is a tool to analyse historical knowledge formations and their statements. The ways in which Foucault's concept of the archive is bound up in his theory of statements can be read through this extended passage:

> The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents; but they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations…. *It is the*

general system of the formation and transformation of statements (Foucault 1972, pp. 129-30).

The archive thus generates 'statements' and here we are to understand the statement not as a speech act but instead as a historical utterance (Eliassen 2010, p. 37). A statement is an event that is realised and ordered through discursive formations of knowledge. What is important to highlight here with regard to my research, is how Foucault conceives of the archive as a process or a methodological tool. Additionally, his theorisation on how discourses are formed in relation to each other forms an argument against universal narratives. This informs an important line of thinking in archive discourse that has sought to frame a suspicion of history presented as sequential, continuous narratives. Instead of a linear approach to the formation of historical knowledge, Foucault offers us the intricacy of discursive formations that are relational. In other words, he allows for a notion of coeval discourses of knowledge from disparate structures, which is an important point in feminist and decolonial approaches to the archive.

What guides this research are forms of artistic enquiry that interrogate official histories and posit historiography as a politicised process. Here we can look to Derrida's psychoanalytical reading of the archive to understand the role archives have in shaping cultural, social and state authority. In his essay *Archive Fever* (1995), which first originated as a lecture in 1994, he explores etymologically, how the word 'archive' denotes a place of dwelling and likens the structure of the archive as a process of domiciliation.

> It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this house arrest, that archives take place. The dwelling, this place where they dwell permanently, marks this institutional passage from the private to the public (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995, p. 10).

According to Derrida, those who have traditionally controlled these places of residence for official historical documents, monuments and records have also controlled the law and order. In this context Derrida extends Foucault's concept of power-knowledge, positioning the archive as an instrument of political power.

Another important contribution Derrida makes is that he articulates two conflicting conditions of the archive. Archiving contains a tension in the need for conservation and memorialisation of the present against what Derrida names a Freudian 'death drive': an underlying need for destruction of memory (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995, p. 14). He thus posits an inherent paradox to the archive in that it aspires to be a form of remembering

and yet also is a record of loss and forgetting. This is an important point within artistic responses to omitted narratives within official archives. Artists who are addressing contested histories are responding to a particular absence of archival trace. Derrida allows us to see how the archive supports forms of historical and political amnesia, where memorialisation operates through selective and fallible processes.

While the scope of Foucault and Derrida's theorisation around the archive is beyond the rationale of this thesis, what is important to highlight here in relation to my research is how both texts have supported a continuum in critical theory that investigate how history has been shaped and controlled by those in positions of privilege. This research draws on archive discourse that seeks to critique the hegemonic structures that legitimise and control historical knowledge. Additionally, this line of discourse proves particularly useful to my research as it provides alternative methodologies for reading archives.

Another key field that engages with the archive is postcolonial studies. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay *The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives* (1985) is a pivotal text in archive discourse that seeks to reinstate missing subaltern perspectives within colonial records. Spivak speaks of the 'epistemic violence' in which the archive is employed to support the coloniser's hegemonic 'worlding' of territory (Spivak 1985). Worlding, as a term, speaks to Western imperialist mapping of the world that places Europe at its centre and other cultures as peripheral. The epistemic violence of this action lies in the way colonialism reshaped the representation of a culture, people and place as inferior and *other,* an image which is then internalised by the colonised (Spivak 1985, pp. 253–4). Through literary analysis of archival documents from British soldiers and administrators, she reveals how bureaucratic records were constructed as repositories of facts to support the legitimacy of British India. Spivak traces the presence of unknown histories that lie within the discursive gaps of official archives, specifically in the case of the Rani of Sirmur. Her positing around the unresolved fate of the Rani points to a way of reading the archives for histories that have remained unrecorded. In this way, Spivak gestures towards the contrapuntal reading of Larasati's dancer, reading back into the archive for the submerged presence of identities and narratives that have been made marginal. Her essay remains an important touchstone for archive discourse that operates within modes of revisionist histories.

Alternatively, Ann Laura Stoler in her extensive studies around Dutch East Indies colonial

records, advocates that in order to locate counter-narratives, we must first pay attention to the prevailing structure and logic of archives themselves. Stoler reveals the ways in which colonial bureaucracy and the accumulative power of colonial administrative records and documents were 'intricate technologies of rule in themselves' (Stoler 2009, p. 20). Along similar lines to Spivak, Stoler reveals colonial administrative records as instruments of power that justified and legitimised colonial rule. However, she argues that to read archives 'against the grain' for moments of agency and resistance, we must first read 'along the archival grain' to decipher their prevailing logic and how they were synchronous to nation-building historiographies (Stoler 2002, 2009). She urges for an ethnographic approach to archival research and thus cautions against the 'romance of resistance' in contemporary interpretations of the archive (Stoler 2002, p. 99).

This section explores founding theoretical engagements with the archive. Several major strands of thought are initiated here. First, that the archive is a mode of power and those who write the archive control and shape our cultural pasts, present and futures. Secondly, that by reading against and along the archival grain we can critically address the power structures that are produced and sustained through the archive. Building on this founding theory, I now address critical methods of re-reading the archive drawn from feminist and postcolonial frameworks.

Retelling the story: Feminist methodologies

Feminist engagement with the archive in art history has provided this thesis with important strategies of correction to address privileged perspectives within historical discourses. In this section I look at the work of feminist scholar Griselda Pollock, whose contributions to art theory redresses the selective and exclusive criteria that the Western art canon is sustained through (1999). Here I primarily draw from Pollock's book *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum* (2007) as it speaks specifically to a notion of the archive. This section focuses on Pollock's feminist interventions in the archive and her speculative models for remapping Western art history models.

Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum opens with the premise to create a 'feminist space of encounter' that defies traditional museum and art historical rules of classification (Pollock 2007, p. 11). Pollock's Virtual Feminist Museum (VFM) is framed as an imagined futurism. The word 'virtual' here is not to connote a digital museum, but alludes to the speculative nature of a museum that resists the phallocentric logic of Western art historical

modes (Pollock 2007, p. 10). The VFM draws from Pollock's earlier work in *Differencing the Canon* which deconstructs the exclusions of Western art historicism that continue to map and segregate traditional museum configurations, thus positioning masculine European art canons as central and 'other' lineages such as African American, Latino, Asian or Women's studies as 'subdisciplinary formations' (Pollock 1999, p. 6). Through Pollock we can understand the concept of the museum not only as a repository for cultural archives but also as an archive in itself, in that it has generated a canon of normative and prevailing texts, representations and practices. In line with Foucault and Derrida, Pollock advocates for an understanding of the selective and privileged processes the archive is produced through. Pollock therefore applies the concept of the archive to the museum and museum practices to reveal the uneven hierarchies of power contained in art history classifications around genre, movement and artist.

VFM is conceived as a strategy that disrupts the conventions of museum classification processes by connecting disparate moments and figures from history. Throughout the book, Pollock uses this strategy to explore unconventional intersections between the female nude, Freudian aesthetics, sexuality and histories of trauma. For Pollock the exhibition is an encounter, one that creates a rupture in the existing archive. Her imagined museum reads back into the archive and she does this by creating relational lines of connection between disparate spaces and histories that transform their meanings and the viewer's relation to them. This builds upon prior concepts in *Differencing the Canon* where she uses the active verbal form, *differencing*, to propose:

> active re-reading and reworking of that which is visible and authorised in the spaces of representation in order to articulate that which, while repressed, is always present as its structuring other (1999, p. 8).

Consequently, the VFM speculatively imagines a mode of art-historical interpretation that steps outside of prevailing hierarchies to recuperate those who have remained marginal within the canon. Significant to my focus on the archive as a mode of memory, Pollock names this feminist re-reading as a 'remembering', a process that calls back repressed histories and perspectives from oblivion. (2007, p. 14). Her strategies call for a deeper change than tactical or retrospective inclusion of women artists into existing canons. Rather, she advocates for structural changes to methods of art interpretation that privilege marginalised perspectives within prevailing frameworks.

Pollock draws her concept of the VFM from two historical prototypes. The first is a vision of Freud's consultation room in Vienna, cluttered with images and sculptured antiquities from around the world that she suggests acted as a cipher for his psychoanalyses (2007, p. 11). The other model draws from German-Jewish art historian Aby Warburg who in the 1920s created an ambitious and unfinished project titled, *Mnemosyne* or *Memory Atlas*, which involved a vast database of photographic reproductions of artworks drawn from different periods and media. These were then collated by interrelated groupings and displayed onto large hessian sheets.[15] According to Pollock, Warburg was challenging the formalist art history definitions that were being developed in his time, so rather than paying attention to categories of genre or medium, he responded to the deep feeling that an image gave rise to. He was, as Pollock claims, primarily interested in what can be described as the 'afterlife of the image', or the deep persistence of memory embedded in a pictorial reproduction (2007, p. 18). His collection of image histories were structured through tracing submerged interconnections across disparate cultural artefacts.

Warburg, and Pollock's subsequent evolvement of his ideas, foreground many of the methods that contemporary artists have used to engage with the archive. As I explore later in this chapter, these ideas align with artists who create alternative or counter-histories through methods of collecting, resampling and appropriating archival images or historical references. Warburg's *Memory Atlas* lays the groundwork for a conception of the archive as a kind of memory space, or in Pollock's vision, a jostling of colliding images and representations across time and space, 'prompting resonances' and 'unexpected pathways' through the archive (2007, p. 9). Pollock's revisitation of Warburg uses his model of nonlinear historicism to resist the notion of the canon as a forward-moving story, where one art movement progressively leads into another, building towards an unchallenged singular narrative. Pollock's theory is particularly relevant to contemporary artists who are interested in following tangential readings of material archives or historical narratives. As I will explore in this chapter, artists who reconstruct and reinterpret the archive align with Pollock's strategies of intervention to recuperate those whose histories have remained marginal. They actively re-read the canon by connecting disparate moments, fragments and material histories.

This thesis draws upon Pollock's strategy for reading archives in several ways. First I use

15 A contemporary iteration of this project can be found in Gerhard Richter's much celebrated project, *Atlas* (1964–1995), which involves a monumental collection of over thirty years of collating found and personal photographs, which the artist then arranges into groups displayed onto cardboard sheets.

Pollock's theory as a framework to analyse disruptions of the archive within creative practices. In Chapter Two, I specifically look at how Indonesian artists, in Pollock's terms, actively re-read national histories.[16] To note – I am not analysing creative practices that address feminist or gender issues. Rather, I apply a feminist lens upon artworks that disrupt dominant national ideologies. Second, Pollock's concept of the archive has become an important factor that has shaped my own creative methodologies. Her proposal for mapping trajectories between disparate moments in history underscores my own strategies of tracing counterpoints within Bali's spatial histories. It offers a critical mode of reading back and remembering in the archive. Feminist strategies of correction have thus become a key analytical tool for this research and also a guiding methodology for my practice.

Counterpoint

Extending from the previous section, I now look Edward Said's method of counterpoint as a concurrent strategy to re-read the archive. In his book *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said provides us with the notion of counterpoint through his contrapuntal readings of canonical texts in Western literature. This mode of reading involves locating the hidden presence of a subaltern counterpoint within Eurocentric narratives. *Culture and Imperialism* frames a process of cultural entanglements and appropriation that occurred from histories of colonisation (1993, p. xx). The main premise of *Culture and Imperialism* is to understand Western imperialism as a cultural system, one that is so prevailing and normalised in metropolitan culture that it 'obscures the sustained business of the empire itself' (1993, p. 51). The second theme to the book is to locate 'historical experience of resistance against empire' that resulted in 'the great movement of decolonisation' (1993, p. xii). While the second half of the book focuses on mapping a theory of resistance, it is best to understand Said's scholarship not as a revisionist project, for his primary engagement is with the Western canon.[17] Instead, his theory offers a recourse into holding two oppositional understandings simultaneously: that is, to understand Western art and literature through the practices of slavery and racial oppression that supported them. Contrapuntal analysis hence emerges throughout the book as a critical decolonisation of the structures of power within

16 Western feminist theory is not always a translatable discourse to apply to contemporary art practice in Indonesia, even within practices that are directly referencing gender issues. See Dirgantoro (2017) who has undertaken the important task of rewriting the Indonesian art canon through a feminist lens.

17 At times, the lack of significant recuperation of subaltern voices and culture throughout the book feels like another form of erasure in that it potentially upholds the Western canons as the dominant narrative. Although in the second half of the book Said does locate subaltern perspectives through different literary examples such as Sudanese novelist Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *The River Between* which both, according to Said, rewrite Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* from the colonised perspective 1993, p. 211).

tales of empire.

Counterpoint draws from musical terminology that conceives of a polyphonic intertwining of independent and diverse melodies. Said applies this notion as a literary device to re-read seminal examples of Western literature, with a particular focus on mid-nineteenth-century English authors such as Kipling, Dickens, Conrad and Austen. For Said, the novel is a cultural archive and through a contrapuntal analysis he aims to reveal the sustained imperialistic structures in which these English novels were produced. According to Said, to read contrapuntally requires 'simultaneous awareness' of the dominant discourse that is being produced (British imperialism and colonialism), whilst also being aware of the other histories buried in the text that are being posited against (the subaltern experience) (1993, p. 51). An example of this is in Said's contrapuntal reading of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814), where he makes connections between the novel's emphasis on domestic tranquillity and propriety with the implicit presence of Caribbean slave plantations (1993, pp. 80–97). Said makes an apt analogy about how British imperialism was sustained subliminally through culture:

> As a reference point, as a point of definition, as an easily assumed place of travel, wealth, and service, the empire functions for much of the European nineteenth century as a codified, if only marginally visible, presence in fiction, very much like the servants in grand households and in novels, whose work is taken for granted but scarcely ever more than named, rarely studied… or given density (Said 1993, p. 63).

The concept of counterpoint thus reveals the structures of empire contained within the Western novel that, like 'silent servants', are not explicit but implied and assumed. It does this by drawing out the subaltern perspective submerged in the text. This can often mean connecting what appear to be discrepant experiences, as in the case of Said's reading of *Mansfield Park*. Counterpoint as a critical methodology thus speaks to a process of reading back from the perspective of the colonised and much like its musical equivalent, counterpoint reveals independent melodies that lie underneath dominant structures.

Counterpoint is a key concept for this research as it advocates a critical mode of re-reading the archive for erased or marginal voices. Parallel to Larasati's dancer and feminist strategies, a contrapuntal reading draws out synchronicities and oppositions between what appears to be discrepant experiences and histories. It allows this research to make a connection between images of Western surfers arriving in Bali in the 1970s and a

hidden mass grave from Indonesia's 1965–66 killings that lies within south Bali, a region predominantly known as Bali's tourist capital. Counterpoint in this research is applied as a method to reveal silent connections in south Bali's geographies that complicate prevailing imaginaries of peaceful island paradise (Chapter Four). It allows me to articulate the ways in which these two contesting histories simultaneously exist within a place and thus complicate the archive.

Transculturation

A final theoretical concept is to be introduced here in the context of Said's method of counterpoint. As a term, counterpoint also comes into focus through the work of Cuban cultural theorist Fernando Ortiz in his work *Cuban Counterpoint* (*Contrapunteo Cubano*, 1945/1995). For Ortiz, counterpoint is used to formulate his theory of transculturation in postcolonial Cuba. Transculturation, and its subsequent development in Anglophone cultural theory, rethinks the ways that European colonial powers were influenced and shaped by their colonial subjects and cultures. This section makes a connection between methods of counterpoint and transcultural processes: the former as a critical mode to re-read colonial narratives for submerged subaltern experiences and the later as a way to articulate subaltern agency within colonialism. Both concepts refer to a process of cultural hybridity, and while scholarly links between the two theorists appear relatively underdeveloped, there are grounds to connect the two terms when it comes to the discussion of global flows of place enacted within the aftermath of colonial imperialism. This section thus tracks the concept of transculturation through cultural theory that addresses processes of cultural entanglements across diverse globalised spaces. In doing so, I create a bridge towards the subsequent section that explores place-based theory.

This research leans on Paul Allatson's exploration of transculturation as an intellectual lineage. Allatson clearly maps the nuanced evolution of the term, tracing its origin within Latin American cultural theory, its development within Latino/a studies and its subsequent theorisation within Anglophone postcolonial and feminist discourse (Allatson 2002, pp. 32–8). Allatson's review of the surrounding literature, specifically from Latino/a literature studies, rescues the term from being simplified and synonymous to cultural hybridity. Reaching back to Fernando Ortiz, transculturation first emerges as a way to articulate cross-cultural processes between European and African peoples in Cuba (Ortiz 1995). Ortiz builds his theory of transculturation by telling a story around the socio-economic conditions of two major Cuban commodities: sugar and tobacco. His scholarly

contribution is a hybrid text of thick description, anthropological and cultural analysis that narrates the contrapuntal history between the two resources, one introduced (sugar symbolic to whiteness) and the other indigenous (tobacco symbolic to blackness) (Allatson 2007, pp. 229–30). Ortiz's theorisation of transculturation was to challenge the directional lines of power of *acculturation*, the preferred term during his time to describe the transition from one culture to another (Ortiz 1995, p. 98). Instead, Ortiz conceives of a transcultural process where each culture that comes into contact with another is changed and while this may be produced through unequal power relations, this contact produces reciprocal entanglements.

The concept of transculturation has subsequently informed Anglophone studies that seek to address the residual effects of colonialism and Western imperialism within postcolonial cultures. Central to this debate is a redressing of colonial power relations, where significant Indigenous voices, experiences and knowledge were being produced coevally to stories of colonial subjugation. Mary Louise Pratt addresses this complexity through her concept of the 'contact zone', which describes 'social spaces where disparate cultures meet, contest and grapple with each other' through colonialism or slavery or their 'aftermaths' (Pratt 2008, p. 7). Parallel to Said's contrapuntal methods, Pratt reads back into European travel narratives that sustain deeply othering discourses around colonial and postcolonial subjects. She reframes these narratives as a reciprocal and uneven process, where colonial centres were highly influenced and shaped by peripheries. In other words she posits transculturation as inherent to contact zones.

Building on this concept, Anna Tsing provides us with the metaphor of 'friction' to illuminate how globalisation does not produce smooth, homogenised flows of global economies and culture, but instead describes spaces that are punctuated with 'awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference' (Tsing 2005, p. 4). She focuses on a particularly contested period of 'awkward entanglements' in South Kalimantan's history of forest logging and environmental activism that arose in the 1980s and 90s. Tsing reconceives polarities between leftist activism movements and political conservatism and instead articulates the 'sticky materiality of practical encounters' that produce precarious and yet potentially progressive collaborations between disparate cultural subjects (Tsing 2005, p. 1). The concept of transculturation thus encapsulates how global flows of capital, ideas and culture are significantly shaped by localised frictions.

What is important to this research is the notion that transculturation navigates the complexity of cultural entanglements in contact zones. This research aligns transculturation as an extended concept to counterpoint, in that it focuses upon subaltern perspectives in contact histories, where even within imbalanced power relations there exists space for agency and reciprocal exchange. This thesis draws upon discourses of transculturation to articulate the cultural entanglements in south Bali's history of tourism. I primarily apply this concept to consider Balinese appropriation of Western surfing as a transcultural history. Tracing connections between Said and Ortiz' theory, transculturation is thus evoked throughout this thesis as a counterpoint to sustained colonial narratives around Bali as a peaceful island shaped by Western desire, and instead locates Balinese perspectives and experiences that reconceive directional lines of power. This builds upon Said's emphasis that counterpoint is not only a literary device but a geographical concern, tracking residual effects of imperialism across large proportions of the globe (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia 2009, p. 92). This section on transculturation is conceived as a bridge that connects methods of counterpoint to the place-based theory that is addressed in the next section. In the subsequent section I consider a series of theoretical moves that address the layering of disparate cultural narratives and histories within places, and which posit methods of reading back into place as an archive to retrieve repressed histories.

Place as an archive

The central premise of this thesis is to apply a critical discussion of the archive in relation to place. The texts outlined in this section establish a theoretical framing of place as an archive.[18] Starting with two key authors, Doreen Massey and Andreas Huyssen I look at scholarship that emphasises the temporal nature of places, where multiple histories and narratives coexist across time and space. The work of Abidin Kusno in this section, grounds this discussion on history, in relation to the built environment, within an Indonesian context. I then turn my attention to historical geography that establishes an expanded approach to the archive: through experimental research methods around archival material.

In engaging with geographical scholarship, Doreen Massey's concept of space and place as a product of social relations has proved to be fundamental to this research. By emphasising

18 Much of this section is indebted to Ilaria Vanni's mapping of place and archive theory in her resource produced for UTS LX LAB based on place-based methodology. Vanni makes links between research methodologies and critical concepts drawn from history, ethnography and geography studies that form an engagement with place (Vanni 2018).

the social dimension of place, Massey posits that places are fluid, subject to temporal changes and always under construction. Her scholarship is significant to place-based theory that disrupts essentialist visions of place that produce problematic nationalism or reductive localism. Instead, Massey advocates for an understanding of place through global flows, tracing a sense of the local through globalised movements of ideas, capital and people (Massey 1994). Another theme central to Massey's work is addressing how these social relations, stretched out across space, hold uneven balances of power across categories of gender, work, migrations, class and race. Massey's work is therefore important to understanding the way in which global flows are subject to power, what she names 'power geometry', where the global mobility of some is enabled by the restriction of mobility for others, continuing asymmetrical relations rooted in colonial legacies (Massey 1994, pp. 149–51).

In her book *For Space* (2005), Massey expands her conceptualisation of space and makes an argument against the continued imaginations of space and geography as abstract flat surfaces that people and culture move across throughout histories of global movements. In this book, Massey generates key propositions around space that are integral to this research. This is summed up in her use of the word *trajectory,* which disrupts imaginaries of space as static surfaces and instead visualises networks of relational connections between different phenomena, broadly described as: 'a living thing, a scientific attitude, a collectivity, a social convention and geological formation' (Massey 2005, p. 12). The term 'trajectory' thus allows for a vision of place and space through multiplicity: where diverse histories, social narratives and cultures unfold in the present and co-exist alongside each other. Trajectories also signify the temporal process that place is always under where multiple time scales coalesce and even long-standing geological formations are under construction.[19] Significant to this research is the way Massey intertwines the term trajectory with 'story' thus speaking to the narrative qualities of spatial relations that unfold across history (2005, p. 12). Accordingly, trajectories also connect to questions of representation and of storytelling, which are two central modes of practice to this project. Throughout this thesis, I evoke this term to address events, narratives and memory that are historical yet which continue to reverberate and shape current geographies.

Another important argument relevant to this thesis is Massey's challenge towards spatial imaginaries that sustain colonial settler discovery narratives. As she points out, discovery

19 See Massey's chapter on migrant rocks (Massey 2005, pp. 130–7).

narratives are stories of crossing over space, envisioned as ambiguous tracts of land and ocean, to find other cultures and places that are only activated by European colonisers' arrival. It is worth quoting Massey at length here:

> So easily this way of imaging space can lead us to conceive of other places, peoples, cultures simply as phenomena 'on' this surface. It is not an innocent manoeuvre, for by this means they are deprived of histories. Immobilised, they await Cortés' (or our, or global capital's) arrival. They lie there, on space, in place, without their own trajectories (Massey 2005, p. 4).

Here Massey is building upon postcolonial projects that aim to decentre Western orientations around modernism and globalisation. Postcolonialism takes aim at the deeply entrenched view of Europe as the central protagonist from which modernism originated and spread out across the globe, thus positioning subaltern perspectives to the peripheries (Stuart Hall, cited in Massey 2005, p. 62). A key point to postcolonial thinking is to disrupt the notion that 'other' cultures lie immobilised in history without their own modernisms, until the activating arrival of the Western colonial settler or globalisation's economic and technological advancements. The implications of this means that significant indigenous perspectives and knowledge are either erased or become immobilised in the archive, designated to being historical or traditional rather than currently relevant in the same way Western intellectualism continues to shape progressive development in the global south (Chakrabarty 2000, pp. 7-8).

What Massey contributes to this discussion is to emphasise histories of modernism and processes of globalisation as a spatial concern. Colonial settler narratives and globalised worldviews arise from imaginations of space as an inert and flat surface to be traversed over. Yet as Massey articulates, space is not smooth (2005, p. 63). It is produced through uneven and multiple trajectories that coincide together. Her spatial theory recuperates the possibility of 'other' cultures and places holding significant trajectories of their own which are coeval to Eurocentric histories. Additionally, this is not only a retrospective correction but speaks to the possibility of an open-ended future, proposing future trajectories that lie outside of dominant frameworks of 'Progress' and 'Development' (2005, p. 11).

Massey's theory holds several key implications for this thesis. First, I am able to articulate my approach to histories of place as a spatial trajectory. Through a Massey lens, I can conceive of south Bali's histories as a complex geography of crisscrossing trajectories. Secondly, it enables me to critically challenge sustained spatial imaginaries around Bali that

position the island as an unthreatening exotic paradise. As established in the introduction to this thesis, there exists a continued notion of Bali as an authentic and traditional culture that is either resisting or under threat by globalised modernity. This is a colonial construct and one that continues to shape current nostalgia for an ideal Bali that existed before modern ruin. Massey's proposal that place is fluid and enacted through global flows is therefore pivotal to my challenging of spatial imaginaries around Bali as a self-contained paradise.

Andreas Huyssen's contribution to scholarship surrounding history, memory and trauma offers tools to visualise how contesting temporalities may converge within a place. In his collection of essays, *Present pasts: urban palimpsests and the politics of memory* (2003), Huyssen looks at three cities, Buenos Aires, Berlin and New York City, that have undergone traumatic national histories and which have generated collective acts and spaces of remembering and forgetting. He draws upon examples of architecture, artworks and literary texts to posit urban space as a revitalisation of contemporary memory debates. Much of these essays is in response to what Huyssen names the 'hypertrophy of memory' that has dominated public culture and academic discussion towards the end of the twentieth century, resulting in cities filled with empty monuments to the past (Huyssen 2003, p. 3). Huyssen turns from a psychoanalytical approach to memory and engages with the materiality of images, sculptures, buildings and texts that offer a critical engagement with cultural and collective memory. His study offers this research an entry into trauma and memory studies through a consideration of place, materiality and image representations.

The key concept that I draw from is Huyssen's use of the literary trope of a palimpsest to understand how cities might be read as a temporal layering of multiple histories (2003, p. 7). Moving away from semiotical readings[20], Huyssen employs palimpsest as a way to engage with the temporality of place, especially in recovering traces of national and often traumatic histories. The notion of place as a palimpsest is particularly useful to address visual information that has been suppressed in the landscape and which registers as blind spots or present absences. This pertains the way histories, in their inaccessibility and (un) representability are invisible and their presence is framed by processes of erasure and loss. Huyssen's proposal for reading the invisible layers of place is central to this thesis, specifically in relation to my creative practice, which focuses upon representations of

20 As Huyssen points out, the notion of the city as palimpsest is an established trope within postmodern criticism hinged around semiotics and coding. Huyssen, however, emphasises his textual reading through materiality: such as the physical experience of urban phenomena or the materiality of an artwork.

traumatic landscapes. This thesis connects Huyssen's notion of palimpsest to a genre of photographic practices that by documenting unseen histories of place, engage with philosophical questions around the (un)representability of trauma. Huyssen's theory also foreshadows one of the major proposals of this thesis: that invisible and immaterial elements of place can also be read as an archive (see Chapter Three).

In proximity to Huyssen's theory lies the work of Abidin Kusno, who writes on the relationship between urban space, memory and national history in the context of modern Indonesia. In his book, *The Appearances of Memory: Mnemonic Practices of Architecture and Urban Form in Indonesia* (2010), Kusno maps similar theoretical territory to Huyssen by revealing discursive modes of remembering and forgetting within architecture and built environments. While his focus of study is ostensibly 'Indonesia', the book narrows much of its scope to the city of Jakarta, as a palimpsest of colonial histories and national shifts in power and reform. The strength of Kusno's approach is his exploration of 'unmanaged anxiety of the past' within everyday built environments that lie outside of official monuments (Kusno 2010, p. 3). Thus, his study explores the vernacular of shopping malls, public transportation systems, mosques and guardhouses as significant archives of Indonesia's social and political transformations.

His writing on the rebuilding of Glodok, the Chinese retail business district in Jakarta after the May 1998 riots, is of particular relevance for this thesis. The May 1998 riots holds a conflicting position in collective memory in Indonesia. On one hand, it has become a symbol for the toppling of Suharto's regime, and a symbol of a people led revolution. Yet, alongside this commemorated narrative of democracy runs the memory of the violent destruction of Chinese owned property, thousands killed over the course of two days and the lasting trauma of gang rapes of Chinese-Indonesian women (Kusno 2010, p. 102). Glodok, known as the Chinatown of Jakarta, was a central target during the riots and a major part of the district was burnt and looted. Kusno explores buildings in Glodok built within a decade of the riots, that in different ways, reveal contesting collective efforts to move on from the trauma of 1998. While one building, the Glodok Plaza was rebuilt as a shiny architectural example of technological futurism, another building, Pasar Glodok, was rebuilt to mimic colonial era architecture as a tourist drawcard. This conflicting desire to reach back into Indonesia's colonial past and conversely to project into imagined futurisms, was at the expense of commemorating the recent past. For as Kusno reveals, each design bypassed troubling memories by effectively imagining a past and a future that holds no

mention or accountability around 1998. Alternatively, it is the undeveloped spaces in Glodok, that Kusno finds visible recognition of the riots. The traces of burnt buildings, broken windows and new security measures at the time of writing, symbolic of enduring psychological wounds.

Kusno critically frames the memorialisation of collective violence and trauma as a spatial concern. His study holds particular weight for this research in that he draws attention to the ways urban development and the built environment in Indonesia reveal a collective inability to assess traumatic pasts, outside of heroic nationalisms such as the fight for Independence. In the case of Glodok, a line of connection can be drawn to this study on 1965, and the ways in which tourist economies and geographies sanitise spaces containing violent histories. His theory offers a concurrent study on the ways in which the built environment in Indonesia visibly suppressed traumatic histories and yet contain unresolved remnants and remains of the past.

A latent concept within Kusno's theory is the consideration of place and urban materiality as an archive. A final line of scholarship to be explored here is within historical geography studies that animate the archive and offer an expanded notion of what constitutes an archive (Gagen, Lorimer & Vasudevan 2007; Lorimer 2003). Tim Cresswell does this through a study on the material remains from Maxwell Street Markets in Chicago, where he draws upon three archival sources: the existing official archives; the collection of fragmentary and undervalued remnants from the site, a research process he likens to 'gleaning'; and the site itself, which he names a *living archive* (Cresswell 2012, p. 166). The concept of place as a living archive has proved instrumental to my research in that it situates theories of place within a discussion of the archive. In this way, the materiality of place and a critical engagement with objects, urban phenomena, non-human elements, offers a significant contribution to archive studies.

Geographer Sarah Mills adds to this debate on materiality of the archive by reviewing experimental and imaginative research methods within cultural-historical geography. She highlights three conditions of the archive that have 'animated' contemporary research methods: fragments, objects and ghosts (Mills 2013). Archives, Mills clarifies, are not repositories of truth but composed of disordered fragments from the past. Drawing from archival practices that read against the grain, Mills advocates to work within the 'cracks' of this disorder, to draw upon multiple fragmentary sources that locate marginalised

narratives. She then looks at research practices that engage with the materiality of archives; specifically objects that contain embodied histories. Finally, she locates the present absences in archives, or in other words, the ghosts that animate them. As Mills identifies, the spectral connotations of the archive have influenced researchers who invest in reclaiming suppressed or overlooked biographies within official records. She stresses the political implications of redressing marginalised lives in light of post-colonial and feminist historiographies.

Mills' categories of fragment, object and ghosts, hold a strong relevance for my thesis in several ways. Her emphasis on performative and reflexive research methods is particularly conducive for thinking how a creative art practice can add to this debate on the archive. Here I can frame my moving image practice within the expanded research methods that Mills reviews. Furthermore, her emphasis on the spectral conditions of the archive, as a site for hauntings and remembrance, is particularly useful for my own study. While Mills looks at ghosts as a metaphorical concept, this thesis proposes the possibilities of a haunted archive by introducing Balinese perspectives around ghosts and spirits (Chapter Three).

The theories addressed in this section establish my approach to place as an archive in various ways. Massey challenges the spatial imaginations that mythologies of global progress rest upon. Her emphasis of place as multiple trajectories that exist in relation to each other is a core element to this research. Huyssen connects this research with larger debates within memory studies, and more significantly provides textural readings of place that focus on spectral remains. Finally, Cresswell and Mills provide this research with parallel studies that present a geographical approach to the archive.

The counter-archive as a mode of practice

In this final chapter section I introduce how archive discourse runs as a critical line of enquiry in contemporary art practices and art theory. The scholarship surrounding the uses of the archive in contemporary art covers an expansive breadth of artistic engagement with memory, historical knowledge and reconfigurations of the past. The 'archive impulse' as coined by Hal Foster, has a long genealogy in the history of modern art: beginning with early avant-garde photography, artistic appropriation of mass imagery in the postwar period and continued through to contemporary artists who take as their departure point events, figures and philosophies from history (Foster 2004). What emerges throughout contemporary art engagements with the archive is the figure of the artist as

historian, who draws from methodologies parallel to ethnographic and historical research to offer significant new perspectives in historical representations (Godfrey 2007). Artists and their creative methodologies are thus pivotal to a critical discussion of the archive. Contemporary artists who engage with forms of history and memory offer a significant vehicle to study founding theories surrounding archive discourse. They draw from Foucauldian and Derridean frameworks to reveal the archive as a site of institutional and discursive power. They critically redress the archive through feminist and decolonial methods and posit counterpoints. Furthermore, artistic engagements with the archive fall within Sarah Mills' claim for experimental research methodologies that privilege fragments, ghosts and absences, thus making room for those who have traditionally been marginalised throughout history (Mills 2013).

In this section I map three key artistic strategies around the archive that are central to this thesis. The archive in art is a diverse and expansive thematic concern, and as such I focus on creative methodologies that are relevant to the artworks addressed in this thesis. First, I address artistic strategies that engage with the archive as *trace*. In this mode of inquiry and interrogation around the past, artists predominantly utilise the archive as a visual material to be resampled, appropriated or critically re-staged. I then turn my attention to artists who disrupt the self-evidentiary claims of the archive through speculative re-imaginings. Finally, I look at artistic strategies that offer alternative memorialisation, remembering and witnessing around traumatic pasts. This section represents a highly curated identification of what constitutes the archive in art but what I primarily do here is set up a framework to analyse my own practice and the creative works discussed later in this thesis.

More significantly, the strategies discussed in this section propose a mode of artistic practice that can be ascribed as the *counter-archive* in that they conceive of strategies to read back into the archive and recuperate missing narratives. The counter-archive is a continual theme to this research project in that it gives a name to the modes of historical enquiry that underpins the artworks analysed in this thesis. This concept is grounded in the thinking of art theorist and curator Okwui Enwezor, whose curatorial vision in *Archive Fever* (2008) cemented the archive as a deeply contested space in which constructions of identity, politics, memory, history and time coalesce. In his curatorial essay to the exhibition *Archive Fever*, he frequently cites terms such as 'counter-archive', 'counter-ethnography' or 'counter-narrative' to describe artistic interventions with the archive (Enwezor 2008). A notion of the counter-archive also emerges discursively throughout Enwezor's curatorial

direction of *Documenta 11* in 2002. *Documenta 11* makes a claim for the international art exhibition as decolonising and decentering tactic by extending the exhibition outside of its traditional location in Kassel and staging it across five international locations, covering four continents. The exhibition shifted the focus to 'circuits of art and knowledge' operating outside of Eurocentric contexts, not only relativising Western art historiographies but proposing 'new ethical demands on modes of historical interpretation' (Enwezor 2002, p. 45). A notion of the counter-archive is situated within this postcolonial reckoning of grand epistemological narratives in art. As a mode of artistic practice, it speaks to recovering experiences and narratives that lie outside of canonical and hegemonic histories. The strategies discussed in this section, in various ways, build upon this framework.

To begin, I address artistic strategies that approach the archive as a residual *trace* of history, to be re-interpreted, re-inscribed or appropriated as a visual material. Here, photography and film emerge as dominant practices, as both media are intrinsically archival and grounded within institutional or personal processes of storing the past (Enwezor 2008). The indexical nature of the photographic image, as fundamental theory on the subject has established, means that the medium is intrinsically linked to efforts of memorialisation, in capturing events and experiences that no longer exist (Barthes 2000).[21] Artists who use archival images as a visual material draw upon the indexical nature of photography to create an encounter with a historical past. They often employ methods that articulate the temporal dissonance between past events and the ephemera and traces they leave behind, revealing subjectivities in historical representations. Strategies of resampling or appropriating archival images emerge as key methods that call into question how the past is institutionalised, recorded and collected. Resampling imagery can speak to analogue collage methods, where found imagery, often drawn from mass media publications, is cut up and appropriated to create hybrid narratives.[22] Within digital media, the process of resampling speaks to the effects of slippage and dislocation that occur through connecting disparate

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21 According to Roland Barthes, the indexicality of photography to something that once existed in the world but which is no longer means that photography is always haunted by death. Barthes' ruminations on the nature of photography in Camera Lucida continues to act as baseline for photographic theory that addresses practices of looking and reading images (Batchen 2009).

22 The technique of collage can be traced back through art history lineages such as Dadaism and continues to be evoked in contemporary contexts. The practice of Australian artist Deborah Kelly can be readily cited here, who uses analogue collage techniques to insert queer perspectives into singular versions of history.

sources.[23] Resampling digital imagery also points to the archival conditions of shared online imagery or what the artist Hito Steyerl seminally named the 'poor image' (Steyerl 2012). The archive in this context speaks of low-resolution images or samples of dislocated moments, which in their capability of being uploaded and downloaded numerously across multiple platforms and users generate collective memory, narratives and unfolding histories. What can be gleaned here by looking at processes of resampling, both within digital or analogue practices, is that by connecting disparate sources, new trajectories are created in dominant cultural narratives. This resonates with this thesis' emphasis on feminist interventions in the archive, where artists conceive of alternative pathways within prevailing canons. Artists who use archives as a visual material to be appropriated or resampled draw attention the structural processes of power that produce the archive. They speak to a Foucauldian and Derridean understanding of the archive, addressing how images are circulated, legitimised and embedded as cultural knowledge.

Another strategy artists employ to challenge official histories is through speculative modes of inquiry. This falls into a broad category of revisionist history projects, where artists create temporal ruptures in linear historiographies. Feminist art theorist, Giovanna Zapperi makes a case for a feminist reconfiguration of historical time in her study of artworks by Zoe Leonard and Cheryl Dunye, Renée Green and Andrea Geyer, who in various ways reclaim marginalised experiences around gender, sexuality and race through archival reconstructions (Zapperi 2013). Zapperi poses a similar set of questions to Pollock in that she takes aim at the notion of history moving along on a forward-facing continuum, and instead addresses artists that create non-linear connections within the archive. Drawing from French historian Nicole Loraux, Zapperi astutely posits that 'a feminist temporality would be an anachronical one', in that artists who reconfigure the archive to reveal forgotten genealogies must 'pose a set of questions' that was never formed during that time (Zapperi 2013, p. 26). The archive, as Zapperi's study reveals, is a site of ambivalence in that it both conceals and yet contains the trace of repressed histories. This aligns with Said's contrapuntal readings of literary texts for stories that remain submerged or altogether erased from the dominant narrative. Artists who 'write back' into the archive, through a fictive re-telling, contest the self-evidentiary claims of the archive, revealing gaps

23 An influential example of this is Arthur Jafa's video *Love is the Message, The Message is Death* (2016), which digitally collates found video archives gleaned from the Internet which center around representations of African-American identity. Jafa presents jarring slippages between celebrated moments of Black culture against moments of racial violence, which set to a Kanye West soundtrack becomes a highly emotive trajectory through collective moments of pain and joy.

and absences in the way history has been written.

Zapperi's study connects to recent literary strategies around speculative narratives that aim to decentre and decolonise prevailing Eurocentric frameworks. As a literary genre, speculative fiction enables writers to envision a world that operates through an entirely different structural reality, thus posing radical alternatives to accepted social norms (Gill 2013). For Australian First Nation writers, Indigenous speculative fiction, or what has sometimes been referred to as Indigenous futurisms, has formed a powerful decolonising tool to conceive of Indigenous realities that are not defined by colonised histories (Kwaymullina 2014; Weaver 2010). Visual art practices that form speculative narratives are engaging with a similar set of concerns as literary contemporaries. They insert imaginative elements within established historical narratives as a way of interrogating who has been made visible or legitimate in spaces of representation. Speculative fiction, as a device, also critically engages with documentary genres in image making, where what appears to be realities drawn from close ethnographic observations are in fact staged and fabricated. This is something that resonates closely with my creative work, which draws upon conventions of documentary photography and filmmaking and then inserts performative or speculative elements.

The final artistic strategy that I address here contemplates practices that form monuments and memorialisation around national historical narratives. These strategies speak to artistic responses to collective trauma in light of histories of colonialism, war, migration or past authoritarian regimes. Predominant to these practices are performance-based artworks or site-specific installations that create alternative spaces for healing and testimony in the absence of official restorative justice. Nadine Siegert, in her study of contemporary Angolan art practices that redress sustained colonial trauma, writes on art's potential to offer collective healing (Siegert 2016). Drawing from memory and trauma studies, Siegert addresses the historical amnesia that arises from collective trauma, where the (un)representability of the original event leads to a forgetting. Artworks that create a belated testimony to erased pasts thus operate through the interplay of modes of remembering and forgetting. They both recuperate marginalised memories and conversely point to the structures that have erased and made such memory inaccessible. The reclamation of marginalised memory within traumatic pasts holds highly political stakes, as can be seen

in recent movements to remove colonial monuments in public spaces.[24] As I address in Chapter Two, artistic practices that generate alternative sites of witnessing and testimony provide important counter-movements to master linear histories.

This section presents a preliminary roadmap to the artistic practices and methodologies that I address later in this thesis. Here I outline key artistic interventions and strategies around the archive that give context to my creative practice and the artists I analyse in Chapter Two. In the subsequent chapters of this thesis I focus my discussion on artists who engage with the archive as a conceptual concern: denoting canonical versions of history and knowledge or grand prevailing historical narratives. The artistic strategies outlined in this section, in various ways, disrupt or interrogate prevailing asymmetries in the archive. They do this through methods of resampling or appropriation. Or, they envision through speculative fictions imagined temporalities that lie outside of the prevailing narrative altogether. Finally, this section addresses artistic reparations in the archive, positing artworks as significant modes of collective healing to traumatic histories.

In closing, the strategies addressed in this section build upon my theoretical framework around the archive. They align with feminist and decolonial methodologies by locating new connections and counterpoints within prevailing histories. The artistic strategies discussed in this section describe a mode of historical questioning that is more interested in absences than recorded presences. Artists who engage with speculative historical narratives and reconfigure archival material concern themselves with traces, fragments, anecdotes and unfinished stories. They take these fragments as a departure point and posit counter-narratives, generating counterpoints between fact and fiction, collective and private memory.

Concluding remarks

This chapter sets up my theoretical framework for this thesis. Here I map my approach

24 An elegant solution to colonial monuments was recently proposed by Tlingit/Unangax artist Nicholas Galanin, whose contribution for NIRIN, the 22nd Biennale of Sydney in 2020, was to dig a grave for the Captain Cook statue that lies in Sydney's Hyde Park. The artwork was titled *Shadow on the Land, an excavation and bush burial* and was installed on Cockatoo Island, one of the primary venues for the Sydney Biennale, curated by the artist Brook Andrew. The proposed burial site was cut and marked much like an archaeological dig and Galanin's work gestures to a multifaceted response to sustained colonial settler mythology in public spaces. It structures an artwork as a palimpsest that reveals multiple layers of history within place. It speaks to burying and healing a history that aimed to erase and literally bury Australia's First Nation people. Finally, it reimagines a notion of the monumental, one that conceals and is marked by absence and conversely gestures to the potential excavation of those histories that have been buried.

and understanding of archive discourse and I present key critical methodologies that have shaped my creative practice and which operate as an analytical framework throughout this thesis. I establish my approach to the archive, which primarily draws from feminist and decolonial methodologies of correction alongside current debates in art criticism that interrogate the discursive systems of power that the archive is produced through. These fields have greatly informed contemporary approaches to archival discourse and present a concept of the archive as neither neutral nor self-evident but determined by social and cultural desire. Feminist and decolonial strategies are especially relevant to this research project in that they emphasise history as a process, which can be reread and rewritten. Furthermore, I ground this discussion of the archive through a place-based approach. Drawing upon Tim Cresswell's notion of 'place as an archive' (Cresswell 2012) I map connections between archive theory and place-based literature that establish an understanding of place as a palimpsest of multiple histories, coinciding and evolving within the present. The literature mapped out in this chapter thus present a diverse and expanded approach to the archive and build upon experimental research methodologies surrounding the archive (Mills 2013).

There are several links between the theories outlined in this chapter that fall within concurrent themes challenging canonical forms of knowledge, prevailing narratives, or in other words, the archive. What is emphasised throughout the chapter is that the archive is not only in reference to the material fragments of the past, but also denotes epistemological canons and hegemonic histories. Most often the theory addressed here are strategies to recuperate, difference or draw out contesting contrapuntal moments in overarching narratives. Edward Said's method of counterpoint is complementary to Griselda Pollock's feminist interventions in the archive. Both theorists offer strategies to read back and remember in the archive. Furthermore, this research considers a link between a concept of counterpoint and Andreas Huyssen's notion of place as a palimpsest. Both concepts connote an archeological approach to reading surface topographies for unseen layers, which also connects to Doreen Massey's claim for place as a product of multiple trajectories. Massey's concept of place also supports another focus to this thesis and that is a transcultural approach to histories of place. In the context of Bali, Massey's concept of place as a product of social relations that are always under construction can be further underscored as a transcultural process. I apply a transcultural lens on Bali's surf tourist histories and through my creative work, build an understanding of south Bali's shorelines as a series of cultural entanglements.

This chapter thus sets up a foundation for this thesis, signalling key approaches to the archive and to place. I use this framework to analyse artistic engagements with narratives of history and place. As established in this chapter, contemporary art continues to offer significant and urgent contributions to archive discourse. Feminist and decolonial projects of interrogating master narratives are far from resolved in current debates around what perspectives remain visible and authorised in our cultural spaces of representation. Artists who navigate representations of historical memory in their work are shaping new narratives within cultural institutions of knowledge. In the context of my research, artistic engagements with the archive pursue lines of resistance and agency within historical discourse. As explored in this chapter, artists who reclaim marginalised histories operate in a mode of practice that is the counter-archive. Such practices question the institutional and epistemological structures that legitimise archives and in doing so, offer alternative forms of remembering. They respond to gaps and absences in the archives and posit speculative and critical interventions in the archive.

2

COUNTER-HISTORIES IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIAN ART

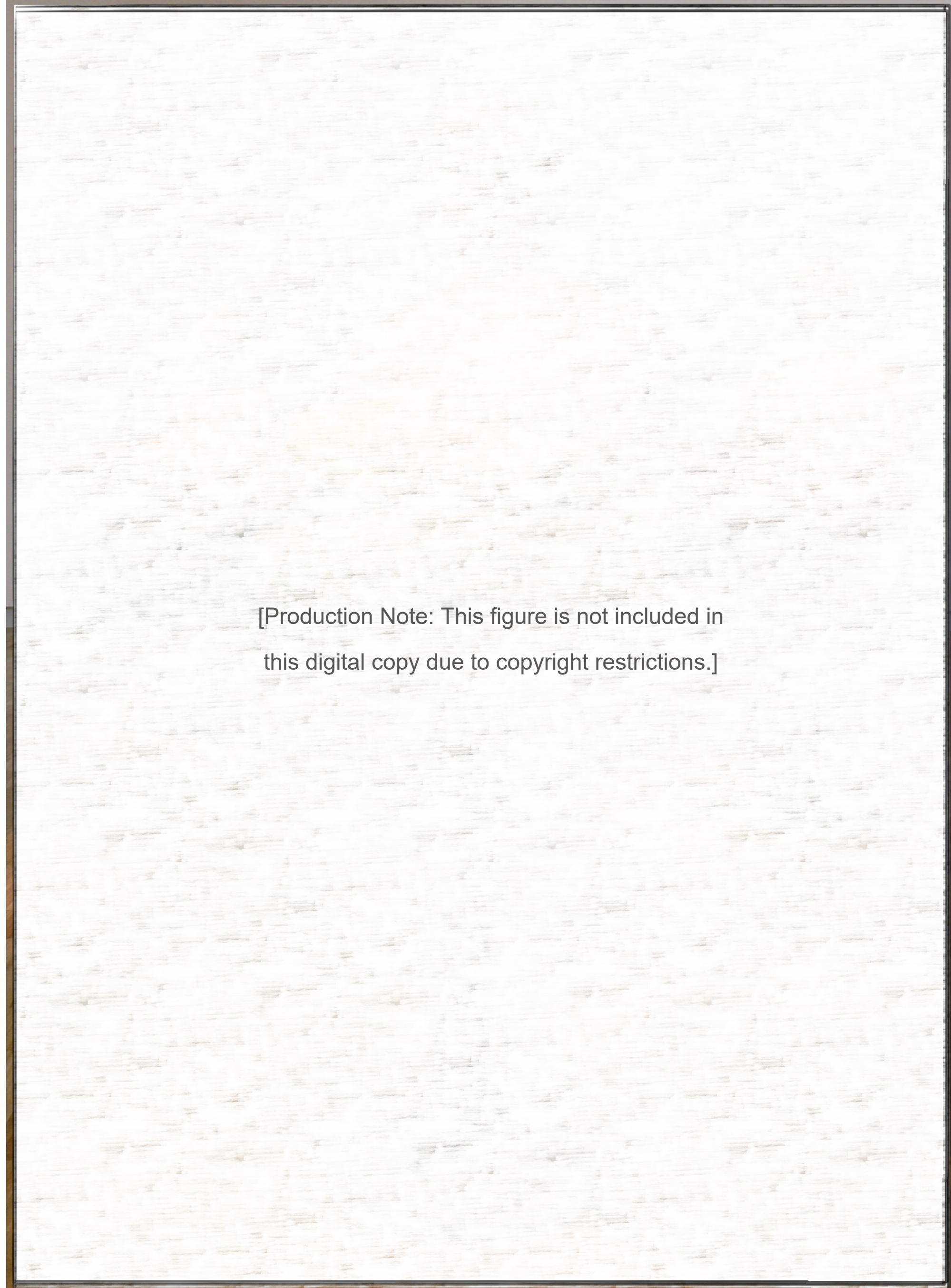

Figure 2 Dadang Christanto, installation detail, *They Give Evidence* (1996-7).

Introduction

This chapter presents a genealogy[25] to my creative work by looking at contemporary Indonesian art practices that engage with contested histories and politics of remembrance. In this chapter I present a highly curated selection of artworks that speak to a notion of the counter-archive in Indonesian art. Rather than focusing on a Balinese specific art context, the wider Indonesian histories at stake in this chapter offer parallel thematic concerns to my own work. By tracing histories of socio-politically driven art in Indonesia, I establish how art provides an important counter-narrative to Indonesia's authoritarian past. Continuing within a feminist framework I look for ways in which artists have provided ruptures to monolithic histories and master narratives. Within this study, political art refers not just to overt expressions of protest, but – as within a feminist framework – art that intervenes and provides a rereading of histories. Or, in Griselda Pollock's terms, art that provides a *differencing* of dominant discourses. While a study of social and politically motivated art in Indonesia is expansive, I narrow my selection of artists by looking at those who engage directly with historical narratives: those who deal with repressed atrocities from the New Order period, colonial legacies, or a reinterpretation of national histories. Many of the artists discussed in this chapter have been well covered within Indonesian art studies. However, my main contribution here is to connect Indonesian art practices with a critical discussion of the archive. While each artist mentioned inspires a much longer study, I focus on certain aspects of their work that ascribe to an engagement with the archive.

To begin, I first examine how socio-politically driven art developed in Indonesia through two major periods that have been canonised in Indonesian art history. I then locate contemporary art practices that engage with contested histories, dividing my artwork citations into two broad categories. In the first, I examine large-scale installation and performative practices that situate the body as a site of repressed testimony to histories of collective trauma. The second category speaks to artists who engage with the legacy of the New Order and the master narratives[26] it has sustained in public memory. I then provide two longer studies: the first addresses a video installation by Tintin Wulia, who uses speculative strategies to create an empathetic remembering of 1965. The second looks at

25 For a definition of genealogical analysis see (Saukko 2003, pp. 115–34). As a research method, genealogy looks at how forms of knowledge are historically constructed by locating the social and political agendas that have informed an idea. Drawing from a Foucauldian framework, often this is a way to contest how certain ideas are taken as a 'timeless truth' (Saukko 2003, p. 116).

26 See Thesis Introduction for Ariel Heryanto's concept of the New Order as a master narrative (Heryanto 2006).

900mdpl, a site-specific exhibition program curated by Mira Asriningtyas, which offers an understanding of place as an archive. I conclude by looking at how the artworks examined in this chapter provide a genealogy to my own practice and support my positing of the counter-archive as a mode of art practice.

The socio-political context in Indonesian art

Indonesian artists have long been antagonising master narratives, whether it be through a critique of state oppression or social inequalities, or representing marginalised histories. The lineage of socially-driven art in Indonesia is interwoven with the history of modern Indonesia and the shifts of power and national identity that have unfolded since Independence. In this section I draw from influential authors on Indonesian art, including Claire Holt, Jim Supangkat and Caroline Turner to trace key figures and movements in Indonesian art history against the political backdrop of their time. Wulan Dirgantoro's book on contemporary feminisms in Indonesian art has strongly guided this research along with a number of PhD theses, including dissertations by Elly Kent and Susan Ingham. Here I focus on two major periods that canonised modern and contemporary art movements in Indonesia, from which we can trace a lineage of socio-political art. The first centres around a period of post-war art that aligned with emerging nationalist identities, while the second tracks experimental art practices that arose in dissent to oppressive nationalisms within the New Order period. Admittedly, this framework is far removed from feminist projects addressed in the previous chapter that aim to disrupt linear art histories. As the esteemed Indonesian art historian Sanento Yuliman proposed, multiple frameworks are necessary to understand the rich diversity of concerns in Indonesian art, including those who are 'mutually oppositional' (Yuliman 1969, cited in Kent 2016, p. 46). Yet, what this section introduces, especially for those unfamiliar with Indonesian art and national histories, are key artistic lineages that introduce a framework for the counter-archive in Indonesian art.

The emergence of modern Indonesian art is linked to Indonesia's revolutionary and early independence period where artists sought to develop a distinctly Indonesian voice. Indonesia's national independence in 1945 was the result of an intense period of conflict and change initiated by the Second World War, Japanese occupation and then was only officially recognised in 1949 after years of revolutionary struggle against the Dutch. We can trace how an alignment of art and the socio-political was formed through a generation of artists who had been vocal in anti-colonialist sentiment during the 1930s and 40s and

who then pioneered early nationalist art movements grounded in socialist ideologies. Key post-war artists such as Sudjojono, Affandi and Hendra Gunawan were merging visual languages drawn from Western art modernisms along with an emerging sensibility around the everyday social fabric of Indonesian life (Holt 1967; Turner 2005). As the intellectual leader of the artist group Persagi, Sudjojono was critical towards sustained colonial painting tropes that produced *Mooi Indie* (Beautiful Indies) landscapes (see Figure 3). Instead, he advocated that art must be grounded within the everyday social realities of 'sugar factories, emaciated peasants, the motorcars of the rich and pants of the poor youth' (Sudjojono 1946, cited in Holt, p. 196).

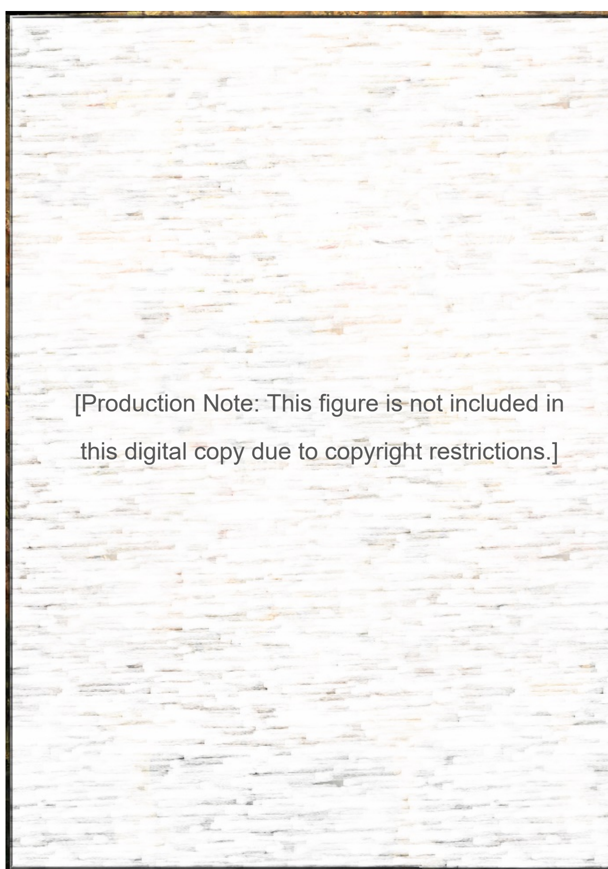

Figure 3 S.Sudjojono, *Tjap Go Meh* (1940).

Beginning with the social realism of Sudjojono and his contemporaries, a certain notion of the artist was canonised within Indonesian art history: where artists sought to intertwine themselves with the voices of 'ordinary' Indonesians, making art for the *rakyat* (people) rather than for the politically elite shaped by class power structures (Kent 2016, pp. 46–73). Additionally, the continued tradition of politically-minded artist collectives in Indonesia can be traced to influential artist groups of this time, such as Persagi and Lekra (the cultural association affiliated with the PKI, Indonesia's communist party). The development of modern art in Indonesia is subjected to many discursive layers of interpretation

(Holt 1967). However, within this research it is important to note how early Indonesian modernists shaped a mode of artistic practice that was politically and socially conscious, forming a challenge to art that was seen as passively decorative.

The other major period that has been canonised within Indonesian art history emerges out of the experimental art practices from the mid 1970s. The pivotal artist collective *Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia* (Indonesian New Art Movement) or GSRB is often attributed to the start of contemporary art in Indonesia and arose in reaction to the conservatism of Indonesian art institutes and the political situation at the time. Anti-establishment in nature, the GSRB manifesto was to shift the perception in Indonesia of what art could be and what the social function of art was. While the movement eschewed Western-influenced aestheticism, they were also inspired by international art movements such as Fluxus and the performative-based practice of Joseph Beuys. Such influences are cited in the group's use of readymade objects, alongside the strong emergence of installation and performance practices. The lifetime of GSRB was relatively short (1975–1987) yet the legacy of this group is attributed to initiating the socio-political turn in contemporary Indonesian arts, with notable members going on to claim major recognition for their individual practices (Dirgantoro 2017, pp. 59–65; Turner 2005). As with the early independence artists, GSRB artists were challenging what they saw as the depoliticised and decorative abstraction of their time, embracing socio-political themes to create transgressional art expressions.

GSRB and their subsequent influence on contemporary art in Indonesia can be further understood against national histories of political and social oppression. The Suharto government continued to hold power through an effective censorship across political, cultural and social spheres. During the 1980s and 90s there was a continued prosecution and stigmatisation of those associated with communism, a blanket accusation for any dangerous ideologies associated with the Sukarno era. Indonesian political history scholar, Ariel Heryanto reveals how a level of state induced anxiety permeated into public discourse, enacting a tight control over the media and limiting cultural expression (Heryanto 2006). Writers and artists who voiced criticism of the government faced the threat of imprisonment. Former political prisoners (referred to as *ex-tahanan politik* or *ex-tapol* for short) and their families were subjected to continued discrimination (Kent 2016, pp. 75–76). Heryanto provides a nuanced insight into how the New Order autocracy was not simply a case of powerful political elite oppressing victimised citizens. It was a 'mode of dominance', where everyday citizens were also collaborators in the New Order rhetoric,

resulting in deeply engrained social oppression and self-censorship (Heryanto 2005, p. 194).

Experimental and protest-based art that arose during the New Order and during the early *Reformasi* (Reformation post New Order) period provided an important counterpoint to the master narrative of the New Order. While the Indonesian art boom of the 1990s generated a proliferation of painting based practices that supported, what art critic Jim Supangkat critically frames as wealthy elite tastes in Indonesia, it was also a period that witnessed the emergence of a generation of experimental and interdisciplinary artists who worked across strong socio-political themes (Supangkat 2005). Artists such as FX Harsono, Dadang Christanto, Heri Dono and Arahmaiani, to name but a few from this generation, initiated an international recognition of contemporary Indonesian art within major art biennales and regional art events. These were practices that were strongly responding to human rights abuses, religious and political censorship, along with the corruptions and inequalities arising from the New Order's embrace of economic globalisation. Supangkat, who is one of the original members of GSRB, explains how the politicised art of the 1980s and 90s was in reaction to the heroic nationalisms and mythologies of the Suharto government (2005). Artists and their affiliated community networks became an important counter-culture during the New Order, creating spaces of resistance to autocratic state rule.

The early years of the *Reformasi* saw the liberation of artists engaging with a broad range of social issues, charging ideas around cultural identity, environmentalism, gender, as well as sustained traumas from the New Order period. It was a period that saw the tendency for collaborative and participatory art, aligned with what would be called 'social practice' or 'relational aesthetics' in Western art discourse. What emerged during this period was a strong lineage of artist activism and collective practices, where artists were not content to simply make art that reflected on social issues but also saw art as an instrument for social change. The artist Moelyono is a well-regarded example of this mode of social practice, working collaboratively with village communities in East Java (Samboh 2020). Other key examples of artist community activism can be found in the well-known group Taring Padi, who formed at the very beginning of the *Reformasi* period. The grassroots artist group worked collaboratively to stage art that was anti-establishment, often framed as a form of street protest again social injustices. Current examples of artist communities that work within villages can be found in Jatiwangi Art Factory, located in West Java (Lee 2015). Contemporary practice in Indonesia can further be understood in the way art has always been intertwined with the local ecology of social and communal spaces. The lack

of government art funding and contemporary art museums has meant that alternative artist spaces such as Cemeti Art House in Yogyakarta or the artist collective Ruangrupa in Jakarta, have been the main protagonists that have enabled critical reception and development of contemporary practices (Ingham 2007). The art practices and discourses that emerged through these artist-led spaces have been enabled by a socially connected arts community, particularly in art centres such as Yogyakarta.

While highly selective, this section provides an insight into the trajectory of socio-political art in Indonesia, as a counter-culture to oppressive nationalisms during the New Order. This maps a historical context to the artists that I subsequently address in this chapter. Creating a linear narrative around the development of socio-political art in Indonesia does not do justice to the many nuances and contradictions that emerge during any period. As researchers have addressed, the lack of female representation and the continuing patriarchal framing of Indonesian art has created gaps and absences in an understanding of Indonesian art history (Dirgantoro 2017). The socio-political context in Indonesian art also developed not only in response to national histories but stems from a long lineage of participatory art practices that hinge on local traditions around communal knowledge (Kent 2016). Other critical discussions are collapsed in this narrative, namely the development of art movements that lie outside of a Java-centric art history.[27] Contemporary art in Indonesia is being increasingly diversified across newly emerging contexts outside of Java and artists are responding to themes outside of politically charged narratives. This poses a challenge for the international representation of Indonesian artists, to position themselves outside of sustained Western art history frameworks, where ideas of the contemporary in South East Asian art must always be concerned with histories of political struggle. For example, the ways in which Australian art institutions have predominantly favoured Indonesian artists working with overtly political themes, has shaped a narrow definition of Indonesian art in a Western context.[28] While the socio-political drive is significant to the history of Indonesian art practice, it is worth noting that this too has created its own master narrative that an emerging generation of artists is now contending with.

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27 See Adrian Vickers's article that challenges the myth that modern Balinese art was solely indebted to Western influences and also complicates the relationship of Balinese art to Java centric canons (Vickers 2011).
28 See Soo-Min Shim's review of the exhibition *52 Artists 52 Actions* at Artspace, Sydney which included work from Indonesian artists Tintin Wulia, Tita Salina and Irwan Ahmett. Shim's review problematises the Australian imagination of South Asia as 'rife with struggle' (Shim 2019).

The body as a site of testimony

The previous chapter began with the image of the Javanese court dancer as a living archive of intergenerational trauma. In Larasati's study, her dancing body becomes a site of ambivalence: a state constructed body to replace persecuted Gerwani dancers and yet, through her own family history, an embodiment of their memory. The body as an archive of trauma can also be traced as a reoccurring symbol within Indonesian visual art practices that deal with oppressed histories. The following section tracks this citation of the archival body within installation and performance practices that produce monuments to bodies that have been killed, erased or displaced. Through the various artworks discussed here, I begin to build the notion of the counter-archive as a mode of practice within Indonesian art.

The installation practice of Dadang Christanto brings readily to mind images of bodies as evidence of past atrocities. While the 1965 killings created a lineage of unresolved trauma, in light of the engrained stigmatisation around the subject, few Indonesian artists until Dadang[29] had responded to this history directly. Dadang Christanto is one of the more prolific artists to have created work that explicitly references the violence of 1965 and has earned an international reputation for making work that deals with human suffering on a mass scale. Dadang has been able to exhibit the majority of his work outside of Indonesia and thus outside of politically motivated censorship (Turner & Barclay 2011). His large-scale installations often involve sculptural bodies situated en masse as effigies to victims of violent histories. One of his major works, *They Give Evidence* (1996–7) demonstrates this, where sixteen terracotta figures stand aligned in the same direction, each holding in outstretched arms the stiffened corpse like clothing of another unnamed victim (see Figure 2). As the title suggests, the terracotta figures as they stand in formation, force us to witness evidence of untold histories. As others have interpreted, there is a reference to generational trauma in the image of victims holding victims (Ingham 2007, p. 261). This image of bodies holding bodies stands as a powerful refute against their historical erasure.

While Dadang has attributed universal themes of suffering and injustice to his work, he also has responded to specific histories such as the 1965–66 anti-communist killings, the May 1998 riots that led to Suharto's downfall, the persecution of Chinese Indonesians, East Timor violence and the displacement of marginalised communities in Indonesia. In this

29 I refer to artists by their first names in this chapter, which keeps in line with parallel citations in Indonesian art studies. Exceptions to this would be reference to FX Harsono and Jim Supangkat who are referred to by their last names.

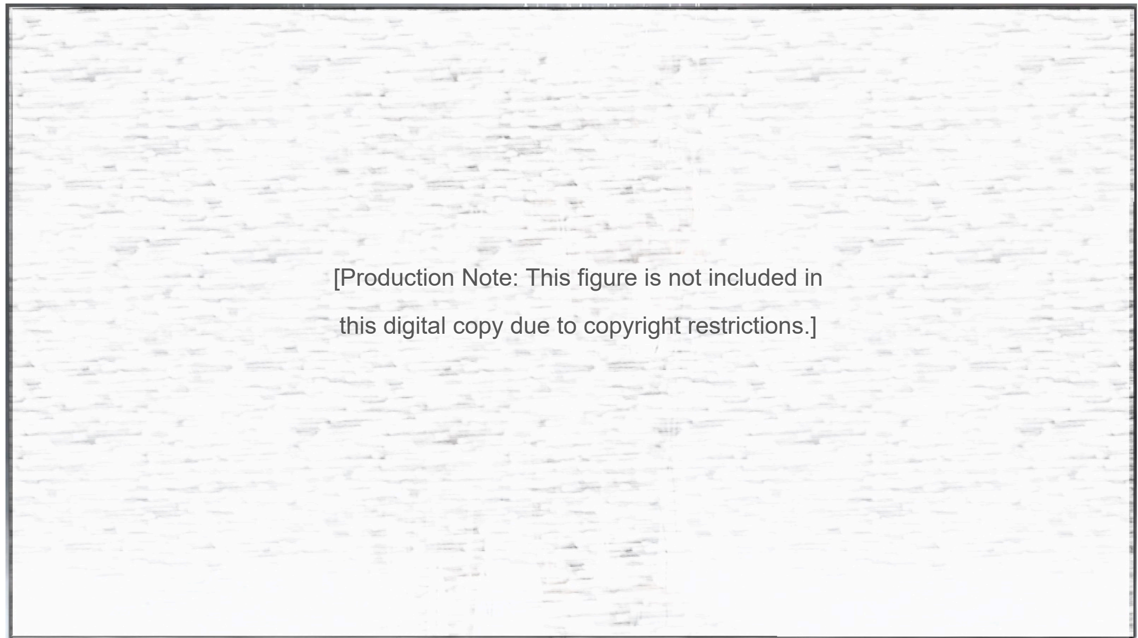

Figure 4 FX Harsono, performance still, *Writing in the Rain* (2012).

Figure 5 FX Harsono, performance still, *Pilgrimage to History* (2013).

way he has created an archive of a history of human rights abuses in Indonesia. Histories of personal loss have also come to the foreground in later years, where Dadang has made more explicit reference to his father who was targeted and killed in the anti-communist purging. His installations, large-scale and cathartic, deal with personal and collective loss. They are in essence, monuments to those who have been suppressed in state-sanctioned memory.

This reclaiming of silenced histories through the body is a thematic current that also runs through the work of FX Harsono. Harsono, whose practice navigates across forms of installation, performance, photography and moving image, is a pivotal figure within the history of politically motivated art in Indonesia and one of the original members of *Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru*. While his early works were concerned with national politics, his practice became increasingly personal once he started to address his identity as a Chinese Indonesian (Clarke 2011). There exists a long history of violence and persecution towards ethnic Chinese in Indonesia with an engrained perception of Chinese Indonesians as foreign and economically exploitative. Prejudice towards Chinese Indonesians has been particularly heightened during volatile moments in Indonesian history (Smith 2015). From 1966 to 2000, there was a literal silencing of Chinese identity by the state, with the prohibiting of Mandarin Chinese used orally or in writing. Harsono experienced this regulation at the age of eighteen when his birth name, Oh Hong Bun, was replaced by his Catholic Baptist name, Franciscus. Harsono has addressed this experience of a suppressed identity in one of his most known works, *Writing in the Rain* (2013), which has been represented in various iterations around the world. The single-channel video performance shows Harsono writing his Chinese name in ink against a wall of glass that stands between the artist and the camera (see Figure 4). Gradually, a sheet of water rains down on the glass, washing away the inked versions of his name. The artist continues to attempt to scribe his name as the characters bleed into each other, with lines of ink gradually pooling onto the floor beneath him. There is a soft tension to the performance in the artist's attempts to continue repeating his name despite the possibilities of erasure.

Harsono has continued to use gestures of inscription and tracing as performative elements in other works such *Pilgrimage to History* (2013), which shows the artist creating a frottage rubbing of Chinese names inscribed on tombstones from mass graves in Java (see Figure 5). The work extends upon Harsono's ongoing research into the location of mass gravesites in Java of ethnic Chinese, murdered in the late 1940s for being suspected

Figure 6 Titarubi, *History Repeats Itself* (2016).

Dutch spies. We can locate *Writing in the Rain* and *Pilgrimage to History* within a broader tradition of performance-based practices, that consist of task-orientated gestures with a ritualised element. In Harsono's video performances, counter-histories are evoked through cyclical performances of inscriptions, erasure and re-inscription. Such gestures look at how histories become written and how some are erased. They also speak to the semantic trace of history and how the performing body offers an archival form of remembering.

Continuing on themes of subversive remembering is the work of Titarubi. The artist's involvement in social movements and student activism during the turbulent years that preceded Suharto's downfall has led to a highly-politicised installation and performance practice. She is also one of the few female artists in Indonesia to frame her work within an overtly feminist discourse: challenging notions of Indonesian motherhood and the female body (Dirgantoro 2017, pp. 155–65). The body, in various sculptural forms, marks an entry point into her practice and is often used to contest cultural and historical constructs and insert counter-narratives (Dartanto 2007). I focus here on Titarubi's ongoing exploration of Dutch colonial narratives and how she creates, through an installation practice, sites of remembrance for legacies of colonial violence. Two major works from different periods of her career offer an insight into Titarubi's ongoing research into colonial histories. An earlier artwork, *Tales without Narration* (2007) looks at the violent history of the colonial sugar

industry in Indonesia. Exhibited at Cemeti Art House, the installation involved railway tracks laid down in the gallery, lined with terracotta figures. As with Dadang, Titarubi represents oppressed bodies in a mass. However, while the body in Dadang's work is elegiac, in *Tales without Narration* bodies are an archive of corporeal violence. Stacked into a railway cart with hands and feet sticking out of a heaped pile, the bodies are more explicitly corpses – evidence of the brutality that underscored the industrialisation of sugar during the Dutch colony.

Titarubi's practice is informed by a deeply researched process and part of her engagement with colonial trajectories in Indonesia is to recuperate events or figures that have been subsumed within larger histories. Her methods align to the feminist and decolonial archival strategies that guide this thesis, where she locates marginal connections in the archive to disrupt sustained hegemonies. One of her major works, *History Repeats Itself* (2016) for the Singapore Art Biennale centres around the history of the nutmeg spice and the exploitation of natural resources by the Dutch East India Company (VOC) across the archipelago (see Figure 6). During the colonial era nutmeg was seized upon by the Dutch as a luxury item and its value became equivalent to gold. Titarubi cites in her research the war between the British and the Dutch around nutmeg territories and the atrocities committed by VOC against the Banda islands in Maluku. As rich sources of nutmeg, the Bunda islands were monopolised by the Dutch and subsequently made into a slave plantation. In *History Repeats Itself* a ghostly apparition of colonial power is represented through three wooden ships, each with a hooded figure standing on top of it. The cloaked figures are composed of thousands of gold plated nutmeg strung together on copper wires. Here Titarubi weaves together a narrative from different historical threads and evocations. The ships signal the maritime power of colonial territorialisation while the empty hooded figures evoke spectres of colonialism that are both threatening and void-like. The installation is also beautiful, in its lush tones of gold and wood, and Titarubi makes apparent the seduction of wealth that colonialism was based upon.

Spice histories are explored iteratively throughout her practice and result in a series of connecting installations and sculptures over the years. In a sculpture titled *Something Remains* (2014) she references the memory of Keumalahayati, a sixteenth-century female admiral of the navy of the Aceh Sultanate. The sculpture consists of the burnt remains of a wooden boat, alluding to the lost archival record of Keumalahayati's vessel. While this work doesn't reference a body, it does evoke the ship as a corporeal remain. I propose

here that Titarubi is creating a counter-archive to colonial legacies. She exposes and makes sites of remembrance around violent histories of sugar and spice. Additionally, in a work such as *Something Remains*, she recuperates marginal stories that lie outside of official archives. Throughout her practice, we see this constant contestation of histories written by men or by colonisers: proposing a feminist differencing to epistemological and historical formations.

In closing, the body is a continual theme within contemporary Indonesian art practices that address traumatic memory. In the installation practice of Dadang Christanto, the body is represented as effigies to those who have been marginalised and persecuted. In FX Harsono's work, somatic inscriptions reveal and recuperate hidden histories. Finally, Titarubi evokes spectral bodies of colonial violence. The works discussed in this section build upon a notion of the counter-archive as a mode of practice. They present artistic strategies that actively read back into the archive and create alternative sites of testimony to marginalised histories.

Interrogating New Order legacies

Dadang, Harsono and Titarubi represent a founding generation of contemporary Indonesian artists who were witness to the atrocities of Suharto's regime and politically active during that time. The New Order, as a historical narrative, is approached quite differently in the works of a generation of artists that have emerged since the *Reformasi*. While the artworks explored so far can be ascribed as a form of monument to collective trauma, a subsequent generation of artists have engaged with how those traumas have been reckoned, represented and textualised in public discourse.

As with most authoritarian rules, an outpouring of violence marks the beginning and end points to Suharto's New Order. The Asian economic crisis of 1997 revealed Indonesia as a debt-ridden nation and exposed the long nepotism and corruption of the politically elite (Vatikiotis 1998). Student-led protests became the public voice of dissent against the government. In May 1998 four students were shot dead in a protest in Jakarta triggering a series of riots across the country and culminating in Suharto's resignation. The riots mark a particularly painful history for ethnic Chinese who became the targets for a rising wave of mass public violence, including the rape and murder of Chinese women.[30]

30 See Winarnita (2011) on the politics of commemorating the May 1998 mass rapes.

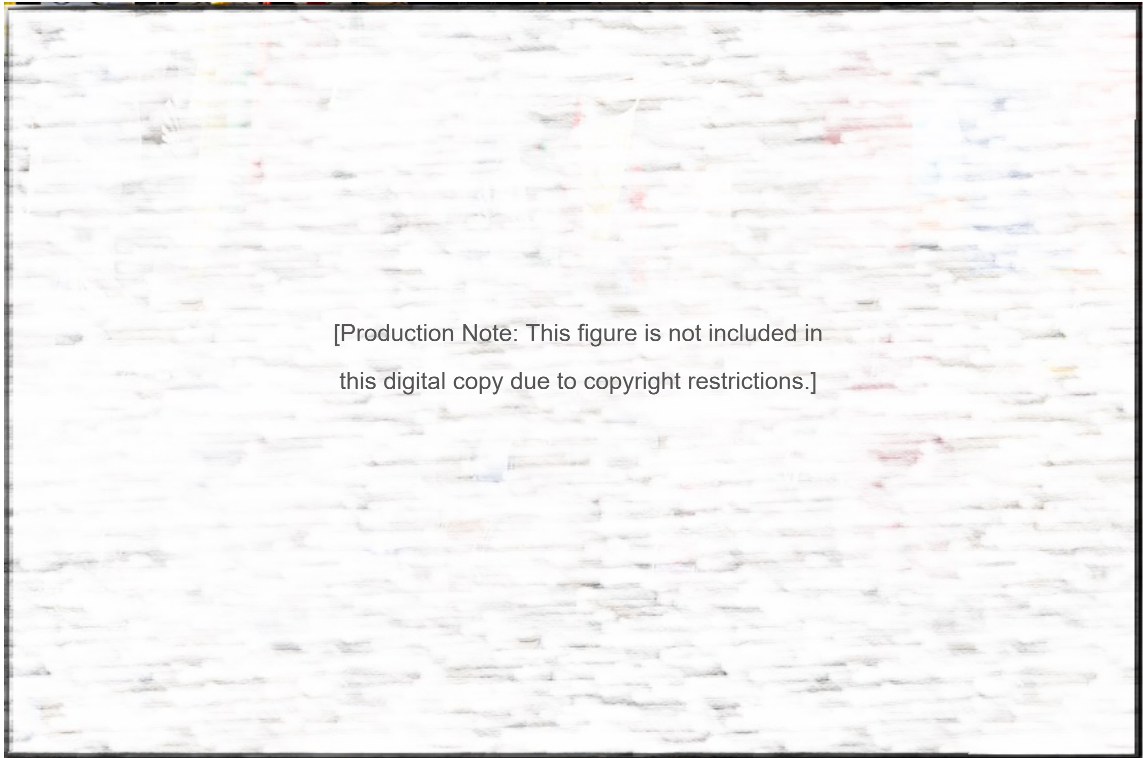

Figure 7 Jompet Kuswidananto, *After Voices* (2016).

The history of the May 1998 riots is revisited by the artist Jompet Kuswidananto in an installation at what was previously known as Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation in Sydney, Australia.[31] Jompet is known for creating multi-media installations that examine colonial legacies and specific Javanese histories (Jurriëns 2009). His visual arts practice is further informed by his background as a musician and his involvement in *Teater Garasi*, an experimental theatre group based in Yogyakarta. The exhibition, titled *After Voices* (2016), presents a ghostly parade of disembodied items of clothing, loudspeakers, flags, drums, and motorbike lights, amassed together as if they were in a public march (see Figure 7). While several video elements are incorporated in the installation, the main focus is upon this archival display of objects and clothing that are animated through moving elements and sound. Kinetic sculptures create a sudden insertion of sound in the otherwise hushed space of the Sherman gallery. Pairs of wooden hands clap together in sudden staccato movements, a drum set creates irregular beats and sounds of chanted speeches echo out from speakers. A fan triggers a flag to unfurl, revealing the photographic image of Suharto holding a gun. Here an archival collection is animated through a theatric sensibility.

31 Now renamed as Sherman Centre for Culture & Ideas.

Of the artworks examined so far, Jompet's installation most closely resembled an archive. All the chaos, the sexual violence, the upheaval of the May 1998 riots have been emptied and distilled into a tightly controlled collection of material artefacts. Indeed, in the Australian exhibition the emotional weight of that historical context would have eluded many viewers. While the previous artworks explored in this chapter evoke the body as an ontological presence, in *After Voices* the body remains a ghostly receptacle of the past. The spectral display of clothed bodies, alongside video footage and sound bites from this era create an archive to a history of riots and protest. It commemorates those who died or suffered during the protests, yet within the taxonomic display there is also an allusion towards the system of censorship and state terror that formed obedient correctness in its citizens.

The established careers of Dadang Christanto, Titarubi, FX Harsono and Jompet have been enabled through international representation in major art institutions leading to opportunities to make large-scale and ambitious installations. In more recent years,

Figure 8 Rangga Purbaya, detail, *Stories Left Untold* (2015).

emerging artists have worked on a more intimate scale to engage with the memory of 1965 and in absence of official reconciliation, offer reparative remembering of the past. The photomedia artist Rangga Purbaya draws from personal family history to examine the disappearance of his grandfather during the 1965 killings. Rangga's history echoes a common experience felt amongst the second generation of 1965 victims, where knowledge of what happened to his grandfather was obscured by family silence and social stigma. In the exhibition *Stories Left Untold* (2015), curated by Budi N.D. Dharmawan and exhibited at ICAN in Yogyakarta, Rangga creates a photographic archive exploring the disappearance and memory of his grandfather. If the previous works in this chapter cited traumatic histories through representations of the body, Rangga's photographs focus on the gap made by an absent body. Not knowing what happened to his grandfather's body, he instead documents his grandfather's personal artefacts. Images of his grandfather's shaver, diary and personal archives are photographed up close against a plain white studio background. Other images trace the erased fate of Rangga's grandfather, such as a photograph of a vertical cave in Wonosari, Gunung Kidul, a well-known killing location of communist supporters (see Figure 8). The grandfather's absent presence fills the exhibition's quiet and unassuming imagery. Alongside these images are portraits of family members, each with a line of text lifted from an interview with the artist about his grandfather. Rangga has described how his project eventually became an exploration of how his generation has mostly remained oblivious to the history of 1965 (Schott 2016). The photographs and text reveal these gaps of knowledge for people as they come to terms with their family history.

Rangga emerged as an artist from *Ruang MES 56*, a photography collective based in Yogyakarta that has been responsible for fostering critically engaged lens-based practices in Java. *Stories Left Untold* paired Rangga's work alongside the German photographer, Nora Scheidler, who also explores a parallel family history of her father's imprisonment in the infamous Hohenschönhausen prison in East Berlin. Both Rangga and Scheidler can be seen as extending a lineage of documentary photography, framed by ethnographic research and conceptual inquiry. Such work relies on a pairing of text with image, where coolly formulated landscapes and everyday objects reveal heavy histories (see Chapter Three on aftermath photography). The exhibition creates a narrative around disappearance, loss and the liminal space missing loved ones occupy within unresolved family histories. Rangga works within an archival mode of photographic documentation, yet the implication of his work lies in that which cannot be documented: the erased evidence, the still missing body and the unanswered questions.

Rangga's project can be seen as a form of reconciliation around past traumas. Yet for other artists, before reconciliation must come a public reckoning of the past. The 2004 performance of the Balinese art collective, *Klinik Seni Taxu* (Taxu Art Clinic) at Cemeti Art Gallery is remembered for its more antagonistic approach to remembering the victims of 1965 (Dwyer & Santikarma 2007; Kent 2016, p. 180). The performance, titled *Memasak dan Sejarah* (Cooking and History), involved the artist group dressed in *pakaian adat* (traditional ceremonial clothing) and cooking sweet potatoes for the audience participators. It was only until after the meal had been eaten that the artists revealed the potatoes had been grown and harvested from a field in Bali that covered a mass grave from 1965. The performance, which triggered feelings of shock and disgust (some participants vomited in response), incited a visceral response to the repressed horror of 1965. There are several layers to this performance that deserve a longer review. The ritualisation of the performance, the specific Balinese subjectivity being represented and critical questions raised around subject participation, make this performance an interesting case study for artists' responses to 1965 trauma. As an example of art engaging with counter-histories, the performance is particularly effective in the way it collapses emotional distance between the present and the past. Food and the socio-cultural processes surrounding it is an archival history. In this performance, the sweet potato, both on a symbolic and physical level, is an archive of the silenced dead. The archive is physically ingested by the participant and dead bodies are thus swallowed anew and digested within contemporary bodies; a performative cycle alluding to the ways in which traumatic histories lie latent within collective psyches.

In a subsequent series of performative lectures, the artist Irwan Ahmett also explores a performative remembering and ingesting of 1965 histories. Ahmett predominantly works as a collaborative artist duo with his partner Tita Salina and their practice consists of collective interventions that explore the social fabric of urban spaces. Between 2014 and 2016, Ahmett staged three performative lectures that deconstruct the continuing mythology of the New Order master narrative. The lectures were instigated by Ahmett's research interest around the lasting impact of Cold War ideologies within Indonesia, and how this political discourse has resulted in a collective hallucination around Indonesia's national history. The lectures involve a performative mapping between research images and footage that the artist collected from the New Order era, including archival documents, state propaganda, local and foreign media footage. In the first two lectures, titled *Graffiti on History* (2014) and *Spatial History* (2015), Ahmett examines the mythology surrounding certain historical documents that have enshrined New Order legitimacy (Ahmett 2015).

Figure 9 Irwan Ahmett, *Autopsy of History* (2016).

In particular he interrogates the historical memory around *Supersemar* (Order of Eleventh March), the official command letter that transferred power from Sukarno to Suharto in 1966, whose legitimacy and original existence is now called into question. Playfully interrogative, Ahmett reveals how the power of the New Order was based on the simulacra of democracy. His project is especially effective at disrupting the self-evidentiary status of the archive. Through a discursive approach, his project destabilises New Order archives and reveals the sustained power that these documents continue to evoke even after the Reformation.

The culminating lecture in the series titled *Autopsy of History* (2016)[32] is what links to the previous tactics of *Klinik Seni Taxu,* exploring cyclical connections between crop plants and the buried from 1965–66. The lecture was conducted in a more openly performative mode, with Ahmett pausing to dress in a surgical gown and mask (see Figure 9). A camera live-feeds a close up shot of him dissecting, with surgical tools, tropical vegetables and fruit that have been preserved in sugar. Cutting them into small pieces he invites the audience to taste and eat the fruit. As with the *Klinik Seni Taxu* performance, the audience is told how the fruit and vegetables have been harvested from the earth where mass graves from 1965

32 Original viewing of this lecture was through a video recording on the artist's website which has subsequently been removed.

lie. Adding to this premise, Ahmett preserved the harvested crops in sugar sourced from colonial sugar factories.

This final lecture connects several historical trajectories that create a re-reading of the suppressed trauma of 1965. Ahmett provides an autopsy on the history of tropical paradise fruit, as a luxury commodity that lay behind the colonial brutality of the Dutch East India Company. He traces the continuing commodification of paradise tropical fruits throughout national histories of Independence and the emergence of modern Indonesia. He then points to the presence of paradise fruit trees as visual markers of violence and mass graves from 1965. Java's fertility and abundance are thus revealed to stem from dark, buried histories. The performance frames tropical crops as an archive that contains paradoxes of sweetness and rot, underscoring national histories of political violence. Ahmett's project is particularly aligned to the feminist strategies around the archive that guide this research. His work not only generates counter-histories, but his research methodologies actively read back into the archive and create surprising connections between disparate events, material and spatial histories. Parallel to this research project, Irwan posits colonial narratives of exotic paradise as a counterpoint to national histories of political violence.

In this section I have connected several artistic practices that form a notion of the counter-archive in Indonesian art. In various ways, the artworks addressed here interrogate sustained New Order hegemonies and stigmas. They disrupt the master narrative of the New Order, its heroic nationalisms and vilification of those who resisted its authority. Significantly, the artworks examined here operate through parallel strategies to feminist archival recuperations. As established in Chapter One, feminist strategies around the archive operate as a way of reading back into the archive to reveal marginalised perspectives. In the context of Indonesia, contemporary art practices have formed a significant counter-voice of dissent. Furthermore, as we see in the practices discussed here, artists offer reflexive and discursive modes of questioning the past, revealing contested memory.

One Thousand and One Martian Nights: A speculative archive

This section looks at Tintin Wulia's video installation *One Thousand and One Martian Nights*, which was part of her installation titled *One Thousand and One Martian Homes* for the Indonesian pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale in 2017. As a mid-career artist, Tintin has achieved both national and international representation in major biennales and public art

collections. Drawing from her diasporic history as a Chinese-Indonesian, born in Bali and living as an artist between Australia, Indonesia, and more recently Sweden, her work has focused on the geopolitics of borders and displacement within transnational flows. Her work explores modes of connectivity through experimental media and technologies, with installations that incorporate video, interactive sculptures, objects and sound. Here I focus specifically on her video *One Thousand and One Martian Nights,* as it frames a discussion around speculative archives for 1965 histories.

Continuing her concerns around borders and nations, *One Thousand and One Martian Homes* took place through two identical installations: one in Venice and one in the Senayan City Shopping Mall in Jakarta. Both locations were digitally connected through live stream projections of the other site. *One Thousand and One Martian Nights* involved an installation of telematic video projections with surveillance cameras. As well as this work, the exhibition involved two interactive works. The first was *We Are Not Alone,* a two metre diameter orb sculpture wired with LED light that was activated through visitors' movements. The second work, *Under the Sun,* created a stairway of circular video monitors with blinking eyes, made by recording people's eyes as they peeped into a locked room. As well as collapsing geopolitical borders of the Venice exhibition, the project was conceptually themed through connecting speculative and historical narratives. It weaves together a futuristic story of Mars terraformation with historic narratives around the year 1965 in Indonesian national histories and American space exploration. The project draws its title from *A Thousand and One Nights*, which the artist has interpreted as a tale of survival, and the exhibition thus connects survival from 1965 trauma with future survival stories from space exploration.

While the concept of the two virtually connected exhibitions test interesting criticisms around the Venice location, I focus my discussion of the archive through the main video installation of the show, *One Thousand and One Martian Nights* (see Figures 10–12). The video centres on interviews with former political exiles who were sent to colonise Mars in the year 2065. The video is set a hundred years later in 2165, and recounts stories of survival around their incarceration on Mars and includes interviews with family members sharing their own survival stories of uncovering family secrets and surviving social discrimination. For those familiar with Indonesia's imprisonment of suspected communists during Suharto's military regime, these speculative stories of Mars colonisation will clearly be an analogy for the prison camps on Buru island. The video creates a complex layering of speculative and historical temporalities. It interweaves interviews with survivors with

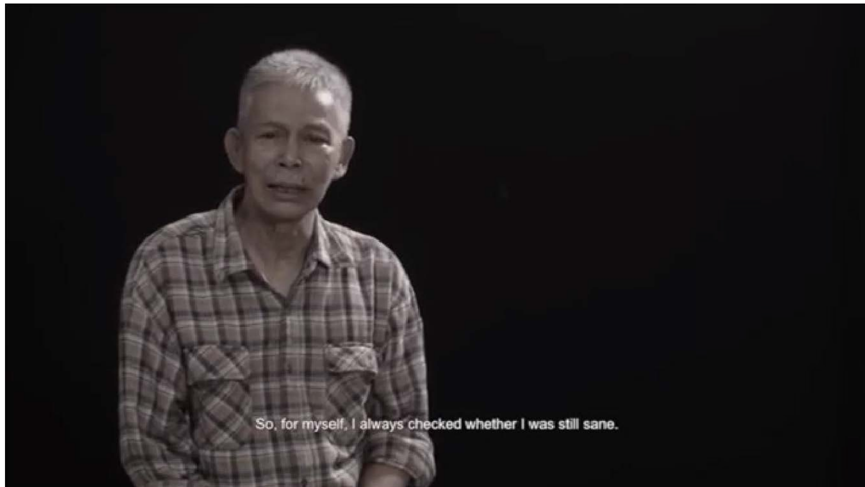

Figure 10–12 Tintin Wulia, video stills, *One Thousand and One Martian Nights* (2017).

documentation of the exhibition being installed, archival media footage of NASA Mars expeditions in the 1960s, documentation of personal artefacts from 1965 survivors and a recording of Tintin and her mother rehearsing Gustav Holst's *The Planets* (1914–16) on two pianos. As a final element, live stream footage of the gallery in both locations interrupts the video sporadically. The video traces recursive patterns in history, as it moves back and forth in time and space and overlays a futuristic narrative on archival footage. The live footage of visitors walking around the gallery further conflates the temporal structure of the video: with past, present and future images intersecting.

In the context of my research I read *One Thousand and One Martian Nights* as being a speculative archive for 1965 survivor histories. What gradually emerges through these shifting temporalities and intersecting narratives is a contemplation of past trauma through imagined futurisms. Tintin has described the video as being based on a mental exercise where one places themselves in the future to recall a moment from the past (McGovern-Basa 2017, p. 116). This speaks to the concept of 'feminist time' explored in the previous chapter, where anachronistic connections are made within the archive to disrupt the linear and singular version of history (Zapperi 2013). Tintin here makes connections between what appears to be discrepant experiences, linking Cold War legacies in Indonesia to imagined futurisms of American space exploration. By creating a speculative memory around 1965, the work actively reads back into sustained New Order master narratives.

The video uses speculative fiction to not only read back, but to empathetically remember in the archive. As explored in Chapter One, the power of speculative fiction for those who traditionally speak from a place of otherness is that one is able to conceive of futurisms that are not bound by past inequalities, traumas or prejudices. For the purposes of the video, Tintin asked participants to be interviewed as actors and provided a script for them to read. Some of the participants were 'closeted' survivors from 1965 who felt safer to narrate their stories through the fictionalised Mars script. Others were second or third generation survivors who narrated stories drawn from other survivor stories. For the participants in the video, speaking about their traumatic histories through a speculative narrative is an opportunity to talk freely about their past without constraints of preconditioned silencing (T. Wulia 2018, pers. comm., 28 June).

The repercussions of enforced family secrets are a continual theme within Tintin's work and research as an artist. The artist's grandfather was a victim of 1965 communists

purges in Bali and her family kept his disappearance as a long held secret to avoid further discrimination. She has described growing up discriminated against as a Chinese-Indonesian, where her sense of origin was a contested identity (McGovern-Basa 2017, p. 113). Tintin's journey towards reclaiming and remembering her family history has made her an advocate for marginalised voices in Indonesia. Together with the academic Ken Setiawan she started the online project *1965setiaphari.org/living1965.org,* which creates a space for families of those affected by 1965 to share their stories. *One Thousand and One Martian Nights* thus stems from the artist's advocacy around 1965 and offers a counter-archive for those who have been silenced.

As an installation, *One Thousand and One Martian Nights*, perhaps does not quite meet the conceptual aims of the project. The exhibition received some negative reviews in response to technical issues that undermined the concept of a non-hierarchical globalised connectivity (Bianpoen 2017). The video, with its fragmentary assemblage of footages from different sources, including shaky video documentation and b-roll footage, is best read as a pseudo-documentary and without insight into the specific history at stake, a viewer might find it difficult to follow the multiple layers of the work.

Yet despite this, the work remains an important project for 1965 survivor histories. The video recuperates small acts of resistance and survival strategies in these histories of incarceration. One man recounts how writing was forbidden, so prisoners would hide their notebooks under banana trees where the earth was said to be the driest. Another man reveals his way to avoid loss of sanity was to recite the entire encyclopedia index in alphabetical order, a ritual he drew from his childhood. In a critical scene, the man attempts to recite the order again and stumbles through the sequence. His reliance on that index as a barometer for sanity has paled over the years. Drawing from this strategy, the video is also divided into chapters each titled with a different encyclopedic index but in non-sequential order, perhaps alluding to a gradual dissolving of logical order. The scene that I return to most is the one of Tintin and her mother rehearsing Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, whose melancholic notes become the dominant soundtrack to the video. In this scene, the artist at some point loses concentration and fumbles the composition. Her mother urges her to "see it, think about it, and connect it to your hands" (*lihat terus, mikir terus, nyambung ke tangannya)* and that "your problem is you look but you don't see" (*salahnya lihat tapi tidak lihat*). This brief moment of a mother urging her daughter to really look at something to remember it can be felt as the essential core within the work. It is a call urging us to see the

past, to hold it in our memories and connect with our histories through the body.

900mdpl: Place as an archive

In this final case study I address several artworks made for 900mdpl, a site-specific residency and exhibition program based in the mountain village of Kaliurang, Java. The exhibition was curated by Mira Asriningtyas, a resident of Kaliurang, who together with her partner, the artist Dito Yuwono, is a co-director of LIR Space, an itinerant curatorial program formerly based in Yogyakarta. Both Dito and Mira are artistic directors of 900mdpl, with Mira in the curatorial role. 900mdpl has now been staged twice as a site-specific exhibition and public program, first in 2018 and then in 2019. The exhibiting artists were a mixture of Indonesian and international artists whose final artworks were developed from a residency period in Kaliurang. In 2020 an offsite iteration titled *Transient Museum of a Thousand Conversations* was staged as part of LIR Space's international residency at ISCP in New York.

900mdpl engages with several thematic concerns that are significant to this thesis. The project positions place as an archive with artists responding to Kaliurang's material, oral and spatial histories. Additionally, the site-specific premise of the exhibition encouraged artists to engage with place-based research methodologies, ethnographic, experiential and socially-engaged tactics to create an alternative archive of place. While the scope of the solo art projects involved deserves a longer study, I highlight here several artworks that engage with archival strategies relevant to this thesis: focusing on narratives of colonial and touristic nostalgia, archival hauntings and recuperating marginal memory.

The project was initially conceived by Mira as an archival impulse, in that she wanted to create a record of the collective memory, cultural practices and folklore specific to Kaliurang (Asriningtyas 2018, p. 4). The village is a palimpsest of multiple chapters within national historical timelines. Made desirable during the colonial era as a Dutch holiday retreat for its cooler climate, the village continued to be conceived as a popular tourist destination within the early national period and during the height of the New Order. The village is now experienced as a slightly faded and nostalgic version of its glory years. Additionally, Kaliurang sustains a symbolic and spiritual connection to Mount Merapi, which is an important site within Javanese cultural geography and cosmology. Merapi is an active volcano whose periodic explosions have threatened the village over the years, the most recent being in 2010 when the village had to be evacuated. The volcano is believed

Figure 13–14 Paoletta Holst, *What Bungalows Can Tell/Hal-hal yang Diceritakan oleh Bungalow* (2019).

to be the spiritual counterpart to the Yogyakarta Sultanate and is aligned on a sacred axis that connects Merapi to the south sea (Asriningtyas 2018, p.4). The residents of Kaliurang thus hold a significant and, at times, precarious relationship with Merapi, shaped by an understanding of the mountain as a site of ancestral power which bleeds into Kaliurang's folklore around ghosts and unseen activity.

Parallel to Bali, Kaliurang as a tourist destination was shaped by colonial legacies. The title of the show gains refers to the village's altitude of 900 metres above sea level (*900 meter diatas permukaan laut*), and for Dutch colonialists the village's mild temperatures evoked memories of European climates. Before the Japanese occupation, Kaliurang was a study in transcultural relations. In an installation by Jompet for the 2019 program, interviews with senior residents of Kaliurang recalled memories of Dutch residents being fluent in Javanese and socially integrated within the village (Asriningtyas 2019). Conversely, Dutch occupants who came after the Japanese occupation are remembered for their aggression and violence towards local residents. Informed by colonial and tourist trajectories, Kaliurang is a 'contact zone' (Pratt 2008), describing uneven entanglements between diverse cultures.

Kaliurang's colonial histories are now read as faded traces in the village's landscape. Belgium artist Paoletta Holst in her contribution for the 2019 exhibition titled *What Bungalows Can Tell/Hal-Hal Yang Diceritakan Oleh Bungalow,* creates a photographic and video archive of Kaliurang's colonial-era villas (see Figures 13–14). Holst's imagery, informed by ethnographic modes of research, reveals vacant interiors that are palimpsests of shifting temporalities and understandings of place. For Kaliurang residents, these colonial bungalows are not thought of in the archival sense. As Mira and Dito explain, the majority of local residents remain generally uninterested in the conservation of these villas and their associated histories (Asriningtyas & Yuwono 2020, pers. comm., 13 August). This speaks of an interesting suppression of colonial narratives in Kaliurang and the transcultural appropriation of colonial aftereffects. Kaliurang's colonial signification as a place for leisure and retreat has been localised within its current touristic identity.

Extending upon these colonial trajectories is Mella Jaarsma's work, *The Right Shot* (2018), which involved a participatory reconstruction of the memory of drinking hot chocolate in her grandmother's house in the Netherlands (see Figures 15–16). The performance was staged in Vogels, a local Dutch style café, where participants were first asked to cool

themselves in front of an open refrigerator and then served hot chocolate. Originally from the Netherlands, Mella has long been a significant figure within Yogyakarta's art scene, and along with her partner, the artist Nindityo Adipurnomo, was the co-founder of Cemeti Art House. Mella experiences Kaliurang's colonial era architecture and cooler climate as a memory trigger for her Dutch heritage. Her artwork for 900mdpl traces the migration of this memory and its diasporic reconstruction in a Javanese mountain village.

Figure 15–16 Mella Jaarsma, *The Right Shot* (2017).

Reconstructions of memory are also evoked in *900mdpl* artworks that engage with oral histories. A central curatorial concern was to archive Kaliurang's unseen histories by responding to folk stories that underscore local understandings of place. In particular, the 2019 iteration speaks to this intertwining of collective memory with local folklore, with the title of *900mdpl: Hantu Hantu Seribu Percakapan* (Ghosts of a Thousand Conversations). Several artworks across both the 2018 and 2019 exhibitions engage with the village's spectral hauntings, either as a socially-engaged practice through oral histories or by reconstructing fragmentary stories around the supernatural. The idea of a haunted archive is explored in Chapter One of this thesis, where marginalised and hidden histories create ghosts in the archive. Experimental research methods and artistic practices that reclaim these histories are often responding to fragmentary and non-linear archival connections (Mills 2013).

Figure 17 Mark Salvatus, installation view, *Jalan-Jalan* (2019).

Figure 18 Agung Kurniawan, *Raungan Terakhir/The Last Roar* (2019).

Responding to local practices of ghost stories, Manila-based artist Mark Salvatus creates an archive of the hidden layers of place in his video titled *Jalan-Jalan* (2019). In the video, Salvatus documents forest scenes and then inserts performative elements with local residents acting out the part of Kaliurang's ghostly inhabitants (see Figure 17). The title of the work, *Jalan-Jalan*, denotes an aimless strolling and links to the walking activities of the unseen that create another interpretative layer to Kaliurang. The video presents a speculative document of Kaliurang's unseen residents and excavates hidden narratives contained within the village's natural environment. His video touches upon several parallel concerns with my creative work for this thesis: namely those around spirits that inhabit forest landscapes and the oral histories that sustain them.

Extending upon the notion of the haunted archive is Agung Kurniawan's sound-based installation titled *Raungan Terakhir/The Last Roar* for the 2019 program. Kurniawan, who is known for his politically subversive artworks, was a previous artist in the 2018 exhibition, where he then also drew upon local attunements to the supernatural to write a fictional horror story. In *Raungan Terakhir* he plays a recording of an actor orating President Sukarno's last speech from August 17, 1966. Kurniawan likens the voice of Sukarno, who was known as a prolific and powerful speechmaker, as a wounded lion[33] and the two-hour long speech, which is full of urgency, as his last roar. The artwork consisted of an elongated and two-dimensional sculpted metal figure of Sukarno, with two small loudspeakers attached to its head (see Figure 18). Installed on a forested hilltop, the speakers blasted the haunting echo of Sukarno's last speech. Kurniawan's research interest was to locate the archival traces of Sukarno's personal history in Kaliurang. He focused upon details such as Sukarno's former house, the local cook who was favourited by his wife and Sukarno's photographic likeness that continue to be hung in people's homes. According to Mira and Dito, this work proved to be the most popular with older Kaliurang residents, evoking their own memories of Bung Karno's (Comrade Karno) life in Kaliurang. The work becomes a haunted archive of Sukarno's present absence and evokes an aural reverberation of a particular window of time in Indonesia's national histories: of a dying democracy and the premonitory unease of what was to come.

As an archive of place, 900mdpl responds to memory that falls within the margin of official histories and in doing so create alternative genealogies of place. Two 900mdpl artists, in particular, have responded to fragmentary and marginal histories within

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33 Sukarno was sometimes referred to as the 'Lion of the Podium' for his oratory skills.

Kaliurang, relying on local oral histories to fill in archival gaps. Artist Lala Bohang researched the story of Masdoelhak Nasoetion, close advisor to the vice president Mohammad Hatt, who during the revolutionary period was taken from his Kaliurang house by Dutch soldiers and shot to death in a nearby bamboo grove. Lala reconstructs this narrative from the perspective of his wife, Adriana, who filed the first successful lawsuit in 1953 against the Dutch state for war crimes. The artist creates a speculative archive based on a fictional character named Ani Teresia, who maps Kaliurang's geography to reclaim Adriana's story. The final artwork, *The Many Faces of Herstory/Berbagai Wajah Kisahnya* (2019), was installed within a colonial era bungalow. Visitors encountered traces of Ani Teresia's personal belongings and her research into Adriana's life, designed as a series of maps and notes taped to the wall (see Figure 19). Rather than providing fixed answers to Adriana's life, Lala uses speculative devices to create an open-ended and reflexive mode of archival research.

Marginal memory is given visibility through a 2018 artwork by the artist Maryanto titled *Hom(age) of LekSigun*. The work responded to the story of a local man known as Lik Sigun who disappeared in the nearby forest three years ago. Lik Sigun, who suffered from mental illness, is remembered as an elusive and eccentric figure in Kaliurang. His memory is retained not only by his family and neighbours who conducted an extensive search for him, but also in his house and garden which remain unoccupied today. Maryanto created a homage to the memory of Sigun by reshaping and cutting back into the garden's overgrown grass to reveal personal objects and small archival traces of the missing man (see Figure 20). Here, someone that existed upon the margins and whose narrative could have easily been lost is reclaimed as a public archive. Although as the curator Alec Steadman noted, as a visiting viewer the work felt akin to trespassing upon Sigun's memory and without insight into the depth of Maryanto's collaboration and consultation with the community the ethical considerations of the artwork felt unresolved (Steadman 2018, p. 53). What I focus on here is the subtle way Maryanto creates visibility around Sigun's narrative. Rather than constructing new mediums or narrative devices, Maryanto simply makes small interventions in the landscape to reveal Sigun's existing aftereffects. As an archival strategy it is particularly effective for revealing present absences and palimpsests of hidden histories.

The conceptual breadth of 900mdpl deserves a longer review, particularly around the site-specific and experiential nature of the program along with the social connections it staged

Figure 19 Lala Bohang, *The Many Faces of Herstory/ Berbagai Wajah Kisahnya* (2019).

Figure 20 Maryanto, *Home(age) of Leksigun* (2017).

between exhibiting artists, art visitors and local residents. However these concerns lie outside of the scope of this thesis. Mira, in her 2018 curatorial essay, addresses the ethical implications of interweaving non-art communities with a transient art community and the particular power dynamics that arise from this. In her words, understanding 900mdpl within Western art frameworks of relational aesthetics lacks a Javanese understanding of art as inherently social to begin with. Mira instead frames her curatorial premise as an archival concern. For Mira, Kaliurang is her hometown and covers seven generations of her family history. The curatorial premise of 900mdpl is steeped in wanting to storehouse Kaliurang's cultural, material and social histories. Given the precariousness of Kaliurang's location under an active volcano, these are important histories to archive. 900mdpl can be understood as form of storytelling and as a socially-engaged exhibition—a living archive. The project forms an important genealogy to practice in that it offers a parallel approach to place as an archive (see Chapter Three and Four), as well as responding to the spectral and marginal narratives within place.[34]

Closing remarks

In this chapter I have examined contemporary Indonesian art practices that have provided important counter-narratives to Indonesia's political and colonial histories and the discourses surrounding them. The artworks addressed in this chapter are a curated selection of the many artists who contribute to a tradition of socio-politically charged art practices in Indonesia. As established in the beginning of this chapter, the history of modern and contemporary art in Indonesia is closely linked to a critical discussion of Indonesia's art activism and the social function of art. The practices of Dadang Christanto, FX Harsono and Titarubi establish how artists offer reparations and alternative remembering to Indonesia's traumatic histories and human rights abuses. Conversely, the practices of Jompet, Rangga Purbaya, *Klinik Seni Taxu* and Irwan Ahmett interrogate the forgetting and erasure that came after the fall of the New Order, where sustained master narratives silenced dissenting voices within public memory. Artworks such as Tintin Wulia's *One Thousand and One Martian Nights*, further disrupt New Order linearism by interweaving speculative pasts with futures, thus presenting the possibility for 1965 reconciliation. Finally, the exhibition 900mdpl builds on a concept that is central to this thesis, in that it reads place as an archive.

34 There are other historical connections between this project and my own. Migrating Javanese Hindu kingdoms to Bali have implemented parallel spatial cosmologies. In Bali, Mount Agung occupies a similar symbolism to Mount Merapi, and like Merapi, is conceived as the northern most point on a sacred line that runs to the south sea.

This chapter has sought to connect contemporary Indonesian art with theoretical discussions of the archive established in Chapter One. I build upon a notion of the counter-archive as a mode of practice by examining artworks that, in Griselda Pollock's terms, actively re-read and create interventions in master historical narratives. Furthermore I connect critical discussions of the archive in Anglophone contemporary art discourse with socio-political motivations in Indonesian art. Building upon the rationale of the previous chapter, I thus focus on artistic strategies that reconstruct historical narratives through speculative or alternative forms of memorialisation. While the artistic practices examined in this chapter draw from a wide range of conceptual concerns and media, what we can identify as a linking thread is the desire to read histories tangentially, to locate gestures of resistance and to speculate on realities that step outside of prevailing narratives. This chapter frames the notion of the counter-archive as a genealogy in contemporary Indonesian art, as well as presenting a genealogy to my own creative practice. By examining contemporary Indonesian art practices through the lens of archive discourse, I am able to contextualise my theoretical and conceptual concerns that inform my creative practice. This has allowed me to situate my work within a larger continuum of artist practices that respond to historical narratives.

3

THE SPECTRAL ARCHIVE: 1965 TRACES IN BALI

Figure 21 Leyla Stevens, video detail, *Witness* (2016).

Introduction

Not far from my family home in Bali there is large banyan tree that sits between the carpark of a local football field and the village temple. Situated on a busy intersection, this site is a rare communal space that quietly resists the mindless growth of south Bali's luxury hotels and private villas. Bordered by roads filled with a constant stream of traffic, the car park has the feel of a small protected island. What is known, but never openly talked about, is the mass grave from the 1965–66 anti-communist killings that lies buried beneath the stretch of road where the banyan tree sits alongside. The whispered presence of these bodies marks a history that underscores a topography known predominantly as a tourist destination.

The silent presence of mass graves from 1965[35] in south Bali occupies the central focus of this chapter. I examine their trace as hidden trajectories and palimpsests within the highly touristed topographies of south Bali. Through an analysis of my moving image practice, I look at how 1965 traces remain as fragments, gaps and present absences in the land. Taking sites such as the banyan tree intersection as a starting point, I frame a discussion around place as a palimpsest of multiple temporalities. What makes this a site of interest is what it conceals, rather than reveals. If we pass through this site there is no hint through the drone of cars and motorbikes of the missing dead that lie beneath the road that the tree sits alongside. It is simply an intersection taken to enter the main highway artery that connects much of south Bali. This banyan tree is thus a signal in the landscape for invisible and forgotten histories.

Thinking through theories of place by Doreen Massey and Andreas Huyssen this chapter proposes an understanding of how conflicting histories may converge spatially and temporally. Furthermore, by engaging with geographical concerns of the archive, as proposed by Tim Cresswell and Sarah Mills, I then consider how places and their material traces are archives in themselves (Cresswell 2012; Mills 2013). Massey challenges established thinking on how histories and cultures progress temporally and reorientates this as a spatial question (Massey 2005). This is visualised through her use of the word *trajectory*, where space is not an abstract flat surface, but the convergence of coexisting trajectories that are always under construction. Similarly, Huyssen's theory on historical

35 This thesis uses the term '1965' to reference not only the 1965–66 anti-communist killings that occurred across Indonesia, but also the many human rights abuses that arose during this time, including the imprisonment of those associated with communist ideologies along with many ordinary citizens, as well as the continued persecution and stigmatisation felt by families of victims.

trauma and collective remembering has proved important to this paper in that it visualises how contesting temporalities may converge within a place (Huyssen 2003). Huyssen uses the literary trope of a palimpsest to understand how urban spaces may be read as a textual layering of multiple histories, narratives and memory (2003, p. 7). His proposal for reading place textually holds weight with this chapter as it places attention on the invisible archeology of place—where visible topographies overlay speculative imaginaries and spectral remains.

To consider the relationship between place and the archive, I engage with several major iterations of my moving image practice. The first iteration, *Of Love and Decomposition*, was a solo exhibition held at Firstdraft gallery in Sydney and involved three individual video works, *Witness*, *Wong Samar* and *The Surfers*. The exhibition, which shares the same title as this thesis, was conceived as a response to the banyan tree site addressed and proved an initial testing ground for me to think through counterpoint histories and 'place as an archive'. The second iteration, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, involved a single-channel video projection shown as part of the selective *2018 John Fries Award* at UNSW Galleries. The fourteen minute long video is narrated by two female voices who slip between Indonesian and vernacular Balinese to create a questioning dialogue on how 1965 has been both remembered and forgotten in Bali. Finally I address two major video artworks, *Kidung* (2019) and *Rites for the missing* (2019) produced for the final creative iteration of this project at UTS Art.

To critically frame my methods, I draw upon theory surrounding late photography (otherwise cited as slow or aftermath photography), which are documentations of empty landscapes and urban spaces that have experienced traumatic histories. David Campany's essay on the subject and the sociological shifts of photography through media technologies, as well as Donna West Brett's book examining photographic landscapes of post-war Germany and Berlin post re-unification, have provided me with key concepts to analyse the use of 'slow landscapes' in my own work (Brett 2016; Campany 2003). As both authors comment, late photography shifts the emphasis away from the 'decisive moment' that so governed documentary and reportage based photography since the advent of SLR cameras. Instead, late photography is taken after a significant lapse of time since the original event. These highly detailed and aesthetically formal images, mostly devoid of human presence, are read not for their content but for the trace of histories that remain invisible and inaccessible to the camera.

To analyse the use of slow landscapes in my work, I make use of theory surrounding aftermath photography in its reading of topographies for blind spots and empty gaps that speak of present absences. Late photography has emerged throughout contemporary art and photojournalism as a genre that engages with places experiencing the after effects of war or terrorism. Aftermath imagery is read as evidence of *trace,* and in this genre, empty landscapes become allegorical for histories of conflict and trauma.

To begin the chapter, I address the representation of traumatic landscapes in my videos through criticism surrounding late photography. I look at how the use of slow landscapes in my work presents a tension between seeing and non-seeing in the context of suppressed 1965 histories. I then focus on the running presence of spirits and hauntings throughout my moving image work as archival traces. Drawing upon the Balinese concept of *niskala*, I look at how Balinese perspectives on the non-material and the unseen offer an expanded dimension to the archive. Here I propose the notion of the *spectral archive*, which registers the hidden histories that are inscribed in a place. In the final section of this chapter I focus upon two major artworks created for this thesis, *Kidung* and *Rites for the missing*(2019). Both are multi-channel video works that stage a performance in relation to traumatic landscapes from 1965. I conclude this chapter by addressing how my creative artworks performatively remember and recuperate marginalised memories surrounding 1965.

Afterimage: Seeing and not seeing within topographies of trauma

In this section, I frame slow landscapes within my work through concepts surrounding late photography. In relation to the topographies that I engage with, my analysis addresses several concerns: seeing and not seeing, politics of witnessing and place as palimpsest of history and memory.

Upon entering the exhibition, *Of Love and Decomposition*, viewers first encounter a three-meter long video projection that hangs diagonally across the gallery space. The video projection, titled *Witness*, involves a black and white documentation of the banyan tree that focuses on the everyday vernacular of the site (see Figure 22). The video is structured through a gradual accumulation of long takes revealing the quiet, early morning activity within the parking lot and the intersection where the tree sits. What unfolds during the video describes a kind of non-action and in this absence of overt subject, the focus hones in on small details that gradually build up to describe the everyday temporality of the space. While not necessarily composed for linear viewing, we witness this temporal unfolding of

the morning, such as: two parking lot attendants sweeping underneath the tree, the steady hum of traffic or a lone runner cutting across the frame. Gradually the ambient sounds give way to a build-up of one haunting note that resonates throughout several close-up shots of the tree. This aural reverberation occurs again towards the end of the video, with a slow zoom in effect on several shots. The recurring note, in its subtle hint of unease, points towards a concealed reading to the site and to an unseen presence.

Figure 22 Leyla Stevens, video still, *Witness* (2016).

This particular mode of documentation, where quiet landscapes reveal hidden meanings, is carried through in a subsequent video project called *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2018). The work, which is structurally more dense and layered than *Witness*, primarily involves a sequence of images of natural and urban phenomena in Bali such as coastlines, forests, volcanoes and the toll bridge that spans across south Bali's contested mangrove wetlands (see Figures 23–24). Interspersed throughout these landscapes are ghostly embodiments of spirits that inhabit the natural world. The positing of these landscapes as genre of image is deliberated accentuated in the layering of two images over the top of each other. A recurring device is for one image gradually to recede in scale until it is a small rectangle and to reveal another image behind it. Other times, this effect is inversed, where a landscape scaled at a small size within the main frame will gradually expand to take over the whole frame.

Their Sea is Always Hungry is guided through a spoken dialogue between the voices of an older and younger woman. The voices slip between Indonesian and Balinese and different levels of formality to exchange fragments of stories and rumours that surround the

1965-66 killings in Bali. Occasionally there is a re-enactment of the stories they speak of, but rarely does the video directly illustrate the narration. For the most part the voices stand in for a kind of commentary on the killings and provide a questioning around what 'truths' are to be remembered and whose memories are to be now recognised. Other times the voices reveal themselves to be embodiments of spirits that are attached to natural phenomena in Bali and thus provide a non-human perspective to the histories discussed.

In this work I address 1965 trauma not through a litany of violence but through an engagement with its trace, fragments and remnants within the present In one particular sequence of slowly receding and emerging images, we hear a conversation play out between the two narrators wondering how many bodies lie buried from this time and where they buried now. At one point, the older woman asks the younger to stop in her recounting of how bodies were thrown into large holes. "*We do not want to remember them this way*", she says firmly. This cautionary note in the dialogue is an indicator of how I have attempted to reclaim 1965 memories. It marks a retreat from the fetishisation that can occur when dealing with bloody pasts. Instead the maintained focus is on the inaccessibility of Bali's buried history beneath landscapes of peaceful slowness and the latent violence of forced erasure.

Here I focus on my use of slow landscapes and the dissonance they create between surface topologies and the present absence of erased histories. I frame my methods through the theoretical ground that late photography offers, in examining relationships between images, place and historical memory. In both videos, the topologies I respond to reference the presence of unacknowledged mass graves in Bali. These landscapes function much as a late photograph in that they are often empty of human presence and operate as a straightforward documentation of a site. While the video, *Witness* responds directly to the site of a mass grave, the landscapes in *Their Sea is Always Hungry* works more obliquely. The video cites typical landscape imagery associated with Bali such as lush tropics and beautiful coastlines and invests them with hidden meanings. The effects of layers and scale disrupt their surfaces. In many ways the work is a collage where images are connected from disparate sources. *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, is structured in many ways as a palimpsest, both in the layering of one landscape over another and through the spoken dialogue. Over the top of these peaceful landscapes we hear troubling narratives surrounding bodies, mass graves, of violence and spirits from wrongful deaths. In other words, the work presents a quiet redressing of Bali's paradise imagery. Slow landscapes thus signal in my work an

Figure 23–24 Leyla Stevens, video still, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2018).

approach to place as palimpsests of memory and history.

The topographies that I engage with, to borrow a phrase from Brett, 'both complicate and present a tension between seeing and not-seeing the histories of these sites' (Brett 2015 p. 95). Much has been written on late photography's contradictory vision, where processes of looking and recording are accompanied by an inevitable blindness and amnesia around the histories they wish to trace. The photograph has long been established as indexical to the past. The very medium is a trace of that which has passed and is defined by a process of memorialisation. Yet as key theory on the subject has expounded upon, photography is inherently tied up to the fallibility of memory, where the original event lies outside of the frame and subject to loss and forgetting (Barthes 2000). This tension of vision holds philosophical and political implications when documenting places of historical trauma.[36] Aftermath photography can only offer a belated seeing where the photographer arrives after the fact. Brett names this ocular failure as late photography's *astigmatic* condition: a term referring to an optometric defect where 'rays of light are not focused at one point but instead diverge across a plane causing multiple focal points' (Brett 2015, p. 3). In this context, astigmatism thus refers to late photography's fractured and imperfect vision, where the focus glides across the surface of the image and expands outside of the frame. Brett's use of terms that refer to occluded sight is useful to understand how late photography primarily speaks of absence, where the subject is not what the photograph contains, but what remains invisible and outside of the camera's eye. We read late photography's empty landscapes as ruins and remnants of temporalities that lie outside the photograph's reality. Campany goes as far to say that late photography records the trace of traces (Campany 2003, p. 124). They are indeed afterimages, such as when you close your eyes in the glare of the sun and behind closed lids appears an aching imprint of the scene before you.

Throughout my moving image practice, landscapes operate through this occluded vision, where the emphasis is on what we cannot see. Much of my depictions of mass graves in Bali are formed as a mode of questioning around absence: where are the missing bodies and how can we remember that which has been erased? How has forced forgetting produced, as Brett would say, 'blind spots' in the landscape (Brett 2015, p. 2). In the context of Bali, 'blind spots' are indicative of state induced amnesia around 1965 histories. Balinese historian and cultural theorist, Degung Santikarma articulates this point:

36 See (Baer 2002) who makes a connection between the photographic image and psychoanalytical structure of traumatic memory. Drawing from Freudian analysis of suppressed trauma he looks at the limitations of Holocaust representation.

> …a mass grave is a document that is far more dangerous. If this document were to be read, if the bones were allowed the opportunity to speak, what we would hear is that images and reality disarticulate" (Santikarma 2005, p. 318).

Here Santikarma is referring to image of Bali as inherently peaceful, which is ruptured by the memory of 1965 violence. A mass grave in Bali is an archive of past violence and to open it up, to reveal its contents, is a disruption of official historiographies and accepted truths.

Unacknowledged mass graves in Bali from 1965 abuses lie as silent lacuna, absences and concealed voids within visible topographies. There is no photographic documentation, no official archives or monuments to these sites of trauma. An ongoing part of the trauma around 1965 for families of victims is the missing status of their relative's body, as the majority were unable to reclaim them after their death. Instead what we are left with are accounts of the *types of places* bodies were buried such as a neighbouring village graveyard, riverbanks, coastlines and coconut fields. These are places that traditionally lie along peripheral edges to the central village structures. Apart from isolated cases of exhumation[37] most of those bodies still remain buried, except now these peripheral spaces have slowly disappeared within the accelerated pace of south Bali's urban development. Apart from village graveyards, which remain intact, places such as empty coconut fields and coastlines have been turned into villas, shopping malls or major roads. In a very literal sense these mass graves are buried history and the question of how to exhume these histories is complex—considering the sustained stigma and censorship surrounding 1965 narratives.

This section has sought to apply criticism surrounding aftermath photography to focus on the relationships between image, place and historical memory that are made in my creative practice. This has allowed me to analyse the use of slow landscapes in my own work and consider them as a palimpsest of hidden histories. As this section establishes, to document landscapes containing traumatic pasts creates a tension between seeing and not-seeing, where the image is read not for what it contains but for that which remains absent. Slow landscapes thus signal in my work a redressing of Bali's paradise imagery, where quiet topographies reveal violent histories.

37 The recent case of the village in Batuagung that performed a mass exhumation and cremation for 1965 victims to stop spirits haunting the village provides a case for localised versions of reconciliation (Rosa & Topsfield 2015).

Hauntings, spirits & speculative narratives as resistance

The site of the banyan tree mass grave is a major trajectory that runs through this thesis and has become shorthand for the theories of place and archive that guide this project. It was my father who first recounted the story to me of what lies underneath this banyan tree. As the original witness to this story, he remembers as a twelve-year-old boy hearing gunshots from that area and when going to investigate, seeing a large, deep hole filled with bodies. I would argue there is also another witness to that night my father told me about and that is the banyan tree itself. While the surrounding landscape of this site has evolved over the years, the tree has remained as a marker. It continues to grow and generate its own trajectory in that space, all the while signalling towards a buried history. The presence of the banyan tree in my video offers a temporal understanding of place through a non-human perspective. Banyan trees are considered powerful locators in Bali. They are believed to be trees that spirits are most likely attracted to and are thus markers of unseen activity. They are often seen with a chequered cloth wrapped around them and a shrine to place daily offerings. The status of a banyan tree in Bali, as markers of spirit activity, introduces the idea that there are other witnesses to 1965 abuses, those outside of the human realm, and whose presence remains continually evoked through the tree.

This section examines the presence of spirits and non-human phenomena that appear as running trajectories throughout my work. While this study does not attempt to address the extensive cosmology of spirits, gods and demons that live in Bali, what I wish to emphasise here is that the 'non-human' are legitimised perspectives for the majority of Balinese. There exists a complex genealogy of spirits in Bali that inform everyday geographies and which are 'fed' and kept in balance by daily offerings and purification ceremonies. Rather than viewing this through a supernatural lens, I draw upon Balinese cultural practices that situate spirits and hauntings as accepted realities, reified by lifelong cycles of rites and ceremonies (Eiseman 2011; Howe 1984). Within Bali's Hindu-Dharma religion, the majority of temple activities involve a form of appeasement to gods and ancestors. Possession by spirits can often occur within the context of religious rites, by healers to treat illnesses or conversely used to negatively affect others in black magic practices (Connor, Asch & Asch 1986). Within non-religious contexts, ghost stories are highly popular tropes in Indonesian film and literature. In other words, a large part of Balinese worldviews are structured around a relationship with the non-human and maintaining a balance between material and immaterial worlds.

The notions of haunting, ghosts and spirits seldom surface as legitimate points of enquiry in scholarly accounts of 1965. An exception to this would be Adrian Vickers' article addressing the social and cultural problems surrounding bodies of victims in Bali and Java (Vickers 2010). Vickers examines underrepresented Balinese historiographies of the killings, as well as elements of Balinese spiritualism that further complicate reconciliation efforts. Drawing from his observations of haunted villages in Bali during the 1970–80s, Vickers explains how the unresolved presence of bodies would have created what Balinese consider as 'polluted' landscapes. In Bali, the effect of a wrongful death (*salah pati*) causes an imbalance, and creates the particular kind of haunting ghosts such as *tonya* or *memedi* that inhabit lonely ravines or forests (Vickers 2010, p. 54). Furthermore, if a violent incident occurs, there are specific cleansing ceremonies that must be enacted on the site it occurred, otherwise this creates an unresolved and potentially dangerous place.[38]

Vickers' article overlaps with many of my own research concerns, in that it questions how traces of 1965 violence have remained ignored in Bali, where corporeality and death are highly ritualised and considered significant communal responsibilities. The main premise of Vickers' article guides this chapter, in that spirit hauntings can be understood as deeply felt affects and resurfaced memories of suppressed trauma. In this section I engage with one particular story of spirit haunting drawn from a clinical case-study which has subsequently found its way into my video work. I examine the spectral presences in my work as a form of speculative fiction and counter-narratives to official historiographies.

The speculative narrative is a device that I use in a video work, *Wong Samar* (2016), and later adapted into a subsequent video, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2018). The video, which was displayed on a large wall monitor with the sound on headphones, narrates the story of an unnamed man who in 1965 witnesses a massacre in his village. The man narrowly escapes being killed as he has had a premonition: when military men arrive in his village, he hides away up in a tree. Since that event the man experiences a debilitating psychosis and is marked as a withdrawn and isolated figure within his village. He also is haunted by the presence of spirits named *wong samar*, whom he develops an ongoing relationship with. The story is recounted by a female voice in Indonesian through a prose-like narration. It begins by a slow pan across a verdantly green coconut field, pulsating with a chorus of crickets. As the video progresses, we watch an older man dressed as a rice farmer, reenact the moment

38 See for example, the two cleansing ceremonies initiated by Balinese authorities on the site of the 2002 Bali bombings (Fischer 2006).

where as a young man he escapes being killed by hiding up a coconut tree (see Figure 25). The camera follows him as he climbs up the tall trunk and reveals how from this vantage point he watched military men hack his fellow villagers (and members of his own family) to death with machetes. The video shifts back to the empty coconut field where, gradually, an apparition of the spirits that haunt him, the *wong samar*, appears and stands motionless as the camera slowly pans across the field. The narration continues to recount his relationship with these spirits and his trauma from 1965, which he names through the Balinese concept of *ngeb*.

Figure 25 Leyla Stevens, video still, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2018).

The story of this man was drawn from a clinical case study by Robert Lemelson and Luh Ketut Suryani, which involved over twelve-years of study on acute cases of psychosis in Bali (Lemelson & Suryani 2006). While the video changes certain details and provides an artistic reconstruction of the case, it is worth examining this original article as it reveals Balinese cultural frameworks around haunting and possession that offer key insight into suppressed trauma from 1965-related violence. In Lemelson and Suryani's interviews with their patient, anonymously identified as Nyoman, he states that since the time he witnessed the massacre he has lived in dual worlds (*dua dunia*), with one foot in the human world and the other in the realm of spirits (Lemelson & Suryani 2006, p. 395). The study gives a detailed account of Nyoman's complex relationship to these spirits as a cultural background to his psychosis. Nyoman's symptoms are triggered through a series of traumatic events in his life, namely the witnessing of the massacre as a young man and the death of his infant

son. After both events his link to the spiritual realm is intensified, and he is possessed by the *wong samar*, who are described as shadowy, indistinct figures who constantly appear before him and talk to him. Already an isolated figure within his community, during these times of intensified haunting he goes missing for days. While the *wong samar* are the root cause for Nymon's mental anguish, he accepts them as an ongoing relationship. Nyoman's haunting is thus framed through a relationship of care and subservience. It is as if they are powerful guests that he has to appease, and they in turn advise him and heal him.

Nyoman ascribes his illness as a form of *ngeb*, which in Balinese describes a state of self-imposed exile or muteness after a horrific experience (Lemelson & Suryani 2006, p. 402). As the authors assess, the social suppression of 1965 in Bali created what can be described as spiritual and psychological state of muteness for survivors. In the context of village and family kinships, the social suppression of 1965 violence further stigmatises survivor experiences, where their trauma remains unrecognised by their own communities. Because of Nyoman's involvement with the PKI as a young man, he is considered by his fellow villagers as being complicit in the violence of 1965. Like many survivors in Bali, he is not thought of as a victim but as a cause of the disorder of events of 30th September movement (Lemelson & Suryani 2006, p. 403). Nyoman's personal history reveals how much of his ongoing trauma comes from the fact that it was members of his own family and village that acted as informants and how a number of the perpetrators were from a neighbouring village.

Here I expand upon the idea of hauntings and ghosts as a form of resistance. Nyoman's story reveals the complexity of reconciliation in Bali, where subsequent generations from survivors and perpetrators continue to live alongside each other. Yet as Santikarma posits, *ngeb* can also be considered a form of resistance (Santikarma cited in Lemelson & Suryani 2006, p. 410). Lemelson and Suryani's interpretation is that in the face of state and social denial of his trauma, Nyoman's self imposed muteness can be seen as a form of protest. For Nyoman, hauntings and spirits were thus a kind of salvation, a way of both surrendering, caring and co-existing with his trauma. To be clear, Nyoman's case is not a common experience. Survivors of 1965 do not for the most part experience hallucinations or disorders nor do all survivors in Bali come from a Hindu-Balinese background such as Nyoman, with its magico-religious practices. But what this story does propose is an alternative form of redressing: where in the absence of official reconciliation, an engagement with spirits is both a form of healing and resistance.

In my video, *Wong Samar*, I reimagine Nyoman's story as a speculative narrative that resists official state historiographies. The video presents alternative realities of spirits, premonitions and hauntings through documentary genres of representation. This mode of image making that combines documentary with performative imaginations describes methods of speculative fiction: where boundaries between fact and fiction are tested as a way of interrogating established historiographies. As discussed in Chapter One, speculative narratives offer artists tools to step outside of the prevailing order and to imagine a world with a different structural reality. The use of speculative narratives in this work has enabled me to approach 1965 traumas through an alternative mode of remembering. This video also provides this research with a framework to acknowledge non-human memories of 1965 abuses. It whispers of spirits who remember, who are manifestations of trauma and residual traces of suppressed histories.

'Niskala landscape' and the spectral archive

In this section I extend upon notions of trace and the archive through the Balinese concept of *niskala*, which registers the unseen, immaterial forces that affect *sekala*, the material, living world. Like many Balinese philosophies, *sekala/niskala* operates as a binary concept. The *sekala/niskala* dualism underpins the continual cycle of temple ceremonies and daily religious duties enacted to maintain balance between seen and unseen worlds. Broadly speaking, it describes an ongoing negotiation between spiritual and secular activities and where 'unbalance' between the two is attributed to major events of trauma (Eiseman 2011). Historical examples of this imbalance are commonly evoked through events such as the Gunung Agung eruption in 1963 or the 2002 bombings. I focus here not so much on how the *sekala/niskala* dualism is enacted ceremonially, but as a geographical concept. By this I mean drawing upon Balinese cultural understandings of place, which make reference to invisible and immaterial landscapes. I look at how my video, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, evokes, what anthropologist Graeme MacRae named a 'niskala landscape', in its reference to spirits who inhabit Bali's forests, ravines and ocean (MacRae 1998, p. 117).[39] Through this analysis I offer a notion of the spectral archive that reframes Bali's invisible landscapes as expanded archives of place.

39 MacRae's use of the term '*niskala* landscape' refers to the well-documented cardinal mapping of Bali that draws a spiritual line between mountains and sea and which governs how space is divided in Bali. It is a mapping of zones that differentiates between wild forests (*alas*) inhabited by *niskala* beings, the secular, organised space of the village (*desa*) and the pure space of temples (*pura*) (MacRae 1998).

Figure 26 Leyla Stevens, video still, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2018).

Their Sea is Always Hungry weaves in several references to Balinese spirits and hauntings. The video is structured through six sequences, with each sequence framed around a conversation between two guiding voices. The *Wong Samar* narrative is reworked within two of these sequences, and the video footage of a man climbing a coconut tree is also resampled. This time however, the narrative of the man is spoken in Balinese and when it comes to recounting the story, the two voices agree to switch the conversation from *Bahasa Indonesia* to *Bahasa Bali*. After working through this narrative in my previous work, I found that I wanted to frame it specifically as a Balinese story, to potentially hold greater weight for a future Balinese audience. This time, instead of choosing to directly represent the *wong samar,* the attention is directed to natural phenomena and the invisible narratives that inhabit them.

In the following sequence, we hear the voice of the younger woman ask '*Sire nggih*?' (who are you?), and the voice of the older woman reveal that, '*Tiang ane meadan buta cuil'* (I am one of what you would call *buta cuil*). Slowly a ghostly embodiment of a spirit figure appears standing on a shot of the dry riverbed. It is a male form with his face partly obscured by a wreath of green ferns, which blend his head into the background (see Figure 26). The spirit voice describes how they are not quite human but something that could be described as being 'closer to the realm of trees.' They describe their reality as sitting parallel to the human world, so close that at time they overlap. This collusion occurs during sensitive times of day such as noon, which is considered a time of spirit activity in Bali.

The final reference to a *niskala* landscape is in the video's ending scene. This is primarily composed of a shot of the ocean horizon overlaid with an expanding translucent rectangle, casting the scene in a deep magenta hue. The voice of the older woman describes how the sea is where the ashes from the dead are cast, which symbolises their final crossing from human to spirit world. She then wonders on the spiritual fate of those who died without the proper death rites, and comments how although many families would have held a ceremony for their missing relatives without the body, she can sometimes still hear the bones of the missing calling out.

Through my use of speculative narratives within landscapes of ocean, forest and rivers, I thus evoke a notion of a *niskala*, or unseen, landscape. While my videos are not a faithful representation of Balinese spirit genealogies, I take artistic license with these stories as a way of representing how *niskala* is foundational to Balinese perspectives of place. For me, I experience *niskala* as a form of palimpsest. It describes a layering of space in Bali, where everyday topologies are informed by the undercurrent of unseen trajectories. In Bali, there are certain markers in the landscape such as crossroads, banyan trees, the ocean and more obviously, graveyards, which signify interstices between the seen and unseen. These sites are where a thinning of borders occurs and where particular attention has to be made to keep the *sekala/niskala* balance.[40] But what *sekala/niskala* most demonstrates for me is how space in Bali is a conflation of differing and at times contesting, trajectories.

What I propose here is that *niskala* provides a Balinese context for notions of trace and memory in theories of place. Furthermore, by privileging the unseen traces in place, *niskala* conceives of a mode of remembering that I name as the *spectral archive*. To be clear, this framing of *niskala* as archival trace is not how the concept is understood in Bali. Those with spiritual authority in Bali would place *niskala* firmly as a spiritual and religious philosophy. But what I propose is an extended notion of *niskala* that registers unseen and immaterial fragments of place and overlaps with the theoretical framework discussed in this paper.

As discussed in Chapter One, this research draws from geographical scholarship that

40 At times, paying attention to *niskala* involves a pragmatic redressing of certain socio-environmental imbalances. In my discussion with one community spiritual leader, who had regular interactions with the *wong samar* in his village, paying attention to their needs also meant caring for the remaining pockets of undeveloped forest in his village. In one case, the spirits were unhappy that a large building had been built on top of their home and upon his recommendation, the building was subsequently downgraded and moved to another site. Taking care of the spirit world in Bali can also address environmental concerns.

engages with expanded and experimental approaches to what constitutes an archive. Tim Cresswell's notion of a 'living archive' in his study of Maxwell Street Markets in Chicago provides this study with an understanding of place, and its material fragments, as an archive (Cresswell 2012, p. 166). Equally, Sarah Mills' study of research methods that 'animate' the archive, explains how recent turns in cultural-historical geography scholarship has embraced the materiality of archives. According to Mills, such methods respect the fragmentary, material and spectral conditions of the archive to read for slippages and cracks that allow for marginalised narratives to emerge (Mills 2013).

Framed through such studies, my moving image practice offers an expanded archive of south Bali's counterpoint histories. Rather than grand linear narratives it connects fragments, ghosts and marginalised histories to create a counter-archive against the dominant imaginaries of a peaceful island. But more than that, it expands upon Cresswell's notion of a 'living archive' and considers instead the non-living, immaterial and invisible fragments of place. In other words, I look at the spectral conditions of place as archival traces. While Mills references the 'ghosts' in the archive as a metaphorical concept, this research considers the possibility of haunting as a mode of remembering.

To revisit the banyan tree site evoked at the start of this chapter, we can apply Cesswell's methodologies to understand both its material and immaterial fragments as an archive of 1965 histories. My initial step when researching this site was to pay attention to *sekala*, or the material aspects of this site. In line with Cresswell's study of material remains from Maxwell Street Markets, I would walk the banyan site's parameters and read its visible topographies of a car park, a football field, a banyan tree, a busy road and a temple, for traces of the mass grave. The lack of visible trace made me consider *niskala*, or what had been concealed in the site. While the grave itself remained inaccessible, what I did have to focus on was the banyan tree. Banyan trees are significant landmarks in Bali and they are often cited when giving directions. What initially drew me to the banyan tree was that here was something that was materially visible and culturally valued against something that had been rendered invisible in the landscape. They are large and beautiful trees, whose aerial roots drip down to the ground and weave into a tangle of limbs. Its presence in the site, stands as both a sign, witness and guardian for the missing dead. Most certainly a home to spirits, this banyan tree signals towards the *niskala* activity around the site. The site's unseen meanings run as felt trajectories underneath visible topologies. In other words, I approached this site as a palimpsest, where traces of the past were revealed in this

Figure 27–28 Leyla Stevens, video still, *Kidung* (2019).

consideration of both materiality and the unseen. By extension, we can start to re-evaluate those once empty fields, riverbanks and coastlines that served as grave sites across the island, as both material and immaterial residues of 1965.

In this section I have primarily sought to frame a notion of the spectral archive. In *Their Sea is Always Hungry* traumatic histories of place are evoked through a *niskala* landscape. By watching slow moving images of *niskala* landscapes, invisible narratives start to emerge, or as more explicitly said in the video, you can start to hear the 'bones calling'. The spectral archive offers a number of important strategies in redressing and remembering 1965 histories in Bali. First, it shifts the attention from institutionalised forms of remembering (such as monuments and official archives) and instead places emphasis on the fragments, traces and ghosts that continue to haunt the island. This is the counter-archive in practice: where connections are made between disparate narratives and fragmentary sources that exist within the margins of acknowledged histories. Second, I emphasise the spectral dimension as it speaks of decolonising the archive: where acknowledgement of the invisible and immaterial reconceives what is legitimised as historical evidence. This offers alternative methods of remembering, that are localised within a Balinese cultural perspective.

Monumental care: Remembering and performing in the archive

In this section I explore intersections between memorialisation, performance and place through two multi-channel video works, *Kidung* and *Rites for the Missing*. These two works were made for the final creative iteration for this thesis at UTS Art in 2019. Both these works present a video performance in relation to a site of unacknowledged mass graves from 1965. This section begins with an extended description of each video and the conceptual decisions behind each performance. I analyse in both videos the role of performance in recuperating histories that have been concealed in the landscape. Bringing together several themes central to this thesis, I approach these landscapes as archives of 1965 and look at how an artwork can performatively reconstruct and heal rifts in the archive. As established in Chapter One of this thesis, the archive is a site of engagement for collective cultural memory. Here in these two video works I offer a performative remembering within the archive, both as a physical place (mass grave) and the surrounding dominant narrative that surrounds 1965 (see thesis introduction). I end this section with a reflection upon the soundscapes across my videos and also in an extended performance titled, *Genjer-Genjer*, staged as part of my UTS exhibition. I propose that the soundscapes in

my UTS exhibition operate as a mode of care that makes space for marginalised memory.

The three-channel video *Kidung* forms the major creative work for this thesis (see Figures 27–28). It was displayed as a large immersive video installation and was the central focus of the UTS Art exhibition. The work was displayed on three large projection screens, each around 3.5 metres wide by 2 metres high. The screens were staggered throughout the main darkened projection space of UTS gallery and displayed as double-sided projections, allowing viewers to walk around each screen and view the work from multiple angles. In this work, I once again focused on the site of the banyan tree, where a mass grave from 1965 lies. This time I shifted my attention to the banyan tree itself, which I had come to think of as a central character to the narrative of this site. Two of the channels are essentially portraits of the tree, focusing on details such as: close-ups of tree root textures; light playing out through leaves; and the small vibrations set off by passing gusts of wind. Where my previous work *Witness* situated the tree within the temporal flow of the site, this time I present only abstract close-ups of the tree, forming a stronger symbolism and focus on the tree as a sentinel to the missing dead.

Kidung is primarily focused upon the central channel, which depicts the performance artist and poet Cok Sawitri singing in a ceremonial style of Balinese chanting. To situate her performance in context of the banyan tree site, the installation centres the performance channel in between two portraits of the tree, as if Cok was singing towards the tree itself. In my initial concepts for this work I wanted to frame this performance as a lament. She is not only memorialising the site but is also giving voice to the missing dead that remain hidden underneath the banyan tree. The performance was made in collaboration with Cok who took the two-person dialogue from my earlier video work, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2018), and translated it into a singular narrative in high Balinese. The title of the work, *Kidung*, refers to the general ceremonial chanting style that Cok sings in. More specifically, she follows the melody of a ceremonial chant called *cecangkriman*, which is traditionally sung during children's *otonan* that celebrate a child's birthday milestones within the Balinese Hindu calendar. But, as Cok explained to me, women also sing *cecangkriman* more informally to their children in their home, even perhaps as a lullaby.[41]

41 For a non-Balinese audience, I chose not to provide subtitles and instead allowed the emotional weight of the singing and Cok's performance itself to be the central focus of the work. In the catalogue essay, which was on display within the gallery, viewers were given the context that the performer was singing in response to a site of a mass grave from 1965.

Figure 29 Leyla Stevens, video detail, *Rites for the missing* (2019).

The second video I wish to discuss here is *Rites for the missing* (shortened to *Rites* in this section), which also stages a performance in response to a site of a mass grave. In contrast to the emotive and immersive scale of *Kidung*, *Rites* was conceived much like a small-scale drawing. It is shot in black and white and is the only silent work in the exhibition (see Figure 29). Displayed on two small 24-inch TV monitors, *Rites* was framed as a silent, small precursor to *Kidung* that viewers encountered before they entered the main projection space. The video documents a stretch of coastline on Bali's south-east coast that a mass grave from 1965 is said to lie. Unlike the majority of Bali's southern coastlines, this stretch of beach is relatively underdeveloped. The land is sparsely covered with arid growing shrub and most of it is left for cows to graze. The beach itself is covered with black volcanic sand and there is a local industry of beach pebble harvesting. Where the rumoured mass grave lies are several half-completed buildings, which is said to be an abandoned villa.[42]

As evoked through its title, *Rites* is framed as last rites for the missing dead in this site. In the video we see a female performer unwinding a long piece of white cloth through the landscape. The white cloth, which is evocative of the cloth used to wrap the dead in Balinese Hindu cremation rituals, is used here to wrap the landscape.[43] *Rites* begins with a series of slow landscapes of the abandoned villa and its surrounds. Then we see a series of close-ups of the performer who is unwinding a long stretch of white cloth wrapped around her body. We then see a sequence of images where the performer slowly unwraps this stretch of cloth, to create a long white line in the landscape. At times, she places the cloth over shrubs, on the ground and around trees. Other times the cloth is secured outside the camera frame and we see the performer enter the frame from one end and pulling the white cloth behind her until it is stretched across the frame. For a viewer watching this video performance there is sense of obfuscation created through subtle time slippages and non-linear cuts between the two channels. The work plays with slippages between the two channels, often repeating the same image across the two channels, but slightly out of sync. What does become apparent over the duration of the video is that this temporal ambiguity between the two channels reveals co-existing temporalities within the landscape. *Rites* thus reveals the present pasts embedded within this site and also seeks to allow for transitory,

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42 Upon enquiry to one woman who was pebble harvesting and with a man from the local village, there appears to be a mystery around who owns the buildings or who contracted the land it was built upon. What is agreed, is that the buildings are abandoned villas and that the place has a sense of *ngeri* (eeriness) that proved too strong for potential owners.

43 I initially took inspiration from a 2011 ritual enacted on Mount Batur where the mountain was wrapped in a line of white cloth over 2kms long. Not much record exists around the ritual, but the little written on it through the social media account *Sejarah Bali* (Bali History), explains that it was an act of healing communal discord over a historical wrong enacted between the King Panji Sakti and the village community of Batur.

performative modes of remembering.

In a parallel study by Nadine Siegert on collective memory and trauma in contemporary art practices in Angola, artistic interventions in the archive are described as a circumnavigation around modes of remembering and forgetting (Siegert 2016). While the concepts of late photography and the place-based theory of this thesis have primarily framed my approach to memory, it is worth considering here Siegert's scholarship as she articulates how art practices performatively excavate and potentially repair traumatic histories. As with late photography, Siegert's article draws from psychoanalytical understandings of trauma that describe the collective loss that arises from the denial of memory, where the original event is suppressed and forgotten.[44] According to Siegert, collective trauma describes a process of amnesia or the 'inability to visualise or translate experienced events' (2016, p. 110). Artists who navigate the '(un)representability of traumatic experiences' are directing attention to questions of visibility in the archive (2016, p. 110). They actively engage with absence, in that they respond to non-accessible, erased and suppressed memory. Artists who stage performative reckoning with that gap of visibility offer, as Siegert's study proposes, practices that form an empathetic remembering in the archive.

Drawing from Siegert's emphasis on the reparative potential of artworks in relation to traumatic histories, I focus now on the modes of memorialisation at work within my two videos, *Kidung* and *Rites*. Both these works stage performances that draw visibility to the hidden presence of the missing dead within the landscape. I propose that these performative acts of remembering and honouring the missing dead can be understood as caring for marginalised memory. Cok's decision to sing a lament about 1965 trauma within the style of *cecangkriman* (a traditional song for children) is a way of re-telling history for a younger generation. It frames her performance as storytelling, which, significantly, is linked to modes of care enacted by women in the home. In the installation, her voice rings out evocatively within the gallery space. Her performance carries an emotive power and as a lament entices viewers to watch and pay witness within the gallery space. *Kidung* as a video installation thus created a monument to the banyan tree site.

44 Siegert draws from a wide spectrum of trauma studies in history and memory fields. Her leaning on Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), is particularly apt to this thesis in that Sontag writes on the non-representability of trauma being subject to forgetting.

Figure 30 Leyla Stevens, video detail, *Rites for the missing* (2019).

In *Rites* the dancers are not overtly performing, rather they are carrying out a task-like activity, one that is infused with a level of care and attention. My direction to Ninus and Intan, the two dancers who perform in *Rites*, was to carry out their performance as if it was a ritual. They were to remember and reveal the presence of the missing dead as they unwound and wrapped the cloth through the landscape (see Figure 30). To wrap, in this context, is framed as a gesture of healing. Conversely, the act of wrapping speaks of concealment and gestures towards those who remain invisible in the landscape. The land in this context becomes symbolic of those who continue to lie missing and as an evocation of last rites, white cloth is wrapped around this symbolic body. This performance is therefore framed as a remembering of those whose memories remain silenced within the archive.

A final mode of memorialisation to be studied here is the soundscape to my video installation, and in context of the exhibition, the public performance titled *Genjer-Genjer*. This performance was originally programed as part of a series of public events staged in relation to my exhibition, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* at UTS Art in 2019. It was performed by two artists and sisters, Kyati Suharto and Kartika Suharto-Martin, who both work across music, visual arts and dance mediums. In their performing of *Genjer-Genjer*, the sisters draw from their family lineage of Javanese style *keroncong*, a genre of music that dates back to Portuguese influences pre-Dutch East Indies, and which now evokes nostalgia for an era of nationalistic pop music from the 1960s. Through this *keroncong* lineage, Kyati and Kartika performed *Genjer-Genjer*, a once banned song associated with the PKI and in particular with *Gerwani*, the progressive women's group targeted in the purges. The song originated as a folk song by the poet Muhammad Arief, and tells the story of peasants from Banyuwangi in East Java, resorting to eating water hyacinths (*genjer-genjer*) during the Japanese occupation (1942–45). Popularised in the 1960s the song became adopted into the PKI as propaganda material. In the New Order's mythologising of the Thirtieth September Movement, *Gerwani* women were said to have sung the song while sexually mutilating Army officers at Lubang

Buaya (Hearman 2016, p. 147). Banned until 1998 for its association with the PKI, the song continues to hold an engrained stigma and evokes strong emotional reactions in Indonesia.

For their UTS performance, Kyati and Kartika sat within the darkened gallery space, in front of one of the banyan tree projection screens During the performance, the soundtrack to *Kidung* was muted and against the visuals of the projected screen they sung *Genjer-Genjer*. The song was accompanied by music played through an experimental gamelan set, made from hand thrown ceramic vessels created by Kyati. A final performance element was that each ceramic vessel was lit by candlelight from the inside.

To unpack this performance in relation to my video, I think through how sound operates as a reparative mode of care and potential healing across the UTS exhibition. *Genjer-Genjer* is a story about survival told from a mother's point of view to her child. In their performance, Kyati and Kartika's voices capture this emotive thread of a woman trying to survive and parallel to Cok Sawitri's chanted lament, the song resonates as a form of intergenerational storytelling. While much of my video practice is centred upon the visual narrative, the aural textures and the spoken narration are equally a strong storytelling element.

Vannessa Hearman in her book chapter, *Hearing the 1965–66 Indonesian Anti-Communist Repression: Sensory History and Its Possibilities* (2016), theorises the often-overlooked soundscape of the killings as a significant sensory archive to 1965. Drawing from her interviews with survivors, Hearman highlights how aural memories of seemingly ordinary sounds of trucks, jingling keys and footsteps, alongside the aural violence of gunshots, knives being sharpened and bodies falling, remain embedded as powerful somatic memories for survivors. As Hearman suggests, the aural trace of 1965 violence is rarely considered within 1965 scholarship and further reveals how these events have literally been silenced in collective memory. What I posit is that the performances of *Genjer-Genjer* and *Kidung* offers a reparative remembering, by 'singing back' what has been silenced into audibility. Conversely in the silent video *Rites for the missing*, the absence of sound is used as a buffering to contain and frame the visual gestures of wrapping and wounding cloth across the site of a mass grave. The lack of a video soundtrack in *Rites*, is aimed at echoing the silent gaps and absences in the landscape.

The exhibition at UTS centres upon a feminist re-telling of Bali's histories and in doing so, presents storied connections that lie outside of state led narratives around 1965. Both

Kidung and Rites, and the performance of *Genjer-Genjer*, stage a performative remembering and recuperation of marginalised memory within the archive. What emerges throughout the UTS exhibition as a whole is that it is through women's re-storying that reparative actions are carried out. Each video centres upon women's bodies or voices performing within the landscape. They lament, remember and witness the histories that are embedded in each place. This gestures towards a larger understanding of this research project that offers a feminist counterpart to masculine canons within Indonesian history. What I focus upon here is how processes of remembering and reparation in my work are enabled by women and by doing this I am presenting a significant alternative to the way in which 1965 has been collectively remembered[45] and possibly reconciled.

Conclusion

In remembering 1965 today, oral history and community-driven projects in Indonesia have provided an important platform for marginalised histories to emerge. In the absence of restorative justice, survivors of 1965 have sought alternative methods of memorialisation that lie outside of official monuments and archives. As addressed in the introduction to this thesis, the continuing imagination of Bali as a peaceful paradise, and its erasure of political violence have further complicated reconciliation efforts. This chapter has looked at how a moving image artwork can function as a counter-narrative to master narratives surrounding 1965 in Bali. Upon reflection on two iterations of my creative practice, I have outlined critical and conceptual frameworks that contribute to a redressing of 1965 histories and Bali's grand narrative of island paradise. First, I have drawn upon criticism surrounding late photography, to consider how representations of traumatic landscapes are complicit in the erasure of past violence. This means that in documenting places after the fact, the original event can only register as an absent presence. Second, I look at examples of spirits and hauntings that offer a Balinese cultural framework for the suppression of 1965 survivor narratives. I explore links between the Balinese concept of *niskala* and the theories of place and the archive that this research is situated in. I discuss the presence of '*niskala* landscapes' in my moving image work as registering the unseen and immaterial trajectories that underscore a place. Drawing from geographical discussions of the archive, I offer a notion of the spectral archive to locate invisible histories of place. Finally, I address the works in my practice that stage a performative remembering to marginalised memory. As a mode of care, I posit that the performing female body and voice in my videos redress state-controlled narratives surrounding 1965.

45 See Thesis Introduction for an account on how women's narratives in 1965 memory were vilified.

In closing, I propose that my focus on the immaterial and spectral offer a significant approach to discourse that connects historical memory, archives and place. Expanded approaches within historical geography, such as Tim Cresswell's notion of a living archive, allow us to respond to place as a palimpsest of multiple temporalities. In the context of mass graves in Bali, paying attention to what remains invisible on surface topologies forces us to think about how 1965 histories may register through other immaterial means. Additionally, my approach to the unseen as an archive, reframes what is to be named within legitimate historiographies. For those concerned with recuperating suppressed histories, the notion of the spectral archive allows for marginalised perspectives to be brought to the foreground. For example, the story of Nyoman paying respects to the spirits that haunt him from 1965, allows for forms of reconciliation that lie outside of official justice. In thinking through alternative forms of remembrance around contested pasts, we also have to reframe our approach to the archive: collapse linear narratives, connect disparate fragments and allow for ghosts to guide us.

4

DISRUPTING IMAGINARIES OF ISLAND PARADISE: FEMINIST AND TRANSCULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS IN BALI'S SURF NARRATIVES

Figure 31 *Kuta Beach* (1970), family archive.

Introduction

> It used to flash out everywhere – at springs and by dusty roadsides, on stone steps, in magical drawings on cloth. It surged up through trees, bounced on fireflies, and glowed at the bottom of a dirty glass of arak. It danced in public. The Balinese were playful with the holy in those days, with their rough trance and bawdy ritual theatre. Their religion was an unselfconscious, multi-dimensional gorgeousness, which to the Balinese was just ordinary life.
>
> Now modern Balinese are becoming pious, and their religion is becoming a venue of identity politics. For the tourists, it's wallpaper. The official face of Balinese culture is no longer a farmer but a grotesquely made-up dancer, often dancing for travel agents or guests of the government. The spontaneous magic and natural glamour of art performed for the gods now appears as just another entertainment item, before or after dinner. The 'sacred' is now a branding theme, applied to tour packages, spa treatments, cocktails (Darling 2019, para. 2–3).

In a recent article for Yak Magazine titled *You missed the Best of It,* the author Diana Darling encapsulates a prevailing nostalgia for a Bali that no longer exists (2019). This image of Bali, seeped in magic, animism and trance, can be traced back to colonial legacies and European modernists' desires. As key authors on the subject have established, Western imaginations of Bali have long positioned the island as a self-contained paradise, rich with cultural traditions that have withstood global reverberations (Picard 1996; Vickers 2012). Master narratives of Bali as an Eden-like island were initially shaped through colonial policy, when the Dutch positioned Bali as a bastion for an ancient Hindu culture and Balinese as innately artistic and religious people. This move was guided by both the political separation of Bali from Islamic Java and the entrepreneurial development of Bali as a tourist destination (Vickers 2012, pp. 113–84). This colonial image of Bali continued to frame modernist encounters in the 1930s and 40s, where a global set of artists, intellectuals and anthropologists constructed highly influential images and studies on Bali.[46] This image of Bali as a tourist paradise was further capitalised upon by the Indonesian government in the 1970s, who focused on Bali to become Indonesia's primary destination for international tourism. In response to the central government initiatives, Balinese authorities implemented a policy of cultural tourism to protect and promote an image of Bali for Western-based tourism. As Michel Picard proposes, Bali's history of cultural entanglements has produced a 'touristic culture', and rather than a notion of traditional Bali sustaining the impact of foreign tourism, he reveals how Balinese culture has been shaped *by* tourism (Picard 1996, 1997).

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46 These global figures included: the German painter Walter Spies, Mexican artist Miguel Covarrubias and the anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson.

It is however in the messier and entrepreneurial tourism that occurred during the 1970s and 80s, when a generation of Western travellers 'discovered' and made Bali their home, that current imaginations of Bali find its strongest reference point. Current nostalgia for the 'old Bali', as demonstrated in Darling's article, comes from the continuing memory of an idyllic Bali as experienced in the 1970s. In this chapter, I focus on the image of Bali as constructed through early surf tourism in the 1970s. My geographical focus is the southern coastlines of Bali, predominantly the village of Kuta, where Bali's early surf narratives originate (see Figure 31). The 1970s mapped out new demarcations of space in Bali through the different types of tourism that developed in certain regions. Central regions such as Ubud attracted visitors intent on absorbing Balinese cultural traditions, religion and arts. Kuta had white sand beaches and waves and the surfing tourism that initiated in the 1970s generated its own counterculture between Western foreigners and local youth: informed by pleasure, new economies and non-tradition. Yet, studies on Bali's tourism rarely consider the transcultural impact of those early surf narratives in Kuta, beyond this era being the start of mass tourism today. Kuta and its surfing histories thus present a significant study around images of Bali as a peaceful paradise and how these imaginaries mapped new trajectories in the geography of the south. Exploring this early surf culture enables me to analyse representations of—and also offers ruptures to—the imagination of Bali as a peaceful paradise.

Darling's comparison of magical, old Bali to modern, commodified Bali reformulates old anxiety within anthropological studies. A useful concept to draw from here is James Clifford's 'salvage paradigm' that examines how modes of late colonial anthropology continue to inform a nostalgia for cultural authenticity within ethnographic writing and art collections. Clifford describes this ethnographic move as: 'reflecting a desire to rescue something 'authentic' out of destructive historical changes' (Clifford 1989, p. 73). The important point that Clifford makes is that within Western practices of art collecting, the concept of tradition has been positioned as diametrically opposed to modernity. Traditional cultures are seen as resisting or yielding to modernity but never the producers of it (Clifford 1989, p. 74). To apply this to Bali, tourists have been lamenting the ruin of traditional and authentic Bali since the 1930s (Darling 2019, para. 5). Bali's progress within current times is often ascribed as a rapid linear trajectory, moving forward at the expense of a simpler, purer past. That much of the present-day reality, especially within the densely urbanised south with its issues of waste and traffic, disputes the image of island paradise, has created a situation where Bali is often discussed through the lens of nostalgia and

where current manifestations of place are haunted by past romanticism.

A similar line of thought that illuminates the point I wish to make about Bali and progress is found in Dipesh Chakrabarty's book *Provincializing Europe* (Chakrabarty 2000). In this book, Chakrabarty decentres continued imaginaries around European modernity as a historical and an intellectual genealogy. He looks at how Europe as a mythological figure continues to be the engrained rationale upon which political modernity in South Asia is measured and historicised against. By doing this, he challenges the idea of the global and the historical conditions of globalisation, which is built upon the assumption of modern progress – a linear flow from Enlightenment, modernism to late capitalism that originates in Europe and then spreads out across space over time. This position is problematic, for as Chakrabarty posits, it designates those cultures and places outside of this centre to 'an imaginary waiting room of history', where they sit in time awaiting to be activated by European modernism (Chakrabarty 2000, p. 8). More significantly, it designates intellectual and cultural lineages that sit outside of European discourse to a historical past rather than as a contemporary discourse.

Chakrabarty's arguments are significant to this thesis in that we can understand the continued romance and nostalgia for Bali's past as a mode of colonialist thinking. As his book highlights, enlightened progress was being propelled by European thinkers at the same time as being denied to the colonised. In the context of Bali, we can see this colonialist thinking being played out in the critique of Bali's modern progress at the expense of cultural traditions. As for the authenticity of Bali's past, what is to be understood as a cultural tradition (*adat*), these are questions that have been historically determined by cultural tourism in Bali (Picard 1997). There is a risk of flattening complexity when making these connections between critical theory and the actualities of place. It is not only foreign tourists and expatriates who mourn for a lost Bali of the past. For Balinese, the anxiety around the present is often expressed in comparison to a simpler, perhaps imagined, past. There is no doubt that tourism is at the forefront of Bali's environmental crisis and deepening socio-economic inequalities. But what this research navigates is the way contesting genealogies and traditions coalesce in present tourist geographies. This means that we can conceive of the idea of historicism as a contrapuntal process, where cultural lineages are alive in the present: evolving, subverting and responding to globalised frictions.

This chapter problematises ongoing nostalgia and imaginaries of Bali through a place-based approach. Drawing once again from Massey (see Chapter One), I apply her theory of place as an open-ended and evolving product of social and global interrelations (Massey 2005). This allows for a challenge to the authentic status of the local or bounded notions of place. What the introductory excerpt from Darling's article reveals is an understanding of place and temporality as a forward-moving progression, where pre-mass tourism Bali is a static point on a linear timeline that is eventually superseded by modern Bali. According to Massey, linear histories conceive of space as a flattened surface and other cultures as simply phenomena on this surface. Parallel to Chakrabarty, Massey notes this is problematic for it deprives cultures of histories before colonial or global capital's arrival (Massey 2005, p. 4). As scholarly debate on Bali has illustrated, the island has long been complicated by a history of transcultural engagements, national and global flows (Connor & Rubinstein 1999). Studies on Bali's surf tourism are quick to point out that the early 1970s was far from idyllic, but a time when Balinese were recovering from the 1965 genocide (Laderman 2014, pp. 61–90). A place-based approach to Bali's surf tourism allows for an understanding of contesting events around certain points in time and also a reconsideration of how those histories reverberate in the present, outside binaries of idyllic past and modern ruin.

To begin this chapter I map recent criticisms in surfing literature that introduces the sport as a transcultural study, creating connections between the local and the global. As established in Chapter One of this thesis, transculturation speaks of processes of mixture that occur in contact zones and locates moments of agency within asymmetrical relations.[47] Transculturation, as a critical mode of thought, allows for contrapuntal readings of globalisation. For example, international surf tourism in Bali can be addressed from the perspective of localised experiences. In the subsequent section I give an analysis of the Australian cult surf film *Morning of the Earth* (1972) as an archive of Bali's early surf tourism. Drawing from the place-based concerns of this thesis, I address how the film significantly shifted Balinese conceptions of coastal space and the lasting impact that this would have on south Bali's geographies. In the second half of this chapter I turn to the

47 Chapter One establishes my engagement with transculturation as a critical concept. Primarily, I draw upon Paul Allatson's study of the genealogy of the term within Latin American cultural theory (Allatson 2007). What this thesis draws upon is the theorisation of transculturation within postcolonial studies on globalisation. See Mary Louise Pratt's notion of the contact zone, which describes culturally disparate spaces informed by power relations (Pratt 2008). Contact zones are also invoked by Anna Tsing's metaphor of friction to articulate uneven yet potentially creative exchange, engendered through processes of global capital (Tsing 2005).

works in my creative practice that respond to surf narratives in Bali and the imagination of island paradise. I first give an analysis of my surf video, *A Line in the Sea* (2019), as a feminist recuperation of Bali's coastal landscapes. In the final section of this chapter I explore how the notion of counterpoint underwrites the conceptual framing of my video installation. I posit that the two solo exhibitions made for this thesis create a contrapuntal reading between Bali's surf imaginaries and 1965 memory.

Surf criticisms

I draw here from existing debates in surfing literature to think through how the sport is indicative of evolving social, gender and cultural constructs in relation to place. Surfing and the history of the sport is place-based and enacted through local and global flows. It is a globalised sport that is bound to specific locales – the surf break – and explores the porosity between categories of the local, foreigner, transnational and migrant. Today's global surf tourism follows routes shaped by histories of colonialism. Surfing's historical dissemination originated with the appropriation of Polynesian cultural practices by white settlement (Walker 2008). By the time surfing was adapted into postwar Californian beach culture in the late 50s and early 60s, the sport had become synonymous with a certain construct of white male heteronormativity (Ormond 2005). Studies that have sought to counter mainstream representations of the sport have given space to marginalised histories and identities, such as: Hawaiian surfer clubs in the 1900s (Walker 2008); Indigenous Australian surfers who approach surfing as connection to Country (McGloin 2007); African American surfers in California and histories of civil rights water protests (Comer 2016); and female surfers who enact their own nuanced agency within male-dominated spaces (Knijnik, Horton & Cruz 2010; Olive 2016).

This study extends upon the work to politicise surfing and the hegemonies it has historically produced. My focus on the generation of local Indonesian surf culture that emerged post-1970s shifts the prevailing representation of surfing's early mythology as solely indebted to Western 1960s counterculture, and instead focuses on the transcultural processes that enabled surfing's global dissemination. Additionally, in my creative practice I place Indonesian women surfers as a dominant presence in the water and through moving image I consider a feminist approach to Bali's surfing histories. An intersectional approach is important here to consider how Indonesian women surfers navigate gendered spaces in and out of the ocean.

This research builds upon key issues that problematise surfing's global migration, where non-white surfing identities and cultures are often scripted through retrograde notions of place and the innocent other. Surfing's early mythology was formed through the surf travel narratives that emerged during the 1960–70s, which saw predominately white, male surfers travelling the world in search of exotic surf destinations. An often-cited representation of this era is the movie *Endless Summ*er (1966), which established the genre of the surf travelogue; where disparate places are stitched together to provide an exotic cultural backdrop for surfer fantasies (Ormond 2005). As scholars on the subject have established, these surfing 'discovery narratives' built upon imaginaries of the American frontier and Western imperialism, where other cultures are positioned as Eden-like places untouched by Western civilisation (Laderman 2016).

In light of today's surf industry, with its highly corporate associations of international competitions and major surf labels, early surf travel narratives now invoke nostalgia for a more innocent and pure era of surfing. Today's global surf tourism continues to be compelled by discovery narratives and entrenched colonial attitudes towards place and cultures. The current appetite in today's surf tourism for the undiscovered surf break in the Global South plays into a neocolonial anxiety surf tourists have around the threat of paradise being ruined and becoming overcrowded (Barilotti 2002). Paige West describes how global surf tourism is built upon the nostalgia for an imagined past of unspoilt surf breaks before surfing became commercialised (2014, p. 25). Yet as West points out, even surfing's early expression as 1960s counterculture was in fact built upon the commodification of alternative lifestyle choices by big surfing brands and disseminated by a global surfing media (2014, p. 425). The notion of the surfing paradise that continues to underwrite surf tourism is thus an industry-led construct. This point informs my approach to surfing histories in Kuta, which continue to evoke nostalgia for Bali's romanticised past.

A key study for this research is Alex Leonard's account of early surfing histories in Bali (Leonard 2007). Leonard's article, which draws from his dissertation on the subject, looks at how young local Balinese men adopted surfing through initial exposure to Western travellers during the 1960s and 70s. His main subject of study is a founding generation of south Balinese and local Indonesian surfers who continue to be respected leaders in Kuta's surfing community today. Leonard explains how surfing provides local Balinese men with opportunities of professional sponsorship and economic success, as well as a form of place-making that binds them to the coastlines of south Bali. According to Leonard, the

strong nationalism and cosmopolitan aspirations of local surfers in Bali can be understood as anti-colonial resistance to Western tourism and the overdevelopment of south Bali (Leonard 2007, p. 4). His study fills a gap in surfing literature on Bali, however much has changed since publication and new research is needed to address the shifting economy of international surf brands in Bali,[48] as well as the emergence of professional female surfers in Bali.

Leonard establishes how surfing became localised and synonymous to Kuta's cultural identity. What this research posits is that the process of surfing becoming adopted into local practices was a form of transculturation. To employ Anna Tsing (2005), the early interactions between Western surfers and local Balinese youth in the 1970s created surprising frictions, that while built upon uneven power relations, enabled the emergence of a local surfing industry. As touched upon in this thesis introduction, the intermingling of disparate cultures in south Bali during the 1970s initiated a power shift in local economies and social structures. As reflected within my family history, surfing-led tourism, and the local businesses it enabled, was a turning point in Kuta's desirability as a place. This research proposes that surfing in the 1970s created a contact zone (Pratt 2008) and that the sustained success of the surfing industry in Bali needs to be seen through a transcultural perspective.

This section has touched upon key themes in recent surfing criticisms that frame my approach to Bali's surfing histories. What is important to this research is the argument that early surf travel of the late 1960s and early 70s can be understood as a mode of colonisation, where Western surfer narratives were superimposed upon local histories of place. Second, today's global surf tourism continues to be compelled by nostalgia for those early surf travel narratives. As I reflect on in subsequent sections, surfing imaginaries have significantly shaped south Bali and continue to sustain tourist desire for Bali as an island paradise.

Morning of the Earth: surfing's re-signification of Bali's coastal geographies

Two surfers step out into the bright sight of an empty beach, beyond them a wall of water towers above their heads (see Figure 32). They face the ocean with their backs to the

48 The financial collapse of several major international surfing brands such as Quicksilver and Billabong has meant a shift in status for many of the older generation of Balinese and Western expatriate surfers in Bali whose careers were forged and made lucrative through these brands.

camera, boards tucked under arms and gaze into a wash of deep oceanic blue. A succession of long tracking shots unfolds depicting that hypnotising horizontal trajectory that is ubiquitous to all surf movies: the surfer riding in narrow escape of the curve of wave breaking in on itself. The year is 1971[49] and the surfers are the renowned American pro-surfer, Rusty Miller, along with a fifteen-year-old Australian, Stephen Cooney. The rocky limestone coast that they stand on lies underneath the cliffs at Uluwatu, located on the southern tip of Bali and it is the first time anyone had surfed in these waters. These images are from the cult surf film *Morning of the Earth* (1972) and were projected into community cinemas around Australia in the early 1970s, igniting a fantasy of Bali in a founding generation of Australian surfers. Conceived as part spiritual odyssey, part surf safari by filmmaker Albert (Alby) Falzon, the film tracks a group of surfers as they travel across Australia, Bali and Hawaii, in a journey to discover unknown surf breaks free from crowds and civilisation (Beattie 2011). It was a visual manifestation of what surfing represented in Australia at that time: a counterculture that sought authentic notions of place and culture outside of Western capitalism.

Figure 32 still from *Morning of the Earth* (1972).

Taking the iconic surf images of *Morning of the Earth* (MoE) as a starting point, this section re-examines the film's 'discovering' of Bali as a colonisation of space: where south Bali's geographies were co-opted by Australian surfing imaginaries. Drawing from the surfing literature explored previously, I first address how MoE sustains an image of Bali as ahistorical and atemporal. I then approach the film in context of this thesis' ongoing theoretical concerns, namely around place as multiple social and historical trajectories.

49 Movie was shot in 1971 and released in 1972.

Engaging with scholarly perspectives in tourism geography, I address two geographical formations and imaginaries – the ocean and the beach – that run as continual visual landscapes in MoE. I look at how these two geographies shifted in cultural signification through the early surfing narratives in the 1970s.

MoE fits within a genre of early surf films that otherise and essentialise non-Western locations. The section of the film set in Bali tracks Rusty Miller and Stephen Cooney as they move through villages, beaches and ocean between Kuta and Uluwatu (see Figure 33). Recurring images of coconut trees, white beaches and pristine surf breaks build an image of these southern coastlines as a peaceful paradise. The film differentiates itself from other surf films of its time in that there is no voice-over narration or linear narrative. Instead it is structured through its psychedelic soundtrack, composed mostly of an original composition by an Australian surf rock band Tamam Shud. The film is more akin to a lengthened music video, with each new scene marked by change in song. Scene changes are presented as a flowing montage of surfers in and out of the water, along with nature clips of island landscapes and seascapes. This lack of ambient sound and voice is significant in that representations of place are never contextualised by place-specific aural textures or language. Instead we are presented with abstracted images of Bali as a timeless Eden: untouched by conflicting contexts of local histories and politics.

Figure 33 still from *Morning of the Earth* (1972).

Here I turn to studies in tourism geography that provide a relevant discourse around the 'tourist*ed* landscape', which geographers Carolyn Cartier and Alan Lew describe as: locales whose natural or built formations entice people to 'seek particular aspects of attractions,

desire and possibilities for liminal experience' (Cartier & Lew 2005, p. 5). Cartier and Lew offer an understanding of global tourism through a geography lens, thinking through how places are constructed and reworked through diverse flows of people and uneven ties to local, national and global economies. Tourist*ed* landscapes speak to messy histories of global mobility where categories of locals, visitors, migrants and residents coincide and redefine each other. What is particularly useful to this research is Cartier and Lew's notion that tourists encounter tourist*ed* landscapes through a process of seduction, where they anticipate, desire and imagine the unknown. I apply this theory to *Morning of the Earth's* depiction of coastal landscapes that represent, as surfer fantasies, a seduction of place.

MoE significantly reshaped Balinese understandings of the beach and remapped these coastal landscapes through tourist imaginaries. While images of Bali as island paradise can be traced back to colonial and state government tourist initiatives, MoE proved impactful in that it mediated an image of Bali's beaches within the visual culture of Western hippy tourism of the 1960–70s. This can be seen in the scene where foreign surfers smoke drugs with Balinese fisherman on a beach in Uluwatu, significant as it depicts coastal Balinese as open-minded to foreigners and white constructs of pleasure. Bali's early surf tourism thus scripted the beach into a place of leisure and exoticism, inscribing new desires upon localised understanding of place. For example, south Bali's white sand beaches were reconceived as more desirable to the volcanic black sand in the north. Sunset at the beach, a time traditionally thought as a vulnerable to *niskala* (unseen spirit) forces, was reframed as romantic and sublime. We can even track these processes of tourist seduction in the changing dress codes that surfers brought to the beach, where various states of Western undress challenged Balinese modesty codes.[50] Bali's surfing beaches in the 1970s were thus where tourists were both seduced by place and enacted their own seductions.

As an extension of the beach, the ocean is another significant touristed landscape that runs throughout MoE. In the film, oceanic space is evoked as a universal place that sits outside of nation borders. In the pivotal scene at Uluwatu the ocean registers as a bright blue expanse: indicative of surfing attitudes to the ocean as a pure, natural and sublime element. The film's representation of surfing as a spiritual encounter with nature can be linked here with Western pictorial traditions around the sublime, where lone (predominantly male) figures stand in contemplation of nature, forming allegorical and symbolic landscapes. One of the most repeated images within the film is of lone surfers traversing waves in empty

50 See Margaret Wiener's study on modernism in Bali through histories of dress and undress (Wiener 2005).

oceans. This effect is heightened by Falzon's use of the long take and slow-motion to create suspended moments of surfers riding seemingly endless waves (see Figures 34–35). Oceanic space in MoE is revealed and activated through surfer bodies. Its emptiness becomes a surface upon which surfer imaginaries are projected.

Figure 34–35 stills from *Morning of the Earth*

What I wish to highlight here is how the ocean in MoE is never culturally specified as a place. As previously addressed in this chapter, early surf films positioned island geographies as a wild frontier, far from the centre of Western civilisation. In surf film odysseys, surfers are on a journey in search for undiscovered waves and the ocean becomes the ultimate source of wilderness. The representation of empty and pure oceanic space in surf films proposes an understanding of the ocean as a natural phenomenon rather than a place. This, as relevant scholars have pointed out, is not an innocent maneuver, but a move that is rooted in colonial legacies and continued within late capitalism's co-opting of natural resources.[51] In Chakrabarty's terms, surfing discovery narratives place Bali outside of history, where coastlines and surf breaks were only activated once Western surfers encountered them. Yet recent moves to decolonise the representation of island geographies have called into question this notion of oceanic space as an empty frontier. Epeli Hau'ofa does this by reclaiming the ocean as a social and culturally networked space of connection (Hau'ofa 2008). His significant contribution shifted engrained Eurocentric perspectives of scale and borders when it came to mapping the Pacific. Rather than entrenched European view of microscopic 'islands a far away sea', he reveals the Pacific to be a vast networked 'sea of islands' (Hau'ofa 2008, p. 31). This research thus builds upon this notion that the ocean is a culturally coded space and sets out to challenge surfing perspectives around the ocean as a sublime emptiness.

51 Anna Tsing addresses with great complexity in her book *Friction*, the ways Indigenous resources have been positioned as a wild frontier to serve Kalimantan logging industries (Tsing 2005). In surfing literature, Scott Laderman has pointed out that surf tourism is a continuation of Western imperialism, appropriating natural resources in the Global South (Laderman 2016).

The ocean within a Balinese context is understood as a heavily layered, symbolic space, both sacred and dangerous. Despite Bali being surrounded by ocean and informed by histories of island migration, there exists little anthropological literature on Balinese relationships to the ocean. What has been studied more extensively is Balinese cultural use of water, including seawater.[52] To think through Balinese concepts of the ocean and the beach, I draw from my cultural knowledge along with a recent article by Balinese scholar on tourism, I Nyoman Darma Putra, who proposes the development of marine cultural tourism in Bali (Putra 2014). An important distinction to start with is that in Balinese religious frameworks, the beach and ocean are not spaces of leisure or pleasure. Instead, these are considered highly significant spaces used for spiritual cleansing in many major ceremonies such as *Melasti*, celebrated a day before the silent New Year day of *Nyepi*. Another major beach ceremony occurs during one of the final stages of the *Ngaben* (cremation) ceremony, which involves throwing the deceased ashes into sacred water. For most families this water will be the ocean (rivers are used for those located inland) and in this context the ocean can be thought of as a liminal space, where the body will pass through on their way to entering the spirit world. Additionally, while the beach and ocean are used for purifying rituals these are also spaces of danger, where lower (demon) spirits reside. One way to understand the beach and ocean in a Balinese context is as a *niskala* landscape (see Chapter Three), where unseen and immaterial forces are to be navigated and balanced through specific rites.

What this research proposes is that Bali's early surf tourism spatially re-orientated Balinese cultural geography. Darma Putra in his article touches upon this, describing how in Balinese orientation the beach is considered both symbolically and physically to be the 'back rather than the front yard' (Putra 2014, p. 19). As touched upon in the introduction to this thesis, south (*kelod*) facing orientations in Bali are symbolically marked as a profane space, while the north (*kaja*) is considered a sacred space. The primary north-south axis runs from Mount Agung, the 'king' mountain in the north, down to the Balinese Sea in the south. The beach, in traditional symbolism, is thus the outer space furthest away from the sacred interior. It is where rubbish from ceremonial offerings is thrown out and where ashes from the dead are scattered. What surf tourism did however was remap this 'back yard' into a highly desirable centre for tourist capital.

52 See Thomas Wright's conference paper on surfers and ocean environment with references to anthropological studies on the symbology of water and the ocean in Bali (Wright 2014).

At the core of this research lies a contrapuntal reading of dominant narratives of Bali as surfing paradise, for politically marginalised stories of 1965 violence. This research argues that surfing provides a significant study of the collective forms of amnesia and enforced forgetting around 1965. Surfing's re-signification of south Bali's coastlines served to erase memory of 1965 in several ways. Scholarly links between surfing and the 1965-66 killings have been explored by Scott Laderman, who argues that early surf tourism in Indonesia was an extension of American cultural diplomacy during the global Cold War and underscored by America's backing of Suharto to enact 1965 atrocities (Laderman 2014). Through a place-based lens I focus, not so much on surfing's political dimension, but on how surfing as a cultural trajectory sanitised 1965 landscapes. Early surf tourism's re-orientation of the beach and the ocean as sites of leisure, in many instances were directly superimposed over sites of violence and mass graves from 1965. This forms the premise for my work *Rites for the missing* (2019), explored in Chapter Three, that stages a performance along a beach on the south-east coast, where a popular surf break lies in proximity to a rumoured mass grave. This spatial co-aligning of disparate histories is emblematic of what Abidin Kusno (see Chaper One) reveals as the simultaneous remembering and forgetting of built environments that overlay traumatic histories (Kusno 2010). We can scan these coastline topologies for signs of 1965 memory, while at same time, reading for the ways in which this history has remained suppressed. For south Balinese youth in the 1970s, the embrace of surfing culture and capital signified a shift outside of traditional village economies. Yet contained within this narrative also lies a reflection of a collective inability for Balinese to assess the recent memory of 1965. The dominant stories that are told about south Bali in the 1970s, tells images of unspoilt white sand beaches, coconut lined villages and for Balinese, the entrepreneurial success of local families. What this research argues, is that this imagery of island paradise in the early 1970s served to sustain collective amnesia around 1965 trauma.

Morning of the Earth has proved an important signifier for this research in several ways. As an archive of early surfing histories in Bali I have responded to this film as a visual and conceptual material in my video practice. But it is in the film's representation of white, male surfers traversing through Balinese coastal villages and oceans that first initiated my interest in surfing's cartographies. By this, I mean how Bali's early surfing tourism colonised coastal space, forming imaginaries of surfing paradise onto local geographies. What this section reveals is how the surfer gaze re-signified coastal landscapes from a dangerous, even taboo, exterior to a desirable, wealthy centre. The arguments I make in this section set up

a critical framework to contrapuntally read back into surfing landscapes for marginalised 1965 memory.

A Line in the Sea: Feminist differencing of surf landscapes

In the second half of this chapter I shift my attention to the works in my practice that draw upon surfer histories in Bali. Here I give an analysis of my video artwork, *A Line in the Sea*, which poses a feminist retelling of *Morning of the Earth* and a transcultural counterpoint to Western male surfer hegemonies. Chronologically *A Line in the Sea* was the last work to be resolved for this thesis, however I started this video at the very beginning of this research project. Creating this video came out of a long process of amassing footage of surfers and coastal landscapes between 2016 and 2019. *A Line in the Sea* represents departure and arrival points in the conceptual development for this thesis. When I first began shooting video portraits of women surfers in Bali, I knew I wanted to place this footage in context of MoE and explore the transcultural legacy of white male surfers coming to Bali in the 70s. What gradually framed my approach was an investigation of landscape, specifically coastal island landscapes. As I explore in this section, landscape as a pictorial genre is a mode of power and an observational tool historically tied to the expansion of Western empire. Through this film, I wanted to question those early surf sightlines and colonialisms that significantly reshaped coastal geographies in Bali.

A Line in the Sea is a ten-minute, three-channel video and was originally exhibited as part of the exhibition at UTS Art, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, in 2019. Displayed on three large TV monitors, the video was the first work viewers encountered as they entered the gallery. The video focuses on two surfing protagonists that move the viewer through a series of island landscapes that explore Bali's coastlines, ravines and oceans. In an echo of the original film I pair an older surfer Bonne Gea with a younger surfer Dhea Natasya. While at different stages of their careers, both women are professional surfers and are active within south Bali's surfing scene. The video offers a series of portraits of the two surfers as they stand on beaches, move through coastlines and wait on their boards in the surf 'line up' (see Figures 36–37). In many ways the video is the inverse of a surf film in that the predominant action focuses on the surfers waiting for waves with their gaze directed outwards to the horizon line. There are no conventional action sequences that one expects from a surf film. This suspended state is accentuated by the video's soundtrack. Designed in collaboration with Australian sound artist Tim Bruniges, the sound design offers a brooding soundscape of low drone sounds underscoring overlaying ambient sounds of

Figure 36 Leyla Stevens, video detail, *A Line in the Sea* (2019).

Figure 37 Leyla Stevens, video detail, *A Line in the Sea* (2019).

wind, trees rustling and the ocean. The soundtrack plays with a repetitive and minimal sound to create haunted and liminal landscapes.

Instead of a discernable linear narrative, the video is structured essentially into sequences of triptychs, where a central portrait of surfers is framed by two landscapes, or vice versa. My editing approach to this video was primarily focused on compositional concerns. Images across the three channels were aligned through the aesthetics of colour, line and shape rather than through conventional storytelling cuts. *A Line in the Sea* creates a steady build-up of landscapes and portraits that slowly unfold and which operate between stasis and motion. This is exemplified in my use of fixed camera frames and long takes that last between one and four minutes. The long take, as a device, can be found throughout much seminal filmmaking from the last century and through contemporary video art.[53] It describes a particular hybridity between photography and film, where a moving image acts like a still image. Similar to the concept of late photography, moving images that operate through stillness create a tension of vision. Much of the experience of watching the slow take is waiting for something to happen, for a turning point that often never arrives. *A Line in the Sea* holds fast in this hesitation between stillness and motion. As viewers it allows our gaze to rest in this liminal state and, much like the surfers in this video, we wait and watch slowly: projecting our attention for something out of the frame to arrive, or for hidden narratives to reveal themselves.

A Line in the Sea presents slowly unfolding landscapes that draw upon Bali's constructed imaginaries of island paradise. To reflect deeper upon my citation of landscape as a pictorial genre I turn to criticism of landscape painting genres in Western art history. Landscape as a genre is a topological reading of the land for semiotic structures that pertain to historical narratives and aesthetical concerns. This is a point that W.J.T Mitchell frames in his essay *Imperial Landscapes*, where he proposes that landscape as a medium needs to be thought of as 'a vast network of cultural codes' rather than a pictorial genre

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53 Key examples of the long take in cinema include: Ingmar Bergman, Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Chantal Akerman amongst others. Within the context of contemporary video, the work of Bill Viola, Fiona Tan, David Claerbout and Andy Warhol come readily to mind. There is a wealth of criticism surrounding interdisciplinary image practices that redefine genres of photography and film. A key text in this field is Karen Beckman and Jean Ma's publication *Still Moving: Between Cinema and Photography* where they address the contemporary proliferation of multimedia and installation-based art practices that reconfigure media formats and invoke hybrid expressions between still and moving images (Beckman & Ma 2008). Another useful text here is David Campany's introduction to the reader *Cinematic,* in which he draws attention to ways in which the development of photography and cinema have sat on a pendulum between slowness and speed (Campany 2007).

(2002, p. 13). By this, he reveals landscape to be a mode of power, aligned as a historical discourse to Western imperialism. He gives the example of nineteenth-century landscape paintings in New Zealand such as John Alexander Gilfillan's *Native Council of War* (1855), which transplanted European landscape traditions around the pastoral picturesque to develop a notion of national identity (Mitchell 2002, p. 22). Mitchell takes to task Western art historical interpretation of colonial landscapes, where what is rarely addressed is the position of who is looking upon the land and who is controlling its representation. This position has proved useful to consider how the genre of picturesque landscapes within current tourism imagery which sustain colonial essentialising and othering of place.

Mitchell's criticism provides me with a further framework to problematise images of island landscapes constructed by surf tourism, where a white male surfer gaze reshaped Bali's coastal geographies. His essay gives me insight into landscape as a cultural discourse, where images of Bali's beaches are coded within colonial tropes of peaceful island paradise. In *A Line in the Sea* I have both utilised and disrupted landscape tropes of island paradise. *A Line in the Sea* extends upon genres of tourist imagery of Bali by presenting empty serene moments in nature and decontextualised versions of south Bali as a place. However, through my use of the long take and the soundtrack I draw attention to suppressed narratives that lie outside of each frame. What I aim for through this mode of production is to disrupt easily read topologies and present landscape in a haunted state. While paradise imagery is present, each image is not entirely idealised to the point of fantasy. Instead, we are presented with brooding landscapes of coconut trees, coastlines and beaches that both cite and subtly contest paradise images to create alternative narratives of place.

What I propose here is that my approach to landscape and portraiture in *A Line in the Sea* represents an 'undoing' of *Morning of the Earth* and its essentialising and patriarchal mappings of coastal space. This is in line with my theoretical framework for this thesis, which centres upon Griselda Pollock's feminist strategies of correction to interrogate prevailing canons. What this artwork does is rethink the legacy of those early interactions between Western male surfers and Balinese male youth through Bonne and Dhea. Traditionally, Bonne and Dhea would not appear in the picture. Their stories disrupt surfing's prevailing narratives around whiteness and masculinity. In Pollock's terms, the film reads back into early surf mythologies in Bali that position Indonesian women as marginal and speculatively remembers their stories back into the archive. Women are rarely represented in *Morning of the Earth* and when they do make an appearance, it is outside

of the ocean.[54] There is a quiet revelation in my film, at seeing Indonesian women in the water, not through Western desire, but as a mode of athleticism and strength. Bonne and Dhea represent archetypal surfers as they observe and project outwards towards the ocean horizon. While I am aware that 'watching and waiting' could be construed as continuing a gendered passiveness, this simple act of gazing out towards a horizon line is framed as a feminist recuperation of Bali's coastlines and oceans. By this I mean that Bonne and Dhea, in establishing a continuous presence in these landscapes, carve out their own trajectories and agency within these predominantly male spaces. Put very simply, they sit still and they take up space. They are thus inverting the white male surfer gaze and instead project their own narratives onto the landscape.

There are several layers at stake when it comes to creating visibility for women of colour through a lens-based practice. The camera has long been implicated in colonial ethnographic image making and when it comes to current documentary genres, the politics of representation remains a critical concern.[55] I hold this thought in mind as I reflect back on *A Line in the Sea* and the process of making this film. Shooting on location, casual onlookers expressed surprise not only at Bonne and Dhea's presence in front of the camera but also towards my own presence behind the camera. Making and reflecting upon this work has proved important for me to consider how my position has redressed prevailing canons in surf image production, where particularly in Bali, women videographers and photographers are rare.

Furthermore, a reflexive engagement with the modes of landscape in this work challenges me to consider how my position, a story that speaks to the transculturation of south Bali, has shaped my representation of coastal topographies. What emerges throughout the video are contesting observations upon landscape, where Balinese understandings of the ocean and the beach as a *niskala* landscape are held as coeval trajectories to surfing's representation of coastlines as beautiful and sublime landscapes. *A Line in the Sea* thus reflects a transcultural perspective on surfing culture in Bali, its history and its representations.

54 It is significant that a contemporary sequel to *Morning of the Earth*, called *Spirit of Akasha* (2013) focuses as one of its protagonists on the Australian surfer Stephanie Gilmore yet remains silent on women surfers of colour.

55 For more on this subject see Mark Sealy, who in his book, *Decolonising the Camera: Photography in Racial Time*, calls into question contemporary photography's visual rhetoric around representing people of colour and how this continues to be framed by colonial legacies (Sealy 2019). Sealy, in his move to decolonise lens-based practices, creates a critical necessity for subaltern perspectives both in front of and behind the camera.

Figure 38 Leyla Stevens, installation view, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2019).

In this section I have explored the politics of visibility in my video in line with feminist strategies of recuperating marginal narratives. *A Line in the Sea* is a feminist differencing of surfing landscapes. It places two Indonesian female surfers as central protagonists in the water and coastal landscapes are encountered and understood through their gaze. Additionally, through my mode of production, it problematises landscape genres of island paradise, drawing attention to contesting cultural frameworks around the ocean and the beach. As an artwork it has proved a significant contribution to this thesis' research concerns, exploring the transcultural entanglements between Australian and Balinese coastal culture. The video thus proposes both a feminist and transcultural counterpoint to *Morning of the Earth* and the sustainment of Western surfer hegemonies.

Counterpoints in south Bali geographies

This section examines the theoretical underpinnings to my video installations where disparate images around surfing paradise and 1965 memory are evoked in the same space. I address the two major exhibitions made for this thesis: *Of Love and Decomposition* (2016) at Firstdraft Gallery and *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2019) at UTS Art, and look at how each exhibition connects contesting narratives of Bali. Here I propose that my

exhibition design incites a contrapuntal reading between Bali's surfing narratives and 1965 memory. A contrapuntal reading posits two disparate narratives. In this case Bali as an island paradise and Bali's traces of political violence, and explores not only the confliction between them but conceives how they run as parallel historical trajectories. Additionally it is a decolonising method, where master narratives on Bali are redressed through hidden counterpoints. Through my video installations I frame counterpoint as a spatial concern, exploring how sites of 1965 memory run as coinciding geographies alongside paradise coastlines and oceans.

Of Love and Decomposition included a video displayed on a small screen simply titled *The Surfers*. The video resamples footage from *Morning of the Earth* and is the only work in this thesis that explicitly engages with an archive as a visual material. *The Surfers* lifts the section of Falzon's film where they travel to Bali, focusing on the pivotal scene of two surfers stepping out onto the beach at Uluwatu. Falzon's original footage already utilised slow-motion to create suspended moments of surfers riding waves. In my appropriation of the footage, I slow the film to such a point that the image begins to break up into an abstraction of pixels. I also manipulate the sound by inserting a distorted noise over the film's original soundtrack. *The Surfers*, through its distorted imagery, subtly refutes the imagining and desiring of place that runs through the original film. The video utilises methods of resampling and remixing to interrogate *Morning of the Earth* as an archive.

Of Love and Decomposition proved an important instigator for this research project in that it enabled me to think through the notion of counterpoint within a visual practice. *The Surfers* was an incongruous presence in the exhibition. Against the considered documentary imagery of the two main videos, *Witness* and *Wong Samar* (see Chapter Three for analysis), the surf video was a bright contrast of saturated colour and low-resolution imagery. The placement of the video in the exhibition was deliberately kept small and slightly below eye level. It sought to insert a small citation of Australian surfing culture within the exhibition's main narratives around 1965 landscapes, trauma and memory. Through this design I was able to consider how 1970s surf tourism was a continuation of politicised erasure of 1965 trauma. As established earlier in this chapter, Bali's early surf tourism actively shifted Balinese conceptions of coastal space. My exhibition design thus posits a consideration of how surfing tourism in the 1970s wiped clean Bali's oceans and beaches, effectively sanitising coastal landscapes from recent 1965 violence. Conversely, I was also able to conceive of 1965 as a contemporary trajectory that troubles continuing imaginations of

island paradise.

Here I propose an understanding of counterpoint through the place-based theory of this research. In the UTS exhibition, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, the installation once again was framed through the notion of counterpoint: where the front gallery space evoked images of island paradise, in contrast to the internal gallery room filled with monuments and memorialisation of 1965 histories (see Figures 38–39). However, as the show progressed, what evolved for me was that this contrapuntal reading of history was framed as a spatial concern. The exhibition maps a consideration between three locations: the coastlines in *A Line in the Sea*, the abandoned beach villa in *Rites* and the banyan tree in *Kidung*. Upon entering the exhibition, viewers are moved through each location and begin to consider each site in relation to each other. These are three points in south Bali's geography that are revealed to be palimpsests of contesting histories. More significantly, the work engages with histories of place through living subjects that perform in the present. The exhibition thus maps south Bali's geography through contesting and parallel trajectories.

Figure 39 Leyla Stevens, installation view, *Their Sea is Always Hungry* (2019).

In this section I have focused on my installation design where conflicting images of island paradise operate in relation the 1965 memory. Framed by notions of counterpoint, both exhibitions construct counter-histories that redress exoticised tropes of Bali. Furthermore this section posits a place-based approach to counterpoint. Histories of place are conceived

as trajectories that coalesce in the present. In closing, I visualise a Massey-inspired mapping of my project, where the geography of south Bali is revealed through running trajectories that intersect at surprising points. Here we can trace intersections between a banyan tree, the missing dead and a surfing beach; in other words, a mapping of counterpoint histories.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. Primarily, it is an engagement with the imagining, desiring and romancing of place through the history of surf tourism that occurred in south Bali. I begin this chapter by centring my approach to surfing through feminist and postcolonial positions that problematise surfing's prevailing narratives around white male heteronormativity. Moving on to my main analysis of early surf archives in Bali, I look at how the film *Morning of the Earth* enacted a colonisation of Bali's coastal landscapes where Balinese understandings of the beach and the ocean were co-opted by surfer seductions of place.

The other major purpose of this chapter is to address how my creative practice engages and ruptures master narratives of Bali. I do this by considering forms of landscape and portraiture that run throughout my moving image practice as pictorial genres and also cultural constructs. I address how landscape image genres have been historically used as an observation tool in Western imperialism, and that the colonial gaze continues to inform touristic othering of Bali. Through my video *A Line in the Sea*, I propose a feminist recuperation of marginalised narratives and perspectives on island geographies. By subverting the traditional male surfer gaze upon coastal landscapes I present a feminist differencing of surfer imaginaries.

What I formulate through this chapter is a consideration of how master narratives on Bali are problematic, in that they create a binary between idyllic past Bali and spoilt modern Bali. As discussed in this chapter's introduction, nostalgia for a simpler time in Bali conceives of pre-mass tourism Bali as a static point in history, waiting to be activated through the discovery of Western travellers. This position does not conceive of Bali's cultural traditions and intellectual lineages as capable of evolving, but rather they become static markers of cultural authenticity that are always at risk of being destroyed by modern progress. This thesis proposes that contrapuntal readings of place and history are important to creating alternative narratives around south Bali. In closing, this chapter proposes that my video installations are a mode of counterpoint, creating connections

between Bali's surfer histories and 1965 memory. This contrapuntal analysis allows for a counter-archive of south Bali, mapping contesting histories that coalesce in present geographies.

CONCLUSION

Findings and contributions

This thesis has explored the possibility of creating a counter-archive to mainstream histories of Bali as a peaceful and exotic paradise. I began Chapter One with the image of a Javanese court dancer to show how archives are not only a matter of material and textual artefacts but also of bodies and places and of what happens at the margins of the archive. These two concerns were expanded in several iterations of a moving image project and in four chapters. In this way, the thesis moves between reading the archive along the grain and against the grain.

At the core of this research project, lies the problem of visibility: how do you represent memory that has been hidden and continues to be erased through historicised amnesia? How to retrieve marginal narratives that lie outside of the archive? These core queries were articulated in the thesis in two specific research questions. First: *How do contesting histories in south Bali register in current geographies?* This question was in relation to two geographical landmarks, a banyan tree and a coastline, that signal disparate histories of place. Additionally, they speak to two master narratives: that of state-led 1965 histories and the image of Bali as a peaceful paradise. The second research question to drive this project was: *How can a moving image artwork create an archive of place?* What was initiated through this questioning was a consideration of the function of an artwork when it comes to bringing visibility to the past, and how an artwork can offer counter-archives to master linear histories.

Drawing on scholarly research on archive and place, I have argued that south Bali's geographies and the sustained imaginaries that surround them are archival concerns. Tim Cresswell offers a key proposal for this research in his concept of place as a living archive. His theory advocates for messier and more contingent notions of the archive (Cresswell 2012, p.175), which have proved relevant to my approach to place as permeable sites of relations. This highlights a central concept for this thesis, which, indebted to Doreen Massey, proposes an understanding of space and place as never fixed, but as simultaneous 'stories-so-far' (Massey 2005, p. 130). The two geographical departure points for this thesis (a banyan tree and a stretch of west-facing beaches) are understood as palimpsests (Huyssen 2003) and trajectories (Massey 2005), in that they contain coeval and contesting

historical narratives that continue to unfold in the present. I have argued in this thesis that engagement with place-based narratives is integral to understanding 1965 events and surfer histories in Bali.

There are three threads running through this thesis. The first refers to feminist and postcolonial readings of the archive. Parallel critical theory by Griselda Pollock and Edward Said offer strategies of reading back into the archive, connecting disparate histories and disrupting forward-facing histories. My contribution here is to create a contrapuntal reading between the banyan tree and surfer imagery. In my video installations, conflicting imagery jostle within a gallery space. Surfers in deeply-saturated seascapes create relational pathways to the tangled aerial roots of a banyan tree. Through these counterpoint images I retrieve the presence of 1965 violence contained within Bali's peaceful paradise narratives.

Feminist and contrapuntal strategies propose to 'remember back' into the archive those whose histories were never considered in prevailing canons. My primary contribution here is to stage videos that bring visibility to marginal 1965 memory. The two performance-based works, *Kidung* (2019) and *Rites for the missing* (2019) offer a reparative remembering around 1965. In the context of the UTS exhibition,[56] these works educated visitors who were unfamiliar with Bali's 1965 histories and it also disrupted prevailing narratives around Bali in the Australian imagination. The final video made for this thesis, *A Line in the Sea* (2019), further complicates tourist imaginaries around Bali by redressing Western surfing colonialism. The video reflected coastal landscapes through the gaze of two Indonesian women surfers: recuperating a feminist perspective and offering a transcultural counterpoint to Bali's early surf narratives.

The second thread that runs through this thesis is the consideration of place as archive. My contribution here is a series of videos landscapes that draw upon the genre of late photography to offer a belated witnessing to hidden histories of place. In my work, landscapes are palimpsest where visible topographies overlay spectral remains. The significance of this has been to approach 1965 memory through a question of absence. By paying attention to what we cannot see in the landscape and by drawing visibility to those 'blind spots' in the land, as Donna West Brett identifies (Brett 2015, p. 2), I am also

56 A planned exhibition in 2020 at Cush Cush Gallery in Denpasar, Bali was postponed due to covid-19 global travel restrictions. It is important for this project to eventually be exhibited in Bali. To have a Balinese audience engage with the work, to offer public debate around 1965 as well as critical discussion of the role of tourism in Bali, would add significant outcomes to the project.

critically drawing attention to the processes of erasure that rendered invisible the missing dead from 1965.

The representation of place as an archive is again enforced through my expanded concept of *niskala*. My contribution here is to position unseen spirit activity within place as an archival trace. In my video narrative of a man that was haunted by spirits, the spectral archive offers an alternative mode of reconciling 1965 trauma. Additionally, the notion of a spectral archive is a decolonising method. It reframes Western hegemonies around what should be considered an archive and shifts the archival record to ghosts, storytelling and embodied histories.

The third thread is the continuous navigation between writing and lens-based practice. My contribution to this is to privilege a creative-led approach to research. Through the making of the creative component to this thesis, I engage with a set of research questions around moving image, place and the archive. My primary research method has been through moving image: using this medium to insert speculative fictions, to disrupt the linearity of master narratives, and to connect disparate trajectories within the archive. The outcome of this research approach has been a series of video artworks that create a counter-archive to state-led histories on 1965 and to Bali's master narratives as a peaceful island paradise. Through a reflective analysis of my creative outcomes, I propose new findings and contributions to the field of contemporary art practices that engage with the archive. This approach proposes a close relationship between the creative and written components of this thesis. The written style reflects the switching of codes that occur when an artist employs scholarly approaches to her creative practice.

This written dissertation was formulated through four chapters. Chapter One set up my theoretical approach, offering interdisciplinary connections between key theories surrounding the archive and place, as well as relative theory surrounding transculturation. Additionally, this chapter introduced engagements with the archive in contemporary art practices and as a curatorial concern (Enwezor 2008). Three archival strategies are highlighted here to give context to my own creative practice: resampling archival imagery, speculative fiction and recuperative remembering. These methods build towards a notion of the counter-archive as a mode of practice.

Chapter Two provides a genealogy to my practice by tracing counter-archival modes

in contemporary Indonesian art. Exploring artworks that have recuperated marginal memory within histories of human rights abuses in Indonesia, this chapter highlights how Indonesian artists have significantly redressed master narratives surrounding the New Order. The video *One Thousand and One Martian Nights* by Tintin Wulia is a framework for a speculative 1965 archive, where 1965 is remembered from survivor perspectives in the future. The other key project addressed in this chapter is 900mdpl curated by Mira Asriningtyas, which provides a parallel approach to place as an archive and attention to unseen histories.

Turning to my own creative practice, in Chapter Three I address my moving image works that respond to sites of hidden 1965 graves in Bali. Focusing on the representation of haunted landscapes in my work, I frame this within the philosophical concerns surrounding the genre of late photography. This chapter critically frames tensions of vision in my work, where the focus is upon what you cannot see in the frame. This notion of the unseen is explored further through the Balinese concept of *niskala*, which registers the immaterial and invisible energies that reside in the material and secular world. Proposing an expanded concept of *niskala* outside of its religious framework, I understand *niskala* as a spectral archive. Finally, I address two final works made for this thesis, *Kidung* and *Rites for the missing* that stage a performance in relation to sites of mass graves. These works offer alternative reparations and reconciliation of 1965 trauma.

In Chapter Four, I explore the master narrative of Bali as a peaceful paradise. I link this historically to early surf tourism in the 1970s that implemented a nostalgia for Bali as white sand beaches and idyllic surf breaks, particularly in the Australian imagination. I problematise these surfer imaginaries through theory that critically addresses sustained Eurocentrism in processes of globalisation and modernisation. In the context of Bali, surfer discovery narratives in the 1970s posited an image of Bali as ahistorical and apolitical. By addressing an archive of this era, *Morning of the Earth*, I address how surfing colonialisms reshaped south Bali's coastal geographies. In the second half of Chapter Four, I address a moving image artwork that explores the legacy of those early surf narratives through a feminist and transcultural lens. The video, *A Line in the Sea,* critically redresses Western male surfer hegemonies by writing the presence of Indonesian women surfers back into the narrative. The final exploration of this chapter connects representations of 1965 and surfing histories in my work through the notion of counterpoint. Through my video installations, I visually conceive how surfer romanticisms repressed 1965 trauma.

Expanded trajectories

I write this at a time that I am on Gadigal Land (Sydney) where current global reverberations around systematic racism have once again brought the stakes of the archive into public focus. As I write, colonial trajectories of place are being critically redressed. Monuments to colonial explorers that sustain imaginaries of European discovery, of space being a flattened surface to traverse across, are being questioned and threatened. Methods of archival correction and decolonisation are being incorporated into protest movements. In this present moment, the concerns of this project appear to be extending in very public ways beyond an art context, resonating with current needs to redress master narratives and recuperate histories that have been made marginal.

As I begin to reflect on how this project will continue to evolve, I think about the sub-context of writing and exhibiting this project within Australia. At times it felt like a discrepancy to be reflecting upon my process and exhibiting my final outcomes outside of Bali when so much of this project arises from an intimate connection to place. What has been revealed to me in this process is how my research framework and methodologies around the archive can be applied to contexts outside of Bali. The concerns of the archive are currently relevant and urgent across many global contexts.

A final consideration is that Balinese historical narratives and images of place can be explored in expanded ways through tracing their movements in the diaspora. An extended version of this project is in current development, where I am beginning to research and respond to Balinese art collections and photographic archives in Australian museum collections. I am particularly interested in the female muses that make their way into paintings by European male artists in the late colonial and early modernist period, as well as the narratives of marginalised women painters in Bali, painting in both traditional and non-traditional contexts. My other interest is to think through how cultural artefacts travel through museum collections and change in their signification.[57] In other words, the archive can be addressed more explicitly through a transcultural framework – where I would explore the ways in which Balinese paintings, textiles and artefacts, as trajectories have been moved throughout the world, reflecting diasporic conditions of the archive.

57 See Silva Spitta's work on transculturation of objects in museum collections, in her book *Misplaced objects: migrating collections and recollections in Europe and the Americas* (2009).

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APPENDIX

Creative Component Documentation

The creative component of this thesis is comprised of three iterations of a moving image project. Each iteration was realised through a public exhibition. Full list of works and exhibition documentation are provided in this section.

2016 *Of Love and Decomposition* Firstdraft, NSW.

List of Works
Witness, single-channel video projection, stereo sound, 6:52 minutes.
Wong Samar, single-channel video, stereo sound, 5:17 minutes.
The Surfers, single-channel video, stereo sound, 8:59 minutes.
Counterpoint, floor sculpture, steel bar, baskets, marigolds, earth, dimensions variable.

Brief Description
Upon entering the gallery, viewers encountered a 3-metre long projection screen that cut diagonally across the room. The projection, titled *Witness,* responded to the site of a banyan tree where a mass grave from Indonesia's 1965–66 anti-communist killings lies. The video is shot in black and white and documents the early morning activity around the site through a series of wide-angle shots interspersed with close-ups of the tree. Gradual musical notes of unease are introduced in the otherwise straightforward documentation of the site. Alongside the main projection, two other videos were shown on monitors on the gallery wall: *Wong Samar*, which explores 1965 trauma through a story about spirit hauntings; and *The Surfers,* which resamples footage from the Australian cult surf film, *Morning of the Earth* (1972) and introduces a countering narrative of Bali as an island paradise. The material consideration of each video installation was consciously designed, with each video offering contrasting scale and placement to the other.

A final sculptural element, *Counterpoint*, was included on the floor beneath the main projection. This saw two woven baskets placed as a weight on either end of a long metal bar. On one side sat a basketful of earth and on the other side a basketful of marigold, with an illusion that the marigolds were the heaviest. This sculpture was in material reference to exhumation rituals in Bali.

Video Links:
Full video link to *Witness* can be found here: https://vimeo.com/leylastevens/witness
Password: hantu

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Of Love and Decomposition*, Firstdraft, 1 June–24 June 2016. Photo: Leyla Stevens.

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Of Love and Decomposition*, Firstdraft, 1 June–24 June 2016. Photo: Zan Wimberley.

Exhibition Documention

Detail of *Counterpoint* (2016), steel bar, basket, earth, marigolds, dimensions variable.
Photo: Leyla Stevens.

Leyla Stevens, installation view, *Counterpoint*, Firstdraft, 1 June–24 June 2016. Photo: Zan Wimberley.

2018 *John Fries Award* UNSW Galleries, NSW.

List of Works

Their Sea is Always Hungry, single-channel video projection, stereo sound, 13:16 minutes.

Brief Description

This single-channel video was made for the selective John Fries Award, curated by Consuelo Cavaniglia. The video was projected on a large scale onto the wall in the front half of the gallery. The video moves through a series of images that explore Bali as an island paradise, with repeating landscapes of coconut filled ravines, forests, coastlines and the ocean. A visual device of overlapping frames that gradually recede or expand to reveal another landscape underneath is employed throughout the work. The video is narrated in both Balinese and Indonesian by two women, who create a questioning dialogue between them on how 1965 today is both remembered and forgotten in Bali. The video explores non-linear narrative devices and interweaves references around tourism, the Wallace Line (the title of the show is drawn from a line of Alfred Russel Wallace's *The Malay Archipelago*), Mount Agung eruptions, 1965 bodies and spirits who inhabit the natural world.

Video Links:

Extract of *Their Sea is Always Hungry* can be found here: https://vimeo.com/leylastevens/sea
Password: laut

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *John Fries Award*, UNSW Galleries, 29 September–3 November 2018.
Photo: Silversalt Photography, courtesy UNSW Galleries.

2019 *Their Sea is Always Hungry* UTS Art, NSW.

List of Works
A Line in the Sea, three-channel video installation, stereo sound, 9:45 minutes. Floor installation of sprouted coconuts, Chinese porcelain plates.
Rites for the missing, two-channel video, 12:21 minutes.
Kidung, three-channel video projection, stereo sound, 10:58 minutes.

Brief Description
The exhibition was curated by Stella Rosa McDonald and Eleanor Zeichner and represented my first institutional solo show as an artist. The gallery was split into two spaces, which provided a darkened interior for projections while the exterior space was reserved for works shown on monitors. The central focus of the exhibition was the three-channel video projection *Kidung*, which was shown in the internal gallery. *Kidung* was projected onto three large screens, visible from both sides and placed at angles to each other. This created an immersive space for viewers to navigate and walk around each screen to see the video projection from multiple angles. The right and left channel of *Kidung* showed close-up portraits of the banyan tree originally referenced in the 2016 exhibition. The central channel shows the performance artist, Cok Sawitri, chanting a lament for the banyan tree and the missing dead that remain buried at the site.

In contrast to the immersive scale of *Kidung*, *Rites for the missing* was shown on two small monitors, positioned on the wall facing the audience upon entering the interior space of the gallery. This was a silent black and white documentation of a performance held on another rumoured site of a mass grave from 1965.

A Line in the Sea was hung in the exterior gallery space that was encountered when you first walked into the gallery. In counterpoint to the other works in the show, the video was an exploration of Bali's surfing histories and the current generation of female surfers. The video was displayed on three large monitors on the wall and the sound was played through cordless headphones. On the floor of this exterior gallery was an extended archive of Bali's island paradise imagery: six sprouted coconuts were placed on blue and white porcelain platters. Several narrative references are interwoven in this installation. Among these, a story the artist's grandfather who had a *tuak* (alcohol made from coconuts) stall back in 1965 and who remembers stories of men coming to drink after carrying out killings. The coconuts become an extended archive of both island paradise and 1965 histories.

Video Links:
Full video link to *Rites for the missing* can be found here: https://vimeo.com/leylastevens/rites
Password: rites

An extract of *Kidung* can be found here: https://vimeo.com/leylastevens/chant
Password: banyan

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art, 17 September–8 November 2019.
Photo: Leyla Stevens.

Leyla Stevens, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art, 17 September–8 November 2019.
Photo: Zan Wimberley.

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art, 17 September–8 November 2019.
Photo: Zan Wimberley.

Performance of *Genjer-Genjer* by Kartika Suharto-Martin and Kyati Suharto, exhibition program, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art. Photo: Leyla Stevens.

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art, 17 September–8 November 2019.
Photo: Zan Wimberley.

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art, 17 September–8 November 2019.
Photo: Zan Wimberley.

Exhibition Documention

Leyla Stevens, *Their Sea is Always Hungry*, UTS Art, 17 September–8 November 2019.
Photo: Zan Wimberley.

Supplementary Content Links:

Exhibition Catalogue with essay by Alia Swastika can be downloaded here: https://art.uts.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/UTS-TheirSea-R7-Web.pdf
Full Exhibition Program can be accessed here: https://art.uts.edu.au/index.php/exhibitions/their-sea-is-always-hungry/
A review by Hannah Jenkins originally published by U: Magazine: https://www.uts.edu.au/news/culture-sport/their-sea-always-hungry
For an audio described tour of the exhibition seen here: https://art.uts.edu.au/index.php/events/their-sea-is-always-hungry-audio-described-tour/