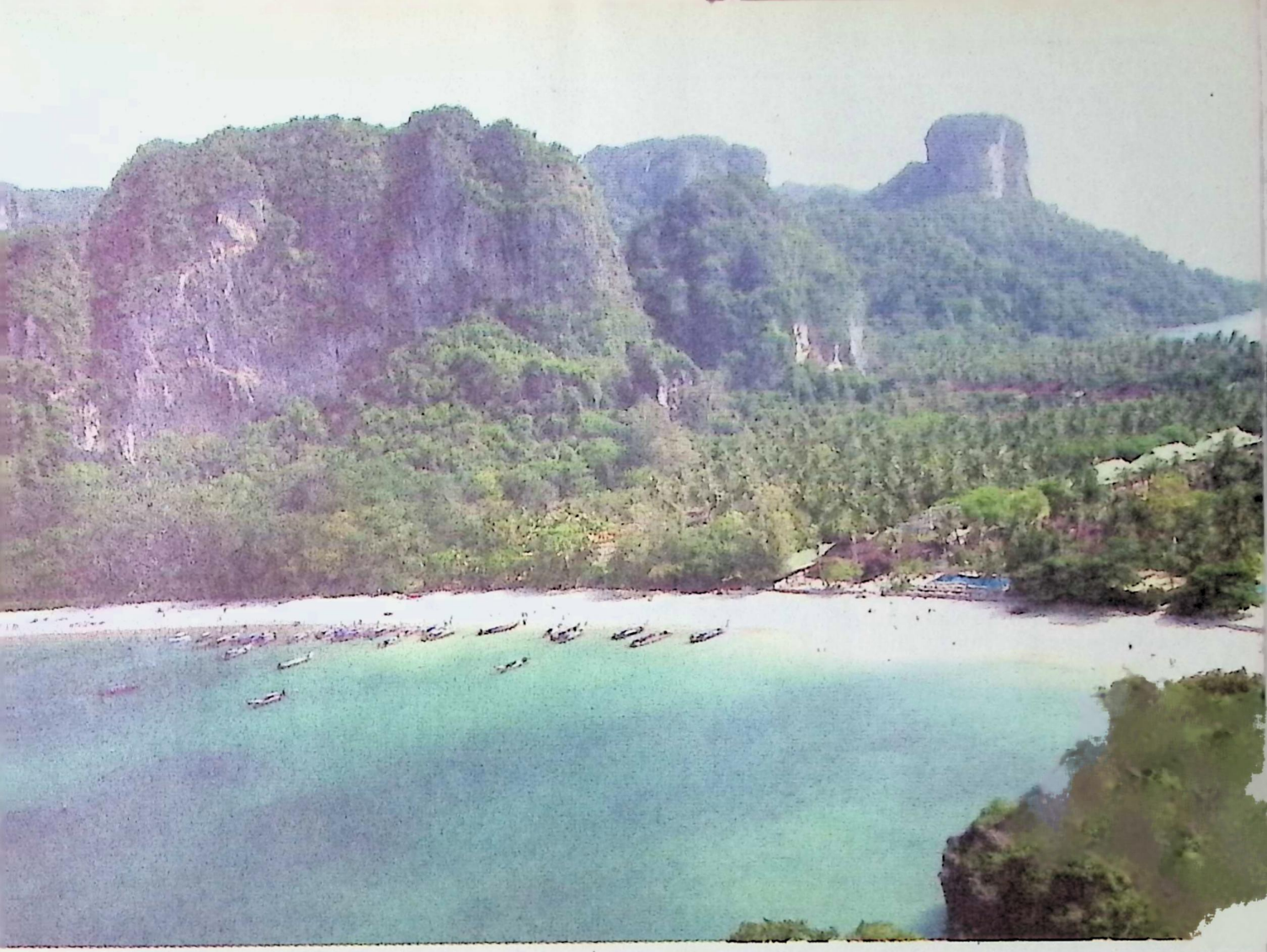


Railay Bay two years after the Tsunami.

place?" I don't think my sole reason for returning was to climb next to crystal blue water and sandy white beaches. I think part of me wanted some peace with Railay for once I wanted to leave Railay on my own terms!

To my amazement, nothing seemed to have changed at Railay beach. All the shops were back in business. There seemed to me more climbers than I remember and the same throngs of European tourists with a few North Americans here and there. I met Ipp, my climbing guide who was belaying me right before the waves struck two years ago. Gone was his long hair and bloodshot eyes. He seemed a changed man clean shaven with neatly cut short hair. My climbing guide on this trip Rit told me that Ipp had calmed down. He had an eight month old son and was not the wild man he once was. Was it the Tsunami that changed him? Who knows. I am sure it affected several people profoundly including me.

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I did a lot of climbing in the next three days occasionally I did look back at the sea this time. The water was as blue as ever, but thankfully tranquil. I went back to the climb that was rudely interrupted by the tsunami. I climbed it with focus and determination. However, this time I still didn't finish the climb. Last time it was the tsunami this time it was my own limitations I wasn't strong enough. At least I have an excuse to go back. Someday I intend to finish that climb. My little victory this time was being able to leave Railay on my own terms.

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