LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES OF THE LANDLESS:

THREE CASES FROM BLITAR, EAST JAVA.

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This thesis is my work and all sources used have been acknowledged.
ABSTRACT

LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES OF THE LANDLESS: THREE CASE STUDIES FROM BLITAR, EAST JAVA

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The view of the passive and submissive Javanese peasant is so common in the literature that it seems that there must be some truth in it. My argument is that it describes one of the strategies for survival used by Javanese peasants in responding to their situation. A key question concerns the different aspects of this strategy for survival chosen by different groups and why these aspects are chosen.

This study focuses on three major types of community within the same cultural and historical setting in the Blitar regency of East Java: Pari, a community based on wet-rice agriculture; Saratemen, a plantation-based community; and Jati, a forestry-based community.

In describing these three communities, I have examined in detail their different conditions: their economic activities, social and cultural institutions, historical experiences, and their political and administrative organization. I conclude that there are basically similar elements of a survival strategy in the three communities. For example, in all three communities, peasants are involved in a wide range of activities and peasant households mobilize as many of their members as possible in these activities. These two elements of a basic strategy for survival are an integral part of being a peasant subsistence-producer.

Although the basic elements of this strategy are similar, the ways in which the three communities apply this strategy are very different. The distinction between the survival strategies of the three communities are less of substance and more, at the margin, in their approach to this basic strategy. The specific conditions in which individuals live can affect the ways in which they develop their strategies. Looking at the studies of these three communities, I suggest two features that stand out as contributing to the differences between them. The first is the communities’s historical experience, especially the peasants’s own perceptions of it. The second is the peasantry’s role in the local economic system, and related to this, the extent of socio-economic differences and of social cohesion within the community.
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Map B: East Java showing Blitar Regency
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study of Javanese peasant life has expanded rapidly since World War II. It might even be considered that in some respects the Javanese peasantry has been over-explained and over-analyzed. However, there remain many unanswered questions. One of the earliest focuses of interest in the Javanese peasantry was why it failed to develop and modernize. It is a question that is still to be answered. A related concern is how the peasantry has adapted to change, both in the past and today. This too remains a fertile field for investigation. The scope and complexity of peasant life on Java pose a major challenge to insightful anthropological research. Specialists, both within Indonesia and from overseas, are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of its diversity on their work.

Many anthropologists who have studied Javanese peasants began from a primary concern with general theoretical issues such as the
causes of underdevelopment or the relationship between environment and culture. Studies of the peasantry often emerged indirectly from interest in broader debates in anthropological theory. The Javanese peasantry became the field in which broader issues were studied. Such concerns often tended to predispose researchers to focus on the general rather than the particular. This approach has influenced the way in which peasant society in Java as a whole is perceived. The extent of conformity and homogeneity in the peasantry has been emphasized. Differences between subgroups within communities and between communities have been obscured.

This thesis takes a different approach. The Javanese peasant communities studied here are not testing grounds for a priori general theorizing. Instead I focus on the way in which the peasants in the study villages view themselves, their own lives and their world. Because their world has changed greatly during the course of their lives, the study inevitably examines how they have coped with past changes and how they deal with contemporary change. In short, it is about peasant strategies for survival. Underlying the study is a belief that variation in local conditions - cropping patterns, social, political and cultural institutions, and historical experiences - are an important and often overlooked element in the way different groups adapt and react to similar changes.

This chapter is divided into several sections. The first reviews the various perceptions presented in the literature on the nature of Javanese peasant society and its reaction to change. The
second presents the rationale of this thesis. The third introduces the setting of the fieldwork, firstly the broader context of the regency of Blitar and then the more specific setting of the three study communities. The fourth is a personal account of the experience of fieldwork. The final section outlines the structure of the remaining chapters.

I. **Perceptions of the Javanese Peasantry:**

There are almost as many different views of the Javanese peasant as there are researchers writing on the subject. In the context of adjusting to change, many of these have been rather negative. One of the earliest writers to examine seriously the Javanese peasantry was H.J. Boeke (1910; 1930; 1937; 1953). Boeke claimed that the cause of stagnation in the rural economy of Java was the Javanese mentality. The Javanese were identified as basically lazy and static in outlook, lacking initiative, willing always to obey and follow their superiors without question or protest. Such characteristics explained their backwardness. These negative qualities were not easily changed because they arose from the kind of climate and physical environment to which the Javanese had adjusted. Boeke's pessimistic view of the peasants drew many criticisms, among them from M. Sadli (1957) and Benjamin Higgins (1955; 1959). However, his geographical determinist approach was
to some extent shared by one of the most prominent writers on the Javanese peasantry, Clifford Geertz (1960; 1963).

Both praise and criticism have been heaped on Geertz by a generation of students of Javanese society and culture. Geertz's concern, like Boeke, was to explain the origins of what he described as "the ossification of the Indonesian agrarian economy" (1963: 38), or the "underdevelopment" of the Javanese peasant economy. He chose to do this through an ecological approach in which he explored the relationship between man and his environment, the influence of ecological processes on "the past growth and present state of Indonesian culture (1963: 11). However, unlike Boeke, Geertz came to the conclusion that the critical factor was not just geography but the combination of environment with the colonial cultivation system, the latter being more important.

Although the arguments he presented on priyayi abangan stratification and "agricultural involution" were essentially not new (White, 1983: 18), they did not receive wide attention until they were presented and popularized by Geertz in his books The Religion of Java (1960), and Agricultural Involution (1963), and in other later works. Geertz attempted to observe the Javanese peasantry from close quarters and to analyse it in original, elegant and systematic ways, supporting his arguments with both fieldwork material from his work of the 'Modjokuto Project' and historical data drawn from the nineteenth century.

In Agricultural Involution, his study of the cultural ecology of Javanese society, Geertz charged that the cultivation system was
directly responsible for the structural stagnation of the Javanese peasant, his economy and his well-being. In this classic study of Javanese history and society he argued that the system was decisive in at least three ways. The first was that, through the intensity with which it caused Java to be cultivated, it gave final form to the extreme contrast between Inner and Outer Indonesia which, thereafter, merely deepened. The second was that it stabilised and accentuated the dual economy pattern of a capital intensive Western sector and a labour intensive Eastern sector by rapidly developing the first and rigorously stultifying the second. The third was that it protected Javanese peasantry and gentry alike from the effects of the much deeper Western penetration into their lives and prevented this from creating autochthonous agricultural modernisation at that point in history at which it could have most easily occurred.

In demonstrating his claims, Geertz noted that the export crops cultivated by Javanese peasants fell into two categories: annuals and perennials. The annuals, of which sugar cane was the most important, were planted predominantly in existing peasant-held wet-rice land while perennials, particularly coffee, were cultivated on previously unused land. Geertz chose as his archetypical case sugar cultivation. Sugar cane was grown on established land in rotation with peasant rice because both crops required similar environments in terms of habitat, irrigation and labour inputs. A symbiotic rice-sugar relationship was created.
The government maintained the relationship so that the peasants remained basically rice farmers and did not become smallholder sugar cultivators themselves. Geertz (1963: 58) noted:

"it [the cultivation system] assumes that there will be no drift of the market mentality across the export-subsistence line; namely, that Javanese peasants will not themselves replace the cultivation of rice on their lands by smallholder sugar. If they do, the resultant pressure on the subsistence base means that it will be more difficult to conscript peasant land and labour. The workability of the whole mutualistic relationship depends, in short, on each side 'doing its job' - the subsistence side feeding the labour force, and the commercial side producing state revenue."

Thus there developed a dual economic structure consisting of the Dutch export economy and the indigenous peasant economy, a "radical economic separation" that kept the peasantry firmly rooted in a subsistence economy. Geertz observed (1963: 58) the paradox:

"In the framework of a colonial political system the close ecological tie between sugar and rice became the basis for their radical economic separation."

The impact of this dualistic structure was to give the indigenous peasantry something they were to retain - "the worst of two possible worlds: a static economy and a burgeoning population" (Geertz, 1963: 70). The expanding demands for irrigated land for sugar cane cultivation inevitably extended the acreage under peasant rice production. This allowed peasant households to support larger numbers, both by providing additional food supplies
and by providing work for them in the sugar-cane fields. Rapid population expansion led to increasing scarcity of land. The Javanese peasantry, however, were able to cope by taking advantage of the improved irrigation system and other facilities provided as a result of the demands of the sugar industry that improved the quality of sawah lands. On these lands they applied labour, the only resource they had in relative abundance, more intensively. Cultivation practices became increasingly labour intensive. Geertz (1963: 77-78) recorded examples:

"pregermination, transplanting, more thorough land preparation, fastidious planting and weeding, razor-blade harvesting, double-cropping, a more exact regulation of terrace-flooding, and the addition of more fields at the edges of volcanoes".

Such practices allowed an increase in the output of rice per hectare of land, although not necessarily per head of population.

Geertz emphasized that this process of "treading water" continued throughout the nineteenth century. As he described it (1963: 80):

"Slowly, steadily, relentlessly, they [the peasants] were forced into a more and more labour-stuffed sawah pattern. . . : tremendous population absorbed on minuscule rice farms, particularly in areas where sugar cultivation led to improved irrigation . . . . . Wet-rice cultivation, with its extraordinary ability to maintain levels of marginal labor productivity by always managing to work one more man in without a serious fall in per-capita income, soaked up almost the whole of the additional population that Western intrusion created at least indirectly. It is this ultimately self-defeating process that I have proposed to call 'agricultural involution'".
The process of agricultural involution, according to Geertz, affected not only agriculture but also social arrangements in the peasant economy. This can be seen in the following passage (1963: 82):

"[it] increasingly pervaded the whole rural economy: tenure systems grew more intricate; tenancy relationships more complicated; cooperative labor arrangements more complex - all in an effort to provide everyone with some niche, however small, in the over-all system".

Geertz saw the concept of involution as the key to the way in which Javanese society as a whole adapted to Western intrusion. He applied the concept to all aspects of peasant life. He used the principle to describe responses on the distribution side, in the increasingly complex and elaborate arrangements for allocating firstly the work of producing the rice and then distributing the product itself (1963; 97):

"With the steady growth of population came also the elaboration and extension of mechanisms through which agricultural product was spread, if not altogether evenly, at least relatively so, throughout the huge human horde which was obliged to subsist on it. Under the pressure of increasing numbers and limited resources Javanese village society did not bifurcate, as did that of so many other 'underdeveloped' nations, into a group of large landlords and a group of oppressed near-serfs. Rather it maintained a comparatively high degree of social and economic homogeneity by dividing the economic pie into a steadily increasing number of minute pieces, a process to which I have referred elsewhere as 'shared poverty'". [Emphasis added.]
Geertz presented his arguments strongly and convincingly. But now, two decades later, as the number of local studies of Javanese society has grown, his arguments are increasingly being questioned. The strongest criticism of Geertz's approach is that he treated Java as if it was a relatively homogeneous entity and considered that the Javanese peasantry's response and adaptation to Western intrusion was everywhere similar to that which he described. His emphasis on involution as a rather harmonious process has also led to criticisms that he overlooked the extent of agrarian differentiation in Javanese society and the potential of the peasantry to be exploited by landlords. Criticisms such as these have come in recent years from both historians (Elson, 1978) and anthropologists (Hinkson, 1975; Alexander and Alexander, 1978; and White, 1983) working with new and more varied data sources, particularly at the local level, and with new methodological insights.

These criticisms are basic to the issues addressed in this thesis. Despite the picture presented by Geertz, Java is characterised by quite wide variations in both natural and socio-cultural environments. An element that has been rather neglected in the work of Geertz and many other writers on Java is the importance of local variations in physical resources and in social and cultural experiences in influencing the ways in which different groups within the Javanese peasantry adapt to change. This applies equally to their response to Western intrusion in the colonial
period and to their response to development in the mid-twentieth century. Variations in such factors as land tenure patterns, social and economic organisations, cultural traditions and historical experiences play important roles in determining the particular response of groups of the peasantry. Such local variations and their importance has often been ignored by writers on Javanese society, partly because of their interest in more general theoretical issues.

One important critic of Geertz's view of the peasantry who raised some aspects of this problem is Elson (1978; 1984). His study of underdevelopment has much in common with that of Geertz. He adopts a firmly historical approach analyzing concrete historical situations in order to direct attention toward the impact of intensive colonial economic exploitation on the Javanese village community and thereby attempts to explain why underdevelopment occurred. Unlike culturalist and many structuralist views that stress 'inner' causes of underdevelopment, both Geertz and Elson identify the colonial political economy as the major factor. However, Elson emphasizes the role of local differences in determining the responses of local communities to particular pressures and intrusions. He notes (1978: 7-8):

"Even within local communities peasants divided themselves into different levels or classes, and reacted in different ways to the demands and opportunities which the cultivation system presented. . . . Different echelons within peasant society possessed, consequently, a variety of conflicting interests and expectations. And to complicate matters even further, most peasants were not just rice farmers, wholly dependent on their fields
for income, ... they obtained income from a number of other sources ...".

In short "the Javanese peasantry was not, in effect, the undifferentiated mass which Geertz implied". In order to examine the concept of involution and to demonstrate that "the varying responses of different segments of peasant society are more clearly observable in a local situation", Elson chose Pasuruan in East Java as his study area. This is not far from Kediri, where Geertz conducted most of his fieldwork.

On the basis of research in Pasuruan, Elson asserted that Geertz's notion of agricultural involution was "open to correction". He wrote (1978:24):

"This is not to say that the involution process has not taken place in Pasuruan or in Java generally, but rather that there is no evidence in the Pasuruan area in the later years of the cultivation system period of the precise patterns described by Geertz".

The sugar-rice cultivation relationship in Pasuruan differed from the symbiotic association described by Geertz: using statistical data on land, population and production Elson found (1978:24) that:

"the more such an area was subjected to heavy cane cultivation, the more that cultivation became a positive obstacle, rather than an operative factor, in the attainment of high rice yields".

Elson is convinced that:
"the link between sugar cultivation and the attainment of high rice yields was more complex and of a different nature from that allowed by Geertz".

Although it is certainly true that infrastructures were improving as the sugar industry expanded and they clearly contributed to increased rice production, they were only one of many factors determining rice productivity. Geertz failed to consider adequately the importance of these other factors. Furthermore, the key factor identified by him, namely labour intensification, do not seem to have been important in Pasuruan, at least by the late 1850's. Indeed, Elson argues that the wide range of tasks that had to be performed by the peasants of Pasuruan were not due to "what might be termed 'work-spreading'" to allow more of a growing population to share a limited resource, work, as claimed by Geertz. Rather the work-spreading was necessary to keep the very heavy per capita labour obligations borne by landholders to tolerable levels. In fact during the early stages of the sugar cultivation system, Elson observed that population tended, if anything, to decline. This he explains in terms of a defensive flight by peasants from the heavy demands of the system. In the later stages, as the system 'hardened' and matured, flight became less important as peasants developed alternative adaptive strategies. Elson speculates (1978: 27) that the process described by Geertz may have been more typical of this later stage of adaptation.
In focusing attention on the importance of differences within the village community, Elson notes the developing and strengthened position of the upper echelons as a result of the powers granted to them to facilitate the organisation of sugar cultivation. These powers gave them access to "a disproportionate share of the wealth which sugar cultivation brought into the villages" (Elson, 1978: 28). Data from Pasuruan showing a dramatic decline in the proportionate number of farmers through the 1840's and 1850's suggests that a class of larger landholders were able to accumulate the lands of the 'missing' farmers. The "comparatively high degree of social and economic homogeneity" of Geertz's village community appears less uniform and more differentiated in Pasuruan. Although not entirely dismissing Geertz's concepts of the growing social homogeneity of Javanese society such as "work sharing" or "shared poverty", Elson (1978: 30) is certain that to the extent that they did operate it was within quite limited social groups. Noting that Geertz himself had commented upon some aspects of socio-economic differentiation that had resulted from the cultivation system, Elson seems generally to doubt that the system produced any marked growth of homogeneity, except perhaps within strata.

Elson is equally uncertain of the value of the concept of involution itself. He does not find that it is an accurate description of the process of Pasuruan's adaptation to the changes brought by the cultivation system. His final evaluation (1978: 30) is cautious but negative in tone:
"if 'involution' is to serve as an enlightening rather than an obfuscating concept, then its causes, emergence and operation need to be more fully examined in the light of those existing and unworked masses of data about society and agriculture in the various and very different regions of Java".

Elson has drawn attention to the importance of local differences in peasant communities in determining the ways in which they adapt to change. However, in his study of Pasuruan he concentrated on establishing the existence of differentiation within village society and on identifying aspects of economic differentiation between villages and the impact of these on the process of adaptation to the cultivation system. His objectives were more limited than those of Geertz. He questions the concept of involution without offering an alternative explanation for the underdevelopment of the Javanese peasantry. He also focuses more narrowly on economic aspects of adaptation and does not explore the impact of local differences on social or cultural adjustment to change.

Like Elson, Collier (1978) in his article "Agricultural Evolution in Java: the Decline of Shared Poverty and Involution" criticizes Geertz's neglect of regional variations and socio-economic stratification within communities. Geertz carried out his research in East Java but applied his findings to the whole of Java. Collier points out the limitations of studying the dynamics of peasant response to change from studies conducted during a period of rather special circumstances. In different times and
under different conditions peasant responses may have been quite different.

Collier represents a stream of criticism of agricultural involution that is primarily interested in peasant responses to change in the modern context. Geertz and Elson both were more interested in the past. Writers such as Collier have concentrated on the way in which peasants in the 1970’s have adapted to modernisation and the Green Revolution. Collier found that involution did not describe the pattern of peasant response to recent agricultural change. Rather than absorbing increasing amounts of labour on the same limited area of land, the response to the Green Revolution seemed to involve exclusion of labour from rice cultivation. Collier (1978: 19) writes:

"... something other than the process of involution is acting as a prime mover in the allocation and distribution of production functions at the farm level. The concept of involution implies the presence of certain social mechanisms and communal norms whereby the needs of the many maintain ascendancy over the wants of the few. Nevertheless, the above evidence suggests that these mechanisms are under some degree of stress and that the presumed equilibrium between labor supply and labor absorption is giving way to a condition where the values of efficiency and profit assume a much more pronounced role in the economy of agricultural production."

He sees the peasants response to change as increasingly dominated by economic considerations. Geertz regarded the complex Javanese institutions for allocation of work as ways of protecting the poor. Collier (1978: 30) in his study of the shift from bawon to tebasan
and the operation of borongan labour groups found that they frequently discriminated against the poor. This difference may be a result of monetization in the rural economy. Collier has a more positive view of the peasantry’s capacity for adapting to change than Geertz. The peasantry has responded to the Green Revolution rationally.

Another critic of Geertz, White (1973; 1976; especially 1983), also takes issue with Geertz’s negative view of the Javanese peasant. White sees little difference between Geertz’s concept of agricultural involution and the ‘mainstream’ view of the causes of agrarian stagnation that emphasized the role of ‘traditional’ values and attitudes. He argues (1983: 19) that:

"On closer reading the main factors held responsible by Geertz for continuing agrarian stagnation in Java (if not for its colonial origins) - the absence of agrarian differentiation and the ‘sharing of poverty’ - are seen as basically a matter of world-view, attitudes and values, that is as a problem of (psycho)-cultural rather than ecological, technological or even political-economic impasse."

White, like Collier, is most interested in the current state of the peasantry. When he reads Geertz to discover why stagnation and backwardness continues in rural Java even after the end of colonialism and the end of the cultivation system, he finds that the major reasons given must now be explained in terms of the persistence of ‘traditional’ values and attitudes.
Geertz interpreted the complexity and elaboration of land tenure and labour arrangements as an adaptive response to burgeoning population. White joins the Alexanders (1979; 1982) in attacking Geertz' Malthusian argument that population increase was a response to increased food production due to the symbiotic relationship between rice and sugar cultivation. White sees the population increase as a positive response of the peasants to the rapidly increasing demands for labour under the cultivation system. Basically he agrees with the Alexanders (1978: 217) that:

"the stagnation of Javanese agriculture during the colonial period was less a product of ecology and demography than political economy."

In relation to the increasing internal elaboration and complexity of agricultural organisation, White also denies that these were a response to the cultivation system. He criticizes Geertz for not offering enough evidence to show that these increased in complexity with the introduction of the cultivation system. Certainly, there were complex land tenure and labour recruitment arrangements even in Raffles' period. White argues that available evidence suggests that land leasing and sharecropping "are now, and were in the past, no more and perhaps less common than in many other Asian societies."

White is surprised that Geertz ignored agrarian class structure in Javanese village society at a time when other researchers (for example Lyon, 1970) were recording major examples
of agrarian class conflict. He observes that reference to agrarian differentiation is completely missing in Geertz' major work on agricultural involution. Yet, these differences and the relations between rural classes provide the key to an understanding of the dynamics of agrarian change. Geertz' view of social and economic homogeneity in Javanese peasant society and his concept of 'shared poverty' are criticized as being not only unfounded but dangerous. He (1983: 26) notes:

"...the idea of 'shared poverty' and the values held to reinforce it has taken root...deeply, and serves some role in the ideological justification of the rural development policies of the New Order government."

Paternalism and policies that fail to protect peasants from exploitation are easily justified by a Geertzian view of rural Javanese society.

White is strongly critical of what he identifies as the culture-based explanation of the situation of the Javanese peasantry today implied in Geertz. An indigenous example of the cultural approach to the backwardness of the peasantry is found in Koentjaraningrat's book Rintangan 2 Mental Dalam Pembangunan Ekonomi Di Indonesia [(Mental Obstacles to Economic Development in Indonesia)] (1969). Using Kluckhohn's framework for observing value systems, Koentjaringrat describes the Javanese peasant mentality. He stereotypes (1969: 31-32) it in the following terms:
A peasant in Indonesia, especially in Java, basically considers his life as something bad, full of sin and suffering . . . but . . . he has to passively accept this life and make the best of it. . . . He is only concerned for today, he does not care about the future, he is too poor to think about such matters. . . . Natural disasters must be borne as part of one’s fate. . . . So long as he can harmonise himself with his surroundings he will be safe. Thus he must cooperate with his fellow men and must be especially conscious that his well-being is ultimately dependent on his food relations with others. [translation by the author]

Koentjaringrat does not explain why the peasants have such a mentality, nor how it originated, except to say that it is ‘original’ (paling asli) and has existed for centuries. He recognises that there are many local variations in these general attitudes and values (1969: 32) and that there is change over time (1969: 28-29) but he paid little attention to either in this context.

II The Rationale of this Thesis:

The view of the passive and submissive peasant is so common in the literature that it seems there must be some truth in it. My argument is that it describes one of the peasantry’s strategies for survival. But, as should be clear from the above discussion, it is not the only strategy used by the Javanese peasant in responding to his situation. The important question is why and in what circumstances this kind of strategy is chosen. This is indeed a broad issue. Although it is not possible to provide
definitive answers, the question is an important focus of this
thesis. In anthropology, no case study can typify all communities,
no single theory is adequate to explain all data, and no one
research method is universally applicable. For this study I have
chosen what may seem a very simple approach: I have tried to
describe three different communities of Javanese peasants as they
portray themselves, by presenting their stories, experiences,
feelings and expectations. I have focused on their response to
change and found that much of my data relate to changes in the area
of land and labour relations, issues of obvious importance to
peasants. In analysis this data it seemed that peasants within each
of the communities had more in common with each other in their
general response to change than they had with peasants in the other
communities.

The study is therefore comparative. By focusing on three
major types of communities within the same cultural and historical
setting, I am able to compare and contrast their responses to
socio-economic change. A key aspect is the different strategies
for survival chosen by different groups of peasants and why.
Analysis of these differences at a local level is important to gain
a better understanding of how peasants adapt to particular
circumstances and what forces are at work in determining the kinds
of adjustment they make.

When I began this study I tended to assume that the Javanese
peasantry was basically homogeneous in its social, cultural, and
ideological dimensions. For example, Geertz - as noted above -
treated the Javanese peasantry as having a homogeneous culture characterized by harmony, timidity, and resistance to change. I found that the reality is otherwise. Although they do share a number of important characteristics, Javanese peasants also differ from one another in important ways. My fieldwork experience of living with Blitar peasants aroused my interest in the different influences coming to bear over time on different communities, and in the response of these communities to such influences. I found examples of what I have called ‘compliant clients’, ‘defiant activists’, and ‘defenceless victims’.

I do not claim that the three study communities are typical of all villages in Blitar, for there are many other sources of variation in Javanese rural culture. I cannot generalize my specific findings to Java as a whole, nor even to the Blitar region. I have chosen these three types of communities, within one area, the same basic cultural setting, and of similar historical origins, as a way of comparing and contrasting the perceptions of peasants within different communities, to demonstrate different responses to economic and political change. I then try to identify the circumstances and conditions that cause them to be different. While the specific findings cannot be generalised, the role of local level differences and the extent of variation in the response of peasants to change in Java are issues of general relevance.

Although I concentrate on contemporary Blitar, analysis of the preconditions creating the setting in which the differences emerged requires some understanding of the long-term historical processes
that have influenced the various responses to change. Local level analysis is useful in demonstrating the internal logic and functional dynamics of different institutional forms in this process and the role of broader socio-political, economic and technological forces from the wider national context.

Studies of local level differences in adaptation to change in Javanese peasant society have drawn the attention of a number of writers, especially historians. Like Geertz, historians of nineteenth century Java studied the dynamics of peasant society in adjusting to the heavy demands imposed by the Dutch-owned plantation system. However, whereas Geertz focused on the nature of the general response, historians such as Elson (1984), H.J. Benda and L. Castles (1969), Sartono Kartodirdjo (1966), Onghokham (1975), Fernando (1978), and C.L.M. Penders (1984) have concentrated on the unique responses of particular groups of the peasantry. Their interest and emphasis inevitably focus on local level differences in peasant response to the general imposition of the plantation and colonial system. Anthropological studies of response to change, on the other hand, have tended to either follow Geertz in emphasizing the general characteristics of the Javanese response or adopted a case study approach (for example, Boedhisantoso, n.d.) in which the broader context of the local level study is of minor interest. Thus the anthropological literature has tended to overlook local level differences in the peasantry's response to change and has not explored the factors
that account for these. It is hoped that this thesis will make a contribution towards redressing the imbalance.

III. The Setting:

IIIA. The Geography of Blitar Regency:

A summary of the geographical features of Blitar regency (kabupaten), within which the study villages are located, will assist the reader to place the thesis in a wider physical context. Blitar is the name of both the regency and its central town, The regency of Blitar is located about 160 kilometers southwest of Surabaya. The regency as a whole covers about 1604 square kilometers, including the town of Blitar. It includes five superordinate districts (daerah pembantu bupati) eighteen districts (kecamatan), and 256 villages (kelurahan). Villages are further subdivided into hamlets (dukuh). Blitar is bordered to the west by the regency of Tulungagung; to the north by the regencies of Kediri and Malang, to the east by the regency of Malang, and has the Indian Ocean as its southern border (Map C). The town of Blitar, the administrative centre of the regency, covers about 16 square kilometers.

1The source of the following data on administrative structures, geography, geology, geography and the regional economy is BAPPEDA (Regional Development Planning Board) Publication 1980: Memori 5 Tahun Masa Kerja Bupati Kepala Daerah Tingkat II, Blitar (Tahun 1975/1976 s/d 1979/1980), Buku I: 1-5.
Geographically, the regency of Blitar is divided in two by the Brantas river, which flows from east to west through the middle of the regency. The area to the north of the river, north Blitar, is about 914 square kilometers and includes three of the five superordinate districts, twelve of the districts and 181 villages. South Blitar is about 690 square kilometers in area with two superordinate districts, six districts and 75 villages.

Geologically, there are three main divisions in the Blitar region which underlie variations in patterns of land use: the northern volcanic uplands, the southern limestone hills, and the Blitar plain (Map D). North Blitar is characterized by volcanic uplands: from the bank of the river Brantas the land to the north slowly rises into the foothills leading up to two large and still active volcanoes, Mt. Kelud and Mt. Kawi. Each of these volcanoes is part of a mountain range, the Kawi mountain range on the eastern side of the Lekso river, and the Kelud mountain range on the western side of the Lekso, which stretches northward towards Kediri and Malang. The soil of the volcanic uplands is relatively immature, consisting largely of young volcanic rock and sand flows from Mt. Kelud, but is also quite fertile because of ash from the volcano. Since very little of the land is irrigated, being elevated and sloping, the most characteristic crops are coffee, tea, rubber and cacao. These crops are grown as part of a fairly extensive plantation system.

South Blitar, on the other hand, is a continuation of the Pegunungan Kapur Selatan, the southern limestone mountain range of
Map D: Geological map of the Blitar area
south Central Java. It comprises a broad, hilly, east-west band across the southern part of Blitar, spreading inland from the Indian Ocean for approximately 15 to 30 kilometers. The soil throughout most of this area is limestone based and thus of poor quality, being formed largely of siliceous and calcareous rocks. The drainage system in the area is unrelated to that of the rest of the regency. Although there are some streams, they are shallow and intermittent, making irrigation possible in only a small area. The rest of the area is dependent on rainfall. Dry-land farming is the most important agricultural activity in the area. Rain-fed rice, corn, cassava, and some varieties of beans are the most common crops because they are resistant to drought. They provide the staple food for the majority of the people in the area. Inter-cropping is also practised to provide a multi-crop agriculture to support families for the whole year. In the more hilly areas, especially in the southernmost region, teak forests dominate the landscape. These forests are an important component of the economy of the southern zone, where the lumber industry developed during colonial times. This industry is now operated by the State forestry enterprise PERHUTANI and part of the area is a government forest reserve. The area is also a source of other products such as nickel, lime, teraso and kaolin, although these are either not yet mined or are only exploited with simple technologies by the local people.

Between north Blitar and south Blitar, between the volcanic uplands and the limestone hills, lies the Blitar plain.
profile, it looks like a shallow bowl with upland regions to the north and south. The plain is of central importance in the regency as it has the most fertile land as well as the most densely populated part of the regency, even though it accounts for only approximately 23 per cent of the total land area. It is the 'rice-bowl' of Blitar, fertilized both by volcanic ash from Mt. Kelud and by the nutrients carried by the river Brantas. It is also the best irrigated area of Blitar, with an irrigation network which can be traced back for decades. In the colonial era, when Blitar became subject to intensive sugar cultivation, extensive irrigation networks were constructed by the Dutch in areas used for cane.

Economically, Blitar is also divided into three distinct areas: a northern upland zone devoted mainly to the raising of perennial crops, such as coffee, tea and rubber; a central plain, devoted to the cultivation of rice, the staple food of the Javanese; and the southern zone, given over to dry-land farming and, in some areas, large-scale teak mono-culture. In this thesis, unless otherwise indicated, the term northern zone is used when referring to the volcanic uplands and the Blitar plain, while the term southern zone is used for the area south of the Brantas river.

The northern and southern zones differ greatly in accessibility. The southern zone is the more isolated. Although communications were improved during and after the Trisula
Operations in 1968, in 1980 facilities were still generally poor. The terrain in the north, especially the Blitar plain, is more accessible for traffic. The town of Blitar itself is the focus of every main highway. From the town a well-sealed provincial road runs northwestward to Kediri and joins the main highway linking Jakarta and Surabaya. Another well sealed provincial road runs eastward through the centre of the rice-bowl area toward Malang to join the main highway between Malang and Surabaya. There are also numerous branch roads linking the main districts of the regency. Trains ran from the town of Blitar to the west via Kediri to Jakarta, and to the east to Malang and Surabaya daily in 1990. The railway is parallel with the main Blitar-Malang highway. Thus the transport network in the Blitar plain is fairly regular and quite extensive. However, places located at the end of the road network still had problems in 1980 with public transportation; this was particularly true in some parts of the northern upland region and in the southernmost zone.

IIIB. The Three Study Communities:

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2 In 1968, members of what was left of the communist party PKI dug themselves in the rough terrain of south Blitar in a desperate attempt to wage a people's war after the failure of the coup in 1965. They built underground hideouts, fortified villages, and organized people following the example of the people's war in Vietnam. Nevertheless, the army crushed this resistance in a mere three months in an operation code-named Operasi Trisula, literally 'Operation Trident.' See Semdam VIII Brawidjaja (1969).
Map E: Administrative Divisions of the Regency of Blitar
This study is an ethnographic account of rural dwellers of Blitar. It deals with three hamlet (dukuh) communities within the regency: I have given the names Pari, Saratemen and Jati to these three dukuhs. Pari is located in the district (kecamatan) of Talun on the Blitar plain, Saratemen in the district of Nglegok in the northern upland area, and Jati in the district of Sutajayan in the southern zone. Each of these communities, for which I have chosen an appropriate name, typified in some way the primary ecological, economic and social modalities of the area. The economy of Pari in 1980 was based mainly on rice growing, a major economic activity in the Blitar plain, which is fed by the upper Brantas River and well irrigated. The economy of Saratemen was based on a coffee plantation, typical of the northern uplands. The economy of Jati was based on teak forest estates, a dominant economic activity in the southern zone. The focus of the study is a description and analysis of the local economic life and the ways in which the villagers saw their own lives.

Historically, the three hamlets had much in common. Their inhabitants had similar origins, being descendants of migrants from poor areas in Central Java or from densely-settled areas in East Java. Most of the first settlers apparently migrated around the end of the nineteenth century during the plantation boom and were landless or near-landless peasants. However, although they lived only a few kilometers apart, the villagers of the three hamlets were remarkably different in their perception of their lives in relation to the wider society.
We will consider for a moment the term 'peasant'. Here, I use the word to mean rural people at least partially engaged in some form of agriculture. They include wage labourers on plantations who are comparable to landless peasants who have become wage-earners in agriculture enterprises. Neither own land and, because plantation workers have seasonal employment, they also have part-time occupations of other kinds that are often similar to those of the landless labourers. In the slack season in the plantations, for example, they join landless and marginal peasants as buruh srabudan - workers who are engaged in a variety of jobs depending on the availability of work and receive wages on a daily basis. Plantation workers retain close individual ties to the land and usually come from cultivator families or were cultivators themselves before becoming employed on plantations.

The three communities represent significant variations in their economic bases, a dimension which is central to an understanding of how they are organized and how they function. The hamlets of Saratemen and Jati in 1980, for example, were both estate communities, but while the villagers were all estate workers, the two estates were organized on different bases. The

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3Here I use the term "estate" to refer to land which is exploited by a large company for commercial purposes. In order to differentiate between private and government enterprises, I use the term "plantation" when private companies are involved, as in the case of the private coffee plantation in Saratemen. By contrast, the state forestry enterprise, PERHUTANI, in Jati is referred to as a forestry estate. If the distinction in ownership is not relevant, I use the term "estate" to refer to both private plantations and government-owned enterprise.
coffee plantation at Saratemen was a private enterprise, while the teak estate in Jati was government owned. Saratemen hamlet was oriented toward a market economy, while in Jati there was a combination of market forces supplemented by subsistence agriculture, because the government teak estate allotted a portion of land to each estate worker. This could be cultivated for subsistence needs when the holder was not engaged in planting or tending the teak trees. In both Saratemen and Jati the estate dominated the community and owned and controlled the land. In contrast, Pari was an agricultural community based on subsistence rice growing, although this was often supplemented by employment outside the hamlet.

Differences in the economic bases of the three hamlets created contrasts in production relations as well in other aspects of community, social and ritual life. For example, the work system in the estates, which employed a relatively permanent labour force living in a sort of enclave, was quite different from that in a lowland agricultural village. On estates where workers are paid wages, impersonal worker-employer/owner relationships would generate a more rigid demarcation between the owner/employer and the workers. Also the exclusivity of estate organization would lead to a greater degree of self-conscious group identity compared to the more diffuse ties in an agricultural community.

The structure in the agricultural community was observed to be more complex than in the estate communities. This seems to be due, among other things, to status differences based on access to
land. These appear to have an impact on social life that is further complicated because in many situations production relations were cloaked or disguised by kin relations. In the agricultural community, exchange also more often involved barter of goods or services instead of cash purchases. In such cases production relations tend to be disguised by implied social relations and there would be a less developed consciousness of group membership. Therefore, the peasants of Saratemen and Jati would be more politicized than the peasants of Pari. However, political activism does not necessarily change labour relations: land was often controlled through subtle agreements and arrangements between patrons and clients. In Pari, in particular, the complexity of agricultural production relations was blurred and cloaked by relationships such as family, ritual and other subtle ties.

IV Fieldwork Experiences:

My earliest experience with Blitar began with short visits to relatives and continued with fieldwork at the end of 1969 when I was involved in an Applied Nutrition Programme conducted by UNICEF, which gave me the opportunity to travel around Blitar alone and with official groups. This was less than one year after the Trisula Operation, a military action to drive out the followers of the PKI who hid in Blitar, especially in south Blitar, after the unsuccessful 1965 coup. Then, years later, in December 1979, I
went back to Blitar to do research for this thesis. On that occasion I stayed for fifteen months. My earlier visits to Blitar helped me to appreciate the changes that had taken place there. Since my 1969 visit there had been remarkable developments, especially improvements in infrastructure such as roads, bridges, irrigation canals, and school buildings, etc.

In 1980, after following official procedures for gaining permission to undertake research, I made courtesy calls on the authorities of Blitar. I also visited old friends and gathered information while I travelled around looking for communities in which I might work. Sometimes I joined kabupaten officials' tours by car, but most of the time I travelled alone. This period was interesting, partly because I had more time to observe and to think. Since this was my own project, I had more freedom to discard the research procedures I had used in 1969 when part of a large, sponsored research project. The frustration I had experienced in that project included strict time limits and the use of ready-made questionnaires which were sometimes inappropriate to the research site. In 1980 I tried to get a grip on what I really wanted to do. I wanted to stay with the people for some time and to follow their daily lives, using my eyes and ears instead of impersonal questionnaires to gain a better understanding of their lives.

As I wanted to do a comparative study, one criterion in the selection of field locations was that there should be a contrast in economic organization between the communities. I also decided
to focus on the hamlet level. This was partly for practical reasons, since a village was too large to study intensively. More importantly, however, the hamlet is the basic unit of community life.\(^4\) It was characterized by a cluster of households located in a particular area. Most activities, such as the arisan rotating credit or kedokan labour groups,\(^5\) tended to be organized on a hamlet basis. People within the hamlet seemed to have a sense of sharing a common history and identity. The hamlet represented a solid entity, by comparison with the village which was generally established later for administrative and political purposes through the amalgamation of smaller communities. Within one hamlet there are more similarities than within one village consisting of many hamlets.

After two months in Blitar, I succeeded in identifying two areas in which I wanted to work. These were: Pari, an agricultural community, located in the rice-bowl area typical of the Blitar plain; and Saratemen, a coffee plantation community representing the predominant economic activity in north Blitar.

In the beginning, after only brief visits, it was difficult to make distinctions between the hamlets, apart from their predominant economic base, as the communities appeared little

\(^4\)In Saratemen and Jati the hamlets had only recently been attached to their respective villages. In Pari one third of the hamlet population was related by ties of blood or marriage.

\(^5\)Smaller arisans were usually restricted to hamlet residents and in Pari labour recruitment through the kedokan system was strictly limited to hamlet members.
different in their social and cultural lives. However, as my knowledge of the communities developed from daily social contact, I was impressed by the fact that each hamlet was remarkably different in terms of the lives of the people. As my concern was with how people in different types of hamlet perceived and responded to socio-economic changes, it occurred to me that such a study might be more balanced and informative if it were broadened to represent the main types of communities in Blitar as a whole. I decided to include a third type of community whose economy was based on forestry, which is predominant in south Blitar. I chose Jati, a teak estate community in the southern zone. These three communities, Pari, Saratemen, and Jati, represent the three main geographical areas of Blitar regency, north, south and central plain, as well as three different economic bases of village life.

For about fifteen months during 1980-1981 I moved between these three communities. Since I was accompanied by my family, I rented a house in Nglegok district in the northern upland area near Saratemen hamlet. I would spend several days at a time in one of the hamlets, returning to Nglegok for some days, then going out again. Living in the communities I was studying had many advantages as well as some disadvantages. The obvious benefits were that I recognized and knew individuals and they knew and recognized me; I could observe their daily activities and interact with them. We talked about their lives, their happiness, and their problems. I also learned the latest gossip since, after awhile, people considered me to be, to some extent, one of their warga, a
member of their community, and invited me to participate in many of their social activities. Sometimes they also asked me to give speeches such as at Family Planning meetings or at meetings of the PKK (Perkumpulan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, the government sponsored Family Welfare Education Programme for women), which is the major organization working with rural women. Several times I was invited to selametan, wedding ceremonies and attended funerals. All these local functions gave me insight into social differences among village families.

The major disadvantage was that I was the object of villagers' curiosity and suspicion. I had to be careful in maintaining relationships with all parties to balance my attentions to each to avoid a negative impact on the research. In day to day life and in conversations with villagers I had to struggle to avoid becoming emotionally involved. This was not always easy and sometimes I failed. Most of the data in this study were obtained by observation of interactions in various settings and by questioning informants during general conversations. Formal interviewing played little part. Since the communities were small, (Pari covered an area of 37.5 hectares with 140 households, Saratemen covered 15 hectares with 191 households, and Jati covered 25 hectares with 97 households), I surveyed the population instead of using a sample. I did use a questionnaire to collect data on demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and I also used guided interviews to direct conversations along standard lines. This technique helped me to collect data that could not have been
obtained only from questionnaires and formal interviews. In interviews I also used a tape recorder. To my surprise, most people did not object to my taping our conversations as long as they were not related to sensitive issues. People would speak openly on certain topics, such as history or everyday life, but they were more careful of others. Precise or correct answers to questions on issues such as land ownership and politics were often difficult to obtain, and replies to questions on income sometimes involved apparently deliberate overestimates or underestimates.

Even though I am not a native speaker or fully fluent in Javanese, my command of it is quite adequate for communication and comprehension, and I was able to establish some intimacy with the villagers, although it took time before they really accepted me. A study of this type depends primarily on the quality of the relationship between the observer and the observed. The intrusions into villagers' lives by a researcher can create problems for them. Yet people were not only prepared to give up time but were also patient in listening to and answering questions about complex matters which had probably never before been raised in their minds. In the early stages of my work I was worried whether their answers, their attitudes and their expressions were genuine, especially since I was an outsider, but my worries diminished as I became better acquainted with them.

In the beginning it was difficult for me to adjust to the people I was dealing with. This was not the first time I had worked with villagers, as my previous work took me to villages
several times. On previous field trips I had had no problem with rapport, and I had enjoyed life in the village. Then I had usually stayed for only a week or so. This time was different. I was to live with villagers for more than a year, observing their daily routines, and being the object of their curiosity. I found this difficult and frustrating at first. To be frank, my original notion of living in a village was motivated not merely by scientific reasons. Deep in my heart I had sentimental reasons: it was my dream to be a peaceful villager far away from routine city life. When the reality was not as I expected, I became dissatisfied. That was the situation during my first two months in the field. Then I reached a stage where I could reflect critically on my experiences and reactions.

The origin of my difficulty, I realized, was partly a social barrier. Being born and brought up with a different socio-economic background, I failed to adapt at first to the new social setting of village life. Problems started with my suspicion that the villagers were demanding, untrustworthy, resentful and suspicious. From the villagers’ point of view, my presence probably was suspicious but I interpreted their reaction as having something to do with jealousy. They looked on me as a city dweller with a lot of money, or as a city dweller with privileges, as someone they could exploit.

My initial experiences occurred in the context of daily observation. For example, one afternoon in Saratemen, I passed a group of men in front of the gardu jaga (night guard post) and I
overheard them talking about coffee stealing. Suddenly I heard one say in a loud voice: "If we do not steal, we do not eat, do we?"
He talked loudly, and I thought he did so on purpose so I could hear him. On another occasion, I met several women on their way home from ngasag, gathering husks after harvest, when one of them scolded her little daughter, reproaching the child for stealing a stalk of corn from somebody's field. She said: "Why did you take only one?"

Another example of unexpected (by me) behaviour came from village market traders. One morning I went to the market just to look around and met an old woman selling garden vegetables, all in small quantities. I sat next to her, just watching people passing by. Very few people bought from her. I felt sorry and finally I decided to buy two bunches of her spinach. She said she could drop the spinach at my house on her way home, but when I arrived home not long afterwards I did not see the fresh spinach I had just seen in the market; instead there was faded rotten spinach that was definitely inedible. Another day, a neighbour brought me pineapples, but she charged double the price she offered to others. The transaction was in front of my house, so I could hear all the bargaining. Time and time again I felt these people treated me unfairly, until one day when I talked to one of my neighbours to whom I felt close. She said: "It's fair for us to charge you extra since you are rich; we are poor. A couple of hundred rupiah are nothing for you. You will get more."
This short conversation opened my eyes and my heart. I realized that what was lacking in my relationship with the villagers so far was my sympathy and understanding. Up till now I had used urban middle class values in judging the relationship, and quickly blamed them unfairly. I had never asked myself why they behaved like this, why they had bitter feelings, why they grabbed at the first opportunity to exploit me, even if it cost my friendship. Learning from these experiences I was then more ready to accept people as they were. I deliberately started to observe their 'negative' behaviour, and to try to understand the background that leads to such behaviour. After some time, I felt I understood them much better. Knowing their lives, I could even understand why they were apparently 'untrustworthy' and 'demanding'. I was able to sympathize with their plight.

My frustration was quickly over and the villagers also became more friendly, helpful and cooperative. This did not mean that they ceased to overcharge me, or that they stopped teasing me as banyak uang, having a lot of money. However, this did not bother me any longer: I saw them in a different light, and I believe they also saw me differently as well. They were beginning to trust me. They talked and expressed their feelings more freely and openly. My relationship with the villagers was blossoming, making it much easier for me to collect information as well as to analyze their behaviour and recognize their feelings. This approach both enriched my life and helped my research. I do not say that I was able to adjust myself fully to village life, nor that I was fully
accepted in the villages. Several times I had to leave the village and escape to 'urban civilization' whenever I felt exhausted. I do not claim that the information I received was always correct and complete. I was quite aware of individual and situational biases, but I tried to improve the accuracy of my data by checking and counter-checking.

V The Structure of the Thesis:

This thesis is divided into six chapters. This chapter provides the introduction. Chapter 2 presents firstly, a summary of the broad historical background that has created the social environment within which peasant reactions to change observed in the study communities takes place. This history (and the peasants understanding of it) is also an important influence on the patterns of thought and behaviour that determine the forms of peasant response to change. The second section of chapter 2 presents a review of recent land and labour relations in Blitar regency, focusing particularly on land and labour relations in the three types of economic environments represented by the study villages. Land and labour relations were one of the most important aspects of peasant life in the three villages and the major focus of recent changes. The analysis of peasant response to change presented in the main body of the thesis will concentrate on this.
Chapter 1

The three hamlets of Pari, Sarateman and Jati are presented in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 respectively. Each is described separately to bring out the distinct differences in their situation and experiences. The different perceptions of peasants in each and the ways in which they react in adjusting to changes are described. At the same time inter-connections and similarities between the different aspects of life and different patterns of adjustment in each are also highlighted.

Chapter 6, the conclusion, analyses the different responses to change in the three villages and examines the factors influencing the different patterns of adjustment. The implications of the findings are related to Geertz' view of Javanese involution and the culture of poverty.

VI. Summary

This chapter locates the thesis within the wider body of literature on Java. The debate on the involution of the Javanese peasantry and alternative views of Javanese peasants' adjustment to change is summarised to provide the theoretical context of the thesis. The general framework of the study has been outlined, followed by a description of the physical setting of the fieldwork and a descriptive account of fieldwork experiences.

The central theme of the thesis is peasant strategies for survival in response to change. Clifford Geertz' model of
agricultural involution among Javanese peasants provides the starting point for the theoretical discussion because, although controversial, it continues to be widely used to categorize the way in which Javanese peasants respond to change by adapting social relations, the land tenure system and labour arrangements in an involuted way that Geertz considered to be ultimately self-defeating. Other writers, such as Boeke, held similarly negative views of the potential of the Javanese peasantry to adapt to modernization and to participate in modern economic development.

Geertz' critics have particularly focused on his implicit assumption that the peasantry is relatively homogeneous and that peasant responses and adaptive strategies have been similar throughout Java. He has been criticized for his failure to appreciate the extent of agrarian differentiation in the Javanese rural community and for failing to take into account local variations. A number of writers have emphasized the importance of local variations in socio-cultural experiences, as well as differences in the physical environment, in influencing the ways in which members of different social groups within the peasantry adapt to change.

This thesis focuses on the influence of different socio-cultural experiences on peasant responses to change. It will also explore the kinds of strategies adopted in different circumstances. In order to study these issues three research communities in Blitar, East Java were chosen. They are typical of three types of economic environment found in the Blitar region and their
historical and socio-cultural experiences were also very different. They thus provide a suitable setting in which to explore the effect of local variations in the physical and socio-cultural environment on peasant strategies for survival in the context of change. The chapter concluded by briefly comparing and contrasting the main physical and socio-cultural features of the three communities and described my first fieldwork experiences in the research area.
CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

THIS CHAPTER consists of two parts. The first presents an overview of the historical context affecting the study. The second presents an overview of contemporary land and labour relations in Blitar regency, the institutional context within which peasant response to change will be analyzed in the following three chapters.

I. The Historical Context of the Study:

An important factor influencing response to change is historical experience. There are two levels of history that are relevant to this thesis:¹ the first is the formally documented historical record that is the main concern of this chapter; the second is the peasants' understanding of their history that is a major factor influencing their behaviour patterns and reactions to change. The second, necessarily less well documented, will form an important element of Chapters 3, 4 and 5. The first is

¹I am grateful to Dr William O'Malley for this point.
significant for this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, the formally
documented historical record provides the background to most of the
debate on the nature of peasant adjustment to change presented in
Section I of the first chapter. Secondly, and more importantly,
the historical reality that is the basis of this formal history has
also shaped the present and created the modern context of change
within which the peasants in the study communities act. There is
also an obvious relationship between historical reality and the
peasantry's understanding of their history, although the precise
nature of the relationship is less clear.

The formal historical record of social, economic, political
and environmental change that forms the background to the debates
presented in Section I of Chapter 1 is better and more thoroughly
covered in other sources. Here I will concentrate on that part of
the historical record that is of more immediate relevance to the
following chapters of this thesis. Although documents for Blitar
in the early nineteenth century are few, it seems that the region
was only relatively sparsely populated during the period of the
Cultivation System, when Dutch colonial rule was first introduced
on a large scale to rural Java. The real economic expansion of

See, for example, de Klerck: 1938; Furnivall: 1944; Schrieke: 1957;
Geertz: 1963; Day: 1966; Van Niel: 1964; 1968 and 1972; Onghokham:

Jonathan Riggs, a member of the Batavian Society of Arts and
Science travelled through the Blitar region in 1847. He was
impressed by the fact that, despite the rich potential of the area,
the population was sparse and much wild country was evident (1849:
495).
Blitar appears to date from the period of the Corporate Plantation System. Thus our review of the historical record begins around the 1870's. This starting point is also consistent with our interest in the second kind of history, that is, the peasantry's perception of their own history, and its links with historical reality. It is unlikely that peasant recollections reach back into the past much beyond this point.  

Following the end of the Dipanegara War, when the mancanegara regions remaining under the control of the Javanese rulers, including Banyumas and Bagelen in the west and Madiun and Kediri (including Blitar) in the east, were taken over by the Dutch. They were placed under direct colonial administration (De Klerck, vol. 2, 1938: 176). This colonial administration was structured as follows. At the apex of Dutch regional administration was a

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4 The oldest respondent interviewed in 1980 claimed to be over 100 years of age. He was probably at least in his late eighties. Thus his personal recollections could date back to the 1890's and stories handed down from his parents could date to the period before 1870. However, most key persons and opinion leaders would probably have been a generation younger. (In the absence of birth documents it was not possible to establish accurately the ages of respondents, especially the elderly.)

5 The biggest war the Dutch ever took part in (1825-1830) in Java, involving Prince Dipanegara who staged a revolt against the Sultan and the Dutch.

6 In the old Javanese state geographical and social divisions were structured to reflect the cosmic order. The kraton (palace) was the centre of the empire, surrounded by the negara agung or core region. The outlying territories of the realm were called the mancanegara, literally areas outside the core. The northern areas along the coast were referred to as the pesisir or coastal regions (Moertono, 1963: 111-118; Onghokham, 1975: 12-13).
resident and below him, an assistant resident. A residency was made up of several regencies (kabupaten). The native hierarchy, operating within a regency, was headed by the regent, or bupati. The bupati were regarded as the direct heirs of the local chiefs or lords of pre-colonial days and were given independent legal status by the Dutch under the 1854 Constitution. Thus they were not subordinate to the assistant resident even though they administered in the same regency. Below the bupati was the wedana, or district chief, with the camat, or assistant wedana, in charge of a sub-district, the lowest official in regional administration. Below this were the villagers under their own indigenous administration (Sutherland 1973: 114).

In line with this structure, the Kediri region was reorganized as a residency with four regencies: Berbek (now Nganjuk), Kediri, Trenggalek, and Ngrowo (now Tulungagung). Blitar was a sub-regency in the regency of Ngrowo. It was only in 1863 that Blitar was promoted to a full regency with the appointment of its first regent (Suwandi 1978: 67). This relatively late administrative development of the area was partly attributable to its early social and economic insignificance. Territorially, the area was larger than any other regency in the residency of Kediri, but demographic records for the first half of the last century indicate that its population was very small (Suwandi 1978: 23). Even until the mid-nineteenth century Blitar was still sparsely populated according to Riggs (1849: 235, 248, 494) who passed through the area in a tour of east Java.
One important consequence of the Dutch annexation of the mancanegara was that the Dutch now replaced the Javanese rulers as the 'owners' of the land (Furnivall 1944: 179). In the eyes of the Dutch, all land in Java had belonged to the rulers so, after the establishment of the Dutch colonial administration, the mancanegara was referred to as Government land under a system of direct government rule (Onghokham 1975: 57).

The Dutch introduced the Cultivation System with the aim of making Java profitable. Peasants were required to cultivate government owned export crops on one fifth of their land, or else to provide 66 days labour each year on government plantations or projects. In practice villages often had to devote more (Schrieke 1929: 110; Kahin 1952: 12; van Niel 1972: 98). In the Blitar region it seems that the Cultivation System affected only parts of the Blitar Plain up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Riggs noted in 1847 that travelling westward from Blitar to Garum he passed through alternating cultivation of coffee and rice. The former was presumably grown under the Cultivation System. He also recorded that carriages could only travel as far as Garum: further eastward the journey had to be made on horseback (Riggs, 1849: 494). Settlement in the Blitar region was described as sparse and the territory 'wild' (1849: 247; 248; 495).

The most significant development of the Blitar region appears to start during the period of the Corporate Plantation System during and after the 1870's. In 1870 the Cultivation System was officially replaced by the so-called Liberal Policy under which
Table 2.1
Population: Density and Annual Rate of Increase
Blitar, 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1845</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Blitar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>20,612</td>
<td>148,814</td>
<td>443,505</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>761,808</td>
<td>774,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Rate of Increase</td>
<td>(4.5)</td>
<td>(2.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(0.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density*</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>162.8</td>
<td>485.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>833.5</td>
<td>847.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Blitar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25,187</td>
<td>145,911</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>256,850</td>
<td>262,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Rate of Increase</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(4.5)a</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(0.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>211.4</td>
<td>372.2</td>
<td>380.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blitar**

| Population | 20,612 | 174,001 | 589,416 | 839,952 | 1018,658 | 1037,258 |
| Annual Rate of Increase | (4.8) | (3.1) | (1.1) | (1.9) | (0.2) |
| Density | - | 108.5 | 367.5 | 523.7 | 635.0 | 646.7 |

*per km²*

Sources: Riggs (1849)^7; Kolonial Verslag, 1891; Census of 1930 (Volkstelling 1930); Census of 1961; Census of 1971, Series E, No. 13; Census of 1980, Series S, No. 15. (all Central Bureau of Statistics).

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^7Refer to this chapter, footnote 5.
private investment by private companies in agricultural or other enterprises was encouraged. This is not to suggest that before 1870 there were no private enterprises operating in Java but that, with the new 1870 Agrarian Reform Act, the private sector gained increased privileges and access to cheap labour and land (Legge 1964). This shift in policy came with the passage in 1870 of a new Agrarian Act which defined all land not under private ownership as state land (domein vanden staat). Later, the government leased this 'unoccupied' land to private plantations under seventy-five year lease agreements (Furnivall 1944: 178-179). Under this new Act most of the unoccupied mountainous and wooded areas in the northern and southern (in which the study hamlet of Jati was located) zones of Blitar were considered to be government property. These were later leased to private companies or else became forest reserves.

The opening of new land, especially with the establishment of estates, attracted more and more people, mostly peasants from other areas looking for land and work. The subsequent change was dramatic. From a sparsely settled area with a population of 20,612 in 1845 (Riggs, 1849)'Blitar increased to a population of 148,814 in 1890 (Kolonial Verslag 1891). (See Table 2.1). During the plantation boom in the late nineteenth century there was a large exodus of people from Central Java flooding into the Blitar area.

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8 This figure must be considered as unreliable. It is based on Bleeker's figures that are generally regarded to have been underestimates (Suwandi, 1978: 21).
The coffee growing hamlet of Saratemen was founded at this time. From this time, the population continued to increase, especially in the northern zone, although not as rapidly as before. Plantation development, and consequently population movement, were encouraged when in 1912 the government railway reached Blitar (Gotz 1938-39: 267-290). For the four decades from 1890 to 1930, the figures were still high with an average annual growth rate of 2.8 per cent (see Table 2.1). The average annual population increase in Southern Blitar was 4.5 per cent during the period from 1890 to 1930 (Table 2.1). However, these were the years when the rate of increase in population in the northern zone slowed down, suggesting that the southern zone may have offered better opportunities to migrants. In 1930, the percentage of immigrants in the regency’s total population was 24.6 percent (Kantoor voor de Volkstelling 1934: 101).

One component of the material wealth of the southern zone was its teak. Teak forests in Java are concentrated in the limestone areas of Central and East Java (Wepf 1958: 400). Teak has probably been cultivated since the Hindu era (Altona 1922: 457-507). Beversluis (1929: 51-57) distinguishes three periods in the forestry history of the Dutch East Indies: first, exploitation of timber resources without forest management; then, (1863-1897) a system of forest management with exploitation mainly in the hands of private contractors; finally, from 1897 exploitation was placed in the hands of the government Forestry Service (Dienst van het Boschwezen). New forestry regulations made the policy of state
management more effective by emphasizing conservation rather than exploitation (Furnivall 1944: 325). After several reorganizations, in 1929 the forest service became a professional institute under the name Dienst der Wildhoutbossen op Java en Madura, the 'Natural Timber Forest Service for Java and Madura,' while outside Java the service was under Dienst der Wildhoutbossen in de Buitengewesten, the 'Natural Timber Forest Service for the Outer Regions' (Odenthal and Soerjono 1964: 162-167). In Blitar the forest reserves included land already occupied by peasants and while these inhabitants were permitted to remain there, they were no longer permitted to clear the forest. (These communities included the predecessors to Jati hamlet.)

Among the most significant changes in the Blitar region were the rise of private plantations under the Liberal Policy and the accompanying spread of settlement. One of the plantations in the study hamlet of Saratemen appears to date from the late 1870s. In neighbouring Madiun regency Onghokham (1975: 206; 224) notes the increasingly rapid spread of the cash economy (see also Penders, 1984: chapter III), the improvements in communications with the construction of railroads, and the increasing pressure on food resources during this period. These factors were all important in the rapid spread of settlement in the Blitar region. (See table 2.1). By 1920 there were fifty private enterprises in the Blitar

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9Kementerian Penerangan, 1953: 646 notes that the lease on this plantation was due to expire in 1954. Since leases were usually for a seventy-five year period, this suggests that the lease was granted in 1879.
region, consisting of forty-one private long-term leases of 'unoccupied' land and nine short-term leases of lands already settled (Departement van Landbouw, Nyverheid en Handel, Landbouwatlas van Java en Madura, Deel II, 1928).

Another factor during the period was increasing poverty in the rural areas, dating especially from the depression of the 1880's (O nghokham, 1975: 224). As a result, the Ethical Policy was introduced in 1900\(^{10}\) in an attempt to relieve growing rural poverty. The Minderewelvaart Commission was also created to investigate the causes of the declining prosperity of the native population of Java and Madura (O nghokham, 1975: 226).

It was in this context that social unrest also emerged and, with it in a number of areas, peasant resistance. From the early part of the twentieth century Blitar was known for its political radicalism. Faced with the increasingly repressive image of the colonial administration, the Blitarese became sensitive to the call for justice. A report by the Resident of Kediri to the Governor General in 1927 indicated that the people in Blitar had lost trust in and respect for the native feudal and Dutch colonial authorities and, instead, had placed much confidence in newly arisen political activists (Memorie van Overgave betreffende de Afdeeling Blitar, 1929). Hundreds of 'agitators' and 'terrorists' had been put in jail from Blitar, mainly those involved in the so-called underground movement Gagak Hitam, literally 'the Black Crow,' which

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\(^{10}\) For an account of the Ethical Policy in the Bojonegoro area of East Java see Penders, 1984: chapter II.
aimed at toppling the colonial structure by force of arms.\textsuperscript{11} Blitar is also known for its strong tradition of messianism\textsuperscript{12} which, as noted by Kartodirdjo (1973: 17), was also closely related to peasant poverty and hardship.

The tradition of peasant resistance persisted throughout the early twentieth century but increasingly took the form of nationalistic movements\textsuperscript{13} (Penders, 1984: chapter IV). The leader of the Partai Nasional Indonesia, Sukarno, was born in Blitar. An anonymous manuscript indicates that communists were established in the mountainous areas of Blitar in the mid-1920's (Anonymous, n.d.: 9). Political activism emerged also during the Second World War. In 1945, an armed revolt\textsuperscript{14} against the Japanese Occupation by the auxiliary army PETA, (Pembela Tanah Air, the 'Defenders of the Fatherland') broke out in Blitar, for which three native officers were executed by the Japanese.

\textsuperscript{11}One respondent, a certain Sukandar of Mara village, who used to be a plantation worker was granted the status of Perintis Kemerdekaan, 'Pioneer of Independence,' because of his underground political activities during colonial times. Since 1927 he has been imprisoned three times, twice by the Dutch and once by the Japanese, for a total of seven years.

\textsuperscript{12}See Suwandi, 1980 for a study of a contemporary messianic movement with a strong following among the local peasantry, focused on a certain Embah Wali.

\textsuperscript{13}Penders also notes that in Pasuruan residency the incidence of cane burnings, the typical form of earlier peasant resistance, declined in the twentieth century. He suggests this was because 'peasants were becoming more skilled ... in dealing with their declining economic circumstances' (1984: 224).

\textsuperscript{14}For details of the revolt, see Notosutanto (1968).
Penders (1984: 224-227) suggests that the East Javanese peasantry was learning to adapt to the economic realities (and uncertainties) of the colonial world in the early twentieth century. Van der Kolff (n.d.: 2), writing in 1936 of the years 1922 and 1936, was basically optimistic about the situation in 1922 but found the region in "a deep depression" in 1936. His impression was of "changes that are tending towards the formation of a proletariat uprooted from the soil". Although he seemed to take a rather optimistic view of this he did admit that there were increasing numbers of peasants "for whom native agriculture is becoming increasingly inadequate".

Despite Van der Kolff's optimism and the efforts of the Ethical Policy the economic condition of the peasantry generally deteriorated. The Depression of the 'thirties greatly worsened their situation (See Elson, 1984: chapter VIII). Even Van der Kolff wrote in terms of "the deteriorated conditions of life" in 1936 observing:

'The purchase of petroleum has much diminished. . . . Matches have fallen into disuse . . . The expenditure on textile has also shrunk. . . . [T]he whole family used to change their outer garments once a year. By now this only happens to some of the members, while the others will at best get the cast-off clothes. In the field of food consumption . . . less rice is eaten and more cassave. (Van der Kolff, n.d.: 43-44).

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15He mentioned it as 'a favourable phenomenon for the existing estates and industries' (Van der Kolff, n.d.: 2).
Van der Kolff was writing about the Regency of Trenggalek and district (Van der Kolff n.d.: 45), within 100 kms of Blitar. Like Penders (1984: chapter VIII), Van der Kolff (n.d.: 43) commented on the "regression to the old economy of domestic self-containment".

Although not directly apparent from Van der Kolff's study of labour relations in rice cultivation, the Great Depression severely affected the plantations (see Elson, 1984: chapter VIII). The second World War brought further major changes. By 1942, during the early period of the Japanese Occupation, most of the plantations and forests of Java and Madura had been devastated by destructive exploitation. Most plantations were abandoned by their Dutch administrators who either escaped or were interned by the Japanese. Many plantations were neglected, especially when the Japanese forced the villagers and ex-workers to use plantation land to grow crops for Japanese supplies.¹⁶ In Blitar this cultivated land became known as tanah babatan Jepang (literally, land cleared - for example, of coffee trees - by the Japanese).

When the Japanese Occupation ended in 1945, at the time of the national revolution, many villagers, especially in plantation areas, continued to occupy the tanah babatan Jepang as their own. Later these lands were converted into agricultural lands and villages (Soetikno 1961: 14-15). Occupants were initially

¹⁶On the condition of plantations during the war see, for example, Sewando, 1947: 90-97. For East Java, Kediri residency and Blitar see Kementerian Penerangan, 1953: 289-290; 327-332; 425-435; 646.
relatives or friends of those already there. Later, peasants - most of them landless - poured in from other regencies. Most were from Tulungagung and Kediri, two regencies subject to annual flooding. They had heard about the 'free land' which they could occupy or at least buy cheaply. For the successful, this was probably the first time in their lives that they experienced control over land. During the Independence War (1945-1949) many plantations became army bases and some were deliberately razed to the ground. Forest reserves suffered the same fate.

When the Revolution ended, an agreement was reached by the Dutch and Indonesian governments in a peace conference known as Konperensi Meja Bundar (the Round Table Conference) in 1949, held to discuss the transfer of sovereignty. All foreign plantations had to be returned to their owners and the Indonesian government would assume control of the forest reserves. The villagers and the squatters who occupied the ex-plantation land and forest reserves before the Conference were given permission to remain on their land until the Indonesian government issued a formal law regulating land rights (Sutter 1959: 695). Some plantations were handed back to their owners but many that were severely damaged and occupied by the squatters or the army remained under dispute. Most squatter groups had already established villages. Returning owners were uncertain how to proceed. In the meantime and throughout the transition period the peasants continued their struggle to obtain and hold land: more squatters continued to occupy neglected and disputed plantation land as well as forest reserves (Kementerian
Pertanian, 1952; Si Amat 1954: 7-11; Adinda 1954: 5-13). There was often a spirit of lawlessness in these areas. Problems increased when land disputes became the centre of political activism. The communist party, PKI, through its peasant front, BTI, (Barisan Tani Indonesia, the Indonesian Peasant Front) and the Plantation Workers' Union, SARBUPRI, made these disputes an issue in the first elections after Independence and received very positive support from the squatters. In the 1955 General Election 46.5 per cent of the total vote in the regency of Blitar went to the PKI (Alfian, 1975: 90-91).

However, the peasants’ hold on the land was precarious. At first the Indonesian Government could give them little more than sympathy, but in 1954 the Government issued an emergency law concerning the occupation of land (Undang-Undang Darurat No.8 1954). Basically, the law favoured squatters who already occupied the land before 1954, especially those living in established villages. However, once the stream of squatters had begun, it was difficult to stop. In the forests, the government started more systematic utilization. In addition to the Forestry Service, a state-owned Forestry Estate, PERHUTANI, was established in some provinces including Central and East Java (based on Regulation No.17/1961). The Forestry Estate adopted the existing mbaon system.

In 1957, the Government announced an emergency law (Undang-Undang No.74 1957), which nationalized all Dutch enterprises including those in the plantation sector. Most of the
Dutch owned plantations became government owned enterprises, a few either were leased to private enterprises or became army cooperatives. In 1960 another Act was issued concerning the occupation of the land (Undang-Undang No.51 1960), which reaffirmed the rejection of the claims of new squatters. In this Act a clear distinction was made between those who occupied plantations and forest reserves before the 1954 Act was issued and those who occupied land after that date. Squatters who came after the 'Round Table Conference' but before 1954 were permitted to remain. New squatters were strictly forbidden. In a letter to the local authorities, the Agrarian Minister encouraged officials to take immediate action to ensure the rights of the earliest squatters, that is, those who had settled before the Conference, especially where organized settlements could be consolidated (Sumarsono 1965: 250-252).

In September 1960, a new Agrarian Reform was instituted which, among other things, confirmed land redistribution. The land to be redistributed consisted of state controlled land, including occupied ex-plantation land and forest reserves, as well as private land in excess of certain limits. Implementation of the reform was weak and slow, and it was not until 1963 that the first list of land available for redistribution was issued (c.f. Tjondronegoro 1972: 6). As expected, the number of peasants who benefitted from redistribution was small compared with the mass of landless peasants. This outcome was partly due to under-registration at
various levels, especially of private land, and to reluctance to implement the law and thus exacerbate local conflicts.

The number of land-hungry peasants occupying and cultivating plantation land and forest reserves continued to grow rapidly. The PKI initiated a campaign to implement the 1960 Land Reform Laws and in 1963, launched a programme known as aksi sepihak in which people simply moved onto land considered eligible for redistribution under the land law. In some areas the reform did take place legally under the reform scheme; in other cases changes occurred more slowly or not at all. In general, while waiting for legalization of ownership the squatters tended to keep for subsistence the plots they already occupied. In some areas, violence spread as villagers began seizing land. In Central and East Java, in particular, there was violent conflict with landowners and government authorities (Lyon 1970, Mortimer 1972). Kidnapping, murder and burnings haunted villagers. Ricklefs (1981: 268) writes:

"In the cities, towns and villages, communists and anti-communists believed stories of assassination squads being prepared and lists of victims being drawn up. Prophesies, omens and violence spread."

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18Literally, "unilateral action." The name was applied to the actions taken by the PKI and its affiliated groups, the BTI and SARBUPRI, to implement the land reform stipulations, in particular those dealing with the sharecropping arrangements, without waiting for the procedures laid down by the government (see Lyon 1970; Mortimer 1972; Ricklefs 1981).
When the unsuccessful 1965 coup occurred, there were still numerous cases where land apparently remained undistributed or claims remained un-legalized. The study hamlet of Saratemen is an example: the claims of its residents are still (1985) not formalized.

On the night of 30th September, 1965, an ill-planned coup was attempted in Jakarta. Soon afterward, the PKI was outlawed and all actions under its influence were, in effect, banned. These included land reform policies and the occupation of estate land by squatters, which were regarded as communist influenced because the PKI and BTI had formed the spearhead of these movements. Consequently, the implementation of land reform slowed down, to the point of becoming entirely ineffective.

In the meantime, after 1965, some disputed ex-plantation land, which was occupied by squatters whose claims had not yet been legalized, was taken over again by plantations or by the local authorities. The occupants were either evicted or placed in reserve areas (cf. White and Wiradi 1979: 53-54). The hamlet of Saratemen again provides an example. There were many victims of the purge following the coup: people were imprisoned, killed or just disappeared, especially (although not only) followers of the PKI and its sympathizers. Some surviving communist leaders withdrew to the southern zone of Blitar to prepare a base for

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19 For details of the coup see Vittachi (1967), Hughes (1968).
guerrilla tactics after the unsuccessful coup attempt. Their base was discovered in 1968 and wiped out by the Trisula military operation. Many died or were imprisoned during this campaign, including ordinary villagers. The Trisula Operation is still recalled as a traumatic experience by people in the southern zone. Having been neglected for a long time, the southern zone was given priority in development after the Trisula Operation. Wide new roads and bridges were built to bring the southern zone out of its isolation. Village resettlement projects were established aimed at making people live close to each other in clusters near or along the roads.

One important consequence of all these events was the organization and politicization of rural peasants. Through political organizations, rural peasants dealt and negotiated with Agrarian Reform courts and other agencies. It was through these political groups that many rural people had for the first time an opportunity to participate in the wider socio-political arena. Yet the effects of those events and political mobilization on rural communities were not uniform. Some communities seem to have been radicalized by their experiences and others not. These differences will be explored in chapters 3, 4 and 5.
II. The Institutional Context: Land and Labour Relations:

A shortage of cultivated land, inequality in landownership, absentee ownership and complex tenancy arrangements and labour relations, a combination of attributes which Taintor (1974: 64) called the land pressure syndrome, is characteristic not only of Blitar but also of other rural areas of Java. This section of Chapter 2 outlines the institutional context of land and labour relations in Blitar with reference to conditions in irrigated rice cultivation, coffee plantations and forestry as found in the study areas. Most of the literature reviewed in Chapter 1 on the response of the Javanese peasant to change focuses on land and labour relations. This is not surprising since these are so important to the peasantry. Similarly, most of the ethnographic data presented in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of this thesis deals with change in the context of land and labour relations. This section describes the land and labour arrangements of certain areas of rural Blitar that form the institutional background to the ethnographic data of the main body of the thesis.

Obviously the land pressure syndrome did not happen overnight. Thus I begin with a brief survey of the development of land pressure in Blitar in general, starting with the nineteenth century. As Kano (1977: 2) surmised:

"the prototype of . . . Javanese problems on land tenure had already grown during the colonial period, for commercial economy must surely have gradually insinuated
He suggested that the origins of contemporary landowner-tenant relations are to be found in the opening up of land to active utilization by private estates in 1870. In the period that followed rapid development of estate agriculture, increasing commercialization and other accompanying changes in rural society must have brought about fundamental changes in the prevailing institutional arrangements.

As noted above, after 1870 the demand for land for planting coffee and other perennial crops was met by the government by providing 'waste land', that is, 'unoccupied land', on long term leases to estates. The establishment of plantations on unoccupied land and, later, also - on short-term leases - on some peasant lands must have restricted the supply of land available for peasant agriculture. In 1874 the Ontginning Ordonatie further restricted peasant access to land by expressly forbidding the peasants from opening up the unoccupied lands that had been

\[20\] With the enactment of the Agrarische Wet and the Agrarische Besluit.

\[21\] Kano (1977: 40) summarized the main features of the pre-1870 system in the following terms: 'rigid communal regulations', 'the element of individual ownership is not well developed', 'a class relationship in the context of desa communal social relations is widespread' and 'arable land is not a commodity except in certain areas of West Java'.

\[22\] See page 52.

\[23\] See above, page 52.
designated as government owned in the 1870 act. The impact of this must have been greater because it occurred at a time when migrants were beginning to enter Blitar in increasing numbers.\textsuperscript{24}

The spread of both settlement and the expansion of the plantation sector during the remainder of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century apparently resulted in land holdings that were increasingly inadequate to provide basic subsistence and the emergence of landlessness. Van der Kolff (n.d.: 24) writing of the situation in 1922 in the residency of Kediri (Blitar at that time was part of Kediri) referred to:

"a population, of which a portion have now insufficient land for planting or even none at all."

Van der Kolff's description of conditions in the area in 1936\textsuperscript{25} (n.d.: 2) matches well with Taintor's description of the land pressure syndrome:

"the rapid increase in the population . . . by bringing in the question of cash transactions and the growing relative scarcity of the necessary agricultural land, causes social differentiation. . . . [E]veryone clings to his bond with the land as long as possible and continues to seek his living in farming. As the number of those without land rises, the cleft widens, dependence on the landowners increases and the returns in wages for work decreases. So it has proved that very rapidly a

\textsuperscript{24}See above, page 50.

\textsuperscript{25}This description appears in the introduction. The report was written in 1936. It presumably refers to the later period rather than to 1922 when the first survey was carried out.
reserve army of persons is formed with very modest demands for living, for whom native agriculture is becoming increasingly inadequate."

Kano concluded that prior to 1870 land was not regarded as a commodity. Van der Kolff observed, despite population pressure on land, peasants clung to their bonds with the land as long as possible. Even in 1980 I found that for a variety of reasons, among them the inheritance system, land is not generally used as a commodity (see also Lyon 1970: 12). Peasants rarely sell their land. However, as Lyon (1970: 11) noted:

"although land itself may not have been a commodity, it can be regarded as having functioned as a commodity via its productive capacity through the proliferation of labor and sharecropping agreements."

Thus, in an emergency they may squeeze cash from their land by leasing or renting it out. If absolutely necessary they may subdivide even tiny holdings in order to sell a fragment. (This helps explain why there has been no large concentration of land in Java, although this does not mean that there is no concentration of control over land). It also explains some of the complexity that has developed in tenancy and credit arrangements relating to land and has further implications, such as allowing concentration of control over land, produce and labour (Lyon, 1970: 12). This concentration provides a basis for economic differentiation that in turn leads to changes in social and economic relations.
The background to land and labour relations in Blitar around the time of the fieldwork in 1980 can be seen from the following statistical data. In 1975 (Bappeda: Memori 5 Tahun Masa Kerja. Bupati Kepala Daerah Tingkat II Blitar (Tahun 1975/1976 s/d 1979/1980. Buku I: II-1) the total area of cultivated land owned by peasant households in the Blitar region amounted to 76,002.685 hectares. This figure was largely unchanged in 1980 (Regency Recapitulation). Thus the amount of cultivated land was per person was 0.073 hectares in a population where in 1980 the majority of the labour force were employed in agricultural occupations. With the total number of peasant households at 199,480 (Regency Recapitulation, 1980 census), this produced an average of 0.381 hectare of cultivated land per household. These figures suggest that there was considerable pressure on land in the regency of Blitar in 1980.

This pressure can be seen even more clearly if we consider the total number of households in Blitar which had access to cultivable land. In 1980 out of 199,481 households 152,671 households, or 76.5 per cent (Regency Recapitulation), had access to land through either cultivating their own land, cultivating someone else’s land or cultivating both their own and someone else’s land. More than one third (36 per cent) farmed less than 0.25 hectares, 29 per cent between 0.25 and 0.50 hectares, and about 35 per cent 0.5 hectares and above. Of households with access to land, 72.5 per cent farmed
Table 2.2

Agricultural Households According to Size and Tenurial Status

Blitar 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenurial Status</th>
<th>Size of Area Operated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) (ha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Below 0.25</td>
<td>Number Pct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner 0.25-0.50</td>
<td>Number Pct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner 0.50+</td>
<td>Number Pct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Total</td>
<td>Number Pct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Blitar 1980 Census (Regency Recapitulation).
their own land. The rest either farmed someone else's land or farmed their own and someone else's land (Table 2.2).

It is possible to obtain some idea of the meaning of these figures in terms of land shortage and poverty by comparing them with estimates of the minimum area of land required for subsistence. Penny and Singarimbun (1976) and Sandi (1977) argued that a farm family of five must own at least one hectare of land to achieve minimum subsistence. Sandi proposed a minimum of one hectare of sawah (or wet rice field), while Penny and Singarimbun suggested 0.70 hectare of sawah and 0.3 hectares of house garden. This is in accordance with the traditional Javanese notion of cukupan, or 'enough,' which is generally regarded as one bau, or approximately 0.70 hectares. The question of the minimum area of farm land needed to support a family can be debated because the estimate depends on many factors, such as the number of members in the household, the type of land, soil conditions, and access to irrigation. Certainly a smaller plot of fertile wet-rice field than of dry farm land would be needed.

If we accept that on average a holding of 0.7 hectares is required for subsistence for one household, then at least 65 percent of agricultural households in Blitar in 1975, operating areas below 0.5 hectares, had either insufficient land or no land at all. Obviously the Blitar peasants could not rely only on cultivated land for their livelihoods. Most were also engaged in other economic activities. Recent studies in other areas of Java (for example, Soentoro et al, 1981) have shown that rice farmers secure
a significant share of their incomes from other off-farm activities. This was also true for the research areas of Blitar.

At the time of the fieldwork those who worked only in agriculture, in the narrow sense of the word, could be broadly differentiated into four groups: those who had sufficient land for subsistence; those who had a small plot of land but also had to supplement their incomes from other sources; those who had no cultivated land but gained their livelihood from other people's land as labourers or sharecroppers; and those whose livelihood depended on the availability of work and who received wages on a daily basis, the buruh srabudan mentioned above. Combined very often with the category of buruh srabudan were the marginal peasants who had only a very small plot of land which was not enough to occupy them fully and was not sufficient to fulfil basic family subsistence needs. These peasants had to look for a second or third economic activity which was sometimes more important in terms of income and time than work on their own land.

Paralleling the increasing landlessness was a growing interest by non-farmers in the purchase of land as a secure investment for capital. Referring to Java, Van der Kroef (1963: 48) noted increasing absentee ownership after 1950. Slamet (1965: 33) found that during the 1950s large landowners in Java were displacing the feudal aristocracy as the holders of economic power in the village, while Hinkson (1975: 329) added that
"...the ascendent landowners, by this time, were often merchants and entrepreneurs from urban centres, who invested in land ..." 

Lyon (1970: 26) summarizes this period:

"With the deterioration of general economic conditions ... the roles of richer peasants and large landlords have undergone a shift ... toward their greater relative financial advantage, so that in their functions as money lenders, hirers of wage labour, purchasers of crops and so forth, landlords are operating for the most part under very favourable bargaining conditions."

Data on absentee ownership was unavailable for Blitar, since it is still forbidden according to the 1960 Agrarian Reform. However, the phenomena was observable in several villages. Absentee ownership often came into existence when land titles descended through inheritance to persons who, because of their occupations and/or education levels, had left the villages and were permanently domiciled in the cities. Some professional and white collar workers in the villages, such as government employees or school teachers, also purchased land for investment. Increasing numbers of landowners originated from outside the village, many lacking both agricultural experience and an interest in farming themselves.

A growing gap between ownership and operation of land developed, creating a new basis for increased socio-economic differentiation. Whereas previously land alone had been the major source of social status (see Kartohadikusumo 1965: 236),
increasingly, ownership of capital provided an additional source of status, although the two were closely related. (Ownership of sufficient land was a means of accumulating capital: furthermore, people with capital acquired from other sources often sought additional social status through the purchase of land.) To some extent, these influences led to a further decline in traditional labour relations and to the development of a group of landlords who used their farms to generate profits through leasing and other commercial arrangements and sought to free themselves from many traditional obligations formerly regulated by adat (custom).

The increase in absentee landownership during the 'fifties and 'sixties elsewhere in Java is well documented in a number of studies. The factor usually blamed for the acceleration of commercialization and the spread of rural capitalism is the Green Revolution of the 1970s. The trend was reflected in a rapid decline in sharecropping together with a growing number of farmers who adopted entrepreneurial strategies for cutting costs and maximizing profits (Husken, 1979: 140-151). The reasons are clear: the owner of land was more likely than a tenant to use new inputs to obtain a higher yield because he was more likely to have sufficient capital to purchase them and did not have to share the

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26 See, for example, Adiwilaga (1954) for West Java and Bennett (1961) and Jay (1969) for East Java.

gains with another party. While new inputs led to increased profits from higher yields, they also raised opportunity costs so that it often became more profitable, for example, to sell a standing crop to contractors on a purely commercial basis (See for example Collier et al 1973; Hinkson 1975). This approach to harvesting contrasted markedly with the system of mutual obligations inherent in traditional arrangements, at least on the surface.\(^{28}\)

The new economics of village agriculture emerging during the Green Revolution often provided a picture of open exploitation. Traditional agricultural agreements frequently assumed new meanings. Studies (for example Collier et al 1974; Palmer 1977; Gordon 1978; White 1979) showed that increasing numbers of landed farmers had transformed their activities into more capitalistic production relations. Such developments often reduced both employment opportunities in rural areas and the obligation of the landowners to provide for the welfare of poorer fellow villagers. Agricultural institutions such as bawon, ngasag (also ngasak\(^{29}\)), sakap and simpan pinjam that in the past provided a measure of security and income to the landless and to marginal farmers were weakened or disappeared (Soentoro et al, n.d.: 7).

One consequence of the loss of traditional occupations and the lack of new opportunities for displaced peasants was migration to

\(^{28}\)See chapter 3 below, page 116-120.

the cities. A parallel development was an increase in off-farm employment (see Conroy and Suko Bandiyono, 1986: 327-367) which in some areas increased to the point of creating labour shortages (Soentoro et al, n.d.: 3). This situation, as Soentoro noted, could result in higher wages being offered to labourers. Alternatively, as will be shown in chapter III, below, landowners could attempt to secure labour at existing wage levels by manipulating traditional land and labour institutions to suit modern capitalistic needs (See also, Husken, 1979: 140-151).

So far this section has discussed the historical development of the land pressure syndrome and its contemporary expression around the time of the fieldwork. I now want to turn to a more specific examination of the institutional context of land and labour relations in the three types of environments represented by the study communities: wet rice cultivation, coffee plantations and forestry. I begin with institutional arrangements relevant to wet rice cultivation, which, in this study, is represented by the hamlet of Pari.

To understand the depth of land problems in Blitar one has to look beyond figures on land ownership. In Blitar, as in other areas in Java, landholdings have been fragmented and subdivided to a point where a complicated pattern of mini-holdings, tenancy and sharecropping arrangements is the rule among the majority of landholders. Lyon (1970: 19) noted that for rural Java there is:

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30Labour shortages were also reported in Pari. See chapter 3 below, page 147.
"a disintegration of holdings into small parcels, and land is being accumulated through purchase, usury, and perhaps more important, through various transactions which tend toward concentration of control of land in the hands of wealthier peasants, if not toward actual transfer of ownership."

She also suggested (1970: 11) that:

"rather than land ownership being the important index of the rural economic situation, land use and land control (with or without ownership) are the key concepts to be considered in examining change in the village scene."

From Table 2.2, we can see that 27 per cent of households cultivated land under tenancy. We have no data at the regency level for those living on income from rented land, but data collected on the three communities in the study suggest that Blitar was not a region with significant numbers of large landlords. Large concentrations of land owned by single persons were apparently rare. However, regardless of the amount of land actually owned, a number of individuals possessed sufficient capital to exercise control over the land of others. An individual could control a large amount of cultivated land through rental, which was common in Blitar. Unfortunately it was difficult to identify large land owners or those renting large amounts of land.

31James Fox, in a verbal communication, indicated that in the Jombang area certain individuals were able to control 20-30 hectares in particular dukuh.
because of the possibility of multiple holdings in different districts.

Many varieties of tenancy arrangements had been developed in the villages to meet the particular needs of both landlord and tenant. One alternative for small landowners in desperate need of cash was to lease out their land, although this often only delayed loss of control. Unable to escape the vicious circle of poverty, peasants were frequently forced to rent their land out again before the first rental period had expired. Since the second tenant had to wait for the expiry of the first tenancy before assuming control of the land, the rental was, of course, much lower. These long term rental arrangements were repeated again and again, often for years. In the end the owners' needs for capital sometimes forced them in desperation to sell their land, also at a reduced price since the new owner had to wait for the expiry of existing tenancy agreements before gaining control of the land. Even when forced to sell the peasant usually negotiated with the purchaser so that he could continue to work his former land as a sharecropper or as a wage labourer. The varieties of tenancy blurs the distinction between owner and tenant. Peasants sometimes claimed land leased to others as their own but this was only partly true because they no longer controlled it. Others claimed ownership of land they formerly owned but were actually operating as sharecroppers of the new owner.

The 1980 Census tried to clarify land ownership by introducing the three classifications used above: 'cultivating own land', 
'cultivating someone else's land', and 'cultivating own land and someone else's land'. However land transactions in Java remain complex, creating many problems for data collection. Judging by statements of the villagers I was dealing with, and by the known limitations of the Census data on land, I believe the number of tenants and sharecroppers to be greater than reported. Unfortunately, land agreements were difficult to document, certainly at the regency level. This was partly because tenancy contracts in Blitar were for the most part verbal. Unless a researcher was really acquainted with the area concerned, and used day to day observation, they were difficult to trace and some land cultivated under tenancy may have been reported as owner cultivated. The most common types of tenancy in Blitar in 1980 were: sharecropping and leasehold.

In sharecropping the owner gave the land to the farmer for cultivation on a crop sharing basis. Terms of sharecropping agreements varied between villages and there was no standard for sharing. The share depended on many factors such as the relationship between the owner and the tenant, work and material contributions, whether the landowner was an outsider or a member of the same village, who decided which crops would be planted or when the harvest should take place, etc. Division of the harvest in the study area varied between 1:1 (maro-byak), a half portion for the owner and half portion for the sharecropper; 1:2 (mertelu), one portion for the sharecropper and two portions for the owner; and 1:3 (merapat) one portion for the sharecropper and three
portions for the landowner. If the division was maro-byak, all agricultural inputs were provided equally by both landlord and sharecropper. Under mertelu and merapat all labour was provided by the sharecropper and all other inputs by the landowner.

Cultivation arrangements between landholders and labourers included kedokan, kedokan tandur, and dacinan. In the basic kedokan arrangement, the farmer engaged someone to cultivate his land. The land-owner provided all cash inputs and also managed the cultivation of the crop. The kedokan labourer was not paid cash but received a certain portion of the harvest. There were several variations of kedokan. Sometimes the kedokan labourer had to take part in planting, weeding, and harvesting too. (This would be reflected in the share of the crop that he received.) Kedokan tandur labourers were usually women. In kedokan tandur, the labourer's obligation was limited to participation in planting, weeding, and harvesting of the crop in a certain part of the land. (Typically, a given plot of land would be divided up into several kedokan tandur shares.) The women were also not paid in cash, but instead received a larger share of the harvest in that part of land worked under the agreement. Kedokan tandur agreements were less formal and depended on the generosity of the farmer.

In dacinan, the labourer provided only labour for preparing the land until it was ready for planting. Dacinan workers were

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32 The type of kedokan arrangement varies from time to time and from place to place. See for example Van der Kolff 1936: 17-61; Soentoro et al 1981: 72-92).
always men. They were basically ploughmen, although their work included harrowing and any other jobs necessary before the fields were ready for planting. Ploughing was usually done with buffalo but the dacinan did not own the animals he used: they belonged to the landowner or the dacinan sometimes hired them from someone else. Dacinan were different from the other workers in an important way: they were not paid a share of the crop but were paid a fixed amount of paddy. The word dacin means a scale used for weighing\textsuperscript{33} but was used here to mean the unit of weight. In Pari in 1980 one dacin was approximately 60 kilograms or the contents of a kerosene tin. In 1980 for ten days of ploughing on one hectare of wet-rice field, a dacinan labourer earned 60 dacin of gabah (unhusked paddy).

In sewa or leasehold, the tenant paid the owner an amount of money for leasing the land for a specified harvest season or for a certain number of years. The agreement and the price of the contract varied according to circumstances, such as the condition of the land and the degree of desperation of the owner for cash and of the tenant for land. Rentals for cultivated land in 1979-1980, depending on soils, location and other factors\textsuperscript{34} ranged from Rp.60,000 to Rp.350,000 per hectare per harvest. This was the fastest way to obtain urgently needed money, without having to wait

\textsuperscript{33}Dacin scales are still used in markets all over Java, although these days they are usually called timbangan.

\textsuperscript{34}For example, the urgency with which a landowner requires cash.
too long to regain control of the land. Usually contracts covered one to three years but were sometimes for only one harvest.

The type of lease varied according to the circumstances under which the contract was drawn up. Terms depended on the relationship between the tenant and owner. Unlike sharecropping, agricultural land was usually rented from the poor, who need cash, to the richer, who were able to pay cash (Soentoro et al 1981: 52-71). Tenants were almost always in the weaker position as landowners could easily evict unsatisfactory tenants since other tenants were available to replace them.

An important difference distinguished the marginal peasant renting out his land in order to obtain capital or cash for urgent consumption needs, from richer landlords. In the case of the marginal peasant the rental agreement was usually in the form of a lease (sewa) agreement for a cash payment for a fixed term. Wealthier landowners preferred a sharecropping arrangement.

As a result there were two classes of land operators. Those renting for cash payments were usually better-off peasants who were farmers, able to afford both the cash rent and to pay for inputs, and who preferred to farm the land they rented directly, without interference from landowners. Those operating as sharecroppers

35Marginal peasants renting out their land to obtain urgently needed cash prefer better-off farmers as their tenants. However, if they are eventually forced to sell the same land, they will seek a buyer from wealthier non-farming villagers or outsiders since these buyers are more likely to allow them to operate the land as sharecroppers.
tended to work on the land of wealthier landlords. Sharecropping 'suited' both parties. It demanded little capital from the sharecropper and offered the landlord both control and continuity, as well as higher returns. Rental agreements were, as mentioned, usually only for two or three years, after which the agreement had to be renewed and possibly a new tenant (with sufficient cash) found. (See Soentoro et al, n.d.: 82, 87.) Soentoro et al, (n.d.: 72) also noted that shares to landlords under sharecropping agreements were generally higher than the amounts that would have been received under rental agreements. Thus, while the sharecropper can be said to have 'preferred' sharecropping to rental, he did so largely because he had no choice. He paid a high price for his weakness in the form of receiving a low share of the crop for his labours (Soentoro et al, n.d.: 72). Those with larger capital - the richer peasant farmers able to pay rent and the wealthy landlords with both land and capital - could manipulate both rental and sharecropping agreements in their interests because they held the stronger bargaining positions against the capital-poor sharecroppers and the cash-poor marginal peasant landowners.

Peasants commonly 'inherited' sharecropping; that is, they received land to cultivate because their parents had also been sharecroppers on the same land. Since landowners were more likely to employ sharecroppers from families already known to them as faithful workers, there was little possibility for those lacking such connections to become sharecroppers. This did not mean that the landowner could not dismiss sharecroppers at his convenience.
The surplus population competing for tenancy strengthened the position of the landowner, although compared with *buruh srabudan*, or those seeking work on a daily basis, sharecropper families were still better off. Their economic position was more stable, and they were assured of more work for a longer period of time.

To the outsider, Blitar regency with its extensive rice fields seems to be dominated by its peasant rural economy. In fact, the economy of the area is quite diversified. The plantations and forestry estates also offer employment, as do other occupations concerned with government and private services, trade, and crafts, although the numbers of these employees in 1980 were small compared with those working in agriculture, the basis of the economy of the region. Unfortunately in the 1980 Census those who worked in plantations and on the forestry estates were both classified under 'agriculture'. Thus we do not know the exact numbers working plantations and in forestry. The difficulty in counting estate workers was partly because they were not permanent workers. Many, especially male plantation workers, were also involved in other economic activities, especially during the slack season in the plantation, when they would join the landless wage-earners as *buruh srabudan*, and become engaged in many kinds of economic activities depending on the availability of jobs. Differences in their economic bases result in major contrasts in land and labour relations between coffee plantation employees and forestry workers, although both are estate communities. I will examine the situation for the coffee plantation workers first.
Most plantation employees were daily rated workers (*harian*) or piece workers (*borongan*). They worked a seven hour day, starting at 7 a.m. and finishing at 2 p.m. with two breaks during the day. They worked six days a week from Monday to Saturday and were paid in cash. Wages were paid every fortnight, based on the attendance list, but *borongan* workers were paid on completion of the job. The wage depended on the type and duration of work. In 1980 the daily minimum wage was Rp.280 plus 450 grams of rice. Digging holes in Saratemen was paid at Rp.15 per hole. One worker could dig about 40 or 50 holes in a day. Other jobs such as clearing were paid at a rate of Rp.3,000 per hectare. Fertilizing was paid as wage labour at Rp.280 plus 450 grams of rice.

Because of the low wages and the lack of alternative opportunities for women, many plantation workers were women. In 1980 low wages on plantations led many young men from Mara village, in which the study hamlet of Saratemen was situated, to seek work elsewhere. Men often preferred to seek higher paying work in other districts. Many worked as cane cutters in neighbouring sugar districts, while others found employment in the construction industry in larger towns. The 1980 the average daily wage for work in the plantation of Rp.280 plus 450 grams of rice

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36 Unfortunately, data on the proportion of women in the plantation labour force were not available. Several attempts to meet with plantation management to obtain statistical data met with failure.

37 The oil boom of the 'seventies in Indonesia produced an increased amount of construction activity, even in smaller urban centres.
(approximate value Rp.100) compared unfavourably with the wage for an unskilled construction worker of between Rp.750 and Rp.1000 per day. Men were more likely to work in the plantation during the coffee harvest when members of the household worked as a team to maximize earnings. Harvesting was attractive because it returns to workers were relatively high. Wages were paid by the weight of coffee beans collected instead of the usual flat rate per day. Nearly all members of the family participate, including children. During harvest time in 1980, for example, the wage for picking coffee beans was Rp.75 per kilogram. One group of workers (teams usually comprised family members) could pick between 40 and 50 kilograms a day.

Monthly workers received wages according to their rank, responsibility and the length of time they had held the jobs. (The company declined to give me the wages list for monthly workers). In addition to their salary, monthly workers received extra rice for their families, medical benefits and annual leave.

There were no such facilities for borongan or daily workers. However, as an incentive to avoid high absenteeism, daily and borongan workers who worked for a certain period of time (forty hours, two weeks, one month and so on) without being absent received a bonus at the time of the annual Idulfitri celebration at the end of the Muslim fasting month. The bonus was mostly in the form of household items such as glasses, crockery or cloth. Plantation workers were thus wholly dependent on their labour for their livelihood. In general they had no access to agricultural
land and only monthly workers of a certain status were allocated housing and a house compound (on which most were able to produce some fruit and vegetables). Daily rated and borongan workers were usually not provided with housing or land for housing.

One type of sharecropping found in the southern part of Blitar is the baon system, which falls somewhere between the situation of the rice growing peasants and the plantation workers in terms of land and labour relations. Forestry estates producing teak employed local peasants as part-time labour under a variant of the share tenancy system. The forestry estate provided a pembau with land where he could cultivate his own crops in return for planting and caring for teak on the same area. After two years the site would be devoted exclusively to the timber and the farm had to shift to a new area allocated by the forestry estate. The number of pembau varied, depending on the amount of land to be opened.

Prior to 1968 in the study hamlet of Jati, the site of the land allotment had been the primary consideration in location of the pembau's house. Hence, dwellings of the pembau tended to be dispersed. After the Trisula military operation in 1968 pembau

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38 The term derives from the Javanese word bau, meaning shoulder, to indicate manual labour. It is not clear how this term comes to its specific use in relation to contract labour in forestry. The worker under contract with the forestry estate is called a pembau, to be engaged in a contract system with the estate is called mbaon, and the land allotted to pembau is called tanah bau (bau land) or baon.

39 See above, page 62.
were resettled in clusters near or along main roads for security reasons. This new policy applied to the whole of Southern Blitar.

III. **Summary:**

This chapter summarises the historical experience of the area in which the three hamlets are located and describes the development of the institutional context, with special reference to land and labour relations. Before the Java War (1825-1830) Blitar was a sparsely populated frontier area. One important consequence of the Dutch annexation of Mancanegara, following that defeat, was that the Blitar area became subject to the Cultivation System. The Dutch replaced the Javanese rulers as the ‘owners’ of the land and introduced the Cultivation System with the aim of making Java profitable. More fundamentally, the Dutch also introduced the Corporate Plantation System, under which private companies were encouraged to enter the agricultural sector. The new Agrarian Act, 1870, gave such companies increased privileges and access to cheap land and labour.

During the plantation boom in the late nineteenth century there was a large exodus of people from Central Java and surrounding areas flooding into Blitar, resulting in a rapid expansion of settlement. Blitar was no longer a frontier area. The people of the area had to adapt to changing conditions with increased competition for land and opportunities. Competition for
limited resources intensified during the deep depression of the 'thirties, the Japanese Occupation and the War of Independence. During the transition following the latter, a spirit of lawlessness prevailed in many areas of the region, especially in relation to land. At this time many land-hungry peasants occupied and cultivated ex-plantation and forest lands. Later, the situation became more confused when land disputes became the center of political activism. One important consequence of these events was the organization and politicization of peasants. However, the effect of political mobilization was not uniform: some communities were radicalized while others were not.

Aside from the increasing political complexity, social and economic institutions were also experiencing fundamental change. Agricultural specialization resulted in different economic institutions according to the type of agriculture practised (plantations, forest, and food production). Increasing competition for land and employment opportunities within each type of agriculture also created increasingly complex land and labour relations. The penetration of the monetized economy into peasant agriculture, a process that accelerated with the Green Revolution, further complicated social and economic institutions. This chapter concluded with a brief review of institutional arrangements in relation to land and labour in each of the three study areas.
CHAPTER THREE

PARi: A HAMLET BASED ON WET-RICE AGRICULTURE

PARi represents many of the qualities of the ideal which many people have in mind when they refer to the Javanese village. In 1980 it was a place where most of those who had land owned only small patches. Despite rapid socio-economic changes, community ties were still relatively strong, and the development of rural capitalism had not necessarily conflicted with traditional social relations. In fact, rural capitalism had even taken over and strengthened existing relations, although - as I hope to show below - sometimes for rather different purposes than the 'shared poverty' ideals so frequently mentioned in the literature.

It is to communities such as PARi that most of the studies reviewed in Chapter 1 of this thesis refer. Geertz' theory of agricultural involution was developed in a very similar setting (actually within 50 kilometres of PARi). Indeed, many of the forms assumed by land and labour relations in PARi, at least on the surface, appear to fit the pattern described as 'involution'. Two aspects of Geertz' theory are especially relevant to the analysis
presented in this chapter. The first is that his argument that involution arises from the combination of peasant values and a particular institutional setting - originally the introduction of the colonial cultivation system into the wet-rice ecological system - implies that involution is largely determined by cultural factors, specifically ‘traditional’ peasant values and attitudes (See White, 1983: 19, discussed above, p.15). The second aspect is his view that the principal objective of involution is to spread limited resources (initially mainly land, but in the modern context this would have to include employment opportunities) among an increasing population: Geertz' concept of shared poverty. This interpretation of the causes and logic of involution places a heavy emphasis on the internal dynamics of peasant society as determining factors in the creation of agricultural involution.

In this chapter I will show that, although land and labour relations in Pari in 1980 appear to fit the involution model, they differ in a number of important ways. Arrangements that seem to be traditional are shown to have subtly but fundamentally changed. Arrangements that Geertz identified as producing ‘shared poverty’ in Pari in 1980 seemed more to serve the interests of capital, that is, the interests of richer farmers and of landlords (by, for example, helping to assure a supply of labour in a situation of increasing labour scarcity). While traditional forms were preserved (they had the advantage of providing legitimacy), the effect increasingly reflected the balance of power in bargaining situations. Peasants accepted these changes, not because of their
'traditional' mentality and values, but because they had little choice. Without capital to provide access to land and without education or personal connections to provide access to alternative ways of earning a living, the peasants had to accept land and work on whatever terms were offered. Their only real alternative was to move away from the village, that is, to migrate to towns. Few peasants with any claim to land and the small amount of security this brought were prepared to risk that claim for the uncertainty of migration to towns. Furthermore, they were poorly qualified - by education, skills or connections - for town life. They stayed, but on the terms of the strong. As will be discussed in the conclusion to this chapter, the implications of this view of land and labour relations are different from those of Geertz' view of agricultural involution.

The chapter will be divided into six sections. Section I introduces the fieldwork situation as I experienced it in Pari. Section II provides an overview of the community of Pari: Section IIA describes the physical, administrative and economic environment while Section IIB examines the social context within which Pari peasants developed their strategies for survival. Section III presents the view of local history as related to me by the

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1Migration to other villages would put them in the same situation but without the small advantage of personal and family ties. Transmigration to areas outside Java is, as will be seen in Chapter IV, another alternative. In fact, after fieldwork was completed, beginning from around 1984, a number of peasants from Pari did become transmigrants. However, this transmigration was strongly related to personal ties with a high official in the transmigration destination area.
Chapter 3

villagers. The importance of these largely undocumented stories is not so much as history in the sense used in Chapter 2, but more that they reflect the villagers' perceptions of their past. It is this version of history that influences their behaviour. Section IV describes peasant strategies for survival in Pari through ethnographic data about the way in which peasants have adapted to the major changes that have occurred in their lives. Section V summarizes the main features of the community of Pari and the kinds of strategies developed by Pari peasants to cope with their changing world.

I. A Trip to Pari:

Pari, one of the five hamlets (dukuh) in the village (kelurahan) of Banyu in the district (kecamatan) of Talun in the kewedanaan of Wlingi, is located in the Blitar Plain, more specifically, on the long flat central plain between the Kelud Plain and the Brantas Plain. It is about 16 kilometres east of the town of Blitar, along a busy highway leading to Malang. The area is known as the regional 'rice-bowl'.

At the time of my fieldwork, Pari was far from being an isolated community. Mini-buses and buses passed by on the Blitar-Malang highway running along the southern border of the hamlet twenty-four hours a day, and trains stopped at the station a mere one kilometre from Pari. My first trip from Blitar terminal
to Pari village in 1980 began on a Monday morning. The terminal, next to the town market, was already crowded with travellers, and food vendors were busy peddling their goods. This hectic confusion was increased by the shouts of drivers' assistants trying to attract passengers. I left the terminal at about 7 a.m. in a reliable-looking colt and thought myself fortunate to have a good seat with plenty of room next to the driver. We only waited for five minutes before the colt left the terminal with five passengers. However, my comfort was to last only for a short while. About 200 metres from the terminal the colt stopped again, waiting for more passengers. We stopped again and again, taking about 20 minutes to leave the town of Blitar. In the end I was squeezed among thirteen passengers with their bundles and baskets filling up both the inside and outside of the small vehicle.

Along the highway one could see people everywhere: little boys playing soccer barefoot with home-made paper balls; women with bamboo baskets on their backs setting off for the market; a group of school children in white uniforms heading for their school by bike or on foot; and an armada of itinerant traders (bakul obrok) clearing a path through the crowd in their hunt for trade. This was a typical busy morning in the Blitar Plain.

The trip to Pari gave little impression of travelling through the countryside. Houses, built so closely that they nearly adjoined, stretched all the way along the highway from the town of Blitar to Banyu village. The rice fields could hardly be seen from the highway because people tended to build their houses along the
road, hiding the farms which spread out behind them. (In general, Javanese villages are laid out in a compact cluster pattern, surrounded by rice fields or other arable land, but villages near a main road usually develop along it.)

Nearly one hour after my departure we reached the sub-district town of Talun, a distance of only 16 kilometres. I decided to alight there and walk to the neighbouring hamlet, the headquarters of Banyu village, only ten minutes away. There was no need to make a courtesy call on the camat since I had already met him, and everything had been arranged. I was told that the camat’s office had already informed the lurah of Banyu that I would be working in one of the Banyu hamlets. Furthermore, Banyu was not new to me: I had stayed there for a couple of weeks when carrying out a community study a few years earlier. There was no complicated procedure for obtaining permission to work in Banyu, possibly because Banyu had been a model village and it was usual for visitors to inspect it as an example of the success of rural development. When I called at the subdistrict headquarters to explain my arrival, the officials were welcoming, taking for granted that my visit was due to my interest in Banyu’s development.

Talun, although not large, had quite a busy market. In the colonial era, it was even more important as it had been a main residential area for Dutch administrators who were involved in

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²In 1970 it had been chosen as a model village in a national competition.
sugar cane cultivation. (Old Dutch-style houses from that period could still be seen in both Talun and Banyu.) I set off in the direction of Banyu village, one of the sixteen villages in the sub-district of Talun (Map F). First I had to go to the village office just to report my arrival. Handsome urban-style houses lined the main road and other signs of urban amenities such as the TV antennae and street lighting were immediately visible, giving the impression of a small town rather than a village. However, this impression was limited to the area along the main road where the houses of the better-off were located. Behind it, the village atmosphere and village physical structures still dominated. For example, only houses along the main road had access to electricity from the Government Electricity Company. Within the village a few houses used their own power generators but the majority depended on kerosene lamps. Most houses were constructed of fired bricks, usually with a concrete floor and tiled roof. Houses made of woven bamboo with thatched roofs were rare. The village settlement looked clean and well-arranged, with houses built along the main village road which was wide enough for cars to pass. The compounds were shaded with plenty of trees, mostly fruit trees. Banyu village appeared to be quite prosperous.

The settlement formed a triangle from north to south. The highway divided Banyu into two, the north part and the south part, the latter being the larger. Most of the house clusters, except for those houses along the road, were compactly located to the south of the highway, which was also the location of village
TALUN SUB-DISTRICT
(Kecamatan Talun)

- Research village of Banyu
- Research hamlet of Pari
- Research village boundary

KEY:
--- sub-district boundary
---- village boundary
--- road  ++++ railway
--- river, tributary

AN.U. 1984 after Peta Wilayah Kecamatan Talun

Map F: Talun subdistrict
headquarters, the Krajan, reputedly on the site of the original settlement founded about 150 years ago. Some rice fields lay within the actual dwelling area, but these were small. Most were located to the south of Banyu. To the north of the highway there was another cluster of houses, and this was where Pari hamlet was located, bordered on the south, north and the east by rice fields.

As Banyu is located on the upper reaches of the Brantas river, people there had access to a plentiful water supply consisting of creeks, dams, irrigation channels and wells. The village economy was centered primarily on wet-rice cultivation. However, in spite of fertile land, as in most villages around the Blitar Plain, there was not enough land in Banyu for everyone. Villagers, especially those who owned only compounds around their houses, made the most of the situation by planting fruit, especially rambutan, which grew well and which, as a cash crop, could provide an important supplement to household income.

The village office stood out even from a distance. It was a typical village office of that region, with various name boards in the front compound showing the government institutions that had offices there. The village office was in the middle; to the right stood a meeting hall, and to the left was a mother and child health centre. In most areas of Java the health centre is located in the subdistrict town but people in Banyu had access to a centre in their own village as well as one in the Talun subdistrict town.

Another meeting hall was also located behind this health centre. Inside the village office were many desks and chairs in
a row facing the entrance. These were seats for the pamong (village officials). However, not all pamong had chairs, only those on duty. The carik (village secretary) works there with two clerks. Next to this room was the lurah’s room, together with an operations room. The operations room was impressive, large and well-ordered. On top of the cupboard I noticed many trophies from competitions which Banyu’s representatives had won. As a whole Banyu village office was just like an urban office.

There were few formalities involved in approaching the pamong in Banyu. That morning, as I entered, the office was quite crowded with villagers. Some were asking for surat boro (a letter needed by any villager seeking a job outside the village); one man needed a letter to sell his cow. I could easily recognize the pamong by their batik or khaki uniforms. I did not have to wait long as one recognized me from my previous visit. In an instant several gathered around me. We chatted about our experiences since we last met. Only the carik was new. The old carik had died several years ago. His replacement was still young. I talked to the carik about the purpose of my visit and handed over my papers. The lurah was not in the office as, I was told, he had a meeting in the Kabupaten. I had come to know him very well during my last visit; he was an old man, very dedicated to his work. (Later, near the end of my stay in Banyu, he died of a heart attack.)

I did not stay long in the village office. I had promised to return early to the house of the family who had agreed to give me accommodation for my ‘base camp’ during my fieldwork in Pari. (My
family were more 'permanently' located in Nglegok, about 25 kilometres away.) It was a large brick house in a spacious compound, complete with electricity, piped water in the house from an electric pump operating on a well, television and two domestic servants. (The head of the family was a well respected descendant of the village founder. He later became an important source of information for my research.) With comfortable accommodation and the minimal formalities complete I was ready to begin my fieldwork in Pari.

II. Pari
IIA. Pari: a green leafy island:

Banyu village, of which the study hamlet of Pari was part, is located on the fertile plains formed by Mt. Kelud with access to abundant water fed from the Brantas and Lekso rivers. In 1980 it was primarily dependent on wet-rice cultivation and the trade associated with a lively and compact settlement of almost 6,000 people. Beside the busy highway connecting Blitar with Malang to the east and with Kediri to the northwest, Banyu was also on the railway line connecting Blitar, Malang and Surabaya. However, the

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3I did not find that staying with a family that was very wealthy by village standards affected my relations with poorer villagers. The family was known to be generous to the poor and their wealth was inherited from a long line of equally respected ancestors. It may have been different if they had been 'new rich' or if they had been less respected.
district centre of Talun, rather than Banyu, was the main focus of social and economic activity. The railway station, bus station, market and all but a few of the smallest stores were located in Talun. Physically within the village, but in fact scattered along the main road joining Talun and Banyu, were three or four larger stores, a coffee shop selling meals, the head-quarters of the local cooperative society, a small warehouse for the national rice marketing authority (BULOG), two primary schools, one junior secondary school and a sports oval. Several ex-residences of Dutch plantation managers stood as reminders of the colonial past, when the area also cultivated sugar cane. The modern era was represented by the many technology TV antennae on top of the houses and by the electric lights that lit up in the evenings.

The hamlet of Pari was reached from the south, walking along the narrow gravel road from Banyu, about a half kilometre from the highway. Broad rice fields spread out on both sides of this road which formed the main entry to the hamlet. From a distance Pari in 1980 looked just like a green leafy island lying in the middle of vast rice fields (Map G). The picturesque landscape of this community was very characteristic of the Blitar Plain. Coconut palms, fruit trees, stands of bamboo and rice fields encircled the site.

Pari covers a total area of 37.5 hectares, consisting, in 1980 (according to records in the office of the hamlet head), of 12.5 hectares of settlement area (including houses, compounds, roads, bridges) and 25 hectares of fully irrigated rice fields. The
Research village of Banyu
(Kelurahan Banyu)

KEY:
- village boundary
- other, hamlets
- other ricefields
- main road, asphalt
- subsidiary road, gravel
- railway
- cemetery
- bridge
- river, tributary

Map G: Research village of Banyu
settlement pattern was rectangular, stretching from north to south and forming a compact cluster of dwellings. The house compounds, neat in appearance with uniform fences, were joined one to another along the main road. The houses of the kamitua (the head of the hamlet) and some other better-off families were among those which face the main road. There were also two warung mracang⁴ along this road, both selling the same goods, such as tea, sugar, salt and kerosene. In Pari the warung mracang played a less important role than in Saratemen partly because people in Pari did not like to shop locally (unlike the plantation workers in Saratemen, see Chapter 4) because they lived within walking distance of the local market in the subdistrict town, where goods were much cheaper and in greater variety. Thus the warung mracang in Pari provided only for immediate daily necessities. Behind the main road the house compounds were more dispersed; these were the houses of the poor, connected to the main road by foot paths. There was no school in Pari in 1980 so children had to cross the highway to attend one of the schools located on the south side of the road.

The villagers, as already noted, had easy access to public transport, as the highway is on the southern border of the hamlet. Although transport facilities had been available since before the war, it was only in the late 1970s that more and more villagers in Pari were earning money outside the hamlet, commuting to Blitar or

⁴The word mracang literally means 'spices.' A warung mracang is a small stall selling daily household necessities, such as rice, salt, frying oil, etc., though some warung mracang also sell other goods such as cloth, writing pads etc.
other nearby towns. Within the subdistrict area the most important forms of public transport were motorcycles, the so-called ojek. Many families in Pari owned bicycles and six families owned motorcycles. Inter-city transport for both passengers and goods was by mini-buses, the colt, buses, and trains.

During the fruit season many villagers sold their rambutan and other garden produce along the highway to car travellers or itinerant traders. Contact with outsiders was not limited to trade. Quite a number of former Pari villagers had moved and settled in the cities or other places but frequently returned to visit relatives. Also, because Banyu, to which Pari belongs, had been selected several times as a model village, many visitors, even from the national level, visited the village. Thus contact with outsiders was quite widespread.

The community in 1980 was divided into five neighbourhood units (rukun tetangga). There were 141 households living in 137 houses with a total population of 708 persons composed of 350 males and 358 females (Table 3.1). About one third of Pari households were related to one another by ties of kinship or marriage. On average the number of persons per household in Pari in 1980 was five, ranging from one to ten. Forty-eight percent of the total households were nuclear families and seven percent were vertically extended composed of two intact nuclear families (parents with unmarried children plus the family of a married child). Eight percent were single person households. Among the remainder were some extended households, composed of a nuclear family (intact or
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-9</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-64</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>350</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

partial) plus other relatives such as a parent, a brother or sister, or cousin, and several that included non-relatives such as employees and servants.

The large number of extended family households was one indication of the land shortage suffered by the majority in Pari. Married children, who would normally be expected to establish their own homes, do not do so in Pari but continue to live with one of the parents. The relatively high number of households composed of co-resident brothers, sisters, and cousins within one household may indicate that consanguinal kin ties were relatively strong. Villagers generally considered that it was rude and inhuman to refuse to give shelter to kin. However, friction between co-residents was frequent, in extreme cases resulting in a move to another relative's house, avoidance or refusal to talk to one other.

In 1980, 489 people or 68 per cent of the population were of working age (between 10 and 64 years old) but not all were economically active. However, in reality there was no marked distinction between those who worked and those who did not, because almost everyone seemed to perform some sort of productive task. Of course there were some differences between the poor and the better-off families. In a poor family children began working early, for these families need all available labour to supplement family income. The children begin to help their parents with light jobs at the age of ten or even younger. They could even be hired out to mind water buffaloes or to draw water in the houses of
richer families. At fifteen they were considered full workers. Active work continued until age sixty when strength began to decline; even so the elderly usually engaged in light work such as making mats. Some remained active in the fields. Working women were also a tradition in Pari, as in other rural areas. Except for heavy tasks such as ploughing, women were involved in nearly all activities that provided a living, particularly during the busy farming season (from transplanting of rice-seedlings up to harvest and sale of the rice). Yet many did not consider themselves to be employed.

The local economy was dominated by rice-farming. According to village records (1980), about half (59 out of 141) heads of household reported their main occupation as 'peasant' (tani). The second largest category was 'trader' (pedagang), comprising 26 per cent, followed by 'labourer' (buruh), 15 per cent. The rest included public servants, soldiers, carpenters, mat makers, brick layers, and a tailor. The type of employment followed and was affected by the rice cultivation cycle: for example, traders were busiest just after harvest, while construction work became important during the slack seasons in farming. The incomes of only a few were unaffected by the rice cultivation cycle: for example, a teacher, a government official and a soldier.

The importance of the agricultural economy in Pari was apparent from its physical setting: a compact cluster of dwellings surrounded by vast open rice fields. The socio-economic structure was also compact. Its basis comprised a strong family unit, close
neighbourhood relations, and a tradition of self-sufficiency. The cultivation of land was central to both the lives and the outlook of most residents. However, the arrival of the Green Revolution in Indonesia during the late 'sixties and early 'seventies produced marked changes in agriculture in Pari. New dams and improved drainage facilities meant that irrigation facilities could reach more distant areas. Furthermore, more integrated and intensified efforts in the early seventies by government programmes, such as BIMAS (Bimbingan Massal, or Mass guidance programme) and INMAS (Intensifikasi Massal, or Mass intensification programme) provided farmers with access to fertilizer and improved seed varieties at subsidized rates. Through these programmes new agricultural techniques, high-yielding seed varieties, credit, and fertilizers, were introduced, resulting in increased productivity for farmers. Since agriculture formed the base of the village economy, the process of agricultural development greatly affected the existing relations of production, as will be discussed below.

Twenty-five hectares of Pari’s most valuable land were entirely devoted to irrigated fields (sawah). There was no dry land in Pari, but some areas of the cultivated land were permanently under water. Here people preferred to cultivate pandanus grass. Water was usually abundant and a strong stream flowing behind the settlement supplied the requirements of extensive and fertile wet-rice fields via an efficient irrigation network. About two-thirds of the households did not own wet-rice land. The majority (51 per cent) of those registered as owning
Table 3.2
Distribution of Households
Based on size of Land Holding
Pari 1980.

A. Holdings of House Compound

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Holding (Hectares)</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No land</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.01 - 0.24</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25 - 0.49</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.50 - 0.99</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>141</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Holdings of Wet-rice field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Holding (Hectares)</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No land</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.01 - 0.24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25 - 0.49</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.50 - 0.99</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 - 1.99</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>141</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1980 Village Records and Field Data.

Includes house compounds and wet rice fields. Bengkok land is excluded. Figures in this table include only households officially registered as owners of land in the hamlet office. They do not account for joint ownership, by which more than one household occupies or farms the land. Thus, the actual size of the land holding is often smaller than the figures shown.
sawah held very small plots of less than one quarter of a hectare. A total of 58 households, or 41 percent owned neither house compound nor wet-rice fields. On the hand, the largest registered holding was 1.65 hectares.

The minute size of holdings in Pari was partly due to population growth outstripping the available land but it was also due to the inheritance system. Under this system each child received an equal share, thus dividing tiny plots of land into even more minute plots. Often, to equalise the quality of the inheritance, each share would be formed by giving each child plots of fertile land plus sections of barren land. These two processes of population growth and inheritance led over a prolonged period to fragmentation of holdings. In Pari this was reflected in the number of plots of land individually owned. For example the 12.5 hectares of Pari’s settlement area was divided into 117 plots, while the 25 hectares of rice fields were divided into 74 plots (Daftar C [Village Record], n.d.).

Another factor influencing the size of holdings in Pari was the type of ownership. This was also related to the inheritance system. Most commonly a plot belonged to one household or person, generally the head, but a spouse or other member could own land in their own right. Usually members of a household worked their land collectively under the direction of the head. Also it was common

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6The gogol system of common land operated in Pari until 1964. In that year, under the Agrarian Reform of 1960, the common land was divided among the founders and their descendants.

7See Mbok Diwut’s story below, page 132, for an example.
### Table 3.3


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Farm Operator</th>
<th>Number of Households and Size of Registered Land Holding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-Operator only</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Owner &amp; Sharecropper</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Owner &amp; Renter</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner/Renter/Sharecropper</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter-In only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharecropper only(^{\circ})</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Sharecropper &amp; Renter</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter-Out only</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{\circ}\) Status categories in the table are mutually exclusive. Thus an owner-operator household only operated land owned by members of the household, a renting-in household only operated land rented from others, and an owner-renter household operated some owned land plus some rented in from others. Pure sharecroppers were landless households sharecropping on other people's land.

\(^{\circ}\) This farmer owned a small plot of land but also cultivated rented land and sharecropped on another person's land.

\(^{\circ}\) Note that sharecropper here includes dacinan but not kedokan tandur.
in Pari to find that a piece of land, although officially registered under one name, was actually cultivated by a group of people - usually siblings in different households. Land under such joint ownership included not only rice fields but also house sites. Land was usually inherited from parents or grandparents. When property was to be divided among the family after the death of the original owners, each heir received a share that could be used individually or collectively. However, the names of all heirs were not necessarily registered in the village office as new owners: often registration remained under the name of grandparents or other ancestors who have died long before.

Table 3.3 summarizes the pattern of land operation in Pari for those operating land in the hamlet, based on the area of land registered as owned (Table 3.2). The table refers only to land registered in Pari. Thus, those listed as owning no land in the table could hold land outside of Pari. However, since the information on land operation was obtained from field interviews, those not in this table did not operate land at all. Approximately half the households in the hamlet did not operate land. Table 3.3 shows that, of the thirty-nine Pari households operating less than 0.5 hectares, only thirty-two (82 per cent) operated at least some land owned by the household, compared with 100 per cent for the larger holdings. Many of the holdings were so small (some were as small as 0.01 hectares) that they had to be combined under rental

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IISee section IV, below, for the peasants' view of joint landownership as a way of securing land for future generations.
and sharecropping agreements to form larger (but still small) farms operated by other people. Many of these people were relatives of the owner.\textsuperscript{12}

Because cultivated land in Pari was scarce, the pattern of land operation was complex. Those with the largest holdings, at least for land held in Pari, tended to be pure owner-operators (eleven of the twelve holdings over 0.5 hectares). Only fifteen out of thirty-nine holdings smaller than 0.5 hectares were purely owner-operated, that is, the owners did not operate any land in addition to that which they owned. Twenty-two households of the sixty-nine operating land in Pari were involved in more than one form of agreement (ownership, tenancy or sharecropping) to obtain their land. Another thirteen were pure sharecroppers and one was a pure tenant. Only one of those operating land under multiple agreements owned more than 0.5 hectares in Pari.

One response to land shortage in Pari was to search for land outside in neighbouring villages. In 1980 there were twenty-four sharecroppers - including ten ploughmen (dacinan) - who lived in the hamlet, but the farms on which ten of them worked were outside Pari. There were eighteen cases of renting land in neighbouring villages on leases ranging from one to three years.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12}Cases where the registered owner was deceased but the land was operated by his heirs were regarded as owner-operated.

\textsuperscript{13}These figures and those in the following paragraph were obtained from an interview with the kamitua and are based on his personal local knowledge.
During the mid 1970s, following the rehabilitation of the main irrigation project supplying Pari, there were significant changes in cropping patterns in Pari. Peasants were able to grow additional crops during the yearly cycle. In Pari at least three crops could be harvested within a twelve months. The usual annual rotation in 1980 was two crops of rice followed by a palawija crop such as corn, peanuts or soybeans, or sometimes tobacco. If water was sufficient, rice could be planted three times a year. These changes increased the demand for labour and contributed to a growing labour shortage.

Although other crops contributed to the community’s economy the proportion of tree crops grown did not increase, perhaps because peasants did not want to take risks in case of fluctuations in market price. For the average peasant with little capital a sudden decline in market prices could be disastrous. Frequently farmers turned a small plot of the rice field into tumpangsari, mixed crops planted simultaneously in alternate rows. The produce was for their own needs and for sale. They also used land along dikes to cultivate snake beans, cucumbers, corn, chilies, etc. The tumpangsari system made intensive use of every piece of land available. It required more attention than rice but had the advantage of yielding more cash and quick returns, especially for farmers with small holdings. From the sale of vegetables produced on one pethak of land (about 100 square metres), peasants could receive around Rp.10,000 per season in 1980.
Chapter 3

The risk, however, was that the price of vegetables depended heavily on fluctuations of supply in the market. Vegetable growers often planted the same varieties at the same times, creating a market surplus that reduced prices. Formerly, farmers planted vegetables according to the *tumpangsari* system on part of their land, mainly for their own use or for the local market, but by the time of the survey, improvements in agricultural techniques had enabled farmers to control insects and disease and vegetables had become a major cash crop. With improved transportation farmers could even sell outside the region. With updated agricultural techniques and the new irrigation arrangements, the farmers had more control over their cropping schedule. They no longer needed to plant all rice at the same time, so that different harvest times could result. When water allowed, the growing season for the two rice crops was from mid-January to late August, followed by other cash crops. The most common rotation, however, was rice from January until April and rice again, harvested in late August, followed by cash crops to be harvested at the beginning of December. For one month or so in December farmers rested the soil before turning it again into rice fields.

Nearly all respondents considered that the best second cash crop to plant was tobacco, because in recent years its price had been generally rising. In 1980 the price of shredded tobacco was Rp.1,500 for one kilogram. Moreover, tobacco could be easily stored until the price increased, although most of the farmers could not afford such a delay, since they needed money immediately
to cover the costs of inputs as well as for their daily necessities. A problem with planting tobacco was that it needed continuous attention, which most farmers could not afford, whereas peanuts, soybeans, and corn were considered relatively easy to care for and had good marketing prospects. Only some better off families planted tobacco.

Sugarcane was not popular. In 1980, none grew in Pari, which had been one of the intensive sugarcane areas during the colonial period. The farmers were reluctant to plant sugarcane because of the long growing season: up to eighteen months to maturity. During that length of time at least four different crops could be harvested on the same land. Furthermore cane fields required different landscaping from rice fields; hence, the change from one crop to the other demanded additional time and manpower.

Usually farmers started preparing the soil in January. While the rice fields were being prepared, the seedlings were growing in the seed bed. From the middle of January the seedlings were transplanted by hand in rows in the rice field which was already flooded with water. This was done by women, usually under kedokan tandur. It was compulsory for villagers to plant new rice varieties. They had been told that the new varieties were most resistant to disease and insects. In 1980 no-one in Pari planted
'native' rice. The new varieties were introduced in the 1960s but promoted more intensively in the early 1970s.

Several tasks had to be carried out to care for the rice fields until harvest. Beginning about thirty days after the rice was planted, the field needed weeding several times, and fertilizing. Some water had to be drained off. Unlike transplanting and harvesting, the rest of the tasks, such as drying, weeding, fertilizing, and spraying were done by the farmer and members of his household or by kedokan tandur women if the land was operated under that agreement.

When the stalks turned golden, water had to be drained off and the rice dried by the sun. Birds and excessive rain were two of the many enemies the peasant faced at this stage. Then came harvest time. Except where kedokan tandur and other similar arrangements operated, the farmer could recruit additional workers by allowing them to keep a stipulated portion of what they harvested. Where kedokan tandur was not used, it was common to distribute cards to limit the number of participants in the harvest. One farmer told me that if he did not do so, hundreds would probably attempt to participate in the harvesting in his fields (cf. Boedisantoso 1974; Miles 1979).

All rice plants were cut with a sickle. Women previously used a finger-knife (ani-ani) or wooden knives but some respondents

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14 At the time of fieldwork, the principal rice variety was IR36 which had been introduced in 1979 as a variety that was resistant to the wereng coklat, the brown planthopper that devastated earlier varieties of rice.
insisted that the new grain was much easier to harvest with sickles. They said the finger-knife was replaced after they began planting new varieties of rice which have short straw. Previously, when farmers still planted ‘native’ rice, which has long straw, the harvesters cut the grain on the stalk and tied it in bundles. They then carried it on bamboo poles to the house of the owner. In 1980 the harvesters also had to thresh the grain in the fields, separate the rice from the straw, put it in sacks and carry it to the owner’s house. Usually the men carried the grain, putting the sacks on the seat of a bicycle and pushing it along. This was an extra job for the harvesters. Yields varied on individual rice fields, according to many factors such as fertility of land, the water supply and investment in fertilizer, but on average the yield was around 4 to 5 tons of unhusked rice (gabah) per hectare in 1980.

Soon after the first crop was harvested, peasants began preparing for the second rice crop: tilling the land and growing seedlings. Between April and May was the busiest season for the villagers. There was no time to spare, since all available water had to be utilised. The whole process of growing and harvesting was repeated. Between the first planting and when the first seedlings were approaching harvest was the slack season when there was not so much work to be done on the rice crop. However, it was not a quiet time. The villagers had no rest as there was always a lot to do. Vegetables needed attention, or the roof of the house needed repairing. For many who owned only a small plot of land,
this could be a time to look for jobs for additional income around the village or in the towns. After the harvest some rice was then sold to pay taxes, rent, and the cost of new seed, but the largest part was used for daily consumption.

Palawija crops, by comparison, were grown specifically for sale. In 1980 for one hectare of peanuts, the farmer would receive around Rp.300,000 nett. Harvesting peanuts needed many labourers, about 50 people for one hectare of land. The yield from vegetables was difficult to estimate because of marked differences between varieties and different harvesting times. But an average field of 0.01 hectare of land was worth Rp.10,000 per harvest. Some vegetables, such as chilies, yielded several crops in one season.

Although most villagers spent some time in work related to farming, nearly all had to supplement their family income from subsidiary occupations: land holdings were too small to provide a livelihood and work in agriculture was in short supply. In this kind of economy almost every household must mobilize every member of working age to earn income. Some of them sought work outside the village, perhaps joining a construction gang. Although hard data were unobtainable, largely due to the casual and irregular nature of this work, it was observable that the size of this group

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At the time of fieldwork three major dam construction projects, the Krangkates, Selorejo and Tulungagung dams, absorbed much unskilled labour from the survey area. These projects (the first two were then nearly finished, the third was just beginning) were supplemented by local public works projects (roads, bridges, schools, etc.) funded under Inpres finance. Most of this employment was short term and was associated with the oil boom.
reached a peak during the slack season in agriculture. Many of these workers were buruh srabudan who could not afford to move to the city with their entire families. Instead they became commuters and/or seasonal workers, leaving their families in the village. Many who remained dependent on the village for employment, especially the landless, had to develop and maintain good relations with those who controlled jobs and capital.\textsuperscript{16}

IIB Pari as a Community: Harmony and cracks

This section will describe the main features of village society and social relations. The basic dimensions of social structure in Pari were formed by the interaction of wealth — in particular, land ownership — kinship, occupation, education and patron-client ties between villagers and influential people outside the village. Traditionally, status in the village was largely determined by access to land. The founders of the village, known as the cakal-bakal, originally owned more land and the best land. Both ownership of the land itself, and the wealth they were able to accumulate from it, ensured their higher social status. Land ownership was also a basic criteria of social status for other villagers, as shown by the terms they formerly used to categorize themselves: the term kuli kenceng, or tani gogol, described a man

\textsuperscript{16}An example of this was the uyang-uyangan trade, see page 140 below.
who owned a compound, a house and wet-rice land;\textsuperscript{17} kuli setengah kenceng owned only a compound and a house; numpang karang owned only a house, but not the land on which it stood; while the lowest status was the numpang usup who did not even own a house, but occupied a house belonging to others. The latter two terms were still in common usage in Pari in 1980.

Over time ownership of land had become less important as a determinant of social status. The process of inheritance had fragmented many of the holdings of the cakal-bakal families. The same process combined with growing land shortage made the land tenure situation increasingly complex, so that in some cases no one knew who was the legal owner of land, and various forms of tenancy increased. However, access to, and control over, land remained the basis of economic status for most residents. Thus access to land, rather than ownership, became the important factor in social relations. Those who attained wealth through other means often sought to obtain land, both as an investment and because of the status attached to it. In the social context, wealth with land in Pari appeared to be qualitatively different from wealth without land.

Kinship was also a fundamental element in the social order in Pari. Of the 140 households living in Pari when I carried out fieldwork, about one-third were related by ties of kinship or

\textsuperscript{17} And who also had certain additional rights (to communal land, to stand for public office) and obligations (labour services, payment of land tax). Perhaps because many of these rights and obligations no longer applied, the term was no longer used by 1980.
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marriage. The importance of kin ties were closely related to the importance of land. Houses in Pari tended to be located in family clusters in enclosed compounds, separated by simple wooden fences or hedges. As many as five houses were jammed untidily together in a small compound. Due to the general shortage of land, kin ties were the main means of access to residential land. Young people getting married usually formed nuclear families but built their houses on land owned by their parents or some other member of the older generation of their family (often a grandparent). Often families living in the same compound were only quite distant kin of the owner, whose own parents had not been able to provide them with land. Land, especially compound land, was almost exclusively inherited and was considered the main means of ensuring the status and security of the family. Custom demanded that descendants keep the family land within the kin group. The older generation felt a sense of obligation to provide younger kin with land to build a house, whereas the older custom of magersari, under which non-kin were also sometimes given a place to build a house (in return for labour), had died out by 1980.

Within the wider family unit, good relations were regarded as both a social obligation and an investment. Social pressures praised those who cultivated strong family ties. Villagers would talk badly about individuals or families who neglected kin obligations. Building good relations with kin was in many ways a very practical investment. Relatives from near and far would gather to assist when a family staged an important event, such as
a slamatan or marriage ceremony. Family members on such an occasion would be expected to support the family’s status by their attendance and to give money. Neighbours, on the other hand, more typically gave their labour and contributions in kind. In times of distress, for example if a villager needed money to treat a sick child, he would turn to relatives first. However, increasingly relatives were unwilling or unable to assist and he would be forced to seek outside help, often from an unrelated patron. With modernization and commercialization the capacity of the family to guarantee security to its members was weakening.

When a new house was to be built, the size and solidarity of the family and its standing in the village could be judged by the numbers of kin and neighbours who came to help. This help had both its positive and negative aspects. One respondent complained to me that it would have been cheaper to hire labour to build the house than to provide food and cigarettes to the numerous friends and relatives who came to help him build a new house. However, he felt obliged to accept their assistance.

Family relations also played a part in hamlet politics. In general, an individual standing for public office could count on the support of relatives. In Pari one prominent family had monopolized hamlet politics. However, the importance of family ties was declining with the increased involvement of the central government in local politics. Factionalism broke out within the family while I was in Pari. The main branch had held the office of kamitua for many years. In 1980, however, the office was held
by a man from a distant branch of the family. When the position was again due to be re-considered, a younger man from the main branch of the family lobbied for selection. He was generally supported by most villagers and all his relatives. However, when the present kamitua was appointed, villagers and relatives alike set about establishing good relations with him and the man who failed to win left the village to become a transmigrant.

Although closely tied to access to land, wealth itself was a factor in the social structure of the village. There were no great extremes of wealth and poverty in the hamlet, although some participants in hamlet life who actually lived outside the hamlet itself\(^\text{18}\), could perhaps be described as relatively rich by general standards. Wealth in the village was relative: people regarded by the villagers as 'rich' might seem quite ordinary to an outsider. I was considered by the villagers to be banyak uang (rich). The villagers described 'being rich' as 'if you want to buy something then the money, or the means of obtaining it by, for example, selling some of your surplus rice, is available'. Villagers also had quite fixed ideas about appropriate patterns of consumption for 'rich' people. For example, I was pitied because, although I was considered to be rich, I didn't own any gold jewellery. The wealthy were also thought to have certain obligations to poorer people in the village, although the force of this attitude was weakening. In hard times, villagers would turn first to kin and

\(^{18}\text{Such as my landlord.}\)
then to the wealthier families for assistance. By 1980, however, help provided by non-kin was usually provided on a commercial basis.

There were two kinds of wealth in the village. 'Old wealth', such as that of the cakal-bakal families, was based on land. The socio-economic position of the founder families was diminishing over time. Due to their wealth, they were among the first to send their children to secondary schools, some even attending senior secondary school outside Banyu. These children preferred to seek jobs in the cities, leaving the land to be farmed by sharecroppers as the parents became too old to farm it themselves. For example, one youth from a cakal-bakal family who had obtained a senior secondary qualification (SMA) went to work in Pertamina in Jakarta. Another with senior secondary qualifications, in this case, STM, became a government servant in Kediri. In at least three cases they even brought their parents to the cities, and in one case to a transmigration area in Sumatra.

The cakal-bakal families were also in a better position than others to ensure that their offspring obtained a job in the city through their connections to often-influential relatives. Both the Pertamina employee in Jakarta and the government servant in Kediri obtained their posts through the influence of a relative. Thus the ability of old wealthy families to provide their offspring with education and access to employment was partly responsible for their declining influence in the hamlet.
In addition to the 'old wealth', there were two families with 'new wealth' gained from business. The first emerged when a member of a non-founder family who had been pensioned from the army installed a rice mill operated by his wife in Pari. In addition to the mill, this family operated a number of other business activities and rapidly became dominant in the social and economic life of the community. The second family were also from non-founder origins. Their wealth was obtained from rice trading but was less than that of the rice-milling family. They were still expanding during the period of fieldwork but had not achieved sufficient wealth to be a major influence in hamlet society.

Education was respected provided that it led to a job and a regular income. Most of the population had not completed primary school. The few who obtained senior secondary qualifications and well-paid jobs, such as the two mentioned above, and the teacher and health workers were well-regarded. However, one youth who had passed the SMA qualification but was unable to find a job was often teased and looked down on by the villagers who considered his unemployed status inconsistent with his education.

Occupation also influenced social status. The office of pamong (village officer) had formerly been a prestigious public office that was obtained by election and reflected the respect and confidence of the community. When, in 1980 the post in Pari became a salaried position, its status appeared to have been reduced. One villager commented to me that now anyone with money and connections could become a pamong. On the other hand, public servants living
in the hamlet - teachers, health workers and army personnel - had high social status. This largely reflected their economic status due to their secure jobs and regular incomes and, perhaps, their generally higher levels of education. The school teachers in particular were respected because, apart from their actual level of education, they were among the few well-informed members of the community and were often consulted for advice on matters of many kinds. They were also looked up to for their rather different lifestyles.

A final element of the social situation in Pari was the special patron-client relationships that existed between many of the peasants and better-off households. Traditionally, a typical Pari patron was a household that owned or controlled land and permitted clients to farm it as tenants or sharecroppers. The patron was also expected to assist his clients' during hard times and to make material contributions to the clients' families on specific occasions, such as at marriage, funeral or other ceremonies. In return, the clients were obligated to serve the patron, principally by providing various forms of labour, but also offering political support, and gifts in kind on ceremonial occasions. Traditional patronage was flexible, highly personal and tended to involve multiple kinds of exchange.

However, in Pari in 1980 the role of patron had changed. Firstly, most patrons lived outside the hamlet, although most lived within the village of Banyu. The most important patrons in Pari in the past had come from the family that had dominated the office
of village headman for five generations. However, due largely to outmigration, none of the five descendants of this family were active in agriculture in 1980. Four were absentee landlords living in distant cities. They had little knowledge of, or interest in, the welfare of their sharecroppers except in direct relation to the sharecropping agreement. Secondly, patrons in general had assumed a more commercial approach in their relations with sharecroppers. The fifth descendant of the family mentioned above lived in the village but operated a public transport enterprise with her husband. Respondents contrasted her business-like attitude to her sharecroppers with the more traditional role that had been played by her mother. The old lady, who was the widow of a long-serving lurah and was still known as Ibu Lurah, died in 1972. She had been perhaps the last of the traditional patrons. Respondents said that she usually helped her sharecroppers when they were in need, 'even for a very simple personal matter', and regularly attended their family ceremonies. In the case of her daughter, these social aspects of patronage had disappeared.

During the 'seventies a new style of patron emerged in the form of the rice-mill owner. Instead of access to land, the patronage of the rice-miller provided access to employment, credit and to a market to those with whom she did business. Unlike traditional patrons, who were dependent on the relatively secure resource of land, the rice-miller was dependent on the market, a less stable basis, and was herself a client of (bigger) outside
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patrons who maintained a fairly strictly business relationship with her. Thus she also adopted a more commercial approach in her relationship with her clients, which was more narrowly defined in largely economic terms. However, social obligations still existed between patron and client. The rice-miller’s clients were expected to provide labour when her family staged a ceremony. On the other hand, she was expected to attend important ceremonies of her clients’ families. In this case, the social aspects of the relationship had not completely disappeared. However, the role of the patron in providing support in times of economic distress had ceased.

Although to an outsider Pari presented the impression of being an harmonious community, where kin and community ties remained strong and traditional institutions continued to function, this was to some extent superficial. Beneath the surface tensions and cracks in community solidarity existed and appeared to have long been a part of life in the hamlet. This was not surprising because the unequal distribution of the basic resources of production, land and capital, gave rise to social differences and competing interests among residents. Open rifts in relations, factionalism, ill-feeling expressed in gossip and petty jealousies were a feature of everyday life in Pari. They could be observed at every level of daily social relations, from disputes between individuals or

\[19\] Traders in Blitar and other nearby towns.
families to village politics and even to instances of what Kerkvliet called 'daily resistance'.

Community participation in government development programmes was not immune from the effects of petty jealousies and disputes that were related to social differentiation within the community. For example, one of the most active women in the hamlet PKK (Family Welfare Education Programme for Women), who was in large part responsible for its active image, was the wife of a farmer with no particular status. The wife of the Kamitua, on the other hand, was formally the leader because of her husband’s status, although she had little talent for the position. When they came into open disagreement over a personal matter the farmer’s wife was obliged to resign, the PKK was left in the hands of the Kamitua’s wife and the level of activity declined because of her poor leadership. The other women gossiped behind her back but could not afford to support openly the farmer’s wife because of the influential position of the Kamitua’s wife.

Hamlet government appeared to function largely as before, but villagers claimed there were important differences that seemed to arise largely from the increased role of the central government in village politics. In the past the mechanism of government had been the rembug desa, a village meeting attended by all villagers. Only certain members of the community, such as kuli kenceng, had the right to speak but my informants told me that most decisions were

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actually made by the wealthier members of the community. However, villagers took an active interest in issues because they felt that they had a right to participate, even although in fact most of them did not exercise those rights. With the entry of the central government into hamlet politics, the village meeting was replaced by a Village Council, known as the LKMD, whose members were appointed. Although, in theory, they were selected to represent the community and were drawn from the same groups who had formerly provided the main decision makers in hamlet politics, the villagers felt alienated from the process and took little interest in issues unless they directly threatened their interests. For example, when the Kamitua used his authority to rent out hamlet land to subsidise repairs needed by the local school, the community showed little interest. They neither praised nor criticised his action. Only if, in their eyes, he had misused the rent, would they have raised their voices.

This process of alienation had also affected the status and role of village leaders. Informants spoke of the late kamitua as a wise and respected leader who was often consulted on all kinds of occasions for help and advice and played an important role in resolving hamlet conflicts at all levels. However, when I did fieldwork in Pari the kamitua at that time was regarded as just a government servant who paid more attention to the wishes and interests of his superiors than to those of the villagers. Villagers turned instead to two residents for advice. One was Pak Sumo, an old man who was head of the RT (neighbourhood unit). The
other was the young man who was challenging the Kamitua for his position. He held no other official post. The former was regarded as wise because of his long and rich experience, the latter because of his ability and personality. However, neither was able to support a role as community advisor with the authority of his official position in the way that the old kamitua had done. This probably reduced their effectiveness in resolving conflict and settling disputes.

Quarrels were frequent between neighbours and within families and quickly became the subject of gossip. One of my informants, telling me of the frequency of petty quarrels, remarked that 'when you are poor like us, small things often become very big, so there are many quarrels'. After I had been working in Pari for some time, villagers began to share their gossip with me too. I was often told tales of the extra-marital misbehaviour of various residents. One day I was informed that Ibu X was so skinny because she was suffering from the misbehaviour of her husband!

However, such tales were always told behind the back of the subject. To their faces the pretence of harmony and good relations was preserved, largely because, whether they liked it or not, they were dependent on each other. For example, one day I was chatting with Ibu Iyah, who was gossiping with other women about Ibu Mur, the rice miller. Iyah was one of Ibu Mur’s penguyang. She was complaining because Ibu Mur had broken a promise to pay Rp.200 for her rice and had paid only Rp.100 instead. As she complained to the other women she said, 'Let her take her money to the grave'.
Just as she spoke, Ibu Mur walked up. I was certain that Ibu Mur had overheard what was said but, to my surprise, she pretended otherwise and did not appear angry. Despite her outburst, Iyah greeted Ibu Mur politely and sat down on a small bench next to her. She leaned over and whispered something to Ibu Mur who, with a laugh and in language that proclaimed her superiority, said loudly: 'All right, I’ll give you some more money and you just continue to say bad things about me.' Iyah was silent, but she looked rather frightened.

As in this example, open confrontation was avoided where possible. Some of my better-off respondents said that villagers often expressed their feelings of dissatisfaction of someone’s behaviour or attitudes or their ill-feelings towards a particular individual through acts of what has been described as ‘everyday resistance’, such as by stealing fruit or chickens etc. from the person’s compound. The frequency with which this happened was probably reflected in the way villagers protected their houses and property. Doors were always securely locked whenever they went out, even in the middle of the day when neighbours were around, and many doors also had security bolts. Windows had security grills, made of wood among the poorer villagers, or of metal among the more affluent. Although fences were insufficient to keep intruders out and neighbours often passed through each other’s compounds, they were intended to mark boundaries and to discourage outsiders from entering.
This section portrays the social setting which Pari residents had to adapt themselves to and which, in turn, shaped their strategies for survival. It placed a high value on harmony and co-existence, despite the existence of numerous 'cracks' in the community fabric. Those cracks arose largely from the extent of socio-economic differentiation in the community. Pari peasants were well aware of the distance that separated their own socio-economic status from that of the wealthier members of their community. They also resented that distance, but those who stayed in Pari accepted it because they could see few alternatives for survival, other than co-existence.

III. The Village View of Its Past:

Recorded historical data on Pari is lacking, but oral testimony suggests it is the most recently established hamlet of Banyu village. Village documents\textsuperscript{21} record the foundation of four other hamlets between the years of 1823 and 1850 but mention no year for Pari, which can probably be dated to shortly after 1850. Most informants in Pari believed that their ancestors came to Blitar in search of work in the plantations. They then looked for agricultural land on which to settle. A few villagers, however, said that their parents or grandparents settled directly without

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Monografi Desa} (Village Monograph), 19**.
having worked in the plantations. There were probably several streams of migration, which may help account for the uncertainty.

Local history compared conditions for settlement in Pari unfavourably with other areas in Banyu: the land was uneven and nearly all covered by stagnant water. Agriculture promised little profit and Pari was abandoned several times by some of its occupants. Even after it became a permanent settlement, there were several streams of exodus. Local history recorded that the status of land abandoned by settlers reverted to communal land. Any villager could ask to cultivate this land but, as with all communal land, this carried the obligation to provide corvee labour. It seems that even though the village eased the qualification for cultivating communal land (previously the right to do so was only granted to those who were already domiciled in the village and owned a house and compound), in the beginning not many villagers or newcomers were interested in the land, which was often poor quality and covered with stagnant water. Until the end of the nineteenth century, there were still some forest areas near Banyuwangi where these migrants could settle, at least initially, without conditions. However, later, within the time of the parents of older residents, even this land was in great demand.

One respondent, Pak Sumo, told a story about Pari which he had heard from his father. Born in Pari about seventy-five years ago, he had lived there all his life, except when as a romusha (forced labourer) during the Japanese Occupation he worked on the south coast of Blitar for a few months. Here is his story:
"According to my parents, they originally came from Solo (Central Java). I do not know the name of their village. They came to Blitar with some relatives and friends to a plantation in Kuning\(^2^2\)(a plantation in the northern uplands). They spent a few harvests there, and then they came down to \textit{dusun}.\(^2^3\) They heard that there was a chance of cultivating land in the \textit{dusun}. What they meant by \textit{dusun} was probably this place. My father said at that time many people left their villages just like that, because of heavy labour service.

In Pari there was some land which was left neglected. Most of the land was not good for rice cultivation because it was always covered by stagnant water. But when my parents came down, there was not much land left, only the worst part which was always covered by water where \textit{mendong}\(^2^4\) grew. There were many people who asked for land, but there was not enough land for all of them. My father was among those who had to wait. But my father died before he got his turn."

Another story came from Mbok Diwut, aged around seventy-five years. She was also born in Pari and told of memories from her childhood:

"My grandfather was one of the first founders in Pari. He came from Bagelen (Central Java). He left Bagelen to find a better life in the east. He and some other people came here, cleared the land and settled down. He had two sons, one of them was my father. I do not quite remember my grandfather. He was a village

\(^2^2\)Probably he meant Kunir Plantation, a sugar plantation in the Blitar area. (Kuning in the Indonesian language has the same meaning as \textit{kunir} in the Javanese language.) I could find no record of a plantation called 'Kuning'.

\(^2^3\)The plantation workers call villages outside the plantation \textit{dusun}.

\(^2^4\)Pandanus grass, used for making mats.
religious official (modin). My father was also a haji.\(^{25}\) One thing I still clearly remember is that when I was a child, Pari was still sparsely populated, especially in the north. My mother always forbade me to play there. She said it was haunted, or I could be kidnapped there. The area was uneven and covered with stagnant water which is full of mendong. I never went there, except with my parents when they collected mendong to make mats.

At that time, people were coming and going from Pari. Sometimes people just left Pari in great numbers, after staying for some time. My mother said they left because they did not feel at home. My mother used to frighten me, especially if I did not obey her, by saying that she would go with them and leave me alone in Pari".

Because of difficult conditions, Pari seemed to be unpopular in the early nineteenth century as a settlement and land was constantly abandoned. Perhaps only as a consequence of the heavy eastward migration following the establishment of plantations, was the unwanted land permanently settled. Around 1850, Pari officially became part of Banyu village.

There is a strong possibility that the land previously abandoned by the settlers in Pari became communal land. It was managed under the gogol system. Until 1964 certain villagers had the right to cultivate a portion of communal land (tani gogol). There were eighty tani gogol in Banyu when the gogol land was converted into private land. To be eligible a man had to have a wife, a house and a compound (sometimes the ownership of cultivated land was also required). In return tani gogol had to undertake certain village duties, usually in the form of labour service. The

\(^{25}\) A Muslim who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.
village meeting (rembug desa), which was held one a year, determined who received gogol land, its location and area as well as what kind of additional duties were required in return. (See Kano 1977: 15-21; Soentoro et al 1981: 14-23.) Gogolan land could not be inherited. Nevertheless, the status of tani gogol often passed from father to one of his sons or sons-in-law.

This system was partly related to population growth which was expanding steadily, due both to continuing migration and to rapid natural increase. Mbok Diwut observed the effect of rapid natural increase within her own family:

"I do not remember when Pari became crowded like this. But certainly it was because we were breeding fast. I'll give you an example. My father together with his only brother inherited 2.5 bau each of wet-rice fields from my grandfather. My father had four children - my three older brothers and myself, the youngest and the only daughter in the family. I myself have twelve children, not to mention my nieces and nephews. Now all of us occupy a piece of 0.25 hectares where we built these four houses.

This is the only inherited land left. My father did not pass on any wet-rice fields to us because the 2.5 bau wet-rice field was pawned and later sold, since my father could not redeem it. The only thing still left now is this house and its yard. Those three houses to the left and the right are occupied by my nephews and nieces, the children of my three brothers".

Population increases intensified the competition for land. Those who came later had no land to clear. Later migrants could only become magersari. They had no land of their own but worked as helpers for landed farmers who needed manpower. The magersari
partner worked the land, contributing only his labour. Everything else was provided by the landed ‘master’. The master also provided shelter and other forms of social security for his magersari and their families. The magersari usually lived in the same compound as his master, but he could also be settled on separate land belonging to the same owner. In practice, the magersari and their families would also help in other activities such as grazing cattle, bailing water and undertaking night guard duties. Thus as early as the nineteenth century, Banyu and surrounding areas already had a landless group, the magersari.

Over the years Pari became increasingly important economically for its sugarcane, but contact with other parts of the region did not seem to change Pari very much. The sugar plantations, which occupied and alternated with peasants’ rice fields on a short-term lease, could co-exist and become interwoven with local social structures. Some villagers, such as the lurah and the pamong who became agents of the sugar mills, became rich or were able to increase their existing wealth. They not only received bonuses from the mills but could also easily abuse their power and manipulate people to serve their own economic interests. In 1980 the descendants of the previous lurah’s families who had ruled

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26 Interviews with the elders of Banyu.

27 It is probable that even then the village leadership was chosen from among the wealthier members of the community.
Banyu for five generations were among the largest landowners in Banyu.  

The only reminders of the sugar cane era were a few colonial houses in Banyu village. These ex-residences of Dutch managers still stood but were fast losing their charm. Yet for older villagers the colonial houses retained memories. Some remembered the colonial days as zaman normal, literally, the 'normal era,' when things were in order and one could buy goods cheaply. Others remembered stories told by their parents or their grandparents about the misery they endured when the sugar mills took over rice fields for cane growing. These opposing views of the past may have represented two different groups of villagers, those whose ancestors were advantaged and those whose ancestors were disadvantaged from involvement in sugar cultivation.

One aspect of colonial rule that benefited only a small group of families, such as that of the lurah, was the establishment in Banyu of a village school teaching classes up to grade three. Perhaps, as one old respondent claimed, the Dutch set up a village school only in an area where there was a sugar mill because they needed clerks. The family of my landlord, which had provided a long line of lurahs in Banyu, was one of those who had benefited from these educational facilities. Most of the descendants of this

Their holdings were large by village standards, although they may have seemed modest by other standards.
family, partly because of their education, no longer lived in Banyu but had moved to cities.29

Sugar cultivation brought many changes. With continuous population growth, more and more families in Banyu could not inherit farms and so became landless. An ex-magersari’s son told how his father, who had been allowed to sharecrop part of his master’s land, later lost his sharecropping rights to most of this land when his master had to divide the land for married children. (His father was lucky because he could still continue to sharecrop a very small part of the land.) Others were less fortunate: once wage labour became available it was often preferred to magersari labour because the landowner did not have to provide shelter, food and the other traditional rights of the magersari to hired labourers. Thus, many lost their magersari status. Some became little different from domestic servants.30

Wage labour became more common as the money economy penetrated rural Blitar, especially with the need to accommodate larger numbers of the landless. One old man in Banyu village recalled that even in the 1920s and before the 1930 Great Depression, some families in Banyu already used wage labourers in agriculture

29They are now absentee landlords farming their land through sharecropping.

3During fieldwork the last magersari attached to the household of my landlord was, in fact, just a domestic servant. After he married he no longer lived in the household, although he continued to work there, and was indistinguishable from other domestic servants. (Servants with families usually did not live in their employers’ houses.)
production instead of sambatan\textsuperscript{31} (a traditional form of mutual assistance). He also mentioned a growing trade in selling and buying paddy from that time.\textsuperscript{32}

The Great Depression of the 1930s severely affected sugar cultivation areas such as Pari. My landlord in Pari recalled the period:\textsuperscript{33}

"We called the depression of the 'thirties zaman meleset.\textsuperscript{34} My clearest memory of that time is of the arrival of poor villagers, especially from Trenggalek, pouring into Banyu and surrounding areas looking for jobs. Their labour was so cheap that there was a saying in the Blitar area during the 'thirties that referred to siteng galek. Siteng was a coin worth half a cent (very little, even then) and galek meant 'people from Trenggalek'. It was used to refer to the very poor or to people who didn't have enough money.

Approximately one-third of the rice fields in Pari in 1980 belonged to and were controlled by ten outsiders. These outsiders had never lived in Pari but their ownership of the land was long-standing. One respondent said that there had been many land sales in 1936,

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{31}A traditional form of cooperative labour, similar to modern gotong royong, for agricultural work.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{32}However, not until the Japanese occupation did this activity become widespread.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{33}These are not the landlord's own words, since the conversation was not taped. They are my understanding of the conversation, based on field notes made at the time.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{34}Zaman means period. Meleset here meant a time of disorder and uncertainty. Literally, meleset means 'off-target' or 'to slip away' and implies failure to achieve some objective. It is probably based on a misunderstanding of the Dutch word mellaise, since the Dutch used that word in the same context.
\end{quote}
presumably as a result of the difficult times. This respondent himself had sold his land to his patron, an outsider, at that time and hence could remember the event.

Villagers had clearer memories of the Japanese occupation. Pak Sumo, a dacinan sharecropper, head of the rukun tetangga and one of the oldest residents, told his story:

"The Japanese era was a period of sara [misery]. There was famine and disease everywhere. Villagers suffered from beri-beri, open sores and many new diseases that I had never heard of before. I was told that the Japanese brought all the diseases as part of their battle tactics. Everyone had lice and bugs, not only in their hair but also on their bodies.

My most unforgettable memory is of the time I and some other villagers from Pari and nearby villagers were forced to become Romosha to work in South Blitar to build a harbour. We had to work hard but they did not give us enough proper food. Many died because of their weakened bodies. Another enemy for us was malaria. I worked there for about three months. I was one of the lucky survivors. Nobody, not even my family, expected me to come home alive. I do not remember how many people from Pari died. There were certainly many from my group.

Our misery during the Japanese time can also be seen in the way villagers coped with their daily lives. Villagers had to eat wild tubers because there was not enough rice. The Japanese confiscated rice for their own supplies so there was no rice market. Anyone who had some could sell it on the black market for a very high price. They did not dare sell it openly.

Again, this is not a transcription of his words but is based on my field notes taken at the time.

See also the account from Mbok Diwut below, page 154.
Another view of this time came from my landlord, whose age in 1980 was around the late sixties. Compared with Pak Sumo, the landlord came from a family that was much better off. He recalled:

"After experiencing the good old days\textsuperscript{37}, the Japanese era was a really chaotic time. What shocked me was the number of diseases, especially skin diseases. Villagers wearing sarongs made of sheet rubber\textsuperscript{38} were an everyday sight. Soap was either too expensive or couldn’t be found at all so we used different kinds of wild fruits instead. We had no spare clothes to change into. There were either no stocks in the markets or we didn’t have any money to buy them.

We did not put rice in our lumbung [rice granary] because we were afraid that poor and hungry villagers would seize it. In any case, we did not have much either. My mother used to sell rice to penguyung [rice-trader] in the beginning but she had to stop because we could not be sure that if we sold it that later we could buy it back again. We also had to hide our rice so it would not be confiscated by the Japanese.

He said that, regardless of whether people were poor or rich, the misery caused by the Japanese Occupation was shared by everyone. However, if we compare his own story with that of Pak Sumo we can see that there were some important differences between their experiences at that time.

In 1947 Blitar became the headquarters of East Java Province of the republican government, replacing Malang which at that time was occupied by the returning Dutch forces. Blitar was among several pockets of republican resistance that did not fall to the

\textsuperscript{37}He used the term zaman normal.

\textsuperscript{38}Probably home made, since there were many rubber trees in the area.
Dutch. In 1947 the Dutch attacked these strongholds in an action known as Agresi I (The First Aggression). On 21 December, 1948 Blitar fell and was occupied in Agresi II (The Second Aggression). For villagers in Pari and Banyu, the Second Aggression was remembered as the time when many big houses, especially along the main road (including the house of my landlord), were burned to the ground (di bumi-hanguskan) by the Indonesian guerilla army to avoid them being used by the Dutch. My landlord said that the Dutch only occupied and controlled the town of Blitar and the area along the main road because they did not dare to patrol within the villages. He and his family fled to one of the Banyu hamlets where they stayed with one of his sharecroppers until the revolution was over. In 1953 he was able to rebuild his house on the same site.

The years after the end of the revolution were troubled times for many parts of Java. They seemed to have left a relatively small impression on Pari villagers. However, a number of land sales, including some very small plots, recorded in village records in Banyu in 1951 suggest that many were hard pressed. Again, my landlord provided his recollections on the experience of Banyu:

"Despite the increasing influence of the various political parties after Independence, I did not believe that the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) had many followers in Banyu village. Some communists made noises in the village meetings but I didn't think they won many followers here. I do not know why, but it was probably


4This also is not a literal transcription of a conversation but is based on my field notes.
because we were not enchanted by their promises. After the 1965 coup there was a bloodbath in many parts of Blitar but Banyu got off very lightly.

I was told that some bodies of people slain after the coup were found in Banyu but that they were not local people. Villagers generally didn’t want to talk about this period of their history. This is not surprising since it is a sensitive issue even today throughout Indonesia.

The sharp break with the past that occurred in some parts of Blitar did not occur in Pari where there was no plantation land or forest area to occupy. Even when the 1960 Agrarian Reform was promulgated, there was no land to distribute and only the gogol land was converted to private ownership. Even this did not change the land structure very much because there was also very little gogol land available. Some additional land rights were granted to tenants by the tenancy legislation. Yet as could be expected landowners avoided implementation and it became difficult to check the application of the Reform since many tenancy agreements were oral. Certainly land reform did not involve the breaking up of larger holdings and most land remained concentrated in the same hands.

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4 Villagers in Pari also did not like to talk about modern politics, although they were happy to discuss more general issues, for example, on development.

4 Communal land. See Kano, 1977: 15-21 for some historical background to communal land.
Despite the broad changes occurring in Blitar during the Japanese Occupation and in the aftermath of the Revolution, there had been little change in the basic social structure. As an agricultural community, Pari continued to follow the classic pattern of work organization.

IV. Strategies for Survival in a Changing World: Pari 1980:

Peasant strategies for survival in the changing world which they faced in 1980 naturally centred on questions of access to land and to work. Using a very crude classification, based on landownership, people in Pari could be divided into better-off families, marginal and landless peasants. Table 3.2 shows that the majority of Pari people fell into the category of marginal and landless peasants. The table also suggests that the land of Pari was concentrated in the hands of a few people. Table 3.3 shows that the numbers of people controlling the land of Pari, through operation, was also small. It was an even smaller number of these who controlled most of the agricultural employment opportunities by being able to afford to hire labour. Many of the kinds of strategies used by the villagers in Pari to make the best of their lives reflected this unequal balance of bargaining power within the hamlet.

It was possible to distinguish two different kinds of survival strategies being used in Pari. There were firstly the strategies
used by those who owned or controlled land and capital resources, represented by the better-off peasant farmers and landowners. (Note that better-off does not mean rich.) Secondly, there were the strategies of the poorer peasants, most of whom had only their labour to offer, but a few of whom had tiny patches of land. To better understand how these two kinds of strategies worked, I will present ethnographic data gathered during fieldwork in 1980.

We begin with the strategies of the richer villagers. Their strategies to deal with the changing agricultural and social situation tended to be positive, involving active decisions and behaviour. This reflected their access to the critical resources of land and capital. One example of their adaptation to change can be seen in their use of sharecropping.

In Pari sharecropping occurred more frequently than renting. There were several explanations for this. One obvious one was the existence of absentee ownership. Land owned by absentee owners covered an area of 9.7 hectares or about 39 per cent of all wet-rice fields. Except for two owners who lived in Malang, these people lived elsewhere in Banyu village or Talun sub-district, so eight were not actually absentee owners according to the 1960 Agrarian Reform. The two exceptions held land in Pari by inheritance. One was a descendant of Eurasians who had owned land in Pari and in neighbouring villages since before the War, while the other was one of the children of the previous lurah. All of the land owned by absentees was worked on a share-cropping basis by ten Pari residents.
Sharecropping also occurred because some who inherited land had taken up other occupations and did not have farming knowledge; others lived some distance from their land. In 1980 there were six people practising mertelu in Pari and in all cases the landowners were domiciled outside the hamlet. The reason outsiders tended to use the mertelu system was probably that they were not always available to supervise the work themselves. Consequently they preferred to farm their land on this sharecropping basis. Four of these six mertelu cases continued to employ sharecroppers from the same family as their deceased parents had. Under mertelu the landowner provided seed and fertilizer and the sharecropper was responsible for all other inputs. At the harvest the sharecropper had the right to one portion and the landowner to three portions. In practice it was always possible to modify the arrangement, often to the disadvantage of the sharecropper.

This was one strategy used by the more powerful to adapt to the changing economics of agriculture after the Green Revolution. There were no written agreements between sharecroppers and landowners, and a sharecropper often had to accept a unilaterally-renewed agreement on the landowner's terms. For example, three of the ten ploughmen in Pari had previously worked under maro and mertelu agreements with the same landowners, but within the twenty years before 1980 the landowners had renewed the agreements on a dacinan basis. One landowner increased his division of a harvest by unilaterally classifying a male sharecropper who had previously received one-third of the crop under mertelu into a dacinan who
merely prepared rice fields up to the planting phase and was paid a fixed amount of padi. In the situation of increasing yields due to the Green Revolution, the dacinan arrangement retained the benefits of the higher productivity for the landowner. Furthermore, dacinan on a certain area of land required less labour than the old maro and mertelu arrangements - and, of course, offered lower payment. The result for the sharecrophers was less beneficial. Instead of working with one landowner, the three sharecrophers had to work for as many as three landowners each, all on a dacinan basis, in order to obtain sufficient income.

There were advantages in sharecropping for the landowner. One landowner preferred to sharecrop his land to avoid the "small but irritating problems" (rebyek) of dealing with many wage labourers. By sharecropping it, he dealt with limited numbers only. From the owner's point of view wage labour was not necessarily cheaper than sharecropping, particularly when the costs of supervision were considered. Moreover, he reduced his possible losses by sharing the risk of crop failure or poor harvests with a sharecropper.

Under sharecropping a landowner does not lose control over his land. In Pari convention required the sharecropper to ask his

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43 See pages 78 and 145 above.

44 In Pari in 1980 for ten days of ploughing on one hectare of wet-rice field, a dacin sharecropper earned 60 dacin of gabah (unhusked paddy). One dacin approximates 20 kilograms, or the contents of a kerosene tin. By contrast with maro or mertelu a dacin harvest share was fixed and did not vary with output.

45 Sharecroppers who received a share of the crop were more likely to work diligently than labourers who were paid a fixed rate.
landowner for advice concerning what crops should be planted, when and how the crop would be harvested and so on. The landowner could even direct the operations to be performed by, for example, insisting that his sharecropper plant tobacco. If he rented out his land, he would completely lose control over its operation. Another reason why owners were reluctant to rent out land was that tenants could plant crops that affected its future use. Sugarcane for example was not a popular crop among landowners in Pari, because they said it required different landscaping from rice and a period of fallow before the soil was suitable for reversion to other crops. Many of these problems could be minimized under sharecropping arrangements. Thus, in many ways sharecropping allowed the owner more freedom to change the arrangements for working his land in ways that increased his profits.

Another advantage of sharecropping that re-appeared during some of the changes associated with the Green Revolution was that it secured labour to work the land when a labour shortage was beginning to emerge. This can be seen as one of the motives of landowners for using *kedokan tandur* labour. The participants in *kedokan tandur* were all women and, as in *dacinan*, were not paid in cash, but had the right to a larger harvest share than ordinary harvesters. In 1980 in Pari they received one portion of rice for every seven they harvested while the farmer received six portions.

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46 This had been an important reason for sharecropping during the early period of settlement in Java.

47 See Chapter 2 above, page 78.
The ratio operating for the ordinary harvester at that time was 1:12. Under a *kedokan tandur* contract, a participant harvested a specific plot that she had previously planted or weeded. Thus she did not have to compete with others while harvesting. In Pari *kedokan tandur* was restricted to women from Pari hamlet and there was a tendency for *kedokan tandur* contracts to become permanent. From the poorer peasants’ view, as one respondent told me, this reduced the access of people from other hamlets to Pari harvests. From the landowners point of view, as another respondent said, the *kedokan tandur* system prevented participation of uninvited outsiders in his harvest.

It seems that in the past, when labour was relatively plentiful and poorer villagers were in need of work and a share of the harvest, *kedokan tandur* may have been more a poverty sharing mechanism. In that case landowners would want to restrict this kind of institution so it would be logical that it would be closed only to women from the hamlet. The peasants also, would want to restrict access to local women. Most labourers under *kedokan tandur* arrangements were from poor households and most worked for more than one landowner. However, in 1980 I found that a few *kedokan tandur* women were from richer households. One better-off farmer told me that he urged his wife to join *kedokan tandur* so that her team would be available when he needed manpower. This seemed to suggest that *kedokan tandur* was coming to be seen as a
Another important feature of kedokan tandur relates to the practice of uyang-uyangan, the 'buying and selling of rice'. This also was used by some richer people in Pari as a way of expanding their non-farm businesses. The persons engaged in uyang-uyangan were called penguyang. The penguyang bought paddy, usually from better-off farmers with a surplus of padi who wanted to exchange this for cash. Families, like the one I lived with, would sell small quantities of paddy from time to time for their daily cash needs. Sometimes as many as five or more of these rice traders would come knocking on the door early in the morning (7 a.m.) wanting to buy paddy. They then hulled it at a slepan (rice mill) and sold it as rice to customers such as rice grocers or other people who traded in rice, including rice mill owners and intermediate traders in the subdistrict centre of Talun and in local markets. The profit of the penguyang was derived from the difference between the price they paid for the paddy and the price they received for the processed rice.

Nobody knew when or how uyang-uyangan started in Pari: as far as respondents could remember it had always been practised there. They agreed that during the Japanese Occupation the business nearly died, but flourished again after the Revolution during the early

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It is very important that harvest labour should be available exactly at the time the crop is ripe. Delay causes the crop to spoil.
1950s and became even more important in the early 1970s with the introduction of a mechanical rice mill. In 1973, a wife of a retired army officer installed Pari's first mechanical rice mill, which the people regarded as a monument to the death of hand-pounding. Within a short time several rice mills were installed in other hamlets and neighbouring villages. The women who lost their jobs in rice pounding were quickly absorbed by the business of uyang-uyangan, which flourished along with the introduction of the mechanical rice mill.

Respondents said that trading in rice had increased but profits were smaller since the mechanical rice mill began operating in Pari. They also said that the number of people involved in uyang-uyangan in 1980 was increasing.49 One reason which was frequently given for this increase was that, as more and more people were without access to cultivated land, they became penguyang, one of the few income earning opportunities available in Pari. It is clear that the expansion of the trade in rice is also related to increasing commercialization in the villages.

As can be seen from the interview with Mbok Diwut below50 the scale of the uyang-uyangan business had also increased in recent years. There were no records in the village of the number of people engaged in this business but the kamitua estimated that probably one person in every four households would be engaged in

49See James Fox, n.d.,: 6-8.
50See page 154.
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the uyang-uyangan business. I estimated that probably more people than that were involved, especially during the harvest season. Women who engaged in this enterprise typically borrowed the necessary capital from the landowner for whom they worked. The landowner who also ran the rice-mill in Pari, for example, provided such capital to her kedokan tandur workers on the understanding that they used her rice mill to process the rice they bought. From the kedokan tandur participant's point of view this was advantageous, since they generally lacked capital. It gave them more chance of adding to their household income in a situation where paid employment was scarce. However, from the rice-miller's point of view, since there were other mills in the district that could have been used, the arrangement enabled her to increase her business and also to profit from the husking the grain. In addition she had both the first option on the purchase of the rice and the right to keep the germ and bran for sale as pig fodder and the chaff as fuel in lime-kilns. Giving credit to the penguyang thus offered several different ways of increasing her profits.

Most penguyang in Pari lacked capital. Larger traders were able to benefit from changes in rice prices during the year. During the harvest usually the rice price was lower so wealthier traders stock-piled, buying from the penguyang whom they often financed. They sold when the price rose. Most penguyang in Pari lacked the capital to do that. They were happy if they could just manage to pay back their capital and make a small profit. In Pari paddy tended to be sold in small quantities, even by larger
farmers. Immediately after the harvest the larger farmers were also able to afford to hold their paddy until prices increased. However, if a small penguyang with whom they already had a kedokan tandur relationship, came asking to buy they might feel obliged to sell some.

Unlike ordinary sharecroppers who had relations with a limited number of landowners, the kedokan tandur participants often worked for several landowners so they had a number of potential suppliers on whom they could rely for their supply of paddy. The wife of the previous lurah told me that if she knew the women personally she would often sell some paddy out of pity for them, even when she did not need cash. Kedokan tandur linked the penguyang to the larger landowners in a kind of patron-client relationship. The rice trader (this was sometimes also the mill owner) profited from being able to buy rice through the penguyang when prices were low and sellers often did not really want to sell. Larger traders wanting to stockpile rice when prices were lower were often quite dependent on the penguyang for their supplies.

The relationships between the penguyang and those who supplied their capital reflected their very unequal positions. Most penguyang operated on a small scale and were very dependent on people such as rice mill owners, rice grocers, and even some better-off penguyang who provided them with capital. Generally, each penguyang obtained her capital from more than one source. In

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51 Partly because larger here is a relative term. Even the larger farmers in Pari were actually quite small.
the past this had not been the case. The penguyang had been able
to rely on a single patron for all her needs, including support in
times of illness or other difficulties. In 1980 this was not
possible because the patrons of 1980 were themselves clients of
bigger patrons outside the village and restricted themselves to
more strictly business relations with their penguyang. The
dependence of the penguyang was determined both by the proportion
of capital provided by these sources and also in her weak
bargaining power.

The small penguyang was virtually an employee of her suppliers
of capital as will be illustrated below. Part of the task of
penguyang was to mill the paddy they bought before selling it as
rice. If they purchased wet paddy, they also had to dry it before
milling. The rice mill owner provided the facilities, such as a
place for drying the paddy, but the penguyang had to carry out all
the work themselves. The penguyang (like other villagers or,
often, their children who brought paddy to be husked) also had to
do all the loading, bagging and other general labour necessary to
mill the rice. The only employee at the rice mill in Pari was a
man who operated the engine.

If penguyang obtained their capital from a trader they would
have to sell their paddy to him. In Pari almost all the penguyang
obtained most of their finance from the mill owner. They fulfilled
their obligation to her by husking the paddy at her mill. For
marketing the rice, they were free to make their own arrangements.
However, for most of my respondents the rice mill owner was likely to be the buyer. She was also a rice grocer.

So far, the discussion on strategies for survival has focused on the activities of the better-off people in the hamlet.\(^{52}\) It is clear that because of their control over the key resources of production, especially land and capital (these gave them control over work opportunities), they were able to respond to the changing situation in a positive and generally 'modern' way to benefit their own economic interests. In the process, their actions were often at the cost of the poorer peasants. In the remainder of this section I will examine the response and strategies of the poorer villagers in coping with change. Some aspects of their response are already illustrated implicitly in the above discussion. The dacinan sharecroppers have been forced to increase the numbers of people they work for; those whose traditional sharecropping agreements have been changed by the landowners have accepted the new terms. As we will see below, their response in Pari was typically 'peaceful' and passive. They accepted the actions of the richer group, although they were often greatly disadvantaged by those actions.

In order to illustrate this, I present an account of the life story of Mbok Diwut, 75 years old and a penguyang, in her own words:

\(^{52}\)Even the smaller penguyang, in having access to at least some capital, were better-off than the majority of the villagers who were wage labourers.
"I started to be a penguyang when I was young. I do not know in what year. I am illiterate. But it was still in the Dutch era. Certainly after I married and had two or three children. I was not engaged all the time as a penguyang, as I am now, because I had twelve kids. So I did business only in my spare time. My husband was a sharecropper. With two cows and a plough he sharecropped two bau of wet-rice fields. From the harvest sharing we had enough in store until the next harvest (five months).

I started in the uyang-uyangan business because I reckoned it was an easy way to earn money. The hard part about being a penguyang then was pounding the paddy by hand. Another reason was that a penguyang was independent. Nobody scolded you, nobody ordered you, like those who worked in the sugar plantation. Work in the sugar plantation was not considered proper for women anyway. Later I did uyang-uyangan more frequently because we needed more cash, which we could not raise from the sharecropping alone.

How does it work? I just followed my friends, a group of five or so, all women, wandering around villages in the sub-district searching for paddy. We simply visited every house which seemed to be owned by a rich farmer and asked whether they wanted to sell their paddy. We left home early, otherwise we would be too late because somebody else would get there ahead of us. I was lucky because I had a good relationship with the previous lurah’s wife who supplied me with paddy. She was among the richest in Banyu village. Her rice granary was never empty. Of course as a rich family there was no need for her to sell her paddy frequently. Only if they needed cash would they sell some. But she always gave me paddy to sell, especially if she knew that I was in a desperate situation, probably because my husband was one of her sharecroppers.

I stopped being a penguyang during the Japanese Occupation. The uyang-uyangan business stopped during this time. Nobody wanted to sell paddy then, not only because of lack of grain, but also because there was a system of forced buying. Villagers were forced to sell their paddy to the Government and, crudely speaking, were ripped off.

53 She used the term preman which means 'free labourer'.
I began *uyang-uyangan* business again right after the War. And I had to work doubly hard because my husband died during the Japanese Occupation. My eldest son replaced him as a sharecropper, but he was not as good as his father. He has since become a *dacinan*. He married also, so he has to look after his family too. In the meantime I still have some children with me to look after. Luckily God gave me skill as a masseuse. People ask me for this service and in return they give me some money: the amount depends on their generosity. By working as a *penguyang* and as a masseuse I keep food in my kitchen.

Of course I cannot compete with the young, especially because nowadays those who are engaged in *uyang-uyangan* are not only women. Nowadays *penguyang* have to work in a team, husband-wife, mother-son, etc. Because doing *uyang-uyangan* nowadays means dealing with quintals and quintals, not just one sack or so, to cover the cost and to make some reasonable profit. This has all occurred since we began to use the motor-huller. To use this machine requires extra money for payment. Before we pounded paddy by hand without extra cost; now we have to pay Rp.3 per kilogram to the mill. I reckon with the old system I made more profit than I do by using the huller.

I give you an example: Before I always bought about 30 kilograms of paddy. That was the amount I could carry. After pounding it by myself or with the help of other members of the family (without pay of course) I would collect about 21 kilograms of rice. When I sold the rice, I could gain as profit two kilograms of rice and fifteen cents cash. The price of rice was four cents per kilogram at that time. Now when we use the huller, I have to buy one quintal at least to cover the expenses. I cannot carry this by myself certainly, so with other *penguyang* I have to share the rent of a truck or a mini-bus, otherwise nobody could afford it except the rich *penguyang*. I have to pay Rp.100 per sack, and besides that, I have to pay Rp.300 to mill the rice."

Then she calculated that her capital, a loan from the huller owner, was Rp.240,000 which was all used to purchase 2 tons of paddy. After milling this yielded 1400 kilograms which she sold back to the huller owner for Rp.252,000 (at Rp.180 per kilogram,
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Rp.20 below market price\(^5\). Thus her gross profit was Rp.12000. However, her expenditure for processing the paddy was Rp.2000 for transport, Rp.6000 for milling and Rp.500 for food and drink, a total of Rp.8500. So her nett profit for two days' work was Rp.3500. On the other hand the huller owner gained Rp.6000 for the milling and additional profit from the bran (worth Rp.25 per kilogram) and the rice stalks (worth Rp.25 per sack).

"Certainly the profit in uyang-uyangan is for the huller owner. We, the penguyang, only receive some drops (kecipratan). Well, it is enough to survive."

Mbok Diwut's strategy was basically adaptive. It had positive aspects such as accepting the new technology, increasing the scale of her business and using new methods of transport. These adaptations suggest that the nature of her response was largely determined by her weak bargaining power.

Poorer peasants' opportunities for responses in the field of economic relations were often very limited and, like Mbok Diwut, passive. They were unable to change institutions, as the landowners could, but they could sometimes use existing institutions to their advantage. For example, families preferred sharecropping arrangements between family members to provide children or other relatives with access to land on relatively easy terms and to share out their limited resources. Thus many

\(^5\)Other penguyang claimed that they usually received the same price as any other seller, that is, the market price.
sharecropping agreements involved family ties. (According to the kamitua's calculations, eight cases out of twenty-four sharecropping arrangements were between parent and child, parent-in-law and child-in-law, or between other relatives. He said that this number would be increased if we included kedokan tandur arrangements. However, he said he did not know how many of these there were because they changed frequently.) Another example is the way in which they used joint ownership of their tiny patches of land to protect their future and that of their children in a situation in which changing values perhaps gave them less control over their families.

There were several views regarding the reasons for joint-ownership. One respondent gave his opinion:

"As parents we must give guidance to our children. Our hope is that our children will not be left neglected. This means that our duty as a parent is to pass on land to our children, at least land where they can build a hut. It is fortunate if we can also pass on to them rice fields. However, since they have no experience, they are not wise. That's our worry. They might sell inherited land for something unimportant. Then how could they survive? To avoid this, usually a parent will still hold the title (pethok), although the land has in practice already been distributed and each child has received a share. Later, when they get older and wiser, they will get their own title."

Other views were more practical, such as:

"It is too costly to re-register land"

or
"It is too small to divide again, so what we do is just build our houses in the same yard".

In 1980, 57 out of 141 Pari households were based on jointly owned land (including compounds and wet-rice fields). With this system of joint ownership the actual area worked by each operator was even smaller than the size of the unit of ownership.

It was obvious that the majority of households that owned land had too little to meet immediate subsistence needs. Peasants sometimes had to dispose of their holdings. While the outright sale of complete holdings was rare in Pari, small portions of a holding (besit) were occasionally sold or, more often, rented out. In 1980 in Pari five plots of land were rented out, each belonging to households which owned less than 0.5 hectares (Table 3.3). The reasons given for renting out included "for farm expenses", "for capital to start a new business" (kangge bunci) and "for medical expenses, to repay a loan", and one gave as his reason his intention to buy a motor cycle.

Many who rented out their land were poor peasants who desperately needed money. Peasants were often quite creative in getting the maximum benefit from their limited resources. According to one respondent, some even accepted rent in advance for the same plot from a number of different tenants with the agreement that they would cultivate it in turn in the future.\(^{55}\) There were

\(^{55}\) James Fox, in an oral communication, mentioned that this also often happened in the Jombang area.
obvious risks in this strategy. The land was often encumbered for so long that it attracted a minimal price if the owner was eventually forced to sell it. (Such land tended to fall into the hands of better-off farmers or families from outside Pari, who could afford to wait until existing contract(s) expired. One of the eight cases of outsiders gaining non-inherited land in the village was cited by the respondent as an example of this process.)

Another consideration in renting out or selling land to better-off villagers was that such people could afford both to give the owner the best price for his land and to let him continue to cultivate it on a sharecropping basis. There was one case in Pari where a farmer rented out 0.2 hectares of wet-rice field because he wanted to use the money as capital for a new business as a trader, buying and selling pineapples. Unfortunately the enterprise failed. He had to rent out his land season after season to a richer farmer from outside the village (no one from Pari could afford to pay the rent he was able to get from an outsider\textsuperscript{56}). Finally he had to sell it at a low price. He was 'lucky' – or clever – because he retained access to the land, since he was able to sell it to a better-off non-farming family from another hamlet. The new owner did not want to farm the land himself and allowed the villager to sharecrop what had been his own land. Thus, unlike many other poor peasants, he escaped complete landlessness.

\textsuperscript{56} A secondary consideration may have been that he could bargain for the highest rent possible with an outsider but it would not have been thought right to ask fellow villagers to pay a very high rent.
This case illustrated that sharecroppers forced to sell usually tried to sell to better-off non-farmers who could pay the best price and were unlikely to want to operate the land. One respondent explained to me that it was through such means that 'rich' outsiders gained control over much land in Pari. In 1980 ten outsiders owned cultivated land in Pari.

An obvious strategy attempted, sometimes unsuccessfully, by poorer peasants was to try to retain those traditional rights that had protected them to some extent in the past. One example of this occurred when one of the absentee landlords sold her holding during the time I stayed in Pari. The sale caused feelings to run high because it was not conducted according to the unwritten but strongly defended customs of the village. Customarily, a landlord wishing to sell a piece of land that had been sharecropped first had to ask his sharecropper whether he wanted to buy it. Instead, she asked the kamitua (hamlet head) to arrange the sale. He wanted to purchase the land himself but, because he did not have enough money - and without informing the sharecropper, asked his brother who was domiciled outside the village, to join him to buy the land. The sharecropper was angry, not with the absentee landlord, but with the kamitua for failing to observe the custom.

The sharecropper refused to accept the sale because his rights had not been respected. The kamitua claimed that he had not informed the sharecropper because he knew he could not afford to

\[57\] The sharecropper was also a distant relative.
buy the land. The sharecropper admitted that this was true but said that, like the kamitua, he would have asked a richer relative to purchase it or to join him in buying it together. The case was still not resolved when I left the village but I had the impression that it would be resolved in the kamitua's favour. The sharecropper told me that since it was the hamlet head who had bought the land he did not think that his claim would succeed. The weakness of the sharecroppers' position may also be reflected in the extreme form by the submissive kind of strategy adopted by one of my landlord's tenants after the 1960 Agrarian Reform. The story, as told by my landlord, is as follows. The landlord informed his tenant that, based on the new regulation, his sharecroppers would be given a bigger share of the crop and he, the landlord, was to be responsible for more of the production inputs. One of his tenants was doubtful as to whether such an uncharacteristically generous offer was genuine, or whether the landlord was just testing him. He rejected the landowner's offer, saying that he was quite happy with the old conditions.

Poorer peasants often carried their passive responses into the sphere of social relations, where they proclaimed their dependency and inferiority as a way of improving, they hoped, their bargaining positions. They put a lot of effort into maintaining a good relationship with those who provided them with their penguripan, or livelihood. This can be seen in the events I recorded at a nyewu ceremony, a special occasion to commemorate the one thousandth day after someone's death. (Traditionally among the
Javanese there were several special occasions (slametan⁵⁸) following the death of a member of the family. They start with the day of the funeral, followed by ceremonies to mark the seventh, fortieth, one hundredth, and one thousandth days after the death. Locally the one thousandth day ceremony, called nyewu (from the word sewu which means one thousand), was the biggest. There were no more special ceremonies, except a relatively less important anniversary once a year (mendag).)

It was the nyewu of an important and respected person, the late wife of the lurah. Preparations had started about a month before. The yard was cleared, the trees pruned, and the house whitewashed. The house had remained practically empty since the woman died. None of her children lived in the village, but for this occasion they returned, together with other relatives. Although most villagers still conduct nyewu, usually they do not celebrate it as a big occasion and only invite close neighbours. The case of the lurah’s wife was different. The surviving family and relatives considered it necessary to hold a big nyewu to show respect. It was an unwritten and unspoken custom in Banyu that the community expects rich and respected families to uphold a ‘different standard’ in conducting such ceremonies, otherwise the villagers would consider the family ‘stingy’. For example, when one other respected and rich patron died, a big buffalo was slaughtered to feed fellow villagers who came to sympathize with

⁵⁸Concerning slametan see Geertz (1960).
The real work of preparation took place a few days before the ceremony. In the kitchen some women had been busy cooking. Most of them were 'clients' of the deceased, including those from Pari: they were her sharecroppers and their families. They brought coconuts, chickens and other things.

Her sharecroppers considered their attendance important, especially because relatives of the deceased were there. These people would be their new patrons. All the wet rice fields of the deceased were distributed and inherited by her children who did not live in the village and were not farmers. Hence, the sharecroppers had good reason to hope that they could continue farming the land and wanted to do their best to ensure that this would be the case. This slametan was the proper time to impress the new patrons with their diligence and loyalty. The sharecroppers calculated that if they failed to play their expected inferior role they would risk losing their privileges as sharecroppers. This attitude was evident from the way they behaved to the new patrons. Even though the sharecroppers were much older than the deceased's children, they addressed them in krama.59 A few years previously when these children were still small, they would have addressed them in ngoko but relations were changing, and their language and behaviour

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59 The Javanese have at least seven levels of language that relate to seven distinctive social-status relationships. Of these, two levels may be considered basic, namely ngoko which is spoken to persons of equal status and krama which is spoken to persons of higher status (Koentjaraningrat 1960: 107).
confirmed their inferiority and recognized the patrons' superiority.

The success of peasants' strategies largely depended on their access to resources. As we have seen, peasants' access to land and capital was generally very limited. Even although they were the main providers of labour, their bargaining power here was also weak because usually there were more workers than there were jobs. However, access to resources could include access to skills and to 'connections' with people in authority that could sometimes offset the lack of the other resources. The case of Ibu Mur and her family is a good example of the way in which one poor peasant family was able to lift itself out of poverty through its access to these kinds of resources.

Ibu Mur's father, Pak Djo was one of the 'newly rich' families in Pari when I worked there in 1980. For a long time villagers had known him as one of the 'less poor' peasants who had no cultivated land of his own, except for a small house compound where he grew a few rambutan trees and coconut trees, as many other villagers did. He was then a bakul obrak, who travelled from village to village on a bicycle to buy agricultural produce such as vegetables, fruits, chickens, etc., to sell to other bakul obrak or to tengkulak (middlemen). He could make a small profit from the difference between his buying and selling prices. My landlord remembered him as gemi, a person who has to be very careful with his money in order to maintain his livelihood, but also as being very hard-working and industrious. My landlord recalled that he
went out early every day on his bicycle and did not return until sunset. He would do anything at all, so long as it made a profit for his business. Later, when I had a chance to meet him (meetings were rare because he was a very busy man who also did not like to talk much) he told me that he entered trading, not only because he had no land, but also because he had no skill in farming.

During the late ‘sixties, when trade in rice was growing, Pak Djo joined the many crowding in to buy and sell rice. His business flourished when his daughter, Ibu Mur, joined him. (See her story below.) During the ‘seventies he expanded his business into the field of transport, particularly supplying transport to those in the uyang-uyangan trade, whom he correctly forecast as needing transport services. By 1980 he owned one truck and a colt. He also bought an electricity generator and sold electricity to those villagers around his house who could afford it. In 1980 he was charging Rp.9 per watt per night. This part of his business suffered a setback when the government electricity company (PLN) introduced electricity to Banyu and villages along the main road at the end of 1980. (Since the richer people tended to live along the main road, he was losing a significant number of his potential customers.) However, like the poorer peasants, Pak Djo had spread his risks in a number of different enterprises which were unaffected by this development. He would continue to prosper.

His daughter, Ibu Mur, was another example of a successful marginal villager who was able to manipulate the changes of the ‘seventies to her own advantage. People remember her as just an
ordinary villager who had just entered the rice business in the early 'seventies. The main difference between Ibu Mur and the other villagers was perhaps her family connections, firstly through her father who was just starting to succeed in his own business, and secondly, through her husband who was in the army. These connections gave her somewhat higher social status in the village hierarchy but not, initially, higher economic status. However, her higher status seems to have been reflected in her ambitions for her four children. She said that she had hoped to educate her children and realised that she could not rely on her husband's salary alone to do this, so she joined her father's rice business. In 1973 she bought a rice mill, the only one in Pari hamlet even in 1980, and built up her business through the penguyang, among others. Almost certainly (although I could not confirm this directly) Ibu Mur also gained commercial advantages through her husband's position in the army. (She probably had easier access to bank credit, for example.)

These two cases of 'successful' peasants illustrate that, where an opportunity appeared, even the poorer peasants were not slow to take it. 'Opportunities,' however, were usually determined by access to resources (and perhaps a bit of luck), including connections to those who were able to control more resources. Pak Djo might be seen as an example of a poor peasant who apparently succeeded largely on his own initiative. However, even in his case I suspect that his success was really due to his daughter's joining him in the business, bringing with her access to resources and
'contacts' through her husband's job. Without this, the case of Pak Djo could have ended up the same way as that of the would-be pineapple trader referred to above (p.150). It was only in extraordinary circumstances that poorer peasants were able to adopt a radical strategy for survival. More typically, they had to 'make do' with adaptive strategies that were limited in scope, manoeuvring to enlarge, or struggling merely to protect their small niches in life, rather than aggressively seeking new ones.

The examples of the basic strategies for survival followed by most of the peasants can be seen in a better perspective if we follow a day in the life of a poorer peasant household and see how the various elements of their strategy fit together. I have chosen the extended household of Supri and Jarmi, a young couple who lived with their children and the husband's aging parents. I have chosen this family because Jarmi was one of my respondents and his father was one of my key informants. I often spent time with them and little by little learned much about their day-to-day activities, perceptions, hopes and worries. The account that follows is based on my field notes of an actual day spent with them, supplemented by my general knowledge of this family, built up over time.

V. A Day With Supri and Jarmi:

[Note: I write this in the present tense, as it was recorded in my field notes.]
A day during the big harvest season in March was the best time to record the activities of Supri and Jarmi's family. Supri was a young woman of 25 years with three small children. She married Jarmi six years ago. She dropped out from primary school in grade five because she was bored. She was not originally from Pari but from a neighbouring village, and moved to Pari a few weeks after marrying Jarmi. Since then she and her husband and three children have been living in Pari with her old parents-in-law, Pak Sumo and his wife, in a simple medium sized brick house. The house is still being renovated and the compound was full of bamboo, coconut trunks and other materials. The house will be inherited by Jarmi, the youngest of Pak Sumo's two sons. In the meantime it is still registered under Pak Sumo's name as the head of the household, while Jarmi and his family were registered as household members with the status of numpang usup, rather than as a separate household.

Despite his 75 years of age, Pak Sumo was very active and a hard worker. He was the head of the neighbourhood. He was a carpenter and a ploughman (dacinan sharecropper). In one season Pak Sumo receives a share harvest of between thirty and forty dacin of rice at harvest time from two pieces of land he works. He has two buffaloes and a plough. Pak Sumo does two jobs at this time. He says he has no strength to do more than that. He also has to make sure his old buffaloes were not too overburdened.

During the slack season when there is no land to plough, he works as a carpenter, a bricklayer, and sometimes even as a
house-builder. With the income received from this work he has managed to buy 0.08 hectares of residential land where he has built his own house, and another for his elder son who has numpang karang status because the land was all still registered in Pak Sumo's name. Two years ago, Pak Sumo rented a rice field of 0.3 hectares for three years. His younger son Jarmi works as his apprentice and will one day take over his father's jobs as a carpenter as well as a ploughman. Pak Sumo's wife, unlike him, has already withdrawn from social and economic activities because of her age and fragile health. Now she stays at home, looking after her grandchildren. Her duties in the household and as the wife of the neighbourhood head have become the responsibility of her daughter-in-law, Supri.

It was the first week of the harvest in Pari. The previous evening, Ibu Mur, the owner of the rice-field where Supri had helped with kedokan tandur, came to tell her that the harvest would take place the following morning. Ibu Mur is rich; she also owns a rice mill (slepan) and some other rice fields in other hamlets. Her rice field in Pari was about one bau, cultivated under dacinan in combination with kedokan tandur. She is not a Pari resident, but lives in a nearby hamlet. Supri and six other women participated in the planting earlier. Supri often joins in with transplanting and harvesting, especially if it is according to the kedokan tandur system because the share the harvester receives is considered to be more satisfactory. By joining in Ibu Mur's kedokan tandur, for example, Supri will receive approximately 30
kilograms as her share of the harvest. Jarmi always helps Supri with harvesting. It is a hard job because the harvester has to separate the rice from the stalks in the field and put it in sacks before carrying it to the owner's house. They will weigh the harvest over there and share the harvest.

This morning everyone except the children wakes early. From her brother-in-law's house which is located next door Supri can hear somebody drawing water from the well. Somebody is pouring water into a big tub in the shared bathroom located between the two dwellings. Outside, too, she can hear somebody sweeping. Ibu Sumo sweeps the compound with a broom made of coconut leaf ribs. She has done it as a matter of routine since she was young. Sweeping the heap of dead leaves and dirt into a big hole in the corner of the yard, to be used as compost, she looks old and bent. She enters the kitchen carrying some twigs and puts them on a wood pile next to the glowing hearth where a big kettle full of water is boiling. Ibu Sumo puts more wood on the fire. She disappears through a doorway with a floral curtain.

Supri washes some dishes at the well and then feeds the chickens with some leftovers from the night before. In this early morning, her father-in-law, Pak Sumo is already busy in his workshop in the western corner of the yard. His workshop is very simple, an open hut roofed with dried coconut leaves. He and Jarmi are renovating the main room. A long dark wooden table dominates the living room. The table is old and uncovered. Around the table there are some chairs. The kitchen is at the back on the right
hand side of the living room divided from it by a bamboo screen. Those who sit in the living room can still see the activities in the kitchen except for the part cut off by the screen. Facing the kitchen, on the left hand side of the living room are the three bedrooms.

Jarmi is wearing a sarong and sitting on a big wooden bench in the kitchen. He will be joined by his father who is still washing his hands. The two men sit quietly, Pak Sumo rolling a klobot (a local cigarette made from dried young corn leaves). They are waiting for Supri to serve coffee. Supri is busy preparing food because today she will join in the harvest in Ibu Mur's rice field. She and her husband will probably spend the whole day in the field. She also prepares lunch because nowadays the owner of the rice field only provides tea or coffee and a small snack. Meals used to be provided for the harvesters, Supri remembers, when as a child she accompanied her mother harvesting. It was always fun for young Supri to go with her mother to the field because it meant no school. She could play with her friends, making toys from rice stalks. She cannot remember when the owner stopped providing harvesters with the meals she so enjoyed on the farms.

Supri wraps up rice and a dish made from young jackfruit, soya bean curd and coconut milk. She has also prepared a jar of drinking water, putting it all into a plastic bag to be carried in her right hand. In her left hand are two sickles. She still knows how to use a finger knife to cut rice stalks but nowadays no one uses it anymore. "It is easier to cut the new rice with a sickle
because the stalks of the new rice varieties are short, whereas
'native' rice has a longer stalk." Now hardly anybody plants
'native' rice. I was told that if one of the pamong knew that a
person was planting the old rice, he would come and pull it out.
However, I still see it occasionally: it is easy to recognize
because of the longer stalk. Usually it is planted in the middle
of a small plot of land, hidden by the new rice around the edge.
I do not know why they still grow the old rice even when they know
it is forbidden but somebody told me it was just because they miss
it.

When Supri arrives at the rice field there were some women
and men already there. They are busy tying plastic ropes to mark
their sections. Supri's section is at the far end because that was
where she did transplanting earlier in the year. They greet each
other. Soon Ibu Mur, the owner, arrives with her daughter. She
gives the sign to start by saying: "You start now!" Each person
goes to her own section. There is no rush or noise, as in an open
harvest when reapers all compete with each other to maximize their
harvest shares by cutting as quickly as possible. They are
surrounded by women who sit on the dikes, waiting to begin gleaning
(ngasag). Ibu Mur's rice field is divided into seven, one part for
each of the women who joined in planting. All the women are joined
by their husbands or one or more members of their households.
Supri has already started cutting stalks and piling them into
several small heaps when Jarmi arrives by bicycle. Supri lags
behind the other workers who have nearly finished half of their
sections, because she has only her husband to help. The hard job comes when they separate the grain from the stalks. A bunch of stalks is beaten and trampled on a piece of plastic mat. Once the grain comes loose, Supri cleans it to make sure only clean grains go into the sack, because when Jarmi does the trampling there are always pieces of stalk or dirt mixed with it. Supri cleans it by winnowing with a big circular bamboo basket stuck in the ground facing the wind. The unwanted stalks, which are much lighter, are blown away by the wind and leave the grain on the plastic mat. By about 2 p.m. the harvesting is nearly done. The field is nearly empty because most of the other workers are finished and have taken their grain to the owner’s house. Only Supri and Jarmi and a few others are still working.

Jarmi uses his bicycle to carry one sack at a time to the house of the owner. This day they can collect about 30 kilograms of rice as their share. Participants must also be members of the Pari community. In the case of cash crops, outsiders are also employed but residents of Pari are asked first. Jarmi told me that if any landowner breached this convention there would be trouble. The culprit would be isolated from the Pari community which would regard the person as "having no neighbours," "arrogant," and "stingy." There could also be further consequences: there could be theft of the landowner’s chickens or fruit and he might have difficulty finding reliable helpers. Similarly, any landowner who does not treat the harvesters or the planters politely will face passive resistance; for example, people may conceal grain in the
field and collect it later for themselves. However, open confrontation with the owner is avoided (cf. Kerkvliet 1984). The villagers try to hide their feelings when face to face with each other, pretending nothing is wrong even though they all know that they talk behind each others' back. The logic of this relationship was expressed by Jarmi when he said:

"We actually need each other and depend on each other. We need them because they give us a livelihood by providing us with capital. On the other hand they also need us in accumulating their capital. I'll give you an example. My wife Supri is also involved in uyang-uyangan like many women here. She gets some money from Ibu Mur to buy rice. Even though there is no agreement between them, my wife always uses Ibu Mur's rice mill. By doing that Ibu Mur will get the profit not only from the money she charges for each kilogram Supri mills in her rice mill but also from bran and other remnants of the process which she will sell again, to people who breed pigs for example. On the other hand, Supri also gets some benefit because she can get a loan from Ibu Mur and Ibu Mur always asks Supri to participate in kedokan tandur."

As the sun goes down, Supri and Jarmi have finished their business with Ibu Mur. They go home together. Jarmi guides his bicycle. Supri walks behind, steadying the half sack of rice which is their harvest share for the day, resting on the panniers. They do not talk much. They are tired. They see two of their children running around playing hide and seek. When the children see Jarmi and Supri they shout: "Pake, Buke!" ("Dad, Mum!") and then continue playing with their friends. In front of the house Pak Sumo sits alone on a long bench with his klobot in his hand. He asks Jarmi:
"Did you get much?" "About thirty kilograms, not bad," Jarmi answers. Supri goes straight to the kitchen, putting the sack of rice in the corner. Then she goes to the well to wash her face, hands and feet in readiness for cooking the evening meal.

The years will roll on but the routine will probably stay the same. They work extra hard during harvest time because this is the time when they can maximize income. In one harvest season Supri might be involved in harvesting up to five times, inside or outside Pari, with or without kedokan tandur. It helps the household income. The 0.3 hectare of cultivated land they rent certainly does not produce enough for the whole of the household of seven but is quite adequate after they add what Jarmi and his father receive as dacinan share-croppers. Besides Supri also keeps some hens and ducks. If they need cash for social gatherings such as becekan, they will sell some chickens. They sell duck eggs from time to time to the middlemen who come around regularly. The land in the backyard is used mainly as a kitchen garden and is enough to make them self sufficient in vegetables. They still need cash to buy salt, sugar, tea, coffee and paraffin for their oil lamp. This cash comes from the harvest shares Supri collects. This year they plan to replace their buffaloes, which means they have to work doubly hard to save money to replace the animals with younger, stronger animals. They will probably borrow some money from Ibu Mur, they say. Once harvesting is finished, Supri will start buying and selling rice in the uyang-uyangan trade. Pak Sumo and Jarmi also expect busy days to come because after the harvest there
are usually people who want to repair their houses, replace a roof or even build a new house.

After harvest comes a time when there is not much to do in Pari. Jarmi will perhaps go to Kediri at this time to find work in construction, after spending a week or so helping his father with the ploughing. Jarmi was offered a permanent job on a new dam project in Kediri but he has not given a positive answer. He is still thinking about what his future will be when he takes over his father's occupations. Many of his friends have left Pari. Jarmi seems to prefer to stay in the village to fulfil his eventual ambition of becoming a 'middle' (not rich but also not poor) peasant.

The small details of the daily life of this family illustrate many aspects of the poorer peasants strategy for survival in a changing world. One part of the strategy was to have many different occupations (dacinan, carpenter, bricklayer and house builder) so that even a small amount earned from each could add up to a household income that was sufficient. The shortage of work opportunities in the hamlet was reflected in the importance to Jarmi of the possibility of inheriting these occupations (and customers) from his father. For some, including Jarmi, there was an alternative: employment outside the village, often eventually leading to migration away from the village and into a town. This carried obvious risks - the kinds of jobs they could get were not permanent - and was more attractive to the truly landless labourers. Those like Jarmi, who had access to even a tiny patch
of land, hesitated to leave. Related to having many occupations was the strategy of using even the small house compound to supply both subsistence produce for the household and things to sell in the market. Having many occupations and many different sources of income, even although each one earned very little, helped to spread risks.

Land was very important to the family of Jarmi and Supri but it was also difficult to obtain. The family had access to land through two dacinan agreements, one rental contract for three years, and the tiny patch of land on which their house is built. The land they owned was the only part of this which gave any security. Jarmi hoped to inherit the dacinan status of his father and they hoped to continue renting the 0.3 hectares of land, but both hopes depended on the agreement of others. It was obvious that Jarmi and Supri knew that they were dependent on the goodwill of landowners such as Ibu Mur. They explained their relationship to the landowners as one of inter-dependence, but to me it seemed an unequal balance. Undoubtedly, Ibu Mur and the other landowners did depend on their labour, but if they refused to work, Ibu Mur would still be able to eat. If Jarmi’s family lost access to the little land they had they would probably be forced to leave the village.

This dependence helps explain the strong feelings peasants like Jarmi had about their right to village work opportunities. As Jarmi said, if a landowner did not follow unwritten ‘laws’ about this, the peasants would use social sanctions and other forms of
passive resistance, including crime, to force him/her to recognize their traditional rights. However, as was seen in the sale of the absentee owner’s land in Section IV above, their efforts were not always successful.

VI. Summary: Pari, Continuity and Change:

It is important to note that the sharecropping system that thrives in Pari has ceased to be typical of Java. For example Collier et al (1974), Palmer (1977), White (1978), Sinaga (1978) and Gordon (1978) found that the structure of rural employment is changing, and that traditional labour agreements are being replaced as technology becomes increasingly labour saving techniques. For example, the sharecropping contract has been increasingly replaced by wage labour. Attempts to rationalize labour use are not new in Java. A study undertaken fifty years ago by Van der Kolff (1936) of the historical development of labour relations in several villages near Tulungagung, 20 kilometres from Blitar, showed that labour saving techniques were being practised there. However most writers have attributed the most important changes in rural labour markets to the Green Revolution which has been central to the commercialization of Javanese agriculture during the last two decades.

Pari has by no means been isolated from such developments. Together with other hamlets within Banyu village, Pari was among
the first in Talun sub-district to come under intensive agricultural development programmes. But far from dying, the old patron-clients relationship governing sharecropping not only survives in Pari, but seems to flourish. Why do Pari landowners with a strong commercial orientation nevertheless maintain traditional labour relations? This is not accidental; it is a strategy purposely adopted for their own advantage.

It was not until 1971 that the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programmes and the Programmes to Introduce High-Yielding Varieties got underway in Pari. In the years immediately after Independence only a few progressive farmers were involved in the new technology. During the 1970s the agricultural extension service became more active in giving information, but again only the better-off farmers responded and received benefits from these programmes. The better-off also had access to financial credit from government banks. Successful applicants for credit included non-cultivating landowners, (such as government officials and army officers) who used loans to buy or rent land from smaller peasants in need of cash. In such cases, because they were not genuine farmers, they tended to work the land by sharecropping. One better-off farmer used credit to buy trucks for a transport enterprise that he developed. Another used the credit as capital to expand a pineapple business. These men, although originally farmers, allowed their land to be sharecropped so that they could devote their own attention and energies exclusively to other commercial pursuits that they considered to be more profitable (cf. Husken
1979). The rice mill owner loaned cash to women to buy paddy but only to those who agreed to husk their rice in her mill. The mill owner recruited rice buyers by offering them the advantage of working her rice land in *kedokan tandur* or other arrangements. In return she reaped the benefits of their network of contacts with other landowners. This is one set of reasons why landowners in Pari, even those with a strong commercial orientation, maintained many traditional labour and share-cropping agreements and the patron-client type of relationship.

Despite the economic changes brought by the Green Revolution, the traditional labour arrangements such as sharecropping persisted in Pari, not merely because patron-client relationships were customary in that hamlet, but largely because they were so adaptable. Landowners were able to respond flexibly to the commercialization of agriculture and exploit some of the patron-client relationships inherent in the traditional arrangements in a 'modern' and economically motivated way. The point I emphasize here is that landowners in Pari sought to promote their economic interests, not by minimizing labour inputs, but, on the contrary, by adaptation of traditional working arrangements that seemed (*kedokan tandur*, for example) to employ more labour than simply hiring wage labour. However, it should also be noted that many of the traditional arrangements that were preserved, while not 'saving' labour in the sense of reducing the amount of labour used, may have reduced the cost of that labour: the substitution of *dacinan* agreements for *mertelu* is an example. In other cases
(kedokan tandur may again be an example), the cost of the labour could be offset against the greater profits gained from some related commercial business, such as the operation of a rice mill. From the point of view of commercialized landowners, there was no real conflict between seeking profits and preserving variations of the traditional sharecropping and labour arrangements.

To summarise, Pari is a wet-rice-growing agricultural community. A relatively complex set of social and economic arrangements govern community life. Socio-economic differences within the community have an important effect on social relations. Community relations in Pari appear to be harmonious and cohesive, but the reality of daily life reveal growing cracks beneath this smooth surface. The absence of dramatic changes in the village's past experiences is also a factor in the picture of harmony that it presents. The strategies for survival adopted by the peasants of Pari are also characterised by this appearance of continuity and harmony. However, the harmony is often directed towards vertical relationships between the peasants and their landlords and patrons. Among themselves, the peasants tend to be competitive rather than cooperative. They consider their interests are better served by subservient behaviour towards their social and economic superiors than by cooperative solidarity with each other.
SARATEMEN: A PLANTATION-BASED HAMLET

Saratemen is a plantation-based hamlet within ten kilometres of Pari. However, the community of Saratemen was quite unlike that of Pari. Saratemen was almost exclusively a plantation village so most of the residents had no access to land for cultivation. This produced a very different community profile and social structure, and consequently quite different strategies for survival. Even the stereotype of villagers in the two communities differed. Where Pari residents gave the impression of being rather traditional, passive and submissive, the villagers of Saratemen were much more outspoken and straight-forward and appeared to have a more progressive outlook and more initiative.

As noted in the previous chapter, much of the material on agricultural involution refers to communities such as Pari. That material is frequently generalized to refer to 'Javanese' involution. However, there are many communities on Java that are not at all like Pari. Saratemen represents an example of a community, where the foundation of economic life is not peasant

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1This refers to the straight-line distance. The journey from Pari to Saratemen by road was longer, about twenty kilometres.

2See page 88.
cultivation of wet-rice but pure wage labour on a commercial plantation cultivating a perennial crop. While some writers might challenge the inclusion of Saratemen labourers under the category of 'peasant', defining the term on the basis of production relations, as argued above, I include them as peasants because of their status as rural agricultural workers with close ties to the land. In that sense their status was little different from that of the landless peasants of Pari who were full-time agricultural labourers.

In fact, as will be revealed in this chapter, the peasants of Saratemen had gained access to land as a result of the upheavals of the Second World War and had been, for perhaps a generation, peasants according to either definition. They were then dispossessed of that land. As will be argued, that experience profoundly affected their outlook and their strategies for survival. In that sense they are not typical of all plantation communities on Java, although there were many other communities in Indonesia with similar experiences. However, this study of Saratemen shows that the kinds of strategies for survival adopted by peasants could be influenced by many factors and that one of these was historical experience.

The story of the peasants of Saratemen is presented in six parts. Section I introduces my first day's field experience in the

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4See above, pages 25-26.
Chapter 4

Saratemen area and sets the scene for a more detailed consideration of the community of Saratemen in Section II. Section IIA describes the physical setting of the hamlet, while Section IIB examines the social setting. Section III focuses on the very important historical experience of the villagers in gaining, albeit for a generation only, access to cultivated land. Section IV examines the strategies for survival adopted by the peasants of Saratemen, especially the way in which these relate to that experience. The chapter concludes with a picture of the day-to-day routine of life for a plantation labourer in Saratemen, presented in Section V, and a summary of the main points of the chapter in Section VI.

I.  The Road to the North:

I sat on the pillion of the travelling ojek (a motor-bike taxi) which was just bringing me from Saratemen, a sub-hamlet of Mara village in the district (kecamatan) of Nglegok, north Blitar (Map H). Saratemen is located on the lower slopes of Mt. Kelud on the most northern edge of the settlement of the village (kelurahan) of Mara. Although it is only 15 kilometres northeast of the town of Blitar, Mara in 1980 was relatively isolated, as there was only a poor road connecting the area to the outside world. The village formed a kind of enclave surrounded by five big plantations. Two of these, both privately-owned coffee plantations, lay adjacent to the sub-hamlet of Saratemen and the remaining three, two private
NGLEGOK SUB-DISTRICT
(Kecamatan Nglegok)

SUMBERASRI
PONGGOK
KEDAWUNG
PENATARAN
NGORAN
DAYU
KEMLOKO
BANGSRI
JIWUT
GANDUSARI
GARUM

PLANTATIONS:
1. Nongko
2. Anyar
3. Penataran
4. Kuning
5. Gambar

KEY:
- Research village of Mara
- Research hamlet of Saratemen
- Research village boundary
- sub-district boundary
- village boundary
- plantation boundary
- plantation
- forest
- volcano

A.N.U. 1984 after 'Peta Kecamatan Nglegok (Peta Desa Sensus Penduduk 1980)'

Map H: Nglegok subdistrict
coffee plantations and a government-owned cacao plantation, were closer to the other hamlets of the village.

I sat still, holding the seat of the ojek tightly to avoid falling off. The road was bumpy and slippery, almost covered by sand which remains from the ash that has poured from the volcano, Mt. Kelud in the past. I hate to ride on motor cycles, especially on such bumpy roads, but this time I could not avoid it since this was the only public transportation available. (The hamlet of Saratemen was at the end of the road.)

It was already dark as we left the village of Mara, heading for Nglegok on the return journey from Saratemen. In the distance I heard the muezzin calling Moslems to pray. I passed some boys and men in their sarongs, wearing peci on their heads as they walked to the mosque in Mara. I asked the ojek driver to go more slowly and started to contemplate my experiences of the day that was just ending.

That morning, I had introduced myself officially to all the pamong (village officials) of Mara at the village office. A few days before, I had met the lurah (village head) and was told that the best time to meet the pamong was on Monday morning at about 10 a.m. Early every Monday morning the higher officials from all villages in the district have to go to the district office for a flag-raising ceremony, which is usually followed by a weekly meeting of the staff in each village when they return from the district centre. This makes it the best time to meet all the pamong, most of whom have no regular daily office hours. The
lurah, the carik (village secretary) and one other official, however, do have office hours from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. at least six days a week. The rest of the pamong only come to the village office sometime between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. each day to sign the attendance list and receive any instructions from higher officers. After that they are free to go. The office closes at 2 p.m. but if there are any problems concerning the community people are welcome to go to the houses of the pamong.

I chose that Monday morning to introduce myself officially, although I had already met some of the pamong and visited them at home, because I felt a formal introduction was necessary so that there would be no suspicions about my presence in the village. In addition, I hoped that each pamong would be happy to explain to his warga (community) why I was working in the village. I had already heard that there were various rumours spreading through the villages in Nglegok about our arrival. Some people had concluded that we were a team of temple architects who would restore the temple of Panataran, located in Nglegok. Another rumour classified us as agricultural engineers who were to introduce a new variety of rice.

I stood in front of the village office, looking around, and waiting for the pamong. It was a quiet morning. Once in a while the quiet was broken by the sound of an ojek racing past with a pillion passenger. My first impression on entering Mara was of a clean and well-planned village. The road, even though still gravel, was wide and edged by houses with gates of a uniform
design. Almost every house, especially those in the main street, had a brick gate in front, each with the number 4 painted on the left hand post and 5 on the right hand gate post. (The number 45 is for the year 1945, when Indonesia's independence was declared. This style of gate was common throughout Blitar regency.) The walls of the houses in Mara were of bricks or woven bamboo, nicely whitewashed (at least three times a year, I was told). A triumphal brick arch spanned the road at the village entrance, welcoming visitors and marking the village boundary. As I passed beneath the arch I was entering Mara Krajan,\(^5\) one of the three hamlets in the village and the location of the lurah's house.

The lurah's office was only 50 metres further on, at the corner where the road forked. I sat on the veranda of the village office, facing the road to Saratemen. It was 9.30 a.m. but there was no sign of the pamong. One middle-aged woman with a bamboo basket full of groceries on her back passed me. She walked slowly and her back was bent from the weight of her load. She wore a bamboo hat covering nearly half her tired and dusty face. She entered one of the houses in front of the village office. I recognized her as a bakul ethek, a person who peddles goods such as salt, sugar, frying oil, soya bean curd and other staples needed daily by the villagers.

It was ten minutes to ten when a red motorcycle pulled up with the lurah and the carik who had just come from the weekly meeting

\(^5\)Krajan means the centre of the village. It is usually applied to the area of first settlement.
in the district office. The lurah was in his early seventies, but looked younger. He was a priyayi desa (a village aristocrat), who had graduated from the local primary school. He spoke Indonesian well, sometimes mixing it with Dutch, which he assumed I spoke because I came from Jakarta.

We entered the lurah's room. There were sixteen pamong inside. The atmosphere of the meeting was very formal. The pamong sat quietly when I was introduced officially by the lurah who said:

"She has an assigned task from Jakarta to get to know our village, our people and our rural development. She will be here with us for about one year. I ask you to look after her, treat her nicely, and make sure she is safe. In case she needs help, could you give her a hand?"

"Enggiiih .......(We will)," the pamong replied in chorus.

"If she is thirsty, would you give her a drink?"

"Enggiiih ........"

"So I leave her in your hands."

I then explained that I was a public servant, as well as a student who wanted to write something about their lives and about the way peasants live and that the first thing I wanted to do was to look around the village to acquaint myself with the area and its
people. When the meeting was over I made an appointment with the kamitua, the head of the hamlet of Karanganyar, of which Saratemen is a part, to see his hamlet. He arranged to pick me up in the village office at about 1.30 p.m. since he had to go to the town first. In the meantime, I studied village data provided in the lurah's office and interviewed the lurah and the carik.

At about 2 p.m. I was on my way to Karanganyar, accompanied by the kamitua of that hamlet. He was a quiet man who replied only briefly to my questions, partly because he did not speak Indonesian very well. His speech was mixed with Javanese. We came to a house with a wooden sign in front of it and a small board hanging on the tree indicating that it was the house of the head of the hamlet and also the hamlet office.

"Come and have a drink. This is my house," he said.

"Oh, yes. I would love to," I replied. We entered the house, which appeared unfinished. He was restoring the house bit by bit as only the living room looked completed and was newly painted, while the rest of the house was still in a mess.

The kamitua explained that this was the way village people build or repair their houses. They collected the materials first bit by bit, over years, before they could start. Sometimes they had to make the bricks first. This could be done in their compounds since the soil was suitable for making bricks. Sand or wood had to be purchased. When all the materials had been collected they could start to build the house, making use of the
custom of gotong-royong, or mutual assistance, to erect the framework of the house and roof. Thus close neighbours were asked to help erect the frame. He said that they usually chose a Sunday morning for this, because most people did not work in the plantations on that day. If more than one day was necessary, the gotong-royong would continue the following Sunday. The rest of the work was carried out by the owner or, especially if the tasks required skilled labour, by professionals at a cost of between Rp.750 and Rp.1,250 per day, according to the kamitua.

As I listened and jotted in my notebook, I noticed a woman in her thirties, with a big smile, standing in the front doorway. She was the kamitua’s wife.

"Monggo, monggo (please come in, please come in) ....," she said. She looked smart and friendly. Indeed, she proved to be a kind and jovial person, always laughing with her words. She asked me many personal questions about my background, and she expressed sympathy when she learned I had only one child. She said to her husband:

"This ibu is just like us. She only has one son. Keluarga Berencana (Family Planning)? Ha, ha, ha!"

Her husband asked her to go and make some coffee. She went to the kitchen still smiling broadly and murmuring to herself.

We sat on plastic chairs in the living room. Apart from the four plastic chairs and coffee table in the centre of the room, there were some wooden chairs, a writing table and a cupboard with a glass door against the walls. Displayed inside the cupboard were
several glasses, a tray, cups and saucers and some kitchen utensils; all looked new and unused. The cupboard also contained some plastic flowers, family photos and filmstar pin-ups. On the wall a Garuda Pancasila (symbol of the state ideology) hung face-to-face with pictures of the President and Vice President. On the other wall were two illustrated calendars. I asked about the population and area of the hamlet of Karanganyar. The kamitua stood up and walked to the cupboard from which he took a book and gave it to me.

"It's in there," he said.

I read in the book that the hamlet of Karanganyar was divided into ten neighbourhoods (rukun tetangga), the lowest administrative units sometimes abbreviated to "RT" and made up of a group of families, numbering between thirty and fifty. Karanganyar's population was 2,135, grouped into 502 households. Originally the hamlet had only six RT. The additional four RT which form Saratemen were only attached in 1966 as a daerah tampungan, a resettlement area for the ex-plantation workers and the squatters who had occupied the neglected plantation land during the Japanese Occupation. The lurah explained that its sub-hamlet status resulted from its recent establishment so that it had not been administratively recognized as full hamlet, although it was socially and physically a self-contained community.⁶

⁶For this reason and in general, I will refer to Saratemen as a hamlet in the remainder of the thesis, although its official administrative status was that of a sub-hamlet.
The kamitua's wife, with her big smile, suddenly appeared from the kitchen. She held a tray with sweets and biscuits and two glasses of coffee. She apologized for being so slow and invited me to try the biscuits and coffee.

"Please have some. These are village home-made biscuits."

"Oh, no. These are not village biscuits. These are biscuits from the city."

"Oh, yes. This is from my warung (little shop)."

"But I didn't see any warung here."

"Just mracang. I keep all the things in the kitchen."

"May I have a look?"

"Please do. But I am sorry, my kitchen is untidy. Kitchens of villagers are not like kitchens of town people."

It was a large square kitchen. In the corner were two large clay hearths with four holes at the base, glowing with heat. I saw what she called her warung, not like any other warung I had known. It was just a kitchen, except that I could see a bundle of sachets of Ajinomoto (mono-sodium glutamate or MSG), and local cassava chips in plastic bags hanging from the ceiling, together with

7The word mracang literally means 'spices.' See Chapter 4, footnote 1.
sachets of different brands of shampoo. In one corner I saw half a sack of rice next to a plastic container of dried corn, cigarettes, etc. In a large round bamboo tray, there were sacks of bean sprouts, soya bean cakes, small chillies and other items. Most of the packages looked faded. I also noticed two new hurricane lamps and some plastic table cloths hanging from the ceiling.

Suddenly the kitchen door opened and a little girl about six years old came in. Her small hand held a bunch of dried coconut leaves. She waited until the kamitua’s wife addressed her:

"What do you want, little girl?"

"My mother told me to buy a packet of Ajinomoto and to ask you for fire."

"Here is the Ajinomoto and help yourself to fire."

Between neighbours it is customary to ask for fire for the kitchen. The kamitua’s wife took an exercise book from the top of an open cupboard; the book looked old and greasy. She did her book-keeping in it while talking quietly to herself:

"Yesterday she took one packet of noodles, and I haven’t written it down yet. Now one packet of Ajinomoto."
She said to me: "We have to be careful to write everything down in the book. Otherwise we forget and suffer a loss."

"How do you manage the warung?"

"Oh, just like this. Just simple. This is the way wong cilik (little people) survive. Bit by bit. My advantage is that I am the only one who runs a warung mracang around here. There is another one over there, but it is just too far for the people around here."

The kamitua's wife told me that the warung mracang was always open. Sometimes, in the middle of the night people who needed something would just knock on the door. Later I learned that nearly all households in Karanganyar hamlet, especially in Saratemen, went either to bakul ethek or bakul mracang for their daily necessities. (Often plantation workers brought home none of their fortnightly pay since all of their wages were owed to the warung mracang or to the bakul ethek.)

When the kamitua's wife finished writing in her book, she asked me to go back to the living room again to finish my coffee. The kamitua was not there. He was working in the backyard planting a big coconut trunk. I drank my coffee and noticed it was not actually coffee; it looked like coffee and tasted a bit like coffee, but it consisted of at least 50 per cent singed rice. The rest was either real coffee or singed corn. I knew that this kind of "coffee" was very common in the villages around Blitar, not
necessarily among poor families, but also among better-off peasant families. Villagers had explained that pure coffee was too bitter, and that the best way to make coffee was to mix in either roasted rice or singed corn kernels.8

It was hot outside and in the distance, borne by the wind, I heard someone singing a Javanese song. I could not hear the words, but it sounded like a sad song, a song of weeping and grief, usually sung by young boys when herding cattle. A group of primary school children walked past, some at a trot. They carried books and were bare-footed. Their Monday uniforms were supposed to be white but were already grey and faded from use and much washing. From the opposite direction some teenagers wearing white Monday uniforms came cycling by, heading south toward the district town or perhaps toward Blitar. (I had been told that there was no high school in the village so pupils who continued on to high school had to travel either to the district headquarters or to the town of Blitar.)

After a watching for a moment, I decided to continue my journey to the sub-hamlet of Saratemen. I went to look for the kamitua to say goodbye. He was in the backyard with a man and his son, a boy about 13 years old. They stopped working when they saw

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8 Despite the village attitude to coffee, this was a coffee plantation area and nearly every backyard had a few coffee trees. Later I learned that they sold the coffee grown in their backyards and used the money to buy daily necessities. In the market I would often see women bringing a little cup of raw coffee and selling it to other women who would then collect coffee from these various sellers and, when they had enough, sell it again to a Chinese warung in the town of Blitar.
me coming. This made me hesitate, as happened again and again in my field work. I always felt that I was disturbing people especially if I wanted to talk to or interview someone during the day. 9 I said to the kamitua:

"I think I had better move on and continue my journey."

"Oh, yes. But we haven’t had lunch yet. My wife is still cooking."

"No," I said."Don’t go to any trouble. I ate the biscuits and that’s enough."

"But my wife is cooking, so she will be disappointed if you refuse to eat. I will wash my hands. After lunch I will escort you."

The meal was served in the living room. It consisted of fried eggs (eggs are not part of the daily menu but are served only for special occasions, such as selametan or for special guests), young papaya fruit soup, and cassava chips and a big bowl of rice. Only three of us ate: the kamitua, his friend and I. When I asked about seeing Saratemen, his friend told me:

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9 The best time for interviewing was after the sunset prayers, after 7 p.m. but this raised another problem as it was not considered correct for a woman to walk alone or to go visiting alone at night. Later, when I was no longer a stranger, I found it no problem at all, but it took months before I was accepted. Even then I still caused people trouble as they never let me go home alone after interviewing at night; someone would always escort me.
"It is hard to find somebody at this time. They are still working either in the plantation or elsewhere."

"When will they come back?"

"They come back at about 4 p.m. But usually they go straight to look for firewood or cattle fodder. So if you want to see them, the best time is after the sunset prayer."

"But I only want to look around," I said.

We walked toward the hamlet of Saratemen, which I had chosen as my field work site, along a wide and shady road. It was nearly 4 p.m. and the sun was beginning its descent to the west. Coffee trees dominated the scenery. They were to become part of my life for the next few months while I learned about the life of the people who lived beneath their shade.

II Saratemen hamlet:
IIA Under the Leaves of the Coffee Trees

The road to the hamlet of Saratemen passes first through the village of Mara and its centre of Mara Krajan, and then the hamlet of Karanganyar, of which Saratemen is still officially a part. Mara was bigger than the village of Banyu, described in chapter 3. In 1980 it had an official population of 6,220. However, it was not nearly as busy as Banyu, partly because it was not on a main
Research village of Mara
(Kelurahan Mara)

Map I: Research village of Mara
road and also because most of its land was not irrigated. Surrounded by plantations, the land of Mara supported a lower density of population than that of Banyu.

The hamlet of Mara Krajan formed the centre of Mara. In Mara Krajan there were several handsome urban-style houses belonging to the lurah, the teacher, some government servants and a few traders. There were also two shop-houses. A few warungs clustered near the school but there was no market in Mara at all. The nearest market was in the next village, Panataran, about one kilometre from Mara Krajan headquarters, and three kilometres from Saratemen, the hamlet farthest to the north. It was held daily, as were the small markets in the district centre about three kilometres from Mara. Another larger market in Nglegok district was held twice every five days, that is, twice a week within the Javanese five-day week. The daily markets, though smaller, were less crowded compared with the two big market days. Markets started at about 7 a.m. and finished at about 10 a.m.

The village office (keluruhan) was located at the centre of Mara Krajan. Opposite it was a branch of the Bank Rakyat Indonesia 1946, a government bank. In the middle of the "U" between the village office and the bank was the village meeting hall. The village office also accommodated other institutions, such as the PKK (Perkumpulan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, the Family Welfare

10Only half of the 273 hectares of smallholder's crops were irrigated or partly irrigated. The wet-rice fields of Mara were all located near the larger hamlet of Mara Krajan, the only hamlet to have access to water for irrigation.
Education Programme) and the LKMD (Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa or the Council for Village Support).

The Mara primary school was near the kelurahan office, about one kilometre from this block. Another primary school was also located near the plantation at Saratemen, about two kilometres away. Children from around Mara Krajan attended the Mara school, while those whose houses were near the plantation went to the Saratemen school. There was also a primary school in the hamlet of Bulu. Thus each hamlet had a primary school. There were also two kindergartens in the village as a whole. However, other education facilities were limited. The nearest secondary school was the junior secondary school at Penataran. The nearest senior secondary school was in Nglegok, a private school of rather poor quality. In Mara even children of primary-school age were often employed during the coffee harvest so levels of education were lower than in Banyu. In Banyu only 17 per cent of people aged six years and above had no formal schooling. In Mara the figure was 49 per cent. The community of Mara was more isolated and backward than Banyu in almost every way. The hamlet of Saratemen was the most isolated of the three hamlets of Mara.

From Mara Krajan, the road to Saratemen skirted Karanganyar before trailing off to become the simple track that led through the plantation to the hamlet itself. Saratemen lay quiet and serene on the slopes of Mt. Kelud on the volcanic uplands of the northern zone. The land is fertile although hilly, with a luxuriant environment for a large variety of crops. For over one
hundred years the mountain slopes have been terraced and planted with coffee, rubber, tea, cacao and the like. In 1980 there were five plantations around Saratemen. All were within walking distance. Two, Anyar and Nongko, bordered Saratemen hamlet on three sides. This compact community indeed seemed almost hidden by the leaves of the coffee trees. A dirt road wide enough for a car linked it to the village headquarters of Mara and the outside world through Nglegok and Blitar. However, because the road ended at Saratemen and was in poor condition, public transport rarely reached the hamlet. The only public transport available was the ojek. To go as far as Saratemen cost extra as the ojek driver was unlikely to find a passenger for the return journey. One person in Saratemen owned his own motorcycle and from time to time ran an ojek business, but usually people travelled on foot or rode a bicycle.

The area of Saratemen hamlet covered about 15 hectares, all in the form of compounds. The hamlet was rectangular in shape and oriented east-west with the houses divided into two main blocks by the main road. The block to the north of the road was called Sara and that to the south was called Temen. Together they comprised Saratemen. All houses in Saratemen were simple with no obvious sign of socio-economic differences between their occupants. Nearly

11 This was why the ojek fare to Saratemen from the district headquarters of Nglegok was more expensive than the fare from Nglegok to the town of Blitar, even though they covered approximately the same distance. It cost me Rp.100 from the district to Saratemen, while the fare to the town of Blitar from Nglegok was only Rp.50.
all were built on uniform-sized pieces of land of 0.05 hectares, the original area received when the villagers had been resettled in Saratemen in 1966. All but one of the 170 houses in Saratemen were built of bamboo or wood with a dirt floor. The exception was a newly-built brick house that had a cement floor, and belonged to a bakul mracang.

By contrast, the sturdy brick buildings of the Anyar plantation headquarters could be seen in the distance. They were about 500 metres from Saratemen. The equally substantial headquarters of Nongko plantation could not be seen from the village as they were about two kilometres further along the road. The Anyar headquarters appeared well-ordered, perhaps much as in colonial times. The first thing noticed as one approached it from the village was the barbed wire fence and the open wooden gate manned by several guards. Inside were several buildings. One, with a small garden in front, was the main office. Nearby were two large open sheds for worker registration (ngerol from 'roll call') every morning. In the far corner were three big warehouses where the coffee was processed before being dried and packed in sacks. (It was then transported to Surabaya and from there shipped all over the world.) Next to the warehouse was another open shed used to collect and weigh coffee beans during harvest, but at other times for worker registration.

Between the main office and the warehouses were cottages for staff, twenty in all. Only some permanent staff were entitled to accommodation at the company site. The dwellings were far from
Table 4.1

Population by Age and Sex Saratemen, 1980

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male Number</th>
<th>Male Pct</th>
<th>Female Number</th>
<th>Female Pct</th>
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Source: Hamlet records 1980.
luxurious, being constructed with half brick bases and wood or woven bamboo upper walls, but they were neatly painted and much more substantial than the villager's cottages. In the far right corner stood company barracks accommodating about 30 households of clerks, technicians, foremen, guards and former employees who were too old to work, but had no relatives to live with elsewhere. The rest of the area, about 350 hectares, was the coffee plantation. It, too, was securely fenced with barbed wire.

In the hamlet, however, little land was available. Twenty-one families, or about 11 percent of all households, did not own their houses or house sites. They were numpang karang who, as in Pari, lived in a house built in the compound of another household. Most of the numpang usup\(^\text{12}\) in 1980 were young couples who lived with their parents or parents-in-law. There were also a number of other extended households (23 percent) composed of a nuclear family plus parent(s) or sibling(s) or other relatives of one member of the couple. Most of the rest (65 percent) were simple nuclear families, composed of husband, wife and unmarried children.

Saratemen was composed of four neighbourhood units of 191 families living in 170 households. In 1980, Saratemen's total population was 775 persons,\(^\text{13}\) composed of 365 males and 410 females. Average household size was thus relatively small at 4.6, compared

\(^{12}\)See above, page 109.

\(^{13}\)This figure included temporary absentees but excluded those who had moved and obtained a surat pindah (letter of permission to move, obtained from the district office).
with the national average of 4.9. This reflected the tendency of young people to leave the community in order to seek work, due to the limited employment opportunities in the hamlet and district. Table 4.1 shows the age-sex distribution of the population. The only features of note are the relatively small numbers of children under the age of four years, presumably due to the active family planning programme pursued by the government. The larger numbers of women in the age group 40-64 was partly due to the longer life expectancy of females but may also be affected by higher mortality among older males in this group during World War II, the revolution, and G-30S.

In Saratemen there was insufficient cultivated land to support all working adults. At the time of fieldwork only 22 households or 11 percent had access to land, either by ownership, rent or a share-cropping arrangement. However, with one exception, their farms were too small to provide a livelihood and all had to work in plantation employment, petty trading or other casual work. Apart from five who obtained land through inheritance or marriage after relocation to Saratemen, the land-holding households already held land before they moved to the hamlet. The holdings ranged from 0.1 hectares to 0.70 hectares. All the cultivated land was located outside Saratemen so people had little choice but to work on plantations. In 1980 around half of the household heads and

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15 Recall the comment of the wife of the kamitua when she learned that I had only one child.
approximately 72 percent of those who were classified as economically active were employed or temporarily employed in the plantations\(^\text{16}\) as daily wage workers at some time during the previous year. In addition, many of those derived extra incomes from construction and other casual work, others combined wage work with trading, buying and selling garden produce (bakul obrok) and a few were involved in warung mracang. Plantation workers (wong kebun) comprised the largest occupational category.

Most of the remainder worked as buruh srabudan outside of the hamlet in a variety of jobs not connected to the plantations.\(^\text{17}\) A few were able to work in Mara but many had to travel as far as Kediri, some to labour on road construction and others to harvest sugar cane. In 1980 the mobilization of male labour for construction jobs and cane cutting was relatively organized. More or less regularly, sometimes once a fortnight or once a month, a truck could be seen parked near the border between Karanganyar and Mara Krajan. It was waiting to transport workers from the surrounding villages to job sites. The trucks were arranged by a middleman from outside the village, who was paid a commission from the employers. A few older men who were still strong enough for

\(^{16}\)Most workers from Saratemen were employed by the Anyar plantation. However, some also worked on the Nongko plantation and individuals might work on both over a period of time. Anyar was the bigger plantation.

\(^{17}\)Some of these who, for reasons that will be explained below, felt very bitter about the plantation, refused to work there.
the work and many young men from Saratemen obtained jobs in this way. They were often absent from the hamlet for several weeks. They could earn Rp.750-1500 per day, which was considerably more than most plantation earnings.

A number of young men who claimed to be working, according to my observation, did not have employment. Finding employment was a basic problem for all Saratemen residents. There was insufficient work for all and the work that was available in the hamlet was almost all provided by the plantations. There were three main types of jobs in the plantations: salaried employment, piece-work (borongan) and daily paid labour. Only borongan and daily-paid labourers were drawn from Saratemen. Of about thirty salaried workers employed in administrative and clerical jobs in 1980 in the nearby plantation of Anyar, including skilled workers, security guards, foremen and technicians, all except one foreman, originated from outside Saratemen. Salaried workers lived on the plantation and were not part of the community of Saratemen.

Most plantation work was seasonal so workers were employed according to the companies' needs. In 1980 the Anyar plantation, on which 350 hectares were planted with approximately 420,000 coffee trees, employed 300 workers per day, excluding the thirty permanent employees. During the coffee harvest the company needed three or four times that number. Tasks such as tending the trees, replacing those that were dying or damaged, pruning, fertilizing,

18 They often said that to be a construction worker you needed 'wire muscles and iron bones'.
spraying and clearing grass had to be carried out regularly, especially during and after the rainy season. Most of these were carried out under borongan, or piece-work arrangements, where workers were paid per area of land worked or per number of trees sprayed, and so on. Borongan workers tended to be more skilled (although few tasks required much skill) and were contracted for tasks that might occupy several days in a particular location.

Additional workers paid on a per day basis had to be employed if there was a shortage of manpower in any section. Employment for daily workers was more uncertain. Some were hired for fixed periods and were employed almost full-time. Others who reported for the morning roll call (ngerol) might only be hired for that day and would have to report again the next day or from time to time in the hope that there would be work for them. Wages were paid in cash and in an allocation of rice every fortnight, based on the attendance list, although borongan workers were paid on completion of each task. The wage depended on the type and duration of work. In 1980 the daily minimum wage was Rp.280 plus 450 grams of rice, worth approximately Rp.100.\(^{19}\) As an incentive to avoid high absenteeism, daily workers who worked without absence during a certain period of time (40 hours, two weeks, one month and so on) received an annual bonus at the time of Idulfitri.\(^{20}\) The bonus was

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\(^{19}\)In Pari, by contrast, one morning of work weeding (matun) from 7.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. was paid Rp.500. Such work was done only by the poorest residents of Pari.

\(^{20}\)Celebration at the end of the Muslim fasting month.
mostly in the form of household items such as glasses, crockery or cloth.

Piece workers did not receive rice and were not eligible for bonuses. (However, the same individual might work some of the time as a daily-paid labourer and another time as a piece worker.) Digging holes was paid at Rp.15 per hole. One worker could dig about 40 or 50 holes in a day, earning only a total of Rp.600-750. Other jobs such as clearing were paid at a rate of Rp.3,000 per hectare. Fertilizing was paid as wage labour at Rp.280 plus 450 grams of rice. Work during harvest was always attractive because it earned relatively good money. Wages were paid according to the weight of coffee beans collected, instead of the usual flat rate. During harvest time in 1980, for example, the wage for picking coffee beans was Rp.75 per kilogram. One worker or a group of workers, usually family members, could pick between 40 and 50 kilograms a day. An additional bonus for village households was that during the harvest nearly all members of the family would be employed.

Plantation work was hard. The plantations worked an eight-hour day, starting at 7 a.m. and finishing at 3 p.m., with breaks through the day, six days a week from Monday to Saturday. Plantation work was also, in general, poorly paid, which led to the second basic problem facing most of the residents of Saratemen, that of poverty. The villagers of Saratemen were much poorer than those of Pari.
In Pari the profile of the hamlet and its community had been defined largely in terms of the fertile yellow-green rice land that surrounded it. By contrast, the physical environment of Saratemen was dominated by the dark green coffee trees of the plantation. In Saratemen daily life was governed to a large extent by the work that the plantation provided and by its work routine.

IIB Solidarity and equality:

This section describes the social setting in the hamlet. Kinship, occupation and employment status and patron-client ties were the three most important elements of social structure in Saratemen. The interaction of these influenced social relations among the villagers and their ties to other groups outside the hamlet. However, the nature of their effect was very different from that in Pari.

Shared experiences in the past are often an important factor in group relations. Shared family or village histories can create strong feelings of group solidarity. However, in Saratemen this basis of group feeling was largely lacking. The hamlet was a newly established community settled only within the last generation. There were no founder families with historical claims to special status like the cakal-bakal families of Pari. The residents of Saratemen, unlike those of Pari, came from many different origins. Many were the descendants of colonial workers during colonial
times. Others were newcomers, attracted to the unoccupied tanah babatan Jepang lands during and after the second World War. (See below.) Yet, in a way, their status as newcomers (and therefore, as outsiders) and their shared experience of the loss of that land (also discussed below) resulted in a stronger feeling of community solidarity than that of the villagers of Pari.

A contributing and related factor was their sense of being different from the surrounding hamlets of Mara village, particularly in their lack of land. Whereas access to land had been an important factor in socio-economic differentiation in Pari, lack of access to land was an important factor in village solidarity in Saratemen. The villagers referred to themselves as wong kebun, meaning people who worked in the plantation, in contrast to the wong dusun, (village people) which was their term for people who lived in the other hamlets. The people in Saratemen, very conscious of their own lack of land, regarded others who had access to cultivated land as being very fortunate. They said that such people had 'backbones to rely on', compared with themselves, who were entirely dependent on wage labour.

There were eleven households in Saratemen who had access to cultivated land, but the amounts of land were very small and made little difference to the socio-economic status of those families. Like the other residents of the hamlet, they also worked on the plantation. They therefore regarded themselves also as wong kebun and identified with the rest as different from the surrounding wong dusun. They were also accepted by the rest of the hamlet as being
no different and only a little less unfortunate than themselves. Remnants of socio-economic differentiation based on access to land, presumably from their agricultural origins, were the common use of the terms numpang karang and numpang usup\textsuperscript{21}, which were used in the same way as in Pari.

Kinship is often an important factor in the ties that link groups of people together. In Saratemen kinship ties were important but their influence was largely confined within the family group. Kinship networks were not yet important in the wider community, as they had been in Pari. The villagers of Saratemen also lacked strong family ties to relatives living outside the village, such as in their places of origin. Most no longer had any connection with their places of origin, although many could remember the name of their ‘home’ villages from stories told for generations. Some, especially the most recent new-comers, retained ties with their families in their home villages and exchanged visits, but even these were few because of the costs involved. One family that still visited relatives in a remote village in the regency of Tulungagung, only about 50 kilometres away, said that they seldom went there because of the costs. Maintaining family ties over distances requires an investment of money and time. Many of the villagers of Saratemen had apparently not been able to afford these.

\textsuperscript{21}See above, pages 116-117.
The lack of close kin ties for many seemed to contribute to the expansion of kin-type relationships with neighbours. Often villagers would remark to, in reference to a neighbour, that they were 'just like kin'. Villagers often used the Javanese saying that: 'Good neighbours are even more important than distant kin' and would often remark that: 'we are all kin here'. There were many signs of good neighbourhood relations in Saratemen that I had not seen in Pari. It was common in Saratemen to see children, especially young children, being cared for by neighbours while their mothers were working in the plantations. Houses were usually closed when the occupants went to work but, in contrast to Pari, they were rarely locked. Villagers in the hamlet did not steal from each other. There were no thefts reported in the community while I was there. This was not due to the fact that the community was a particularly honest one. Thefts from the plantation were common and the unlocked houses of the village were a distinct contrast to the securely fenced and guarded plantation buildings.

In addition to neighbourhood and kinship links, new bases for social relationships were emerging. For example, friendships based on work relationships. However, the new relationships were often different from the traditional ones because they were between individuals and did not involve their families. In the plantation or construction work, friendships tended to relate exclusively to occupational roles. Outside the work place, such relations made minimal demands upon those who were party to them. One example was the friendship of Sutinah and Sumi. Both were plantation workers.
and had become close friends. They often walked to work together and joined the same gang. They lived close to each other in Saratemen, but their friendship developed on the plantation. This kind of friendship did not flourish outside working hours and the families of the two women had no involvement in the relationship. When Sutinah had a wedding party for her daughter she asked Sumi, who was a penyabet, to prepare food but she had to pay Sumi for her services. Payment would have been unthinkable in the traditional kind of kin- or neighbourhood-based relationships.

Although isolated in many ways, in others Saratemen was more open to the outside world than Pari. Many youngsters had migrated out of Saratemen in search of jobs. Of the 191 hamlet households, 48 or 25 per cent, had at least one member living outside the village. Many had gone to the cities to work as servants or construction or industrial workers. I heard of two young women who went as far as Kalimantan in search of work. Many of these outmigrants returned from time to time, especially during the muslim festival of Idulfitri, bringing with them a wider view of the world. I also heard of six young married couples who also left the hamlet in search of work, two leaving their young children with the grandparents. The grandparents had asked to keep the children ‘as a token, to make sure they [the young couple] return’. This reflected the fear that, like many other youngsters who left, their visits might be few or they might not return at all.

The community atmosphere in Saratemen was one of warmth, close cooperation and solidarity. In the evening, neighbours would
gather spontaneously along the village road to chat and exchange ideas and views on many topics. These informal meetings were an important means of forming community opinion. For example, it was during such meetings that the community decided to pursue their claims to the tanah babatan Jepang through a lawyer. (See below, pages 236-237.) During these meetings there seemed to be no particular leaders because participation largely depended on knowledge and interest and varied with the subject and from day to day.

Formal leadership in the hamlet rested with the kamitua and only one pamong, the bayan or village messenger. This was because of the village’s informal status as a sub-hamlet of Karanganyar. The kamitua was an ex-plantation worker who was a member of the pamong in the tanah babatan Jepang before the villagers were resettled to Saratemen. He was well-respected and accepted by the community as their leader but he was not usually involved in the village informal discussions, such as that on the land question that led to the legal action. The bayan was a santri (a devout Moslem) from Srengat, who had been a soldier before his appointment in 1966. Together with the village modin (muslim registrar) who was the kamitua, he was responsible for the spiritual life of the

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22 See below, pages 236-237. This was probably because he had to be very diplomatic due to his former status as a pamong of the community on the disputed land. Although he took no active part in discussions on the question, he also did not interfere.
community. This area had been regarded as 'pink'\textsuperscript{23} and spiritual life was considered to have been neglected. The bayan had organized a pengajian (religious recitation) class. In these classes, usually held as sunset was approaching, children, and sometimes adults, sat together to learn to recite the Quran. Beginning in 1968, three years after the unsuccessful coup in 1965, in which these people suffered severely, such classes had been gaining in popularity in Saratemen. The authorities believed that the pengajian class would restore the spiritual life of the people. However, despite the attendance of most children at these classes, religion did not seem to be a major factor in community life.\textsuperscript{24}

Another factor in the solidarity of the community was the lack of socio-economic differentiation among the villagers. Socio-economic status in the hamlet was largely determined by occupation and, especially employment status as plantation wage labourers. There was not a single household that did not work at some time as wage labour on the plantation. Although many also did other work, such as construction labour, the basic fact of their status as sellers of labour was not changed and they continued to identify themselves as wong kebun. In contrast to Pari, there were no school teachers or other government servants, apart from the kamitua and the bayan, living in Saratemen. The most affluent

\textsuperscript{23} That is, under the influence of the PKI, the Communist Party of Indonesia.

\textsuperscript{24} For example, work continued much as usual on Fridays. Some attended the Friday prayers but many continued with their normal work.
person in the community was a trader, a bakul mracang named Ibu Wuk. She had access to a certain amount of capital and her husband was one of those who had access to land as a sharecropper. In contrast with Ibu Mur in Pari, relations between the villagers, many of them her customers, and Ibu Wuk were essentially egalitarian. They spoke the ngoko level of language with her, in the same way as with each other, whereas in Pari villagers used the kromo level with Ibu Mur, indicating that she held higher status than they did. Only one resident of Saratemen was a permanent employee of the plantation. He was a former wage labourer who had become a supervisor (mandor). However, he was the only salaried worker who did not live on the plantation in the staff compound and his status in Saratemen seemed little affected by his promotion and higher income. Thus socio-economic differentiation in Saratemen was very limited. The higher economic status of these two households did not seem to affect markedly relations with the other residents.

Relations between the villagers and the plantation staff in general, on the other hand, were distant. There was little contact between the salaried permanent staff and the daily-paid labourers from the hamlet, inside or outside the work place. They treated each other distantly and did not encourage conversations, even although they lived only a few hundred meters apart. In contrast to the relationship within the hamlet, that between the villagers and the plantation, particularly with the plantation owners, was far from harmonious. For instance, apart from the theft mentioned
above, several times I saw people throw rotten fruit at the plantation owner's jeep as it passed through the hamlet. In contrast to the concealed resentment of Iyah towards Ibu Mur in Pari, that was noted in the previous chapter, the wong kebun of Saratemen were more inclined to express their resentment openly in face-to-face encounters with their employers. The fact that they were even prepared to confront representatives of the plantation, as described below, in a court of law exemplifies this directness.

In Pari patron-client relationships with landowners and with people like Ibu Mur, who controlled access to capital and markets for her clients, had been an important factor in social relations. In Saratemen patron-client relationships were not about access to land or capital, but access to credit. Monetization of the economy was a consequence of the plantation economy and a basic fact of life for the villagers. When the people of Saratemen had been cultivators they had been largely self-sufficient. As plantation workers they had ceased to be self-sufficient producers. Instead they had become a community of shoppers. Nearly all their daily necessities had to be bought and the majority, if not all, of the households in Saratemen were customers of warung mracang. There were five warung mracang in Saratemen in 1980, all operated by women. The largest was that of Ibu Wuk. Most sold consumption goods such as rice, salt, sugar and kerosene but Ibu Wuk also

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25 See above, pages 128-129.

26 See below, page 231.
provided other consumer commodities such as cassette recorders, kerosene lamps, and cloth (by order only), which were becoming newly-felt needs among the plantation workers. Warung mracang used a credit system. Debts were settled on pay day, every fortnight or whenever cash was available. Credit was important for workers in constant debt because of their low earnings and the credit system was facilitated by the fortnightly pay system of the plantation and by the contract system under which many villagers taking work outside the hamlet were employed.

Despite the commercial basis of the relationship, customers felt that they were helped by the willingness of the bakul mracang\(^\text{27}\) to give them credit. In that sense there remained an element of patronage in the relationship. However, the traditional obligation of the patron to assist her clients, outside the usual day-to-day activities of the relationship was lacking. Furthermore, it seemed that, unlike Ibu Mur, the bakul mracang in Saratemen attended the festivals and ceremonies of their customers, not as patrons, but as neighbours. However, when the bakul mracang was the person holding a ceremony, there seemed to be an obligation on those customers who most frequently used credit or who perhaps still had debts with her to help with their labour. This obligation to 'be nice' to the bakul mracang in order to ensure access to further credit showed client-like behaviour that justifies the use of the term patron-client relationship. However, the relationship was

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\(^{27}\)The business was known as a warung mracang, but the operator was called a bakul mracang. The word bakul meant a trader.
even further removed from the traditional model than that which I described in Pari between Ibu Mur and her penguyang. Villagers in Saratemen did not differentiate between themselves and the bakul mracang, in the way that they did with the owner and staff of the plantation. Whereas the relationship with the plantation had an 'us and them' feeling that reflected resentment and hostility, the warung mracung remained, in village perception, as part of 'us'. The commercial relationship between them had not yet disturbed village solidarity.

The owner of the plantation held a position that had, in some ways, much in common with that of traditional patrons. He had almost total control over the main resource on which the villagers depended for their livelihood. That resource was the opportunity to work. However, there was no sign of traditional patron-client ties in the links of mutual dependence that joined his interests to that of his workers. He was a local man, an ex-foreman of the plantation before the war. Because of his background and the land dispute discussed below, the people in Saratemen had little respect for him.

In 1980 he was a sick man. His wife performed the day-to-day administrative tasks as de facto manageress. The couple lived in a beautiful house in Nglegok. Nearly every day the wife drove to the plantation, but otherwise she directed the company by telephone. They relied heavily on the owner's half brother, who became head foreman and lived in company housing inside the plantation headquarters for day-to-day administration. Internal
company relations and important decisions were made by the wife, who ran the company with a mixture of paternalism and authority. Every request or internal dispute was referred to her through her brother-in-law or other administrators for personal hearing, judgement and decision. Two of her sons were preparing to join the company and were training as horticulturists. Thus the Anyar plantation was managed as a family business but it was also a modern enterprise in terms of organization and centralised control. Management of labour was also largely along modern lines. There was no hint of patron-client ties in the attitude of the plantation owners towards their labour or of the workers towards the owners.

This section describes the social setting of the hamlet of Saratemen. Social relationships in the community of Saratemen can best be described by the word solidarity. This solidarity was based on the villagers' feeling that they were new-comers, wong kebun, and different from people in the surrounding hamlets, from their shared recent experience of eviction from the tanah babatan Jepang and their common cause in struggling to regain that land, and from the very limited extent of socio-economic differentiation within the community.

III. The Village View of its Past:

Official records provide limited information on the history of the people of Mara village and its hamlets before the Japanese
Occupation. Evidence from genealogies suggests that there was no major settlement in the area until after the 1880s, by which time five plantations including Anyar and Nongko were already established.

Village records show that from 1830 Mara was a hamlet of the village of Penataran. In 1885 it became independent. This event was related to the establishment of plantations in the area around 1875-1880. By 1885 there were five plantations, producing coffee, tea, rubber and other crops, in the area surrounding the new hamlet of Mara. In that year two new settlements were founded: the hamlets of Bulu and Karanganyar, near the plantations of Nongko and Anyar and some distance from the earlier settlement of Mara Krajan.

According to the owner of the Anyar Plantation, the two plantations of Anyar and Nongko were established in 1880. That date was given to him by the Kadaster (Registrar of Land) in Kediri. These two coffee plantations were owned by Dutch private enterprise under 75-year leases, and were managed by a company by the name of N.V. Zuid Priangan Rubber Mij/Pa. Kooy Coster Van Voorhout, Surabaya. From 1880 on, there appears to have been a correlation between the rapid development of Saratemen and the increasing labour demands of Anyar and Nongko plantations.

Some of the present inhabitants still recall stories heard of their ancestors' place of origin. It is said that the first settlers were peasants looking for land and a better life. They came from the poor regions in Central Java, especially from the
Kedu area at the end of the nineteenth century. They had been displaced from their villages because of poor socio-economic conditions. It was said that they wandered widely in search of jobs and the chance of a better life in more prosperous regions. A continuous stream of migration flooded into Blitar and the nearby areas after the new plantations were established. Migrants usually came in a group, generally linked by kin or friendship and from the same village. Many were deceived by false promises of plantation agents about the good life and good jobs in the east, the land of promise. They had to walk for several days. Most were disappointed when they realized that there was little empty land and that they would have to work in the plantations as wage labourers. Some decided to continue their journey further to the east, to Banyuwangi, which was still receiving migrants during the twentieth century. They hoped that maybe there they would still find forests to clear but many became disillusioned, accepted their fate and settled down to work in the plantations. Here are the words of Pak Bantet, the oldest inhabitant (he claimed to be over 100 years old) of Saratemen about his arrival in the plantation. He said:

"I was a young man already when I arrived in this area. I walked with some friends and relatives from Ponorogo. It took seventeen days. At first we went to Kuning (one of the sugar plantations around Mt. Kelud). We just followed our guides. We spent a few harvests
over there and decided to move to this plantation, and have stuck here up to now.

"Why did I come here? We were poor in Ponorogo. We had no land and besides that, it was a hard time in my village in Ponorogo. Plagues and famines were occurring alternately. When a man came to our village and spread "good news" of a "better life in the east," we did not think too long. We just packed our belongings and followed that person. In my group there were families with small children. My parents did not come, I was alone, but there were some relatives. Later, we knew that we had to work in the plantation. It upset us, but there was no way to go back. It was not much better than the livelihood in my previous village either. I decided to stay and work in the plantation.

"Some of my friends, after spending a few harvests there, continued the journey further east. I moved several times, but only around the plantations. But then I settled down in this plantation as I married a girl whose parents were also plantation workers. I do not know how many harvests have passed already."

In the early days of the establishment of plantations, many workers were needed in addition to those people who voluntarily
came seeking work. As a result, recruitment of workers was also organized via middlemen who wandered around poor villages spreading news about opportunities in the east. The bupati from the poor regions were also said to have encouraged people to migrate to newer areas. Because such people were not contract labourers, they were free to go whenever they wanted. Mobility among the plantation workers was high. Often they simply moved from one plantation to another. By the end of the nineteenth century the population around Anyar and Nongko plantations was sufficient to support the plantations' needs. The settlements of workers then became hamlets attached to the village of Mara Kranjan and were named Karanganyar and Bulu. Other people came to Karanganyar hamlet without assistance or encouragement from plantation agents or the government; they were tempted solely by the prospect of jobs and better lives.

In the late 1920s, however, another wave of migrants did come into this area, prior to the Great Depression. These tended to come from the regions nearby, from Trenggalek, Tulungagung and Kediri, as well as from the pesisir or north coast areas, such as Gresik. With the exception of migrants from pesisir areas, who often settled down and practised specialized trades such as salt fish trading and tailoring, most were seasonal labourers who came during the coffee harvest season in the months of June, July and

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28 These notes are partly based on interviews with the owner of Anyar Plantation, based on what he had been told by colleagues and had heard from older members of his family.
August. They were known as boro musiman, or seasonal workers. Although ordinarily they returned to their own villages after the coffee harvest was over, some of them, usually the landless peasants, apparently decided to stay permanently in the plantations or in the village as magersari to wealthier peasants. Helping their masters in the field, as well as with the housework, they would be given shelter and a small payment in goods or in cash.

One respondent, Mbok Tik from Trenggalek, who came to the Mara area during that period, told her story as follows:

"We came here several times during harvest time before we settled down. Usually we came in a big group and stayed here for a couple of months, then just went back to Trenggalek. I was still a small girl and just followed my parents and other families. Sometimes my father did not come along, only my mother and other relatives. We walked from Trenggalek. We stayed in somebody's place, I do not remember who they were. But most of the time we stayed in the plantation barracks. It was not only us who came from a distance, there were big crowds from everywhere. We children only played around until we were big enough to help our mothers or parents pick coffee beans.

"On one visit we did not return to Trenggalek. There was a famine in my village. We left Trenggalek and
stayed at Pak Sastro's. My father got a kedokan of about one hectare of sawah from Pak Sastro, who lived in the dusun. My father built a hut in Pak Sastro's yard. In the slack season when there was not much work in the ricefields, my father joined my mother working in the plantation. I worked in the plantation and married a plantation worker. My father still worked for Pak Sastro for several years until my father and I bought a piece of land on the tanah babatan Jepang."

Another story that probably related to the same time came from the present elderly lurah of Mara. His father was also lurah in the early decades of this century.

"During coffee harvest time, the kelurahan and also father's house were filled with people from everywhere to join in the harvest in the plantations. Usually they went back to their own villages after the harvest was over. But there were some who stayed, either continuing work in the plantations or in somebody's place. My father used to have some labourers from this crowd for helping with household chores. These were what we called seasonal migrants (buruh musiman). They came only during the harvest.

29Villages outside the plantations are called dusun.
"A great stream of these seasonal migrants occurred before and during the Great Depression, in the late 'twenties. Most of them were women. I do not know why the majority were women. Perhaps because they lost their supplementary incomes in their villages."

Such stories are also confirmed in the report Memorie van Overgave 1929 (Arsip Nasional 1978), which mentions a great exodus from Trenggalek and Ponorogo pouring into Blitar's plantations in 1919 and 1920. It mentioned hundreds of women from Ponorogo and nearby areas coming into Blitar for jobs in the plantations.

A more recent event clearly remembered by many of the older villagers was the Japanese occupation. By 1943-1945, during the Japanese Occupation, the plantations around Blitar were abandoned by the Dutch administrators who either escaped or were interned by the Japanese. The plantations were neglected and only poorly managed by the former foreman (mandor) or the like. The Japanese also occupied the plantations of Anyar and Nongko. They employed the Dutch manager of the former plantations to administer both and appointed a Chinese as his counterpart. The Japanese forced the plantation workers and villagers to clear about 160 hectares of coffee trees on the Anyar plantation and about 140 hectares of the Nongko plantation to plant crops such as corn and castor oil for Japanese supplies. Since that time these two pieces of land have
been known as tanah babatan Jepang, or land cleared by the Japanese.

In 1945, the Japanese Occupation ended. The Chinese employed by the Japanese continued to manage the ex-tanah babatan Jepang and encouraged the villagers to cultivate the tanah babatan Jepang on a sharecropping basis with a fifty-fifty division of the crop. They planted corn. Officially the plantations were under the government plantation centre, Pusat Perkebunan Negara, or PPN. Between the first clash between the Dutch and Indonesia in 1947, and the second clash in 1949, this area also became a guerrilla base in the fight against the return of the Dutch. The neglected plantations were used to provide the guerrillas' supplies but the villagers continued to cultivate the ex-tanah babatan Jepang under sharecropping arrangements.

In 1948, in the wake of the military showdown between communist rebels and the Republican government in what is known as the Madiun Affair, this area was used as a refuge from the army by the communists. The villagers who cultivated the ex-tanah babatan Jepang were freed from their responsibilities to give up half of their crops as before, and their rights over the land that they occupied were acknowledged. Moreover, the fighting led to the cutting of relations between the central authorities of PPN and its local officials. The local representatives of PPN in the various plantations, together with representatives of the workers' union,

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30 With regard to the abortive revolt by the communists, see Reid 1974: 121-147.
were forced to conduct policy on their plantations on their own initiative. As a result policies varied considerably between different plantations.

During this period the plantations of Anyar and Nongko were deteriorating. Damage was especially heavy in 1949 when, in fighting against the Dutch during the second Dutch military action against the Republic in 1949, the warehouses were deliberately razed to the ground by the republican guerillas and the coffee trees were neglected. After the Revolution, under the terms of the 'Round Table Conference' in 1949, all plantations owned by the Dutch had to be returned to their former owners.

By 1950, the army had also freed the area from communist influence. Villagers who had occupied the ex-tanah babatan Jepang again had to fulfil sharecropping obligations and give up half of their crops to the plantations which now reverted to full control of the republican government under the central authority of PPN.

In the meantime, more and more people came to this area from surrounding regions to squat on and cultivate the neglected plantation land. Many of the people were so interested in cultivating the tanah babatan Jepang that they even sold their small pieces of property in their own villages and came to

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31 In 1966 three hundred individuals claimed ownership of the plantation land. See page 234. However, considerably more than this number had occupied or cultivated sections of plantation land between 1942 and 1954, when the emergency law was passed restricting its use.
Karanganyar. Pak Muslan tells his story:

"I came here with my parents and brothers from Tulungagung in 1951. My parents only had 300 ru (one ru of cultivated land = 15 square metres) but nearly every year it was subjected to flooding. One day, my older sister who married and stayed in Blitar returned and encouraged my father to move to her place in Blitar. She told him about the cheap land in the ex-plantation areas where she lived with her family. My father was tempted and sold the 300 ru of land and we moved to the ex-plantation area. It was called tanah babatan Jepang and we bought 7 gang (9 gang = 1 hectare).

"The land was fertile and we had sufficient for the whole family. We still had a surplus to sell sometimes. We planted cassava, corn and vegetables. Some of our neighbours who lived near the creek even converted their land into wet-ricefields. We stayed there until 1966 when we had to move to this settlement (Saratemen)."

However, many plantations were already damaged and occupied by the villagers who refused to move. In the area of the tanah babatan Jepang between the plantations of Anyar and Nongko, the villagers continued to cultivate the land and did not fulfil their sharecropping obligations. The plantations as a whole were
still under dispute between the former owners and the government when the Indonesian government nationalized all companies owned by the Dutch in December 1958. The Nongko plantation was then placed under the control of the Reserve Army Corps, and became an army cooperative company. The Anyar plantation was taken over by PPN through its regional office in Kediri. Representatives of PPN and of the workers' union were put on a committee to govern it, and the sharecropping system was restored.

By then, the tanah babatan Jepang had been divided and fully occupied by the squatters, who gradually refused to pay their share of crops. The tanah babatan Jepang grew into two settlement areas with their own village structures and borders. These two settlements were named Sara (part of Anyar plantation) and Temen (part of Nongko plantation). Suitable land was converted into ricefields, and land became a commodity. Buying and selling was frequent, with buyers coming from established villages, such as Mara and Blitar itself, and from regions surrounding Blitar, such as Kediri, Trenggalek and Tulungagung. Some even sold their own small plots of land or property to buy tanah babatan Jepang, which they heard was not only fertile, but also much cheaper than the regular market price. This meant they could obtain slightly larger plots. However, these land transactions had no standing in law; no papers or official procedures were involved. In general, the position of the squatters on this land was strengthened during the early 1950s, or at least the status quo was maintained. But ex-plantation land and occupation by squatters became the focus of
an important political dispute at a higher level, as leaders took
advantage of it in election campaigns. Squatters who had occupied
land before the Round Table Conference in 1949 were given temporary
permission to remain on the land at least until the government
issued a formal law regulating squatters' rights. In 1960, this
law was passed in the form of the new Agrarian Reform, although
there were still many disputes.\textsuperscript{32}

In Sara and Temen, however, there were no real disputes over
the occupation of the \textit{tanah babatan Jepang}. It is claimed that
this was because the BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia, or peasant front
and SARBUPRI (Sarikat Buruh Perkebunan Republik Indonesia,
Plantation Workers' Union of Indonesia), two of the prominent
peasant and plantation labour organizations affiliated to the
communist party PKI, were very active in this issue, and simply
"managed" this area, with the squatters still continuing to occupy
the land.\textsuperscript{33} In spite of this, however, the area was never
recognized legally as a village or as a hamlet; its existence as
an entity was simply taken for granted. It was a matter which
still troubled the people of Saratemen once they learned that the
other former plantation located next to them had already been
converted to a legal village. This was the situation until 1965.

Then, in 1966, for the first time since the occupation of the
land nearly 20 years before, the civilian and military authorities

\textsuperscript{32}See above, page 58.
\textsuperscript{33}See above, page 59.
raised doubts about the rights of the squatters to the *tanah babatan Jepang*. This occurred one year after the unsuccessful coup in 1965. The occupation of the former *tanah babatan Jepang* in Sara and Temen was considered to have been masterminded by the PKI. Some of the caretakers from Anyar plantation were jailed: some escaped or disappeared, having been accused of sympathizing with the PKI.

At the time that their legal rights were first questioned, there were more than 300 people (not necessarily living in the area) listed as being in control of about 300 hectares of land. These households were forced to leave the land, and were resettled on a small plot of 15 hectares, made up of 8 hectares from Anyar plantation and 7 hectares from Nongko plantation and located on the border between the two. The former *tanah babatan Jepang* reverted to the plantations, except for 100 hectares in the Nongko part which was handed over to the army for a local transmigration project for retired soldiers, and another 100 hectares in the Anyar part which was distributed among 100 names, many of them prominent local officials and their families. The Anyar plantation became the estate of a private company owned by one of the former caretakers under a 25-year lease.

There were many stories and rumours as to how the owner came to own the plantation, especially because he was originally only

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34 See above, page 60.
an ordinary foreman and later one of the caretakers. Most stories centred on 100 hectares of the ex-*tanah babatan Jepang* which he supposedly handed over to the authorities. The Nongko plantation remained under the old management. There was no open protest from the squatters. Previously the BTI and SARBUPRI had largely controlled the area but following the 1965 coup, they lost their power, were outlawed, and could give no support to the squatters.

Every household, regardless of the size of its holding in *tanah babatan Jepang*, was given only 0.05 hectares and between Rp.60 and Rp.250 in cash, depending on the condition of their houses. However, only those who resided in the *tanah babatan Jepang* received this compensation. Those who owned or controlled land in the *tanah babatan Jepang* but who were domiciled elsewhere received no compensation at all. In the end, only 300 households which previously controlled the ex-plantation land moved to the new settlement. Most of the squatters living in the plantation areas accepted this as misfortune, but some, about 50 households, preferred to migrate elsewhere after selling their portions of 0.05 hectares. The new settlement was called Saratemen, the name of the former settlement in their *tanah babatan*; but outsiders called it *tampungan*: a reservation.

The settlers were all registered as the owners of the new plots and their names were written in the village records as

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35 He became one of the caretakers, representing the workers’ union, when the committee was set up by the local office of PPN to manage the neglected Anyar plantation between Independence and 1965.
tax-payers. The village office gave them *pethok*, a legal document indicating that they paid tax on and therefore controlled the land. However, in 1977, those who lived in Sara, in what was formerly part of Anyar plantation, were asked by the village office to return the *pethok* without any explanation. Later the plantation claimed the land because the owner said that he had always paid the tax on it. Without *pethok*, the people of Sara had no legal claim to the land they occupied, even though they were still allowed to remain on it. People were initially ignorant of the implications until they learned that they could not sell their land.

This resulted in open anger from the people of Saratemen. Their political response was atypical of hamlets in a comparable situation and took the form of a formal protest by several representatives of those who had occupied the *tanah babatan Jepang* to the plantation owner at Anyar in October 1979, demanding recognition of title to the land on which they were living, which had then been claimed by the plantations. In May 1980, a group of 15 villagers representing the people of Saratemen and, led by a lawyer whom they had hired, went to Jakarta to lodge their complaints about that land against the local authorities with the Parliament. They also wanted to question the seizing of the former *tanah babatan Jepang* in 1966. Their determined action was surprising, especially after their traumatic experiences following the 1965 coup attempt.\(^{36}\) The very existence of the PKI-affiliated

\(^{36}\)See above, page 60.
union of plantation workers, the SARBUPRI, was enough to bring plantation workers under suspicion as ex-communists, even though they were not necessarily so.

The lawyer had apparently come to the village by chance, and was later hired to represent the villagers in their mission to Jakarta, as a result of informal discussions in the community. Each person who wanted to participate in the claim contributed Rp.5,000 to hire transportation and pay the living expenses of the 15 members in the delegation. Many were fearful of this action and indeed were discouraged by the negative reaction of the local authorities. In the end the delegation to the national capital did not meet anyone because parliament was in recess. However, there was much publicity about the matter in Jakarta newspapers.37

When they returned to Saratemen they were questioned by the local government authorities. One young man who was considered to be the leader of the action was taken to court along with the lawyer. The lawyer was later sentenced to jail for 18 months for allegedly misappropriating funds from his clients. It was charged that the Rp.5,000 contributed by the people was an attempt to get their money, despite the fact that even after strong intimidation by the officers of the public prosecution office the majority of the clients stated that they were not forced by the lawyer to make the payment. The villagers insisted they gave it because they wanted the delegation to go to Jakarta but the findings of the

37See, for instance, Kompas of May 7, 1980.
court were that the lawyer was guilty. The lawyer was so angry when the verdict was announced in court that he threw a chair at the judges and for that he faced new charges. While the case was in the courts, the villagers who had been involved were called in to be questioned by the authorities again and again.

For some it was such a dreadful experience that they wanted no more of it. However, many of the younger people acted differently, even though they had been only small children in 1966 when the land was taken. They seemed to have the most ill-feeling and clearly perceived the taking of the land as an injustice. After the court action the central government handled the case and based on a Presidential Instruction (Instruksi President No. 55/1980) a committee headed by the bupati was set up to solve the problem. However, the dispute was still dragging on when I left Saratemen at the end of February 1981. In June 1981 the case was being handled by the OPSTIB, the Intelligence Bureau. Some members of Parliament were also reported to have given attention to this case (Kompas, June 2 1981).

IV. Strategies for Survival in a Changing World:

In 1980 the villagers of Saratemen were still very concerned about their land claims, both to the land they then occupied and

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38See TEMPO, September 5, 1981.
the tanah babatan Jepang, from which they had been removed some fourteen years earlier. However, their daily strategies for survival centred, not on the struggle for land, but on the search for work.

Villagers could be crudely divided according to their occupations into two groups. The first were those who sold their labour for a daily wage. These included the plantation workers, construction workers and all those who did casual labour. The second group were the traders, the bakul obrok, who bought the villagers' produce and sold it in the market or to middlemen, and the bakul mracang. However, nearly all the households in the hamlet had one or more members who worked in the plantation at some time or other during the year. During the coffee harvest virtually the entire hamlet population, with the specific exception of certain groups of youths (who will be discussed below), worked in the plantations. Thus, in this sense, almost everyone in the hamlet was a plantation worker, as was reflected by their description of themselves as wong kebun.

In this section I will examine strategies for survival at two levels. Taking the entire hamlet in this sense as plantation workers, I will first describe their strategies for survival in the context of the plantation. However, as described above, many of the plantation workers also worked outside the plantation because of the limited availability of work on the plantation. A
particular group, mainly of youth, also refused to work there. The strategies adopted by those who chose or were forced to seek wage labour outside the plantation, either regularly or occasionally are also considered. The strategies of both these groups are related to the world outside the hamlet. At the second level are strategies adopted by the villagers in their dealings with each other. I will examine both sets of strategies through the ethnographic data that I collected during fieldwork in 1980.

In order to understand the context of the villagers' strategies, it is necessary to know something of the strategy adopted by the plantation itself in its dealings with them and with the authorities. The plantation, with access to land, capital and power, followed the traditions of the Dutch colonial plantation system in relying on close co-operation with the authorities. For example, the experience of the villagers of Sara in having their pethok land certificates withdrawn suggested collaboration between the plantation and the authorities. The plantation had originally had to give up the 7 hectares of land the villagers occupied, when they were resettled there by the government. The villagers were given pethok certificates and registered as tax payers. However, later, the government, through the lurah (who reported that he had been under pressure from the land office) took back the certificates for no apparent reason. Shortly after, when the

This was partly because of their bitter feelings over the land question, but it also seemed to be related to the fact that plantation work was unattractive.
villagers had no legal proof of their status, the plantation claimed ownership of the land.

The coffee plantation was similar to the Dutch sugar plantations and unlike plantations in many other parts of the world in that the plantation workers (unlike the permanent staff) did not live in housing provided by the company and obtained no welfare benefits. (The fact that they lived on land formerly owned, and in the case of Sara, claimed by the plantation was largely accidental.) The plantation workers of Saratemen were independent peasant labourers. The plantation had no obligations for their welfare other than the normal payment of wages for work carried out. The plantation had no need to offer anything other than work in order to obtain its labour because, despite the low wages and poor conditions, villagers were heavily dependent on plantation employment.

In discussing the strategies of the peasants of Saratemen, it must be remembered that their experience of the recent past was very different from that of the peasants of Pari. In Pari, life for the villagers had changed little by little over time. They had never known sudden or dramatic changes. By contrast, the people of Saratemen had experienced dramatic changes in the conditions under which they made their living.

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40 Like sugar, coffee has highly seasonal labour requirements. Plantations growing crops requiring more regular inputs of labour, such as rubber in Malaya and tea in modern West Java, usually provided accommodation and other facilities and benefits to their workers.
Most of the villagers of Saratemen had been plantation workers before they suddenly had the opportunity to become farmers on the tanah babatan Jepang. For almost a generation they had cultivated that land while the fighting associated with war, revolution and rebellion kept the authorities and owners busy with other matters. Then, in 1966, they suddenly found themselves plantation workers again. The dramatic change in their status can be seen by comparing access to cultivated land before and after moving to the present site. Most of the 300 households who were listed as occupants of the tanah babatan Jepang had cultivated the 300 hectares of dry land and a few wet-rice fields. Thus the average holding was one hectare per household, which apparently met the basic needs of the peasants at that time. In 1980 only eleven of the 121 households had access to cultivated land and in each case the amount held was very small.

The impact of the change on the peasants was clearly seen in their recollections of those days and their comments contrasting the past and the present. Respondents recalled that nearly all households had access to cultivated land on the tanah babatan Jepang, although there were some landless households and some with large holdings. Many repeatedly mentioned that previously their day-to-day needs had been met from their own crops. Several said that then they seldom had to buy basic food staples (principally corn and cassava) because they had enough of their own. Most had produced only for their own consumption, but a few also reported that sometimes they sold produce to buy goods such as salt, sugar
and cloth. This self-sufficiency in food production contrasted markedly with the situation in 1980, when nearly every daily necessity had to be bought.

When they were moved to Saratemen the villagers had to develop strategies to cope with their new situation. One of the problems they faced was the low wages and insecure employment offered by the plantation. Strategies to overcome this included moving to different kinds of jobs when there was no plantation work, seeking better-paid jobs and seeking alternative sources of income. This could be seen in the survey of occupations and sources of income that I carried out in 1980. All except the five single-person households in Saratemen relied on more than one source of income. All households reported that at least two members of the household earned money. The most common pattern (62 percent) was for at least one member of the household to work on the plantation while at least one other earned money elsewhere. A typical explanation for this arrangement was:

"The wages on the plantation are low," or

"It is not enough to rely on only one source,"

Plantation wages were low, so some tried to find better-paid work elsewhere. Although there were very limited chances of employment outside the plantations, most young men preferred to work elsewhere because they considered work on the plantation to be time-consuming and inadequately paid. Those who were dissatisfied with wages or conditions had no choice but to look elsewhere outside the hamlet, and usually outside the village.
Some also refused to work on the plantation because of their resentment over the loss of their parents’ land. Their refusal to work on the plantation had no effect on wages because there were always other workers eager to work on the plantation. The excess of landless and jobless rural people reduced the bargaining power of workers.

Unlike the men who were mobile and could travel to find better wages, women with household responsibilities had little choice but to accept work in the plantation. Plantation work did have some advantages, especially for the women who could not seek employment elsewhere. One advantage was the regularity of employment. The plantation had regular work for about three hundred workers, mostly in relatively low-paid jobs. As a result many of these regular workers were women or older men who were unable to get work outside. Apart from the value of a regular job for itself, regular employment was especially valued because warung mracang owners only gave credit to those who had regular incomes. Nearly all plantation workers relied on warung mracang for their daily necessities. Despite the low wages, plantation work thus had some attraction because it almost guaranteed loans from the warung mracang.

When women were asked why they worked in the plantation, the answers were always: "We need money," or "We need to supplement our incomes," or "This is the only work available." Their situation was clearly expressed by one middle-aged widow as follows:
"Of course, Rp.280 a day is not enough. Even together with 450 grams of rice. But I still work in the plantation because I do not know how to find any other job. I am old, not like the young girls who can go to the city and find jobs with good money. So I just accept work in the plantation. I must say that to work on the plantation is hard and long work. Every day I have to wake up at about 4 a.m. and come back at about 4 p.m. I am already old. I have lost my strength.

"But one advantage of working on the plantation is that we can collect firewood. I always stay in the plantation for a while after work to collect some materials to sell. It all helps, even if it's only enough to buy salt and chillies."

Another strategy employed by the peasants of Saratemen to overcome their poverty was for households to supplement the wages of working members with earnings from other activities. Often these supplementary activities were carried out by children or old people and others unable to work because the others were too busy. Many children tended water buffalo, sheep or chickens, usually belonging to the somewhat better-off families from neighbouring hamlets. This was done under the gaduh system, which worked as follows: the owner of the animals allowed someone to look after them for a share in the offspring. If, for example, a sheep had
two lambs the division was equal, with the owner getting one and the caretaker the other. If there was only one offspring from the animal, they might wait until they had an equal number to share. Otherwise the animal would be sold and the money shared between the two. Even young children, especially girls, were employed to rear chickens under the gaduh system. In this way even poorer villagers were able to obtain cattle, which were a good investment and, in the village context, a measure of wealth. Children in Saratemen, under the guidance of their parents, were very keen to rear cattle and other domestic animals.

One boy I knew, aged about ten years old, raised a cow under this system. Each afternoon after school he would gather grass to feed the cow, carefully wash her and bring her home in the evening. He hoped to buy a bicycle with the money he would eventually get from the cow. This was his dream but it was not clear that it would be realized. However, even if he got his bicycle, it would not cost as much as the cow would bring. The contribution of earnings from gaduh was often an important supplement to household income. Even some older residents, including the kamitua, reared cattle under the gaduh system. The kamitua had an advantage over others. Because of his position he could take grass for his cow from the plantation for free. Others, including children, were allowed to take grass from the plantation only if they worked for a certain time as payment. Some villagers who did not have cattle would cut grass in this way to sell. (Many who sold grass in this way were outsiders who sold the grass as far away as Blitar.)
For those who could not obtain wages, such as old women, or mothers with small babies, the main avenues for earning were limited. They typically gleaned rice and collected fire wood or edible ferns (in season) for sale to middlemen. Six families reported received some extra income in the form of remittances from sons or daughters working in the cities. However, they said that this money was sent irregularly. It seemed more important to them as a sign that they were remembered by their children than as a supplement to household income.

One group of young men and some women earned their livelihood by selling and buying garden produce such as coconuts, bananas, young jackfruit and chickens collected from villagers the day before to sell in the market. They were bakul obrok. Every day, as early as the plantation workers, they started their day. If they were lucky, they might sell their goods to other bakul obrok before reaching the market. Sometimes they had to cycle all the way to Kediri, about 30 kilometres from the town of Blitar.

However, the importance of even such relatively regular sources of non-plantation income as that from trade as a bakul obrok or bakul mracang was small compared with the importance of earnings from the plantation. In the end, of course, income from trade depended on the buyers’ incomes and they were mostly from plantation wages. Other jobs, such as construction, offered higher pay but employment was unstable and the income intermittent. Although the basic pay was higher than in the plantation, they
often had to spend most of it for subsistence. The plantation remained the mainstay of the village.

Although the villagers had no choice but to work in the plantation they did so under protest. There were still strong feelings against the company among the people in Saratemen because of the land dispute. People considered that their impoverishment began with company appropriation of "their" land. The direct result, they felt, was that they had become property-less dependents of the plantation, to which they had been forced to sell their labour in order to subsist. The wider society to which they belonged evaluated social status according to landownership. Many had parents who were landless or near-landless before they settled on the tanah babatan Jepang but most were born and brought up on the tanah babatan Jepang at a time when they controlled land. By 1980 they had again become property-less. This relegation to low status exacerbated their sense of dispossession. This feeling could also be seen in their consciousness of themselves as plantation workers (wong kebun) rather than, for example, as farmers (wong tani).

Despite their apparent dependence on the plantation, the workers of Saratemen were not afraid to show their bad feelings about the plantation. Their bitterness and anger were evident in words and actions. I often heard them swearing or making rude jokes when the owner’s car passed by. They also showed their resentment by stealing or damaging the coffee trees and other acts of ‘daily resistance’. Damage to the trees and plantation property
was clearly an expression of resentment. The motivation for stealing coffee beans during the harvest was partly an expression of resentment and partly another strategy for survival. The same can also be said from the action of some in making a claim to the tanah babatan Jepang, even though they did not actually have any right to claim.

The plantation workers also hit back at the plantation through the way they worked. They made no effort to work hard. If they saw something in the plantation that needed attention they did not bother to fix it. They were often deliberately uncooperative and did not hesitate to take days off or take alternative jobs outside when they were available, even at times when the plantation needed extra workers. As a result, the plantation had to offer the incentives and bonus noted above, in order to ensure a regular supply of workers. It seemed they were not afraid of losing their jobs on the plantation because they felt that the plantation needed them. Although there many workers hired from outside, the plantation required, on average about 300 workers and the villagers supplied approximately one-third of those on a regular basis. The fact that they lived on the plantation, whereas the outsiders had to come from further away, probably added to their feeling that the plantation needed them sufficiently to tolerate their negative

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41 Inspection of workers was very strict during the coffee harvest and included thorough body-searching after the coffee beans collected had been weighed. One of the foremen told me that often women workers hid some coffee beans in their bras; another tactic was to bury packets of beans during the harvest and to smuggle them out later when inspection was not so severe.
attitudes. When I was there I found no case where their open
defiance led to individuals being barred from work on the
plantation. I felt that the solidarity of the villagers made
plantation staff hesitate to take strong action against individuals
in case the villagers might react en masse. This might have been
especially because the land dispute was a hot issue at the time I
was there. The plantation would not have wanted bad publicity or
further deterioration in the relations with their workers at that
time.

It was interesting that many of the villagers with the
strongest feelings against the plantation were young men. One,
named Jadi, who was only eighteen years old at the time, played a
principal role in the confrontation with the plantation over the
land claim. He was born on the tanah babatan Jepang in 1962.
Thus, when his parents were forced to leave their farm and re-
settle in Saratemen he was only six. I was unable to meet him
before he was arrested as a result of the land dispute. Villagers
said that he was a quiet person who lived with his widowed mother.
His mother had been a plantation worker for more than a decade.
Like most young men in Saratemen, Jadi had never worked on the
plantation and had only just joined some other young men as a bakul
obrok before he was arrested. Before that he was unemployed.

42He was regarded as a ringleader of the group who organized the
protest to the parliament in Jakarta. He was already in jail
waiting for his case to be heard when I was in the village:
His friends said that he did not remember life in the tanah babatan Jepang but, like them, he would have imagined what it was like because people so often compared their life with the ‘old days’ when they farmed there. He and his friends insisted they had the right to the land on the tanah babatan Jepang and blamed its loss on the plantation. They felt that their families had been proud and self-sufficient farmers who had become mere shoppers and wage labourers for the company which had deprived them of their land. Jadi had apparently been obsessed with his determination to regain that land. While the others merely talked about it, Jadi had taken advantage of village solidarity to organize a collective briefing of the lawyer who had offered to help take the claim to the courts.

The young men who worked as labourers in construction work or sugar cane harvesting outside the hamlet had the same attitude on defiance towards their employers as the plantation workers. Their wages were usually higher than on the plantation but because they worked away from home their costs were also higher. One worker told me that he sometimes could not bring any money to his family because he had to spend it on daily necessities. He also said that some of his friends had got into debt because they had borrowed in advance of their wages from the contractors. The loans were without interest and were apparently a strategy by the contractor to tie the workers to him so he could always supply workers to his employers. My respondent said there were almost constant disputes with the contractors about loans but, unlike disputes with the
plantation, these were just between the contractor and the individual.

There seemed to be little solidarity among the contract workers. The men took little interest in the quarrels of their friends. There were frequent quarrels among the men themselves. The respondent said that they were often over very small matters and happened 'probably because of our frustration and exhaustion'. Solidarity among the contract workers was also difficult because they worked for different contractors and in different places and so could not form cohesive groups. They also often worked with people from other places, so their influence in the group might be quite small.

The economic strategies for survival used by the villagers in their relations with the plantation and other employers centred on access to work and income. Villagers often had many different kinds of jobs over the year. They also tried to use every small opportunity to earn an income, even from the activities of children and old people. Their dependence on the plantation was reduced by such strategies. They seemed aware that the plantation was also dependent on them. They were not afraid to show their resentment against the plantation or even to take quite strong action, such as the court case, against it. Their common interests and solidarity gave them strength against the plantation. In contrast, the villagers who worked for contractors showed less solidarity in dealing with their employers, even although their negative feelings about the contractors were similar to those against the plantation.
I did not hear of acts of resistance against the contractors comparable with those against the plantation.

In their strategies that dealt with the outside world, villagers generally had a common interest as wong kebun and as wage labourers. In their dealings with each other, however, there were clearly different interests within the community. Many villagers traded with each other, either informally or formally through the institutions of obrokan and mracangan. There would be different interests between buyers and sellers that might disturb the solidarity that was created in the relationship with the plantation. However, the fact that most villagers were equally poor limited the differences in their interests and created some difficulties for trade.

One type of trade that was common in the village was obrokan, carried out by the young bakul obrok described above. They bought perishable produce from the villagers and sold it in district markets or to middlemen. One morning I observed a woman carrying green jackfruit waiting on the edge of the road for the bakul obrok. If she was lucky she would get Rp.100 or so. Another woman held a cock she wanted to sell. She needed to sell the cock for at least Rp.1,000 - Rp.500 as her contribution to a ceremonial feast (becekan) and Rp.500 to replace the cock with some chicks. She would breed the chicks and sell one whenever she needed cash. (This is one way in which villagers invested their earnings.) Before long, a bakul obrok woman on her bicycle approached her. There was some bargaining, with the cock being transferred back and
forth between the two women. Still there was no agreement. Then the obrok woman started to cycle away. The woman with the cock peered after her then shouted, lowering the price by Rp.5. The bargaining continued, but this time at a distance. They shouted at each other and each made offers. Finally the bakul obrok got the cock for Rp.900. Neither the seller nor the buyer was happy. Each continued to argue and mutter.

It was interesting to observe how the transaction was made. The price went up and down by a single rupiah. Each party looked very grim. I followed the woman with the cock and asked:

"How much did you sell the cock for?"

"Nine hundred rupiah. Too little, I guess. "My cock is big. It could be worth Rp.1,500 in the city. The bakul obrok always push down the price. They know that if we are selling anything it means that we desperately need money. They make a lot of profit."

"Why didn’t you wait for a while until you find a good offer?"

"From whom? If we wait and wait until midday no more bakul obrok may come, and you can’t expect the villagers to buy my cock at a good price."

The conversation explains, at least in part, why people in Saratemen usually preferred to sell their goods to bakul obrok from other villages. They said that outside bakul obrok could afford
to pay higher prices than the local bakul and paid cash immediately. The local bakul usually paid the producer only after they had sold the goods in the market or to a middleman. This sometimes occurred among bakul obrok who lacked capital. However, in Pari most bakul had sufficient capital to pay cash immediately for their purchases and only a few who sometimes paid only after the goods were sold. In Saratemen all the bakul paid after sale. If they were unable to sell the goods, they would return them to the producer, saying that they had not laku. This might have been because of poverty and the lack of capital among the bakul of Saratemen. However, comparing the bakul in Saratemen with those in Pari, it seems that some of the bakul obrok in Saratemen also probably had sufficient capital to pay cash in advance. But none did. Viewed in a different way, it might reflect both the solidarity of the Saratemen community and a rational strategy on the part of sellers. People would only allow traders they trusted to pay after selling because the price they received was not set at the time of the transaction. It depended on the price the trader was paid in the market (or from the middleman) and the producer had to trust the trader to reveal the actual price that he was paid. If the trader paid cash before he sold, the price he gave would have to take into account the possibility that the price he would later get in the market might be low. If he then received a higher price, he received all the benefit. If the price was not fixed until after the sale in the market, the trader and the producer shared both the risk of a low price and the benefits of
a high price. Thus the system used by the bakul obrok in Saratemen can be seen as a strategy of mutual benefit for trader and producer that depended on feelings of trust and common interest.

Two other traditional forms of trading were carried out in Saratemen. The first was the small retail trade of the bakul ethek. People living far from the markets usually relied on the bakul ethek for their daily grocery needs, particularly those who worked on the plantations and who had no opportunity to go to market in the morning. The bakul ethek, who were always women, sold fresh vegetables, bean curd, soybean cake and sometimes prepared snacks bought from the district market or from the village market in Panataran. They often gave credit to their customers. This was often important for the plantation workers who were paid every fortnight. As the bakul ethek wandered from house to house, they took their time, talking, gossiping, and sometimes even helping with the housework of her customers. Bakul ethek trade was very small scale and none of the villagers of Saratemen operated this kind of business. There were several reasons. Most villagers had insufficient capital to sell on credit. They also lacked easy access to outside markets where the goods traded by the bakul ethek were bought. But perhaps most importantly, the earnings of the bakul ethek were probably no more than village women could earn in plantation work.

The most important form of trade, as in most small villages in Java, was mracangan. The warung mracang was in some respects like the bakul ethek but was not mobile, had different goods and
a larger stock and required more capital. Like the bakul ethek, the warung maracang gave credit to customers. They also sometimes bought dry goods, such as mung bean, corn, shelled peanuts, coffee beans that could be stored, from the villagers. They would keep these until they had sufficient to sell middlemen. The three different kinds of traders were complementary, not competitors. Each had different kinds of goods to sell. This in itself can be regarded as a strategy, because competition in such a poor community would have been self-defeating.

All warung maracang were small in Saratemen because retailing was only one side of their earning activities and because they lacked capital. They were family businesses employing only members of the household and making only small profits. They obtained their stock from local shops in the district headquarters, although one was also supplied by a Chinese grocer in the town of Blitar.

One of the bakul maracang was Ibu Wuk. Her business was larger than the others. She had been in the business of warung maracang on the old site in the tanah babatan Jepang. A few months after moving, she opened the first warung maracang on the new site of Saratemen and nearly all villagers became her customers. This woman’s secret was that she already had capital to support the enterprise and could get customers because she could afford to wait if debts were not paid immediately. This ensured a good relationship with the community. She also had a long-term relationship with a Chinese patron in the town of Blitar who trusted her to take any goods she needed on credit. Because she
was such a successful businesswoman, some other villagers had attempted to follow in her footsteps. Many failed. The five that survived belonged to families which had some capital.

One day I asked her how to be successful as a warung mracang owner. She said:

"You see, it is not easy running this kind of business. If you are not careful you can easily make a loss, like many of my friends who are now bankrupt. One thing you have to do is be sure to be patient and have friends. Patience here means you cannot expect to see the profits directly in a short period since our business is a credit business. Especially if you are dealing with plantation workers, you really have to know what it means. Actually, they are the source of money, the source of profits. If we can handle them they become faithful customers.

"You probably know, plantation workers rely on warung mracang for their daily necessities. What I do all the time is make friends with all of them, treat them nicely, provide them with the things they need, and then they will always come to me. For example, I always give special consideration to my old and faithful customers. Of course, for those who always postpone and postpone their debts, I have to chase them up. If it is necessary
I will go to the foreman and they will get into real trouble. Sometimes you have to be heartless, otherwise you suffer losses.

"Of course, you need strong capital to back you up. In my case I am lucky, I have a good relationship with certain Chinese grocers in Blitar who trust me with their supplies without paying in advance. Once a week, or every ten days, depending on the stocks, I go to Blitar, hand over the money and pick up more goods. Sometimes I haven’t brought the money, but they already trust me. But once again, that is because I have been a good client over a long time. I only take a small profit, just enough to survive.

"This is the way I run my business. I guess they like me otherwise they would not come to me. They do not like to go to other bakul mracang because they are not so friendly and I was also told that they take too much profit."

For a couple of months I visited her nearly every afternoon during the busy hours when the housewives were beginning to cook.

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43 Later I realized that what she meant by 'not so friendly' was less willing (that is, able) to give credit. Most of the other bakul mracang could not afford to give long-term credit like Ibu Wuk.
after working in the plantations. The shop, located in her kitchen, was seldom empty. People came in and out in a steady stream. Some took rice, some noodles or chillies. Almost no money changed hands but she wrote everything in her notebook.

One Sunday morning I went to Ibu Wuk’s house. As usual all activities were in the kitchen. She was busy cooking sweet glutinous rice for one of her relatives who was going to have a wedding party in Tulungagung. She wore only a bra and sarong, her strong hands busy stirring the mixture in a big pot. Other women present helped with stirring, fuelled the fire or prepared other food. More women sat on the big bamboo bench chatting. All were neighbours around the block, most of whom I knew. The atmosphere was relaxed and very informal. There was no sign that they treated Ibu Wuk with special respect. They spoke ngoko to her and she did to them. I emphasize this because it was quite different from the asymmetry of language and etiquette in dealings between people and the patrons in Pari\textsuperscript{44}. The language spoken in Saratemen defined the relationships as egalitarian.

The warung mracang had become a means of survival but their role in the life of people in Saratemen went further as they merged with certain customary institutions. An interesting development was the role of the warung mracang as ceremonial agents. People in Saratemen who planned to hold ceremonies such as weddings but who had no capital were increasingly approaching the bakul mracang.

\textsuperscript{44}See Chapter 3, page 164.
The bakul mracang would agree to provide the necessities such as rice, noodles, coffee, and sugar. All transactions were on credit, repayable two to five days after the celebration. The money to pay the debts came from the contribution (becekan) of the guests. Any items remaining after the ceremony, would be taken back by the warung mracang, who would deduct their value from the customer's costs.

This was radically different from the practice prevailing during the period of tanah babatan Jepang, when such occasions had been community enterprises. Then the host had been able to rely on kin and neighbours to contribute necessary goods such as rice, chickens, sugar, etc. a few days beforehand and, most importantly, to provide labour for cooking on the day of the ceremony. A combination of the proletarianization of labour (in both the plantation and construction work etc.) and the monetization of the village economy had caused changes in customary social institutions in the community that reflected new strategies among the villagers in their relationships with each other. Services that had been regarded as part of kinship or community membership were becoming increasingly commoditized. Forms of mutual support derived from peasant economic organization were being remodelled on a more business-like basis. This can be seen in changes that had taken place in the peasant institution known as becekan.

Originally, the rationale of this institution was to spread the economic burdens of the host. The custom was a manifestation of the mutual support that characterized a peasant economy in which
cooperation was a community obligation. However, with socio-economic change, this institution had also changed. In this account I will describe the way in which the traditional institution of becekan was being adapted to a more monetary basis to form a new strategy for survival for villagers.

The becekan in Saratemen in 1980 involved money. Most respondents agreed that using money for becekan had started when they were still in the tanah babatan Jepang, but had recently become far more common. One respondent explained that giving money in becekan was more useful than other gifts because the hosts could use the cash as needed. There was no household in Saratemen that held a becekan without asking the warung mracang for a loan.

In Saratemen the becekan was becoming commercialized. The host calculated his costs and benefits in the same way as he would for a business venture. Some used the institution as a vehicle for profit making. The kamitua (village chief) had criticized those people openly by saying that it was becoming an unhealthy business because some people just used non-obligatory ceremonies as an excuse for holding a becekan in order to make a profit. (Examples of such ceremonies included the ‘daughter-in-law picking’ institution described below and circumcisions in Christian families.) To show his disapproval, he refused to attend such occasions.

Sometimes families fell into serious debt because they made a wrong calculation for becekan and spent much more money than they received. The amount of money sponsors receive in becekan depended
on the size of contributions they had previously made. In 1980, males donated an average of Rp.1,000 and females Rp.500. Women usually brought two kilograms of rice as well. It was shameful to give less than had been received and, since every contribution was written down, almost impossible for the details to be forgotten.

I was invited by a Saratemen village official to a becekan that he was holding one Friday evening. The occasion was to introduce a newly-married couple (ngunduh mantu, literally 'to pick a daughter-in-law'). Neither the bride nor groom was resident in Saratemen. He was the host's younger brother who had been married earlier in his parents' home in Kediri. The host explained to me frankly that his reason for holding the party was that since he became a village official 13 years previously, he had held only two parties. He and his wife had no children of their own, so they had no opportunity to hold a wedding ceremony or a similar type of celebration. In the meantime they had both attended dozens of parties and together had probably spent many thousands of rupiah on becekan. So now this was a good opportunity to hold a party and receive becekan in return.

The village official who invited me to his becekan wanted a big ceremony so he planned to celebrate for two days and two nights. He invited about 200 households and expected at least 400 guests. It was a carefully organized event requiring much preparation. He had rented a marquee for additional space, chairs, crockery, kerosene lamps and loudspeakers. He paid Rp.15,000 for three days' hire of this equipment. He had asked the warung
mracang to supply all the food, spices and other provisions. Together, they had already calculated that they needed 250 kilograms of rice, 50 kilograms of glutinous rice and 150 coconuts, plus sugar, coffee, and spices. The total cost was to be Rp.150,000. The *warung* mracang provided all these necessities without payment five days beforehand. All payments were to be settled within five days after the party.

The host had also hired a professional cook, known as a *penyabet*, who was paid in cash to prepare the food. The *penyabet* seemed to be a new role, since there was no equivalent in the other villages. It probably also reflected a more practical and monetary orientation to the task of preparing large quantities of food for public occasions. Had the work been done by villagers on a voluntary basis there probably would have been more waste and higher costs. In the kitchen I watched the *penyabet* who was very busy giving orders to cook rice and grate coconuts. She hardly left the kitchen, where she sat without any interference by the host or his family. She gave instructions about how much rice was to be cooked, how many chickens were to be slaughtered, and so on. Because she was already paid for her skills and her reputation as a *penyabet* was at stake, she had to be really careful in estimating the amount of food to be cooked. The food was not all cooked at the same time, so much depended on her judgement. She had calculated the total number of guests expected at each particular time and cooked the appropriate quantities of food; if she thought the food was running short she would instruct her assistants to
cook more or to slaughter some chickens. The best known penyabet were those who could judge and estimate accurately, so that those conducting becekan would not suffer loss through waste. My respondents told me that a good penyabet never failed in her estimates.

The feast started in the afternoon, at about 2 p.m. The guests did not all arrive at the same time, because the host had already announced that the function would last for two days and two nights. Usually women would arrive in the afternoon and the men in the evening. In the corner near the entrance stood a table where female guests handed in their contributions. A young woman recorded each contribution in a note book and put the money in a locked box. A big basin was provided to collect the gifts of rice. The men’s contributions would be handed in when they were just about to go home. Somebody would record each gift in the note book, putting the money in a separate box.

Male and female guests sat separately, the women inside the house, and the men under the marquee. There were two tables in each place, laden with cakes and sweets and two bunches of bananas (which were apparently just for decoration as I never saw guests touching them). Usually each guest, after sitting for a while and tasting some of the cake and sweets and being served tea or coffee, would move to other chairs behind the table and let the new arrivals sit around the table with the cakes. In the meantime the guests would be served with a bowl of rice and soto soup. When the guests rose to go home, they would be given a plastic bag
containing rice with fried noodles wrapped in a banana leaf and some sweets.

Since the host could not afford to pay for live entertainment, he made do with cassette recordings of music and a wayang performance amplified via loudspeakers on the coconut trees. The bride and the groom sat separately. As this was only a 'daughter-in-law picking' ceremony, there was little ceremony. The groom wore a sarong with a black coat and a traditional peci cap, while the bride wore a hired western-style gown, and sat alone on a "throne" inside the house in an area informally set apart as the women's domain.

On Monday morning I visited the village official again, when I saw him in front of his house with some other men who were busy dismantling the marquee and packing the crockery. They calculated how many glasses and plates were missing or broken as the host had to pay for those. He told me that the party had been a great success, because he had collected Rp.220,000 from the becekan and two hundred kilograms of rice. He said that with that money and rice he could pay his debts to the warung mracang and still have several thousands of rupiah left. In a short time nearly everybody in Saratemen knew that the village official had made a good profit from his party. In this instance it was clear that the becekan was not a ceremony held for community purposes but had become an occasion for individual profit.

The human dimension of the context in which the peasant labourers' of Saratemen developed and applied their strategies for
survival can best be appreciated if we follow an average day in the life of a typical plantation worker. The following description is a composite picture based on my daily field observations over six months.

V. The Plantation Worker's Day:

It was the beginning of March, when the fragrant coffee flowers are in bloom and there is not usually much work in the plantations except for fertilizing and pruning, two jobs regarded as women's work. The hamlet was still hidden in mist but already awake. From some kitchens smoke appeared as people prepared food or boiled water. A few minutes later I heard the first siren from the warehouse to arouse the plantation workers from their sleep. It was 4 a.m. The second siren would sound at 5 a.m. telling the workers to leave their houses. Workers on distant plantations would have to leave earlier.

That morning, I joined some of the workers on their way to work. They passed in a long line, like a procession of ants, becoming longer and longer as more people joined the group. Most were women. Their voices sounded like the distant swarming of bees. It was still dark, and some brought torches to light the road. It was an attractive sight in the early morning. Most women wore a traditional sarong and blouse. They had their belongings (food, betel leaves and so on) in shoulder sashes hanging down to
their waists. Some wore frocks and carried plastic bags. Their clothes were faded and their faces lined. Since they had to leave so early, there was no time to eat breakfast, so they usually brought a cut lunch (known as bổn tro) consisting of rice with soya bean cakes or a gravy made of young papaya, wrapped in banana leaves. They ate their breakfast at work, during a break at 10 a.m. If there was some left over, they would eat at lunch time, but usually they combined breakfast and lunch.

By 6 a.m. when the third siren sound, nearly all workers were inside the plantation’s headquarters. They grouped in front of the open shed. That was the time for workers to queue to register with the duty foremen who would allocate tasks. Some who worked on a piece work basis and who had not completed their previous tasks had to register again to record their attendance, while others who had already completed their tasks waited for new tasks to be allocated by the foremen. Those who worked on a daily basis were allocated tasks according to the needs of the plantation. Often they were employed to replace absentees or to meet particular demands for labour, for example, if the warehouse needed extra manpower. (Absenteeism was chronic among workers.) With this work allocation system the composition of the work group was not constant.

After allocation of work tasks each gang, composed of approximately 30 workers, was escorted by a foreman to its work place. By the time fourth siren sounded at 7 a.m. every worker was already on the job. They worked until 3 p.m. with breaks twice in between under the foremen’s supervision. The last siren sounded
at 3 p.m. to mark the end of the day for the plantation workers. Most, however, stayed inside the plantation for a while, searching for sticks for fire-wood or edible ferns to sell or use themselves. Some people gathered grass for cattle-feed, waiting at the front gate of the plantation for inspection of their loads to make sure they were not taking forbidden items, such as coffee or large pieces of wood. For some, grass also provided additional income. One large sack of grass was worth Rp.500 in 1980. Only those who worked as plantation workers had access to the grass. Outsiders who were professional grass-seekers had to work without pay for three hours or so before being permitted to cut grass. They trimmed the trees and flowers around the headquarters or did odd-jobs.

The women with fire-wood on their backs walked home very slowly under their heavy burdens. Sometimes on the way they stopped at the warung mracang to buy something, such as hot chillies or packets of noodles, for the evening meal. These women had no time to rest as they often had to prepare food. However, usually they cooked a large quantity at once, so there was no need for them to rush home to cooking after returning from work. Moreover, the supply of cooked food was handy for hungry children too.

The evening meal started early, at around 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. but there was no fixed dinner time. Children usually ate earlier. Most people ate only twice a day, although children were sometimes fed more often. The meal was generally eaten in the kitchen. The
evening meal was simple, consisting of a pile of rice and vegetables in season, perhaps cooked with coconut milk and a lot of chillies. Sometimes noodles or soya bean curd were added. People used a lot of chillies in nearly every dish to give flavour and make the dish more appetizing. As one respondent said:

"Because it is spicy, we only need a little to feel satisfied."

Meat or eggs were consumed only rarely on special occasions, such as selametan held by better-off families from neighbouring hamlets. Even on the occasion of a big selametan, people in Saratemen served only quite simple food. Because of the poor diet, especially because of iodine deficiency, many people in Saratemen suffered from enlarged goitre.

After the evening meal, the children often attended a pengajian class to learn religious recitation. The adult men usually sat in their houses or in the open courtyard where friends and neighbours joined them. They sat with their sarong wrapped around them for warmth, smoking kretek (locally-made clove cigarettes), gossiping and chatting. When they returned home, the women and children were already asleep. The children slept on wooden boards covered by woven mats in the main room.

For women workers life was really tough. They had little free time. I hardly saw them pay visits to one another, like the women in Pari or other hamlets. They also had no time to join in women’s activities conducted by the PKK or to form the arisan (a savings co-operative) groups among neighbours, which were very popular in
Pari and in other hamlets in Mara. They had no time even to go to the market. That was one reason why they were very dependent on the warung mracang.

Houses, as noted, were mainly of woven bamboo, built by the villagers themselves with the help of neighbours. The dwelling compound usually had a courtyard in front and a kitchen garden along the side, though sometimes there was no kitchen garden because the land was already occupied by an annexe to the main house or by another house built for married children. Inside, the house was divided into two large separate compartments: a living room and a kitchen. Furnishings were sparse. There was no place in which to display even the simple signs of relative affluence that I had seen in the house of the kamitua of Karanganyar. In general dwellings were bare. One side of one corner of the living room was made into a bedroom or two by separating the space with curtains. This area was used by the women and small children, while the rest of the family slept in the living room on a wooden bench also used as a sitting platform. In the kitchen were the food supplies, fire-wood and sometimes chickens and cows because cattle-stealing was common.45 Usually there was also a separate stall for cattle behind the kitchen.

This was a general picture of life in the hamlet. The routine was repeated monotonously day after day. The only variation occurred on Sunday when the plantation workers and school-children

45 The thieves were not villagers but outsiders who often used trucks to transport the stolen cattle.
had the day off. However, there was always something to be done: laundry, mending, repairs to a torn roof or a broken bench.

VI. Summary:

The peasants of Saratemen were embedded in a plantation-based economic system. They depended on the wages earned from selling their labour to the plantation, supplemented by earnings from other kinds of wage work. Yet, although they were plantation workers they were involved in rural economic activities in ways very similar to the villagers of Pari and Jati. Like peasants in general, they mobilized as many household members as possible to seek work and earn money in a range of economic activities, including growing some crops in their house compounds, raising livestock, and gathering firewood and grass from the plantation. Their strategy for survival was in many ways similar to that of the other peasants but it was different in one important aspect. The peasants of Saratemen were not subsistence producers. They were shoppers, dependent on the warung mracang for their daily needs.

The community of Saratemen was relatively homogeneous both socially and economically. Although it was also relatively new, in that it had only been located on its current site in 1966, the people shared a much longer community experience going back to the time when they farmed the tanah babatan Jepang. They had experienced dramatic changes in their lives, from landless labourers to independent farmers and then back to plantation
labourers again. Their group consciousness was very obvious and strong. They had shared ups and downs in their fortunes. They had fought together to defend their claim to the tanah babatan Jepang and their everyday experiences as plantation workers reinforced their feelings of unity against the plantation. They invoked the ideal of group solidarity in proclaiming their identity as employees of the plantation (orang kebun) rather than as neighbours, kinspeople or affines or as collective dependents of an elite. In the land dispute, all the people expressed their solidarity and equality as orang kebun, even though many of the men were construction workers and some of the women, including the bakul mracang, had other types of employment. Their strategies for survival utilised this solidarity. It gave them the strength and courage to fight against fate.
CHAPTER FIVE

JATI: A FORESTRY-BASED HAMLET

My third study was carried out in Jati hamlet of the village of Wana, district of Sutajayan in the South of Blitar. This was a forestry community where most people depended on the teak estate for their livelihood. They were pembau (see Chapter 2: 77-78). The areas controlled by the state-owned Forestry Enterprise (PERHUTANI) are divided into several forest resorts. Jati was located on one of these, in a forest area (Resort Polisi Hutan, usually known as RPH) covering an area of 1,400 hectares. Jati had been a settlement of scattered and temporary houses close to farms that were on land allocated to the farmers by the Forestry Estate. During and after the Trisula Operation in 1968 (see Chapter 1: 24), villagers were forced to permanently close to the road in compact settlements, often far from their farms.

The forestry worker-peasants of Jati were largely subsistence farmers. In that way they were like the rice growing peasants of Pari. In fact, in many ways they were more dependent on subsistence production than the people of Pari. However, the
farmers of Jati were also employees of a large enterprise, in this case the government Forest Estate, like the peasant labourers on the coffee estate in Saratemen. Their experiences of the recent past were also rather similar to those of the estate workers. They had experienced great changes in their way of life with resettlement. During the war and the unrest that followed, they had gained temporary free access to unoccupied forest lands and then lost them. However, unlike the peasants of Saratemen, they did not seem to have strong feelings of bitterness and loss because the lands were taken from them, even when they were threatened with transmigration. Their attitudes were more like those of the peasants of Pari. The villagers of Jati seemed resigned to their fate.

This chapter contains six sections. Section I introduces the hamlet and describes my first day in the field in Jati. Section IIA describes the physical setting, while Section IIB describes the social setting of the hamlet. Section III presents the villagers' view of their history and Section IV discusses their strategies for survival. The chapter concludes with section V, describing the day-to-day activities of the pembau farmers, and a summary of the chapter in section VI.
I. **Journey to the South:**

I was on the way to Wana in the southern zone. After exploring for quite some time, I had decided that Wana typified southern zone villages. That morning a jeep had brought me from the town of Blitar on a narrow second class road to the centre of Lodoyo district, about 12 kilometres southeast of the town of Blitar. Public transport was relatively easy as far as Lodoyo, which is a junction. From there a regular colt service operated, connecting the districts within the West Lodoyo area. In 1980 the trip from Lodoyo Junction to Wana cost Rp.100, for a distance of about 20 kilometres. Alternatively one could travel to Wana via Suruhwadang district, about 16 kilometres from the town of Blitar. To do that one had to leave Blitar by the southwest colt route connecting the town with Bakung district in the south. This route does not pass Wana, but passengers could alight at Pasiraman village and reach Wana by ojek or by walking about nine kilometres. Although it is closer via Suruhwadang, people preferred to avoid transportation changes by using Lodoyo Junction. In either case, the roads, although sealed in parts, were in poor repair, with many holes full of stagnant water during the rainy season.

The further we drove to the south, the less we saw of wet rice fields, as dry fields began to dominate the view. The jeep travelled fast because there was no traffic, yet we had to be careful of cyclists or groups of cows which sometimes blocked the
road. It was a lovely morning, and the air was fresh after the overnight rain. Here and there I could see wild flowers scattered on the slopes of the hills, yellow, purple and pale orange. The remoteness of the southern zone gives a special accent to these bare, empty hills. There are no yellow paddy fields spreading out; no green, leafy, island-like settlements in the middle of rice fields, as in the north, but this area also has its own special beauty.

I was very impressed by the silence of the morning. By contrast with the north, there were few pedestrians on the road. The people were probably on their farms, somewhere in the hills or the deep valleys. Once in a while we passed a colt creeping up the steep and winding road, filled with passengers and piled with goods on the roof, the back, and even on each side. Public transport was still a problem in the south, despite the improvement when bridges were built to connect with the northern zone. Colts operated daily to and from the town of Blitar to the centre of each district and between districts and villages but not as frequently as in the north, especially at the district to village level.

The road wound past occasional houses, rather than through crowded villages as in the north. The huts were very simple with walls of shabby wood or bamboo. On the outside walls of nearly every house hung earthenware pitchers or bamboo cylinder water containers together with plastic buckets. The villagers in the southern zone, especially those who lived in the hills, had to
collect clean water from springs in the valleys, sometimes far from their settlements. The houses looked newly occupied and simple. The yards were neatly swept. Here and there I saw a few sticks of corn or cassava mixed with dry-upland rice. People in the southern zone grow rice wherever possible, taking advantage of every piece of land to do so and even of their backyards, where they mixed the grain with garden vegetables.

It was interesting to observe signs of change in the area. For a long time the communities of this region had been barely touched by urban influences and had been able to preserve their identity as agricultural communities with a significant degree of self-sufficiency. By 1980 people had become more mobile with the opening-up of the southern zone, and urban influences had steadily intruded. When our jeep had to stop because of engine trouble, I took the opportunity to visit a nearby stall. In addition to daily necessities, the stall also stocked miscellaneous articles from the city, such as sachets of shampoo in a variety of brands, detergents, condensed milk, and instant noodles. Such merchandise was very popular in the villages around Blitar.

We drove slowly as we detoured around a group of cows blocking the road and then past a procession of about fifteen women, carrying firewood on their backs. Both sights were common on the southern road. The women with the firewood moved aside slowly when they heard the vehicle approaching. Their burdens looked heavy. Their bodies were bent double and they could not even turn their
heads. Sometimes these women had to walk for hours to sell the firewood they collected from the forest, either to middlemen or directly to the lime-kilns, which were operated in the south as cottage industries. This economic activity was an important source of supplementary income, as there were few other alternative jobs available to older women.

We reached the small town of Lodoyo. This was the centre of the district and used to be the centre of the southern zone as a whole. The administrative reorganization of 1973 divided the southern zone into two districts, Lodoyo Barat (West Lodoyo) with its headquarters in Sutajayan, and Lodoyo Timur (East Lodoyo) with its headquarters in Suruhwadang. In 1980 the centre of the district, still known as Sutajayan, was moved to a new site about 20 kilometres from the old site, which became known as Sutajayan Lama, or just as Lodoyo.

We did not linger in Sutajayan Lama. South of the town, the scenery was dominated by teak forests. In places the trees looked old and straggling but we could also see young trees, recently planted. Much of the area was forest reserve that had been worked as a government estate. The teak forest was a sign that we were approaching our destination.

There were 16 villages within the Sutajayan district, which had a population of 65,277 (1980) and an area of 178,830 hectares (Map J). Only the camat and his staff had arrived at the recently relocated district headquarters. The other administrative offices
SUTOJAYAN SUB-DISTRICT
(Kecamatan Sutojayan)

- KANIGORO
- TALUN
- WLINGI
- BINANGUN
- SURUHWADANG
- teak forestry estate
- mixed plantation
- PANGGUNGREJO
- BAKUNG
- NGADIPURO
- Indian Ocean

KEY:
- sub-district boundary
- village boundary
- plantation
- forest
- scrub
- river
- coastline

Research village of Wana
Research hamlet of Jati (approx, position only)
Research village boundary

Map J: Sutojayan subdistrict

were still located on the old site. I had already met the camat on several occasions and had been officially introduced to some of his staff. On one occasion I told him that I wanted to work in one of his villages, probably Wana. He suggested I might choose another village and I had assured him that my choice of Wana was tentative and could easily be changed if it did not fit my purpose. However, for the time being, I told him, I was happy with Wana since it seemed likely to provide good material for my study. The data collected from the district showed that the majority of people in Wana gained their livelihood from the government teak estate, and I was looking for a community whose economy was based on forestry. Later I was told that the camat’s hesitation about my choice of Wana related to the extraordinary personality of the lurah there.

The jeep which brought me from Blitar approached a fork in the road. The signpost indicated a left turn to the villages of Wana and Ngeni or straight ahead to the district office, which was located a few metres from the junction. I decided to go to the district office first, to greet the camat and to inform him that I was on my way to Wana to meet the lurah. It was already 11 a.m. I had missed the camat, who had gone to Blitar for a meeting, but I met other staff in the district office. It had been arranged that while I worked in the village, I would stay in one of the rooms in the district office, but I still wanted to assess the situation before deciding on this. I stayed only a few minutes in
the district office before continuing west on the way to Wana village headquarters in the same direction as Ngeni, another of the villages in the Sutajayan district.

Ngeni was located at the end of the asphalt road, where public transport also ended. Wana lay between the centre of the district and Ngeni Village. I was told that the village office and the house of the lurah were about 3 kilometres from the district, on an uphill climb before the road turned slightly downhill to Ngeni. I did not see a colt anywhere along the road, as would be common in the north, yet this was the only main road connecting the area to the outside world. Only three or four colts daily travelled through Wana along the route from Lodoyo district to Ngeni, and they were always crowded. Not far from the fork, on the left, I saw a group of simple huts. It was a local market. Usually there were traders in front of the market, waiting for transport to Lodoyo district or to the town of Blitar so they could sell cassava, firewood or charcoal but on this morning I did not see any traders or customers because the market had started early and was already finished. As in many other villages, the market was held every five days, according to the Javanese calendar.

Along the roadside, houses were built in rows typical of settlements in the south. They were simple but neat. During the Trisula Operation in 1968, when the army wiped out the remaining communist followers who hid in this area, villagers had been forced to move to a location accessible to the road, no matter who owned
the land. However, when the political situation returned to normal, the villagers then had to negotiate with the owner of the land on which they had been forced to reside. The arrangements varied; some bought the land, others exchanged it for their previous land, and some were still negotiating a settlement.

It was not difficult to find the village office. From a distance I could see a group of buildings on the left side of the road with several notice boards in front. This had to be the krajan, the centre of the village. I stopped in front of the village office, and a young man in a white uniform quickly came up to me. I introduced myself and asked for the lurah or the carik. I was very surprised when he introduced himself as the carik. He looked too young, like a school boy, in his white uniform and bare feet, and not like a village official at all. The lurah was not in the office, but in his home, opposite; he sat on the verandah with some visitors.

I waited. It was an attractive house, cool and pleasant with air flowing freely in and out. In some parts it was shaded by bamboo blinds. The floor was cement. A glass door separated the verandah from the rest of the house. It was certainly a contrast to the bamboo houses I saw along the road.

Suddenly I sensed that the lurah had raised his voice. I did not really hear clearly and I did not know whether he was addressing me or the two guests, as his eyes did not turn towards me. I was uncertain and looked at the carik who signalled, so I
approached the lurah. He still did not look at me, but said in Indonesian:

"Have a seat!"

I formally introduced myself and explained the reason for my visit. He then briefed me about the poor condition of his village, especially compared with the villages in the north. He continued to talk about his successes in leading and guiding his people. He said it was 37 years since he became a pamong, so he knew his people very well. I became more interested in what he was saying when he began to talk about Jati, one of Wana's seven hamlets. He said it had just recently been attached to Wana, in 1973. It had been established as a settlement in 1968 when, following the Trisula Operation, a group of forest workers who used to live scattered around the teak forest were resettled close together on a permanent site. They still worked as teak forest workers.

Since I was looking for a forestry community, I later suggested that I would probably choose Jati as my study area. But the lurah's response was not encouraging. He explained that Jati would cease to exist because the residents were to be transmigrated. He showed me Wana on a map. A disc of blank paper concealed the location of Jati.

"See, there is no more Jati," he said.

However, I did choose Jati as my third study community.
Research village of Wana
(Kelurahan Wana)

KEY:
- village headquarters
- school
- mosque
- graveyard
- village boundary
- hamlet boundary
- 1-7 number of hamlets with associated dry field cultivation area
- teak forestry estate
- road
- subsidiary road

ANU 1984 after Peta Desa Kecamatan Subagyan

Map K: Research village of Wana
II. Jati Hamlet:

IIA. The Land Beyond:

Wana village, of which the study hamlet of Jati was a part, is located in Southern Blitar. Wana is in the dry limestone hills where the poor quality of the soil and scarcity of water make agriculture difficult. The community was dependent on the surrounding teak forests for its livelihood. Public transport in 1980 was limited to local ojek and a few minibuses that passed Wana on their way to Ngeni district, where public transport ended. Within the village of Wana facilities were equally limited. A tiny market, held once every five days, five warung mracang, one also serving coffee and simple meals, two larger warung, two primary schools, the village office and the house of the lurah were scattered along the main road. The two schools, the village office and the lurah’s house were more substantial buildings, compared with the simple houses of the villagers. About a kilometre away, the new and modern brick buildings of the new district headquarters, still called Sutajayan after its original location, symbolized the larger and richer world outside the village. A large meeting hall, office and a house for the camat had been built. However, the facilities of the modern world were still far from the village. The post office, junior and senior secondary

\[1\] Both were Sekolah Inpres, built with central government funds.
schools, the health centre and the nearest doctor were all located 20 kilometres away in Sutajayan Lama.

About three kilometres before the main road reached the village of Wana, a small dirt track led off into the teak forests about a kilometre to the hamlet of Jati. The hamlet was wholly located on the teak estate's land and was surrounded by the teak trees. Jati, was distinctive for several reasons. The area formed a natural as well as a cultural unit strongly oriented towards the teak estate economy. The settlement was sited on 25 hectares of flat land with paths between the rows of houses and surrounded by a vast teak forest area covering 1,400 hectares (Map K). It was part of the forest reserves. Fields of young teak alternating with corn and cassava were a common sight. Yet Jati was by no means isolated from the six other hamlets of Wana village because it was only a kilometre from the main road from Lodoyo to Ngeni. All the other hamlets of Wana could be reached from this road.

The current site of Jati was new. During the Trisula Operation of 1968, all the households scattered throughout the forest land and far from the road had to move to a location which could be easily reached and controlled by the army. Each household received approximately 0.25 hectares of land, of which the major portion was for house site and kitchen garden. Since then Jati had become like many other hamlets - a cluster of dwellings surrounded by unfenced land. The houses were tightly grouped to form a well-defined concentration, roughly the shape of a rectangle. They
were very simple and similar to one another. Most were made of wood and thatch, with an earth floor. Although varying in size, the interior was usually divided into three parts. The open front served as a living area by day and a sleeping area at night. In the middle was usually a bedroom for adults and small children. Most houses had only one bedroom. The kitchen was located at the rear. It also served as a rice store and as a place to protect cattle from theft at night. The interior of the houses was almost bare, except for a set of chairs and some benches. Some houses had wooden cupboards with clear glass doors. Inside on display were unused kitchen utensils, plastic flowers, family photos and cloth. Only one house was built of brick as well as wood, and that belonged to the family which operated a warung mracang. The house of the only foreman from the estate who lived in the hamlet was also bigger and made of better materials.

Water was a problem because there was only one spring near the settlement. People used this water for cooking, drinking, washing and other daily needs. In a dry season they frequently had to fetch water from a source a few kilometres away in the valley, because the spring had dried up. Their crops depended on rainfall.

The children attended a village school beside the road about half a kilometre from Jati. After grade three they had to travel to Wana Public School, about 2 kilometres away. If they continued to secondary school they had to travel to Lodoyo district, about
20 kilometres away. In 1980 there was only one boy attending the Junior High School in Lodoyo District and he had to bicycle back and forth everyday. It was only when they moved to the current site, that people had easy access to elementary schooling. When they still lived scattered on their baon land few children attended school, not only because of the poor facilities but also because the young were needed to help in the household and on the farms. Even in 1980 during harvest time, for example, the school was only half full because the children helped their parents in the fields. I was not able to obtain reliable records on literacy for Jati but I met many children of school age who did not attend school. The teacher said that few continued after grade three: the education level was very low.

The community was divided into three neighbourhood units (Rukun Tetangga), each of about 30 households. These had no clear boundaries and were not necessarily based on personal links, the neighbourhood unit being merely an administrative entity. Informal neighbourhood groups did exist for cooperative work in planting and harvesting. Such groups were mobilized on a local basis within the hamlet.

In 1980 the population of Jati was 418 persons, composed of 206 males and 212 females (Table 5.1). They formed 97 households, with an average of 4.3 persons per household. Including house compounds and baon land, which was around 14 hectares, the population density in Jati was high, at 1,071 per square kilometre.
This pressure on land was especially acute considering that the land belonged to the Estate. Only three Jati residents had permanent titles to their land in 1980. These were the owner of the warung mracang, who had just purchased land in a neighbouring village, the head of the hamlet (kamitua), and a foreman.

The numbers in the households ranged from one to ten members. The single-person households, composed of 10 widows and 3 widowers, together with nuclear families accounted for 67 households or 69 per cent of the total. The remaining 30 households were extended families. The relatively large number of extended households was indicative of the severe shortage of housing in Jati. Unless they could afford to buy land outside Jati - and most could not - the people of Jati were forced to live with relatives. As the amount of land in Jati for the 97 households was fixed and since all land belonged to the Forestry Estate, Jati residents had no right to divide, inherit or sell land. The most common way to solve the space problem was to add a room or annex to an existing dwelling. However, this meant that the area of compound available for growing their subsistence crops would be reduced. During the 12 years after the move to the current site (in 1968), several new families had been created as a result of marriage. In 1980 there were only 6 of these new families left, all newly married couples living with the parents of either spouse or with other relatives. The other new families had emigrated or moved to the spouse’s village, if the marriage was with an outsider. About one-third of families living
in Jati had at least one member of the immediate family, usually a son or daughter, living outside the village.

Marriage with outsiders was, in fact, quite common and the land shortage appeared to affect marriage patterns in Jati. Although marriage within the community was still common, young girls from Jati often married outsiders. The opportunity for youngsters to meet partners from outside had also increased with greater access to the city. In Jati, as throughout the southern zone in general, it was difficult for both males and females to find jobs. In contrast with the northern zone, there was little opportunity in the surrounding areas for work as daily wage labourers or as petty traders. Most job seekers looked for wage employment outside Jati as boro. Many young girls sought work in the towns, either as maid servants or factory workers. Several of the young women I talked to said that their friends had left the village to seek jobs in the cities because of there were no jobs in the village. They were often helped to find urban jobs by their friends who were already working in the towns. However, many of these young girls returned to marry and lived in the village with their parents or those of their husbands after marriage, at least for a time.

The pressures for young men were different. Males aged 15-19 were potential manpower and were needed to help their parents in

\[2\text{See below, pages 300, 302, 322 and 331-332.}\]

\[3\text{Daily-paid wage labourers.}\]
the fields. However, they had no way of obtaining land for themselves. When a young man without land wanted to marry, he would have to seek work outside the village in order to support his new family. These two patterns of migration affected the female and male age distributions differently, as shown in Table 5.1. The proportion of the female population in the age group 15-19 dropped markedly while the proportion of the male population dropped only in the older age group, 20-24 (Table 5.1).

In 1980 there were 311 persons or 74 percent of the total population in the working age group (aged between 10 and 64). It can be assumed that these people were economically active, although in practice there was no marked age difference between those who worked and those who did not. As in other peasant communities, almost everyone, even children younger than 10 and old people, worked. Girls began their working lives earlier than boys, with household duties at the age of six or seven. It was common to see small children helping with light jobs in the household or in the fields, such as collecting firewood and herding cattle.

The hamlet records classified all 97 households as peasant farmers (petani). They were all pembau who worked the estate land on a semi-sharecropping basis (see Chapter 2: 76-78). Almost all households had additional occupations: two owned warung mracang, one ran a food stall, and two made charcoal (the number of charcoal makers varied from time to time, but there were two families who always made charcoal as their additional economic activity). In
Table 5.1

Population by Age and Sex, Jati, 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male Number</th>
<th>Male Percent</th>
<th>Female Number</th>
<th>Female Percent</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Total Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-64</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 +</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
<td>212</td>
<td></td>
<td>418</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

one household there was a blacksmith, and in another, an estate foreman. Two village officials, the head of the hamlet (kamitua) and the village guard (jogoboyo), also lived in Jati. Most residents were involved in various kinds of casual labour, such as agricultural wage labour, labouring in the kaolin mine and rencekan (collecting firewood), etc.

   However, the basis of the hamlet economy was cultivation of the bau land as pembau under the mbaon system. The system works as follows. When the Forestry Estate opens a new area for planting, the villagers, individually or as a group, are informed by the foreman through the village office. Interested villagers would register their names. The foreman would then bring all applications to the forestry officer, who distributed allotments according to the amount of land to be opened and the number of applicants. The minimum area of bau land that one household could hold was 0.25 hectares. Each applicant received a note (kepek) recording the location and size of the allotment. Successful applicants, supervised by the foreman, marked out their new bau land by erecting stakes at each corner and a notice with their names on a pole. The contract, consisting of a statement of rights and obligations between the Estate and the villagers, is signed or finger stamped by both parties. The Forestry Estate agrees to provide the teak seedlings and the land. The villagers agree to plant and tend the young trees and are permitted to plant their own

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4 See chapter 2, page 85 and footnote 38.
crops between the seedlings for approximately two years, so long as they do not disturb the seedlings. At the end of the two years, the villagers move to new allotments allocated under similar arrangements. The baon cannot be transferred to third parties and the pembau is paid a stipend, which in 1980 amounted to Rp.1,200 per hectare of land worked, in two instalments, payable per contract signed.

The villagers of Jati hamlet thus had access to two kinds of land: their house compounds, that is the 0.25 hectares allocated to them by the Estate when they first moved to the site, and additional baon. The minimum area of baon land allowed per household was 0.25 hectares. In 1980 there were 14 hectares of baon land farmed by 50 households in lots ranging from 0.25 hectares to 2 hectares. Some people did not farm baon.

IIB. The Community:

Two factors influenced the social structure of the community of Jati: occupational status and kinship. Access to land and wealth in other forms were not very important, largely because most families had similar access to land and their were few differences in wealth. As in Saratemen, work relations were a key element in social structure. Access to the outside world was an important influence on the community as a whole, although it was less
important for relations within the community. When, in 1968, the road was constructed and the settlement relocated the community started to open up to the outside world. Increasing numbers of traders came to Jati to do business, linger a while and then depart. Officials came and, for awhile, paid much attention to the villagers. Improved communications and transportation gave the people of Jati an opportunity to make a day trip to Blitar. New patterns of social relations, new activities and new perceptions became possible. Modern consumer goods trickled into the household budgets of Jati. Bamboo pitchers and clay water containers were replaced by brightly-coloured plastic buckets. People yearned to visit Blitar, go to the movies or own a tape recorder.

Yet, I found the villagers of Jati to be people of very simple appearance, habits and views of life. Their affairs were based largely on personal relationships and social organization was relatively simple. Although no longer as isolated as before, they still had little contact with outsiders. There was almost no differentiation into poor and the rich. Only a few households which supplemented their work as pembau with other occupations were better off than their neighbours and even then the differences were small. There was little evidence of social stratification.

Only three households owned land, all of it outside Jati. There were few of the usual indicators of wealth. There was not one house in Jati that would be described as ‘good’ by outside standards. It was true that the owner of the warung mracang had
a better house and some land of his own outside the hamlet, but in daily life he seemed no different and was treated no differently that his neighbours. Cattle were one indicator of wealth and a customary form of investment. By that measure, the owner of the warung mracang could be considered better-off since he owned nine cows and five goats. He also operated two hectares of baon and his wife operated the warung mracang. Yet, although this family was comparatively better-off, there was little in their life style to suggest it.

As in Pari, there were families that were considered to be descendants of the original founders of the hamlet. However, these twenty cakal-bakal families in Jati seemed to have no special social position or role. All but two had lost their land and all were pembau, like everyone else. Thus their inherited position as cakal-bakal had no social impact and, in contrast to the cakal-bakal of Pari, they seemed to share no sense of common identity. Their sense of identity was with the other villagers as a whole, rather than as a special sub-set.

The leader of the community, the kamitua, was a member of one of these families. He was appointed by the government at the time of resettlement. The only other pamong, the bayan, was from a non-founder family. Both were accepted by the community, although while I was in the hamlet there was criticism of them, especially
of the kamitua in relation to the distribution of the bau land. Some villagers, including the kamitua himself, had better bau land than others. This was thought to be due to his good relationship with the mandor of the Forestry Estate, who was responsible for allocating the land. However, despite these stories, he was regarded as kind and helpful.

An important informal leader in the community was the old grand-uncle of the kamitua, who was also a key informant for my study. He was the oldest resident of the hamlet and the only person still alive who had been an eye-witness to their original dispossession when the village had been transmigrated to Lampung. When I asked the kamitua about the history of Jati, he immediately took me to Pak Dipo and told me that he often consulted him for advice. Pak Dipo’s age and experience both added to his status.

Another important person in the community was the only foreman of the Forestry Estate who lived in the hamlet. However, he was feared rather than respected, largely because of his role as the ‘long arm’ of the Estate. Although he had a house in Jati, his family lived in another village so personal contact between him and the villagers was limited. People looked at him as someone who issued instructions, rather than as someone they could go to for advice.

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5Notice of distribution was given through the village office. See above, page 292.
The third key member of the hamlet community was the owner of the warung mracang. With a little capital and a keen business sense, he had been able to exploit the economic opportunities opened up with the new road in 1968 and was better-off that the other villagers. He also acted as a middleman in channelling the villager’s produce to market. This made people to some extent dependent on him. It also gave him another kind of social recognition because outside traders would gather at his warung. Through the contacts he made in this way he was seen as a man with good outside connections. Although this man was in a similar position to that of Ibu Wuk in Saratemen or, on a much smaller scale, of Ibu Mur of Pari, I did not see any element of patronage in his relationship with the rest of the hamlet. Many villagers were economically dependent on him to gain access to a market for their products but this did not lead to any particular social obligations between him and the villagers. Socially he was treated as just another member of the community.

Although personal differences like these affected social status, the most important factor influencing social relationships in Jati was the fact that almost all members of the community had the same occupation, that is as pembau. They were all dependent on the Forestry Estate, which for most villagers provided the only access to cultivated land. This relationship differed from that between the peasant labourers of Saratemen and the plantation because the peasants of Jati were still peasant farmers who had not
lost their right to cultivate the land. Also, there was little
direct contact between the peasants of Jati and the Estate, except
through the small Estate staff, consisting of the mandor, five
foremen, who supervised the pembau in the field, and two security
guards.

This gave the foremen a position of power. The foreman who
controlled the lands operated by the peasants of Jati could
manipulate the situation to his own advantage by, for example,
giving more information to some pembau than to others. One
respondent said that he did not know how much he should receive for
the stipend\textsuperscript{6} because sometimes he received more and sometimes less.
When he asked the foreman he was told that the money was some kind
of \textit{wang rokok} (literally, cigarette money), which implied that it
was too small a sum to bother about. Another respondent said that
those with connections to the foreman could get better land or land
in a good position. This was important because the bau land could
be far from the hamlet. Some, such as Pak Karjan, could even
transfer their land to third parties\textsuperscript{7} and sharecrop their bau land
to others. Because Pak Karjan's land was in a good location,
people were always willing to sharecrop it.

\textsuperscript{6}See above, p.293.

\textsuperscript{7}This was strictly forbidden in the contract with the Forestry
Estate. The practice was not widespread but during 1980 the market
price for one hectare of accessible \textit{baon} land that could be worked
for two seasons was between Rp.40,000 and Rp.60,000.
Such things created resentment among the pembau. However, the relationship between the pembau and the Forestry Estate was not a direct master-worker relation; the peasants retained a measure of independence and individuality. Because they cultivated the baon, they were not nearly as dependent on bakul mracang as their counter-parts in Saratemen. Hence the opportunities for creating and expressing antagonism were more limited than on the coffee plantation. Furthermore, the pembau of Jati felt that the Estate 'helped' them by giving them access to land. The right to cultivate the land was the main benefit of their employment with the Estate. However, their relationship with the Estate was insecure. When there was no more land to be planted with seedlings, the Estate would have no further use for pembau. This contrasted with the position of the labourers on the coffee plantation, who would always be needed to tend the plants and to harvest the coffee. The villagers of Jati knew that they had no future on the Forestry Estate and yet they also had no weapons to defend themselves.

In such an insecure position, the role of kinship in providing support was important. One-third of households were extended, largely due to the shortage of land. These were usually made up of the nuclear family plus married children and other kin, such as grandparents, uncles and aunts, who had no immediate relatives in the village. Within these family units ties were very close. Family members usually helped each other in work on the bau land
and in making ladon (cultivated land in the compound). Villagers needed manpower to cultivate subsistence crops. Family units were one way of getting sufficient labour. Male labour was especially needed for the hard work of hoeing. One respondent told me that it did not matter if his daughters left to work in the towns, but it would be difficult if his sons left.

However, marriage patterns were changing in ways that reduced the importance of kin ties. The phrase 'ngumpulahe balung pecah', meaning to gather scattered bones, suggests that marriage preference in the past was among distant relatives who, perhaps because of their previously scattered settlement pattern, had little contact with each other. Marriage in that situation often renewed old family relationships that had been broken by physical separation. However, many respondents in 1980 claimed that marrying non-kin outsiders was becoming more common. While I was in the hamlet two marriages, both between hamlet girls and outsiders, took place.

Kinship ties in Jati were confined to the family unit. Kin-type ties did not extend to neighbours, as in Saratemen. However, social relations within the reciprocal working group known as the sayan\(^8\) were very important. The members of these groups were not necessarily relatives, or even close neighbours. Membership

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\(^8\)The term sayan was also used in Pari but had largely been replaced by the term gotong royong. Both were applied to a wide range of mutual assistance tasks. In Jati the term sayan was used only for specific tasks associated with land cultivation.
depended on personal relationships between people who could work together for their mutual benefit. All members of a group were from the hamlet. No outsiders were included in a sayan from Jati. Respondents said that these groups were especially important in community life before the resettlement of 1968. Then individual households were scattered on their bau land, often isolated from their neighbours. The sayan groups were essential to gather together sufficient labour for the task of breaking up the hard soil of new land for cultivation and for harvesting. In both cases the work had to be finished quickly. The land had to be cultivated so that seeds could be planted before the rains and the harvest had to be gathered before it was eaten by wild pigs or birds, or spoiled by the rain. As subsistence producers, the people could not afford to hire labour so the sayan work groups were essential.

After 1968, the households were already gathered in one place but their bau land was now scattered, some as far 3-4 kilometres (according to the respondents' estimates) from their houses. Villagers said that the sayan groups were weaker after the move. As the hamlet economy opened up, households had more varied interests. Some people worked at other kinds of jobs, such as on the kaolin mine or gecik (removing peanuts from the shells or corn from the stalks), where cooperative activities were not needed. Although the formal institution of sayan for agricultural production was weakened, the villagers still cooperated with each other. More informal arrangements, usually between neighbours,
were used to solve the problem of insufficient labour. I often saw neighbours working together to prepare compound land for cultivation. Neighbours also helped each other on occasions such as weddings or building a new house. However, respondents felt that this kind of cooperation had also weakened. For example, one respondent said that now, when you wanted to build a new house, you would have to ask people to come and help. Before, people would just see that you were starting work and come without being asked.

The whole process of community change in Jati can be described as a kind of erosion. The economic base of the community had been eroded to the point where the pembau had become redundant and the village was threatened with transmigration. Where once they had all shared a common occupation, by 1980 approximately one-third of hamlet households did not work as pembau, relying only on the cultivation of their compounds, supplemented by earnings from other jobs. The social basis of community unity had also been damaged. The strength of the extended family was being worn down by pressures that pushed youngsters to seek work outside the hamlet and encouraged them to marry unrelated outsiders. The traditional mutual assistance organization, the sayan work groups, were increasingly difficult to arrange. The informal arrangements that replaced them were more restricted in membership and less effective. They had no traditional patrons to protect them and no new patrons had emerged from the changes they had experienced after
resettlement. They lacked the solidarity to sustain defiant radicals who might fight for their interests. They had become defenceless victims of change.

III. The History: The Village View of its Past:

In describing the history of Jati, it is necessary to distinguish between the old Jati and the present Jati. Not only do they share the same name, but the history of the Jati of 1980 was a continuation of the history of the old Jati. The story of old Jati ended with the reactivation of forestry under the Colonial Government and the resettlement of the entire village to Lampung. Ironically, it seems that this story will be repeated with the completion of planting in the near future and the transmigration of new Jati. I will present this somewhat circular tale in chronological order, as it was told to me by the people of new Jati.

Oral tradition substitutes for a written history of Jati. One story tells that the village was founded by a noble from Madiun called Tirtokusumo, also known as Embah Demang, who fled to the wilderness of the southern zone. It was not clear when or why he had to escape. One version suggested that he wanted to escape from the authorities; another, that he wanted to meditate to be sakti or mystically powerful. In any event he was well-known as a
generous and charismatic leader. The story also tells that the first settlement was so remote that in the beginning it included bandits who had become fugitives like the founder and his followers.

It is most likely that the first settlers came from the poorer, established areas near Jogyakarta and Surakarta, seeking land and a better life. A number of people in Jati still mention places in these areas as the origins of their ancestors. The settlers were warmly welcomed by Tirtokusumo, who encouraged new-comers to bring their relatives. Local tradition records that the first settlement was in the hamlet Ngekol, which later became the centre of the village of Jati. With further arrivals, the settlement grew and more new settlements were added as the forest was cleared. They became farmers. Eventually six hamlets formed the village of Jati: Ngekol, Jati, Kelangkapan, Cerme, Kralan, and Basongan. Basongan was the most recent hamlet, founded around the end of the Nineteenth century.

One villager still remembered the development of this hamlet. Dipo, an old man aged 85, who was one of the informal leaders of the community, came from Ngembul village in Jogyakarta and was among the founders of Basongan hamlet. This is his story as I recorded it:

"I was a small boy, but I can still remember when one day my mother, who was a widow, and my grandparents
with other villagers, packed our belongings and left our village. We walked seven days and seven nights and arrived in Basongan village. It was not Basongan in the south, but another Basongan which was located in the north [Blitar]. In the old days we used to name our new settlement after our old village, so Basongan in the south was named after Basongan in the north, probably just for remembrance.

"I was not quite sure why we left north Basongan, but later I was told by my grandfather that since we were magersari in the north, we had no land of our own, but we would get land of our own if we moved to the south, for there was still plenty there. We had some relatives who were already in the south and they came and visited us in the north from time to time. They used to tell us about their leader named Embah Demang, and they also said that their leader invited us to come if we were interested in clearing the forest in the south, where there was still plenty of empty land. This was why we moved to the south.

"Basongan became the sixth hamlet in the village of Jati. So I was brought up in and followed the development of Basongan. I married one of Embah Demang’s
grand-daughters. Actually, Embah Demang had no children of his own but adopted one of his nephews who succeeded him as the lurah of Jati village after Embah Demang died."

Local history has it that the village of Jati became large and powerful under Tirtokusumo. He was respected and known as having magic powers, including the ability to catch tigers with his bare hands. He was appointed by other local leaders as a palang (the leader of several villages). In his new role Tirtokusumo was known as Demang and, because of his mystical capability, was commonly called Embah Demang. At the time of his death there were seven villages under his authority, including the village of Wana.

After his death, there was no such prestigious leader in Jati. Five other lurah ruled in succession after Embah Demang until a critical event occurred in 1939, when the population of the seven villages in the area, including Jati, were directed to move to Lampung, in South Sumatra. The population of the whole village including the village staff had to move. The people called this

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9 The present lurah tries to impress people by saying that he inherits Embah Demang’s magic power and that he also has a mystical "white tiger."
10 The word embah, literally 'grandfather,' is an honorific form of address to refer to a man, not necessarily old, of mystical repute.
event **jebol payung**, literally 'to pull up the umbrella', that is to uproot everything.\(^{11}\)

The move had started in 1932 when the Colonial government re-activated the forest regeneration and colonization programme, especially in the poorer areas, including the limestone region in the south of Central and East Java. That programme still lives in the people's memories. At first the people of Jati refused to move. Their hesitation is clear in the story of Dipo, who experienced the event and told me this story one night:

"Several times **ndara Wedana** (the district head) had told us to move to Lampung, but the villagers were still hesitant, and did not want to move. That morning, again he addressed us and was telling us about the promised land, a prosperous bright new village in **tanah sabrang** (the outer islands), making a fresh start in life, away from the worries, droughts, unreliable harvests, unreliable soil and so on. Finally we were forced to move.

That morning **ndara Wedana** asked us, the villagers, to face him one by one. He sat far away from the

\(^{11}\)In his book *Dari Kolonisasi ke Transmigrasi 1905-1955* (From Colonization to Transmigration 1905-1955), Amral Sjamsu mentions this event. There were 27,826 persons in 7,461 households who were transmigrated to Lampung in 1939, including 1,984 persons in 411 households from Jati (Sjamsu 1960: 8).
villagers though, so when he called a name, one of the village officials had to repeat it again, otherwise we did not hear him. When it came to my turn, as far as I remember he told me:

"You have to move to Lampung. Over there the land is fertile."

I answered him:

"No, please, I will stay here. The soil here is also fertile."

He was very angry. I only remember his voice was like a thunderstorm. He scolded me:

"Go away! Go away, crazy dog!"

A village official pulled me by the shoulder. There were some other people who refused to move. Some were evacuated to other villages, especially those who had relatives in other villages which were not subject to jebol payung. After all we are only peasants. Our father's father had lived on this land and farmed it. For us, whatever its condition, this is the land on which we can rely. We were very sad. It was already noon when the meeting ended. Before the meeting ended, there were some announcements, but I did not hear them anymore. I was just pondering what I was going to do.
We departed from the meeting but still continued talking in a group, discussing what we had heard, about leaving our village. Everybody felt upset, and depressed. There were some pros and cons, but most of us just heard and did not know what to do. I was included in the group against the plan from the beginning. Some of my friends who refused to move finally had to surrender since they had no alternative. Like some other families who refused to move to Lampung, I had relatives in other villages, so we simply evacuated and stayed with them. I myself moved to Pandanarum village which was not subject to jebol payung.

It was Rebo Kliwon,\textsuperscript{12} the year was 1939. The people were busy packing their belongings. They just left their houses, their coconut trees, and some of them even left their chickens. I saw all the activities from a distance, because I was afraid they would catch me and send me to Lampung. I peeped from the bushes with some other friends who refused to move. I saw my mother. She was among them, with my two brothers. I saw that my mother was crying. I have never seen my mother since. She died in Lampung.

\textsuperscript{12}The day Rebo Kliwon is Wednesday (Rebo) which coincides with the day of Kliwon in the Javanese five-day week.
They departed in the morning at about 4 a.m. It was raining, yet they had to walk to the town of Blitar carrying their small children, their bundles and their belongings. I heard that from Blitar they were transported by train to Betawi (the old name of Jakarta) and then shipped to Lampung. Two days after they departed, I returned to my old village. It was guarded by two foremen. I was curious. I peeped from the bushes. It was a dead village. Here and there I saw chickens walking around. I saw cassava plants still in my backyard. It was very sad seeing my old house, remembering my mother and other relatives.

I just sat there, pondering my plight. Only yesterday I still had a house and land of my own, but now it was finished. I had to live with somebody else. If I was lucky I might become magersari on somebody’s land or at least for the relatives I lived with. But they were also poor, and only had a small piece of land. I do not know how long I sat pondering like that, when suddenly a foreman appeared from behind me. To my surprise he did not chase me nor was he angry with me. Instead he offered me a job as forest worker. He told me that the area would be cleared to the ground and
planted with teak. Some workers were needed to plant and look after the teak. I did not say yes or no at that time, but later on I joined them. Some fellow villagers joined me too, and many also from other surrounding villages."

Not very long after the inhabitants were moved, Jati and the surrounding areas affected by the so-called jebol payung were returned to teak forest under the management of the Forestry Service. These villagers and others who did not go to Lampung were allowed by the Forestry Service to farm the land again but under specific conditions which did not mean ownership. Under the new system, villagers were allotted a piece of land on which they had to look after the Forestry Service teak but they could also plant their own crops in between the young teak trees. They moved to a new location when the teak grew and when there was no place left for them to cultivate their own crops. The allotment of new land for cultivation was controlled by the Forestry Service. The work was known as mbaon,13 and the worker a pembau. The pembau farmed the land but were, at the same time, employees of the Forestry Service. The arrangement benefited both parties, providing the Forestry Estate with cheap labour while it gave the peasants, most of whom were landless or near-landless, access to land.

13See chapter 2, page 85.
Between 1942 and 1950, there was lawlessness and destructive exploitation in the forests. During the Japanese Occupation the management of the Forestry Service became Japanese; forests were neglected, and illegal timber-felling was widespread. During the five years following the revolutionary period the forest became a guerrilla defence base providing food, fuel, and other necessities. It suffered further damage as a result of occupation by squatters during the war and in the early 1950s, and large areas were deforested (Sewandono 1947: 90-97). In Jati the pembau, who had previously been moved from site to site by the Forestry Service, gradually established their own cultivated land on a permanent basis. Outsiders were even encouraged to come and work the forest reserves, as well as the estate land. Even in the early 1950s, after the Round Table Conference, when it was agreed that the Indonesian Government would resume control of the forest reserves as well as the estate land, the squatters continued to occupy some areas. They received support from the PKI, which used this as a political issue in the 1955 General Election. For years this land was the subject of dispute. When, in 1959, the Indonesian government proclaimed the Emergency, occupation by squatters was stopped.

Dipo continued his version of what happened during and after the war. I recorded it as follows:
"During the Japanese occupation it was miserable. Famine, disease was everywhere. We lacked food and were subject to crop failures. We men, in the villages, were forced by the Japanese to become romusha (forced labourers). Together with other villagers from other parts we were sent to the south coast to build a harbour. Many of us died from hunger and malaria or both.

We did not work as pembau at that time; instead, there was plenty of land we could clear. There were no foremen or forestry officials, so we were free to farm any part of the land. I myself cleared about one hectare. For more than that, there was not enough manpower. I think one hectare of land is just enough for one family to cultivate and to live on. More and more people came to this area and cleared the forest, until they were told that it was illegal. It was the year of "PKM 10"¹⁴ just about after Independence, if I am not mistaken. Then I became pembau again, because I had no papers to prove that it was my land. The land returned to the Forestry Service, but I continued to live on what was previously my own land.

¹⁴Probably what he meant by PKM was Penguasa Komando Militer, 'the Military Command Authority.' After Indonesia declared the state of Emergency in 1959, East Java and other provinces were under military command.
After gegeran PKI, we had to move to this land. Each household received 0.25 hectares, provided by the Estate. I do not know, but I have heard that they plan to transmigrate us again. Our land has been measured and we were asked to plant acacia and mahogany in our yards which left only enough land for a house. In two years time, when the acacia and the mahogany grow, we will not be able to plant our own crops. I do not know what I will do; I am too old to move. I want to be buried here on my land!"

Suddenly he stopped talking and sat quietly, rolling his corn leaf cigarette. With his black peasant costume and slim body, he looked tired. The silence was only temporary. The conversation continued but with other speakers, guests from the neighbourhood. They added comments and corroborated his account, some correcting details of events they had also experienced. Dipo still sat quietly in the corner, and did not comment.

During the 1968 Trisula Operation, these people were relocated on the present site of 25 hectares of land belonging to the Forestry Estate, because it was accessible by road. There were 97

15 The turmoil associated with the communist uprising of 1966 and the 1968 Trisula Operation.
households of whose members 20 were the founders of the original village or their offspring. They continued work as pembau, and for this they were permitted also to cultivate some baon. In 1973, in an administrative reorganization, this settlement officially became a hamlet of Wana, headed by a kamitua and a bayan. It is still called Jati, after the original settlement.

Thus new Jati is not an old settlement. As a community it is also relatively new. Most of the people settled there in the 1940s or early 1950s and do not have strong historical ties binding them to the area. But the repeated pattern of conflict, withdrawal and resettlement experienced by these people has imposed some sense of community.

IV. Strategies for Survival in a Changing World: Jati 1980:

In discussing the strategies adopted by the villagers of Jati hamlet to cope with their changing world, I will examine two levels. The first level deals with the strategies of the Forestry Estate. It represents the context within which the pembau must manoeuvre. The second level, the real focal point of this section, deals with the strategies of the people of Jati as pembau and as members of the hamlet economy and community.

The mbaon system offered the Forestry Estate a cheap and convenient supply of labour. Unlike the coffee plantation, the
The teak estate did not need labour for continuous care of the crop. Care was only needed in the first two years. After that the trees would grow with little maintenance. The pembau system not only provided a temporary labour force for the first two years, it also provided a very cheap labour force. The pembau were able to grow their own means of subsistence on the land beneath the seedlings and in their house compounds. The small annual stipend paid by the Estate was much less than a wage so production costs were kept to a minimum. Due to the security needs of the country, the Forestry Estate had also given up 25 hectares of its land for the hamlet location.

From the peasants' point of view, the arrangement provided access to land for cultivation. The obligation to care for the teak seedlings made relatively small demands on their limited labour resources. Thus the relationship produced mutual benefits, although the dependency of the peasants on the Estate for land was much greater than the very temporary need of the Estate for their labour. It might seem that the situation was similar to that in Saratemen. However, there were important differences. The plantation in Saratemen was much more dependent on its labourers than the Forestry Estate was on the pembau. Both plantation and workers had a basis for bargaining. In Jati, the pembau had almost no bargaining power as opposed to the estate.

In order to understand the basis of the strategies for survival developed by the peasants of Jati, it is necessary to know
something of the way they lived before they were resettled into their current location. Until 1968 the people of Jati did not live in a village but in scattered homesteads on baon belonging to the estate. They did not live permanently in any particular location but moved their houses to wherever their bau land happened to be located. Their houses were not in close proximity to one another but were always close to their fields. In 1968 the government authorities forced them to occupy permanently houses that were close to one another near the road but, in many cases, at a distance from their allotments of bau land.

In their original scattered homesteads, farming was a way of life. The people were satisfied to harvest just enough to feed their families until the next harvest. They considered themselves very lucky if they could save enough from the harvest to replace livestock that had been sold, or to buy new clothes for the next Bakda.16 For most, the baon was sufficient to grow crops for their own direct use, with some extra for cash. They were basically subsistence producers. However, after resettlement near the new road, the local economy changed. When surplus production had been difficult to transport, people gave any surplus away and rarely sold it. Only after moving near the road, did peasants produce a significant surplus for sale.

16Nationally known as Lebaran or Idulfitri. The term means 'conclusion,' that is, the conclusion of the Ramadan fasting month which becomes a major holiday celebrated with family feasts, new clothes, and visits to relatives and neighbours.
In 1980, subsistence production was still the basis of the local economy. To take an example, in 1980 a household in Jati with 0.25 hectares of house compound and 0.50 hectares of baon harvested approximately one ton of rice, 12 quintals of cassava and 800 to 1500 cobs of corn. In addition, they probably also collected as much as Rp.10,000-Rp.15,000 from the sale of chilies and other kitchen vegetables. Respondents repeatedly said that this amount of land was sufficient for a family of five to grow not only all the staple food they consumed, but also a surplus to earn money for goods they did not produce. Whereas before, they seldom sold crops other than vegetables, unless they needed money for special purposes, such as buying cattle or renovating a house, things had changed. They were no longer relatively self-sufficient, but had become dependent on the money economy.

Since moving to the present settlement many Jati people ceased to cultivate baon because it was too far from the hamlet. In 1980 the closest baon was about 2 hours walking distance away and the furthest 5 hours. Single-person households, old people, and households with a shortage of manpower had to rely only on their house compounds. In 1980 34 households relied mainly on their house compounds for their subsistence crops. A respondent said that "farming baon is just like opening a rice granary because the soil is more fertile than our compound, but it is just too hard for us to manage if it is too far." The reluctance to work additional baon was also confirmed by one of the Forestry officers.
The experience of some younger men, living as numpang karang or numpang usup,\textsuperscript{17} who were determined to become pembau, either on their own baon or as sharecroppers, showed the problems of distance. They had accepted the challenge of farming far from the settlement but soon found that their undertaking was too ambitious. Some of them reported:

"Even though we work together and help our friends, our bau lands are too far away and we can hardly manage. Last year the grain was spoiled by the rain which came suddenly while we were still drying the crop in the field."

"Our bau land is too far away. To reach it we have to go up and down the valley and the hills. Thus it is difficult for our children to get there, yet we badly need their help."

In addition to the baon, villagers had access to the 0.25 hectares allotted to them for their house and compound. The house compound was relatively permanent, whereas the bau land was available only for a certain period; in 1980, two seasons. Both types of land lacked access to irrigation or rivers, so they depended on rainfall. Rain-fed paddy, cassava and corn, were the three most important staple foods grown by the villagers. They

\textsuperscript{17}See above, page 109.
could not use all of the baon for their own crops because they had to allow room for the teak trees but, until 1980, they were able to use their compounds exclusively for their own crops and their house-sites. One strategy used by many people in Jati had been to intensify cultivation of their house compounds.\textsuperscript{18}

Whether from house compound alone, or from compound and baon, most households in Jati had to supplement their incomes from other sources. This was due both to the limited area of land which they could cultivate, and their growing need for cash income. The road into the village of Wana symbolized the process by which the people of Jati had been hooked into the cash economy. With more people working as wage labourers, rather than as semi-subsistence pembau, village households became more dependent on cash purchases for their daily necessities. As trade grew villagers learned about new commodities, such as soap, shampoo, monosodium glutamate, and instant noodles, which came to be considered household needs. The new road allowed agricultural surplus to be transported to market so that villagers could get cash to buy these things. Transport costs were still high, so most people relied on the middlemen who came regularly to collect produce. The middlemen bought rural produce, such as cassava and charcoal, and sold urban-made products. Traders coming in to the hamlet sold goods such as cassettes and radios that were becoming part of the villagers' felt needs. Such transactions involved cash.

\textsuperscript{18}In 1980 even this resource was threatened. See below, page 334.
In this way the road created new needs but it also created new ways of meeting these needs. Villagers could travel along the road to find employment outside the hamlet. Households, which already did not have enough labour for cultivation, had to adopt appropriate strategies in allocating their limited labour. Young girls in particular were encouraged by their families to seek work outside, either as factory workers or maid-servants, in big cities such as Malang and Surabaya, and even as far away as Jakarta and Kalimantan. Their jobs were often arranged by middlemen who channelled them to employers.

One respondent who had worked as a maid-servant in Jakarta told me how she was approached, with a group of five friends, by a middlemen who promised them good jobs in Jakarta. When she went she did not know what kind of job she would get. She was sent to a family as a servant. She worked there for two years before she decided to return to the hamlet because she was homesick. She said that when others like herself visited home, such as at the festival of Id, other girls from the hamlet often followed them back to their place of work. The city-style appearance of the working girls who returned to the village, and their city ways and knowledge attracted others to follow in their footsteps. At the same time the lack of jobs in the village pushed them to leave. The girls' families were happy to have the money and urban goods they brought home, even although few of them sent regular remittances. The girls' chances of making a good marriage with
someone from outside who had a good job and a regular income were also higher if they worked outside the village. The respondent mentioned above said that, out of six girls in her original group who went to work in Jakarta, two were married in Jakarta to outsiders. Thus it was a good strategy for households to allow their daughters to go outside in search of work.

Families were more reluctant to see their sons leave the hamlet. As Pak Karjan said, the people of Jati needed their boys because they needed their labour to make ladon. Although most boys did not leave the village to seek work outside, like other household members they did seek various kinds of wage work around the village. In every household in 1980, at least one member worked in non-pembau occupations at some time during the previous twelve months. With the opening up of the local economy, new kinds of employment, such as work in the kaolin mine, gecik, or selling firewood, became available. In one hamlet within Wana the soil was rich with kaolin for ceramics. A Chinese from Blitar began to exploit it, using very simple techniques. The villagers were employed to hoe the clay, put it into sacks and carry it to a truck that would transport it for further processing in Blitar. This new mining attracted villagers from surrounding areas, including Jati, especially during the slack seasons between planting and harvest. In 1980 they were paid about Rp.500 for five hours work.

Casual work made their status as employees more obvious. Before, even though they worked at the Forestry Estate with the
status of labourers, they did not regard themselves as employees. That was partly because the Forestry Estate interfered relatively little in their lives. Furthermore, their success or failure in raising their crops depended very much on their own efforts. Working in wage labour either in the kaolin mine or gecik for an employer was different. Firstly, the availability of work was uncertain. In the kaolin mines, work might be unavailable for an indefinite number of days without any announcement beforehand; gecik was limited to a specific season. Uncertainty of income also occurred if, because of illness or other unexpected events, they were unable to work.

Most kinds of employment in the district offered low wages or returns and an uncertain future. People were aware of this; as one respondent said:

"Before, we could buy two kilogrammes of rice by working one day in the kaolin mine, but nowadays we can only buy one kilogram instead."

This complaint was echoed by the women who collected fire wood (rencekan). In making such comments they overlooked the fact that previously they would have done such jobs for supplementary income only, because their main source of livelihood was work on the baon. Selling fire wood or doing gecik would have been only in their spare time, and the money earned would probably have been used to
buy salt and sugar. In 1980, however, as more and more people could no longer rely on bau land for their livelihood, they had to rely on such insecure jobs to meet most of their needs, including buying staple foods.

People also struggled to meet their needs by having different sources of income. As in Saratemen and in Pari, raising livestock, often using the gaduh system, was another way of obtaining a supplementary income. People raised cattle mainly for investment. They sold the animals in emergencies or for important occasions such as weddings and house renovating. The kamitua told me that he had renovated his house by selling a cow for Rp.260,000. In addition to improving his house he had used the money to buy two sheep and some chickens. He said that he planned to sell these again when they bred and use that money to buy another cow. There were 35 cattle and 53 sheep in Jati in 1980. In addition nearly all households owned poultry and sold eggs, as well as chickens. Money earned from the sale of eggs and poultry was more often used for ordinary expenses. The larger amounts obtained from the sale of cattle were used only for special purposes. Cattle were therefore an important investment. They were usually kept inside the houses at night because cattle stealing was common.19

Most women in Jati earned money from selling fire wood to middlemen or the lime-kiln. They were paid Rp.200 per bundle by

19The thieves, as in Sarateman, were outsiders. They could not have been villagers because they knew each others' cattle.
the middlemen and Rp.300 if they carried it further to the local lime-kilns. Another way of earning money was selling teak leaves to be used for wrapping. These two occupations were considered to be women's jobs, while men made charcoal from the dead wood scattered on the ground. Felling trees was strictly forbidden and from time to time the forestry police inspected the houses to see whether villagers had hidden teak. Teak stealing was very attractive because of the high price of teak. Consequently it was common, but resulted in serious trouble if discovered.

Some members of the hamlet had been able to take advantage of the changing economic situation, particularly if they had commercial talents, capital or connections. One of these was Pak Karjan. Through the warung mracang operated by his wife, he was able to take advantage of the villagers' increasing needs for modern urban-produced goods. He would accept payment from the villagers in the form of agricultural produce, such as corn, mung bean or cassava. For example, I often saw villagers buy lamp-oil, salt, royco (chicken stock) or soap in return for a small plastic bag of corn or mung bean. Pak Karjan would then weigh and value the contents and allow the seller to take the equivalent amount in goods. The seller could not bargain over the price, but had to accept Pak Karjan's valuation. In this way he collected corn and mung bean from many different villagers until he had enough to sell to a visiting middleman or tengkulak. He also bought produce directly from villagers who wanted to sell for cash. This was
convenient for the villagers, who could thus obtain cash when they needed it, instead of having to wait until the outside tengkulak visited the hamlet. The tengkulak also was saved from going from house to house to collect only very small amounts of produce.

Although the people of Jati were dependent on the warung mracang for many of their daily necessities, their position differed from that of the workers of Saratemen who had regular debts with the warung mracang. In Jati the villagers’ real dependence on Pak Karjan was because he provided them with access to a market for their produce. Pak Karjan’s business had flourished, partly because he had some capital and a natural talent for trade, and partly because of the very strategic location of his warung. It was on the corner of the crossroad between the main road and the track to Jati. Everyone who waited for transport or alighted from the passing colts would stop in front of his warung. He exploited this position by serving coffee and meals. Visiting tengkulak also regularly gathered there to chat and do business. He then used the connections he was able to build up with these outsiders in this way to benefit his trade.

A few people in Jati, like Pak Karjan, were able to benefit economically because of their special positions or access to authority. Pak Karjan was able to use both his contacts with outsiders and his stronger economic position, as someone with

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20 He owned a small piece of land outside the hamlet before resettlement in Jati.
capital, to gain special privileges that gave them even more advantages over the other villagers. People like Pak Karjan and the kamitua were able to get more bau land than the others and in more favourable sites. Then, even though it was officially illegal, they could sharecrop or even sell this land to make a profit. Those who "sold" or "sharecropped out" their bau land were those with privileges, such as influential connections, or other advantages, such as economic talents. Such people, because they did not work their baon themselves, had plenty of time to engage in other economic activities. For example, Pak Karjan sharecropped his two hectares of bau land out to others while he concentrated on his business as a middleman (tengkulak), channelling local produce to the itinerant vendors. Those who "bought" or sharecropped bau land, on the other hand, were from the underprivileged group, such as newly-married couples (the numpang karang and the numpang usup) who were landless and desperately needed the opportunity to cultivate.

Thus a degree of socio-economic stratification was emerging within the village economy, although the differences in interests between groups were much less clear than in Pari. Often those with some small advantage were able to improve their own position only at the expense of someone else - usually those who suffered some

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21 Although theoretically the Forestry Estate dealt with the pembau individually, in practice many of the dealings were made through the village officials. In return, such village officials were rewarded with priority over the others in their applications for baon allotments.
disadvantage. As the first group gained and the second continued to struggle, the rather weak foundation of village unity was shaken. As some members of the hamlet community increasingly turned to the outside world and the opportunities it appeared to offer, their ties with others who continued to work within the traditional economic framework loosened and solidarity was further weakened.

The traditional labour groups of sayan provide an illustration of this process. One important consequence of the resettlement on a permanent site was a change in the traditional sayan labour arrangements. The sayan reciprocal working groups were used by the pembau to recruit extra manpower, especially during harvesting. When they were still living in scattered settlements, before 1968, the pembau moved their place of residences as allotments of their bau land changed. One way of maintaining contact with family and neighbours was through these reciprocal working groups, which tended to be a permanent group whose members moved together to neighbouring allotments of bau land. The group worked as follows: any household that received help from another had to provide equivalent assistance in return. This was usually arranged through a group which exchanged labour among its members. A work group usually comprised five to ten households. Neighbours would arrange their harvesting schedule to avoid conflict with one another. A sayan group not only operated for the preparation and harvesting of land, but also in other circumstances. One respondent recalled
that when he and his neighbours had faced famine because of crop failure, his sayan group went together to collect seaweed (agar-agar) from the ocean. Members of a sayan group would also help one another on ceremonial occasions. There was even a preference for marriage within the group.

Everybody agreed that the old sayan group system had begun to break down after the move to Jati's present site. One reason was that the allotments of baon to sayan members were often at great distances from one another. As villagers explained:

"Some pembau received baon close to the settlement, others received allotments at the other end of the world. How do we help each other?

"Some members of my previous sayan group preferred not to farm the baon because they could not cope with the distance, or some thought that a quarter of a hectare was just enough."

Despite this, the sayan group did not totally disappear. Its basis remained proximity of bau land. However, one big difference from the old sayan groups was that the new groups usually did not survive past the contract period of two seasons. A few members might still work with each other after that but most did not. The new arrangement was seen to lack the security of the old feelings
of teamwork and togetherness. One pembau observed:

"The disadvantage with changing sayan group all the time is that we do not know each other very well. We find ourselves relying on new members who are sometimes lazy. Working with new people does not give us a sense that we care for one another and share each other’s experience. At the end of two seasons our relationship is finished. We do not know each other anymore. Before, the sayan group was just like a big family. We were together in happiness and in misfortune. Together we taught our children to understand the land, the weather, and the behaviour of the crops."

People observed that sayan was not as strong as in the old days and was less spontaneous. They said: "Nowadays we have to ask first, while before the neighbours came to you to give a hand." In 1980 sayan was more important in providing labour for the cultivation of the house compounds (ladon) than for baon. The numbers of households involved was often limited to just two next-door neighbours.

There were only two cases in 1980 when pembau households needed more help for their subsistence farming than their work groups could supply. These were the households of Pak Karjan and the kamitua. They each hired villagers, paying Rp.500 per day for making ladon in their compounds. Neither had sufficient labour to
do the work themselves and they also did not receive a 'hand' from their neighbours because they did not practise sayan themselves. Both preferred to concentrate their resources on other economic activities and could afford to hire labour. Hiring of labour was beginning but was still generally limited to certain tasks such as planting and harvesting of cash crops, or removing peanuts from the shells and corn from the stalks (gecik).  

Both Pak Karjan and the kamitua were examples of households who had recognized the hopelessness of dependence on the baon and had turned to other ventures. Pak Karjan had turned to business and the kamitua was able to use his official position to support new economic activities. Others who lacked the advantages of Pak Karjan and the kamitua were also looking outside the village for their futures and those of their children. Many villages who had little hope for themselves, still had hopes for their children. There was some evidence that changes in marriage patterns within the village partly reflected the extent to which parents' hopes for their children had turned to the outside world.

As noted in section II A, educational facilities for the people of Jati were limited and educational levels among the population were generally low. They were the lowest of the three study villages. Thus people in Jati did not see education as a way of achieving a secure future for their children. However, some seemed

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such workers were recruited from Jati itself or from neighbouring areas.
to hope that they could get the benefits of good jobs and secure incomes for their children indirectly through marriage. This largely applied to their hopes for their daughters and was reflected in their attitudes towards marriages with young men from outside the hamlet.

Their attitudes towards such marriages were heard most clearly during the wedding of Simpen, a girl from the hamlet. The groom was a member of the armed forces. Simpen met him while she was working in a cotton factory in Surabaya. They married in the city three months earlier and had come to Jati for a wedding in the house of Simpen’s parents. Everybody agreed it was a big ceremony by Jati’s standards. Many attended and enjoyed the party. There was much gossip over the fact that her husband was in the army. Some young girls giggled when I asked where they would look for a husband. One woman heard my question and answered for them:

"Go to Surabaya first, and find a rich husband."

On another occasion I asked the same woman for her opinion on the phrase ngumpulahe balung pisah. She said that it was good to marry within the family but if something went wrong with marriage among kin it could also damage family relationships. She used phrases such as "like a broken clay roof that is difficult to mend." She also said:
"it is awkward to marry kin; how do we address one another?"

Finally she voiced what was perhaps her main reason for thinking that 'nowadays' marriage outside the family was also good:

"Marrying our kin or neighbours does not help us, we are all poor, we all have no land, while marrying an outsider, especially like Simpen has done will help us. Her husband has a good job, he is in the army."

This respondent was not the only person who approved of Simpen's marriage. The wedding was a 'hot' topic for the week. People talked about it as if Simpen was their own daughter. Without hope for their land, their children were the villagers' hopes for the future. A spouse with regular employment and a secure income was a prize. Several times I heard villagers talk with apparent pride of girl's like Simpen, who had achieved this goal, even though the speaker had no kinship ties with them at all. The wedding typified a new kind of marriage for Jati. Parents encouraged their daughters to look for work in the cities and, if they were lucky, to marry men with secure jobs. It contrasted with the old pattern, as exemplified by Simpen's parents who were second cousins.

The people of Jati were fast running out of options for their future. They had always worried that they their compound land, which also belonged to the Forestry Estate, might be taken from
them. They often said that their compounds were so important that they would not mind even if they had to pay the Estate for their use. However, at the beginning of 1980 the axe fell. They peasants of Jati faced the situation they had long feared. First rumours spread that they were going to be transmigrated. The rumours became a reality when they were asked by the Estate foremen to measure and mark out their compounds for planting mahogany and acacia, leaving only a 10x10 metre plot in each compound as a house site. This meant that for the next two years they would not be able to grow their own crops in their compounds. They had to face the fact that they would soon be forced to move again, to a completely new site, just as their founders had to move almost 45 years ago. They were told that they would be transmigrated to the outer islands because in another two years the teak forest would be fully planted and there would be no more work for pembau.

The problem stemmed actually from 1968 when government policy both severely reduced the general access of the farmers of Jati to the fertile land of the Forestry Estate and, by resettling them permanently, forced them to rely on a single plot for their ladon in the house compounds. The fertility of that plot was soon exhausted by continuous use. Like the fertility of their land, slowly the spirit of Jati had dried up. The people had no certainty that they could farm either their baon or their compounds during the next season. At the same time, the temptations of the encroaching modern world to buy new products increased. Their lack
of money made them despair. Social organisations such as the sayan groups, that had maintained harmony and community spirit in the past had weakened. Their education and culture had not equipped them for such dramatic changes in their community and offered little basis for understanding what was happening.

The people spent much time discussing their future. They felt that they were victims of injustice but, unlike the peasant labourers of Saratemen, they also felt powerless to oppose the forces, such as the Forestry Estate, on which their immediate future was so dependent. Insecurity and uncertainty dominated their view of life. They discussed their dispossession from the land and recalled the good old days when they still lived scattered in the forest. But their talks were aimless and without hope.

V. The Pembau's Year in Jati:

The life and world view of the people of Jati can only be understood in the context of their everyday struggle for a living. The following account describes the agricultural cycle that I observed during my stay in the hamlet and the experiences of a typical pembau family at the time of the harvest. It is a composite picture built up from my day to day observations and from data collected during interviews with the villagers.
For most people in this area, as in other dry areas in the southern zone in general, life was very much a struggle. Life also had a regular routine that, in the past, had not changed greatly from year to year. Their livelihood depended on the routine cycle of agricultural activities that centred on their farms. Their lives followed the rhythms of the seasons and varied from day to day only in accord with the weather.

The weather was a critical factor in their lives. They had to calculate carefully as the rains fell only during a short period, and they tried to optimize their utilization through multiple cropping. Under multi-cropping, a piece of land could be harvested almost continuously for at least three and, in some cases, up to eight months. The first harvest was corn, followed by rice, and lastly cassava. In 1980 farmers also planted cash crops, such as peanuts and soya beans. None of their cultivated land was irrigated or had access to a river. Every possible scrap of land available was utilized for production.

One day I was struck by the sight of an old woman spreading a handful of seed in her backyard, days after any rain. I asked what she was doing:

"Oh, just hoping they will grow well, and we can harvest, if we were lucky"

she said. I saw another woman harvest the rice from her backyard. It was not much more than a handful.

"Well, better than nothing,"
was her comment when she saw me watching.

The agricultural production cycle began in June-July, a few months before the rainy season which was usually from November to February. Work started with preparation of the land for cultivation. As the farmers of Jati had two types of cultivated land, they practised two kinds of land preparation. First they prepared ladon (literally, 'muddy soil,' referring to the condition of soil ready for planting) in their yards by hoeing the soil by hand. In Jati no one used ploughs or cattle for preparing land, although cows were relatively abundant. The main reason for not using cattle was that the soil was too hard and rocky. Making ladon was hard work. In such dry hard soils and with poor tools and inadequate manpower, it took months for one family to make 0.25 hectares of ladon.

Once they had finished preparing ladon, they prepared their bau land. On the baon they practised a cultivation system without ladon, partly because the presence of the teak seedlings made ladon impossible. The baon was frequently sited on slopes in the foothills or on the top of a hill. There they would clear a patch of land and grow dry upland rice, corn and cassava in the clearings between the young teak trees they cared for. The bau land was relatively fertile, for the plant nutrients had not been leached from the top soil and were not yet exhausted as in their compounds. If the situation allowed it, as on land where old teak trees had been recently removed, they first burned the vegetation to provide
additional nutrients for the shallow root crops such as paddy and corn. However, burning was permitted only under strict Forestry Estate supervision.

Once the rains began, the land was ready to be planted. At nearly every stage in the cultivation of the baon, the pembau worked directly under the supervision of the foreman, whose duty was to protect the young teak. The foremen constantly pushed the pembau to finish preparing the land before the rains started and they strictly inspected each plot at each stage of preparation. The pembau calculated that the preparation of land, the installation of small stakes to support the young teak and all preparations for planting teak had to be finished by September at the latest. They received teak and lamtara (Leucaena glauca Benth, a quick-growing plant that provides shade and nitrogen for the soil) seedlings from the foremen in October, by which time the rain had probably begun to fall. While they planted the teak seedlings and the protective plants, the pembau also had to plant their own crops in order to take advantage of the rain. Usually inspections by the foremen at this time were very strict. They knew that the peasants were busy with their own crops as well and they feared the young teak might be neglected. The inspections continued after planting. The foremen had to check if any teak seedlings were dying and needed to be replaced and make sure that the upland paddy was not shading the young teak. If it did the pembau would be ordered to tie up the paddy stalks.
In planting their crops in their compounds as well as on their baon, the farmers used very simple techniques. The men used sticks to dibble. The women followed to put the seed in the holes and cover it with loose soil. They put different seed, such as paddy and corn, in alternate holes. This kind of farming required two or three weedings to prevent the plants from being covered by competitive vegetation. The teak also needed much care, especially when newly planted.

In February-March one crop of corn was harvested and the land prepared for a second. The Forestry Estate required the corn stalks to grow between the lines of young teak to protect the seedlings. The main harvest was in May, when women harvested the rice with finger-knives (ani-ani). In June they harvested the cassava and the second crop of corn. In between, they also picked kitchen vegetables, such as chilies.

In 1980 it was becoming common for Jati peasants to sell cassava immediately after the harvest, especially if a middleman made an offer, even though the farmer did not necessarily need immediate cash. The temptation to buy consumer products, such as cassettes and other attractive commodities induced them to seek cash. If a family had not finished ladon by October, they usually asked for assistance from neighbours on a mutual help basis. In many other communities in the Blitar region this system of mutual help had been seriously weakened by changing economic circumstances; at best work groups limited mutual help to specific
tasks only. However, in Jati people were relatively cooperative as the system still had social and economic significance, although the numbers prepared to work together in this way were declining.

Most households still needed the help of their sayan group. Each household provided one meal and some refreshments. Although there were no clear rules as to who was obliged to participate in a particular group, when a villager was asked, it was difficult to refuse. At the time of field work, the most common basis on which to develop a sayan group was the proximity of the members’ baon. The experience of the families of Surip and Jaman, two neighbouring families in Jati, on one day during the harvest was typical:23

While the morning mist still envelopes Jati, Surip, together with Jaman’s wife and other Jati women, is carrying a clay pitcher filled with water, which she has collected from the well down in the valley. Back and forth she trudges while her mother is still preparing food in the kitchen. Jaman goes to the well too for his morning toilet. Not a single house in Jati has a bathroom, so people use an open bathing area near the spring to bail water.

It is the first time young Jaman has been a pembau, but he is not a newcomer to the system because he has always helped his father in his occupation. Last year he and seven others were allowed to sharecrop bau land that had actually been allocated to Pak Karjan. Pak Karjan did not cultivate any of his 2 hectares

23As in the previous chapter, I use the present tense as taken from my field notes.
himself. Jaman cultivated 0.25 hectares of this baon. It is located about two hours from his house. He says he did not sign or finger stamp any contract with the Estate, but insists he knew his obligations as a pembau. He also knows that the contract excludes transfer to a third party, but says he did not sign the contract. Moreover, he says that the foreman also knows he farms on Pak Karjan’s bau land. He works under a kedokan system with Pak Karjan. Jaman only provides manpower, the remaining requirements are Pak Karjan’s share.

This morning Jaman and other members of his family woke early because they have to harvest. It is the rice harvest season. Since every pembau plants at the same time, the crops on different fields ripen simultaneously. That is one reason why farmers in Jati usually have a shortage of labour at harvest time. Like other peasants in the south, Jaman always has to work to a strict timetable, which is geared to rainfall and other seasonal factors.

When preparing his baon Jaman has been helped only by his wife. But in harvest time he will ask two or three neighbours to help, especially to carry the grain. He and his wife will then reciprocate. He has joined one sayan group composed of four families who all farm on Pak Karjan’s land. Like other pembau he practises a multiple crop (tumpangsari) system: he grows corn, dry upland paddy and chillies together among the teak seedlings.

This morning Jaman and Surip, his wife, are on the way to their baon. Jaman, with a bamboo pole on his shoulders, walks a
few metres ahead of Surip. She has brought lunch and the equipment needed for harvesting in a bamboo basket on her back. On the road Jaman joins the others going to their land. They will stay there until dusk; some will probably stay all night, sheltering in their huts.

Jaman will probably finish his own harvesting in one more day, and then he and Surip will have to help other members of his group. While Surip and other women are cutting paddy stalks with finger-knives, Jaman makes rope and strings from bamboo for tying the paddy stalks into sheaves.

They dry their paddy in the field and while they are waiting for the grain to dry, they help other members of their sayan with the harvest. Piles of rice, corn or cassava awaiting transport are a common sight in the middle of harvested land. (Such scenes are rare in the north.) At this moment their serious enemies are wild pigs and the rain, which will spoil the grain.

After about six days, the grain is dry and they tie the stalks into clusters with bamboo strips. All this work is mainly done by women, helped by some of the men. Several clusters form a bundle that is hung on a bamboo carrying pole. Harvest sharing within the reciprocal group is 2:7; the harvester receives two portions of every nine that she collects. If a free harvester (ngrampyang) is involved, the harvest share is 1: 8. For harvesting cassava, which includes peeling and collecting it in a sack, the sharing is 1: 5.
From his 0.25 hectares of baon Jaman collects 50 unthil of paddy. In addition, he collects 500 cobs of corn and two full sacks of chillies which are probably worth Rp.10,000 or so. He then has to share the produce he has collected with Pak Karjan, because he is working under the kedokan system.

Certainly the produce from this harvest is not enough to meet the needs of Jaman and his family until next harvest. Yet he still considers it worthwhile to farm the bau land. Next year he says he is determined to become a full pembau by registering himself with the foreman to make sure his baon will not be too far away. In the meantime he also intends to work in the kaolin mine, while Surip also earns money from selling firewood and teak leaves. When I ask whether they earn enough to live Surip says: "As long as we live very carefully".

Many Jati residents hire out their labour in other hamlets and villages, especially during the slack season. In Jati there are two busy seasons; for preparing the land and for harvesting. However, the months in between are not a time for idleness. Firstly, the young teak always needs attention. Secondly, during this time people seek alternative ways of earning money. Although there are few employment opportunities in Jati and the surrounding areas, nearly all Jati peasants find it necessary to seek casual jobs to supplement their incomes. This is a fairly recent phenomenon, because as one older respondent said:

24 One unthil of paddy was about 6-8 handfuls.
"We need more money now, because we want to buy more things".

VI. Summary:

The community of Jati was located in a relatively isolated location on poor limestone soil in a dry region without access to irrigation. The economy was dominated by the teak forest that surrounded it. The community depended on the Forestry Estate for land for cultivation. The villagers were pembau: forestry worker-peasants. Although they had no land of their own, they were closest to the classic model of subsistence peasants. In addition to growing their subsistence crops on the Forestry Estate and in their compounds, they worked as labourers on the Forestry Estate. They were not paid wages but were allowed to cultivate the forest beneath the teak seedlings in return. Their relationship with the Forestry Estate was one-sided. They were totally dependent on the Estate for their land and place to live but the Estate had only a temporary need for their labour. In 1980 that need had almost finished.

Their position was insecure. They knew they had no future on the Estate and no weapon with which to bargain. Their past had been almost as insecure as their present. Their predecessors had been dispossessed of the original village of Jati. They had been
shifting cultivators of the forest, with no permanent attachment to any one location until the village was resettled in 1968. They had gained free and uncontrolled access to the forests during and after the Japanese occupation and then lost it. But, until 1968, these events were the common experiences of individual family units, not the collective experience of a community. They lacked a strong sense of group identity and a sense of solidarity.

Their insecurity forced them to look elsewhere for their future. This further weakened their solidarity because different members of the community were finding new interests in different ways. Some were turning to the towns, if not for themselves then for their children. Others turned to trade. Their strategies reflected their lack of cohesion. They struggled without hope and alone.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The objective of this concluding chapter is to review the strategies for survival observed among the peasant communities in the three study hamlets. The study must be seen in the wider context of studies about peasant behaviour, in general, and Javanese peasant behaviour, in particular. As noted in chapter 1, many studies of Javanese peasants have been concerned with general theoretical issues, such as the causes of underdevelopment (Boeke, for example) and broader debates in anthropological theory, such as Geertz' initial concern with the impact of environment and ecology on culture. Such concerns have led to a tendency to emphasize the homogeneity and conformity of the peasantry, and to obscure differences between subgroups.

By contrast, this study has adopted an essentially micro, village level approach that strives to view the peasants and their world in their own terms. By focusing on only three communities at this level, I was inevitably struck by the differences between them and, particularly, by the different ways in which they coped with change. In describing the three communities I had to examine
in detail the differences between conditions in the three hamlets, including economic activities, social and cultural institutions, historical experiences and political and administrative organisation. I came to the conclusion that certain aspects of these differences were critical in explaining why their approaches to coping with change were so different.

This chapter is divided into five sections. I begin in Section I by summarising the relevance of this study to the general literature on peasant behaviour and strategies, as characterised by writers such as Scott, and to the specific paradigm of Javanese peasant behaviour presented by Geertz. In Section II I distinguish between those aspects of the strategies for survival in the study hamlets that were common to all three groups and those aspects of strategy that were differed in each case. In Section III I describe in more detail what I found to be the main characteristics of the strategies for survival in each hamlet, and in Section IV I consider possible explanations for why the three peasant communities developed such different approaches to their common need to adapt to a changing world. The chapter, and the thesis, concludes in Section V with a more detailed and critical assessment of the views of Scott and Geertz about peasant behaviour, and the implications, in this context, of the findings of this study.
I. The relevance of this study to the study of the Javanese peasantry:

Geertz' model of the reaction of the Javanese peasantry to change was expressed in his model of agricultural involution which, he argued, affected not only agricultural practices but also social and cultural arrangements.\(^1\) It was characterised by passive acceptance of externally-imposed changes and behaviour that was reactive, inward-looking, conservative and emphasised security. It emphasised traditional social institutions that spread limited resources among increasing numbers of peasants through work-spreading and poverty-sharing. Geertz saw this strategy of involution as the key to the way the peasantry adapted to change. He also saw it as a self-defeating strategy. In the end, it was limited by the capacity of the agricultural environment to absorb increasing numbers of peasants on increasingly tiny plots of land.

As discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis, Geertz all-embracing model of Javanese peasant behaviour has been severely criticised by many. However, few of his critics have offered alternative models of the way in which peasants adapt to change, although some, such as Koentjaraningrat, have produced more limited models of peasant behaviour.\(^2\)

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\(^1\)See above, page 8.

\(^2\)Koentjaraningrat's model is more psychological that structural, but is not very different from Geertz' view of the peasant in characterising him as passive, conservative and security-seeking.
Chapter 6

In non-Indonesian contexts, Scott and Popkin are two writers who have tried to characterise the peasantry and its ways of adapting to change. Scott popularised the term 'the moral economy of the peasantry' in his first book (1976). Grant Evans (1986: 6-7) has explained Scott's position as follows:

"[The] material situation gives rise to what he calls the "subsistence ethic", which asserts the right of the members of the village community to a living so far as local resources will allow. He argues that various arrangements involving reciprocity, labour exchange and ritualised redistribution within the village only begin to make sense when one knows of the existence of this ethic."

Scott also emphasises that peasants follow the 'safety first' principle when making economic decisions. They tend to avoid risks in favour what is known, leading to the charge that they are inherently conservative (1976: 15-26). However, he points out that in doing this peasants are being quite rational and that, when subsistence security is not threatened by innovation, peasants are quick to try new methods (1976: 24). Scott emphasises that strong risk aversion and what he calls the 'economics of subsistence' applies only to peasants with 'very low incomes, little land, large families, highly variable yields and few outside opportunities' (1976: 25). None of the peasant communities in the study hamlets really fits this situation. However, Scott also recognises the importance of different situations (1976: 213):
"the growing role of migratory labour works against economic and political cooperation at the village level ... The resulting social disorganization is likely to rule out the mutuality and shared poverty that typify involution and to produce instead, a pattern of mutual hostility and Social Darwinism."

Much of the discussion of Scott's work has centred on the issues of the economics of subsistence, the conservatism of peasants in using the 'safety-first principle' and, from Popkin (1979), a whole debate on peasant rationality that many feel seriously distorts Scott's position (Evans, 1986: 3). Evans considers that Scott's main interest in his first study was the sources of peasant consciousness in order to identify situation in which peasants are likely to rebel(1976: 12). This is not a concern of this thesis, although studies of peasant consciousness are related to the kinds of strategies adopted by different groups of peasants in different situations.

In his latest book (1986), Scott turns more obviously to the concerns of this thesis. He focuses on 'everyday class relations - on how peasants have survived and struggled between revolts, which is to say most of the time' (Scott, 1984: 16, cited in Grant, 1986: 22). One key point to emerge from his study of Sedaka is that the sense of community and mutual obligation between members of the community is fast being eroded. He also identifies the phenomenon of the 'remembered village', which refers to the very selective memories that peasants have of their past when they use it as a standard against which to measure the present. He found that they
remembered the good things:

"when harvest work was plentiful and larger farmers curried favour with them by giving advance wages, loans, zakat gifts, and giving large feasts to which they were always invited. (Scott, 1985: 178-179)"

They forgot the less favourable features of the old order because they 'did not contribute to the argument they wish to make today.' There is undoubtedly an element of this in the ethnological material reported in this thesis.

The work of Scott and his critics focuses on the peasantry as a general phenomenon. Geertz began his study of 'Modjokuto' to explore broad theoretical questions about culture and environment. However the study has had most influence on the more limited subject of perceptions of the Javanese peasantry. The objectives of this thesis are still more limited. I am principally interested to show that Geertz' model of involution as a model of Javanese peasants strategies for survival and the way in which they adapt to change is inadequate. Any single model of peasants' strategies is bound to be inadequate because peasants' strategies are many and varied. They have several elements in common, because they are peasants, but their approaches to these elements are often quite different.

Scott recognises that peasant strategies are different in different situations: some revolt, some do not. Scott and his critics have attempted to identify the critical factors that help
to account for these differences. In doing this they have tried to develop broad theoretical models of peasant behaviour. In this chapter I identify two key aspects of life in the three study communities that I think help to explain their different kinds of strategies. However, I do not want to fit these into any broader framework to apply to all peasants, or even to other peasant communities in Java. I prefer to follow Moise's advice, (Moise, 1982: 77, cited in Grant 1986: 36):

"to concentrate on specific situations, and say as little as possible about the general nature of peasant society."

II. Fundamentals of peasant strategies for survival:

Although there were many ways in which the peasants strategies for survival in the three hamlets were different, there were very obvious elements of strategy in the three communities that were basically similar. For example, in all three communities peasants were involved in a wide range of production activities, such as growing crops for their own use, growing crops for sale, raising cattle, chickens or goats, gathering firewood, grass or teak leaves, and working as wage labourers. The farmers of Pari and Jati, as well as growing many different crops, also worked as daily-paid wage labourers at different times during the year when their labour was not needed on their land. In Saratemen estate
workers worked in many different kinds of jobs when there was no
work for them on the coffee plantations. In addition to having
different kinds of economic activity, peasant households mobilised
as many of their members as possible in those activities. Men,
women and children and even the old people all made some
contribution to household income.

These two elements of the basic strategy for survival are an
integral part of being a peasant. Peasants are basically
subsistence producers. Subsistence producers must carry out a wide
range of economic activities in order to meet their different basic
needs. For instance, they need a staple food, such as rice or
corn, in their diet, as well as vegetables, eggs and, sometimes,
meat. They also need a way of saving for emergencies or important
ceremonies and, in the modern world, some cash for things that have
to be bought or paid for in cash. Furthermore, subsistence
producers must depend largely on their own resources. Although
some community institutions could help the poorest survive
individual hard times, each household had to be largely independent
because community resources could not cope with major disasters
affecting many households. Thus security was a high priority.
Security was obtained by spreading risks, such as by having
everyone in the household working or by growing many different
crops or by having many different sources of income. Then if one
person was unable to work, the income of the rest would allow the
household to survive. If one crop failed, the others might
produce a harvest, and if one source of income dried up, income could still be obtained from the others.

Peasant in Pari and Jati were largely subsistence producers growing much of their own daily consumption. They displayed all aspects of the classic peasant strategy. The coffee estate workers of Saratemen were shoppers dependent on the warung mracang rather than subsistence producers. However, they also employed many aspects of the basic peasant strategy in their struggle for survival. Because there was insufficient estate work and it was poorly paid, they also used their children and old people to raise cattle, poultry and goats. Their women collected firewood for their own use and to sell. Whole families worked on the estate during the coffee harvest and the younger and stronger men sought wage work outside the village. In Saratemen it was the search for security, rather than the need for subsistence, that motivated this strategy. In Pari and Jati both security and subsistence motivated peasants to work in many activities and to mobilise all their resources.

III. The same but different: three approaches to a strategy for survival.

Although the basic elements of the strategy for survival were similar in all three hamlets, the ways in which the three communities applied the strategy were very different. Pari more
obviously fitted Geertz' model of agricultural involution. The peasants of Pari appeared to be conservative and passive, compared to those of, say, Saratemen. The community of Pari was more heterogeneous, with more socio-economic differentiation, within the community as a whole, and among the peasants themselves. The degree of socio-economic differentiation led to different interests and orientations among the peasants. Their identity as a group was cloaked by various other considerations, such as kin and patron-client relationships. They tended to identify themselves more with those for whom they worked, their employers, landlords or patrons, rather than with each other.

The peasant farmers of Pari recognised the mutual benefits that arose out of the ties that bound landlord and sharecropper, landlord and labourer, rice miller and penguyang. They said that the two parties needed each other and seemed to realise that this need limited the power of those above them to exploit them. They rarely openly protested against exploitation, even when they seemed to feel the poverty of their lives. In talking about their lives they tended to emphasise harmony and balance. Their overall strategy seemed to involve reactions to externally-imposed changes and small adaptations at the margin. They less often initiated actions themselves and the kinds of strategies they adopted involved small changes to the way things had always been done, instead of really new ways of doing things.

In contrast to Pari, the plantation community of Saratemen was much more homogeneous, both socially and economically. Every
household in the hamlet had similar status defined by their dependence on those household members who worked as wage labourers on the coffee plantations. The people of Saratemen were very much aware of being members of one group. They often expressed their awareness of a common identity as wong kebun, in contrast to the wong tani and wong dusun in the surrounding area. They also exhibited a strong sense of solidarity rooted in collective opposition to the plantation and especially in relation to their claim against the plantation to the tanah babatan Jepang. Like the sharecroppers and labourers of Pari, they recognised that the plantation needed them just as they needed the plantation to provide most of their income. However, this did not lead to them passively submitting to the authority and position of the plantation. Instead, they felt brave enough to express their feelings of bitterness and resentment against the plantation quite openly.

Jati community, on the other hand, seemed to be in a situation of no hope. Like Saratemen, they had experienced big changes in their lives. But their experiences of being disposessed in 1939 and again in 1968, and then the plan to transmigrate them in 1980, had brought them to a position of uncertainty, despair and hopelessness. They looked, and indeed appeared to be, defenceless.

If I had to choose to describe in a few words the characteristics that typified the strategies of the three communities in the study hamlets, I would describe the
sharecroppers and labourers of Pari as compliant clients. The plantation workers of Saratemen could be described as defiant activists, while the pembau of Jati were defenceless victims. While there were individuals in all three communities that appeared to follow different kinds of strategies, these were the characteristics that stood out as typical of the majority in each hamlet. The elements of the strategy that each followed were fundamentally the same, as described above in section II of this chapter. What was different was the approach - the style - used by each group in pursuing these common elements.

IV. Why were their approaches different?

The distinction between the strategies of the three groups of peasants was less of substance and more at the margin, in the approach to the basic strategy. An important issue is what were the key factors that seemed to account for the differences in these approaches. Certainly the specific conditions under which individuals live, and the qualities of the community within which they function, can affect the ways in which they develop strategies for survival and for coping with change. Thus the patterns of behaviour of individuals within a community come to share common characteristics. Looking at the studies of the three hamlets of Pari, Saratemen and Jati presented in this thesis, I suggest that two features stand out as contributing to the differences between
them. The first is the community's historical experience, and especially the peasants' own perceptions of it. The second is the peasantry's roles within the local economic system and, related to that, the extent of socio-economic differences and of social cohesion within the community.

I will begin with the different historical experiences of the three hamlets. First, I should say that these also had much in common. This is especially true of the origins of the three communities. The origins of the peasants' ancestors in all three hamlets were similar. They had been landless peasants pushed from poverty and pulled by stories of free land and abundant work. In Pari some of these landless peasants, members of the cakal-bakal families, had succeeded in obtaining land. Some later saw it eroded by the process of inheritance or lost due to debt, sickness or the burdens of social obligations. Others were able to hold on and a few had even moved out of agriculture. In Saratemen the landless peasants seeking their fortunes found work on the plantations, rather than land. In Jati they found both work and access to, although not ownership of, land. This was insecure. Their descendants in 1980 were facing a return to the situation of their forefathers - landless peasants being driven or pulled to new frontiers with more promises. As migrants to new areas of settlement, the ancestors of the peasants in all three hamlets were adapting to change. The strategy they used was different to what might have been expected of the passive, conservative, submissive Javanese peasants of the agricultural involution model.
The early history of the three communities had much in common, but their more recent experiences and, more importantly, their perceptions of their recent history, were more obviously different. Pari's historical experiences had been of a continuing slow progression towards agricultural intensification. It was most like the Java described by Geertz. The hamlet's experience had been of continuity rather than change. The war, the revolution and the unrest that followed had largely bypassed Pari.

In Saratemen, the plantation economy already made a sharp break with the past of the original settlers, who had been land-hungry subsistence farmers. The search for a new future brought the pioneers to wage labour, not land. The war and the disturbances that followed gave the next generation what the first had hoped for. They got land and subsistence. They held that land, and the hope that it could be theirs permanently, for one generation. Because the land had belonged to the defeated colonial masters, the hope that they could be given legal title must have seemed reasonable. Furthermore, their settlement on the tanah babatan Jepang had been given semi-official status and they had developed a viable community. It seemed their dreams could be realised. Suddenly it had all been snatched away. They were thrown back to dependence on wage labour on the plantation that was responsible for their loss. Yet, the circumstances gave them some hope that the government or the law might still give them what they demanded. The dispossession of a whole community after it appeared to have been given official recognition gave them a sense of moral
outrage. They felt that other people from outside would support
them. At the same time, this action of the plantation was taken
partly because it needed labour to care for the coffee trees and
harvest the coffee. They were bitter and angry, but they also had
a source of bargaining strength and hope.

The settlers in the forests that were eventually to become the
peasants of Jati appeared to have found land and subsistence.
However, their situation was always only temporary. The first
community was uprooted and transmigrated so the forests could be
developed. The pembau who replaced them did not feel attached to
any particular area of land because they regularly moved their
farms and the places where they lived until 1968. They did not
become a community until after the resettlement. As individuals
dealing with the Forestry Estate, they were always in a weak
position. During the war and after, like the peasants of
Saratemen, they found that they could get as much land in the
forests as they wanted for free, because the Forestry Estate lost
control. But they knew that it was government land. They knew
that eventually the Forestry Estate would come back to take it from
them and they never had any real hopes they could keep it. Even
then they were still individuals scattered through the forests.
They were not a community and they had no source of bargaining
power. They needed the Forestry Estate for land, but the Estate
only needed them for as long as they were still planting teak
seedlings. When there were no more seedlings there was no longer
any need for pembau labour.
Community economic structure and the extent of socio-economic differentiation were another important difference between the three hamlets. In Pari agricultural intensification had led to increasing socio-economic differentiation, both among the peasants and between them and the landlords and traders. The economic interests of the various sub-groups were different. The interests among the different kinds of sharecroppers and between them and the various categories of kedokan and dacinan labourers were diverging. At the same time, each of these groups recognised the mutual reciprocity in their relationship with their landlords and patrons. Social cohesion was weakened. Social relations were much less harmonious than the community's emphasis on harmony as a value would suggest. People had to lock up their houses and protect their property from each other. Neighbours quarrelled and even families were sometimes split by bitter divisions. Such cracks in community solidarity inevitably weakened the basis of group actions as a community. Community solidarity often seemed superficial. There was a lot of talk about it, but community activity was lacking.

In Saratemen, on the other hand, there was evidence of strong group solidarity. The economic homogeneity of the community as wage labourers created a sense of social cohesion. Every household had at least one member working as a plantation labourer. Their other economic activities were subsidiary and did not disturb this essential solidarity. Furthermore, their sense of being different from the surrounding communities strengthened their social
cohesion. Their sense of standing united together against the plantation was the final factor giving them a strong awareness of their position and of their common interests. It was perhaps the most important factor, since the solidarity of those villagers who worked as wage labourers for contractors, as a group standing against the contractors, seemed much weaker. Within the community of Saratemen social relations seemed more harmonious. Quarrels were less common than in Pari, thefts were not feared within the community, and neighbours cooperated to mind each others' children and property.

In Jati, people shared a sense of common destiny because of their common plight but it did not provide a firm basis for group action. Social cohesion seemed to be more at a personal level between neighbours as neighbours, rather than as members of the same community. The extent of socio-economic differentiation was limited but seemed to be growing. People's interests were diverging as they each struggled to find a way of surviving as individual family units in an apparently hopeless situation. Saratemen had a strong sense of identity as a community and was determined to survive as a community. Jati had barely established itself as a community before its existence was threatened. People were struggling to survive as individuals. There seemed to be no idea of survival as a community and little sense of community identity. People cooperated with each other but on an individual basis only.
The three communities began from similar origins. But different local historical experiences brought them to different plights. Pari experienced many small changes but had no experience of cataclysmic change to compare with Saratemen's loss of the tanah babatan Jepang or Jati's original transmigration, the 1968 resettlement to the 1980 threat of transmigration. The peasants of Pari were more like those of Geertz' model. In their moral attitudes they stressed harmony, even although in their social relations the reality was often different. They tended to appear passive and submissive because they were most often reacting to changes initiated by others often the landlords) by small marginal adjustments to old ways of behaviour. They did not need to change their strategies for survival in radical ways because there had been no drastic changes in their own environment. Although I thought the villagers of Pari were very poor, compared with the other two hamlets and with many other Javanese villages, they were not so poor. They could survive much as they had in the past, without making big changes in their lives.

There seemed to be two aspects to their passive acceptance of fate. Firstly, they felt that their poverty was partially offset by relative security. In this Pari peasants seemed to better fit Scott's economics of subsistence, safety-first principle. They also did not seem to think that they had any power to change their situation. This strategy of passive acceptance applied at the community level, to the peasants of Pari as a group. Within the
group, some individuals, such as Ibu Mur and her family,\textsuperscript{3} had clearly used a different strategy. This seemed to be because, in some way, they had found themselves in a position where they felt they had power to alter their lives in a way that the rest of their neighbours did not. Another group who had a different strategy were those who were no longer in the community: the migrants who had moved to the towns and cities\textsuperscript{4} or to other areas. The importance of this group will be discussed in section V of this chapter.

The sense of group identity in Pari was more complex than that of Saratemen because group relations were also more complex. Vertical ties between peasants and their landlords or patrons seemed more important than horizontal ties between peasants. However, this was not because they did not recognise the difference in interests between them and their superiors. They were well aware of the gulf that divided them. However, they judged that their interests were still best served by building links to their patrons. They had seen, in their own experiences and those of their neighbours, that these links were weakening with modernisation. Some of people in the hamlet had felt they could survive without their patrons. They had left for the towns and a different way of life. But those who remained felt they were better-off by adapting themselves to the demands of those who held

\textsuperscript{3}\textit{See page 155.}

\textsuperscript{4}\textit{See page 167.}
land and employment opportunities.

The peasant labourers of Saratemen, as I have described them, were the defiant activists. They preferred to throw stones and insults across the gulf that separated them from the plantation. They had experienced dramatic changes in their own lifetimes of those of their parents. Many began as plantation workers without land. During the war they occupied ex-plantation land and became peasant farmers on the tanah babatan Jepang. Later they lost their land and became landless plantation workers again. The changes had first improved their situation and then worsened it. Change had left them with an awareness of their situation, its changeability, and their own strengths. They did not fear change and they felt no particular attachment to the way things were. They had changed their fate once and felt they could do so again.

Perhaps most importantly, they had hope. They felt they had nothing to lose by their defiance because the plantation needed them as much as they needed the work it provided. They did not try to strengthen their links to the plantation. There was no need because the ties were part of the plantation economic system. As a group, they felt strong and secure. In Scott's terms, they did not feel that their subsistence base was threatened, so they were willing to take risks. They had acted aggressively and in radically new ways in hiring the lawyer and taking their petition to parliament.

The peasants of Jati, however, were weak and defenceless victims of change. They and their predecessors had experienced
drastic changes but the changes had usually made them worse off. They had no security in the economic system in which they worked because the Forestry Estate had no further need for their labour. Yet they could not survive without the land they got from the Estate. Socio-economic differentiation within the community was limited but it was slowly growing and weakening the already weak community spirit. Without a firm economic base on the baon, they had been forced to develop new economic footholds. This created a tendency towards slowly increasing socio-economic differences and pushing peoples’ social and economic interests in different directions. Pak Karjan, for example, was developing his trading business. This gave him different economic interests from those of his customers. Villagers who had placed their hopes on their children, sending their daughters to the towns in the hope that they could find an economically-secure husband, were turning away from the hamlet.

The people of Jati as a group had almost no strategy for survival. The future for them had become a matter for individuals, not the community. Their solidarity as a group was weak, firstly because their experience of being a community was relatively short, starting only in 1968. With an initially weak sense of identity and solidarity and increasing differentiation, group consciousness remained weak and offered little support for the community’s situation in 1980.
V. Geertz, Jati and Jago: A last word:

I noted in section II of this chapter that outmigrants were an important group with a different strategy in Pari. Although not specifically mentioned, they were probably also important in the other hamlets. Their strategies could not be easily studied just because they were no longer in the community. This seems to have been overlooked by Geertz. He focused on the community of Modjokuto and the people who lived there during the period of his field work. This was actually only a residual part of that community, since many people had undoubtedly migrated elsewhere, even at the time of Geertz' study. The attitudes, behaviours and strategies of those who had left were unlikely to have been as passive and compliant as those who remained.

In the history and culture of Java there are different models of behaviour and strategy. Geertz took one stereotype and treated it as if it was the only model. Javanese culture certainly values harmony and submission in particular situations. On the other hand, much has also been written, some of it approvingly, about rebels, bandits, Jago figures and bromocorah. These too, represent well-tried strategies for survival.

In 1980 the passive hopelessness of the peasants of Jati resembled an extreme form of the agricultural involution model.

5 Migration is an integral element of population growth, even in the involution model of Javanese development.

6 Particularly relating to the colonial period.
Individual households faced two major choices. They could follow in the footsteps of their forefathers and set off to become new settlers, perhaps building a new 'new' Jati somewhere outside Java. Those who refused to be transmigrated could join other rural communities, where opportunities were also likely to be very limited, or migrate to towns. Even passive submission and acceptance of fate seemed unlikely to save most from a forced move and a new start. In new locations, whether in a transmigration site in the Outer Islands or in a Javanese town, it is likely that their behaviour would much less resemble the Geertz' model. In new situations, like their forefathers, they would probably adopt more daring and positive strategies for survival. As this thesis has shown, not all Javanese peasants follow the same kinds of strategies. Individual peasants might also follow different strategies at different times during their lives. Strategies are determined by circumstances and experiences. As circumstances change and as experiences accumulate, peasants' strategies for surviving in a changing world also change.
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