matters. As long as the *iman* (faith, religious devotion) is the same, namely Islam, interethnic marriage is acceptable.

Within a village it is usual to find a hamlet or neighbourhood with a dominant ethnic group, either Sunda, Java, or Semendo. Those from other ethnic groups living in a hamlet are merged and speak the dominant language. There are also hamlets and neighbourhoods with a complete mix of ethnic groups along the main road. Indonesian language is used here. Along the main road in the main village settlements, Padang traders and tailors and Batak *tambal ban* (tyre services) can also be seen.

It is important to note that with regard to identity, all the migrants from the highlands of Palembang see themselves as Semendo, although originally they may have come from other Pasemah sub-groups. Thus all Pasemah-speaking persons in the region identify themselves and are identified as Semendo. The same is true of those from Sunda; those few from Banten identify themselves and are identified as Sundanese.

Ethnicity is often used as a subject of political jokes. In the case of forest destruction, the migrants from Java wash their hands and blame the Semendo for their aggressive and skilful techniques in clearing the forest. The Semendo reply smartly by pointing out that it is the migrants from Java who farm the cleared forestland. The Semendo claim that the migrants from Java have only become as ‘healthy’ (*sehat*) as they are now thanks to Semendonese generosity in ‘giving’ them land. The migrants from Java claim that the region’s progress is the result of their work; without them there would be no ‘development’ and ‘progress’. These friendly rivalries over the subject of development and progress provide the central and dynamic theme of local village politics. The next chapter
will discuss the dynamic of local politics as it relates to 'development' and 'progress' in the region.
Table 3.2 Area, population, population density, and poor families in Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Population in 1998</th>
<th>Density (per sq km)</th>
<th>Families/households in 2000</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sumber Jaya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Simpang Sari</td>
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<td>195</td>
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<td>2505</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Way Petai</td>
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<td>4043</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1755</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tri Budi Sukur</td>
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<td>213</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>155</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pura Jaya</td>
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<td>3581</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>194</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Purawiwitan</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>2553</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>657</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Muara Jaya I</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>1302</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>167</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Muara Jaya II</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>1764</td>
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<td>Pura Mekar</td>
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<td>4532</td>
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<td>Gedung Surian</td>
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<td>Cipta Waras</td>
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<td>1707</td>
<td>111</td>
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<td>Tri Mulyo</td>
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<td>2567</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>35,647</td>
<td>40,948</td>
<td></td>
<td>8908</td>
<td>2973</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Way Tenong</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pajar Bulan</td>
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<td>1238</td>
<td>206</td>
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<td>Puralaksana</td>
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<td>155</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Karang Agung</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>2918</td>
<td>157</td>
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<td>193</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mutar Alam</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>4531</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sumber Alam</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>703</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Tambak Jaya</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tanjung Raya</td>
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<td>Sukamenanti</td>
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<td>4410</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>683</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Sri Menanti</td>
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<td>963</td>
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<td>Sukaraja</td>
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<td>2252</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Padang Tambak</td>
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<td>309</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sidodadi</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>1735</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>387</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Semarang Jaya</td>
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<td>1310</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Gunung Terang</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2135</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19,321</td>
<td>38,713</td>
<td></td>
<td>8351</td>
<td>2586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28 Total</td>
<td>54,967</td>
<td>79,661</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>17,259</td>
<td>5559</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Government of West Lampung District (2002)
Table 3.3 Land ownership in selected hamlets in Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of village</th>
<th>Semendo</th>
<th>Transmigration</th>
<th>Spontaneous migrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet*</td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee garden</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraction of households owning (%)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: Range (ha)</td>
<td>0.5–4.0</td>
<td>0.25–6.0</td>
<td>1.0–3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average (ha)</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice field</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraction of households owning (%)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: Range (ha)</td>
<td>0.5–1.75</td>
<td>0.25–1.0</td>
<td>0.04–0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average (ha)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey 2000
*Hamlet and village name
(a) = Gunung Terang, in the village of Gunung Terang
(b) = Sindang Pagar, in the village of Sindang Pagar
(c) = Air Ringkik, in the village of Simpang Sari
(d) = Fajar Bulan, in the village of Fajar Bulan
(e) = Waras Sakti, in the village of Cipta Waras
(f) = Talang Bodong, in the village of Suka Jaya
(g) = Air Dingin, in the village of Trimulyo

Note:
The villages selected for the survey were to represent old Semendo villages created prior to the 1950s, transmigration villages created in the 1950s, and newer villages created by the subsequent spontaneous transmigrants since 1960s. In close consultations with the village leaders, a hamlet that has rice fields from each village was chosen for survey. About 20% of the hamlet residents were chosen for the household survey. Note that the survey excluded hamlets with no rice fields and non-landowning households viz. sharecroppers and/or contract labourers—many of whom lived in houses or huts in the gardens outside the hamlet settlement compounds.
CHAPTER FOUR

Local Politics:
Bringing State to the Village

The region of Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong has been the target of constant national, regional, and local political manoeuvres to control its population. There are clear indications of the deep penetration of the state into the villages. Village integration into the state in the region, however, can also be seen as local people's efforts—through their village leaders—to bring the state into the village as a strategy to tap state resources by putting their village in the mainstream of national and regional politics. These processes, interestingly, lead to the emergence of politically powerful village elites whose power and domination is nevertheless circumvented and limited. Thus far, villagers in the region have been able to develop ways to constrain the emergence of individuals with dominant political power in the village.

Military Campaigns Against State Enemies

From the mid 1960s to late 1980s people in Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong experienced a series of military operations to crush rural dissent. A military operation to wipe out the communist movement was undertaken in the mid 1960s, and against religious rebels in the late 1970s. These actions have created a dynamic relationship between the villagers in the region and the modern state.
**Chasing the communists**

During the military campaign against Indonesia’s communist party (PKI: *Partai Komunis Indonesia*) and its elements in the mid 1960s, hundreds of men and women were taken from their homes, loaded into trucks, and jailed at the military post (*Koramil*) in Sumber Jaya for interrogation. Some of them were brought to other military camps in Kotabumi. A few of them never came back. Some spent years in jail and the rest—the majority—returned to the *Koramil* at Sumber Jaya. During the following years these women and men were obliged to report regularly (*mel, wajib lapor*) to the *Koramil* and were treated as corvee labour (*kerja bhakti*) repairing roads and cleaning military, police, and public facilities. The sight of hundreds of men and women carrying their children in fear sitting in the sun in front of the *Koramil* office and enduring various forms of torture and intimidation has filled the memories of many people in the region.

The alleged communists came from almost all corners of the region, but the largest proportion of leaders and followers were said to be from Simpang Sari and Way Petai. However, as it was later revealed, the majority of these communists had not actually taken any political action. In the region, the PKI never gained a significant number of votes during the early national elections. In 1965, prior to the commencement of the national military campaign against the PKI, women were recruited to join various groups of Islamic teaching (*pengajian*) and cottage industries (e.g., sewing, stitching), and youth were encouraged to join the *rebana* religious music groups. The only indication of concrete action, it was said, was with regard to land reform—the main the PKI political agenda to gain rural
support. There was a story that landless villagers were organised into groups in anticipation of obtaining ownership of farming land. Village elites and large landowners, threatened with becoming the target of the dispossessio of land, were more than willing to give full cooperation to the military personnel.

During the campaign there were stories about villagers mistakenly detained (salah tangkap). Those who had no links whatsoever with the PKI were detained, interrogated, and subject to intimidation by the Koramil personnel. This was largely the result of fierce opposition between factions in the village. Both sides gave information about their opponent’s involvement with the PKI. Having a distant relative or friends involved in the PKI movement was enough to bring someone to the notice of the Koramil.

Suspicion of involvement in the PKI had long-term deleterious consequences for some. Near the market town of Sumber Jaya, there is a small hamlet, a large proportion of the inhabitants of which were the victims of oppression during the anti-communist campaign. Until recently the hamlet has been isolated, receiving no government projects that the neighbouring hamlets received, such as roads and schools. Most of its poor inhabitants live mainly as labourers and sharecroppers. Another job for the young men is tree felling and cutting from the remaining forests nearby.

*Chasing the Islamic rebels*

While no ‘concrete action’ by the communist movement ever took place, an Islamic rebellion a decade later was an actual one. Warman and his
gerombolan (group, band of men) were remembered as having a strong anti-state agenda and multiple criminal records. In the second half of the 1970s, Warman and his followers were involved in some armed actions in various parts of north Lampung. The gerombolan were responsible for burglaries, raids on buses, the killing of village officials, and attacks on military posts from which the group obtained firearms. The latter two endeavours were said to have been more frequent during the New Order’s 1977 national election and were widely perceived as an attempt to sabotage the election.

Warman was believed to be one of the closest loyalists of Kartosuwiryo, the leader of the Darul Islam (DI) and Tentara Islam Indonesia (TII) founded in 1949 in West Java. The ultimate political agenda of DI/TII was an Islamic state. After more than a decade of warfare with the Indonesian army, the DII/TII rebellion was crushed and Kartosuwiryo was executed in West Java in 1962. Warman fled to Way Tuba, a region near the town of Baturaja in the neighbouring province of South Sumatra (Palembang). In 1975-76 he and his family moved to Sukapura, Sumber Jaya. About 50 of Kartosuwiryo followers joined the BRN transmigration in the 1950s and lived in Sukapura. Of these, about 15 to 20 later joined Warman. During these years none of the neighbours knew that they had the notorious Warman living next door or that their village was the headquarters of his gerombolan movement. Warman lead a pengajian group in his small mushala (praying house). Members arrived and joined the group. A type of ‘true Islam’ (Islam sejati) was Warman’s main political teaching. When the group held separate Friday prayers, instead of joining in the village mosque, and the group became more and more exclusive, the village officials and military began to investigate. Soon the hilly region of
Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong became a battleground between the *gerombolan* and the military troops.

Instead of surrendering to the military troops, the *gerombolan*, consisting of no more than sixty men, fought back relentlessly. Hiding in the forest during the day they raided military posts and villages in the night. Like the DI/TII movement in West Java, food supplies were taken from the villagers, in this case from shops and stalls (*warung*). Unlike the DI/TII rebellion in Java, apart from taking food from the *warung*, the local *gerombolan* did not terrorize the whole village. They targeted only the village officials, not ordinary villagers. On the contrary it was the military personnel who forced the ordinary villagers to take part in the campaign against the *gerombolan*. Not being allowed to carry firearms was a good excuse for these ordinary villagers to avoid becoming involved in direct bloody contact with the *gerombolan*. Hence, the casualties, including some shot dead, were limited to the *gerombolan* members, military personnel, and village security officers (*hansip*). Although most of his followers were shot dead or captured, Warman himself escaped, first to elsewhere in Lampung and then to Java. Some of his followers had deep ideological views about the need for an Islamic state, and were never involved in any criminal acts, but others were simply criminals. The military hunt for Warman continued. Ketapang, near Kotabumi, was the site of a fierce clash between the *gerombolan* and military troops, resulting in dead on both sides. This was commemorated with the building of a *Koramil* post. Warman then fled to Java. He was first caught in Magelang, but managed to escape and remain at large until 1978 when a team of *Kopassus* shot him dead in Soreang near Bandung, West Java. Like the victims of the military action against the PKI, a few surviving members of Warman’s rebellion
and the wives and children of the dead or jailed now live in isolation and poverty. Many moved elsewhere in Sumatra and to Java.

The relatively long period of the military hunt, the fact that the group of rebels was small, and the absence of casualties among ordinary villagers indicate that villagers in the region carefully positioned themselves in the battle. Ordinary villagers neither harboured the rebels nor fully assisted the military campaign. Nonetheless, the alleged PKI movement and Warman’s gerombolan rebellion in the region brought special attention from the higher state apparatus that further deepened state entry into villages in the region.

**National Politics in the Villages**

Following the successful crack down on communist and religious dissent, a strong military presence continued in the region. Their role expanded from hunting down state enemies to ensuring monoloyalitas (single, undivided loyalty) of the population of the region toward the state. ‘The state’, until the 1998 reformasi, meant Suharto’s New Order and Golkar (Golongan Karya, functional groups). At the heart of the New Order were the twin objectives of ‘political stability’ and ‘development’. Both Koramil officers and the babinsa (the village military officer) played a key role in the process. To become the head of village (kepala desa) or to hold other official positions in the village, besides the ‘blessing’ from sub-district head (camat) and Golkar functionaries, a clearance from Koramil was needed. Through the program known as ‘the military enters the village’ (AMD: ABRI masuk desa) the villagers were forced to participate in gotong royong or kerja bhakti (community works) on village projects such as
building and maintaining roads, bridges and schools. In the absence of AMD, the constant supervision of village military personnel (babinsa) ensured villagers participation in routine kerja bhakti and gotong royong in similar village projects, especially on the construction and up keeping of the road network.

The triumph of Golkar until the 1999 national election and the instalment of Golkar cadres in village administration ensured a state of ‘political stability’ in the region. Undivided loyalty (monoloyalitas) toward the state was achieved through the incorporation of village leaders into official positions in village administration such as village councils LMD (lembaga sosial desa, village social board) and LKMD (lembaga ketahanan masyarakat desa, village board for community resilience), the youth association (Karang Taruna), a board of mosque for the religious leaders, and family welfare education for women (PKK: pendidikan kesejahteraan keluarga).

The creation and incorporation of village leaders into the village administration was directly related to the success in the mobilisation of rural populations in centrally planned rural development projects. In the region, as elsewhere in the nation, rural development projects included the construction of physical infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges, schools, village halls, markets), village administration (pemerintahan desa), economic development (e.g., agricultural extensions, land administration), and social welfare (e.g., family planning, PKK). The New Order agenda of political stability and development was, apparently, successfully achieved in Way Tenong and Sumber Jaya. With the absence of villagers political alignment other than with Golkar, the villagers in the region devoted themselves to the rural development agenda. It was during this period of political stability and rural development from the late 1970s to the mid-
1980s that more administrative villages were created and more people migrated and settled in the region. The, nationwide mysterious killings of criminals in the early 1980s (known as mysterious killers, *penembak misterius [petrus]*) further ‘stabilised’ the region, enabling the movement of more people into the region.

The political texture of Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong is a reflection of a political dynamic at national level. With the majority of the population Golkar loyalists during the three decades of Suharto’s New Order regime, the region received its share of the development cake envied by the neighbouring regions. All villages have paved or gravel roads and two or more elementary schools. In every three or four villages there are a health clinic, rotational market, and junior high school (SMP). After the reformasi of 1998, local people in the region, like people nationwide, switched their political favour toward the oppressed PDIP (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*). As elsewhere, people voted PDIP not because of the attraction of its political agenda but simply because they had had enough of Suharto’s New Order.

But for the local PDIP functionaries, winning of the 1999 election had a very different meaning. It was just like night turning into day. Economically and politically marginalised, often previously being fooled by their rich Golkar counterparts, thanks to their deep devotion to Megawati, the 1999 election provide them their time to reap the harvest. PDIP functionaries from Sumber Jaya dominated the PDIP branch, the House of Representatives (DPRD: *dewan perwakilan rakyat*), and government of the West Lampung district. The position of chairperson of PDIP, chairperson of DPRD, and vice head of the district (*wakil bupati*) all fell to the PDIP politicians from Sumber Jaya. Beside PDIP, Sumber Jaya
and Way Tenong was also home of members of DPRD and key figures from ‘Islamic’ parties such as PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan), PAN (Partai Amanat Nasional), PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa), PBB (Partai Bulan Bintang) and, of course, the former ruling party Golkar. People in the region noted that the new members of DPRD busied themselves in renovating and rebuilding their houses or building new ones and getting a car. This drastic change was most noticeable among many of those who were not among the well-to-do in their villages in the past.

What brought politicians from the region to the top seats of the district level political arena was the proportion of their voters. The two subdistricts of Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong are now home to a quarter of the total population of West Lampung district. West Lampung district now has nearly 400,000 people, spread over fourteen subdistricts. Thanks to the high proportion of a ‘dynamic’ population, Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong have always been seen as two important subdistricts in West Lampung district. An important pocket for Golkar during the New Order, the region had turned into the centre of PDIP and middle axis parties during the reformasi era. In 2002 and 2003, the uncertainty of the credibility of the present ruling party PDIP at the national level was also reflected in the region. The local dynamics again indicated a continuation of the strategy of the population in the region to ensure their position in mainstream national and regional politics. As some villagers in the region put it “We have to join the crowd, otherwise we will be left behind”.

During 2002 and 2003, there were early signs of an alignment of the population of the region to the established political parties, namely, the ruling party PDIP led by president Megawati and the camp of the ‘middle axis’ (the PPP led by the vice president Hamzah Haz, the PKB led by
former president Gus Dur, PAN led by the chairman of national people assembly (MPR) Amin Rais, and the PBB led by minister of legal and justice Yusril Ihza Mahendra). The national configuration of politics towards the national election in 2004 was also reflected in the region. The split of PPP into a camp led by the vice president Hamzah Haz and another camp, the PPP Reformasi, led by the popular Islamic preacher Zainuddin MZ is an example. On one occasion, over a thousand people gathered in Fajar Bulan soccer field to hear a speech by Zainuddin MZ inaugurating the branch of his PPP Reformasi in West Lampung district: as if the support from the region’s population was assured. A couple of months later, brand new billboards supporting Hamzah Haz’s PPP were erected in some villages, indicating that the village functionaries were active in getting local people’s support. Similarly with the split of PKB, boards and banners of both factions (i.e., pro-and-contra Gus Dur) could be encountered in the region. In the market towns of Fajar Bulan and Sumber Jaya one would see boards and banners of different political parties erected side by side. With regard to the erection of the billboards and banners, Golkar was an exception; its loyal cadres seemed to wait until the national election was closer. The political configuration in the region continued to reflect national political dynamics. Whether the population would be able ‘to join the crowd’ in time to come is still to be seen.

Cross-cutting the alignment to political parties, Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong has been the site for the emergence of mass organizations with ethnicity and regionalism as markers. In 2002, a branch of Paku Banten was inaugurated in Sumber Jaya. In the following months a Batanghari Sembilan branch opening was celebrated in Way Tenong. The Paku Banten was formally declared to be an umbrella of all camps of pencak silat.
(martial art) in Lampung. The Paku Banten is known for its recent involvement in gathering mass support (*dukungan massa*) for particular candidates in the election of some district heads (*bupati*) in the province; the most favoured candidates were already incumbents in the position who hoped to be re-elected by the DPRD for the next term. The gatherings were organised with a martial art (*pencak silat*) performance, *dangdut* music entertainment, and concluded with a speech in favour of the candidates. Paku Banten is open to people of any ethnic background and one’s actual involvement with the *pencak silat* practice is not of prime consideration. In Sumber Jaya Paku Banten members and functionaries are Sundanese and Javanese and many of them hardly practice *pencak silat*.

Batanghari Sembilan was also officially formed as a venue for promoting the arts (singing and *pantun* poet composition) of people originating from the southern part of Sumatra including Jambi, Palembang, Bengkulu but excluding Lampung. Two national figures, Taufik Kemas (president Megawati’s husband and a key figure in PDIP) and Ali Marwan Hanan (one of the chairpersons in PPP and Minister of cooperative and small business) are said to be involved in Batanghari Sembilan. In Way Tenong, Batanghari Sembilan functionaries are Semendonese politicians, government officers, and businessmen.

Typically, at the gatherings of these mass organizations, the candidates for political positions will promise to bring ‘progress’ and ‘development’ to the region in exchange for the support of region’s population. These statements are what the people in the region are eager to hear to ensure that they will not be ‘left behind.’ Many see both Paku Banten and Batanghari Sembilan as a response to the emergence of similar mass organizations of the native Lampung population which, besides promoting Lampung arts and culture, also campaign for the filling of
political positions by ‘native children’ (putra daerah). While ‘native children’ of Lampung and Javanese have joined Paku Banten, none seem to have joined Batanghari Sembilan. The functionaries and prominent members of this new breed of mass organization were key members and functionaries of other mass organizations during the New Order, such as Pemuda Pancasila, AMPI (Angkatan Muda Pembaharuan Indonesia, youth for the renewal of Indonesia), KNPI (Komite National Pemuda Indonesia, national youth committee of Indonesia), and the like. Formerly loyal to the unitary state as the central theme, regionalism is now put forward. But, underneath, is ultimately the struggle for local, regional, and national power.

**Village Head Elections**

By integrating their villages into the state, the villagers are involved in an effort to tap state resources to bring ‘progress’ to their villages and enable them to maintain their livelihoods and pursue prosperity. The indication of such a dynamic can be seen in the village leadership. At this local political level, state attempts to control the rural population and villagers’ efforts to tap state resources are clearly visible. In the region such dynamics occurred during the New Order, and were further accentuated in the period immediately after Suharto’s fall in 1998.

In village head elections during the New Order, one way to ensure the positioning of one of the Golkar functionaries as the village head was by blocking the non-Golkar candidate’s eligibility to obtain approval and letters of ‘clearance’ from the sub-district office. To ensure the victory, village head elections were often organised with a single favoured
candidate against an empty box (kotak kosong). Another strategy, when the term ended and no one wanted to run for election, was the installation of an 'ad interim' or care taker (PJS: pejabat sementara) as a temporary replacement, nominated by the village council with the approval of the district head (camat). In cases where the village had not decided to organize a village head election and no PJS was suggested, the subdistrict office would appoint someone as the PJS. The latter could be a military or police officer or a government employee from the subdistrict office. Since they usually continued their current duties and did not live in the village where they were appointed as the ad interim village head, these PJS were rarely present in the village. This made it difficult for the villagers to obtain their services. There were only one or two cases in the last decade of a type of PJS who was sent from sub-district office; more than one-third of the villages had a PJS who was nominated by the village council.

During the New Order, one of the functions of the village head was to ensure that Golkar won the village vote. One popular and successful way to do this was by promising the villagers streams of development projects in their village or to threaten that the failure of Golkar to win would mean the end of 'progress'. Roads, schools, and health clinics were among the attractive items in this regard. The delivery of these projects was achieved by rotating the distribution of development funds and projects to each village in the subdistrict. The village head would then further 'rotate' the funds and projects to each hamlet in a village. It was the promise of bringing 'progress' that the villagers used to evaluate the achievement of a village head. Failure to deliver this promise would lead to a refusal to vote for the same person in the next village head election. Since funds and projects needed to be rotated among all the villages in the subdistrict, a village that received one had to wait for the next cycle. The longer the
'waiting period' the smaller the chance of the village head winning in the next village head election. Success in bringing 'progress' to the village would prolong the village head's term of office, and a village head election would not be needed. The main and steady source of village development projects was the small annual village development fund (bangdes: dana pembangunan desa). The most common way to use the fund was to build gorong-gorong (small bridges) and to gravel the village's unpaved roads. Thus each year there would be either a new gorong-gorong or more gravel roads. The fund was used only to buy the materials; the labour obtained through gotong royong or kerja bhakti (community works) was free. This meant community work involving all the men in the village or particular hamlet(s).

Until recently, the village head received neither salary nor office land. The only legal sources of income for a village head were a small portion of land tax (PBB: pajak bumi dan bangunan) and fees for services from various letters needed by the villagers. The amount from both sources was extremely small. In general, villagers accept the fact that village officials take a portion of development funds and projects, but the absence of village development projects seems to be unacceptable. This sets a limit for the village heads to accumulate wealth from state resources, forcing them to continue to bring development to the village.

It is possible to say that what the village communities in the region would like to have is a village head who can fulfil the villagers' aspirations by bringing progress to the village. This is a formidable task. To ensure the flow of state resources into the village, the village head needs to get closer to higher levels of the state apparatus; during the New Order this would be managed through the Golkar network. This would imply involvement
in petty corruption at various levels of administration and more cash in the pocket of the village heads. If the village head went ‘too far’ with this petty corruption, however, the village community would react by setting up opposition in the village, developing factions, and spreading gossip to prevent the corrupt village head from winning in the next village head election. On the other hand, village heads who moved too close to community norms would bear expensive costs. Without involvement in petty corruption it would be hard to bring development funds and projects to the village. No one would be able and willing to personally bear such transaction costs. A few village heads in the region were and are somehow able to maintain a balanced position. They manage to be quite close to the state in order to bring regular development funds and projects to the village, but not overly involved in petty corruption, thus maintaining village community support (dukungan masyarakat). These village leaders manage to prolong their terms of office.

Efforts to keep the office within the family line by passing the office to children and/or to close kin have resulted in more failures than successes. In a few villages, the communities have nominated one of the children of a former village head to run in the next village head election. However, the nomination is usually based more on the nominated person’s active involvement in village and community affairs, such as in sports, religious feasts, and village projects and/or administration. In other word, it is quality that matters here rather than the kinship tie per se. The village communities would be supportive of the nomination of anyone with such qualities. It is the village community support that needs to be stressed as far as village head elections are concerned. During the New Order, a connection to Golkar was much more important than community support. Today community support is the determining factor. Even during the
New Order, community support could not be totally ignored. To avoid a win by an empty box in the village head election, the community support was obtained by selecting a favoured candidate who had potential ability to use his closeness to higher government officials, via Golkar, to bring development to the village.

In 1999-2000, in line with the new national trend toward regional autonomy which gives more authority to the district level, in West Lampung the uniform name desa for administrative village, which had previously been the official designation throughout the nation was changed to pekon, the head of the sub-village or dusun known as kepala dusun or kepala suku become pemangku, and the village head kepala desa—informally called lurah—was renamed as peratin. All the new terms were said to be the original adat (customary) terms used by the native Lampung communities in West Lampung district prior to Indonesian independence in 1945. The former village councils, LMD and LKMD, changed to LHP (Lembaga Himpun Pekon, village representatives council) and LPMP (Lembaga Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Pekon, village council for community resilience) respectively. Another important thing was that village officials such as the village head, village secretary, leader of village councils, and heads of hamlets were given a monthly allowance from the government of the West Lampung district. The annual village development fund, increased to Rp 5 million from previous Rp 3 million, did not need to be used only for physical construction such as gorong-gorong (small bridges) and roads but could be used for the village administration’s operational costs. Another change was that the village head’s term has been reduced from eight to four years.
Previously identified as part of the New Order, these village leaders now tend to act more as part of the West Lampung district administration. One of the results is that in most villages there is a kind of reluctance among them to show clear loyalties to a particular political party. With the disconnection of village administration from the political parties and the provision of monthly allowances the official village leaders attachment to the district administration has been strengthened. The official village leaders act as if they were the government apparatus, at the lowest level. They now pay more attention to district policies and affairs.

In 2000, the head of the sub-district of Sumber Jaya launched a new policy that stated that the year 2002 would be the end of PJS terms in all the villages in Sumber Jaya subdistrict. Otherwise the subdistrict office would send one of its office staff to be the PJS in the village, and no more village-nominated PJS would be approved. Villages that still had village-appointed PJS had to hold village head elections.

The dynamics of village politics can be better illustrated in actual cases of village leadership and village head elections in the region. Aliases are used for both the place and the person’s name.

Sukakarya is one of villages created by the early BRN transmigrants. The last elected village head, Sarman, ended his term in the mid-1990s. Since then, the village has an ad interim head PJS, a position occupied in the first year by the former village secretary (carik) Amin. Otong was appointed for the next couple of years before the PJS office returned to Amin until a village election was held in late 2002. Both Amin and Otong’s appointment as PJS were based on nominations by the musyawarah desa (village assembly), with the approval of the head of
Sumber Jaya subdistrict. Amin’s nomination was based chiefly on his experience and knowledge of village administration as village secretary. For Otong it was his activity in New Order and Golkar youth organizations such as AMPI and KNPI at the subdistrict level. Otong’s appointment was made possible through his father’s intensive lobbying within the village and at the subdistrict office.

Otong’s father Darsi was an elected village head from 1964 to 1983. (His successor, Sarman, won the village head election against an empty box.) Among the early BRN transmigrants, not many had a high school education, and Darsi was among these few. His active involvement in village administration and community projects amazed the elders, who then gave support for him to become the village head. It was during his term that most ‘progress’ (school, road, etc.) was brought to the village, enabling Darsi a very long term in office. He resigned as the village head and successfully managed to become a member of district house of representatives, DPRD, in North Lampung initially and then West Lampung when West Lampung separated from North Lampung in the early 1990s. He represented Golkar until the national election in 1999 that brought down Golkar and lifted the PDIP and the middle axis parties. Darsi’s prominent involvement in the military hunt against Warman (Darsi himself was explicitly targeted by Warman’s gerombolan) helped him to establish contact with higher levels of government, the military, and Golkar. It is through this well-established contact that he was able to take a Golkar seat at the DPRD.

Later, however, Darsi’s son Otong was sacked from his PJS office by the village assembly—comprising heads of more than ten hamlets and village councils, which mainly consisted of village elders. Apart from the
villagers’ disappointment at Otong’s performance (he spent most of his
time taking care of his agen bis business finding bus passengers to Java),
villagers opposed his father’s influence on village affairs. Darsi used his
son’s position to gather popular support for himself and Golkar in the
1999 national election. With the reformasi following the fall of Suharto’s
New Order and Golkar, Darsi suddenly lost his influential power in the
village.

Following the sub-district policy to end PJS terms and to require an
election of a village head, an organising committee was set up in
Sukakarya. Yet, surprisingly, no one officially registered with the
committee as a candidate. The few, who were interested or nominated by
factions in the village, were either unwilling or unable to pay the costs of
an election. The village committee had calculated the total cost for the
election and the candidate was responsible for this cost, which was
comparable to the cost of a wedding reception. The sub-district office
demanded nothing except the actual cost of the photocopying and/or
printing of the required materials. No bribe (pelicit) whatsoever was
needed to obtain official approval of a nomination.

Still until late 2002 no one was willing to register as a candidate. The
village assembly then decided that the village would be responsible for
the cost of the village head election. An equal sum of cash was collected
from each of the households in the village. Each head of hamlet was
made responsible for collecting the money. In return, instead of
candidates proposing themselves, the hamlets would select their own to
be nominated for village head. From more than ten nominees, the village
committee approved seven candidates. The subdistrict office approved
three of these nominated candidates. The rest failed since they had only an
elementary school education, while according to the district regulation a minimum of junior high school is a requirement. Amin, the former village secretary and the present PJS, was among those who were rejected. This led to a great disappointment in the village, since Amin was the favourite candidate. The day of election was postponed to allow the village committee to lobby the subdistrict office to enable Amin to be a candidate. The head of subdistrict advised the committee to persuade Amin to sit for an equalised examination (ujian persamaan) of junior high school; if he passed the exam he would get a junior high school diploma (ijazah) and be officially approved as one of the candidates. The village committee, village council, and head of subdistrict were supportive of this idea and willing to postpone the village head election day. But, to everyone’s surprise, Amin refused to take the advice. His close friends said that he was frustrated (patah hati) and embarrassed to be openly seen as too ambitious. Most villagers agree that had Amin’s candidature been successful, he would definitely have won the election. Being an active village secretary for decades he was neither involved in serious corruption nor in other wrong doings. He, therefore, had village community support (dukungan masyarakat).

Since the money collected from all the village households was insufficient to cover the costs, the village council decided to pawn the village fishpond to the village saving and credit association. Sukakarya is among a few villages in the region with such communal land. For several years to come, the village saving and credit association was expected to manage and be entitled to the harvest of the fishpond, which was more than a hectare in size.
So the village head election went on with three candidates: Haryana, Odo, and Tatang. All candidates were young, in their 30s and 40s. Haryana was the head of a hamlet and the only one with a couple of years of university education. Otong was active in the village saving and credit association. Tatang was another son of Darsi, but had no leadership experience, and his candidature was largely ‘steered’ by his father. While Haryana and Odo worked their own coffee garden, Tatang sharecropped his coffee garden. Tatang’s house, the same house used by his father during his term as the village head, was the busiest a day before the election day. Friends and relatives gathered to work on the preparation or simply to talk. Cars and motorbikes came and went. The host generously served meals, snacks, and drinks for the guests. It was as if the house was holding a party. Large photos of Tatang were stuck on the front of houses, cars’ windscreens, and shops in the village. By contrast, at both Haryana and Odo’s houses, it was as if nothing special was happening; things just like any day, one or two kin and neighbours chatting.

With so many people crowded in his house, Tatang’s camp’s confidence’s was high. The morning of the election day half a dozen cars with Tatang’s poster on the windscreen were busy picking up voters from all the hamlets in the village, including the two hamlets of his rivals, and taking them to the village hall. His confidence was further boosted by the odds in the gambling market, two or three to one in favour of Tatang. Those who bet on Tatang were entitled to the same amount of money if he won and those who bet on Tatang to lose would get double or triple if the other candidates won. It is important to note, however, that those who were involved in the betting largely came from neighbouring villages.
The voting was held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It began with a speech and official opening by the head of the subdistrict, followed by a detailed explanation of procedures by the committee. There were no campaign speeches from the candidates. The candidates with their wives sat side by side in the centre of the hall during the opening; afterward they were free either to stay or go back home. All candidates went back home immediately after the voting commenced. The voting began with women and elders, each entering the hall and exchanging the vote letter (surat suara), distributed before the day of election, for the voting form with photos of the three candidates on it. The voters entered one of more than a half dozen voting booths (bilik suara) to punch a hole in one of the candidates’ photos on the paper and put the paper in a large locked box at the centre of the hall.

By 2 p.m., with no more voters entering the voting rooms the committee decided to start the counting. A very small number of registered voters were considered to have abstained and a few voting forms which were not properly punched, were considered invalid. The ballot box was opened and the counting began. Each candidate appointed an official witness to ensure a fair count. The fairness of the counting was further enforced by the presence of subdistrict officials, police and military officers, members of village council, and anyone who wished to attend. The result was contrary to the expectation of many, especially outsiders. Harnaya convincingly won the election. In the next couple of days there were stories about those who had bet on Tatang losing their bank savings, coffee gardens, or motorbikes. The few who had bet on Tatang losing gained a considerable amount of cash. Yanto, a local Chinese businessman, was said to have instantly won Rp. 10 million.
Gossip about the way villagers had deceived Tatang and his father Darsi soon spread. A few days before the election key figures in the villagers had openly expressed their support of Tatang. None, except their close kin, seemed to be openly in favour of the other two candidates. Some of the villagers said that this was done to avoid humiliating Tatang’s camp because that might have led to chaos or disturbance (rusuh, ribut-ribut) in the village. Intimidation and violence were things that Tatang’s camp was said to be capable of if they were humiliated. However, by ensuring a fair and clean (jujur, bersih) ballot, there would be no reason for Tatang’s camp not to accept the final result.

Odo’s loss, on the other hand, was a surprise to no one, being largely due to the work of his own camp persuading the villagers not to vote for him. The night before the election and on the morning election day, Odo’s close kin informed the key figures in the village that Odo’s candidature was a mistake. He was too young, economically unstable, and immature as far as leadership was concerned. Simply put, for the sake of the village it would be better not to vote for Odo; even Odo’s close kin would not vote for him. The persuasive message continued with an argument that it would be better to give Odo a chance to improve his family’s economy and his leadership skill to be better prepared for the next village head election.

A couple of months prior to the village head election in Sukakarya, Ciptapura, a village about 30 km from the capital of Sumber Jaya town had held its village head election. Ciptapura was created in the 1960s by two groups of Sundanese who now lived in the two main, neighbouring hamlets in the village. Each group had a charismatic leader, Sujana in Sukawaras, and Takim in Ciptajaya. Both leaders were legendary for their
leadership role organizing the early migrants to transform the forested land into the present day Ciptapura. Both Sujana and Takim were separately able to persuade the neighbouring Semendo village head to give part of their village territory to the new migrants. Sujana and Takim were active in providing assistance to the subsequent migrants who settled in the village. This was done, in the first years, by simply collectively clearing the forest and distributing the cleared land to each individual involved. Later, it was facilitated by ensuring that new comers had a host in the village, allowing them to start work on a piece of land as numpang (using a plot of land for free), sharecropper, or as hired labourer to enable them to accumulate enough money to buy land of their own.

The communities in the two new hamlets sought advice from either Sujana or Takim. Both are now among the richest in the village with more than ten hectares of coffee gardens and rice fields. Later Sujana focused more on formal leadership in the village while Takim became an informal leader, regularly receiving fellow villagers who consulted him about supernatural things, such as asking for a good day to do things to healing severe sicknesses.

The settlement turned into an official village (desa) in the early 1980s. A village head election was held, and Sujana had a big win against the empty box. Sujana was also Golkar komisaris in the village, ensuring a majority vote for Golkar in the village until the 1999 national election when, as in the region and nation, PDIP won. Sujana’s term as village head continued until the early 1990s when he decided to retire, largely due to his wife’s health’s problems. No village head election was held at the end of Sujana’s first eight-year term, the village council and the sub-district office just agreed to continue his term of office. The villagers regarded Sujana as an ideal village head. He acted as a father in the
village by ensuring fair decisions on internal affairs. He was said to never touch the village funds, kept with complete records by the village treasurer. And he let the village councils and village assembly take decisions on village funds and projects. More than that, Sujana was recognised for his achievement in bringing government projects to the village. It was during his term that the village built a health clinic, a market, two elementary schools, and bridges so the village’s unpaved road network could be reached by jeep. The village was also continuously selected as the site of demonstration plots (demplot) for various agricultural extension programs, and since the mid 1990s, the village was one of the most productive and intensive coffee-growing villages in the region.

When Sujana retired in the early 1990s, the village council appointed Sudarto as the PSJ, and planned to hold a village head election in a year or two later. Sudarto had migrated to Ciptajaya from Central Lampung in the 1980s. He had bought a plot of coffee garden, which was sharecropped while he himself was involved in the lucrative business of cutting and selling timber from the remaining state forest nearby. Upon his arrival in the village he was appointed by the village council as the assistant babinsa (village military officer) in the village, his main responsibility being the security of the village market. He received a regular income from the village funds collected from the traders in the weekly village market. Sudarto was successful in doing his job, preventing stealing and pickpocketing that had frequently occurred in the village market prior to his appointment. His appointment as the market security guard and later as the PJS was largely due to Takim’s endorsement. Sudarto had long been in a close contact with Takim.
Sudarto somehow managed to prolong his term as PJS for almost a decade. A couple of years after his appointment, when the sub-district office questioned his status as PJS and suggested a village head election, he was able to persuade the village council and the head of hamlets to sign a letter stating that the village agreed to extend his term as PJS. With this letter, plus, according to rumours, trucks of lumber, the sub-district accepted the extension of his term as PJS. Like Sujana, Sudarto was very active in bringing government projects to the village, roads were gravelled and bridges, schools and market were rebuilt. A land certification project was also brought to the village. As far as tapping state resources was concerned, Sudarto’s achievements and leadership were well recognised. But, when it came to the issue of morality, the villagers expressed nothing but disappointment. He kept all the village funds in his pocket and left almost no room for the village council to have a say in village projects. It was also noted that he did shameful things such as selling the gardens in the state forest zones whose owners were evicted during military operations to evict the forest settlers at the turn of 1990s, ‘eating’ the villagers’ money to pay the cost of land certification, and continuing his illegal timber business. The list continued to include other forms of wrongdoing, from drinking, gambling, and ‘playing with women’ (main perempuan) to asking for cigarettes or drink from shops without paying. Only in the latter case, however, was Sudarto reported to have done such things in the village. For the other wrongdoing, it was said that Sudarto committed them outside the village, thus making them difficult to verify. The only proof was his frequent absences. A story about Sudarto’s brother being caught in the act of burglary and burnt to death near the town of Metro in Central Lampung was further used by the villagers to suggest the possibility of Sudarto’s involvement in the criminal networks elsewhere outside the region.
In addition to the sub-district policy to have a definitively elected village head in all the villages, the village head election in 2002 was also the result of conflict between Sudarto and Takim. This was the end of Sudarto’s long term support from the most influential informal leader in the village. One of Takim’s sons was involved in a fight with a young man from a neighbouring village. Normally, in cases of youth fighting with no weapons involved, both parties would enter discussions to reach ‘peace’ (damai); the injured party would receive an apology and compensation in cash equal to actual hospital costs. The peace agreement would indicate that the case was considered as juvenile delinquency and taken care of by the community rather than as a criminal act to be taken to court by the police. In Takim’s son’s case, his enemy’s family demanded compensation amounting to more than Rp 1 million, well beyond the actual medical costs to treat the injury. Sudarto, in his capacity as head of village, did nothing to persuade both parties to discuss a peace settlement; rather he reinforced the demand for compensation and obliged Takim’s family to pay the compensation. Many believe that had the compensation been paid, Sudarto would have taken a portion of the payment for himself. Sudarto had done this before to others in the village. Takim himself, not surprisingly, due to his strong informal leadership, was finally able to settle the dispute in a peaceful manner. But by then he had become so angry with Sudarto that he promised to topple him from the village head office. Takim’s statement was embraced with much delight by most Ciptapura villagers.

A village committee for the village head election was soon set up. Juhana, in his capacity as the head of the village council, directly supervised the committee. Yet there was another problem. Apart from Sudarto, no one
was willing to become a candidate. Takim soon asked Ujang, one of his sons, to run in the village head election. Less than 30 years in age, Ujang was studying at a private university in Bandar Lampung; hence he was frequently absent from the village. A couple of months prior to the election, Ujang married a Semendonese girl from a neighbouring village. Since there was no news prior to the marriage, and no wedding party, a common occurrence among ordinary villagers but extremely exceptional for a rich family like Takim’s, it was said the marriage was for the purpose of the candidature. According to the regulations, a village head must be married. Takim and Ujang’s next step was then to approach key figures in the village to gain community support. There was no problem with this. Key figures in the village were more than willing to advise the villagers to vote for Ujang.

It is interesting to note that both Sudarto and Takim actually nominated Hardi to become the next village head. Had Hardi agreed to run, both Sudarto and Ujang would have withdrawn their candidature to ensure Hardi’s election. Hardi, in his 40s, had a good leadership record. He was the head of the hamlet of Sukawaras and an active and influential young leader of the village council during Sujana’s term as village head. He was economically established, with more than 3 hectares of productive coffee gardens and a couple of plots of rice fields, and had managed to send his two sons to Yogyakarta and Bandung—two prominent cities in Java for good higher education. In the early 1990s, Hardi and his wife Minah went to the state palace in Jakarta to receive a national award from President Suharto as pioneers in the national family planning program for having only two children. During Juhana’s term as village head, his wife’s problems with literacy and health prevented her from performing the tasks as the head of PKK (Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, the family
welfare education program). Hardi’s wife, Minah, had acted as the leader of PKK in the village and actively represented the village at the higher government levels. Thus Hardi and Minah were seen by the villagers as the ideal couple for the office of village head. To persuade Hardi to accept the nomination, the village council were willing to issue a decree that the village would be responsible for all the costs of the village head election. Yet both Hardi and Minah refused the nomination.

According to his friends, Hardi himself was quite willing and ready to accept the nomination, but not his wife Minah and his two sons. Minah, with her experience as PKK leader, concluded that the tasks would be unbearably exhausting for her. Another problem was that the task would not result in a comparable material reward. Although at this time all village heads in West Lampung district received a monthly allowance, the amount was relatively small: Rp 250,000, equal to merely 100 kg of milled rice, while the actual living costs for an established family, according to some of the village heads in the region, was about two to three times higher. Using the annual village funds for village head’s personal needs, although acceptable would trigger shameful gossip. It is for this reason that Hardi’s youngest son strongly opposed the idea of his father becoming a village head. According to him, if his father became a village head, any goods (household goods, vehicles, and clothes) the family bought in the future would be gossiped about as if the family had used the village’s money. In particular, he could not stand to hear in the future any gossip that the cost of his study was paid for using the village’s money.

Thus, finally, Sudarto and Ujang competed in the village head election. To cover the cost, Sudarto sold one of his cars and some of his coffee gardens,
while Ujang sold his motorbike and pawned some of his father’s coffee gardens and sawah. The village council decided that no village money would be used. On the morning of the village election day, a dozen jeeps, minibuses, and lightweight trucks with either Sudarto’s or Ujang’s posters stuck on them were busy picking up voters from all the hamlets to take them to the village hall in Sukawaras. Sudarto was reported to be very nervous and got drunk on the night before election day. He rode his noisy fake Harley Davidson motorbike from hamlet to hamlet, and said to anyone he met on the street that he would take note of those who did not vote for him and threatened that something bad could happen to them. To cool Sudarto’s temper, hundreds of villagers gathered in his house the night before the election day, cheering him up and indicating they would vote for him. The host provided snacks and meals. Takim’s house, where Ujang also lived, was much less crowded. It was said later that the villagers purposefully prevented themselves from openly showing their favour to him.

The procedure of the voting was similar to that in Sukakarya. The candidates and their wives arrived at 9 a.m. and sat in the middle of the hall watching the final preparation. Sudarto looked calm sitting on a couch, while Ujang was clearly nervous and frequently went out of the hall. The voting began around 10 a.m. after the head of the subdistrict’s official opening speech. Again there were no speeches from the candidates. In both Sukakarya and Sukawaras, in his speech the head of the subdistrict stressed that unlike the time before reformasi, the government now had no favoured candidate (tidak ada lagi calon yang dijagokan pemerintah). This time villagers should follow their hearts (mengikuti hati nurani) to vote for the best candidate for their village. Ujang and his wife left for home right after the opening speech prior to the
commencement of the voting. Sudarto’s wife left early, but Sudarto sat relaxed on the couch smoking, exchanging jokes with members of the committee, and teasing some of the voters. He left home a couple of minutes prior the lunch break.

Unlike the vote in Sukakarya, the gambling market did not bet on which one of the candidates would win or lose. No one seemed to dare bet for either Sudarto to win or Ujang to lose. The betting was on whether Sudarto could obtain 200 votes from the nearly 2,000 registered voters. The odds were one to one. Those who bet that Sudarto would get 200 or more would win the same amount of cash and vice versa. As in Sukakarya but with far fewer participants, apart from cash, the betting involved motorbikes and coffee gardens.

At 3 p.m. the voting was completed and the counting began. Sudarto got less than 200 votes. A party was held at Takim’s house that night to celebrate the victory. A couple of weeks later Sudarto was no longer seen staying with his family in the village. Some said that he was living with his other wife elsewhere. For Takim, not only did he manage to depose Sudarto from the village head office but he got rid of his rival from the village.

In the end of 2002, both the head and the secretary of the subdistrict of Sumber Jaya were promoted. It was these two men who imposed the policy that by 2003 no more villages in Sumber Jaya would have PJS and all would have definitive village heads elected through democratic elections. The secretary of the subdistrict was appointed head of the less developed neighbouring subdistrict, whose head was promoted to leadership of the developing Sumber Jaya subdistrict. The head of the
subdistrict of Sumber Jaya was himself promoted to be the head of an office at the West Lampung district level in the capital of Liwa. He was not really keen to take his promotion, as he much preferred to continue his position as the head of the Sumber Jaya subdistrict. The village heads in Sumber Jaya also preferred to his replacement. According to these village heads, unlike other camat, he treated the village heads more as colleagues (kawan) than inferiors (bawahan) and, more importantly, never unilaterally asked the village head to deposit (setor) money at the subdistrict office or slice (potong) a considerable portion of the village projects and funds.\(^1\) In the official ceremony for the handing over of the camat office, all the village heads of Sumber Jaya made a declaration to the district head (bupati) that they wanted the present camat to stay and refused the replacement. Acknowledging the sentiment, the bupati persuaded the village heads to give the new camat a chance. If in the following couple of months they still could not accept the new camat, then a replacement would be arranged. This was a warning to the new camat to treat the village heads as colleagues rather than inferiors.

With the replacement of the two key figures in the subdistrict office, the imposition of the policy of having elected village heads in all the villages in Sumber Jaya weakened. Among the fourteen villages, two villages still had PJS in early 2003. In both villages the PJS were former village secretaries. In the first village, Trijaya, the village committee scheduled a village head election for the end of 2002. The cost of the election was still an issue. The candidates were expecting the village to bear the cost as in Sukakarya, while the village council wanted the candidates to be responsible for the cost as in Ciptapura. At the beginning of 2003 the

\(^1\) Nonetheless, this by no means indicates that there was no petty corruption at all.
issue had not been resolved. An extension of the term of the PJS would be the likely result. In the second village, Sindang Cahaya, the situation was rather different. No one is willing to nominate as a candidate. A village council initiative like Sukakarya’s where each hamlet nominated a candidate and the village bore the cost, was also absent. The villagers seemed to quite happy to an extension of the current PJS.

Unlike Sumber Jaya, in the subdistrict of Way Tenong, the extension of the term of the PJS faced no obstacle. As long as there was no one willing to nominate as a candidate for the village head election, the PJS term would be prolonged. Yet, people are always attracted to the position of village head. Two village head elections were held in Way Tenong in 2002. In both villages the candidates were responsible for the cost of the election. In one of the villages, candidate Hendra was the richest man in his village, an important coffee re-seller in the region and owner of a large shop. Many people were surprised by his decision to run since the material gain from the office of village head would be nothing compared to his current business. Hendra finally failed to win the election, to the surprise of no one. The elected village head was an ordinary villager (orang biasa). It is said that the village head is a position that someone cannot get without money (tidak bisa didapat tanpa uang) but it is also something that money cannot buy (tidak bisa dibeli dengan uang). What Hendra lacked and could not buy was the villagers’ popular support (dukungan masyarakat).

The granting and withdrawal of villagers’ popular support (dukungan masyarakat) for village leaders has played a key role in village politics in the region. Dukungan masyarakat was given to individuals who were able to meet villagers’ expectation to integrate the village into the state and to bring ‘development’ to the village. Village leaders were expected to keep
promoting resource flows to the village; otherwise the dukungan masyarakat would be withdrawn and be given to somebody else.

**Conclusion**

The progress that Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong achieved has largely been the results of villagers' efforts to bring state resources into the village. This was achieved by positioning the village within the orbit of state power. During the New Order period, villagers turned the region into an important pocket of Golkar loyalists in the Lampung highlands and enjoyed resource inflows in the form of rural development projects. Following the reformasi movement, in the hope of aligning themselves to central elites as in the past, the villagers turned the region into a stronghold for the new ruling party the PDIP (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle).

The integration of the village into the state has led to the emergence of politically powerful village leaders, whose power has been promoted as well as constrained. Villagers expect their village leaders to promote the flow of state resources into the village. Village leaders who can bring 'progress' to the villages will gain popular community support (dukungan masyarakat). Otherwise the dukungan masyarakat will be given to someone who can deliver the promise of development.
CHAPTER FIVE

Resources Control, Conflict, and Collaboration

After discussing the ways villagers bring the state into the village in the last chapter, this chapter explores the ways villagers in Sumber Jaya and Way Tenong resist and, alternately, accommodate state attempts to exact a greater control over people and resources. As Peluso, Vandergeest, and Potter (1995) have noted, one of the trends in the social aspects of the political economy and political ecology of forestry in colonial and post-colonial Southeast Asia has been the consolidation of state power over forest resources, labour, and territory. States’ attempts at forest control, furthermore, have created struggles between state agencies and villagers involving claims and counter-claims over forest land.

Smallholders who farm the land inside state forest boundaries in the region can be seen to fit the Indonesian forestry authorities’ definition of *perambah hutan* (forest squatters/encroachers/destroyers). Notwithstanding that villagers knew that farming the land inside the state forest boundaries was illegal, they continued transforming forests into agricultural fields. For the late coming landless migrants and the children of the early migrants who aspired to become smallholder farmers, squatting on forest land was the way to gain access to land through non-market relations. Villagers’ resistance to the forestry authorities’ attempts to transform smallholder fields into plantation forests and, recently, villagers’ involvement in ‘forest
management' can be seen in the context of restricting resource extraction from this peripheral area by the central elites.

**Conflict Over Land and Forest Resources**

*(Mis)classification and (mis)management of Lampung's forest zones?*

Between 1922 and 1942 the Dutch administration gazetted forested land in lowland and highland Lampung as forest reserves. On paper, the Dutch administration classified nearly 1 million hectares of Lampung land as state forestry zones *(boschwezen)*. Local people were prohibited from farming and gathering forest products from the gazetted forestry zones. Until the Japanese invasion in 1942, the Dutch were able to conduct field delineation and boundary pole demarcation of more than half of the gazetted forestry zones. Today, these delineated forest zones are still referred to by local people as BW land *(tanah BW)*, after the signs of BW *(boschwezen)* marked on the boundary poles.

In the post-colonial time, the national forestry authority reclassified these Dutch-gazetted *boschwezen* as state forest zones *(kawasan hutan negara)*. Although the designation of the new forestry zones was simply a reclassification of the former BW land, the process took decades to complete. The process began in the 1970s and was perceived to be completed in 1990, by the signing of a Minister of Forestry decree on Lampung's agreed forest land use plan *(TGHK, Tata Guna Hutan Kesepakatan)*. According to the Basic Forestry Law of 1967, the Minister of Forestry had the authority to designate the state forestry zones based on provincial government planning. For

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1 This material dealing with the history of forestry policy in Lampung is based mainly on my previous research (2000).