

# **Australia and Indonesia**

## **A Neighbour's Perspective<sup>1</sup>**

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Relations between Indonesia and Australia have been characterised by periods of cooperation and periods of conflict. Unfortunately, research shows that moments of friction have largely shaped each nation's perceptions of the other nation and its people. The honours study informing this paper was conducted over a set period that ended in 2005, before relations between Australia and Indonesia soured over the Papuan asylum seeker issue and subsequent distasteful images that were published in the media in early 2006. Although this is not considered in this paper, it does highlight the tenuous nature of diplomatic relations and the role the media plays in that relationship. In a global climate of Islamic-linked terrorism, ideally there should be more trust and understanding between such geographically close neighbours, not only in terms of diplomatic and trade relations but also among the public. For most Australians and Indonesians the only perceptions they have of their neighbours are those derived from their mass media. Thus media play an essential role in how each nation views the other and in bilateral relations.

The purpose of the research on which this paper is based was to determine how Indonesia and Australia have been portrayed in each other's newsprint media and explore what influenced those portrayals. An additional aim was to develop a way to systematically measure and analyse those

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representations that could provide a research framework with which to inform further research on the topic. As such, content analyses were conducted of articles from two of each nation's newspapers taken from three case study periods: the first six months of 2005, the 2002 Bali bombings, and the 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami. This paper will largely discuss this empirical research, in terms of the research methods applied and the findings. To place this post-2000 research in context, however, it is first necessary to briefly explain the review of relevant pre-2000 literature and research.

## Relevant literature and research

A review of literature and the research of several academics and analysts, such as David Reeve<sup>2</sup>, Alison Broinowski<sup>3</sup>, Rodney Tiffin<sup>4</sup>, and Lambert Kelabora<sup>5</sup>, found images and perceptions of Australia and Indonesia in each other's media pre-2000 to be overwhelmingly negative on both sides. The academic literature comprises research that was conducted between 1990 and 2000 that considers representations of each nation dating back to the 1960s. Much of the research focused on media representations during the East Timor crisis of 1999 / 2000, where the media on both sides were blamed for a breakdown in bilateral relations.

The perceptions derived from the literature review are somewhat imbalanced, as most complaints were aimed at Australia, Australians, and the Australian media. However, the research and literature suggest there were negative portrayals on each side, including images of Australians as racist, patronising and interfering; and Indonesians as corrupt, a threat and human rights abusers. A full list of the negative images found in pre-2000 research can be seen in Table 1 on the following page.

Other than partly relevant research, such as Woods' study of the Pauline Hanson debate in three South-East Asian newspapers<sup>6</sup>, the previous research and literature was largely anecdotal, with selected samples taken mostly from extreme publications or negative texts. Many of the negative

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<sup>2</sup> See David Reeve, "Australia must be wrong: Indonesian images of Australia", in *Australia in the World: perceptions and possibilities*, eds. Don Grant and Graham Seal, 356-362 (Perth: Black Swan Press, Curtin University of Technology, 1994). See also David Reeve, "Significant anti-Australian feelings", *Asian Analysis*, July-August 2000, <http://www.aseanfocus.com/asiananalysis/article.cfm?articleID=283> (accessed 29 Nov 2005), ANU ASEAN Focus Group.

<sup>3</sup> See Alison Broinowski, "A pebble in both our shoes: East Timor and the media, 1999", *Australian Journalism Review*, 21, No. 3 (1999): 1-24.

<sup>4</sup> See Rodney Tiffin, *Diplomatic Deceits: government, media and East Timor*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2001). See also Rodney Tiffin, "The press", in *The Media and Communications in Australia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, eds. Stuart Cunningham and Graeme Turner, 97-112 (NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> See Lambert Kelabora, "The problem of images in Australian relations with Southeast Asia, with particular reference to Indonesia", in *Australia in the World: perceptions and possibilities*, eds. Don Grant & Graham Seal, 363-372 (Perth: Black Swan Press, Curtin University of Technology, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> See Denise Woods, "Australia in Asia: Negotiating Pauline Hanson in the Southeast Asian Press", in *Alter Asians: Asian Australian identities in art, media and popular culture*, eds. I. Ang, S. Chalmers, L. Law and M. Thomas, 263-279 (Sydney: Pluto Press, 2000).

images arose from events or incidents, such as the Balibo murders<sup>7</sup>, the Jenkins affair<sup>8</sup>, the Pauline Hanson debate<sup>9</sup> and Australia's intervention in East Timor.

<b>Australia/ns</b>	<b>Indonesia/ns</b>
Racist	Corrupt
Ignorant	Poor / miserable
Disrespectful	Unstable / unsafe
Arrogant	Human rights abusers
Rude / hostile	A threat
Untrustworthy	Having inferior political and social systems
Hypocritical	Inferior race
Viewed Indonesia as a threat	Foremost described as the most populous Muslim nation
Moralistic	Technologically backward
Imperialistic	Untrustworthy
<b>Australian media:</b>	Having corrupt and barbaric leaders
Critical	Uneducated
Unbalanced / hostile	Irrational
Subjective	Incompetent
Sensationalistic	
Moralistic	
Offensive	
Bullies	
Imperialistic	
<b>Australian Government / authorities:</b>	
Superior / patronising	
Racist	
Arrogant	
Imperialistic	
Hypocritical	
Interfering / overpowering	
Aggressive / brutal	
Intrusive	
Unreliable	
Causing violence	

**Table 1: Recurring negative images reflected in media representations pre-2001**

The literature concentrated more on the negative representations than the influences behind them, but suggested journalists and media institutions have the strongest influence over press representations. This honours study, however, identified other areas of influence on media last century including

<sup>7</sup> The Balibo incident was the 1975 murder of five Australian journalists by Indonesian armed forces in Balibo, East Timor.

<sup>8</sup> The Jenkins incident was triggered by a 1986 *Sydney Morning Herald* article by Australian journalist David Jenkins that focused on the riches of the Suharto family.

<sup>9</sup> A more recent cause of negative press in Australia and in Southeast Asia was the Pauline Hanson debate. It was sparked by Hanson's contentious maiden speech to Australian federal parliament in 1996 in which she said Australia was 'in danger of being swamped by Asians' who 'form ghettos and do not assimilate' (see Woods 2000).

differing ideologies and values in press cultures, such as press freedom restrictions of the authoritarian *Pancasila* press and the critical nature of the Western libertarian ‘watchdog’ press. Authoritarian control of media in Indonesia was seen as significant. Journalistic bias and news values of both Indonesian and Australian media contributed to negative portrayals, as did journalists lacking understanding and background knowledge of issues when reporting on their neighbouring nation. Diplomatic relations also affected media representations.

## **Media representations post-2000**

This study investigated the hypothesis that substantial social, political and cultural changes have taken place since previous research that would have positively affected media representations of each nation. It was further hypothesised that there would be fewer negative images of each nation in newsprint media this century than there were in last century’s media representations.

### **Research methods used in the case studies**

The purpose of this study was to analyse a more moderate perspective of each nation through representations in mainstream broadsheet newspapers. For this reason conventional, daily newspapers with a reasonably broad circulation were chosen for the case studies. All are generally considered ‘quality’ newspapers as opposed to tabloids in that they tend to be more educational, opinion-forming, in-depth, and responsible<sup>10</sup>. *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian* were the Australian newspapers chosen for inclusion in the sample. The Indonesian sample newspapers were *The Jakarta Post* and *Jawa Pos*. The Saturday or weekend editions of *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian (The Weekend Australian)* were also included in the case study samples.

Stratified sampling was used to form the database sample for analysis. For the 2005 period, a composite week sampling method was used. Studies conducted on sampling efficiency by Lacy, Riffe, Aust, Drager and Robinson show this technique to be superior to random sampling<sup>11</sup>. Riffe, Lacy and Fico recommend sampling a constructed week in a population of six months<sup>12</sup>. In this study, a week was constructed by random selection of an edition for each day of the week from the six-month period starting from January 2005. Samples were taken from every Monday in the month of January, every Tuesday in February, every Wednesday in March, continuing up to and including every Saturday in June. The sample was confined to six days, as most of these newspapers did not have a Sunday

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<sup>10</sup> Henry Mayer cited in David Conley and Stephen Lambie, *The Daily Miracle: an introduction to journalism*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, 39 (Vic, Australia: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Cited in Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick, *Mass Media Research: an introduction*, 142 (Belmont, USA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Riffe, Stephen Lacy and Frederick G. Fico, *Analysing Media Messages Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*, 97-8 (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., 1998).

edition. The units of analysis were taken from sections relating to news, features, editorials, letters, opinion, and relevant finance articles in the daily newspapers.

Samples used in the Bali bombings and tsunami case studies were taken from the same newspapers used in the 2005 case study for every day of the week following each event. Consistent with the 2005 composite week sample, these sample weeks were made up of a six-day period from Monday to Saturday. This method is a form of purposive sampling, as probability sampling did not apply in this instance<sup>13</sup>. The contents were processed and analysed applying the same methods as those used in the six-month sample.

Samples were taken from the electronic online archives of each newspaper by conducting a search of the archives using the keywords 'Indonesia' (in Australian newspapers) or 'Australia' (in Indonesian newspapers). Such a broad search strategy produced large numbers of articles, the majority of which were considered irrelevant to the media representation study. Articles deemed irrelevant included those that did not reflect on the country mentioned or were from sections of newspapers not included in the sample. For example, articles that merely mentioned Australia or Indonesia as a geographical location and those from the sports or entertainment sections were deemed irrelevant. A total of 1002 articles was collected to make up the case study samples. These articles were categorised as relevant or irrelevant according to operational definitions. Of the total number, 486 were considered relevant.

The content of each article was evaluated according to whether the article portrayed the country (or its people) in a negative, positive, or neutral light by adopting Lee's model of coding<sup>14</sup>. Articles were evaluated only as to how Australia was reflected in Indonesian newsprint and how Indonesia was reflected in Australian newsprint. The content evaluated was largely manifest rather than latent. This means that the surface meaning of the messages, or what the general reader would interpret the meaning to be, was considered; rather than a deeper meaning, or an individual interpretation of the meaning, in the message<sup>15</sup>. The positive and negative aspects of the content of each article were listed and then an evaluation was made on how these aspects balanced as a whole. If an article comprised mostly negative, or mostly positive, content it was categorised as such. Those that had neither positive nor negative aspects, or that were balanced (made up of both aspects) and merely reported the facts, were evaluated as neutral.

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<sup>13</sup> Delbert C. Miller and Neil J. Salkind, *Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed, 53 (California: Sage Publications, 2002). See also Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*, 5<sup>th</sup> edn, 36 (Boston: Pearson Education Inc., 2004).

<sup>14</sup> See Paul SN Lee, "Stereotypes and news media: 'Australia' in Hong Kong", *Australian Journalism Review*, vol. 22, No. 2, (2000): 34-47.

<sup>15</sup> Rife, Lacy and Fico, 29-30.

The data were searched for recurring negative images found in pre-2000 representations. The occurrences of these images and the frequency with which they occurred in each newspaper were noted and tallied. This was to test whether past negative images endured in mainstream newsprint this century and to measure their persistence.

### Case study 1 – six months of 2005

The Australian sample newspapers had similar numbers of articles relating to Indonesia as the Indonesian sample newspapers had relating to Australia (see Table 2). However, the Australian newspapers had a much higher number of relevant articles (58 per cent) than Indonesian newspapers (25 per cent), indicating that Australia was not as newsworthy in Indonesia as Indonesia was in Australia. There were fewer relevant articles taken from the total identified in the Indonesian sample newspapers. A high proportion of the articles in the *Jawa Pos* were sports-related, leaving a total of only 28 relevant articles from 160 for the week.

	Total of articles collected for the composite week	Total of relevant articles identified
<i>The Jakarta Post</i>	71	30
<i>Jawa Pos</i>	160	28
<i>The Australian</i>	149	83
<i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>	95	58

**Table 2: Numbers of articles collected – six months of 2005**

### Evaluation of articles

Combined, the Indonesian sample newspapers had a higher percentage of both negative articles (34 per cent) and positive articles (24 per cent) than the Australian newspapers (see Table 3 on the following page). In this sense the *Jawa Pos* was the most balanced. *The Jakarta Post* had the highest percentage of negative articles for this six-month composite week at 43.5 per cent of its total of relevant articles. Interestingly, 83 per cent of those negative articles or letters were written by either Australian expatriates in Indonesia or Australian (or US) based authors. This is congruous with the observation that most negative images of Australia originate from Australian sources<sup>16</sup>.

In real numbers, however, the total of negative articles about Australia in the Indonesian newspapers was only half of the total of negative articles about Indonesia in the Australian newspapers. Thus Australians were more exposed to negative images of Indonesia in the sample media than Indonesians were of Australia.

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<sup>16</sup> Ilsa Sharp, "Looking beyond the *wayang*: perceptions and coverage of Australia in Southeast Asian media (with special reference to Singapore/Malaysia)", in *Australia in the World: perceptions and possibilities*, eds. Don Grant & Graham Seal, 277 (Perth: Black Swan Press, Curtin University of Technology, 1994). See also Woods, 278.

**The Jakarta Post**

2005	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
January	1	3 (2*)	5 (2*)	9
February	1	2	3	6
March	1 (1*)	1	1(1*)	3
April	2 (2*)	0	0	2
May	2 (2*)	1	0	3
June	6 (5*)	0	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 (43.5%)</b>	<b>7 (23%)</b>	<b>10 (33.5%)</b>	<b>30 (100%)</b>

\* Australian /expatriate OR Australian (or US) based author

**Jawa Pos**

2005	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
January	0	2	1	3
February	0	0	0	0
March	0	3	2	5
April	1	1	1	3
May	3	1	6	10
June	3	0	4	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 (25%)</b>	<b>7 (25%)</b>	<b>14 (50%)</b>	<b>28 (100%)</b>

**The Australian**

2005	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
January	9	2	15	26
February	1	2	1	4
March	3	4	12	19
April	1	3	10	14
May	1	0	2	3
June	7	1	9	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 (27%)</b>	<b>12 (14%)</b>	<b>49 (59%)</b>	<b>83 (100%)</b>

**Sydney Morning Herald**

2005	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
January	4	1	8	13
February	2	2	2	6
March	2	1	4	7
April	1	5	7	13
May	0	0	2	2
June	8	2	7	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>17 (29%)</b>	<b>11 (19%)</b>	<b>30 (52%)</b>	<b>58 (100%)</b>

**Table 3: Evaluation of articles - six months of 2005**

Although most of the articles in the Australian newspapers were neutral, negative articles outnumbered positive articles. However, two points should be considered here: first, news media have a tendency to report negative news<sup>17</sup>, and second, international news tends to be more negative<sup>18</sup>. In percentage terms, *The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* had an almost equal percentage of negative articles. Combined, the Australian sample newspapers had more negative articles (27.6 per cent) than positive articles (16.3 per cent). Even though most articles were classified as neutral because they were balanced, many of them contained negative content regarding Indonesia. Therefore, the overall impression of Indonesia portrayed by the Australian press was negative in this period.

<sup>17</sup> Lee, 39.

<sup>18</sup> Galtung and Ruge in David K Perry, *Theory and Research in Mass Communication: contexts and consequences*, 107-8 (London: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, 2002). See also Levi Obijiofor and Folker Hanusch, "Foreign News Coverage in Five African Newspapers", *Australian Journalism Review*, vol. 25, No. 1, (July, 2003): 146.

### **Major issues in the content of articles**

Content in *The Australian* for this period consisted of 17 positive issues about Indonesia and 22 negative ones. *The Sydney Morning Herald's* content consisted of 22 positive issues and 29 negative ones. These articles related to particular events. The December 2004 tsunami produced some positive articles that were either sympathy generating or highlighted the resilience and strong community spirit of Indonesian victims. This event, however, also raised negative issues in the content of articles, such as concern over the safety of displaced children and aid workers, and the possible syphoning of donations by Indonesian officials. The tsunami drew Australian media attention towards Aceh, which had been closed to media scrutiny for years. The Indonesian military was portrayed as the biggest threat to human rights and security.

Threats made to staff at the Indonesian Consulate in Perth in April 2005 and an anthrax scare at the Indonesian Embassy in Canberra in June produced mostly positive articles in the Australian newspaper sample, portraying the Indonesian authorities as working with Australia to combat terrorism in investigating the incidents. President Yudhoyono, in his April 2005 visit to Australia, engendered significantly positive articles. The conviction of Schapelle Corby produced many articles in both nations' sample newspapers containing negative content throughout this case study period.

*The Jakarta Post's* content comprised eight positive issues and 20 that were negative. Even though the *Jawa Pos* sample had an even number of positive and negative articles, there were seven positive and 14 negative issues in the content. The Boxing-Day tsunami, and the Nias earthquake in March produced articles in both Indonesian sample newspapers highlighting the generosity and compassion of the Australian people and government. However, these articles were tempered with articles expressing distrust of Australia through innuendos that the offer of Australian aid was based on ulterior motives. Other favourable content involved issues of trade, security and increased aid. In contrast to the positive Australian media portrayals of President Yudhoyono, Prime Minister Howard was portrayed in some Indonesian newspaper articles as arrogant and patronising. Threats made to the Perth Indonesian Consulate in April 2005 were reported in Indonesia as tied to the Australian backlash over the Corby case. As the anti-Indonesian sentiment over the Corby case grew in Australia, more articles negatively representing Australia appeared in Indonesian press, opening old wounds and rehashing festering issues from the past.

### **Recurring negative images**

Each nation's newspapers in the sample had an even number of occurrences of negative images or stereotypes in this period (see Tables 4 and 5 on the following pages). Eleven of 14 negative images from pre-2000 representations persisted in the Australian newspapers, as did 24 of 28 in the Indonesian newspapers. No new negative images emerged. Aside from the images of Indonesians as uneducated, irrational and incompetent, the negative images found in past largely anecdotal

representations of Indonesia in Australian media were present again in this empirical case study (see Table 4).

Recurring negative images	<i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>	<i>The Australian</i>	Both newspapers
Indonesia/ns as:	Number of articles	Number of articles	Total recurrences
Corrupt	10	4	14
Poor / miserable	8	6	14
Unstable / unsafe	3	7	10
Human rights abusers	5	5	10
A threat	4	5	9
Having inferior political and social systems	4	4	8
Inferior race	1	1	2
Characterised as the most populous Muslim nation	0	2	2
Technologically backward	0	2	2
Untrustworthy	1	1	2
Having corrupt and barbaric leaders	0	1	1
Uneducated	0	0	0
Irrational	0	0	0
Incompetent	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>74</b>

**Table 4: Recurring negative images - six months of 2005 – Australian newspapers**

An article in *The Australian* said a survey of foreign businessmen in Asia ranked Indonesia as the most corrupt in the region igniting fears of tsunami funds being lost to corruption<sup>19</sup>. Indonesia was portrayed as an unsafe and unstable place in articles about Aceh and terrorist threats in the region. Terrorism was also the main issue in articles portraying Indonesia as a threat to Australia or Australians. The Indonesian military generated recurring negative images of corruption, human rights abuses, instability and lack of security. Content in two articles contained notions of Indonesians as an inferior race. One of those contained a direct ‘xenophobic’ quote from radio 2GB shock jock Malcolm T. Elliot in reference to the Corby case, who said: ‘The judges don't even speak English, mate. They're straight out of the trees, if you'll excuse my expression. Whoa, give them a banana and away they go’<sup>20</sup>. The other article was subtler but expressed the same latent meaning. While few in numbers, these articles were evidence that such negative attitudes towards Indonesians still existed in Australian society in the first six months of 2005.

Negative images that recurred most in the Indonesian sample newspapers were those portraying Australians as racist and ignorant (see Table 5 on the following page). These were closely followed by images of Australians as arrogant, disrespectful, rude, and hostile. The large majority of these images occurred in articles relating to the Corby case. Distrust of Australia was evident in three articles that questioned the ulterior motives behind Australian aid.

<sup>19</sup> “Global Business Brief”, *The Australian*, 9 Mar 2005: 36, Finance section.

<sup>20</sup> Cited in Mike Seccombe, “Quick backburn deflects the heat”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 Jun 2005: 33, Opinion section.

Recurring negative images	<i>Jakarta Post</i>	<i>Jawa Pos</i>	Both papers
Australia/ns as:	Number of articles	Number of articles	Total recurrences
Racist	5	2	7
Ignorant	5	2	7
Disrespectful	3	3	6
Arrogant	3	2	5
Rude / hostile	2	2	4
Untrustworthy	1	2	3
Hypocritical	2	1	3
Viewing Indonesia as a threat	1	1	2
Moralistic	0	1	1
Imperialistic	1	0	1
<b>Australian media as:</b>	-	-	-
Critical	1	2	3
Unbalanced	1	2	3
Subjective	1	2	3
Sensationalistic	1	2	3
Moralistic	2	1	3
Offensive	0	1	1
Bullies	0	1	1
Imperialistic	1	0	1
<b>Australian Government / authorities as:</b>	-	-	-
Superior /patronising	4	3	7
Racist	4	1	5
Arrogant	2	0	2
Imperialistic	1	0	1
Hypocritical	0	1	1
Interfering / overpowering	1	0	1
Aggressive / brutal	0	0	0
Intrusive	0	0	0
Unreliable	0	0	0
Causing violence	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>74</b>

**Table 5: Recurring negative images - six months of 2005 – Indonesian newspapers**

Three articles, relating to the Corby case, portrayed Australians as hypocritical in criticisms of Indonesia's judicial system and squalid prison conditions. In one article Australian academic Max Lane argued that agitation in Australia over the Corby case rested on layers of imperial hypocrisy<sup>21</sup>. Two articles in *The Jakarta Post* pointed out that the impoverished state of Indonesia, often portrayed and denigrated in Australian media for being backward and corrupt, was the result of decades of oppressive policies in which Australia played a role<sup>22</sup>. Further, a *Jawa Pos* article charged that Australians were hypocritical in asking the governments of both countries to intervene in Indonesia's judicial system to defend Schapelle Corby<sup>23</sup>.

All the pre-2000 negative images regarding Australian media recurred in this period, but those relating to the Australian Government were fewer in number. Negative images of the Australian Government related to policies revealing elements of white superiority and racism, and allegations that Prime

<sup>21</sup> Max Lane, "The Hypocrisy of an Imperialist Down Under", *The Jakarta Post*, 4 Jun 2005, opinion, <http://www.thejakartapost.com> (accessed between 22 Jun 2005 and 25 Aug 2005).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. See also Soe Tjen Marching, "Bad news leads Western media coverage of RI", *The Jakarta Post*, 27 May 2005, opinion, <http://www.thejakartapost.com> (accessed between 22 Jun 2005 and 25 Aug 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Baiq Wardhani and M. Ikhsan Modjo, "Kemunafikan Politik", *Jawa Pos*, 4 Jun, 2005, opinion, <http://search.jawapos.com> (accessed between 22 Jun 2005 and 25 Aug 2005).

Minister Howard had a patronising attitude towards Indonesia. But overall, the Australian Government was portrayed in a more positive light than a negative one. This lends weight to the hypothesis that events and political change have had a positive impact, if only slight, on images of Australia in Indonesian newspapers.

On the whole, the sample newspapers in this case study carried a higher percentage of negative articles than positive articles. But that is the nature of news. However, fewer types of negative images found in past representations persisted in this period, and the absence of any new negative images can be viewed positively. This partly confirms the hypothesis that portrayals of Australia and Indonesia in the study period would be more favourable than pre-2000 representations.

### **Case study 2 – The 2002 Bali bombings**

The totals of articles collected in the sample newspapers for this case study period compare with the pattern noted in the 2005 six-month period. *The Australian* contained the most articles followed by *The Sydney Morning Herald* and then the *Jawa Pos* (see Table 6). The Australian sample newspapers had substantially higher numbers of relevant articles relating to Indonesia than the Indonesian sample newspapers had relating to Australia.

	<b>Total of articles collected for the week</b>	<b>Total of relevant articles identified</b>
<i>The Jakarta Post</i>	54	22
<i>Jawa Pos</i>	62	29
<i>The Australian</i>	135	100
<i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>	96	70

**Table 6: Numbers of articles collected – 2002 Bali bombings**

Of the total articles collected in the Indonesian sample newspapers, 44 per cent were deemed relevant. Many irrelevant articles merely mentioned Australians as being among the victims of the bombings and nothing more. In contrast, 73.5 per cent of the total of articles collected from the Australian sample newspapers were relevant. This was not only because so many Australians were involved, but also because the event took place in Indonesia and was largely dealt with by Indonesians.

Although the bombings did not dominate Indonesian news media as much as Australian media in this case study, the event received more media coverage in Indonesia than other terrorist attacks and bombings that often occur there<sup>24</sup>. This event had more impact on Indonesians because foreigners or tourists were also victims. According to journalist Desi Anwar when many visitors to the nation were killed in the bombings the majority of Indonesians were struck by remorse and sorrow<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Desi Anwar, in *Insight*, television program, Special Broadcasting Services, Jakarta, 4 Oct 2005.

<sup>25</sup> Desi Anwar

### Evaluation of articles

The Bali bombings week produced a low percentage of negative articles overall and a higher percentage of neutral articles for the short period following the bombings (see Table 7).

#### *The Jakarta Post*

2002	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 14 Oct	0	1	0	1
Tue 15 Oct	0	4	2	6
Wed 16 Oct	0	3	2	5
Thu 17 Oct	0	1	3	4
Fri 18 Oct	0	1	0	1
Sat 19 Oct	0	1*	4	5
Totals	0	11 (50%)	11 (50%)	22 (100%)

\* written by Australian

#### *Jawa Pos*

2002	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 14 Oct	1	4	1	6
Tue 15 Oct	0	0	1	1
Wed 16 Oct	0	0	5	5
Thu 17 Oct	0	0	6	6
Fri 18 Oct	1	3	2	6
Sat 19 Oct	0	1	4	5
Totals	2 (7%)	8 (27%)	19 (66%)	29(100%)

#### *The Australian*

2002	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 14 Oct	2	2	12	16
Tue 15 Oct	2	2	11	15
Wed 16 Oct	3	3	15	21
Thu 17 Oct	1	2	14	17
Fri 18 Oct	1	5	10	16
Sat 19 Oct	2	2	11	15
Totals	11 (11%)	16 (16%)	73 (73%)	100 (100%)

#### *The Sydney Morning Herald*

2002	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 14 Oct	3	0	9	12
Tue 15 Oct	5	1	5	11
Wed 16 Oct	2	0	7	9
Thu 17 Oct	2	6	7	15
Fri 18 Oct	4	3	4	11
Sat 19 Oct	2	0	10	12
Totals	18 (26%)	10 (14%)	42 (60%)	70 (100%)

**Table 7: Evaluation of articles - 2002 Bali bombings**

The percentages of neutral articles in all the sample newspapers for this period were higher than those of the 2005 sample period. At the same time, except for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, there was a lower percentage of negative articles in the newspapers. In contrast to the 2005 case study, *The Jakarta Post* did not carry any negative articles in this period and also had a higher percentage of positive articles. The *Jawa Pos* and *The Australian* had a higher percentage of neutral articles and fewer negative articles for this period compared with the 2005 period. Conversely, the percentages of articles in those categories for *The Sydney Morning Herald* were more consistent with its percentages for the 2005 period. Of the sample newspapers, *The Sydney Morning Herald* had by far the highest percentage of negative articles at 26 per cent.

For this period the Australian sample newspapers combined had a higher percentage of negative articles relating to Indonesia than the Indonesian sample newspapers had relating to Australia. However, except for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, the samples contained more positive articles than negative. Indonesian newspapers combined had a higher percentage of positive articles compared with Australian newspapers. As with the 2005 period, in this 2002 period Australians were subject to more negative images of Indonesia than Indonesians were of Australia.

### **Major issues in the content of articles**

Although there was a lower percentage of articles classified as negative compared with the 2005 period, there were many negative issues within the content of Indonesian-oriented articles in the Australian sample newspapers. Many of these issues were demonstrably true and valid in context of the situation. As such, in various cases the whole article was not necessarily deemed negative. The content of articles in *The Australian* dealt with 25 positive issues regarding Indonesia and 45 negative. *The Sydney Morning Herald's* content of Indonesian-oriented articles comprised 19 positive and 54 negative issues. Positive content mostly consisted of expressions of sympathy towards Indonesians and concern over the bleak future for 'peace-loving' Balinese. There were also articles that called for seriously wounded Indonesian victims to be flown to better-equipped hospitals in Australia, and ones that called for long-term national support of the Balinese. Prime Minister Howard's speech at the memorial service in Bali conveyed the essence of 13 other articles or letters emphasising that the Balinese were 'lovely people' and Indonesians were 'friends' who needed Australians' support<sup>26</sup>. There were letters from Indonesian and Muslim groups in Australia condemning the bombings<sup>27</sup>. Indonesia's support for a joint investigation into the bombings with the Australian police and intelligence taskforce was also portrayed positively.

With both Australian sample newspapers the main issues in the negative content of articles were the Indonesian Government's denial of, and failure to address, the existence of terrorist networks in Indonesia. The armed forces were criticised for being inadequate, unprofessional, under-equipped and under-funded. Their record of corruption, human rights abuses and murders was referred to in several articles. Some articles alleged there were strong connections between suspected terrorist organisations, high-power politicians and army officials. There were some articles in *The Sydney Morning Herald*

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<sup>26</sup> John Howard cited in *The Australian*, 18 Oct 2002: 6, news section. Proquest ANZ Newstand (accessed between 22 Jun and 25 Aug 2005).

<sup>27</sup> Yon Machmudi and Elisabet Titik Murtisari, "Beware whose face you slap, it may be yours", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 Oct, 2002: 16, letters to the editor. Proquest ANZ Newstand (accessed between 22 Jun and 25 Aug 2005).

See also Shaykh Jehad Ismail, "Being true to Islam is to abhor violence and murder", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 Oct, 2002: 14, letters to the editor. Proquest ANZ Newstand (accessed between 22 Jun and 25 Aug 2005).

portraying Indonesia as a dangerous place with a history of communal violence and internal instability. Some articles portrayed Indonesia as a threat to Australia in the context of Islamic-linked terrorism and Indonesia being the biggest Islamic nation in the world.

The Indonesian sample newspapers contained a high percentage of articles representing Australia positively for the surveyed week. The contents of Australian-oriented articles in *The Jakarta Post* referred to 16 positive issues and only four negative, while the content of the *Jawa Pos* articles consisted of 11 positive issues and nine negative. The main issues were reflected in sympathy-generating articles of personal accounts of Australian bomb victims, and the mutual grief and solidarity of Australians and Indonesians as valued neighbours and friends. Australian authorities were lauded for providing aid in areas such as human resources, medicine, equipment, and funds. Several articles favourably portrayed the cooperation of Australian police and intelligence officers with their Indonesian counterparts. The Australian Government was praised for showing concern for its citizens in issuing travel warnings and Prime Minister Howard was commended for his ‘genuine’ expressions of sympathy towards victims of the bombings and their families. Although not overtly, Howard’s public concern for victims was shown in contrast to President Megawati’s lack of sentiment and failure to formally address the nation over the bombings.

The *Jawa Pos* was the only Indonesian newspaper from the sample to have published negative articles in that week, but there were only two. One expressed resentment about the Australian Government pressuring the Indonesian Government and holding Indonesia responsible for the bombings<sup>28</sup>. The other reported on anti-Islamic sentiment in Australia with the fire bombing of a Melbourne mosque, and the stoning of an Islamic school and a Muslim’s house in Sydney. These incidents were represented as Australian retaliatory actions for the Bali bombings and highlighted Australian prejudice against, and ignorance of, Muslims.

### **Recurring negative images**

Fewer negative images presented in this period compared with the 2005 period. However, in some cases there were many more recurrences of such images. The same number of negative images (11 of 14) found in the 2005 period presented in the Australian sample newspapers, whereas in the Indonesian newspapers only six of 28 negative images occurred (see Tables 8 and 9 on the following page).

The number of times negative images repeated in the Australian sample newspapers was approximately double the number of times negative images appeared in the Australian newspapers in the 2005 period. Both *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian* published a substantial number of articles (10

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<sup>28</sup> ZA Maulani, “Asing terlibat”, *Jawa Pos*, 14 Oct 2002, <http://search.jawapos.com> (accessed Aug 25, 2005).

each) that portrayed Indonesia as unstable and a threat to Australia. Similarly, there were articles portraying Indonesia as having inferior political and social systems (see Table 8). The high frequency with which these images recurred in articles this period was reasonable given the context of the situation: Australians appeared to be the target of terrorist attacks and, in the lead-up to the bombings, Indonesia had failed to act on repeated warnings about terrorist threats. This also explains the high occurrence of the image of Indonesians as incompetent. An image that reappeared in a large number of articles was of Indonesians as corrupt. This persistent image recurred in 21 articles in this period compared with 14 articles in the 2005 period. *The Sydney Morning Herald* published 18 of those 21 articles.

Recurring negative images	<i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>	<i>The Australian</i>	Both newspapers
Indonesia/ns as:	Number of articles	Number of articles	Total recurrences
Incompetent	8	28	36
Unstable	13	12	25
A threat	10	10	20
Corrupt	18	3	21
Having inferior political and social systems	7	8	15
Irrational	8	4	12
Characterised as the most populous Muslim nation	2	2	4
Human rights abusers	2	2	4
Untrustworthy	2	1	3
Poor / miserable	2	1	3
Inferior race	1	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>145</b>

**Table 8: Recurring negative images - 2002 Bali bombings - Australian newspapers**

In contrast to pre-2000 representations, the 2005 period, and the Australian sample newspapers for this period, only a small number of negative images resurfaced in a few articles in the Indonesian sample newspapers for the week following the Bali bombings (see Table 9).

Recurring negative images	<i>Jakarta Post</i>	<i>Jawa Pos</i>	Both papers
Australia/ns as:	Number of articles	Number of articles	Total recurrences
Viewing Indonesia as a threat	1	4	5
Viewing themselves as superior	1	1	2
Untrustworthy	1	0	1
Critical	0	1	1
Imperialistic	0	1	1
Interfering / overpowering	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>

**Table 9: Recurring negative images - 2002 Bali bombings - Indonesian newspapers**

Despite such recurring negative images, only two articles were classified as negative. Australians viewing Indonesians as a threat was the theme that persisted the most out of the eight recurring negative images. Again, this was reasonable given the context of the situation. Those articles concerned Australian Government travel warnings telling Australians to leave Indonesia because of new terrorist threats. In pressuring the Indonesian Government to crack down on Islamic extremists the Australian Government was portrayed as imperialistic, interfering and overpowering in two articles. The imputed Western superiority of Australians was an image that reappeared in both

newspapers with articles containing complaints about alleged preferential treatment of Western patients and journalists in Bali. The *Jawa Pos* published an article about Australians' scepticism of Balinese hospitals. Finally, the second article classified as negative contained the image of Australians linking Islam to terrorism. This image was not present in pre-2000 representations, but it often occurred in newsprint representations of Muslims in Australian media from 2000 to 2002<sup>29</sup>.

The Bali bombings incident dominated news media in Australia, more so than it did in Indonesia. The Australian sample newspapers published more relevant articles in this period than in the 2005 period. Although there were more articles classified as neutral, the Australian newspapers still had a much higher percentage of negative articles than the Indonesian newspapers. The anger and fear of Australians was reflected in the high number of both negative issues in the content of articles and recurring negative images. Indonesian newspapers, on the other hand, had substantially fewer recurring negative images and numbers of occurrences for this period.

### Case study 3 – the 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami

All newspapers in the sample contained significantly fewer relevant articles for the week following the 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami than they did for the week following the Bali bombings and the 2005 composite week (see Table 10). The tsunami was an event that was very different from the Bali bombings in that it did not involve Australian people as victims of a disaster in Indonesia. However, it was a significant event for both nations as it was a catalyst in improving relations between them.

	Total of articles collected for the week	Total of relevant articles identified
<i>The Jakarta Post</i>	13	5
<i>Jawa Pos</i>	46	14
<i>The Australian</i>	74	28
<i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>	45	19

Table 10: Numbers of articles collected – 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami

For the 2004 tsunami period the totals of articles identified in each sample newspaper were again consistent with the 2005 period and the 2002 period; *The Australian* had the highest total and *The Jakarta Post* had the lowest. However, for this period *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Jawa Pos* had similar totals of relevant articles. Combined, the Australian sample newspapers published substantially more articles relevant to Indonesia than Indonesian newspapers published about Australia.

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<sup>29</sup> See Peter Manning, *Dog Whistle Politics and Journalism: reporting Arabic and Muslim people in Sydney newspapers*, (Sydney: The Australian Centre for Independent Journalism, 2004).

## Evaluations

Evaluations of articles in this case study show that overall both countries portrayed the other in a far more positive light compared with the other case study periods (see Table 11 on the following page). Although *The Sydney Morning Herald* had only one positive article, it carried 16 per cent fewer negative articles than it did in the 2005 and 2002 periods. The number of positive articles in the other three newspapers for the tsunami week substantially outweighed the number of negative articles.

### *The Jakarta Post*

2004	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 27 Dec	0	0	0	0
Tue 28 Dec	1*	2	1	4
Wed 29 Dec	0	0	0	0
Thu 30 Dec	0	1	0	1
Fri 31 Dec	0	0	0	0
Sat 1 Jan 2005	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 (20%)</b>	<b>3 (60%)</b>	<b>1 (20%)</b>	<b>5 (100%)</b>

\* expatriate author

### *Jawa Pos*

2004	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 27 Dec	0	0	0	0
Tue 28 Dec	0	1	1	2
Wed 29 Dec	2	2	0	4
Thu 30 Dec	0	3	1	4
Fri 31 Dec	0	0	1	1
Sat 1 Jan 2005	0	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 (14%)</b>	<b>6 (43%)</b>	<b>6 (43%)</b>	<b>14 (100%)</b>

### *The Australian*

2004	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 27 Dec	0	0	1	1
Tue 28 Dec	0	3	1	4
Wed 29 Dec	0	1	3	4
Thu 30 Dec	0	3	3	6
Fri 31 Dec	1	3	3	7
Sat 1 Jan 2005	0	0	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 (4%)</b>	<b>10 (36%)</b>	<b>17 (60%)</b>	<b>28 (100%)</b>

### *Sydney Morning Herald*

2004	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Total articles
Mon 27 Dec	0	1	3	4
Tue 28 Dec	0	0	1	1
Wed 29 Dec	2	0	3	5
Thu 30 Dec	0	0	3	3
Fri 31 Dec	0	0	1	1
Sat 1 Jan 2005	1	0	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 (16%)</b>	<b>1 (5%)</b>	<b>15 (79%)</b>	<b>19 (100%)</b>

Table 11: Evaluation of articles - 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami

From a combined total of 47 relevant articles in the Australian sample newspapers for the week the majority (68 per cent) were neutral, a sizeable number (23.5 per cent) were positive and only a minority (8.5 per cent) were negative (see Table 11). The Indonesian sample newspapers had a total of 19 articles, of which about one third (37 per cent) were neutral, almost half (47 per cent) were positive and the remaining few (16 per cent) were negative (see Table 11). *The Australian* and *The Jakarta Post* carried only one negative article each. Notably, an expatriate wrote *The Jakarta Post* article.

### Major issues in the content of articles

Most articles in the Australian sample newspapers relating to Indonesia concerned the tsunami and its effect on Aceh. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, however, published articles about Aceh's history and issues relating to Acehese separatists (GAM). Indonesian-oriented content in *The Australian* articles consisted of 11 various positive issues and nine negative ones. *The Sydney Morning Herald* content in articles dealt with 12 positive and 16 negative issues. Positive content in both newspapers included sympathy-generating articles of personal tragedies and heroic feats of Indonesians. Other positive content included news about the Indonesian Government loosening restrictions in Aceh to allow access for aid relief, and its commitment to forging closer ties with Australia. Some articles uncharacteristically portrayed the Indonesian military (TNI) as capable in relief efforts and devoted to helping. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was positively portrayed for personally taking the lead in relief efforts and attempting to halt misappropriation of government funds.

Negative content in the Australian sample newspaper articles mainly related to Indonesia as a dangerous place in terms of its geographical instability as one of the world's most earthquake-prone regions, and in relation to the threat of disease in the aftermath of the tsunami. Both newspapers portrayed Aceh as a region of extreme poverty, but *The Sydney Morning Herald* took this further. One article mentioned research that found Aceh to be the nation's most corrupt province<sup>30</sup>. The Indonesian military offensive in Aceh was blamed in several articles for poverty and rising unemployment, malnutrition and infant mortality. Beside its history of human rights abuses in Aceh, the military was also criticised for poor coordination of aid supplies, helping their own families before others, and there was speculation that the military would use the tsunami relief as a cover for operations against GAM. Despite this number of negative issues in the Australian newspapers, there were only four articles classified as negative, as much of what was published was factual, balanced and informative.

The content of articles relating to Australia in the Indonesian sample newspapers for the period was mainly positive. *The Jakarta Post* content dealt with 11 positive and only three negative issues. The *Jawa Pos* articles covered four positive and only two negative issues. Positive content related to Australia's help in the tsunami relief effort and Australian tourists continuing to travel to Indonesia, despite the tsunami. The Australian Government was commended for its efforts to forge closer ties with Indonesia and cooperate in combating terrorism and people smuggling.

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<sup>30</sup> Louise Williams, "Disaster compounds the misery of corruption, poverty and 28 years of war", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 Dec 2004: 5, news section. Proquest ANZ Newstand (accessed between 22 Jun and 25 Aug 2005).

Negative issues reflected in the Indonesian sample newspapers included Canberra's defence policy of pre-emptive strikes against terrorist targets in Asia, and Indonesia seen as a threat to Australian national security<sup>31</sup>.

### Recurring negative images

This sample period produced the lowest number of recurring negative images and the least number of occurrences of these images in articles compared with the other sample periods. In the Australian newspapers seven of 14 negative images that were present in pre-2000 representations recurred, whereas only four of 28 negative images recurred in Indonesian newspapers (see Table 12, and 13 on the following page). *The Sydney Morning Herald* had the most recurrences of negative images, at 26, and *The Jakarta Post* had the least, with only one.

Recurring negative images	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>	<i>The Australian</i>	Both newspapers
Indonesia/ns as:	Numbers of articles	Numbers of articles	Total recurrences
Unstable / unsafe	7	6	13
Corrupt	6	3	9
Having inferior political and social systems	2	3	5
Poor / miserable	4	1	5
Irrational	1	2	3
Incompetent	3	0	3
Human rights abusers	2	0	2
Inferior race	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>41</b>

**Table 12: Recurring negative images - 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami – Australian newspapers**

Again, given the context of the situation, the most persistent image in the Australian newspapers was Indonesia as unstable or unsafe (see Table 12). Violence in Aceh, between rebels and Indonesian military, and the threat of disease spreading were the main reasons this image reappeared in articles. Geographic instability was mentioned on four of the 13 occasions the instability image was presented. The next most recurrent image was corruption. On six occasions *The Sydney Morning Herald* published articles that made reference to corruption in Aceh, endemic corruption, corruption in government and corruption in the army. *The Australian* referred to Indonesian civilians as being corrupt in articles about looting and lawlessness in the wake of the tsunami in Aceh. The stereotype of Indonesians as poor and miserable persisted in five articles. On two occasions it was in reference to the conditions for survivors of the tsunami in Aceh. In *The Sydney Morning Herald*, however, misery and poverty were also mentioned in reference to the long-term suffering of people in Aceh under Indonesia's authoritarian oppression.

<sup>31</sup> Adianto P Simamora, "Terrorism bolsters Australia's ties with Indonesia", *The Jakarta Post*, Dec 28, 2004, <http://www.thejakartapost.com> (accessed 29 Jun 2005).

Another image that reappeared on five occasions was one portraying Indonesia as having inferior political and social systems. Two articles in *The Australian* mentioned the standards of hospitals in Aceh as inadequate, especially in the tsunami crisis. Other articles criticised Indonesian Government bureaucracy and the army for poor handling of relief efforts and aid, as well as being corrupt and incompetent. Incompetence of the government and army was referred to on three occasions in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Unlike the 2005 or the 2002 periods, the stereotype of Indonesians being irrational occurred in three articles this sample period, in reference to looters in Aceh and the war between Acehese rebels and TNI.

In the Indonesian sample during the tsunami week, only four of the negative images recurred in two articles (see Table 13). The first image of Australia's fear of Indonesia appeared in a *Jakarta Post* article that mentioned the findings of an Australian Strategic Policy Institute report showing that 'Australians believe Indonesia posed the greatest threat to their national security'<sup>32</sup>. Recurring images of Australians as rude, disrespectful and abusive were found in the one *Jawa Pos* article about an Australian woman charged with assaulting an Indonesian.

<b>Recurring negative images</b>	<b><i>Jakarta Post</i></b>	<b><i>Jawa Pos</i></b>	<b>Both papers</b>
<b>Australia/ns as:</b>	<b>Numbers of articles</b>	<b>Numbers of articles</b>	<b>Total recurrences</b>
Viewing Indonesia as a threat	1	0	1
Rude	0	1	1
Disrespectful	0	1	1
Abusive	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

**Table 13: Recurring negative images - 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami – Indonesian newspapers**

For the week following the 2004 tsunami there were significantly fewer articles than in the other sample periods. Overall, each nation was represented more positively in this period than they were in the other case studies. It boasted the lowest numbers of negative images recurring and the least recurrences. *The Sydney Morning Herald* was the only newspaper to contain more negative issues than positive for this period. The Indonesian newspapers had only four stereotypes recur on one occasion each in two articles.

## **Conclusion**

In all case studies the Australian newspapers published substantially larger numbers of articles relevant to Indonesia than did the Indonesian newspapers in relation to Australia. This is hardly surprising given the size, proximity, and importance of Indonesia to Australia. It indicates that Indonesia tends to be more newsworthy in Australia than Australia is in Indonesia. Indonesia, on the other hand, tends to have more pressing domestic concerns than those of the relatively small nation of

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid

Australia. Lack of news about Australia in Indonesian newsprint may also be the result of difficult economic conditions in Indonesia. Many articles in Indonesian sample newspapers portraying Australia negatively came from Australian sources.

Events that occurred in the 2005 period and the major events of the 2002 Bali bombings and the 2004 Boxing-Day tsunami generated significant negative and positive images of each nation. Significantly, in the six-month period both nations newspapers in the sample carried more articles classified as negative than positive. As the Australian newspaper sample was made up of more than twice the number of articles than the Indonesian sample, Australians were more exposed to negative images of Indonesia than Indonesians were of Australia. But these results must also be read in the context that news, especially international news, is most often negative. In relation to the case studies of specific events the Indonesian newspaper sample portrayed Australia more positively in both instances. The Australian sample newspapers also carried more positive than negative articles in the Boxing-Day tsunami case study but not in the Bali bombings one.

The hypothesis that fewer types of negative images would be found was confirmed in all case studies, especially in relation to Indonesian newspapers. In this context, compared with last century there was an improvement in the way Australia was portrayed in Indonesian newspapers and only a minor improvement in the way Indonesia was portrayed in Australian newspapers from the start of this century until the time of writing in early 2006. Indonesian newspapers contained substantially fewer negative images of Australia in the 2002 and 2004 case study periods and fewer negative issues in the content of articles than positive ones. Furthermore, in both these case studies the Indonesian newspapers portrayed Australia more positively than negatively. The reduction in negative images of the Australian Government and the few positive articles regarding President Yudhoyono and the Australian Government indicate that political change, particularly in diplomatic relations, had a positive impact on perceptions of Australia in Indonesian newsprint up to the time of writing. Nevertheless, images of the Australian Government as patronising, racist and arrogant persisted.

On the whole, negative images of Indonesians in the Australian sample newspapers and the frequency with which they occurred substantially outweighed negative images of Australians in the Indonesian sample newspapers. These findings indicate that while social and political changes this century may have improved images of Australia and Indonesia in each other's media, unchanging negative perceptions of each nation regularly recurred. Enduring images of Australians as racist, disrespectful, arrogant and interfering and Indonesians as a threat, corrupt, impoverished, with inferior political and social systems were never far below the surface. The ease with which negative reporting arose in each nation was evidence that old wounds had not fully healed. Or even if they had healed to an extent, past issues continued to be used as ammunition in defence of national pride.

While only a snapshot of how Australia and Indonesia are portrayed in each other's media, this empirical research provides a template and database for further research. It is a topic that warrants attention, as it is relevant to Australia-Indonesia relations of which harmony on all levels is of increasing importance.

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