

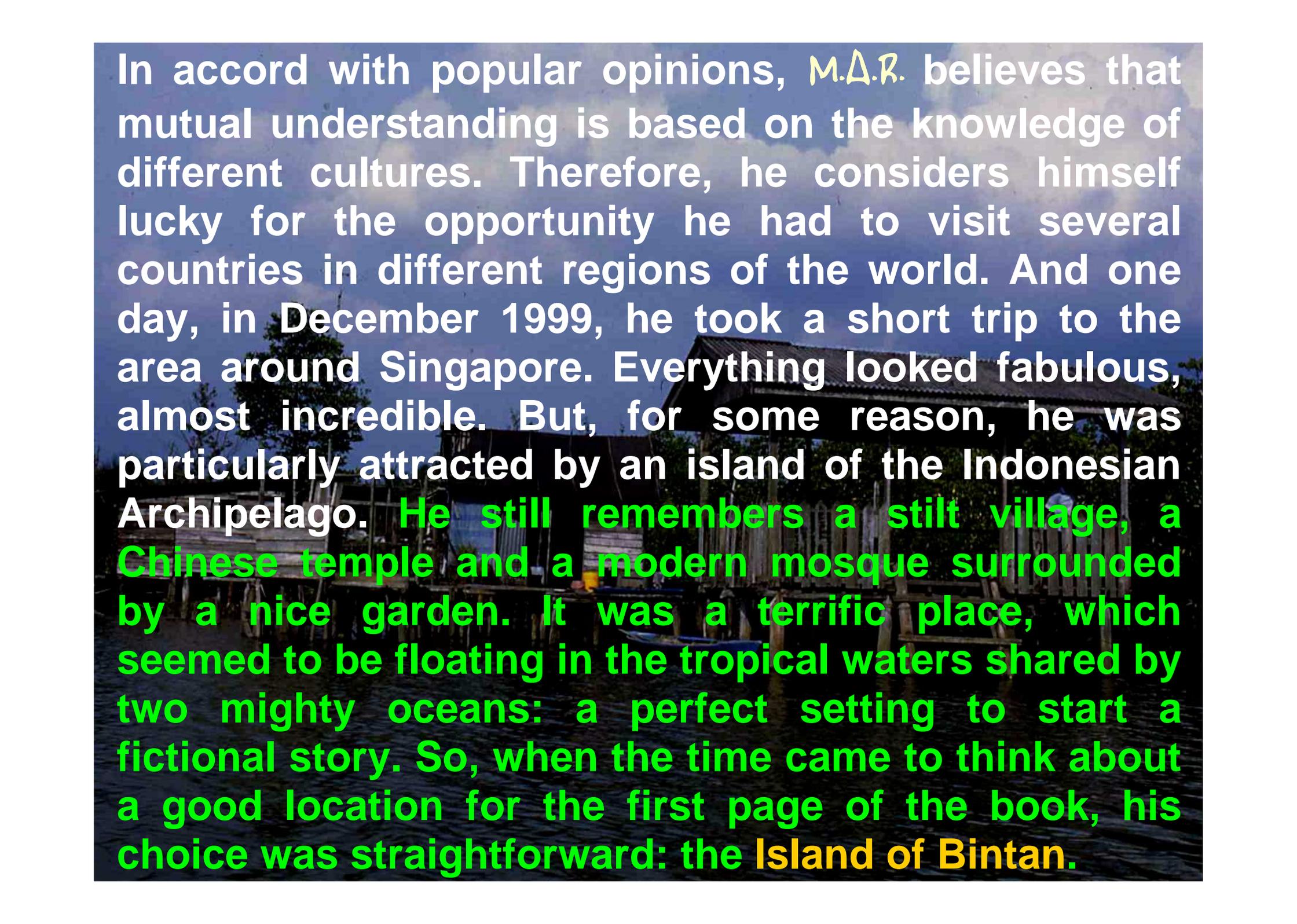
M.A.R. has been working for nearly thirty years in higher education institutes, teaching, studying and doing research in a scientific field. However, he has always had a special interest in history and foreign politics. In 2001, after the September 11 tragic attacks and, perhaps even more, in 2003, under the emotional impact of events related to the *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, he felt a strong desire to enter the arena of the war on terror with a fiction book on this subject (and on widespread policies of the Western world).

In the end, he went far beyond the issue of terrorism. In a mix of strange dialogues and personal thoughts, his characters are so anxious to enforce their law, that some readers might begin to see a good reason why our planet is driven by violence—and some readers might start dreaming of a completely new world (never seen before) that is based on *true tolerance, secular ethics, unconditional acceptance of all beliefs, deep respect for any religious and political entity which does not aim to impose its own doctrine.*

To put it into a few words, the manuscript is the diary written by a fanatical militant and filled with his propaganda, his objectives, his grisly business (so often forgotten, ignored, hushed up, with the complicity of languages which are widely used to recruit volunteers and are generally unknown to the Western public). But killings and hatred are not the only ingredients: irony, too, plays a role and eventually the militant himself, together with his fellow fighters, becomes a sort of spokesman for the author. Every few pages, he does not hesitate to laugh at the politically correct diplomacy of a Western world, which does not care about the risk of being caught in a **devastating fire**. In a mixture of ironic and defiant

remarks, the militant talks about the stunning policy of a Western society which is getting more and more vulnerable... which seems doomed to surrender. And every word comes as an implicit tribute to any person who is fighting to safeguard fundamental liberties.





In accord with popular opinions, M.A.R. believes that mutual understanding is based on the knowledge of different cultures. Therefore, he considers himself lucky for the opportunity he had to visit several countries in different regions of the world. And one day, in December 1999, he took a short trip to the area around Singapore. Everything looked fabulous, almost incredible. But, for some reason, he was particularly attracted by an island of the Indonesian Archipelago. He still remembers a stilt village, a Chinese temple and a modern mosque surrounded by a nice garden. It was a terrific place, which seemed to be floating in the tropical waters shared by two mighty oceans: a perfect setting to start a fictional story. So, when the time came to think about a good location for the first page of the book, his choice was straightforward: the **Island of Bintan**.