For people in rural Indonesia – like in many other parts of the world – making a living not only involves the establishment of a day to day livelihood, but also requires firm ways to cope with shocks and stresses endangering the continuity of this livelihood. Not all people live under the same conditions and create security in the same way. In this thesis, the different styles of coping with insecurities and adversities, embedded within local forms of social security, are explored and analysed in detail. It aims to show how people, in the absence of a well-established state system of social security, try to secure a decent living and deal with insecurities and dilemmas such as those between collective or individual procurements.

The author presents material from extensive fieldwork in a remote, upland area in East Java in the late 1990s. Combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the thesis departs from the eventful history of the village and patterns of social inequality and poverty to analyse insecurities and local forms of social security and mutual help. Against the stereotypical views of the strength of traditional, communal or family arrangements to provide social security, the author concludes that many are excluded from the ‘village social security system’ and that it is doubtful if there ever has been a good working social safety net.

People follow different styles in minimizing risks and maximising social security reflecting the habitual and structural dimensions of strategic and creative action. During the economic crisis in Indonesia (starting in 1997), the relative strengths and weaknesses of these styles were taken to the test. Some villagers following entrepreneurial and cash oriented styles – highly successful during the Suharto era – did not do well under crisis conditions, while those oriented towards subsistence and mutual help – often regarded as backward and traditional – were relatively well-protected.

The style approach introduced here reveals differences between people and explains the variety of the responses to insecurity, change, and interventions. Moreover, it enables the reader to understand why villagers organise their livelihoods and social security differently, and why some are more vulnerable or successful than others. It also shows that in rural Java, there is more than poverty, inequality, insecurity, and survival strategies. If we want to understand why some people and households cope better than others, style matters.

ISBN 90-6734-315-3

Cover: Topeng mask collection, courtesy of Nijmegen Ethnological Museum.
Gerben Nooteboom
A Matter of Style

Social Security and Livelihood in Upland East Java

a Matter of Style

Gerben Nooteboom
A Matter of Style
A Matter of Style
Social Security and Livelihood
in Upland East Java

Een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de Sociale Wetenschappen

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, op gezag van de Rector Magnificus Prof.dr. C.W.P.M. Blom volgens besluit van het College van Decanen in het openbaar te verdedigen op

maandag 30 juni 2003
des namiddags om 3.30 uur precies

DOOR

Gerben Nooteboom
geboren op 31 oktober 1970 te Apeldoorn
Promotor:
Prof.dr. F. Hüsken

Co-promotor:
Dr. H.M.C. de Jonge

Manuscriptcommissie:
Prof.dr. B.N.F. White
Institute of Social Studies, Den Haag
Prof.dr. F. von Benda-Beckmann
Max Planck Institute, Halle, Germany
Prof.dr. W.G. Wolters

A MATTER OF STYLE:
Social Security and Livelihood in Upland East Java. / Gerben Nooteboom

Thesis Nijmegen - With ref. - With tables - With maps - With figures - With summary in Dutch.

© Gerben Nooteboom, Nijmegen, 2003


Subject headings:
Indonesia, East Java, Madurese, social security, livelihood, poverty, risk, socio-economic analysis, style, agriculture, upland.

Layout and cover design:
Bart van der Griendt (www.bartvandergRIENDT.nl)

Printed by:
[OPTIMA] Grafische Communicatie, Rotterdam (www.ogc.nl)

Email author:
g.nooteboom@maw.kun.nl

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photoprint, microfilm or any other means, without prior written permission from the proprietor.
CONTENTS

Preface 7

Introduction 11

Four families 12
Development and social policy in Indonesia 18
Fieldwork 23
Outline of the thesis 31

1 Structures and strategies: social security conceptualised 33

A genealogy of social security 34
Related fields of study 39
Social capital and social security 46
Ways forward: beyond provision and strategy 50
Research questions 56
Research methods 56

2 The growth of an upland village 61

A village in upland Java 61
Krajan and Bondowoso 73
A history of the region 76
Changing agriculture 82
Economic history 86

3 Land and land use 95

Land and land use 97
Land transactions 102
Farming for food: livestock, poultry, crops 106
4 Social inequality in Krajan 121
   Wealth and poverty in Krajan 121
   Social classes in Krajan 126
   Direct access to land and cattle 133
   Indirect access to land and cattle: labour relationships 141
   Property, power and prestige 153
   Conclusions 156

5 When life gets difficult: local forms of support 159
   Insecurity in Krajan 163
   Arrangements and institutions for social security 169
   Where or whom to turn to? 176
   Conclusions 189

6 Styles of social security 195
   Cases of coping 197
   Styles in Krajan 206
   Styles: between structures and strategies 216

7 Crickets among the ants: risk taking, sex and gambling 221
   Risk-taking 223
   Risk-taking in Krajan 225
   Analysis of risk-taking practices 238
   Risk-taking, a counter-style? 243
   Conclusions 244

8 Crisis in Krajan: perceptions, effects and politics 247
   Crisis in Indonesia 248
   Government politics 250
   When the crisis came to Krajan 251
   Winners and losers 257
   Surviving the crisis 262
   Government social security 265
   Conclusions 268

   Conclusions 271

Bibliography 281

Glossary 299

Summary in Dutch 303
Writing this thesis has been like weeding a large garden: by the time one end is reached, the other end needs redoing. Every time I went through this garden of ideas, the weeds seemed tougher and more deeply rooted. Moreover, sometimes I got the feeling that I was pulling out carrots and leaving the tares. Many ideas were excluded, remained immature, or are still in need of improvement. Nevertheless, I hope this dissertation contributes to an understanding of the lives of vulnerable people.

In countries such as Indonesia, large parts of the rural population live in poverty and have little hope of escaping. These people do not necessarily face starvation, but they are vulnerable. When disaster strikes, they face difficulties in coping with the social and financial consequences of these calamities. This thesis speaks about the lives of such people and their quest for making a living under conditions of inequality, insecurity, and limited support. Despite this focus on the difficulties of people, I hope this dissertation does not exude hopelessness and desperation. During our stay in the village of Kragen, I became fascinated by the beauty and creativeness of the villagers’ way of life, their hospitality, their openness, and their cheerfulness. Nevertheless, I did not shut my eyes from the more hidden, negative, aspects of their lives. Many faced a chronic lack of security, a constant competition for resources, and experienced widespread conflicts, distrust, and jealousy.

At times, the village reminded me of my Dutch home village, Oene, where people are friendly, helpful, and amiable, but also complex, resentful, and stubborn. In this particular village I have always felt an external insider, and since my early childhood I have observed the harshness of agricultural work,
the joys of reaping the fruits of your own labour, the force of tradition and culture, and the tension between the wish to stay independent and the need to work together. Moreover, I learnt that understanding village life requires more than listening to spoken words alone, it requires an understanding of the unsaid.

Besides the valuable experiences of my village youth, which probably inspired this study more than I am aware of, I remember the precious contacts made there. Once I had moved on to study at Wageningen University, there were other people who had a special impact upon me. I remember the inspiring lectures of Jan Douwe van de Ploeg, Otto Hospes, Sarah Southwold, and Jan den Ouden. Sadly, Jan den Ouden has passed away far too early. All of them inspired me - in their own particular ways - to remain curious, to ask questions, to stay critical, and to go out in the field and search for answers myself.

When I moved to Nijmegen, to work towards this PhD, many people, directly or indirectly, supported me, or contributed to this thesis. Sometimes this support was unexpected, undeserved, and impossible to repay. Notwithstanding all this support, writing a dissertation remained a lonely process and it must have harmed many of my formerly good relationships. In the process of writing up, I often had to refrain from family visits and meeting old friends. I hope they can all understand now why I abstained, but I realise a free copy does not bring back the times we could have spent together.

Special thanks, in this respect, I owe to my parents who, despite their own busy activities and priorities, encouraged me and supported me through good times and bad. The same goes for Jolanda, my wife, who joined in the fieldwork where we worked together, made sacrifices of her own, and enabled us to continue. Her support has been the most precious and crucial to me, and gave me the confidence and security I needed to carry on. I also thank my children Aron and Ellis, who were never a burden, but always a source of gratefulness and constant joy. I hope they will not remember me as the man in the attic, too busy with work, but as a father. Special thanks goes also to Ronald who has not only been a unique friend since childhood, but who remained a friend through the darker times. Ron, I thank you for your support, for listening, for questioning, and finally for structuring the unstructured. Now we both have our books.

On the professional side, I thank Frans Hüsken and Huub de Jonge, who kept coming back with new remarks and comments and, to my despair, continued editing until the book was really finished. Frans, I thank you for coaching me and for your trust and belief. Your style of supervision created space and enabled me to breathe and to continue. I am also grateful to Huub for pointing me towards the Madurese in the first place, and for your eligibility, textual perfection, and for provoking me to write and state what at least I thought to be important. Together, my supervisors were as a strong couple: true parents raising their offspring according to their own proven academic recipes, each in their own style. I do not know if this is the thesis you envis-aged when you recruited me, but I hope you are both happy with it now.
Many others have helped, and I cannot possibly mention them all. Among those I do mention are colleagues and PhD fellows at the Department of Anthropology and Development studies: Catrien Notermans, Ien Courtens, Marijke Steegstra, Robert Verloop, Hein de Haas, Edwin de Jong, Oane Visser and, in the early years, Els Verzijlbergen, Ruud Strijp, Erik Brandt, and Marie-Antoinette Willemsen. I also thank Leo de Haan and Willem Wolters (Willem would enter my room every now and then, mocking, provoking, and putting my dissertation into perspective). Last, but not least, I mention René van der Haar, who patiently endured my sighs and lamentations standing at the printer stone. You probably do not realise how much I enjoyed our contacts.

I thank the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (kNAW) for sponsoring this research, the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) for covering some of the travel costs, CERES for educational support, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) for supporting the work in the field, and the University of Nijmegen and the Population and Policy Study Centre of the Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, for all their support and facilities, both at home and abroad, to bring this project to an end. I also thank the ‘Stichting Fonds voor de Geld- en Effectenhandel’ for contributing to the costs of printing my dissertation. Thanks goes also to Elisabeth Schroder-Butterfill, Chris Kijne, and Jaap Erkelens for their support and inspiration during the various stages of the fieldwork, and I thank André van Tol, the Topografische Dienst Emmen, and the Landmeetkundige dienst Apeldoorn, for assistance with finding, producing, and printing maps. To Giles Stacey many thanks for correcting and editing this dissertation, and to Bart van der Griendt many thanks for helping me through the final stages of shaping this thesis and more than that, of really making it into a book.

I thank all those who gave lengthy and critical comments on earlier drafts of papers and chapters. A special thank goes to my friends and colleagues in the KNW project ‘Social Security and Social Policy in Indonesia’ for their friendship, trust, and helpful comments. Particularly, Hotze Lont, Juliette Koning, Ruli Marianti, and Made Kutanegara, who became friends more than colleagues, and further Ben White, Jan Breman, Irwan Abdullah, Jacqueline Vel, Ratna Saptari, Pujo Semedi, and Agus Indiyanto. Special thanks go also to the members of the ‘Wageningen Social Security Group’ who are extraordinary pleasant and warm people: Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Dick Roth, Arie Brouwer, André Leliveld, and Renske Biezeveld.

I also thank the lads back home, Sjaak Wolfert, Gerard Koorevaar, Jaap van Bergeijk, Arnoud Bosse, and Martijn Bezemer for the nights of nosing and tasting, for critical and personal questions, for vanishing and emerging ideals, and for offering a forum of free complaints. Although we stem from totally different academic backgrounds, I enjoyed the empathic sense of each others’ work and worries. Martijn, I thank you especially, not only for understanding me and my work, but also for your constant comments, criticism, and annoying questions. These questions were major incentives not to stop thinking and improving. I hope you will never stop questioning me.
In Indonesia, I remember the warm hospitality of Andreas Susanto, Made, Ninik, and the rest of the Indonesian Nijmegen group (Mona, Meuthia, Argo, Andreas, Indy, Edwin, Agus, and others). I received great support from the people of the Department of Fisipol, Universitas Jember. Especially, I want to thank Prof. Akhmad Khusyairi, Dr. Bustami Rahman, Drs. Partono, and Drs. Sjoekron. Through you, we had a wonderful introduction to Indonesian life, and we thank you for your support while we were in hospital. We remember Pak and Bu Sjoekron as parents.

Preface

As for the village, special thanks goes to Pak Eko, Bu Sumrati Eko, Mas Abdurahman and Mas Anang who were great translators and who developed into clever, flexible, and creative fieldworkers from whom I learnt more about fieldwork than books could ever teach. Without you, this thesis would not be as it is now. When we said goodbye, I felt I was leaving behind more than just odd friends and colleagues. I hope you will never loose your eagerness and curiosity, and continue to wonder about the world we live in. Besides you, I thank Pak Bambang Suwito for his hospitality, company, and for facilitating me whenever needed.

Above all, I want to thank all those friends, neighbours, and friendly villagers in Krajan for accepting me and my family. It was an honour and privilege to work, learn, and live with you. I thank all of you who patiently explained to me the simplest things over and over again, who answered questions, and recalled stories, figures, events and feelings, sometimes entrusting me with experiences that never were intended to be told. For you, and by you, this thesis is written in the first place.

In all of this, my gratefulness goes out to the Lord who guided, inspired, and protected me through this phase of my life. Throughout this research and writing period I learnt and experienced the truth of this advice:

And further, by these, my son, be admonished:
of making many books there is no end;
and much study is a weariness of the flesh.
Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God, and keep his commandments:
for this is the whole duty of man.

(Ecclesiastes 12:12-13)
Introduction

This study is about difficulties that villagers face in making a living, and about the ways in which they try to safeguard their livelihoods when times get tough. More than anything, it aims at understanding the everyday responses of people when they are confronted with misfortunes, hazards, and major and minor crises in their lives: the multiple ways in which people try to secure their livelihoods over time, directly through their own efforts, or indirectly through support from others. Such actions will vary greatly between people of different social economic background, occupation, age, and gender. Central to this thesis is the notion that people follow diverse trajectories guided by preferences and shaped within structural boundaries. This thesis searches for new ways to deal with this diversity, and aims at an integration between the strategic and structural conditions of making a living and securing support.

Before I address these issues, I will start with a few stories about villagers. These accounts, of villagers from different social classes, highlight central issues of this thesis: unequal access to resources and unequal access to the provision of support, the meaning of personal and institutionalised forms of support, and the diversity in the ways people make a living and cope with difficulties. Moreover, they show the complex dilemmas of everyday life, where short term needs compete with long term interests, sharing with saving, and where social relationships can be supportive as well as a source of insecurity. Although this thesis deals with people living in a small area, the village of Krajan\textsuperscript{1}, close to the Argopuro mountain in East Java, it develops an approach which aims to go beyond the study of small localities and simplified distinctions between survival strategies and village support systems.

\textsuperscript{1} Most of the names of places and people in this study are pseudonyms.
Four families

Living on the margins: Suripa and her granddaughter

*Bu* Suripa is old, but nobody knows her age precisely. She is a widow and lives together with her seven-year-old granddaughter in a small, shabby house. Few villagers know Suripa, as her tiny house lies apart from the settlements, and is invisible from the path to the remote hamlet of Dluwang. She has no relatives in the village except for her granddaughter who was left in her care by Suripa’s daughter when she migrated to Kalimantan six years ago and, due to the somewhat isolated location of her house, neighbours are few.

When her husband died twenty years ago, she paid for his funeral by selling the cow they were taking care of. After that, she occasionally worked in other people’s fields and earned some money by weeding, harvesting, or transplanting rice. It has been many years since she was asked to do that work as she is no longer strong enough. “Nowadays, the only things I own are my agonizing worries.” She can only make bamboo baskets and the money from selling them is just enough to buy some rice and maize to prepare two meals a day for her granddaughter, and one for herself. She does all she can to care for her granddaughter, but is afraid that soon she will not be able to do so anymore.

“If I get ill”, *Bu* Suripa told us, “I would not go to the local health centre because there is no money and my only chance will be to pray to get better so that I will be able to continue to care for my granddaughter.” If her granddaughter should fall ill, she would consider going to the health post if there was some spare money, or someone to borrow from. “For a sick child, they will maybe lend me some. Otherwise, it wouldn’t be possible.” She is afraid of getting indebted and her poor neighbours are very reluctant to lend to her. She would never be able to repay a loan as she has no possessions except for her clothes, basic kitchen utensils, and her decaying house. In the past, she could ask for an advance on her baskets, but nowadays she does not get any credit from the basket trader.

When I asked what had been the most difficult thing for her during the last couple of years, she said that she had been worried when she had no food in the past. She once ate dried cassava too quickly and got sick. Later she learned to soak it longer and to mix it with rice or maize. She told how she got used to simple food and occasional shortages. However, it was not the hunger that was the most difficult thing to bear: “It was the pain in my heart when my child and son-in-law left me for Kalimantan. Until now, I have never heard from them. I don’t even know if they are still alive.” She worries all the time about her house that is leaning a bit and seems to be slowly sliding down the slope. “It might one day collapse on my granddaughter and me. Who will care for my granddaughter when I die? She is still so small, and her father and mother they are no longer here. Who will she live with then?”

Although *Bu* Suripa is extremely lonely and marginalized, and forms the bottom line of Krajan society, it is not exceptional for elderly couples or widows in Krajan to be living alone and taking care of themselves. When they get ill or old, or needy, some of them experience serious difficulties in finding care

---

2 She had even been forgotten in the list made by the head of the hamlet (*kepala dusun*). We included her in the village survey after mapping the area.
or support on a regular basis. In such cases, children, grandchildren, or close relatives are supposed to take care of them, but sometimes there are no children to care, or no relatives who will take full responsibility. In these cases, the neighbourhood occasionally offers support, but this is not always enough. Widows or the elderly who are living with children or who own savings, land, or cattle are better off and better prepared to fulfil their needs.

Observing hierarchies: the Bagenda family

Bagenda is the unrivalled village leader. He is the big man (orang kuat) of Krajan, both feared and respected, believed to possess great - almost supernatural - powers, with a weak spot for women, known to be a daredevil, keen on business, and an incurable gambler. He is judge, mediator, patron, moneylender, tax collector, and caretaker for the village all at the same time: and one of the richest and most generous villagers, helping many others in times of need. He owns things most villagers can only dream of: a big brick house, a luxury car, a pickup truck, a mobile phone (which does not work in the village), good connections with military and police officers, has liaisons with women, and a huge television set with a VCR. It is this television set which is the catalyst to enlightening the pecking order of the village.

Those who want to watch television in Krajan can best go to the house of Bagenda. There the quality is the best, and there is potentially the added bonus of getting close to him. Since 1997, when electricity reached the village, he has had a conspicuous satellite dish on his roof, enabling him to receive all the national and some international channels. Every night, the house is crowded with villagers all trying to watch the television, observe his guests, and the family life of their leader.

If Bagenda is at home, he sits or lies with his wife and daughters on the floor in front of the television. He, or his five-year-old daughter, holds the remote control. Behind them, on the large comfortable coach, his closest relatives sit, as well as important guests, and close friends. It is also the place for Bagenda's stepsister and his mother, Bu Tik, who watches over the guests, and the transactions of her only son. Less important guests and village officials sit on the second row which has a table and a more formal atmosphere.

In front of the television and around this table, village politics are transacted and the most important businesses and political problems are settled or discussed. Financial transactions, however, are rarely completed here. Money nearly always passes hands in the office, a side room, separated by thick curtains and only to be seen by a few insiders. During the fieldwork period, my position shifted slowly from being with the guests on the second row, to the first bench, and then to the floor in front of the television. I also witnessed many of the transactions and discussions in the office. I never got to hold the remote control, though!

Behind the large coach, and the table, there is a final row where close neighbours, distant friends, and kinsfolk dare to sit. In the doorway, the young lads from the neighbourhood, poor neighbours, and Bagenda's farm hands stand. Behind them, outside, common villagers, women, and children try to catch a glimpse of what's going on.

Just as the seating arrangements for guests at rituals, weddings, and funerals reveal people's social status and relationship with the family involved, so the positions of villagers in front of Bagenda's television set reveal much about village hierarchy and social distance.
In general, these seating arrangements not only point to social and political inequalities in the village, but also suggest the likelihood of extra income, a windfall, or support in times of difficulties. The greater the distance from the television, the smaller the chances of making a profit or receiving support from Bagenda during difficult times, and consequently, the less courage villagers have in asking him for a job, a loan, or mediation.

In the surrounding villages, Bagenda is well known for his success. In his eight years of rule, he has been able to improve the economic conditions of his family and the village, and to establish a firm rule. In comparison to other village heads in the area, Bagenda is a very strict leader, less corrupt than many others, but more of a womaniser. Moreover, he is the only one in the area who has managed to prevent revenge murders (carok) taking place in his village. Having good contacts with government officials in town, with loyal villagers, and a keen sense for business, he has been able to implement a considerable number of governmental projects that have been beneficial both for him personally and for the village as a whole. During his rule, he has also been able to reduce the number of thefts, violent conflicts, and cases of sexual abuse.

Bagenda’s strong rule and a well-kept balance between self-interest and redistribution of jobs and resources is the key to this success. In return for redistributing most of the money from governmental development projects, he demands, and receives, loyalty by which he is able to get better access to local resources and government money. From a village perspective, Bagenda is a great patron possessing powerful connections with the military, police, and the regional government. He is not seen, in the first place, as a continuation of the government in the village. In practice however, both functions amalgamate.

It appears that the village head can do whatever he likes. When he goes to religious prayer parties or rituals (selamatan), he is usually late and does not join in the praying. While the others are praying, he smokes cigarettes, holding the tip under the table, and is clearly uninterested. In his house, beer is served openly (even when religious leaders are present). He regularly rents porno films in town to watch at midnight and owns a number of gambling boards and sets of dice, which he rents out to villagers in return for a share of the profit. However, when he visits the heads of the district, or the religious leaders (kiai) of important religious schools in the region, he is humble and sits in the second or third row.

Fallen from affluence: the Satrawi family

When the heat of the day has all but gone and the sun sets towards Mount Argopuro, the villagers of Krajan go out to visit friends and neighbours. On many of these afternoons, I visited Pak Satrawi, a friendly and talkative neighbour. At this time of the day, he would usually be sitting in front of his bamboo house, freshly bathed and wearing his green sarong - the only one he has - awaiting maghrib, the prayer at sunset. It is hard to estimate Satrawi’s age. I guess he is around sixty, and in Krajan this means you are getting old; work starts to become a burden especially when times get tough. Satrawi married about thirty years ago to a daughter of a relatively rich family but, nowadays, not much
of these riches are left. They had six children and adopted a seventh. Now, three of their children are married, one has died, and three still live at home.

"Nowadays, my household owns only a tiny plot of infertile land, not enough to feed the family for more than two months," he tells me. "In the past, however, we belonged to the better-off in the neighbourhood." Colourless remnants of woodcarvings above the doors and inside their house recall this more glorious past. But now, the house looks shabby and worn-out, windowpanes have been sold, and the roof is in urgent need of repair. "Our match was not good, they say. I probably should not have married my wife," Satrawi sighs, "but what else did we do wrong?"

There, in front of his house - and in the houses of neighbours and old friends - I was gradually told the full story of the Satrawi family. It is a long history of a family going from riches to rags through a combination of misfortune, sheer bad luck, and perhaps an inability to read the changes in the social and economic fabric of Krajan society over time.

After marriage, they inherited many ricefields, dry fields, and cattle. They were part of the top echelon of Wringinkurung, Upper Krajan. Many recall how, in the past, Satrawi was charitable towards poor people, gave alms to the needy and staged huge parties where everybody felt welcome, even his poor neighbours. Gradually, fifteen years ago, things started to decline in the house of Satrawi. The selamatan performed to commemorate their parents' deaths were costly, cattle and land were sold, and additional more land had to be pawned. Their second daughter died a year after her marriage while giving birth, leaving a grandchild to be taken care of and costly rituals to perform. Ami, their third daughter divorced and remarried three times within six years, which cost a fortune. Additionally, she had to be treated in hospital for over a month and so more land had to be pawned.

Notwithstanding dwindling resources, Bu Satrawi continued to spend money freely on expensive food such as fish, chicken, noodles, coffee, and sugar. She was known for her nice collection of sarong and "her children looked like princesses", as people say in the neighbourhood. She kept up her lifestyle even when the family income was far too low to finance all her luxurious expenditures. The pawned ricefields had to be sold, and more land had to be pawned in order to obtain credit to keep up appearances and to meet the demands of the ritual exchange economy (organising large selamatan and giving expensive presents). They still hoped to recover from their misfortune, but as their main resources such as cattle and land had gone, household income fell drastically making it impossible to repay debts and regain the pawned lands.

They had to cope themselves with the high costs of weddings, hospitalisation, and burials and related selamatan, as they did not receive sufficient support from their relatives and neighbours. They did not cut down enough on expenses and could not prevent themselves from losing nearly all their land, and becoming one of the poorest families in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, Satrawi is still invited to weddings, praying groups and selamatan, often as a special guest or as a prayer leader (freeing him from the obligation of contributing financially). He is known as a good and respectable man, a good prayer leader, who never complains and is always ready to join mutual help and cooperative labour activities. He does not try to keep up appearances now that he is poor. By knowing his place, he is accepted by everyone. "His wife is different. She still has difficulties in adjusting to lower living standards and rejects work such as helping with kitchen activities in the houses of rich people", Bu Maryami, a neighbour, commented. "She never learnt to work. Still today, she cannot do dirty work and instead calls her daughter to do it. Bu Satrawi is still so haughty."
Probably they backed the wrong horse by clinging for too long to old values and investments in mutual help, social relations, and the status gained from huge parties and rituals. Probably they made poor choices in neglecting to accumulate and command their own resources. When confronted with a series of misfortunes, little came back from all the efforts and money they had invested in mutual help, gifts, and their good name. Now, living in poverty, they clutch at their last straw: the former large network of neighbours and friends. Perhaps something of the former investments will be returned. During fieldwork, I often asked myself, like Satrawi, why they made these choices, did they make a mistake, and could they have done it differently? Moreover, how durable would their livelihood be if new hardships strike?

During the economic crisis of late 1990s, and the subsequent rapid inflation, Satrawi’s cash income dropped even further and he could no longer buy items such as fish, eggs, noodles, coffee, sugar, or cigarette wrapping paper. Now he uses the dried leaves of maize cobs to roll his own cigarettes. Every time I met him, he smiled happily, but his face looked older and more tired. If I asked him how he was, the answer was always the same: “Biasa, biasa saja, kerja terus... Alhamdulillah saya masih makan”, (‘The same, the same, we just work on... Thank God, I can still eat’). Indeed, although the cash income of the household decreased substantially and prices trebled in the course of one year, 1998, Satrawi’s family did not slide down much deeper. Although their own resources were completely used up, friends and neighbouring landowners continued to offer him work every now and then. By working their fields, he earned some income in kind (rice and maize). They helped his family out with some small loans, free meals and invitations to religious parties and selamatan where food is served and can be taken home. Also, Satrawi’s fourth son, Saleh, married into a richer family who owned rice fields and were active in house construction. “I hope Saleh will be able to support himself, and maybe us, in the future”, Satrawi said.

**Upwardly mobile: Patik**

The story of one of Satrawi’s neighbours, the Patik family, forms quite a contrast. The house of Pak Patik is made from solid bricks, and stands on a hill a hundred metres above the crowded and dirty neighbourhood where Satrawi lives. Ironically, while the family of Satrawi fell from relative wealth to poverty in the course of a dozen years, in the same period the Patik family moved from rags to riches. In the past, Patik and his wife worked for the Satrawi family, and now Satrawi works for the Patik family.

Pak Patik, a cattle trader, is a self-made man, and he is proud of this. He likes to wear good shirts and jeans, and often wraps an expensive sarong over his shoulders, making his tall figure even more imposing. When Patik enters a house, he enters slowly and with

---

3 Compared to other villages in Java that maintain more intensive contacts with urban centres and the national cash economy, the crisis was felt rather late in Krajan. Krajan villagers place the beginning of the crisis at Ramadan, at the end of December 1997, when they started to prepare for Idul Fitri and realised that prices were rising faster than usual during Ramadan. For a detailed account of the crisis in Krajan, see Chapter 8.
dignity. He even says he is not afraid of the village head, and that one day he will run for village head himself. However, when sitting in the same room as Bagenda, the village head, he is noticeably silent. Other villagers all agree that the story of Patik is a good one, and that he is very clever, perhaps too clever, in accumulating wealth.

He was one of the former friends and frequent visitors at Satrawi’s parties in the past, and used to be a poor labourer in Satrawi’s fields. Nowadays, as a rich man, he seems to have forgotten the former generosity of the Satrawi family. Patik’s children played in Satrawi’s house and were given sweets and snacks but, now, they order him around when working in the fields and only pay him any respect because of his age. However, their father is said to be worse.

“Patik has no heart”, villagers say. Even if he has ready money in his pocket, he does not lend money to less fortunate villagers such as Satrawi. “Those people don’t know how to deal with money”, Patik says. “I will not give them money, because they only know how to spend it. They should take better care of their own money.” Saleh, the son of Satrawi, put it differently: “If I ask for help or money, there is none to be had they say, but, if I am in need and want to sell a cow, or if I need to pawn a piece of land, definitely there is money.” Indeed, ironically, half of the five hectares of land that Patik has acquired over the last fifteen years, was once the property of Pak Satrawi, his former patron and protector who now is a labourer on his own land.

In Patik’s perception, he acquired his wealth on his own merits. At least that is what he likes his visitors to believe. However, people say, in fact it was his wife who did most of the work in managing the lands, controlling the household budget, and building up a large network of labourers through exchanging gifts with neighbours and friends in the village. She comes from a relatively well-off family, but only inherited a small area of rice field because her father used almost all his land, cattle, and money to finance his pilgrimage to Mecca. According to neighbours, she used to work terribly hard, and for years did not ask for anything for herself being determined to regain the ‘lost’ family property. She became famous for saying: “Don’t spend, save the money to buy a calf first.” Although thrifty, neighbours generally respect her, and all mention her kindness. She secretly offers free meals to poor children from the neighbourhood on a regular basis and is willing to provide small incidental loans (in the form of cash, rice or maize) for the wives of their labourers. Besides this, labourers praise the food she serves for being tasty. “There you get real coffee, and plenty of sugar in it”, they say, “she is not like her husband, who is even too greedy to buy cigarettes for his workers.” Without her, probably no-one would have been willing to work for Patik and so help him make his wealth.

In Patik’s view, he, and he alone, can take care of their family wealth, and he even tries to check all the expenditure of his wife. Others are not entitled to his support: “because nobody has helped me in the past.” He once said: “Why should I help someone who should be able to take care of themselves?” Only if people are struck by disaster he is willing to support them, he says. Patik is not hold in high esteem in the neighbourhood: not because his new riches have made him arrogant, but because he only tries and tries to increase his wealth still further. “He doesn’t notice common people. In the past he was poorer than I am, but now he only thinks about money.” Patik himself says he doesn’t want to have too many social relations. “Having too many friends is an expensive business.”
These examples show that the lives and living conditions of the people of Krajan are not stable, cannot be taken for granted, and can change quickly. Poverty and affluence are not fixed categories, and neither are friendships or other social ties. Wealth can diminish over the years, and friends or relatives can disappear or turn out to be unreliable partners. Sometimes only minor events or misfortunes are enough to trigger the downfall of a family while others receive support. Conversely, with some luck, hard work, and in favourable conditions, some manage to rise above the others, and establish a stronger livelihood or better support relationships. How should one capture these differences between social economic classes, events, and trajectories?

The examples also show that people seldomly bring about major changes in their livelihoods on their own. Households consist of men, women, children, and (often) parents. These members might have conflicting interests, but they often eat together, work together, pool resources, and care and support each other. As a household, and sometimes as individuals, members exchange gifts, cooperate or compete, claim or provide support to other households and individuals in times of need. Establishing and maintaining good relationships with others is of crucial importance for enhancing and maintaining a living while, at the same time, others can also be a major source of insecurity. It is precisely the ways in which people handle insecurities, both alone and together, and the dilemmas of exchange and support, that form the core of this thesis.

The thesis aims to understand how poor families, such as the Satrawi family, and widows like Suripa, obtain and maintain access to resources and support; it also aims at uncovering any patterns or trajectories that exist in the ways people try to obtain and maintain access. Are they just unlucky or have others had a better strategy, a stronger household or a better network of support relationships? Do viable relationships, arrangements, and institutions in villages such as Krajan exist to protect villagers against the negative consequences of misfortune and contingencies? And if so, who cares - and under what conditions - for the vulnerable and weak members of society if they cannot make a living themselves, or when their sources of livelihood are severely hampered by misfortune or unforeseen contingencies?

Development and social policy in Indonesia

In the above-mentioned cases, the state did not play a major role as provider of support to the needy and poorer members of society. This is no coincidence. For poorer sections of the population in rural Indonesia, state programmes for poverty eradication and social security are often not relevant, although individual civil servants can be important (Von Benda-Beckmann & Von Benda-Beckmann, 1998: 145). There are no large, nationwide social security schemes providing cover against major contingencies for all people. Relatives, friends, neighbours, patrons, and village leaders - as well as individual preparations such as like savings, stocks, and assets - are more important for support in times of need.
The above-mentioned cases and questions consider people in the relatively small world of the village. However, the lives of the villagers are not confined to the village: villagers are part of, and live within, a wider regional and national context. Villages are not isolated communities, but interknit with the outside world through politics, the media, networks of kin, migration, trade, and religion. Following independence, Indonesian society has been thoroughly transformed, and so have villages and the lives of villagers.

In the mid-1990s, it was thought that Indonesia would become one of the economic 'miracles' in Asia, able to sustain high growth levels and be successful in the eradication of poverty. In 1996, for instance, the Australian economist Hal Hill wrote an optimistic book on the modernisation and development of the Indonesian economy: *The Indonesian Economy since 1966: Asia's Emerging Giant*. His analysis of the Indonesian economy included a core section on agricultural developments in which he states that the New Order (Orde Baru) regime had been successful in creating rural development and improving rural people's livelihoods. Ironically, a year after the publication of his book, Indonesia faced a severe economic crisis, and economic development was pushed back many years.

Notwithstanding the setback in Indonesia's economic development in the late 1990s, impressive changes have taken place at the economic, social, cultural, and demographic levels in recent decades. To mention just a few: population growth has decreased, education and basic healthcare have improved, economic growth has increased and large masses of the rural population have migrated to the large cities. These, and other, developments have led to higher life expectancy, widespread commercialisation, industrialisation, globalisation, as well as to individualisation and Islamisation.

Economic development during the New Order regime also brought a gradual shift of focus to the urban areas, and urban problems of unemployment and poverty. New Order attention to the rural areas materialised in a series of rural development programmes, such as the Green Revolution programme⁴ and the 'Colt Revolution'⁵, road construction projects, electrification and the development of small-scale industries. Between 1975 and 1997, the living conditions in rural areas of Indonesia did, in general, improve significantly. At the same time, in most areas, the pressure on rural resources did not increase further, and the negative consequences of decreasing fertility figures and the migration of many (often landless) villagers to the cities in search of work became visible. New Order policies created rapid agricultural development, increased rural incomes, but also put a strain on employment. While agricultural production increased, inequality grew, and

---


⁵ The 'Colt' was a popular vehicle and its name became synonymous with the improvement of transport and migration opportunities.
employment opportunities for landless villagers decreased so rapidly that a growing number of young villagers left to work in the cities.\textsuperscript{6}

These processes were most evident in lowland Java, but also in the less-densely populated highland areas did similar agricultural revolutions also take place (Hefner, 1990; Murray-Li, 1999; Palte, 1989; White, 1999). Hefner (1990), who carried out research in mountainous East Java, some forty kilometres from Krajan, notes one of the consequences:

> Right up through the late 1960s, cheap land had been a distinctive feature of upland society. As has been reported elsewhere in Southeast Asia (Scott 1985, 69) the green revolution has changed this. [...] For the land-poor, the escalation in land prices represents a development as significant as the closing of forestlands at the beginning of the century. A small window of opportunity has closed. The very developments that have brought prosperity to more affluent farmers have reduced economic mobility among the poor. Long more permeable than in lowland society, the boundary between landed and landless has become firmer” (Hefner, 1990: 130).

Another effect of this development is that villages have become less isolated and partly urbanised. Many rural areas in Java have started to look like desakota or rural regions (McGee, Watters, & Sullivan, 1997), and urban and rural economies have started to merge. Therefore, when urbanised Java was affected by the severe economic crisis in 1997, rural areas were similarly affected. Even in economically remote rural areas - within and beyond Java - the crisis was felt with much force. Due to the economic crisis, with rising prices for the most important basic needs, the burden on villagers became heavier and particularly so for poor families.

Notwithstanding the major achievements of the New Order government in creating economic growth and reducing poverty, widespread and persistent poverty has remained a problem in Indonesia. According to the official statistics for 1991, 15% of the population were living below the poverty line, and larger numbers were living just above it. In 1998, following the onset of the economic crisis, 40% of the population were living below the poverty line, and many others were at risk of falling below the poverty line, facing major difficulties in making ends meet (Breman, 2000; Levinsohn, Berry, & Friendman, 1999; Nehru, 1998). These figures show that, in the middle and longer term, the quest to create and maintain secure livelihoods for large numbers of Indonesians will remain very important and therefore this deserves continuing attention.

It is especially the consequences of poverty such as inequality, vulnerability, and insecurity which are relevant to this study. In general, poor people face different and more frequent insecurities than richer people, and it is especial-
ly the failure of support or support systems that makes people vulnerable. These considerations have been constantly debated over the years and expressed in questions of sharing or impoverishment of rural areas in Indonesia (especially Java). There have been many studies on rural Java concerning poverty, inequality, and social class, while others have taken sharing, support, and cooperation as their starting point. Many of the latter only partly or indirectly touched on the lives of people in coping with insecurity and social security, and instead offer a static, limited, romanticised, or distorted picture of rural societies in Java.

The well-known work of Clifford Geertz on *agrarian involution* (1963), can be seen as an example of such a study, focussing on the sharing and redistribution mechanisms in Javanese society. He claims, in his influential book: *Agricultural Involution: the Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia*, that in rural Java widespread levelling mechanisms of shared poverty existed. He argued that rural populations in Java reacted to population pressure and decreasing resources by sharing their poverty and by a continuing process of increasing labour intensification in wet rice production. The shared poverty idea of Geertz has been disputed by later research on Java which showed widespread inequality and poverty in rural economies, thus disproving the existence of a shared poverty ethic. White (1983) gives a clear analysis of this later view on the idea of shared poverty.

"...No observer would dispute the existence of a pervasive public ideology of sharing and reciprocity in Javanese society - nor the widespread, actual 'sharing of poverty' within the marginal and landless classes, the crucial error of agricultural involution lies in assigning to this ethic a determinant role in regulating the actual relations of distribution between classes" (White, 1983: 27).

The discussion on sharing and support versus inequality and poverty in rural Java still lingers on. Some conclude that, although moralities of sharing can be found in many Javanese villages, these societies tend to remain highly egalitarian with regard to the distribution of resources (Hüsken & White, 1989: 260). In the whole of Java, landlessness and near-landlessness have been widespread phenomena. In 1983, some 43% of the rural population had no land at all (Hüsken, 1989; Hüsken & White, 1989). Associated with this debate is

---


9 See Hüsken & White (1989: 255-158) for these figures and more details.
another on whether New Order changes in agriculture led to more wealth for all, or to a new schism in society. Edmundson (1994) argues that, on average, inequalities in the distribution of wealth in the rural areas did not increase. Others have shown that the incomes of the larger landowners increased and that labour wages also increased, “but slower (while still being among the lowest of Asia)” (White & Wiradi, 1989: 81), and that the gap between rich and poor thus increased. Simultaneously, other important changes in the rural wage structure took place through diminishing harvest shares (wages in kind) (Hüsken & White, 1989: 249).

This contrasts sharply with the rosy image of the communal Javanese village. The Javanese village has been often mythologised as harmonious due to the existence of various arrangements for mutual help (Geertz, 1963; Jay, 1969; Koentjaraningrat, 1967b; Koning, 1997: 33). Why is this image of harmonious villages so persistent that, even at the end of the 1990s when the economic crisis started, shared poverty ideas regularly cropped up in the thinking of governmental and academic elites, leading to inertia in dealing with the problems of the poor in rural areas. It could well be beneficial for some groups in Indonesia to maintain this discourse. During the 1997 crisis, for instance, politicians could easily believe that the effects of the crisis were not as bad in the villages as in urban areas. Recognition of the problematic impact of the crisis on poverty in rural areas would have required taking some action. They, instead, obviously opted to focus on the huge urban problems, and leave the village community to make ends meet by *gotong royong*, solidarity, and mutual help. They could do so relatively easily as urban elites rarely went and stayed in villages, and simply did not want to know about disharmony, inequalities between groups and classes, and between local regions within those villages (Kutanegara & Nooteboom, 2000).

If we, then, want to group present-day social realities in rural Java, we need to set aside such stereotypes and classical views of the Javanese countryside, and move beyond agricultural involution, social class, and poverty debates. A social security approach, with a keen eye on diversity, offers such a way forward. However, before going into the theoretical detail of such an approach in the next chapter, I first want to introduce briefly the research area, my fieldwork, and the vagaries of living in Krajan.

---

10 The anthropologist Jellinek stated in Kompas of February 10, 1999 that the effects of the crisis, which hit Indonesia a year earlier, did not affect rural people very much. On behalf of the World Bank, she had carried out a rapid appraisal of the effects of the crisis in Indonesia in certain urban and rural areas. According to her, the effects of the crisis were much worse in the cities because of the lack of social support networks there (assuming these were still present in villages). At the beginning of the 1997 crisis, Harmoko (parliament spokesman and prominent member of Suharto’s Golkar party) visited some rural areas in Central Java to observe the situation in the villages (*safari Ramadan*). He spoke to village officials and had dinner (*buka puasa*) in one of the villages visited. The dinner was well prepared, and after his visit Harmoko stated in interviews on television and for newspapers that the situation in the rural areas was not so bad because he had had a good meal, and *solidarity is still strong in the villages*, implying that plenty of food was available for everybody (See also: Jawa Pos, December 1997).
When selecting the location for this study, I was looking for a relatively poor upland area, that was commercially somewhat isolated, since relatively few studies have been done in dry, poor, and under-commercialised upland areas of Indonesia,\textsuperscript{11} despite the large numbers of people living in such places.\textsuperscript{12} Moreover, I wanted to study an area with a diverse agro-ecological landscape to rule out the influence of monocultures on social security arrangements and institutions. I found such an area in Krajan, an upland village along a road in the dry isolated upland area between Bondowoso and Besuki, East Java. Due to the diversity of agro-ecological conditions in this area, and the hilly and rugged terrain, many different crops can be grown in a relatively small area. Each of these has its own specific requirements in terms of capital and labour inputs, and each of them carry specific risks and vulnerabilities.

Krajan is a medium sized village which lies on the dry and infertile northern slope of Mount Argoepuro, twenty kilometres from Bondowoso and around twenty-five kilometres from the town of Besuki in East Java. The village lies in the centre of a poor and infertile hilly area, at an altitude between 800 and 1,100 metres, on a mountain ridge. Compared to most villages on Java, Krajan has been relatively isolated - both economically and politically - for a very long time. Founded in the first half of the 19th century by Madurese immigrants in search of land and by workers of the neighbouring coffee gardens, it remained a remote and semi-autonomous frontier area for many years. Only since 1994 has the village road to Krajan been asphalted. Presently, regular daily transport to Bondowoso or Besuki is available, making more frequent and intense contacts with the outside world possible. These cities, and the subdistrict capital Pakem, are the main market centres for villagers.

An important part of the household economies of villagers relies on subsistence production and self sufficiency in basic needs, and most villagers only go to the city markets for the purchase of oil, sugar, cigarettes, or the sale of cows, tobacco, and bamboo baskets. The area around Krajan has a low agricultural production base due to its infertile soils, limited agricultural opportunities and related economic activities. The village itself has around 3,400 inhabitants of whom the majority engage in some form of farming supplemented with other income-generating activities such as trade, handicraft production, and house construction. The average purchasing power of villagers is low: incomes are small and the area is a so-called ‘backward vil-


\textsuperscript{12} As far as I know, exact figures for people living in upland areas are not known, but Murray-Li suggests that the estimated number of people living in forest areas may serve as a proxy. Bappenas 1993 (quoted in Murray-Li 1999) acknowledges twelve million people living in forest areas. "Other estimates [of people living in upland areas] are much higher" (Murray-Li, 1999: xiv).
In contrast to most villages on Java, migration rates are low and most of the migrants do not work in cities, but are wage labourers in Kalimantan, Bali, or Madura, where returns on labour are relatively low. Therefore, remittances from migration are not very significant to the village economy as a whole.

Conditions that add to the weak production base of Krajan are the insecurities in crop outputs due to the infertile soils, malfunctioning irrigation canals, and climatic circumstances. The village of Krajan receives slightly more rain than other villages in the region due to its high altitude and location but, rains are irregular and the dry season is long. For four to six months a year practically no crops can be grown. There are only a few irrigation channels and irrigable ricefields are scarce. Land tenure in Krajan is unequally distributed among households, albeit less unequal than in most lowland Javanese villages (Hart, Turton, & White, 1989; Hefner, 1990; Husken, 1989; Husken & White, 1989).

The village lies along a branch road from the main Bondowoso-Besuki road heading towards the steep slopes of Mount Argopuro. The Bondowoso-Besuki road is a spur of the old trunk road (Jalan Raya Pos) which stretches along the north coast of Java. The Krajan road cuts through three agro-ecological zones: a lowland and lower slope area (< 500 metres), a mid-slope hilly area (500-1,000 metres) and an upper-slope mountainous area (> 1,000 metres). Krajan bridges the mid-slope and upper-slope areas. The lowland zone has primarily sawah with rice and maize or sugarcane, and dry permanent fields (tegal) with maize and tobacco. The mid-range zone has only a few irrigated plots and much tegal where maize, cassava, and tobacco dominate; and the upper zone has maize, some rice, tobacco, and a small coffee plantation.

The junction, where the Krajan road branches off the main road is at the watershed between Besuki and Situbondo and represents a local landmark to villagers. Although many houses are built along the main road, these houses do not make up an independent village but belong administratively to two adjacent administrative units (desa). The junction has no market place, but forms a natural division between village and town, and between inland Bondowoso and coastal Besuki. At this place, the mountains meet the lowlands. Here, at the same time, one can see barefoot villagers, selling their last chicken, and tourists or rich city people in long-distance busses from Jember, Bondowoso, and sometimes even Bali, heading for Surabaya or Jakarta. Sometimes these busses stop at the junction for minor repairs, or for a quick refreshment break at one of the food stalls selling cookies, meals, and local snacks and fruits such as sweet fermented cassava (tapé), mango, rambutan, or durian. Usually, however, the bus drivers ignore the shouting children and waving sellers and pass on by, keeping passengers and spectators apart.

---

13 IDT stands for *Impress Desa Tertingal* (*Instruksi Presiden Desa Tertingal*) and refers to a decree by the president regarding special developmental programmes and funds to remote and under-developed villages.

14 About 5% of the population has a family member working elsewhere.
The junction resembles a non-place (Augé, 1999), a border area, not really lowland and not really mountainous either. In Krajan, it has a bad reputation: as a hotbed of crime, gambling, and prostitution. Conversely, in the eyes of the city dwellers, here the safety and predictability of modern lowland Java ends. Foreigners are warned not to go beyond here into the mountains, as the people are supposed to be fierce, dangerous, and hot-headed. The junction, with its small shops, fruit stalls, repair shops, petrol sellers, and densely-built stone houses along the road looks like many of those *rurban* areas to be found along all long-distance roads in Java and Southeast Asia: combining city and hinterland, not being clearly one or the other. After the junction, it is still another ten kilometres uphill before you reach the village office of Krajan.

*Introduction*

*Living in Krajan*

Before moving with my wife and one-year-old son to the village of Krajan in October 1997, I sought permission from Bagenda, the village head, to settle down for over a year. He liked the idea of foreigners living in the village, but was concerned about a suitable place for us. The only place he could think of was his own house, or the house of his sister which was attached to his house. We were not very attracted to the idea of living in, as we reckoned that the compound would give us little privacy. I was also afraid that living in the house of the village head would limit my freedom and independence during

---

15 In total, the fieldwork lasted 15 months divided in two periods; a first period from October 1997 to October 1998, and a second from May to August 1999.
fieldwork, and I did not want to be associated with Bagenda’s friends and factions. Besides that, I wanted a place that at least enabled us to receive our own guests. So we refused politely but firmly.

During initial visits to the village, I also talked with Bagenda’s neighbours and people hanging around at the nearby coffee stall. Someone told us about Pak Asus, a widower living alone with a small boy, who had recently hosted workers for the electrification project in the village. His brick house stood a few hundred metres down the road, small and run-down, sufficiently far from the village head to live independently but close enough to be able to visit him regularly. It was located somewhat above the road, on a hill at the edge of a small neighbourhood and the coffee stall.

Pak Asus moved to one room at the back of his house and we occupied the guest room with two small bedrooms. We paid a year’s rent in advance and bought paint for the walls and the windows, iron sheets to improve the roof, wood and board for further repairs, and built a small private bathing-place. On one of these early days, Bagenda’s wife came and suggested finding us a domestic helper to do the cooking, washing, cleaning, and child caring. Again, it was hard to refuse, but we suggested asking the daughter of Patik, one of our new neighbours, in the hope of keeping the involvement of the Bagenda family to a minimum.

Although privacy was far from guaranteed, we could at least run our own household, receive guests, and at the same time live somewhat apart from the dominant families in the village. These proved to be good choices as my study progressed. Our friendly neighbours allowed us to participate intensively in their daily life, while we were still living close to the road, the warung, the village office, and the house of the village head. It turned out to be a strategic spot, enabling us to interact on a daily basis with villagers, while being able to follow the most important meetings, visits, happenings, and comings and goings of guests, on the village’s central stage.

Soon after settling in Krajan, the small veranda in front of our house became a meeting place where neighbours and friends would sit down to smoke, chat, and tell stories or jokes. It would remain a get-together place for more than a year. From these casual talks, gossip, and sometimes heated debates, we learnt a lot about the daily activities of our neighbours, village life in general, and about the villages past. Moreover, they offered a forum where I could crosscheck any information I had gathered during the day. Patently they would explain the most trivial events in their lives and repeat them over and over again until I understood. Such long talks with villagers and my experiences in participation in village life formed a crucial source of additional information to the systematic data collected in the two surveys and the many semi-structured interviews (see the methodological discussion in Chapter 1). In this way, I gathered subjective accounts of insecurity, cooperation, and survival in the village, all contributing to my search for and understanding of, support and subsistence in the village. Moreover, by participating in as many as possible activities, by using intuition, and by visiting people at different times of the day, I had chances to discover aspects of village life I could never
have imagined of in advance. Many of these I found by accident, while other opportunities were more-or-less deliberately created. An example of such unforeseen chances (serendipity) is how I came across gambling in the village.\(^\text{16}\)

During the first two months of fieldwork, I noticed the importance of gambling in village life only from a distance. I was still busy visiting all the important families and leaders in the village, making good impressions, and learning the basic rules of village life. Sometimes, I came across a group of people playing cards or gambling on big occasions such as village festivals, weddings, and bull fights. Initially, I had thought that gambling was a rather isolated activity of a small group of diehards. Each time I tried to get to know more about gambling, I received vague answers, or negative stories about these bad and wayward people (orang nakal). Later I found out that relatively many people must be engaged in gambling but friends and close neighbours, who obviously wanted to maintain a good impression with me, answered vaguely or assured me they were not like the gamblers.

One day, I heard rumours about regular gambling going on in a coffee shop nearby because one of the youngsters who had won money was sharing an expensive brand of cigarettes with his friends when I walked in. Later that day, I asked if someone knew where it was and when the gambling usually took place. My neighbours remained silent and only after repeated questions did they tell me they were not able to take me there, as they did not know either the exact time or the location. I then decided to ask some of the youngsters with whom I had already established good relationships.

To my surprise, the gambling den proved to be at the back of the warung where I used to chat and drink coffee in the morning. I heard the sounds of rolling dice and, when I entered the room, they all rose, looked surprised or scared, and gazed at me. The small place was lit with a shimmering light and was occupied by more than a dozen people from the same vicinity including the village head. I smiled and said: "I heard there was gaming..."
around and I wanted to join." Immediately, I drew out some small change and threw it on to the playing board. They all laughed, relieved, allowed me to join, and the game continued.

That night I played carefully and long. Eventually I won Rp 40,000 (nearly ten times a labourer's day wage). The next day, I was the talk of the neighbourhood. All the neighbours, even those who had assured me they were not gamblers, congratulated me, and asked me to recall the story of the game. Some now admitted they were playing every night, and others warned me against playing too recklessly because they had lost huge amounts in the past.

Some of the women in the neighbourhood came to my wife, trying to find out if she knew that I had been playing that night. When she told them she did not mind, as long as I played for fun with small amounts, they smiled understandably. The people in the neighbourhood seemed very relieved to find out that I liked playing and was not too conceited.

This event proved a breakthrough in my fieldwork and opened the door to discussing more sensitive subjects. From this time onwards, I felt accepted and people started to open up. At the same time, I was very careful not to gamble too often and risk my reputation as I needed to maintain good contacts with the religious elites who were heavily opposed to such practices.

In Krajan, many people are bilingual, able to speak both Indonesian and Madurese. About half of the male population and about a quarter of the women were able to speak Indonesian fluently. Others could speak some Indonesian, but about a quarter, mostly the elderly and women, were not able to speak any Indonesian. Communicating with those who were not fluent in Indonesian was sometimes difficult, and in those cases I had to ask for help from bystanders or assistants. In casual village life, there were always people willing to explain what was going on if I did not understand something. Sometimes these translations were explanations in themselves, and the comparison between explanations given by different people, enhanced my understanding of local terms and frames of meaning and interpretation.

On many occasions, Pak Eko, my assistant, was present and he helped me in translating from Madurese into Indonesian if needed. Moreover, he translated and assisted with the village survey, and with the many long in-depth interviews. Sometimes, he brought his wife and nephew Abdurahman along and they also assisted with the interviews. Bu Eko translated many of the in-depth interviews with women and widows (often with my wife), and

---

17 Something similar happened, later, at the start of Ramadan. I decided to fast with the villagers. Every night, those neighbours who still fasted prayed in the prayer house attached to my house. After six days of fasting, I had difficulties with working and I became very thirsty, so I decided to stop fasting and took some drinks and food in private. When I was eating, one of my neighbours entered the room. He directly told all my neighbours I was not fasting anymore and they smiled relieved. From that time on, I spotted many of them smoking or sipping coffee at daytime in their house. That night, hardly anybody showed up in the praying house.
Abdurahman was a helper in many ways, never tiring of writing down stories, lists, and prices. Abdurahman, son of a former village official for religious and marriage affairs, was an important source of information in himself.

Both the Ekos descended from former village heads. Their grandfathers were rich, owned large plots of sawah, and had competed heavily to win elections. Both grandparents had lost most of their wealth, but could still send their children to high school in Bondowoso. The Ekos were perfect assistants, eager to learn, neither too rich, nor too poor. They had a good reputation in the village, their status was not too high and not too low, and they were not too close to Bagenda the village head, but also not too distant. They were acceptable to all the informants, never haughty and never shy. Moreover, they were great friends and always eager to learn more about their own society.

Socially and economically, my wife and I tried to assume a modest status as far as possible, and maintained a living standard below that of the village head in the hope of making ourselves acceptable persons for all social classes in Krajan. Our house, motorbike, selamatan, refrigerator, and coffee cups were smaller and cheaper than his, and I even smoked a cheaper brand of cigarettes than that of the village head. However more than adjusting to the villagers’ ways of life and maintaining a modest lifestyle, our one-year-old son was the key to participation, integration, and acceptance in the village although we realised we would always remain outsiders and ‘strange bedfellows’. His blue eyes and blond hair made us welcome visitors on every occasion and eased social interaction. By bringing him along on visits, contacts could be made quickly, interaction became more natural and formed a sound basis for participatory activities, friendships, visits, interviews, and collecting life histories.

Sometimes it was rather difficult to separate our various roles in the village. We were a Western married couple, a family participating in Madurese village life, and researching at the same time our setting. On the one hand, we were inhabitants of the village and twenty-four hours a day doing our best to understand and engage in everyday village life, acting as inhabitants of the vil-

---

18. Most villagers speak Indonesian to me, others who were not able to try Madurese. After a few months, I was able to understand their Madurese mixed with Indonesian and talked about casual subjects with my Madurese speaking neighbours without the help of a translator. However until the end of the fieldwork period, I still needed the help of a translator for the more in-depth and lengthy interviews. At the beginning of the research period, I talked only in Indonesian, and friends, neighbours, and informants answered in Indonesian, Madurese, or with a mix of these languages. Later, I was increasingly able to speak and understand some casual Madurese (kasar), which has a lot of words similar to Indonesian. I never mastered the more polite Madurese language (halus), which is used to address people who are higher in status. If I wanted to talk with these people, I could get by with speaking Indonesian.

19. In the first week after moving into the village, Bagenda’s wife paid a visit and inspected our refrigerator. Although the fridge was smaller than hers, she was very upset about it. Mbak Titik, our domestic helper, told us she had a monopoly on ice production in the village and was very afraid that we would start to produce ice cream as well. After we had assured her we had no intention of making a profit she departed reassured. Mbak Titik also told us that the wife of Bagenda had asked her husband over and over again to buy her a gas-stove like ours; but Bagenda refused.
lage, making friends and ‘relatives’, and accepting duties. But on the other hand, I was an academic doing research, and expected to maintain some distance and neutrality. The same was true for my wife who was always keen to listen to stories, gossip, and the experiences of women, things that are normally inaccessible to males. At the same time, she was expected to behave like an Indonesian woman, raise our child ‘properly’, and manage household matters without any participation by her husband. This demanded great flexibility and adaptation from both of us (and our neighbours). It yielded many valuable insights, but regularly also caused tensions and conflicts in our household. Similarly, villagers could not always understand and demarcate between our different roles of being a friend, a neighbour, a ‘relative’, an outsider, and a researcher; and neither could we.

Moreover, after having plunged so deeply into village life, keeping some distance and neutrality while conducting interviews and observations on painful and sensitive topics was not always easy. Good interviewing demands compassion, or at least the capacity to imagine and empathise, while at the same time the interviewer needs to keep some distance and remain analytical. When engaged in social security research, there will always be moments and situations where you are touched by the tragedies you see and the disasters and misfortunes you hear about. Sometimes informants, neighbours, or friends were in desperate need and called on our help. At first sight, from an academic perspective, it might have been better not to help and to keep some distance. At the same time, keeping a distance would disqualify us as village members, neighbours, or friends, as people knew we were often in a position to help, and it would have limited social acceptance in the village and hamper proper participation. Especially when studying human tragedies, such tension between two attitudes - compassion and analytical distance - cannot be avoided as both are crucial for good fieldwork.

How did we deal with such dilemmas in practice? Initially, we were very reluctant to support people in need, and limited ourselves to a few small gifts, some free meals, cigarettes, and so on. Usually, we asked advice from neighbours and friends about how to deal with social expectations and obligations. Later, when we became more and more a part of the community, we tried to see and discuss whether there were alternatives for support, or what our responsibility was in terms of our social position in the village and in the social network we were part of. Often we did not, or only in a very small way, help people who came to us. However, there were other cases, in which we did give some - often secret - support. Although this might have made us in terms of the research, an additional source of help and intervention\textsuperscript{20}, and endangered our neutrality, it probably made us somewhat more reliable friends and network partners. Although we remained outsiders in many respects, showing commitment opened new doors and insights, and I believe contributed to the research quality and the validity of the information gathered.

\textsuperscript{20} See, among others, on intervention, insiders and outsiders and research: Long (1989, 1992).
Outline of the thesis

In the first chapter of this thesis, I further conceptualise social security by delving into the history of the concept, and by contrasting related concepts and academic traditions including studies on poverty, livelihoods, risk, insurance, and social capital. In doing this, I elaborate further on the existing dichotomies between these traditions in an attempt to bridge and combine theoretical approaches that are oriented towards either the actor or the structure. Following this, I refine my research questions and discuss the methodology used.

The thesis has basically a tripartite structure, first focussing on issues of poverty and livelihood, then on issues of social security and finally, on integrating two often-contrasting approaches, oriented towards ways of achievement or towards the provision of livelihood and social security, by using the concept of styles of social security. I start with an analysis of the resource base of the village and related issues of poverty and inequality in access to these resources (Chapters 2-4). From there, I go on to discuss perceptions of risks and threats, and village institutions and arrangements for overcoming these risks and threats (Chapter 5), and this is followed by the third part on styles of social security in an attempt to move beyond static livelihoods and social security studies. Chapter 1 will also follow this tripartite sequence in the theoretical discussion on livelihoods and social security studies.

In Chapter 2, I further expand on the village of Krajan within the wider area in which the village is situated, and in this way the current and historical context that constitutes village life. It can be read as a description of the contemporary and historical landscape in which the people live. In Chapter 3, I turn to the agro-ecological characteristics of the research area. I describe resources, crops and cropping systems, and cultural and individual preferences for different types of food, plants and production methods. This includes some aspects of the local knowledge held by villagers, and constitutes the context in which villagers live, forming both a constraining and an enabling context for the villagers’ methods of survival. Chapter 4 deals with questions as to how villagers get access to the village resources and by which means. It focuses on labour arrangements and institutions, as well as inequalities and poverty. As the majority of Krajan people can be labelled poor, Chapter 5 deals with insecurities, and the perceptions of insecurity and uncertainty of these poor people. Additionally, it describes the village’s social security system including its scope and limitations. There are two central questions in this chapter. What local institutions and arrangements exist in the village that, in times of need, might offer access to resources, support, and social security? Are such social security systems strong enough to protect villagers and vulnerable livelihoods?

The thesis turns, in Chapter 6, directly towards the villagers’ ways of coping with difficulties as reflected in their value orientations, tastes, preferences, choices, and strategies, all within the constraints of everyday life. It describes peoples’ choices and patterns, which I call styles, in establishing social securi-
ty. Moreover, it considers possible alternative routes for villagers to make a liv­ing, and their hopes and fears for the future. One of these styles forms the framework for Chapter 7 where, in contrast to Chapter 6, a deviant style of social security is discussed: i.e. excessive forms of risk-taking, such as heavy gambling, engaging in extra-marital relationships, and speculation. Finally, in Chapter 8, the perceptions and effects of the economic crisis on villagers and village life, and the role of the local government, are discussed. Moreover, in this chapter, the social security styles of villagers are put to the test when they are confronted by the economic crisis of 1997/1998 and its aftermath. Who was doing well, and which style performed best when confronted with the shocks and stresses arising from a crisis that, all of a sudden, changed economic conditions and triggered a decisive transformation in labour relations?
Structures and Strategies: Social Security Conceptualised

"'More than the calf wants to suck, the cow wants to suckle.'

Mutual aid, then, is the very essence of human relationships, as well as the basis for individual and societal existence."

(Macarov, 1995: 34)

In the introduction, I described several people living in a more or less continuous state of insecurity and some others who were doing well. These examples show that people do not stand alone, but search and receive - directly or indirectly - support from others, or, in case of the well-to-do deal with the claims of others in a strategic way. Clearly, villagers are not living on an island, but need and use other individuals and institutions to secure their living, for access to resources, to gather wealth and status, and to receive support in times of need. In this chapter, I examine such practices from a social security perspective which means that I will focus on both structures and strategies.

By 'social security' I refer to all ways in which individual people, households, and communities protect their livelihood and are protected socially against the shocks and stresses that threaten its continuity and stability. Adopting such a definition implies that this study focuses in the first place on people's non-state and locally-organised forms of social security, often referred to as 'informal', or 'traditional' social security.1 Compared to the western world, state social security programmes of developing countries like 1 Since the end of the 1980s, the study of local forms of social security has gained momentum. Examples of some of these studies are: Ahmad, Dreze and Hills (1991), Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (1994), Von Benda-Beckmann, Von Benda-Beckmann, Casino, Hirtz, Woodman and Zacher (1988), Biezeweld (2002), Van Dijk (1994), Van Ginneken (1999), Hirtz (1995), Leliveld (1994), Platteau (1991).
Indonesia are limited and certainly unable to cover all people in poor and remote villages such as Krajan. The majority of the population needs to rely on their own resources and on local forms of support. These local forms of support are not embedded in state regulations and legislation, generally not formalised in explicit rules and regulations, are context specific, restricted to small areas, and mainly organised by local people.

Before coming to the research questions, methodology, and my theoretical approach of social security, I aim to demarcate and conceptualise this social security perspective by turning to the history of the term and of related academic fields of study. I will do so in four steps: first by sketching social security as it originated in the Western World. Secondly, by describing the discussions and peculiarities of social security studies in developing countries. Thirdly, by demarcating social security studies as a result of earlier fields of study such as poverty studies, livelihood approaches, risk studies, and social capital. Finally, I will explain how I use the concept of social security by integrating both structural and strategic dimensions of action. Having done so, I present my research questions and elaborate on the methodologies used during fieldwork.

A genealogy of social security

The term social security as such is relatively new although the underlying mechanisms to which it refers are not. In Western Europe, social security - often called social welfare - refers primarily to the whole system of state-organised laws and institutions, which offer citizens financial guarantees against sudden fallbacks in income. There, social security refers to a range of public assistance programmes to overcome difficulties related to health problems, unemployment, and old age. Examples of these programmes are: unemployment schemes, health insurance schemes, old age pensions, widow or widower allowances, educational schemes, and a range of subsidised facilities for vulnerable citizens to strengthen or maintain their position in society. In the United States, social security primarily only refers to the monthly payments by governmental institutions to people who are entitled to social benefits, like elderly, unemployed and others who cannot work.

2 The use of traditional, indigenous, or informal, social security is problematic due to misleading connotations and suggestions of false dichotomies. See for a discussion on these dichotomies such as formal - informal and traditional - modern: Von Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann (1994), Von Benda Beckmann, Benda-Beckmann, Casino, Hirtz, Woodman and Zacher (1988), Midgley (1994).

If a distinction needs to be made between state organised social security and other forms of social security, I prefer the term local social security to stress the heterogeneity and the embeddedness of it in local communities, specific socio-economic landscapes, and cultural repertoires. This does not mean however, that the state is absent in those communities. In practice, old and new forms of social security are intermingled and state programmes are modified and negotiated at the local level. Different forms of social security can be relevant for people at the same time. Throughout this thesis, I speak of social security to refer to all forms of local as well as state organised social security.
A detailed historical study of the emergence of social security in Western Europe is still lacking, but recent literature provides many examples of sharing and mutual help arrangements and local systems of support which have existed since long. 3 De Swaan (1988) calls such forms of "proto" social security *mutuals*. These *mutuals* were organised on the basis of trust, reciprocity, and willingness to share. Also Macarov looks for "...the historical roots of social welfare [in] the need and desire to engage in mutual aid, with the family as the primary locus. However, the structure of the family is changing from the 'traditional' family to a myriad of different forms, some of which have been recognized in law and in social welfare regulations, and others which have not. […] Voluntary social welfare organizations often originate as a sharing of resources between people with common problems or needs. These resources are not limited to finances but may include psychological support, social relations, information, and activities" (Macarov, 1995: 33).

Besides *mutuals* with a specific, and often explicit, caring and support objective, we find numerous arrangements and institutions not primarily designed to serve an explicit welfare purpose but clearly having such a function under certain circumstances and for certain categories of people. These include: guild corporations, churches, monasteries, groups based on ethnicity or locality, and religious associations helping their members in case of need.

In European history, the nobility and the clergy occasionally redistributed resources to poorer sections of society. In times of crisis, war, famine, or natural disasters, these elites sometimes offered food or help to poorer sections of the population, but this provision of welfare was basically a kind of personal charity, not an obligation or a right or an act of enlightened self-interest to prevent the poor masses from turning into angry crowds who might start a rebellion (De Swaan, 1989: 4).

In Europe, non state-organised, large-scale collective social security arrangements first appear during the industrial revolution when large numbers of labourers were drawn to newly established industries in the cities. They were working and living under harsh conditions, such as long working hours, low wages, unhealthy working and living environments. They had mostly come from rural areas where they used to be part of small, local, communities in which mutual help and charity through the family, the neighbourhood, the village society, and the church, provided at least some basic care (De Swaan, 1988: 3). 4 In their new environments, they often lacked such protective institutions and labourers started gradually to organise themselves - often under the influence of outsiders - into mutual associations to protect themselves against emergencies and contingencies.

---


4The importance and scope of these forms of mutual help and charity should not be romanticised as rural Europe was highly segmented, stratified, and unequal, without ample access to resources by the large masses. See also: Wolf (1982: 358-359).
According to De Swaan (1989), these associations were mostly organised on the basis of friendship, shared origin, employer, or neighbourhood. Examples of these associations of mutual assistance are health insurance groups, funeral associations, and labour unions. At the outset of these **mutuals**, the pooling of risks such as illness, invalidity, costs of hospitalisation or burials, was on a very small scale. Relatively quickly, several local associations merged to better insur their members against adversities (De Swaan, 1989: 3). Although, many of them collapsed due to problems related to mismanagement, fraud, and insufficient risk spreading (if all members are of the same age or working in the same company or industrial sector, the **mutual** will have difficulties to survive in the long run). Gradually, due to the pressure of labour unions and political parties, the state gradually started to take over and collectivise some of the insurance functions of these former **mutuals** at the beginning of the 20th century. According to De Swaan (1989: 3), these **mutuals**, in retrospect, proved to be a transitional phase in the processes of market formation, industrialisation and state formation. Although labour families had already been incorporated into the monetary economy, they were part of a ‘crumbling network’ of mutual care obligations among neighbours, fellow workers, and relatives, which was based on exchange; the **mutuals** were partly a continuation, and partly a substitute, for this network of mutual care. De Swaan’s view that the **mutuals** marked a transitional phase in Western history where care arrangements developed from small-scale **mutuals** to collectivised schemes is questionable as such forms of mutual help have co-existed and re-emerged constantly in Western societies.

Large schemes of state organised social security, only appear late in the 19th century when industrial nations started to implement a range of laws offering the population, under certain conditions, equal access to financial benefits and care. Generally, the introduction of the first state-organised social protection schemes for poor workers by Count Otto von Bismarck in late 19th century Germany is taken as the beginning of modern state-organised social security. Early in the twentieth century, in most industrialised countries, social legislation was passed guaranteeing minimal levels of education, child protection, health care, housing, income, and unemployment payments. In the US, the first so-called social security laws became effective under the Roosevelt administration in 1935. In England, the Beveridge reports of 1942 demarcate the start of the modern welfare state (Leliveld, 1994: 8, Midgley, 1995: 62). After World War II, the United Nations declared social security officially as a human right in 1948.

In the modern welfare state, social security is a central component of the political system, and social security expenditures consume a large proportion of government budgets (Midgley, 1995: 63). The welfare state’s ideals, of social

---

5 De Swaan calls these groups **mutuals** (in Dutch: **onderlinges**) referring to the main characteristic of these groups; mutual assistance and solidarity.

6 Examples of such forms of care and support are: care for ill, old, or handicapped family members, self organised childcare among friends or colleagues, and care or 'buddy-care' for chronically ill, elderly neighbours, and friends.
security guarantees and protection schemes for everyone, imply that every member of society has access to health care, education, old age pensions and care, protection of human rights, unemployment schemes, and schemes in case of the inability to work.

But in practice such ideals have never completely materialised and particularly since the 1980s, the gap between the rich and poor has started to increase again (Dixon & Macarov, 1998, Midgley, 1995: 64). The welfare states in Western countries have started to show cracks due to their own success.8 The increasing costs of the welfare system, because of rising life expectancy and an ever-more expensive health sector, have become too high to cover through taxes and premiums.

A conspicuous group of such excluded people consists of the millions of illegal workers in Western countries.9 These ‘non-members’ of society - excluded from all administrative records - are generally beyond the scope of the welfare state. They have to rely on forms of self-help within their own group. Nowadays, most Western countries are unwilling or unable to expand state-sponsored social security much further. They often prefer to move in the opposite direction and tend to transfer responsibilities to private initiatives.

Large systems of state organised social security may have originated in Western welfare states, but its ideals have been adopted by international organisations and by developing countries. The ILO (International Labour Office) was the first to formulate, in 1952, universal minimum standards of well-being and social protection within the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and defined social security as:

The protection which society provides for its members, through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment, injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death; the provision of medical care; and the provision of subsidies for families with children (ILO, 1984: 11)

Through this, and other international organisations, state-organised social security programmes gradually spread to many developing countries.10 These programmes tended to be copies of models used in welfare states, and were not adjusted to the context of low-income countries with generally well-functioning local social security systems (Dixon, 1985; Midgley, 1994). Limited

---

8 In the US, the level and coverage of welfare provisions has never been as high as in Europe. Another example of a decline in the welfare system are the former socialist countries, which are not able to maintain their welfare system due to rising costs.

9 Estimations for smaller European countries such as the Netherlands range from a few tens of thousands to more than 100,000. For the US a few million are often assumed.

government budgets, failing bureaucracies, and budget restructuring programmes of the Worldbank and the IMF, have prevented most developing countries from reaching an adequate coverage of their population. State-organised programmes typically restrict coverage to those in regular wage employment in the public service, the military, and the modern industrial and commercial sectors. The majority of the population, i.e. those working in the informal urban economies or in the large rural sector, are not eligible for such government support even though they “have lower standards of living than those in the modern sector, and their need for protection is greater. They are poor, their health conditions are unsatisfactory, their educational levels are low and they face great insecurities on a daily basis” (Midgley, 1994: 220).

It is only in the last decade, that the structural exclusiveness of state-organised social security in developing countries has caught the eyes of scholars and policy makers. In recent years, the IMF and World Bank have acknowledged that social security needs to be an important element of their policies.11 Calls for attention for the social welfare of the poor and enhancing ‘social safety nets’ at major world policy forums was clearly related to the negative social impact of structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s that had caused a sudden fall in employment and soaring prices leading to large segments of the population falling below the poverty line. New social security schemes were meant to soften the social pains of these programmes and to protect weak young states from violent internal conflicts. Moreover, politicians and academics became aware that persistent large-scale poverty could seriously damage economic growth.

Whatever the intention of international policy makers, nowadays, in most developing countries the greater part of the population remains outside the scope of conventional social security policies which are mainly oriented towards people working in the formal sector. “Paradoxically, therefore, social security in many developing countries excludes those whose need for protection is greatest, and covers those whose needs are relatively less severe” (Midgley, 1994: 222).

Ironically, social policies in developing countries leave the poorest part of the population relying on ‘self-help’, or self-organised social security arrangements. Although in recent years policy makers, major development institutes such as the IMF and Worldbank, and academics, have increasingly become interested in these forms of social security, little is still known about their nature, scope, and functioning on micro level. Often, the insecurities and adversities that people face are underestimated while local forms of social security tend to be romanticised due to a lack of knowledge about the logic,

11 During the 1997 economic crisis in Indonesia for instance, the World Bank called for social policies - a social safety net approach - to lessen the pain for the vulnerable and prevent the majority of the Indonesians to fall into poverty again. This help however was only partly effective and did not exceed a meagre two percent of the whole available budget needed to restructure the banking sector and the Indonesian currency. The social safety net programs cost 1 billion dollar, about 2 percent of total available foreign funds.
scope, and performance of these forms of social security. This thesis aims to fill this gap and focuses upon the ways in which local forms of social security operate among those categories of people who are predominately excluded from state organised forms of social security. Of course, such a study does not start from scratch: the problem of the poor in developing countries have long been the object of social and economic research. Before I turn to applying a social security framework, I will discuss four of these approaches which concentrate upon poverty, livelihood, risk, and social capital.

Related fields of study

Poverty studies

Before social security studies gained momentum, social problems such as poverty, vulnerability, and insecurity have been studied by a wide array of historians, economists, and social scientists. They laid the foundations for a systematic analysis of vulnerability, insecurity, shocks, and stresses threatening the survival of people and households.

Poverty generally, and primarily, refers to a state of insufficient satisfaction of basic needs due to the poor economic conditions of people. Being poor essentially means being unable to make ends meet. The causes of poverty are thus a lack of ownership or command over assets, resources, and monetary incomes. Generally, a distinction is made between relative and absolute definitions of poverty. Absolute poverty occurs when people fail to receive sufficient resources or income to support a minimum level of physical health and efficiency, often expressed in terms of calories or nutritional levels. Relative poverty is defined by the general standard of living in different societies, and what is culturally defined as being poor rather than some absolute level of deprivation (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 1994: 328). Including relative dimensions of poverty enables an analysis of the perceptions and experiences of people in poverty and offers opportunities to look at wider and related consequences of poverty such as vulnerability. This especially comes to the

12 Examples of such romanticising, or over-positive approaches of local social security can be found in: Getubig (1992), Mesa-Lago (1992), Midgley (1994), Van Ginneken (1999).

13 In practice, the distinction between assets and resources is a bit artificial since most assets are resources at the same time, and meanings constantly flip according to the situation and context. Assets have been defined as: "a wide range of tangible and intangible stores of value" Swift (1989: 11) in Niehof and Price (2001). Analytically, assets differ from resources as long as they are kept and not used. As they can be used, they become a resource. "Assets can be converted into resources when necessary. [...] Livestock is an asset if it is kept for its value. It can be converted into money when the need arises. Livestock is a resource when used in agricultural and domestic production." Niehof and Price (2001: 7). In this thesis, I speak of resources, as from a social security perspective, assets can always be potentially converted into resources. Land and cattle have an inherent value as assets, but as a means of production, livelihood, and collateral they are resources. Among the most important resources in rural areas are land, cattle, natural resources, and credit. Work is a special case, as it is both a resource and a means of gaining access to other resources such as land or money.
fore in situations of adversity when the scarce possessions of the poor are at risk or might be lost. As Townsend (1993) states, being vulnerable has a ‘relational’ aspect, since social isolation - not a possibly fall of income - is the utmost threat of poverty (Townsend, 1993). The difference between being vulnerable or not is whether one is excluded from, or is a member of, systems of support. Chambers (1989: 20) therefore distinguishes between poverty and vulnerability. “Much prose uses ‘vulnerable’ and ‘poor’ as alternating synonyms. But vulnerability is not the same as income-poverty or poverty more broadly defined. It means not lack or want, but exposures and defencelessness. It has two sides: the external side of exposure to shocks, stress and risk; and the internal side of defencelessness, meaning a lack of means to cope without damaging loss. Loss can take many forms - becoming or being physically weaker, economically impoverished, socially dependent, humiliated or psychologically harmed.” In other words, the lack of social relations and the lack of social networks make up the vulnerability of poor people. Not being able to participate in systems of exchange, insurance, and redistribution prevents people from receiving social assistance and protection in times of need.14 Whether someone has direct or indirect access, or is excluded, makes the difference between a secure and a vulnerable livelihood.

In ‘classical’ poverty studies, these dimensions of exclusion from social relations, of care and of time, and from other indirect and potential access to resources, are often overlooked as they have been largely static in their attempt to define absolute standards of poverty.15 Poverty definitions with fixed often monetised ‘poverty lines’ do not make much sense when prices and basic needs differ between societies and when part of the economy is non-commoditised. The irrelevance of a dollar-based poverty line becomes clear in the situation of a rapidly devaluating national currency where suddenly many people fall below the poverty line while their purchasing power

14 These are called covariate risks: depending on the specific character of this need. If all members of the network are hit at the same time, little help can be expected.

There is a large body of literature on risk pooling and insurance, mostly from an economic point of view, putting the risk-avoiding and insurance functions of practices, arrangements, and institutions to the fore, but these are left out here as I take a different point of departure and seek for a holistic combination of individual and social strategies by making use of a social security perspective. Examples of such studies can be found in the work of: Bouman (1992), Cashdan (1985), Coate and Ravallion (1993), Devereux (2001), Eswaran and Kotwal (1989), Evers (1993), Evers and Mehmet (1994), Freudenburg (1993), Genabeek (1996), Heimer (1988), Huysman (1986), Ingleson (1996), Nicholson (1972), Plateau (1991), Wiessner (1982).

15 An example of this kind of poverty study applied to Indonesia can be found in the works of Masri Singarimbun Singarimbun and Penny (1973) and Sajogyo (1986). Their main achievement has been that they have brought the problem of widespread rural poverty in Indonesia to attention. They have tried to improve monetary poverty definitions by using rice as a definition of poverty. According to them, the destitute poor are those whose incomes are less than 240 kg rice equivalent/capita/year, and the poor are those who have an income less than 320 kg of rice Singarimbun and Penny (1973). Their definition of poverty, although a major improvement at the time, remains rather static and income-oriented. It fails to take social exchange and supporting relationships into account.
of locally available basic needs might stay untouched. In general, poverty studies tend to focus on relatively static conditions such as a lack of income or control over resources. They also concentrate upon the here and now, neglecting diachronic dimensions and long-term perspectives of future access to resources, income, or support.

Economist and Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen, aiming to solve some of these limitations of poverty studies introduced the concept of entitlement (Sen, 1977, 1981, 1990). According to him, it is not the actual non-possession of material wealth which makes people poor, but the lack of entitlements (rights, privileges, and potential access) to resources. Sen speaks in this respect of 'capabilities failure': the deprived and vulnerable are not capable of reaching a desired standard of living not only because of a lack of ownership, but also because they lack entitlements. The entitlement approach of Sen has especially contributed to economics and made poverty studies more dynamic by including 'indirect access' in the analysis of poverty. Nevertheless, he still views 'the poor' as a more or less fixed category living under structural unfavourable conditions, which need to be changed. He largely neglects individual actions, strategies, and creativity in dealing and coping with shortages.

Livelihood studies

The livelihood approach (mostly found among human geographers, rural sociologists, and development economists) starts where most poverty studies end, viz. with the strategies and creative choices of people in making a living. They want to know how people make a livelihood, and how they try to survive. From this perspective, livelihood studies not only focus on the ownership of assets and structural constraints in society, but primarily on the ways in which people manage to gain access to them, and the ways in which they handle them for their own survival. A livelihood thus includes assets, individual characteristics, and activities. As Ellis puts it: "A livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household" (Ellis, 2000: 10). This livelihood is not something temporal, but should be strong and sustainable in the long run. Chambers and Conway (1992: 8) define a sustainable livelihood as: "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. Livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with, and recover from, stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base."

The livelihood approach developed over the years in a reaction on the lim-

---

itations and shortcomings of poverty studies, due to adaptation to changes in social and political context, cross fertilisation of different domains within science, and exchanges between social scientists and policy makers. Many scholars and policy makers felt attracted to ideas concerning livelihood and the active role of people in constituting their livelihood, and began to use the concept in different parts of the world and in different academic circles. Only in retrospect can it be distinguished what these studies have in common, and thus, what a livelihood approach implies (Kaag et al., 2003: 3). Furthermore, in order to grasp its significance, we need to know the context in which it emerged.

It was only by the end of the 1980s that a livelihood approach began to take shape in the sense that we perceive it now. It was the era of the, often disputed, Structural Adjustment Programmes of the IMF. According to critics, a more people-sensitive approach was needed, paying explicit attention to human welfare and the fulfilment of basic needs, both in the short and in the long term (Cornia, Jolly, & Stewart, 1987). Moreover, under influence of Sen (Sen, 1981, 1992, 1990), among researchers from the ‘political ecology’ school (Blaikie, 1985; Blaikie et al. 1994), and students of development (Chambers, 1989; Chambers, Pacey, & Trupp, 1990), the insight rose that there is a diversity of poverty situations and that poverty is a multi-dimensional problem. It can not be understood (and alleviated) by a narrow focus on poverty and structural conditions alone. This implied a shift from pure economic aspects, to political, cultural, social, and ecological aspects (Kaag et al., 2003: 4).

By concentrating upon the needs and strategies of the poor, livelihood studies are actor-oriented, bringing individuals and households, and their strategies to prominence; they focus on the agency and the capability of actors, on ‘strengths rather than needs’. In doing so, the livelihood approach is a valuable counterweight against structural approaches to poverty, both macro-economic and basic needs oriented. It tends to portray people as mere victims of structural constraints (Kaag et al., 2003: 5). Livelihood strategies are, in this context, understood as efforts to enhance or stabilise one’s ability to provide for one’s basic needs. In order to analyse these strategies one needs to incorporate the social and cultural conditions as well as the contexts in which people live. This calls for a broad definition of livelihood such as “the whole of dynamic interactions between various actors (including individuals, households, and social groups) and the various resources and assets embedded within a social, economic, political and ecological structure” (De Haan, 2000a: 394). In order to be successful in the long run, the strategies of actors need to be embedded in social frameworks and in accordance with the future availability of resources. In other words, people aim at sustainable livelihoods.17

Inherent to the nature of livelihood studies, there is a risk of too narrow a focus on the actions and strategies of a group of poor people and foregoing

---

structural constraints, such as power inequalities, in which these people have to make a living; also differences within categories of poor people, such as gender and age differences, may easily be glossed over. One of the consequences of a livelihood perspective is that in fact a fairly positive image of poverty is created: ‘they are poor, but see how strategic and active they are.’ This is not only not in line with reality, but even dangerous, as it apparently diminishes the urge for addressing structural causes of poverty such as unequal power relations, and unequal access to resources. Apart from the basic problem of people-centeredness in livelihood studies, there is the issue of how to deal with the actor-structure dilemma. Livelihood studies claim to be people-centred, but what exactly does this mean if people are sometimes reduced to active agents, black boxes, homines economici, or just profit maximising, not explaining why people behave in a particular way, and why there are differences in success between people of similar social background?

Summarising, the livelihood approach is useful in that it tries to come to terms with poverty problems ‘from the bottom up’, and in so doing, stresses the agency of poor people and considers their actions and strategies worthwhile, but the challenge for livelihood studies is not to lose sight of the structural environment that may constrain their initiatives (Kaag et al., 2003).

Risk studies

In recent years, risk has gained a reputation in the social sciences as a concept crucial in understanding the persistence of poverty, insecurity, and vulnerability of many people and households in developing countries. Risks are possibilities of success or failure, which are calculable and often consciously perceivable as dangers and threats on the basis of previous experience (Devereux, 2001: 508).\(^\text{18}\)

Conceptually, there are differences among insecurity, risk, and uncertainty. Insecurity is a state of not being secure or safe and not being provided with good support, defence or protection. It is the antonym of security, which is the state of freedom or protection from danger or worry (Hornby, 1990). Under conditions of security, an actor knows the result of an action or choice and, feels firm, protected, cared for, and safe. Uncertainty is a perception in which the future cannot be predicted at all. Actors do not know if an action will lead to success or failure, and if their livelihood is secure or insecure. Uncertainty points to feelings and perceptions of actors vis-à-vis unknown dangers and threats. Insecurities and uncertainties are related to the perceptions of people whereas risks are external and related to events and condi-

\(^{18}\) The word risk is relatively new in many European languages. However, it has a Roman origin and was used in Italian, Portuguese, and Arabian languages before the 17th century. It arose with the rise of sea trade in the 16th century when ships and trade could be lost. Using statistics and new mathematical methods risks could be calculated and from this time on, insurance companies were established. I am grateful to Willem Wolters for comments and suggestions on earlier versions of this section. See also: Wolters and De Graaf (2002).
tions. Risks can be calculated and are therefore at the heart of statistics and insurance. Since risks are calculated dangers and threats, people can anticipate them, assess the probability of their occurrence, and insure themselves against them through informal pooling arrangements, through savings or, in modern times, through commercial insurance companies. They even might decide to avoid risks as much as possible on the basis of a 'safety first' principle (Scott, 1985). However, people often do not know probabilities.

The relatively recent attention given to the study and phenomenon of risks has been explained as a 'reaction against the preoccupations of modern times, which seem to be obsessed by control and certainty' (Giddens, 1990: 84). Lupton (1999: 3-5) distinguishes three major approaches on risk that gained momentum during the 1990s.

The first one is the symbolic, anthropological approach as elaborated in the work of Mary Douglas (1985, 1992). It has its origin in her work on boundaries, purity, and contamination. Things which are understood to be contaminating and polluting are seen as threatening and dangerous and therefore constitute risks. Risks and blame are culturally-shared concepts. They are means to maintain and form boundaries and to single out high risk groups or high risk individuals.

Beck and Giddens, are representatives of the second approach who focus in their analyses of risk largely on macro-structural factors that influence what they see as an intensification of concern with risks in modern societies, have proposed a second perspective: risks increase in magnitude and became globalised and generalised (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1990: 7). The negative consequences of modernity have become visible, and modernity is now seen as a producer of dangers and risks by which one feels threatened, such as environmental pollution, unemployment and family breakdown. “The world in which we live today is a fraught and dangerous one” (Giddens, 1990: 10).

Finally, a third approach is inspired by the works of Foucault who drew attention to the governmentality in dealing with risks and the networks of expert systems, which increasingly controls the discourse and perceptions of risk and danger in modern society. The implication of this rationalised discourse is that risk is perceived as ultimately controllable, as long as expert knowledge can be properly brought to bear upon it (Lupton, 1999: 5).

These three approaches study risks as features of modern society at large, and do not pay much attention to observing and understanding individual and collective perceptions, and the ways people deal with risks. Economists, on the contrary, have concentrated upon the ways in which people cope with risk in their lives. A common way has been through risk pooling which became the basis of present-day insurance schemes. Since risks are calculable, one can calculate the probability that something will happen which may seriously threaten one's livelihood: such as a sudden death, a protracted illness, harvest failure, or a fire. By pooling premiums, people can be sure (if not too many free riders are involved) that they will survive such disasters. Economists further make a distinction between covariate risks, for example area-wide risks which can hit everybody, such as droughts, floods, and earth-
quakes and idiosyncratic risks, which hit individuals or households such as illness, death, and fire (Ellis, 2000: 60). They tend to further assume that peasants are basically risk-averse, an assumption based on the idea that people can adequately assess chances and the possible consequences of their behaviour. It foregoes cultural frameworks of risk calculation or consciousness. In this dissertation, I take another stance, since I am interested in the villagers’ point of view - not in an expert outsider’s risk calculation - concerning risks and uncertainties and thus in people’s perceptions. For this reason, I rather speak of insecurities referring to the whole range of measurable risks and the perceptions and feelings of risks and uncertainty.\(^{19}\)

Using the concept of risk, rather than that of insecurity, would be based on a rational actor approach, which perceives people as calculating the costs and benefits of their actions. There are however, as many critics have remarked, numerous situations in which people either do not calculate at all, or make the wrong calculations, or do not act according to their calculations. Often people tend to concentrate on a few obvious risks while neglecting others (Beck, 1992; Heimer, 1988). The risk of a fatal accident, for instance, during air flights is much smaller than from daily road traffic. Still, many people fear the first far more than the latter, and get into their cars without even thinking about the risks being taken. It would seem that human beings do not always make rational decisions on the basis of available knowledge and evaluation, but often act on the basis of unconscious assumptions and vague perceptions. Moreover, in certain situations or on specific occasions, people might deliberately take ‘irresponsible risks’ such as gambling even though the odds are against them; or they may engage in forms of ‘Russian roulette’ behaviour. For this reason, in this thesis, I do not study risk from an outsider’s perspective, but concentrate on the meaning people themselves attribute to risk, insecurity, and uncertainty and their coping activities.

However, it is not simply that people do not always think and behave rationally, some people are better equipped to cope with risks and uncertainties than others. Although threats and dangers may be the same for all people, not everybody is able to insure themselves against them. Wealth is an obvious discriminating variable: poor people face more risks and uncertainties in their lives than those who are better off. And they are more vulnerable (as adversities will have a greater impact on their livelihood) and they often have less ways and means to cope with adversities (less assets, less influential networks). This is not always a matter of class or wealth. People from the same background and the same social class may opt for rather different strategies in risk management. Apparently, personal characteristics also play a decisive role in success or failure. It is to these characteristics that the concept of

\(^{19}\) See also: Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (1994: 7) “There is tremendous variation in the extent to which the fundamental indeterminacy of social organization and life is perceived and evaluated in societies, how indeterminacy, uncertainty and insecurity are dealt with in cultural belief systems and ideologies, and to what extent social organization bears the promise of dealing satisfactorily with them.”
agency points. According to Long: ‘agency’ is “the capacity to process social experience, and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme conditions of coercion. [...] Agency is composed of social relations and can only become effective through them” (Long, 1992; 2001:16).

Unlike classic poverty studies, and similar to the livelihood approach, the perspective of uncertainty, risk, and risk management draws attention to the strategic and dynamic dimensions of people’s actions towards uncertainties, dangers, and insecurities. However, as with the livelihood approach it overemphasises rational and strategic behaviour at the expense of structural and personal differences and inequalities between people.

Livelihood studies moved one step further than poverty studies by introducing strategic action rather than static notions of poverty, and by taking individuals and households rather than economic structures, as the units of analysis. It is understood that livelihoods are constantly at risk, and people and households differ in their capacity to cope with shocks and stresses. Risk studies form an important addition in the sense that they help to understand threats to vulnerable livelihoods and causes of poverty and insecurity, but they are not the main subject of livelihood studies. Livelihood studies go beyond static criteria such as incomes and ownership of assets, and concentrate on individual designs and actions with regard to resources and constraints. By such a strong focus on the individual, however, livelihood studies run the risk of neglecting social relations, networks, culture, and cooperation. The very concept of livelihood strategies narrows attention to the ways in which people anticipate, cope, or manage, their lives while neglecting the boundaries within which they can operate and the social relations they need for access and support.

Social capital and social security

Society is not simply an amorphous collection of individuals who are individually coping with insecurities and risks, each of them successful or not due to personal skills, or ownership of access to resources. People constantly interact, exchange, mutually influence, enable or constrain, and mobilise relationships with other people who might give access to resources and support in times of need. Especially, when it comes to support, survival, social insurance, and social security; personal relationships and networks are crucial. This opportunity, to mobilise social relations and networks for personal benefits and support, has become known under Bourdieu’s label of social capital. By using their social capital, people employ their membership of social networks to achieve goals and benefits.

In recent years, the use of social capital has become fashionable in social sciences and economics, and it seems to have evolved into a panacea for the maladies affecting society both at home and abroad (Portes, 1998:1). As with poverty, entitlements, and the livelihood approach, social capital has been applied in many contexts, and referring to social problems, ranging from vulnerability of people, understood as a lack of support in interpersonal rela-
tionships or solidarity, to the malfunctioning of political systems at national or even international level. It runs the risk of losing any distinctive meaning. Furthermore, policy makers and economists (for instance from the Worldbank) have embraced social capital as an explanation for the many social trade-offs in economic programmes that cannot be explained by economic models, and as a cheap solution to a range of social problems which cannot be solved economically. Moreover, it seems to be a promising safe haven in the ideological clash between state and market approaches, simultaneously reflecting the growing influence of mainstream economics over social sciences (Fine, 1999).

Despite this danger of the erosion of social capital as a concept, it has put the importance of social relationships, networks, and non-material forms of capital as a source of domination, power, and influence, on the economic and international political agenda. The concept has revealed a number of mechanisms, which up to then had remained a black box to policy makers and economists.

At this point, I do not want to go any further into the global, institutional, and political interpretations of social capital as is done by for instance Putnam (1993), but return to the original conceptualisation of social capital by Bourdieu to grasp the meaning of the concept and assess its usefulness in the study of social security. Bourdieu initially introduced the term capital in an attempt to overcome an over individualistic and non-historical conception of the social world. In his view, capital is any form of accumulated labour (in material, non-material, or embodied form) that can be achieved by individual actors or groups in the form of human labour. Capital needs time to accumulate, and inherently has the potential to produce profit, to reproduce itself, or to be transferred (Bourdieu, 1989: 120).

In the first publication in which Bourdieu mentions social capital (in 1986), he makes a distinction between economic, cultural, and social capital. These different forms of capital can be exchanged and transferred and, according to Bourdieu, eventually all forms of capital can be reduced to economic capital. The processes that bring about these alternative forms of capital however vary and are not purely economic. “They each possess their own dynamics, and, relative to economic exchange, they are characterized by less transparency and more uncertainty” (Portes, 1998: 4). According to Bourdieu (1989): only when these different forms of capital are acknowledged - and not only their economic form - can the structure and the functioning of the social world be fully understood.

Bourdieu goes on to describe social capital as the entirety of the actual or potential resources which arise from the possession of a durable network of, more or less, institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition - or from the membership of a group - which offers each member the support of collective capital ownership which makes them, in a broad sense, creditworthy. These relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition can take the form of material or symbolic transactions, they can be institutionalised in a name (i.e. of a family, class, clan, party or school) and guaranteed...
by belonging to this group, and they are maintained and reproduced by a range of institutionalised practices of exchange (Bourdieu, 1989: 132). These exchange relationships are both material and symbolic, and based upon recognition of nearness. “Bourdieu’s treatment of the concept is instrumental, focussing on the benefits accruing to individuals by virtue of participation in groups and on the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource” (Portes, 1998: 5).

If we look at the current use of the social capital concept, in this context of mobilising support, it needs to be questioned, whether the concept of social capital adds anything new to the already existing understanding of the role of networks, groups, and classes in generating support. Moreover, social capital remains a metaphor for the claims, rights, and possibilities, that people have, and does not represent a fixed and certain body of capital that can be ‘cashed’ in times of need. Applied to social security studies, it is more of an ex post explanatory concept when people survive crises or adversities, rather than an ex ante trustworthy forecast. Social capital itself does not explain why some people are less vulnerable than others and why some people do receive more support than others. Furthermore, social capital is not a discriminating variable because it tends to correlate with other forms of capital. Its strength is that it is able to reveal and explain ‘irregularities’ and ‘odd cases’. Since it points to the intermediate level between social structure and individual agency, it can throw light on the ways in which people are able, or unable, entitled and unentitled, to generate, exchange, and receive support by social means.

The relevance of Bourdieu’s understanding of social capital for social security studies is apparent. Under certain conditions, social capital, arising from social connections, can be converted into economic capital and material forms of support. Although Bourdieu especially uses this property of social networks and exchange relationships to analyse strategies and processes of social mobility, this dimension of social capital is also relevant for social protection. It is not only relevant for access to resources (capital, information, networks) to achieve goals, but also for mobilising and receiving support in times of need.

Social security

After this brief discussion of related fields such as poverty, livelihood, risk, and social capital, I now return to social security. Traditionally, most social security studies take poverty as a starting point, be it that they are mainly concerned with the vulnerable and defenceless face of poverty. For this reason, also Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann start from notions of insecurity and looking at people’s efforts on different levels - either individually or socially - to overcome these insecurities:

“All over the world, social, and economic conditions are such that a multitude of people suffer from insecurity: from uncertainty whether they will have to eat or to be fed, whether they have a roof over their head, [will] be cared for when they are ill, be helped when they are young and old, have no money to support themselves when they have no
means to earn it, and so forth. In the most general sense, social security thus refers to the efforts of individuals, groups of individuals or organisations to overcome these insecurities (Von Benda-Beckmann, 1988: 10).

Social security’s prime concern is the conversion of resources into protection and the safeguarding of a sustainable livelihood, rather than the material ownership of assets, social security studies are both broader and more dynamic than classical poverty and livelihood studies. Whereas strategies for survival, access, and the maintenance of access (by risk avoidance, diversification, and insurance) are at the centre of attention in livelihood studies, social security studies are much more oriented towards support, protection, collectives, and welfare provisions. A social security approach, however, cannot do without an understanding of strategies of individuals and households and an emphasis on their ways of access to resources.

Conversely, a social security perspective builds upon and augments livelihood studies by making the combination between both perspectives; attention to actors’ and households’ strategies within the enabling and constraining landscape of social security opportunities, inequalities, and limitations, with an incorporation of social capital. I define social security as follows: social security deals with the - often local - provision of care, support, and welfare to individuals and groups by social means. This provision can be either achieved, by individual, social, and collective strategies, or provided by arrangements and institutions offering access to care, insurance, and general well-being to individuals, households, and specific categories of people. Both strategies for achieving social security, and the mechanisms providing support, are often intermingled, simultaneous, and therefore inseparable.

This social security is varied, different for different people, and subject to constant changes. Social security studies therefore tend to be focused on long-term processes. They further look at social protection against shocks and stresses when conditions are changing and major contingencies occur. They refer to unequal access and changing strategies and networks of support to be mobilised. If people or households are confronted with shocks and stresses, then it matters how many ways they have to access support, rather than their position in society as such. This does not imply that social security studies have completely moved out of the domain of poverty studies. Although all layers of society are confronted with occasional and periodic uncertainties, it is particularly the poorer sections that face the greatest problems when fate hits them.

The concept of security is closely related to concepts such as safety, reliability, certainty, and trust. It refers to securing basic needs including food, shelter, health, protection, and care. These basic needs can vary among different people in different societies and of different social class. Security is the accomplishment of certain basic needs, and can be analysed at different levels: at the level of perceptions, at the level of reliability, and at the level of the collective and the individual (Giddens, 1990). Giddens defines a state of security as a situation in which specific dangers are counteracted or minimised, and he distinguishes three dimensions of security: "We may define 'security"
as a situation in which a specific set of dangers is counteracted or minimised. The experience of security usually rests upon a balance of trust and acceptable risk. In both its factual and its experiential sense, security may refer to large aggregates or collectivities of people - up to global security - or to individuals" (Giddens, 1990: 36).

Many social security studies therefore concentrate on institutions and arrangements that provide social security.20 According to Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1994: 7) “In each social organization there is a range of more or less satisfactory ways to deal with the material and immaterial aspects of uncertainty and insecurity in problematic life-situations. Social relations and institutions and cultural or religious belief systems always, preventively or reactively, provide, or promise to provide, some help and assistance to those who are unable to help themselves.” Any analysis of social security should not stop at these institutions: “the provision of social security which is embedded in other social relationships, may easily become invisible. More seriously, it leaves out social relationships and institutions which are not normatively defined as social security institutions, but do have a social security function” (ibid.: 12). They therefore propose a ‘functional approach’ to social security; “for the functional point of departure leads to the question of what ideas, relations and institutions become relevant as social security under different social, economic, political and cultural conditions” (ibid.: 14).

In any society, the crux of social security boils down to a few basic questions for the people involved: how do people get direct or indirect access to resources to secure basic needs, and how do they themselves directly or indirectly protect, secure, and maintain their livelihood. Such questions are relational since survival necessarily involves other people (with the possible exception of the Robinson Crusoes, but even they need a Friday). These others consist of partners, household members, relatives, the neighbourhood, the community, and possibly larger social groups or associations, to care and to be cared for. These may be supportive and protective, but on the other hand they may also demand support, or even be a threat to survival.

**Ways forward: beyond provision and strategy**

**Provision of social security**

Many studies on these local arrangements, institutions, and mechanisms of support and assistance to other community members in times of need, have a common perspective in that they are oriented towards the supply-side of social security, and tend to focus on *institutions of support*.

In earlier literature dealing with what we now would call social security (i.e. studies about peasant societies dealing with issues of support, subsistence security, mutual help, reciprocity, and forms of exchange) an important divi-

---

sion exists between the assumptions held on the nature of the village and villagers’ actions.\textsuperscript{21} Key questions posed by these studies include: are villages and rural societies moral entities in which a minimum subsistence is secured for all members, or are households and individual villagers calculative and driven by individual motives of survival and profit maximising, searching for a balance between risks and stability in livelihood out of self-interest?

This difference in basic assumption about village and villagers’ behaviour still influences academic analyses and government policies on poverty and insecurity. The best expression of this debate, and still revealing for the current different views on social security, is that between moral and political economists, also known as the Scott - Popkin debate.\textsuperscript{22}

James Scott argued in his book \textit{The Moral Economy of the Peasant}, that peasant societies in South East Asia can be characterised by two principles: 1) peasants are risk-aversive and oriented towards subsistence and reciprocity and 2) inequalities between peasants are not extreme and the ‘moral economy’ offers its members a certain ‘right of subsistence’ based on ‘the norm of reciprocity’ (Scott, 1976). He argues that peasants have collectively developed risk-insurance mechanisms.

“If the need for a guaranteed minimum is a powerful motive in peasant life, one would expect to find institutionalised patterns in peasant communities which provide for this need. And, in fact, it is above all within the village - in the patterns of social control and reciprocity that structure daily conduct - where the subsistence ethic finds social expression. The principle which appears to unify a wide array of behavior is this: All village families will be guaranteed a minimal subsistence niche insofar as the resources controlled by villagers make this possible” (Scott, 1976: 40).

Even if such village levelling mechanisms or collective support systems did once exist (a conclusion which is highly doubted by several historians and anthropologists - (Cf. Popkin, 1979; White, 1985) it seems highly unlikely that they are still strong in present-day peasant societies which are increasingly incorporated into the global economy and closely linked to urban centres and national policies.

If local social security institutions and arrangements work at all, they generally seem to cover only specific risks and uncertainties, to be accessible only to certain groups and categories of people, and only to be tapped in specific circumstances or periods. These limitations imply that people are often excluded from such collective or communal provisions and that they, therefore, have to rely upon their own devices, relations, and inventiveness.


\textsuperscript{22} See for this debate for instance Keyes (1983), Platteau (1991).
Strategies to obtain social security

It is these individual efforts to make a living and safeguard security that have been at the heart of a range of studies, focusing on people's strategies to achieve support and security. Some of the assumptions underlying these studies were discussed earlier in the sections on livelihood and risk. Here I want to go into them further, starting with the work of Samuel Popkin on *The Rational Peasant* (1979).

Popkin rejects Scott's view of the Southeast Asian village as a harmonious entity, and postulates peasants as being rational actors who are primarily acting to further their own interests by maximising profits, rather than altruistically sharing costs, benefits, and risks. Insurance, welfare schemes, and subsistence guarantees, if they exist at all, are limited in scope and designed around individual self-interest.

“I show that the calculations of peasants, led not to subsistence floors and extensive village-wide insurance schemes, but to procedures that generated and enforced inequality within the village [...] It does not follow from individual risk minimization or security maximization that villages will function to minimize risk or maximise security” (Popkin, 1979: 20).

Instead of relying upon village schemes of social security, individual households usually develop their own strategies to avoid risk and starvation. The same goes for relations between the better off and their poor co-villagers. Whereas moral economy theory stresses the social obligations of the rich to engage in charity, Popkin states that “evidence indicates that affluent villagers commonly react by excluding such persons from the village long before everyone is reduced to the cultural minimum or subsistence line” (Popkin, 1979: 22).

In order to substantiate his claim, Popkin points to the inherent conflict between collective and individual interests. Collective arrangements of social security are usually bound to the weak as they are nearly always confronted with problems; of freeriders (who benefit from schemes without contributing to them), of mismanagement (those in charge of the schemes use them for their private purposes), and of ambiguity (lacking clear standards as to who is entitled to village assistance).

Popkin makes a distinction between risk-sharing mechanisms, which he calls insurance, and subsidies (provision of social security), which he calls welfare. He states that village-wide insurance schemes are highly specific and limited due to problems of trust and consensus, and usually welfare systems are greatly restricted and restrictive. Reciprocity will be strict and limited to relative equals. Village leaders for instance will only help less fortunate villagers if it does not affect the long-run welfare of the better-off villagers or if it serves their own interests.

In his view, only very limited welfare is available for people with certain problems such as those caused by bad harvests. Village welfare is mainly for
the aged, the widowed or the orphaned. With these categories the claims are clear, and their problems are not caused by laziness or mismanagement. All parties have to be able to maintain a long-term balance. Social security, in his view, is very rationalised and relations are highly specific and goal oriented. Labour or goods are exchanged on the basis of balanced reciprocity, and very often records are kept. "There is nothing loose or informal about this at all [...] therefore, complex interchanges generally take place among small groups of four or five households" (Popkin, 1979: 27).

Structures, strategies or styles?

The two views of local social security are usually presented as mutually exclusive: it is either communal institutions and village structures which provide support in times of need, based on long-term bonds of reciprocity, or it is individuals designing strategies to cover their own risks through maximising profit and sharing only among a small groups of social equals. In this respect, the two approaches build upon old-time dichotomies in the social sciences. In actual practice, of course, the structural and the strategic views can be highly complementary because they address two sides of the same coin, albeit that they do so from different perspectives. Social structures do not determine individual behaviour, but they do set limits and shape it; individuals cannot act in a social void and have to take contexts, structures, and institutions into account. Moreover, depending on the specific conditions, there may be more, or less, room for individual efforts and strategies to further one’s interests. Rather than initially opting for one of these two approaches, they should both be tested in specific research settings. In my fieldwork in Krajan, I ascertain what the role of communal institutions is in providing social security, and what room individuals have, and use, to achieve such security. Moreover, I go beyond the 'either/or' and the 'both/and' questions by building upon Giddens’ concept of agency. In the following, this is related to the often divergent ways in which people manage to arrange social security.

A starting point is acknowledging that rural institutions and villagers' strategies are by nature diverse: “people survive by doing many different things, rather than just one thing or a few things” (Ellis, 2000: ix). However, they do not do this in a social vacuum since “social and familial constraints do apply, and [...] not only what people do, but their capacity to change what they do, is influenced by their social and institutional context” (Ellis, 2000: 9) and, one may add, by their personal characteristics.

This brings us again to the structuration theory of Giddens (1984), which states that social action is made up of both structure and agency. Structures are not like forces of nature which compel people to behave in a certain way but, while they do limit the range of choices open to people, people always have some choice and can resist some social pressure. At the same time, people cannot simply follow their own intentions through their actions, they have to follow social rules and to have resources at their disposal. So, in going about their own daily business, people produce and reproduce the social fab-
ric of society. Structure, then, according to Giddens, is intrinsically related to action and human agencies. This concept of agency emphasises that individuals are capable of changing the conditions in which they find themselves, and of coping with social constraints.

Returning to the story of local social security, and the diversity of strategies and opportunities one can observe in this field, it pays to look back at common patterns of protection, coping, and security strategies. People do not randomly invest in reciprocal relationships, or opportunities of social security, but make specific and meaningful combinations reflecting their orientations, perceptions, and assessments, as well as their capabilities and resources.

Not every combination is open to all. Wealthy people can predominately rely on their own resources and networks, while their less fortunate neighbours must invest heavily in mutual support and care in order to be eligible for social security when they are in need. These combinations can also be gender-specific since men and women can have different orientations and resources. Often, women are much more concerned with household food security and livelihood protection than their husbands. At the household level, these differences may be smoothed as most activities require the involvement of both husband and wife.

At the village level, therefore, there can be a large heterogeneity in strategies and arrangements for social security, stemming from the differential responses of actors to the ecological, economic, political, and social insecurities that they face and, the resources to which they have or can mobilise access. In this heterogeneity, one can distinguish patterns or pathways, or as I prefer to call them styles of social security.

The idea of style I take loosely from the work of Van der Ploeg and Bolhuis (1985) and Van der Ploeg (1990, 1999). Who use the concept of farming styles to analyse patterns of farming strategies in Peru, Italy and the Netherlands. Van der Ploeg argues that the heterogeneity in contemporary agrarian societies can be explained by the wide range of differential responses by farmers to the political, social, economic and environmental problems they are facing, reflecting their ideas about solutions, ‘good’ farming, and the desired future of the farming enterprise.

His farming styles are based on emic categorisations of farmers, and are empirically validated by analysing farmer orientation towards markets and the level of intensification and extensification in their use of labour and technology. “A style of farming is a valid structure of relations between producers, objects of labour, and means. It is the outcome of a particular labour process guided by certain options, structured in a specific way by a corresponding ‘logic’, and conditioned by particular social relations of production. Through the farm labour process both the social relations of production and the style of farming are reproduced” (Van der Ploeg, 1990: 19).

In an analogous fashion, I define styles of social security as distinguishable patterns of orientations and actions concerning the variety of means to achieve security; these patterns are structured by an internal logic and conditioned by social, economic, and personal characteristics of the people.
involved. Again following Van der Ploeg, I see these styles as emic social constructions based on the ways that people themselves behave differently in managing their social security mix. Styles thus are not the same as strategies in a sense that they are designed by individual people, people do not follow a style, but have a style of organising their social security.

The concept of style has the advantages that it includes both the structural, individual, and the ‘habitual’ dimensions of social action (cf. the concept of *habitus* introduced by Bourdieu (1980) to bridge the gap between the structural and the individual dimensions)\(^{23}\), and that it can operate as an interface between long-term practices and institutions on the one hand, and individual strategic choices on the other. People have a certain style because they were raised in a particular fashion, share a cultural repertoire or because neighbours expect them to conform to their style. When conditions change, people can turn to new, and probably more profitable, ways of organising their social security. However, for social and economic reasons, such a shift of style is not always that easy since styles carry a history and a legacy: if one is strongly involved in profit maximising and individual arrangements for social security, it is well-nigh impossible to suddenly switch to a style based on strong ties with neighbours, relatives or patrons. There is, nevertheless, room for gradual shifts if one moves out of tight networks, or if one's economic position changes dramatically.

\(^{23}\) *Habitus refers to views and preferences held by individuals, which are molded within specific contexts of nationality, ethnicity, gender, age, and class. Dales and Bras (1999). Pels in introduction to Bourdieu (1989: 13) explains *habitus* as the internal, 'embodied' dispositions which are drawn in individuals as durable schemes of observation and interpretation which bring action into being. *Habitus* is the result of institutionalising the social, of the objective field structures in separate bodies, and generates, as practical matrix of practices, the determinants for the reproduction of these structures.*
Research questions

After this survey of the major theoretical and conceptual discussions with regard to social security research, I now turn to the formulation of the questions which are central to my own fieldwork in the East-Javanese upland village of Krajan and which arose out of the observation of the different fates and lives of villagers as I described in the introduction. The main question for this study is: how to understand local forms of social security taking both wealth and poverty, structure and agency, and collective and individual dimensions of human action into account? More specifically:

- How do villagers gain direct and/or indirect access to resources in order to earn a secure livelihood and what are the structural opportunities, constraints, and inequalities in this access? Who is entitled to which resources and who not? How and why are differences in access constituted?
- What kinds of adversities, threats, and risks do villagers encounter in their daily lives, how do they perceive and try to overcome them and what kinds of support do they receive?
- How strong are local forms of social security; in what ways, and to what extent do village institutions and arrangements protect against these adversities, threats, and risks; and operate as providers of social security to villagers and what is the role of the state in this respect?
- How do villagers prepare themselves against adversities and risks, what cultural repertoires do they use, for what purposes and when, and what styles of social security can be found? How do these styles relate with livelihood and social security, and how effective and strong are these styles in dealing with adversities, misfortunes, but also with opportunities.
- How effective were these styles when they are put to the test like during the 1997 crisis in Indonesia? Does something as a nationwide economic crisis have and influence on the significance, scope, and pervasiveness of local social security?

Research methods

I tried to answer these questions with data and information gathered during one and a half years of anthropological fieldwork carried out in the village of Krajan, East Java. During the research period, from mid-1997 until the end of 1998 and again in mid-1999, I collected in-depth data on village livelihoods, wealth and poverty, perceptions of threats and insecurities, coping strategies, labour and migration, and the role of the local government.

My fieldwork started just before the beginning of the crisis in 1997, and the crisis will echo through this thesis although it is dealt with in a distinct chapter. To some extent it has influenced my analysis. By its specific nature as a monetary crisis, with rapidly rising prices, it revealed more clearly the diffi-
culties that villagers face in making a day-to-day living, their hardship, and the structural differences between rich and poor in economic opportunities and access to resources. In this way, it put a strain on village social security mechanisms, forms of redistribution, and mutual help. In addition, it highlighted more clearly the processes, and related setbacks, of the ongoing transformation processes in economic and social development in rural Java, than the strengths and weaknesses of village social security mechanisms.

The study builds upon and goes beyond the anthropological literature on rural Java, many of which have been village studies. This has partly been for practical reasons, as villages appear to be human settlements with clear boundaries (‘bounded locales’) and administrative entities. At the same time, villages are considered to make up a community with a ‘distinctive quality of behaviour’ (Kemp, 1996: 47). These two aspects of villages are often confused. The administrative boundaries do not have to match the boundaries of a community. Also in social security research, the temptation of equating villages, or bounded locales, with communities as boundaries of support networks and mutual help prevails.

In general, village studies are suspected of falling into the trap of presupposing characteristics such as communality and primordial sentiments and thus of strengthening the idea of the unchanging village (Koning, 1997). Breman (1980: 42) states that the village as such never really existed in Java and was no more than an ‘administrative standard entity’ and with that the ‘cornerstone for policy execution by the colonial state’.

This does not prevent social scientists from studying villages since village studies do have something to offer. A village study offers an in-depth insight into village life and interactions on the local level (Koning, 1997) and beyond. A good village study is a kind of extended case study which - if contextualised - opens a window onto different layers of society at large and throws light onto processes which otherwise would not have been visible. But, as the locale, various locations could have been chosen, an area along a road, a valley, a neighbourhood, a riverbank, etc. Choosing such locations is also linked to the specific anthropological methodology of participant observation since this requires a place to live in the midst of the people under study. Villages are very attractive places for anthropologists to live, they offer overseeing entities with central forums of interaction such as market places, village halls, and village festivals.

My research took place primarily in one village, but this does not mean that the research area was confined to the village of Krajan. Neighbouring villages were taken into account when it came to trade, exchange, family rela-

---


25 By a village community I mean here a group of people who regularly interact with each other, live close together, are somehow dependent upon each other, and the community as such is recognised by the people themselves.
tions, and access to resources. Krajan villagers, for instance, have rice fields in lower Ardisaeng, while poor Krajanese collected firewood or lumber from forest that officially was mostly part of the adjacent Andungsari. Andung men married in Krajan, Andung women sold local medicine in Krajan, and Krajan men and women built houses in adjacent villages, and participated in harvests in neighbouring villages. In the research, I have tried to study the relationships of villagers with the outside world, not only those within specific boundaries. I accompanied Krajan villagers when they went back to their religious teachers at the Islamic boarding school (pesantren) and leaders who went to government meetings or informal encounters with military or police officials in town. Moreover, I followed migrants to Denpasar and Bali, and to Ijen, East Java, and met semi-resident villagers there. I also visited villagers living in other parts of East Java, and tried to recover migration histories of villagers who worked in Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Malaysia. However, all my case studies of families and the main survey were carried out within the village since I needed to study these families on a daily basis, something that would never be possible in a larger area.

I have opted for a relatively small area because of the need to carry out in-depth research in a multiple agro-ecological landscape. In no more than one desa I have been able to study people working in a range of agricultural landscapes including wet rice production, tobacco production, maize production, cattle raising, coffee plantations, and forest product harvesting. Within these agricultural systems, I have been able to study the combinations people establish in labour arrangements, ranging from wage labour to patron-client relations, and social security strategies.

I used a number of qualitative research methodologies including life histories, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews. Early 1998, I approached a large number of villagers with an extended list of questions as part of the household survey. In this survey, I concentrated upon six themes: household and family composition; expenditure and consumption; property and income; adversities and people’s perceptions of them; engagement in mutual help, giving or receiving support; and debts and saving. Although questions were preset, I used this list in a rather flexible way sometimes changing sequence, or formulation of the questions depending on the process of the interview and quality of the conversation allowing to go deeper into subjects if needed. All survey interviews have been carried out with an assistant, most of the time Pak Eko, who translated questions and answers whenever needed, and often introduced, reassured people, and explained the purpose of the survey. We developed a close working relation and ways to encourage informants to elaborate on relevant stories, examples, experiences, and sensitive topics. Often during these interviews, Pak Eko advised me on changing subject, rephrasing questions, or probing sensitive subjects in a very subtle way highly increasing the quality of the interview. Most of these interviews lasted three to four hours and often ended in being offered a meal at the house. In most cases both wife and husband were present. As much as possible, questions were addressed to the household member who knew most about the topic.
In total we interviewed 100 families two times. The families were taken proportionally (one out of ten) from the books of hamlet heads (*kepala kampung*). Besides, we included the data of the four case study families in the survey. A year later, in mid-1999, I revisited the surveyed families to grasp changes and reach a better understanding of the effects of the crisis on livelihood and social security. The second survey was less extended and lasted less long (one to two hours). It focussed on changes and modifications in property, income, labour, and household constitution since the year before and on consumption, expenditures, and mutual help. Only after the second interview, we compensated people with a small gift of money (Rp 5,000), the equivalent of a days wage. Except for two households, we were able to revisit all households interviewed the year before.

A few families were studied in-depth and followed at daily and important events. These families were - with one exception - all in the same neighbourhood I was living and this enabled me to visit their houses on a daily basis. The purpose of this detailed study of a limited number of families and individuals, was not only to see how they coped with adversities in life, but also to identify the daily and small ways of making a livelihood. These families were further studied using the extended case study method (Velsen, 1967) which provides a framework for studying their networks, activities, labour relations, conflicts, insecurities, norms and practices, in a coherent and interrelated way. An extended case study is the study of an event, phenomenon or for instance a household with all its members, activities, and interrelationships through time. The extended case study enables studying the changes, dynamics, and problems of coping with insecurity in actual daily life. It also offered me the opportunity to link strategies and the arrangements for social security to changes in the wider social, economic, political and environmental context.

The case studies were of: the poor Satrawi family which included married children and divorced husbands; the Patik family, including children and labourers; Bagenda, the village head, including his family but with a focus on him as a village leader with all his contacts, businesses, and legal and illegal activities, within and outside the village. I or my wife, regularly visited several widows, including Suripa. Besides these case studies, I had close and regular contacts with the family of my landlord, and the Hosni family in Dluwang, a middleclass farming family in a more remote hamlet, two leading (and antagonistic) religious families, and with the Eko family.

I studied these families from a three-generational perspective, and made genealogies to document changes and to gain insights into family histories and kinship relationships (Den Ouden, 1989). Historical information was gathered by studying secondary sources such as historical records, maps, and by interviewing different family members - both young and old - about the past.

To deal with such a multiplicity of topics and personal experiences, I used different levels of inquiry to come to a rich as possible picture, focussing on subjects and events, and on individuals, households, families, and social networks. I started the research by studying general perceptions of risks and insec-
Structures and strategies

 Securities, coping strategies, economic activities, labour relations and village values of support, and later, the focus shifted towards people and households. In addition to this wide and integrational scope of this study, the specific normative dimensions of social security also cause methodological difficulties. What people say should be done, not always coincides with what they actually do. In helping or not, social actions of villagers are the crunch issue, not norms and values. Adopting that stance, my fieldwork has been focussed on observation and analysis of actual support (or lack of) rather than norms and values.

Initially, I frequently asked questions of the form: what would you do if... and then mentioned something bad for the person or family, such as illness or missed harvest. The answer often was: “alhamdulillah - God forbid” and then an answer followed. This worked well for a couple of weeks, but I soon felt the need to go beyond hypothetical questions and see what really happened in the event of adversity. There was a need to go beyond norms and values, as expressed by the villagers, and to look into practices and calculate which people really benefited when they were confronted with an adversity or emergency. At the same time, a continuous link to norms and values’ steering practices had to be maintained. I encountered people who initially claimed that they would borrow from neighbours or kin, but, when confronted with an emergency, actually sold their last cow, pawned land, or ran away. They themselves explained they had hoped to receive support, but I learned repeatedly that to receive local social security, a great deal needs to be observed.

For this reason, I daily visited the selected families and whenever possible funerals, weddings, ceremonies, praying sessions, harvests, and circumcisions; to observe expenses, (re)distribution, support, gifts, assistance, food sharing, etc. After some time, I would return to these places, to interview in retrospect and evaluate these events with some of the participants to further note down expenses, support, experiences, and mutual help. Visiting these activities was not always easy, very time consuming, and sometimes tremendously boring. But gradually, when I felt more and more a member of the community, even the most trivial chats and rumours became interesting.

My position as an insider/outsider enabled me to visit and participate in most of all these activities in the neighbourhood. I also participated as far as possible in forms of mutual help and, especially in the dry season, the numerous mutual help parties and housebuilding activities. While participating, I could observe the rules of the game, the people present and those absent, gift giving, food sharing, etc. While working in the fields with others, I could ask numerous questions about details, reasons, and the past, while it simultaneously enhanced my acceptance as a member of the community. I also visited many poor people, widows, the handicapped, and the crippled, to unravel the support for these vulnerable and weak groups, their orientations, and their strategies. And last, but not least, I tried, by frequent visits to a few selected families, to observe the daily, minor, ways of support and subsistence.
The Growth of an Upland Village

Before we look at the routes people follow in making a living, and how they deal with the insecurities inherent to this living, I will introduce the village and its surroundings. In this chapter, I describe the village and its historical roots, in the next the crops and cropping practices. I will start this chapter with a description of the village, then turn to the different agro-ecological zones around Krajan and move on to Bondowoso, the main market town for Krajan villagers (for many the only urban place they have ever visited). From the present I move back to the historical roots of the village economy. I briefly discuss the history of settling in the mountains in response to changing economic conditions, market developments, and agricultural and ecological change in the area. I will argue that over the past 150 years, Krajan, although on the periphery of East Java’s economy, experienced alternating periods of commercial expansion and contraction.

A village in upland Java

Krajan can best be reached from the direction of Bondowoso. After the junction at the main road towards Besuki, a small asphalted road heads uphill towards Krajan. From the beginning of the road, the green, sharp peaks of the Argopuro mountain can be seen. It follows a ridge of the mountain and is very winding and, at some places, quite steep. Drivers should be careful; if it is nice weather, the road is full of rice, maize, coffee beans, and bamboo strips laid out to dry. If it is raining, the road can be quite slippery in its sharp bends and at places where water or dirt cover the asphalt.

Before reaching Krajan, the road passes through five large hamlets, separated by tegal fields and sometimes lush plots of sawah. Just before reaching the welcome gate of Krajan, an asphalted side road goes down to the rice growing village of Ardisaeng. From the gate, one of the steepest climbs start before the first houses of Krajan appear. The first houses are built scattered or in small clusters along the road. The houses are made of wood or bamboo plaid
and covered with orange roof tiles. The first hamlets of Krajan, Mengkuara and Pakuarah can be spotted somewhat later as green islands of bamboo bushes downhill to the right. After a few more bends and another steep climb, the houses of Sayuran can be seen at a small hill to the left. Closer to the road, on the right, a mosque, a shop, two coffee stalls, and some stone houses are situated. After another kilometre, passing more scattered and clustered dwellings, the village office of Krajan is reached. It lies along a flat stretch of the road, away from the larger hamlets of Krajan. Around the village office, a dozen of houses (some of them made of bricks), a shop, and a coffee stall are situated including the house of the village head, his mother, and his sister. Here the dirt road towards Dluwang departs. At this part of the road, there is not much motorised traffic, but many people walk along the road carrying cattle fodder, fire wood, or rice and maize.

Desa Krajan is situated in the middle of the poor and less fertile hilly area between Bondowoso and Besuki (see colour map). The village is demarcated on the northwest by the deep ravine of the Dluwang river which forms a natural border with the Besuki subdistrict, and on the southeast by a gentle ravine covered with sawah belonging to the villages of Ardisaeng and Andungsari. Krajan itself does not have much sawah as irrigation in the higher areas is problematic. Due to the rugged terrain, the village has always been much more isolated than most of the lowland villages on Java. Only in 1994, the village road to Krajan was asphalted, and irregular, but daily, transport to Bondowoso or Besuki became available by pickup trucks. Krajan is far from the large urban centres of Java. The first city to be reached is Jember at a distance of 60 kilometres, and few villagers have ever been there.

The village of Krajan receives slightly more rainfall than the other villages in the region due to its high altitude, but it has few irrigation opportunities and sawah is scarce. Major crops include maize, livestock, tobacco, and rice. Given that land is scarce and not very fertile, yields tend to be insecure compared to villages in lowland Java. Krajan is a relatively poor village. However, it is doing slightly better than many other villages in the area which have even fewer resources, less fertile soils, and less rain. Only the neighbouring villages of Ardisaeng (with its sawah-covered valley) and Andungsari (with lower population pressure, easy access to the state forest, and a coffee plantation) have higher average incomes.

In 1997, Krajan numbered about 3,400 inhabitants of which 48% are male and 52% female, spread among 880 households of which 150 are female-headed. The majority of the villagers are engaged in farming supplemented with

1 Village statistics at the village office give for 1997, 924 households. This refers to the Indonesian concept of KK (kepala keluarga) which means household head and includes widows and widowers living alone. Based on my own calculations and data from the different hamlets heads, I come to 880 households, a number I will use here. Most of the female headed households are headed by widows (janda). Janda are actually women without men and can be divorced, unmarried, or left alone due to the departure or death of their husband. Widows who are living with children and are being cared for are often not counted as individual KK.
one or more other income generating activities such as trade, handicraft production, and house construction. Unlike many Javanese villages, migration rates are low, so remittances from outside are not very significant for most households. In the village access to resources is unequally distributed. About one-third of the population can be called rich, while two-thirds have difficulties in making ends meet. In Chapter 4, these differences will be described and analysed in detail as it comes to access to land and cattle.

These differences in wealth are visible in consumption styles. Eating white rice, vegetables from the market, and meat or fresh fish, are clear indicators of higher social status, and the same goes for the ownership of motorbikes, television and radio sets, brick houses, jeans, and expensive sarong. Distinctions between social classes are especially visible in the smoking habits of men, and the cigarettes provided at praying sessions and celebrations. The poor, such as Pak Satrawi mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, roll their own low quality tobacco, sometimes only with a maize leaf as wrapper, while others smoke hand rolled kretek cigarettes, cheap kretek filter cigarettes, or, if wealthy, the prestigious Gudang Garam brand. Bagenda, the village head, smokes Dji Sam Soe, the most expensive kretek cigarette. Once, for a few months, Pak Asari a tobacco trader, also smoked Dji Sam Soe, but when others learned that he had nearly gone bankrupt he became the subject of many jokes. After that, he never smoked Dji Sam Soe again.

Ecological conditions: climate, soils, and altitude

The climate of Krajan is pleasant: nights are fresh and dry while the temperature seldom drops below 19 °C. Mornings are cool, and during the day in the dry season temperatures exceed 30 °C for only a few hours. On the northern slope of the Argopuro, winds blow regularly, while rainfall is limited and much lower than in the areas south of the large volcanos in East Java. The average rainfall in the area amounts to 2,000-3,000 mm. a year (Tennekens, 1963:314), but there are microvariations depending on altitude. Sometimes, in the upslope area of Krajan, huge quantities of rain fall, while in the lower parts (only two or three kilometres away), do not receive a single drop. The higher the altitude of a field, the more rain it generally receives.

The microclimatic diversities between the upslope and the lower areas explain much of the agricultural differences between the region of Krajan and surrounding areas. These small differences in rainfall can be responsible for a successful second maize crop and a failure of the tobacco harvest while, a few kilometres down the road, the maize crop can be lost and the tobacco flourishes. Harvest failure is to a large extent a matter of bad luck, but it also comes

---

2 It is remarkable that the villagers are not able to predict rainfall at all, and have not developed a vast body of climatological knowledge crucial for planting in time to secure a good harvest. Moreover, I witnessed regularly that tobacco, rice, coffee, laundry, etc., put outside the house to dry, got wet because of a sudden shower. On these occasions everybody was running around trying to put things to dry in their house as quickly as possible.
down to the specific knowledge and management skills of a farmer in dealing with the threats and using the different opportunities of the diverse agro-ecological environment.3

Another important aspect of the climate is the variability in rainfall over the years. In some years rainfall can be much greater and much longer than in other years. In the dry season of 1997, the rains started three months late due to El Niño. In other years, however, the start of the rains may also fluctuate by one or two months, and so, tobacco and maize crops can be lost due to water shortages. In 1998, there was a lot of rain related to La Niña. Rains did not start particularly early, but lasted much longer destroying the tobacco crop. Desperately, farmers commented, “we never understood the weather, but now everything seems to be mixed up even more”.

In contrast to the soils in the Tengger area, on which Hefner (1990) wrote his Political Economy of Mountain Java, the highlands in the area of Krajan are poor. There are no ashes of the dormant Argopuro volcano to renew soil fertility. Moreover, the long dry season in the rain shadow on the northern slope increases the soil temperature and restricts the build-up of humus and humidity. The clayish texture of the red podsoils are also not so favourable for agriculture: it is mainly sticky, heavy to till, easily saturated in the wet season, and then dry and stone hard in the dry season. Preparing and cultivating the land is a laborious process and machines cannot be used for this work as the land is divided into small terraces. According to official village statistics, Krajan has 75 hectares of sawah. According to my own observations and calculations, this figure is far too gloomy and total Krajan sawah does not amount more than 50 hectares. Much of this sawah is of low quality and only half of it can be irrigated. An estimated 800 hectare of Krajan is tegal although not all of these fields can be cultivated permanently.

Settlement

The village of Krajan is not a clearly demarcated settlement, but consists of several hamlets, scattered dwellings, and loosely linked clusters of houses along footpaths and along the road. The hamlets and their vicinities administratively belong to one or two RW (rumah warga) split up in smaller RT (rumah tanga). Krajan consists of 12 RW and the RW and RT do often not correspond exactly with the boundaries of hamlets, settlements, or neighbourhoods as defined by villagers themselves.4 The scattered settlement pattern of Krajan is common in the region, and in the middle and upper areas of the northern and eastern Argopuro one finds many dead-end roads. The set-

---

3 In the literature on rural livelihoods, often agricultural conditions are taken for granted, and microdifferences that need specific adaptations and knowledge by farmers is easily overlooked. This often occurs when generalisations are made assuming that farming practices and knowledge are similar across large areas.

4 In this thesis, I will use categories referred to by villagers themselves such as hamlets and neighbourhoods.
tlements along these roads are frequently of a vein or ribbon type, and from the valley, the roads are often 10-15 kilometres long before they end at a village or in the forest at the higher slopes of the volcano. Further away from these roads and connected by footpaths or dirt roads, we find many smaller hamlets. The population in the area is of Madurese origin, but have been living there for generations. Unlike most lowland Javanese villages, Madurese houses are a bit dispersed. In this area, the houses of extended families and close kin are often built closely together in tight rows or around yards.

In Krajan, we find seven major hamlets: Mengkuara, Pakuarah, Sayuran, Morsungai, Dluwang, Wringinkurung, and Pakualas. These seven hamlets include nearly twenty neighbourhoods (lingkungan) often inhabited by villagers sharing a common line of descent. Coming from lowland Bondowoso, the hamlets before the village office are Mengkuara, Pakuarah (on the dirt track to Pakem) and the Sayuran hamlet. The village office does not lie in the largest, or in a clearly demarcated, hamlet, but somewhere central to all the hamlets of Krajan. Just before the village office, a dirt track leaves the road in the direction of Dluwang. Dluwang is the largest hamlet of Krajan and is situated two to three kilometres further northeast. After passing the village office, further up the road, one reaches the hamlet of Wringinkurung. Just before Wringinkurung a small dirt track leads off eastwards towards the highest and most remote hamlet of Krajan, Pakualas. Morsungai is the smallest hamlet of Krajan, and the only one with abundant sawah due to its location near rivers. It can only be reached on foot.

Sources of income

The ownership of land as a productive resource is very important in Krajan. Rice and especially maize production, with some cassava and other minor crops, cover most of the subsistence needs of the population. Despite the large number of households that are dependent on subsistence production, another significant category of villagers derives its main income from wage labour, trade, or other cash-generating activities. The bulk of the population, however, combines incomes-in-kind from their own fields and share-tenancy relationships with cash incomes from wage labour and weaving baskets. For many villagers, cash incomes may be marginal and incidental but they are very important and highly desired as part of the mix of activities. Generally, however, the more difficult the situation is for a family, the fewer opportunities that are open. Those who remain dependent on only one or two sources of income are generally the poorest and most vulnerable villagers.

3 Koentjaraningrat (1967: 248), in his study of a Central Javanese village, distinguishes between two types of settlement: a) widely dispersed hamlets separated by fields of sawah and b) hamlets consisting of three or four rows of houses strung along a road or river.

4 The area around the village office (balai desa) is called Krajan proper, but it is neither an independent hamlet, nor an RW.

The growth of an upland village
While land is important for rice, maize, and tobacco production, livestock and especially cattle are a crucial resource, both culturally and economically, in Krajan. The Madurese are fond of their cows and bulls, and some say jokingly that they treat their animals better than their children. In upland Krajan, no water buffalo are kept, only cows and bulls. Once, a very good cow died in the neighbourhood I was living in and many men cried at its burial. Before that, I had never seen men crying, not even during funerals. Cattle are important both culturally and symbolically because they add status, are used for bullfighting (aduan sapi), offer security and, according to De Jonge (1990), reflect and enhance the masculinity of Madurese men.

Cattle are economically important because they contribute an important part of the income of rural families in a relative stable and predictable way. After one or two years, bulls can be sold for high prices, and cows yield offspring once a year. Besides that, cattle are one of the few ways of accumulating and saving assets, and offer some income security and collateral in times of need. Selling a cow or bull is the most common way to cope with a sudden need for cash. Cattle are a profitable form of saving, and usually cows are sold to buy land, to build or repair a house, or to pay for a big funeral, wedding, or selamatan. They are important and integrated into the agricultural production system. The animals are kept at home and fed with leftovers from agriculture such as rice straw, corn, and weeds, and with grass from unproductive lands mixed with tree leaves and by elephant grass planted along the ditches of the tegal terraces. Cows are used to plough the tegal and muddy the sawahs, and cow dung is used as organic fertiliser. Beef is highly appreciated and an essential element of the menu at funerals, weddings, and on the larger selamatan, or at Islamic festive days like Idul Adha (hari korban) and Idul Fitri (hari raya). Last, but not least, people bet on bulls in bullfights for huge amounts of money.

While land and cattle bring income in kind and cash, the main sources of cash income are wage labour, trade, basket weaving, and handicraft production. Only a dozen people receive a salary, a (war) pension, or significant remittances from migrated family members. Those who receive a salary are mainly those working for the government such as teachers, health workers, and some of the village officials. Further, some people earn money by working for governmental projects and by being engaged in construction. For half of the villagers, incomes in kind, in what we may call subsistence incomes, are more important than incomes in cash. A stable and adequate cash income is hard to find. Only a few people make a living solely out of trading or a profession. Most of the villagers, get their income from multiple sources, and combine a number of cash-generating activities with incomes in kind to

---

7 Most of them are of mixed blood of Javanese, Madurese, and more recently introduced white Indian cattle (reddish, white, or black with large horns and a long neck).

8 Those who were crying were not the owners or caretakers, but neighbours. They did not cry because of the economic loss. "I am crying because this was a very promising, young bull," someone told me. Another said: "I have to cry because it was such a beautiful animal, kasihan sapinya."
make a living. Those who mainly rely on subsistence means derive incomes from land, barter, the forest, and out of participating in harvest for which they receive a share of the crop. Nevertheless, for these families, mainly engaged in subsistence production, cash remains crucial for buying consumption items such as cooking oil, salt, sugar, tea or coffee, rice, cigarettes, and for the purchase of clothes, medicines, and footwear.

For those able to make investments, cash income comes from tobacco production, cattle raising, offering loans, running a shop or coffee stall, and trade. Most of the poorer villagers, care for a cow or bull of a richer fellow villager, and women in particular, earn an income from basket weaving, occasional jobs, or some small trade.

Wage labour in Krajan is mostly agricultural work such as ploughing, hoeing, weeding, carrying, harvesting, and, the preparation and processing of tobacco. In addition, wage labourers are sometimes needed for government projects for road improvement, construction, and irrigation maintenance and improvement. Most villagers who primarily depend on wages from labour cluster in the lower hamlets of Pakuarah, Mengkuara, and Sayuran. In these hamlets, land is mostly concentrated in the hands of a few families belonging to the pious Haji Feisal family, who are generally involved in labour-intensive tobacco production on a large scale, and also prefer to employ wage labour in other crops including rice, maize, and rarely, peanuts, chilli pepper, onions, and garlic. The strategic location of these hamlets, close to the roads to Bondowoso and Pakem, as well as the concentration of large traders here, are conductive to an increased demand for labour.

In the more remote hamlets such as Dluwang and Pakualas, far fewer wage labour opportunities are available. There landowners rather employ labour exchange groups, offer harvest shares, or pay wages in kind. Moreover, the higher the altitude, the lower the percentage and quality of tobacco planted, and so the less wage labour required. The only exception is a coffee plantation that regularly employs a few dozen workers. In general, men can do all the tasks except for transplanting and weeding rice, which are clearly seen as women’s tasks. Before the crisis of 1997, wage labourers earned Rp 2,500 - 3,500 a day, the equivalent of three kilos of rice. Women earned less (Rp 1,500 - 2,500) depending on the task and the hamlet. Wages are somewhat higher in the lower zone. During the crisis, wages rose slowly, and by 1999 wages had doubled, but in the meantime, prices had increased at least threefold (See Chapter 8).

The most important non-agricultural source of cash income is the making of small bamboo baskets (besek). Most of the women in the hamlets of Dluwang, Wringinkurung, Morsungai, and some in Pakualas weave besek. Besek is generally made at home from all types of bamboo. Male household members cut the large bamboo trunks, or haul bundles of smaller ‘wild’ bamboo stalks from the forest, saw them into pieces about thirty centimetres long, and splits the trunks into fine strips. These strips are dried by the women and woven into small baskets. On average, a household of husband, wife, and one helping child or grandmother, is able to produce 100 to 150 baskets a week.
The price of 100 pieces ranged, before the crisis, from Rp 6,500 to Rp 8,000, depending on the season and the quality, that is about seven to eight kilos of rice. In 1999, besek prices hardly increased due to an increase in production and a stagnating demand. The baskets are sold to local middlemen, some of them women, who take care of the transport to Bondowoso or Jember. These middlemen often pay advances or small loans to these women producing besek, which has to be repaid with baskets which are bought at a lower price.

Cash savings are rare, and then only in small sums, and less than ten villagers have a bank account. Usually women secretly save some cash for emergencies - without their husbands knowing about it - enough to buy food for a few days. Also men generally do not tell their wives how much they spend or how much they still have in their pocket. A general form of saving in cash is celingan, saving coins in a bamboo stick. Sometimes people deposit these celingan with local religious leaders to be used at Idul Fitri or in times of emergencies. Others save through rotating saving groups, arisan, but its number and size are limited. Most villagers explained that they do not join because they never know beforehand when they will need the cash and their savings are vulnerable because of inflation. Most people who can afford it save by buying (young) cattle, gold, or chicken. Savings in animals are often more profitable, and make spending more difficult.

Education and health

Krajan has three primary schools, one in Mengkuara, one in Wringinkurung, and one in Dluwang. The first two of these are in a poor shape, teaching materials such as books and pencils are lacking, teachers and children do not attend regularly, and the level of education is very low. Most of the Krajan teachers live in Bondowoso and often do not come to school in the morning due to rains, a broken motorbike, or business elsewhere. All teachers are from elsewhere, of Javanese origin, and come from as far as Jember, Malang, and Banyuwangi. Five of them live in Krajan, and four have married local women. As teachers, they are important and influential villagers, members of the village council, informal leaders, and they sit on committees to administer governmental village development funds such as LKMD and PPPDT.

The lack of teaching materials and committed staff are not the only reasons for the low quality of the education system in the village. Many parents are illiterate, and most Krajan villagers do not particularly value education as a means of enhancing their skills or livelihood in the future. Moreover, some of the children, from remote hamlets such as Pakualas and Morsungai, are often absent as they have to walk nearly an hour to reach school and only go if the weather is good. Particularly in the hamlets of Mengkuara, Morsungai,

---

9 An arisan is a form of a ROSCA, a rotating credit and savings association. For a study on arisan, and credit and saving, in Indonesia see Lont, 2001.
10 LKMD (Village Community Resilience Institution), PPPDT (Infrastructure and Population Development of 'Backward Villages').
and Dluwang, parents of poor households do not send their children to school when they are small, or when there is work to be done at home. From an age of eight or ten, boys and girls in most of these families are expected to help out. Boys collect cattle fodder, firewood, or split bamboo stalks for basket weaving; and girls hull and grind maize, or weave baskets to sell. Another reason for not sending children to school is the shame of parents who are not able to pay for a proper school uniform.

For these reasons, by the age of twelve, about half of the children are hardly able to read, write, or calculate. Very few children make it to high school or to professional training. Only around 25 villagers have ever attended governmental or religious high schools, and less than half of them have graduated. A handful of Krajan villagers have completed professional training as teachers, health workers, or employees, and one has attended the university college in Jember (but dropped out in the third year). Almost all of the better educated villagers are living in the hamlets of Wringinkurung, Krajan proper, and Mengkuara.

In contrast to the low popularity of governmental education in Krajan, religious teaching attracts more students. In the late afternoon, dozens of boys and girls can be seen walking along the roads and paths heading to one of the nine Koran schools (surau). Here they are taught reading and writing of Koran verses by religious leaders who have been educated in one of the religious boarding schools (pondok pesantren) in East Java or Madura. Some of these leaders are also head of one of the three mosques in Krajan. The oldest mosque of Krajan was built in the 1950s and is situated between Krajan proper and Sayuran, the others are in Wringinkurung and in Dluwang. In Krajan, about seven religious families dominate the Koran schools, some of them are very strict (especially in Mengkuara, Dluwang, and Pakualas) while others are more liberal. All of them belong to the traditional and relatively moderate stream of Islam and are member of the NU (Nahdatul Ulama).

In Krajan, there is a health post with a government-paid midwife who offers basic healthcare and extension services on hygiene, diet, and childcare. She also gives advice on family planning, but there is also a special family planning organisation (KB) in each village. Unfortunately, the midwife for Krajan is only in the village once a week as her family is living in Banyuwangi (75 km east of Krajan). If there is an emergency, villagers have to go to down the road to Ardisaeng, or even to the government hospital in Bondowoso, where treatment is expensive. Late in the evening or at night this is often a problem as no transport is available. In neighbouring Ardisaeng, the health post performs better than in Krajan, as the midwife there is better trained and always present (she is married to someone from that village). Although the services of these health workers are supposed to be free, they earn a supplement to their low government wages by asking money for medication. In practice this means that villagers pay for medicines, vitamins, and injections

\[\text{KB: Keluarga Berencana (officially BKKBN).}\]
which ought be free, or cheaper, and which are often not needed or beneficial from a medical point of view. Especially the sale of injections, believed to be a cure for all kinds of maladies and bad feelings in general, is very profitable. During the 1997 crisis, a programme was launched offering free health care for the poorest of the population, but this programme did not work well as individual doctors and chemists still demanded money.

Besides this government sponsored health care system, there has always been a local system of healers (dukun)\textsuperscript{12} and sellers of local medication (jama) in Krajan. These latter sell mixtures of herbs, spices, honey, and sometimes chemical drugs, for a variety of maladies. Sometimes, they also work as midwives, advisors, and offer massages. Healers (dukun) sometimes offer the same services, give advice, perform curing rituals, or make use of magic. In the event of severe illness or suspicion of being a victim of black magic, help is sought from stronger healers further away (many living in the neighbouring village of Tamankursi), or from important religious leaders in the area.

\textit{Village leadership, religion, and politics}

The Madurese of Krajan, like the other Madurese I met elsewhere, consider themselves good Muslims, carrying on the tradition of the great Madurese ulama who spread Islam on Madura from the 17th century onwards. In the eyes of other Indonesians, Madurese are pious but ‘fanatical’ Muslims. Being Muslim, and a member of NU, has become part of the Madurese cultural identity. Although all villagers have received religious training in one of the Koran schools, most of the villagers from Wringinkurung, Morsungai, Krajan proper, Sayuran, and parts of Pakuarah hardly ever visit a mosque. Nevertheless, religious teachers enjoy high prestige and are often important leaders. As they have substantial political power in the village, they are regularly consulted by villagers in search of advice and guidance. Their political role became explicitly articulated during village elections under the days of Suharto, when they have rallied their clients to vote for the Islamic PPP. In these days, about one third of the Krajan villagers voted PPP, and the others voted the government party Golkar. In the reformatory 1999 elections, the former PPP voters switched to Wahid’s PKB as well as a third of the former Golkar electorate, and the less strict observers of religion to Megawati’s PDI-P, which was supported by the village head. From the other voters who previously voted Golkar, two third voted PDI-P which became the largest party in Krajan.

\textsuperscript{12} Sometimes these are specialised locals using herbs, massages and magic; but often religious leaders are also healers. There is a sliding scale ranging from jama sellers to healers. Sometimes a jama seller is also a dukun. These dukun are believed to possess, or be in contact with, the supernatural. Some women and men consult their dukun for advice over sexual problems, relational problems, when they fall in love, or in the case of lovesickness, but also about health and illness in general.
Apart from election time, these religious fractions can also play an important role in the area of village politics. During village head elections, the village is often divided along religious lines. As in other parts of Java, such political cleavages in Krajan are not primarily based on differences in political ideology or class. Rather, people are politically divided according to religious beliefs and related sociocultural values (cf. Geertz, 1960). “These ideological currents, that in some instances have developed into fully-fledged political parties, became known as aliran, ‘ideological streams’” (Antlöv & Cederroth, 1994: 5).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, so called secular and more religious families, have rivalled with each other in Krajan for controlling village resources and its leadership. From the mid-1960s, after the death of Bagenda’s grandfather (secular), until 1991, the religious family of Haji Aliwafa from the hamlet of Mengkuara ruled the village. In the village elections of 1991, Bagenda defeated Aliwafa’s son Haji Feisal. Bagenda is a descendent of the first postcolonial village head, who had strong ties with the military and who was not very religious. From the start of his rule, Bagenda has never been on very friendly terms with the Feisal family, or with the more orthodox religious leaders of Krajan.

In principle, villages in Indonesia are organised in an uniform way, and supposed to function due to a system of checks and balances through an elected village head with the assistance of a secretary and a council of village officials, to assist the village head.13 This system is supervised and guarded by the regional government.

In practice, the village organisation and governance in Krajan is controlled by Bagenda who makes use of a wide network of clients in the village, backed up by the regional government and a wider system of state patronage.14 First and foremost however, Bagenda’s power basis is in the village. In his system of patronage, the village secretary, the village officials, some religious leaders, youth leaders, and the heads of the hamlets are Bagenda’s clients. Some of them, in their turn, are patrons of other villagers, or act as brokers between different factions and interest groups in the village. Bagenda makes the major decisions, and expects clients to follow him in exchange for

---

13 Under New Order rule, in the village, state influence and state decisions were essentially unchallenged, and are supposed to be actioned directly by using this chain of bureaucrats and village organisations. During the New Order rule, a national administrative network has been established, which reached down to the most remote corner of the village, executed by a large number of government patrons who receive, in return, political power, the use of service land, fees for paperwork, and commissions on weddings, land transactions, and legal penalties. In Krajan, this system of state influence never completely worked.

14 Antlöv and Cederroth (1994: 8) mention about state patronage: “Right from its rise to power, it has been a conscious, and successful, policy of the New Order to incorporate the support of the rural elite. Because village leaders are tied to the state by multistranded links, they become state clients; because state clients are local notables with a legitimate authority, state politics are given the touch of compulsion and substance.” The term state patronage has been introduced by Gillian Hart, 1989.
The growth of an upland village

financial, political, and social favours. Other patronage networks like that of the ‘religious faction’ in Krajan with Haji Feisal at its apex, are organised in a similar way.15

Despite the strong pressure of the New Order state to gain influence on village politics and organisation, Krajan has never been totally conformist. Both the orthodox religious factions and the more secular group had their own goals to pursue outside of or opposed to government officials and created room for manoeuvre during the New Order years. The village cooperative (KUD) was never able to control the total supply of rice, maize, tobacco, and fertilizer. Village heads and farmers tried to avoid levies and taxes on tobacco and other crops by illegal trade and alternative trade canals. Government budgets were creamed off by corruption, or used for unintended purposes, illegal logging took place with the help of regional officials and the village head, and sometimes small revolts, demonstrations, or riots took place with the secret approval of the village head. In the past, the remote location of Krajan certainly made this hidden opposition and autonomy easier, however, with the completion of the road in 1994 government interference and control increased.

The weaknesses of the New Order state patronage system became evident during the 1997 crisis. Although government policy could always be modified, negotiated, and reshaped by strong village leaders, in a context of a weakened state and diminishing favours, local patrons easily shifted to older, local allegiances based on religion or ideology, and took their clients with them. When Bagenda, in early 1999, proclaimed that he and his family had always been keeping the legacy of Sukarno alive and that he was now backing Megawati’s PDI-P, all his clients followed him and PDI-P won the elections in Krajan. Obviously, political power depends on material benefits. People’s role in local politics highly correlates with the property they own. This is a mutually reinforced process: people need power to control resources, and due to their property they obtain power and the capacity to engage others in their projects and to bind them as clients.

15 From the 1920s onwards, four families have dominated village politics, providing the village heads. Of these families, three are among the richest in the area. These families are the abangan Bagenda family based in Wringinkurung (providing the village head from 1949 until 1968 and from 1991 onwards), the religious Haji Feisal family based in Mengkuara (village heads from 1968 until 1991), and the Effendi family living in Wringinkurung, Ardisaeng, and Andungsari (providing village heads before 1945 and several village notables since). Currently, the village secretary is from the Effendi family and their kin rules the neighbouring village of Ardisaeng. The fourth family, living in Sayuran, was loyal to the Dutch and provided village heads prior to 1941 and from 1947 till 1949. Due to this loyalty, they lost most of their prestige and land. Nowadays, the offspring of this family provide some of the teachers in the village and others have migrated and have low level government jobs in Jember and Bondowoso. The prosperity of other rich Krajan families, including a large number of haji and religious teachers, and well-educated villagers who were not involved in village policies or never succeeded in being elected, can all be traced back to the period after 1930.
Administratively, Krajan belongs to the district of Bondowoso (although administrative borders have been changing over time). The town of Bondowoso is a regional economic and governmental entity since the second half of the 19th century. Here are the main markets, and the offices of the police, military, and representatives of important government departments. Nowadays, Bondowoso town itself looks pleasant and clean, and is a relatively well-off regional market centre in the shadow of Jember. Large numbers of retired military personnel, civil servants, and small businessmen reside here or are engaged in small-scale businesses. The town however is rather small and due to the absence of large companies offers little employment opportunities for either skilled or unskilled labourers from Krajan. There are many small shops, a few furniture workshops, some transport companies, and a number of trade companies. Most incomes in town are generated from the fertile plains to the northeast, the Ijen coffee plantation, commercial vegetable growing areas to the east, and the tobacco area towards Maesan and Jember to the south. The plains, with large sawah complexes, are predominately populated by Javanese although many Madurese can also be found. The dry mountains towards the north and the west of Bondowoso are fully Madurese. These areas, where Krajan is situated, do not add much to the prosperity of Bondowoso. The average purchasing power of villagers is low in these areas, and more than half of the villages here are classified as remote or underdeveloped IDT villages.

Bondowoso still breathes some of its colonial past. An example of the well-preserved colonial heritage is the Palm Hotel, which was built in 1931 as a residence for a Dutch tobacco planter, and has been a hotel since independence. Nowadays, a local Chinese businessman runs it and hosts travelling businessmen, a few tourists, government employees, and weddings for Chinese families. Its huge veranda and ceilings recall a glorious past when Bondowoso was a thriving tobacco and coffee centre, and many merchants stay there during the tobacco season. Since those times, the hotel has only been painted and repainted. The palms have become enormous trees, hosting a colony of hundreds of herons, resting after foraging in the sawah around Bondowoso. Only recently, at the beginning of the 1990s, was a swimming pool and a hall room with rooms for large parties and weddings (mainly Chinese) built at the back of the hotel.

In the town square (alun alun) further remnants of Dutch colonialism can be seen: a few civil servant houses, the catholic church with adjacent school, an old drugstore, the former pawnshop (pandhuis), and the prison. These buildings are well conserved and still in good shape in this sleepy city. At the oversized square the first signs of post-colonial developments are visible: a large and almost empty town hall in need of some paint, some small Javanese-styled parlours, a concrete playground for baseball, soccer, and badminton, a statue of a policeman and, at the west end, the recently enlarged main mosque. The wide asphalt roads around this rather empty town square
almost without any traffic, complete the visible blessings of the New Order regime. As in many towns and cities in New Order Indonesia, Bondowoso received large government funds for road infrastructure and the building up of a huge government apparatus and police force. At the same time, this period marked an increase in Javanisation and Islamisation, as one can see from the large government offices, built in the old Kraton-Javanese style, and the immense mosque.

In the middle of one of these roads is a memorial of the struggle for independence: Gerbang Maut, the train wagon of death. This pathetic monument - made from blackened brass - recalls the disastrous and cruel transport of war prisoners to Surabaya organised by Dutch military forces in 1947. During the transportation, 46 of the 100 prisoners in the train died of heat and lack of oxygen due to neglect by Dutch marines.16

There is a Chinese quarter with narrow streets, two roads with shops, and also a crowded marketplace downtown where most Krajanese do their shopping. To the north of the town square the quiet Besuki road, in the direction of Krajan, begins. The shops along this road are much smaller than in the rest of town, and mainly sell basic things such as foodstuffs, simple building materials, and snacks. Along the road, pickup trucks line up waiting for passengers or loads to take into the mountains between Bondowoso and Besuki. Outside the tobacco season, business is slack here as the northern hinterland has not much to offer except tobacco. Nevertheless, there seem to be far too many cars and other public transport facilities. It has been popular among richer families to buy pickup trucks to organise transport between villages and Bondowoso after major road improvement projects in the mid-1990s. But too many have stepped in, causing an oversupply.

The road from Bondowoso to Besuki was built at the end of the 19th century by the Dutch Birnie family to connect Bondowoso with the large trunk road (Jalan Raya Pos), which connects the Eastern Salient to the rest of Java. The Birnies played an important role in the tobacco cultivation and trade and the development of the area of Bondowoso and Jember. The first of the Birnies came in 1859 to Jelbug (between Jember and Bondowoso) and worked as an administrator (controleur) for the colonial administration. After a conflict with the Dutch resident he resigned, started a tobacco enterprise, and married a local girl. A few decades later, when their children took over the enterprise, it was one of the most influential in the Eastern Salient (Broersma, 1913).

The large, old tamarind trees make the Besuki road shady and pleasant to drive along, when not slowed by several roadblocks of youngsters in white Moslem clothes. These youngsters try to reduce the speed of passing traffic by

---

16 Despite repeated calls for help and water in Dutch and Indonesian, the accompanying Dutch soldiers did not open the wagons. At first the responsible officers received only a small fine and a disciplinary reprimand. Only in a second order were those responsible sentenced to prison for two, three, eight, and four months by the Supreme Military Court (Hoog Militair Gerechtshof) in Batavia.
funnel-shaped roadblocks and ask passengers to contribute to the building of a new mosque. After throwing a few coins in a basket, a man with a microphone shouts all kinds of blessings and hails over the traveller, who then can continue the journey in peace.  

After passing Curahdami, the road crosses a river and the landscape overwhelms with different shades of green such as the light greens of newly planted rice, the dark tamarinds, coconuts, the dusty green of scattered teak trees, and the massive dark body of Mount Argopuro and Mount Krincing. These mountains in the west form an exciting backdrop to each trip to and from Krajan.

In Poler, on the road to Krajan, some five kilometres from Bondowoso, there is a monument at the side of the road. The - typically New Order style - statue depicts some brave men fighting an invisible enemy with sticks. According to the plaque, villagers fought at this very place, with sticks and stones, against the arriving Dutch tanks in 1947. In the Bondowoso area, Dutch forces came on the 20th of July 1947 from the direction of Besuki where they had landed that morning at Pasir Putih (thirty-five kilometres northwest from Bondowoso). After taking Besuki, they marched the same day straight on to Bondowoso and Jember. The military operation in the Eastern Salient of Java was a success, and within a few days nearly all the strategic towns, roads, and bridges were controlled. The approaching troops had hardly encountered any serious resistance in this part of East Java.

Also in Krajan, people tried to adjust to the circumstances and a dozen Krajanese who had fought against the Dutch fled further into the mountains and joined bands of guerrillas to continue the fight. Since the capitulation of the Japanese forces in August 1945, this part of East Java had been an autonomous area virtually, as the allied forces who came to disarm the Japanese stayed away from the interior. The area experienced a power vacuum during two years until Dutch troops came to re-establish firm colonial rule in 1947.  

According to some old people, several inhabitants were happy to see Dutch rule reaffirmed and the situation normalised. Others told about how they accommodated the new situation: making the best of it.

---

17 In recent years, the number of these roadblocks in the area around Bondowoso has increased dramatically. Stimulated by important kiai, and internationally supported Moslem institutions, many villages have started to build large new mosques. (According to local religious leaders and government employees, these grants come from organisations sponsored by Saudi Arabia). Such mosques are often a way for local kiai to increase their influence and prestige in a certain area. Since villagers are not able to meet all expenses, and funds from outside are not sufficient, collections are needed; and in the eyes of many villagers taxing traffic is a legitimate and acceptable way to achieve their goals. Collecting sufficient money and finishing a mosque can take years, and therefore the roadblocks are not lifted for many years. After a few weeks, however, volunteers are hard to find and therefore a share of the money has to be given to the collectors. A number of youngsters and some of the elderly have made a profession out of 'almsbegging' and mosque building along major long-distance roads. At many places in the area, mosque building has been the only construction activity for many years, and the revenues from passing tourist cars, minibuses, and pilgrims form a welcome contribution to the weak village economies.

18 According to some old people, several inhabitants were happy to see Dutch rule reaffirmed and the situation normalised. Others told about how they accommodated the new situation: making the best of it.
Republic of Indonesia on the 17th of August 1945, but the Dutch did not recognise independence. In about May 1947, and after several unsuccessful diplomatic attempts to regain full control over Indonesia, the Dutch decided to attack the Indonesian Republic directly in what they euphemistically called police actions (in Indonesia generally remembered as the agresi). Until that time Dutch troops had largely only controlled the main cities such as Jakarta, Bogor, Bandung, and Surabaya, which had been held previously by the British. In this first campaign, they aimed to secure access to export products of Java (especially sugar) and Sumatra (especially oil and rubber). The Dutch believed that Republican-held cities could be conquered in two weeks, and the rest of the of Republican territory within six months: Ricklefs (1991: 225).

**A history of the region**

To understand contemporary Krajan and its specific political, ecological, and economic structure, insight in the history of the region and settlement in the area is needed. In the following, I concentrate upon the growth of Bondowoso and the of Madurese settlement in the area.

Ki Ronggo, a descendant of Madurese nobility in disgrace, is said to have founded Bondowoso. This first leader, alias Raden Tumenggung Wirodipuro, married a Madurese princess and founded a dynasty of rulers. It has been common practice on Java for minor descendants of kings to settle down elsewhere and establish their own village or city in order to start a clan of their own (Wessing 2000). Different sources claim that Bondowoso was founded in a similar way in an open area in the forest.

The area between Besuki, Bondowoso, and Jember was inhabited long before the official founding of Bondowoso, but these populations disappeared as a result of the long periods of warfare in this area prior to 1700. There is archaeological evidence that the areas west and south of Jember have been densely populated before. Also, in the mid-slope area around Krajan,

---

19 After the end of World War II, the Dutch government in the Netherlands, faced a severe lack of revenues from the colonial areas.

20 According to signs and inscriptions on tombstones at the holy burrial place (kramat) in Bondowoso, Ki Ronggo was the first ruler and sources at the local office of tourism depict him as the first leader of Bondowoso.

21 Bondo Wasa might mean 'open place in the jungle' or 'bull and forest'. One source, recalls a myth telling the story as follows: Asra, the adopted son of Kyai Patih Halus, the ruler of Besuki, and descendant of the former king of Madura who had been defeated by a bastard son of his, was sent to find new land. Farmers in the area of Besuki could no longer find enough land and living conditions became harsh. At his marriage, Asra received a white buffalo with short horns, and the buffalo led him to a fertile place in the jungle where he could cut the forest to start to grow rice. The first place where he arrived, he planted a young banyan tree, and that place was called Wringin (nowadays a sub-district, kecamatan, halfway between Besuki and Bondowoso). The second place where he came to, he put up colourful flags and called it Mandiro (which means flag). Later, when prosperity increased, he called the place Bondowoso and he became the first ruler of Bondowoso, called Ronggo Kertonegoro and popularly known as Ki Ronggo. He constructed sawahs and established the bullfights aduan sapi in Bondowoso (Suhartono 1993).
signs of earlier habitation exist. In the village, as at other places on the north slope of the Argopuro, many graves, tombstones and holy places (kramat) are found which originate from well before the 18th century, and recall of a more prosperous past. Archaeological remnants of Hindu settlements and holy places have been found three kilometres north from Krajan and at the northern end of the Argopuro (Gennep, 1895; Veth, 1903). Nowadays, villagers sometimes find jewellery, pottery, and other valuables in and around these old places. Some of the kramat are still in use as burial places, on others mosques have been built, and some can be spotted as mounds in the fields or have simply been demolished by villagers in search of valuables or wishing to extend their fields.\(^{22}\)

Although Madura had Muslim rulers since 1527 (Ricklefs, 1991: 39), in the sixteenth century the Eastern Salient was under Hindu rule. Pasuruan was the only significant Islamic power in the Eastern Salient during the 16th century, and there were apparently frequent wars with Hindu kingdoms in the interior of Java. According to Ricklefs, there were numerous wars during the 16th century between Pasuruan and Blambangan on the extreme southeast coast of Java. In 1600-1601, even the town of Blambangan was conquered (Ricklefs, 1991: 39-40) by Pasuruan fighters. The area of Bondowoso - situated between these kingdoms - intermittently came under Hindu and Pasuruan rule, and every now and then passing armies are said to have destroyed houses, fields and crops.\(^{23}\)

In the second half of the sixteenth century, in the interior of Central Java close to current day Yogyakarta, a new power, Mataram, emerged based on its richness in agricultural resources. In 1614, Mataram assaulted much of Java's northern coast, the Eastern Salient, and Pasuruan; and raided Pasuruan again in 1616 and 1617. In 1624, Mataram's conqueror Sultan Agung subdued Madura. One of the strategies of Sultan Agung was to weaken the enemy through forced migration of large populations and the destruction of crops, food reserves, and livestock in the area under attack (Ricklefs, 1991: 43).

These wars in the Eastern Salient led to huge devastation, starvation and epidemics in the area where Jember and Bondowoso are now situated. The destruction was great, and V.O.C. reports from 1625 (quoted in Ricklefs, 1991: 44) claim that two-thirds of the population died in some of the conflict areas. In 1633, more raids took place in the Eastern Salient including against Blambangan and Panarukan, which again led to huge devastations. After crushing the resistance of Pasuruan, Panarukan, and Blambangan, the Eastern Salient remained the scene of several fights between Mataram and Balinese rulers until the end of the 17th century.

After 1700, the area came under the rule of Surapati of Mataram and the remnants of Blambangan, but by the beginning of the 18th century none of the original people who had inhabited the areas around Pasuruanan,

\(^{22}\) These kramat and findings from graves are believed to possess magical powers and only dare-devils are inclined to open graves and demolish hills (after giving a selamatan and long fasting).

\(^{23}\) See for an overview: Cribb (2000).
Panarukan, and Blambangan were left. They had died because of killings, starvation, deportation, or epidemics caused by the wars between the kingdoms of Bali and Mataram. Passing armies of both central Javanese and Balinese - East Javanese origin, had ruined the land between these kingdoms. As a result, the area of Bondowoso and Jember was virtually uninhabited at the beginning of the 18th century except for the areas around Besuki, Panarukan, and Banyuwangi (Tennekens, 1963: 323). It is probable that in the higher mountains some of the communities will have survived, as Hefner (1990: 57) describes for the Tengger area. In the cities and towns of the north coast, the influence of traders and rulers from Madura increased. Around 1700, Besuki was nearly completely Madurese, and the V.O.C. left the rule of these coastal areas of East Java to the Sultans of Sumenep, indicating that already firm relationships existed between these areas. Such links with Madura remain until the current day.

After 1740, the influence of the V.O.C. continued to grow on the north coast of Java, and several trading ports and fortifications had been established; the Eastern Salient came under full V.O.C. control. After the Dutch imposed a firm hegemony over this part of Java, eventually peace was restored and the population could increase again, mostly with Madurese people from the Sumenep area. The V.O.C. offered the wastelands of East Java to Madurese soldiers who had fought for them. Population pressure on the fertile coastline of Besuki was building up at the end of the 18th century, increasing the size of towns and cities on the north coast such as Pasuruan, Probolinggo, Besuki, and Panarukan, and new land was needed (Suhartono, 1993; Tennekens, 1963: 327).

Migration into the interior of the Eastern uplands, thus first started in the area of Besuki after 1700. A century later, the whole northern coastal zone of residentie Besuki, and some of the inlands were almost completely populated by Madurese. After 1743, when the Dutch seized full control over the region, migration from the overpopulated, dry and infertile island of Madura to Besuki was actively encouraged by both Dutch and Madurese rulers, and more settlers started to move into the mainland of East Java (Tennekens, 1963). The trunk road connecting Besuki and Panarukan with the rest of Java, further added to the economic possibilities of the area, and through this road many more Madurese could easily spread further into the interior.

Bondowoso thus has been populated by people from the coastal areas around Besuki. Except for a short period at the end of the 19th century, the town has always stood in the shadow of other more thriving places. In 1792, the new assistent resident of the district of Jember transferred his seat from

---

24 See also Hefner (1990: 8) "After winning control of the region in 1743, the Dutch made up for the shortage of population by encouraging migration from the impoverished island of Madura (Kumar, 1979)."

25 According to Tennekens (1963) Bondowoso was founded in 1792, but local myths indicate that the town already existed before that time (See Suhartono (1993)). According to a written genealogy at the burial place of Bondowoso rulers, about 1750, the rule of Ki Ronggo, the first known ruler of Bondowoso, was established.
Jember to Bondowoso and a period of prosperity began (Tennekens, 1963). In 1850, Bondowoso became a new independent district and was to be one of the most important districts under the Besuki residency.

Bondowoso was growing very fast at that time, while the area around Jember was hardly populated. In 1905, Bondowoso became the capital of the residency Besuki, but not for long. It became the capital not because of its economic success and the opening of plantations in the area, but due to the downfall of Besuki as a major trading port and economic centre. Besuki’s harbour was very small, and had been silting up for decades, and the railway from Surabaya to Jember and Panarukan bypassed the town in 1899. From the last quarter of the 19th century onwards, economic activities shifted to East Java’s booming plantation economy, east and south from Bondowoso, around Jember, and the newly built harbour of Panarukan. Due to ongoing southwards migration, and the accompanying economic activities there, Jember soon became the economic centre and the seat of colonial administration. Bondowoso became a sleepy town.

**Populating the uplands**

Now, two hundred years later, the contrast with the emptiness of the past is striking. Not a single patch of the land in the area is unused. Population pressure is high and all land, even the poor pieces, are cultivated or occupied. The population in the rural areas near Besuki, Bondowoso, Situbondo, and Jember is predominantly Madurese, and in the cities the majority also belong to this ethnic group. When exactly did this migration into the area of Krajan take place, and how and why did people spread into the mountains of this area?

Although the coastal areas were well populated with Madurese from the 18th century onwards, the main - and most well known - waves of Madurese migrants to the Eastern Salient came at the beginning of the 20th century. They were attracted by work in the newly established plantations, and Madurese migration to plantation areas was strongly encouraged by the colonial government. Plantation owners favoured Madurese labourers because they were hardworking, honest, disciplined, loyal, and strong workers (De Jonge, 1995: 15).

The Madurese immigration into the uplands of Besuki, Panarukan, and Bondowoso is much older but created a basis for these later waves of settlement. At first, migrants moved to the lowland areas in East Java where *sawah* could be made (Palte, 1989: 18). However, soon in the 18th century, they settled in the mountainous areas north and northeast of Besuki. It was this wave of migrants that populated the lower areas of Wringin, Pakem, and Bondowoso in the second half of the 18th century. Boomgaard draws attention to the fact that the widespread cultivation of maize in this period, especially in the Eastern Salient, made the population of the uplands and semi-permanent dry agricultural land possible (Boomgaard, 1999b: 64). According to Hefner, it was the introduction of compulsory cultivation, especially of cof-
fee, on upland 'wastelands', which led to migration to the uplands in the Tengger area. “From 1830 to 1850, therefore, all territory between 600 and 1,200 meters above sea level was stripped of its jungle and transformed into one vast coffee stand. At first, the cultivated expanse was punctuated by only occasional native settlements. Soon, however, land-hungry migrants poured into the highlands” (Hefner, 1990: 10). Similar developments took place on the slopes of Mount Argopuro. New settlers continued to move slowly higher up the mountains and established the lower hamlets of Krajan, which was an area relatively suitable for agriculture, irrigation, and habitation due to gentle slopes and abundant brooks and rivers descending from the mountain.

From the 19th century onwards, detailed maps of the area become available and these enable us to further reconstruct the history of Krajan. Since the beginning of the 19th century detailed maps are available from Java as a tool of the colonial government to strengthen its hegemony and facilitate the extraction of surplus from these areas. It was in the early nineteenth century that the colonial regime pinned people down into households and villages, surveyed land, fixed and enforced desa boundaries, and represented the result in maps, lists and censuses (Breman, 1980: 13). The making of these maps marks a period where “modern state formation, and with it the process of territorialisation, began under colonial rule. An early goal was to increase state control over labour through the imposition of a territorialized system of village administration. The pre-colonial rural system in Java, characterised by personalised allegiances and channels of extraction, had been ‘unable to bind people to existing settlements for any length of time’” (Breman 1988: 26).

Tennekes (1963) shows that the area of lower Krajan was certainly populated between 1800 and 1845 if not earlier. A map in the atlas of the Dutch Indies (Melvill van Carnbée & Versteeg, 1853-1862) notes Krajan as an independent desa in 1856.26 Although, nowadays, Madurese is the mother tongue of all villagers it is not certain that the first inhabitants of the upslope regions were all of Madurese descent.27 Another explanation for the early population of higher areas such as Krajan is the device of villagers to escape the pressures of local rulers, Islamic sultanates, and colonial rule which became especially hard

26 In this atlas, the maps of East Java were published in 1856.
27 As described previously for Bondowoso, probably, there were still original people living: remnants of Hindu populations who had fled from wars and the hegemony of new kingdoms or Muslim rule, or people who had fled from the coastal areas. Probably, in the area of Krajan, a similar development took place as in Tengger where Hindus had fled to mountainous areas and survived. Boomgaard (1999: 65) comments: “It is possible that the introduction of maize enabled similar migratory movements elsewhere to successfully establish themselves as ‘mountaineers’, thus constituting ‘heathen’ upland ‘tribes’ (masyarakat terasing in modern Indonesian parlance), who preferred to live at a distance from coastal Muslim-Malay sultanates, the European and Chinese trading settlements, and the risk of epidemics. This, by the way, was much to the regret of the Dutch who always attempted to get the mountain-dwellers to come and live in the coastal areas, and to make them grow ‘wet’ rice.” See also Hefner (1990: 9-10) who describes the flight of Hindu Javanese to Bali and the Tengger mountains in East Java (The Tengger volcano and its Hindu population are about 50 kilometres from the Argopuro).
after the introduction of the cultuurstelsel in 1830 (Boomgaard, 1999a; Hefner, 1990). However, due to the limited possibilities for further settling, the relatively poor soil fertility, and better settling opportunities on the Bondowoso and Jember plains, the focus of migrants coming from Madura shifted from Besuki and Panarukan to the further away fertile areas of Situbondo and Bondowoso, and finally to Jember.

Local myths in Krajan also suggest that the first waves of migrants came from Besuki. I found, in some myths about the establishment of Krajan, indications that the ancestors (buyut)28, who settled first in Krajan, were Madurese but not born on Madura, instead coming from Besuki. These buyut settled in the lower part of Krajan. The area indicated corresponds with the place where Krajan is located in Melvill van Carnbée’s Atlas of the Netherlands Indies (1853-1862).

In this atlas, Krajan is mentioned and situated slightly lower on the Argopuro slope than the current location of the village centre. At the spot where Melvill van Carnbée indicates Krajan, we now find the mid-slope hamlets of Mengkura and Pakuarah of lower Krajan. Up to ten years ago, the village office and the residence of the village head were situated in Mengkura, but long before, the focal point of the villages was shifting to more upslope areas. With the shift of the village hall in 1992, this process seems to have been completed.

In the past, the area around Mengkura and Pakualas were the most commercialised, as they are nearest to the road and cash (coffee) producing areas. Here, the rich of Krajan lived, making money through trade and cattle production. Nowadays, soils here are the most infertile, dry, and worn out with the exception of some patches below dwellings and close to brooks and wells. From the end of the 19th century onwards, settlers have moved higher up the slopes of the mountain to clear new forests and reclaim land.

The youngest hamlet of Krajan, Pakualas, was apparently founded around 1920. On a detailed map of 1926, Pakualas is not yet visible except for some forest clearances which had been transformed into tegal fields.29 Ten years later, on a map of 1934, at the same spot a hamlet is indicated and the clearings of the forest have increased. Some permanent dry fields and some patches of sawah have also been established. Since then, not much has changed in

---

28 Buyut means great grandparent - either male or female - and all the offspring of one buyut see themselves as belonging to one lineage. In this context, the first inhabitant was a woman, called buyut Krajan, from whom all inhabitants descend. I found no indications that this person was related to nobility, but she is seen as a heroic person possessing supernatural powers, with which she was able to start a living in Krajan. At the place where she is said to have been living and buried now stands a large Wringin tree and a small mosque. As far as I know, offerings are no longer brought to that place, and the centre of Krajan has shifted up the mountain during the last hundred years and now other places in Krajan have become more important and sacred.


the settlement of Krajan except for the disappearance of some sawah. Currently, the soils in the highest hamlets are more fertile, and of a much better texture, than those of the older hamlets of Krajan.

The ownership of land in the higher hamlets is much more equal than in older hamlets of Krajan. In low-lying, older, Mengkuara, for instance, three families own 75% of all the land. In upslope Pakualas31, most of the villagers have access to at least some land. This suggests that during the formation of this hamlet, prior to 1932, free access to the forest was still possible. Despite the 1870 Agrarian Law which restricted customary rights on waste and forest lands, and offered the colonial government more control over forest reserves, villagers continued to clear forests and construct terraces for farming in the upland area of Krajan. Oral histories suggest the opportunities to clear land for fields far into the twentieth century.32 In the 1930s, these practices came to an abrupt end due to stronger colonial water-control programmes to fight erosion, flooding and droughts which prohibited shifting cultivation at these altitudes and further expansion into the mountains.

Changing agriculture

The agricultural system of present day Krajan has been established and shaped as a result of 150 years of changing economic and political circumstances. During these years, several new crops and cropping techniques have been introduced. Sometimes these changes were enforced by outsiders such as the colonial government, in other cases, they were led by internal demand and adjusted to the specific ecological conditions of Krajan, or to cultural preferences of its people. These new crops and techniques offered new opportunities to Krajan villagers and shaped the village economy to what it is now. In this paragraph, I will subsequently deal with the history of coffee, maize, tobacco, and cattle production in Krajan. Its production and introduction went largely along with periods of greater and lesser market involvement of the Krajan economy, which I will describe in the next paragraph.

The cultivation system (cultuurstelsel)(1830-1870), which drew many small-scale farmers on Java into the cash economy, induced major changes in the area of Krajan. People who fled the pressures of the cultuurstelsel and corvée services (heerendiensten) in the lower areas could settle in the Krajan area, clear forest and ‘live undisturbed by the colonial government on their semi-permanent swiddens’ (Boomgaard, 1999b: 65). “Fleeing debts and excessive corvée demands, people frequently moved off in search of less oppressive conditions with another master, or autonomy (often temporary) on a forest frontier” (Murray-Li, 1999:13). “Soon, however, the obligation to plant coffee on their lands thwarted their surge for freedom.” The Krajan frontier offered both offered labour opportunities, shelter, and relative freedom for those who

31 Paku/pakis means edible fern growing in more temperate zones, alas means forest.
32 Old villagers in that area told me that they cleared fields to start farming when they were young.
fled from the pressures of the *cultuurstelsel*, and statute labour in the Besuki area where the forced sugar cane cultivation increased population pressure.

The enforced cultivation of cash crops of the *cultuurstelsel*, however, did not bypass Krajan. Only twenty kilometres from Besuki, the administrative centre of the eastern salient during the *cultuurstelsel*, the area soon opened up for the establishment of coffee 'gardens'. After 1870, the *cultuurstelsel* was abolished for some crops, and the uplands were transferred into private ownership, but, for coffee, the *cultuurstelsel* continued longer. On old maps (1883) from the end of the 19th century, extensive coffee areas can be spotted in the Mengkuara and Pakuarah area. On topographical maps of around 40 years later, these coffee fields have completely disappeared.

This matches the developments on a national level. At the end of the 19th century, the once flourishing Java coffee cultivation had been virtually wiped out by coffee leaf rust (CLR) and the abolishment of the *cultuurstelsel*. In Krajan, the coffee lands may have remained much longer than those in Java's lowlands because of the high altitude and relative isolation. Pests for instance reached the village much later, and caused less devastation due to the cooler climate. In 1895, an expedition to the top of the Argopuro mountain reported flourishing and extensive coffee areas in the region (Gennep, 1895). By 1922, however, nothing was left of them as all land had been converted into sawah, tegal, or ladang. What happened to the village economy during those 27 years?

After the abolishment of the forced coffee production under the *cultuurstelsel*, the local population started to convert the old coffee plantations into tegal fields. In the same period in the areas around Lumajang, Jember, and Bondowoso (Ijen plateau) large scale, privately owned, coffee plantations were established at higher altitudes where new coffee varieties were grown. But, in the dry and poor areas around Krajan, on the northern slopes of the Argopuro, such large coffee plantations were lacking. Only recently, in 1993, an experimental coffee plantation was established on the slopes of the Argopuro above Krajan. For this plantation, not only forest but also tegal, cultivated by local farmers but lacking any official land title, was used. Subsequently, Krajan farmers have started to plant new varieties of coffee on some of their steep and infertile plots of land under the smallholder programme (*kopi rakyat*).

33 These maps are in the archives of the topographical department of the Dept. of Defence in Emmen, the Netherlands. According to the chief librarian these maps were not produced by military departments but stem from a legacy and were produced to meet the needs of land registration taking place in the area around Jember, Lumajang, Probolinggo, and Besuki at the end of the 19th century. These maps were made to decide which lands could be giving as concessions to private entrepreneurs willing to establish plantations, and for the land taxation (*landrente*) effective in the area after 1913.

34 For some reason, these pieces had never been registered during the land registration programmes of the colonial state. Farmers were forced to sell their land below market prices to the plantation, and received relatively small amounts for their land due to the illegal practices of bureaucrats. See Chapter 3 on coffee and the corruptive practices of bureaucrats in land transactions.
Maize in the lower areas of the region, near to the Bondowoso - Besuki road, is mainly of the new hybrid varieties in contrast to local types, which are grown mostly in the mid- and up-slope areas of Krajan. According to elderly village people, before World War II maize was not as important as it is now, because then they also planted a lot of cassava. Especially in the higher areas of Krajan, where soils are more fertile, cassava was replaced by maize after independence. One can not be sure whether these accounts are reliable, since there are other indications that maize has been grown in the upland areas of Besuki for much longer. Boomgaard shows that maize has been grown on a large scale in the Besuki, Bondowoso, Jember area before 1830 (Boomgaard, 1999b: 49). Boomgaard explicitly links the growing of maize with tobacco and livestock as a strong and coherent upland agricultural system. To a large extent, this mix functions up to the present day in the mid- and up-slope areas of Krajan.35

The relatively poor and infertile soils of the mid-slope areas produce a rather good quality of Virginia shredded tobacco (tembako rajang or kerftabak) nowadays produced for the domestic market. In the colonial period, in this area, mostly dried tobacco leaves were produced for the European market. On detailed topographical maps (1922), a large number of stone warehouses and barns for drying tobacco can be seen in this area. However, in higher areas tobacco production was difficult and often damaged by rain.

Tobacco is an old crop in the area of Besuki and Bondowoso, and long before 1850 good quality tobacco was already being produced in the region and sold internationally (Broersma, 1913; De Jonge, 1984). Around 1850, the first European tobacco planters came to the Eastern Salient and started to plant tobacco for the European market. The most expensive tobacco produced was leaf tobacco used as wrapping for cigars. In the early decades, to the east of Jember and south east of Bondowoso, some of the finest wrapper tobacco was introduced later, when coffee was on the wane, as a second cash crop perfectly matching the existing agricultural system. If we look at the present day working of this system in Krajan - although conditions such as population pressure and costs of inputs have changed - the profitability and sustainability of this agricultural system lies in the fact that the dung is needed for the production of maize rather than tobacco. Maize crops benefit more from fertiliser than tobacco, and too much fertiliser or dung negatively affects the taste of tobacco. Dung was probably cheaper in the past since more was available due to larger numbers of cattle, and cattle from lower areas which were probably also transferred to the uplands after ploughing (Boomgaard, 1999b: 60). Thus there was enough for both crops. Besides this, there are climatic explanations. A maize crop in the rainy season, and tobacco as a second crop in the dry seasons, is a very appropriate combination in this area. Especially in the mid- and up-slope areas between Bondowoso and Besuki, the rainy season is generally too short for a successful second crop of maize, whereas tobacco benefits from the absence of rain in the second half of the growing period. A combination of maize and tobacco further serves the need for food and cash simultaneously, and tobacco offers work in the dry season when other agricultural activities are slack.

35 I disagree, however, with Boomgaard on the explanations for the existence of maize, tobacco and livestock. In his view, the need for dung for the production of tobacco made this combination possible (Boomgaard, 1999b: 61). In my view the argument should be reversed, the availability of cattle (and thus dung) made intensive and sustainable maize production possible. In the mid-slope areas, tobacco was introduced later, when coffee was on the wane, as a second cash crop perfectly matching the existing agricultural system. If we look at the present day working of this system in Krajan - although conditions such as population pressure and costs of inputs have changed - the profitability and sustainability of this agricultural system lies in the fact that the dung is needed for the production of maize rather than tobacco.
leaves (*dekblad*) for cigars were produced and production continues until the present day. Among the first planters in the area were the Birnie family who settled between Bondowoso and Jember. Other enterprises established in the area between 1850 and 1860 were Sukowono, Oud Jember, Jelbug, and Sukokerto-Ajong. These planters did not grow tobacco on their own land, because most of the favourable lands were already in use for food production and the *cultuurstelsel* was declining. They therefore offered free seedlings to farmers in return for the harvest at a fixed price. These tobacco enterprises competed heavily over access to land and the profits for local landowners were considerable.

At the end of the 19th century, as competition increased from other tobacco producing areas such as Deli (Sumatra), the heydays of Besuki tobacco were over. Nevertheless, the region maintained an important position in the export market until Indonesia's independence. After independence, tobacco production in the area between Bondowoso and Besuki became more oriented towards the local market, and only in the plains between Jember and Bondowoso does tobacco production for export continue. Krajan, however, benefited indirectly from the tobacco boom. Tobacco was only produced in the lower areas of Krajan where conditions and trade connections were more favourable. Demand for labour in the lowlands was high, and older villagers recall stories of their parents working in tobacco production in the region.

The tobacco production in the area benefited from the Besuki-Bondowoso road, making transport to Besuki and later to the railway station in Bondowoso or the new harbour (1899) of Panarukan possible. After the prices of Besuki tobacco started to decrease in the 20th century, production of high quality tobacco was concentrated in the area between Bondowoso and Jember, and the tobacco storage sites along the lower parts of the road to Krajan gradually disappeared during the depression of the 1930s and with it most of the tobacco production in Krajan.

In the twentieth century, East Java witnessed the growth of medium and large cigarette producing factories making clove (*kretek*) cigarettes. When in the 1970s, this cigarette industry in Java started to boom, more tobacco was needed, prices started to rise, and commercial tobacco production in Krajan became again common. Nowadays, tobacco is the major cash crop in Krajan and surrounding areas, and traders send tobacco to the warehouses of these national cigarette factories. These factories increasingly started to cooperate

---

36 There had been attempts to include tobacco production under the *cultuurstelsel*, but due to the extensive labour needs and high costs involved, it did not work well. See: Boomgaard (1999b).
37 If the yields would be calculated in terms of rice/tobacco price ratio, the price of tobacco in the years 1900-1910 were 3 to 5 times higher than the average price of tobacco in the three seasons 1997-1999.
38 Nearby producing centres for *kretek* cigarettes are at Surabaya, Malang, and Kediri where some of the most important Indonesian brands of cigarettes are produced. Besides numerous small factories, in these cities the subsequent factories of Dji Sam Soe, Bentoel, and Gudang Garam are situated. See: Saptari (1995).
with each other and to intermingle with the interests of local, regional, and national governments in order to dominate the market and the market prices (Saptari, 1995).

The area has a long history of cattle raising. In 1861, Besuki had the highest number of cattle of all residences on Java and remained highest until the beginning of the 20th century. In the period before the emergence of tobacco, raising cattle was already common and offered a major source of cash. While in 1861 the ratio of cattle to people was 1:2, it has gone down in Krajan to 1:3 in recent years due to population pressure and agricultural intensification. Especially in the lower and mid slope areas, the number of cattle has decreased due to land pressure in the mid slope area, shortages of water and fodder, the emergence of alternative sources of income, a decrease of shareholding relationships, and migration.

In higher slope areas, the number of cattle is still high, migration rates are lower, and there is more rain and a better access to fodder due to the nearby forest. Notwithstanding the decrease and the regional differences, throughout the years, cattle remain an important agricultural tool, as well as an economic resource in Krajan.

**Economic history:**

**Cycles of commercialisation, accumulation and crisis**

These glimpses from Krajan’s past show that landscapes are not static, but change over time. In the last 150 years, the village has gone through alternating periods of greater market involvement and periods of less involvement, following a cyclical pattern of commercialisation, commoditisation, and subsistence. Villages like Krajan have never been completely isolated subsistence economies, but their degree of incorporation into the wider regional, national, or world market has varied. Over the years, such incorporation has increased because of national politics and the expansion of the world market, which has brought monetisation. But often there have been setbacks, periods of decommercialisation and demonetisations and a return to subsistence production. In the following discussion I briefly describe these different periods of greater and lesser market involvement.

At the end of the imposed cultivation system (cultuurstelsel) in 1870, Krajan was already part of a commercial national economy. Coffee was grown in the region in large coffee ‘gardens’, but the bulk of the profits went into the...
pockets of outsiders. The same was true for sugar production in the coastal zone of Besuki, and east of Bondowoso where tobacco was grown in the lower and mid-slope areas. The introduction of such export crops had led to incorporation in the wider regional, colonial, and international money economy. The people conscripted to work in the coffee ‘gardens’, and seasonally in the tobacco and sugar production in Bondowoso and Besuki, received wages in cash which they spent locally and regionally on food, clothes, and other consumer items, thus pushing commercialisation and monetisation in the area. This period is marked by the growing importance of Bondowoso as a regional market town, not only exporting agricultural goods, but also importing goods such as salt, oil, dried fish, and consumer goods for the local market.

Following the abolishment of the cultivation system after 1870, the regional economy gradually opened up to private entrepreneurs and, slowly, land from the old coffee plantations was leased or taken over by local villagers to grow coffee and maize. Only at the end of the 19th century did corporate plantations appear in the area, taking over some of the old coffee lands. This did not happen in Krajan as most of these plantations were established on the northern, western, and southwestern flanks of the Argopuro Mountains. Due to poor soils and less rain, the eastern and northeastern sides of the Argopuro were less favourable for large-scale coffee plantations and unsuitable for tea, rubber, and cocoa.

After 1880 a period of economic decline and decreasing monetisation set in. Until then, sugar and coffee were highly profitable crops, but sugar prices plummeted in 1884, and coffee leaf diseases spread over Java leading to a major crisis in Java affecting both the villages and those who successfully exploited them (Ricklefs, 1991:125). Incomes of wage labourers fell, while rice prices rose causing famines in several parts of Java. The smallholder coffee plantations in Krajan began to fall apart and were gradually converted to tegal and some sawah, with farmers who moved to producing predominantly food crops.

By the beginning of the 20th century, coffee production and highland tobacco had completely disappeared, and villagers had turned to subsistence farming. Immigration in the mountain areas continued, but of a slower rate than before. As can be seen from statistics and from maps, the village population of Krajan continued to grow and expand until the 1930s, and new fields (both tegal and sawah) were cleared in the uphill areas. Since 1913, the area has been fully under land taxation except for the zones above Krajan and Andungsari, and below the mountain forest. In the 1930s, a new colonial law stated that no more forest was to be cut down on the steep volcanic slopes in Java in order to prevent erosion. The colonial government, simultaneously,

---

42 Generally, 1870 is seen as the end of the cultivation system (cultuurstelsel). However, this did not include coffee and sugar which remained longer within the system. Compulsory coffee cultivation was abolished in slow stages after 1870.

43 I only have incomplete data about labour migration in this period. The population of the hilly districts in the area, such as Wringin sub-district, only grew slowly. See Tennekens (1963).
ordered reforestation of some of the cleared areas and, in Krajan a number of farmers lost the lands they had reclaimed in the years before.

From that time onwards, immigration stopped and the Krajan population only increased by natural fertility. A growing population led to increased inequalities in land tenure. According to very old villagers, rice in the earlier period was not that scarce in Krajan and most villagers owned cattle, but later more and more people had to rely on other food crops as substitutes. Before World War II, inequality continued to increase and children of poorer families were unable to obtain any land. Up to this period, not many villagers owned enough cattle and land to pay for the pilgrimage to Mecca. Nevertheless, the years between 1930 and 1945 have been the founding year of the current Krajan ‘aristocracy’ which was able to expand control over village lands.

From the early 20th century till in the mid 1930s, according to older informants, the Krajan economy was relatively prosperous, and generally people were not facing any food shortages. The fields produced sufficient rice, cassava, and maize which, in times of need, could be supplemented with the marrow of the aren three (a kind of sago). Further, the nearby forest provided wood and forest products for house construction, food, and small trade. The economic crisis and depression of the 1930s, which hit Indonesia extremely hard reducing exports to less than a quarter of the pre-crisis exports (Boomgaard, 1999a; Cribb, 2000), did not affect the Krajan economy that badly. Few villagers were dependent on wage labour or working in the export sectors outside the village. Villagers were able to maintain their levels of food consumption and could generate cash, if needed, by the sale of cattle or forest products.

When, in 1942, the Japanese entered the village and claimed a part of the agricultural production, things got worse. People fell back to poverty and a subsistence existence. Generally, elderly referred to the Japanese occupation as the hardest and most troublesome time of their lives. “We didn’t even have clothes to clothe ourselves. Even rich members of our village had to go to the forest to make clothes from bark. Only the Haji were sometimes wearing clothes made from rice bags which was a luxury at that time”. Villagers survived on cassava, tubers from the forest, and on sago starch from the aren palm. “Some fell ill or died after eating poisonous varieties of tubers taken from the forest”.

After 1945, the situation in the village improved slightly due to the removal of the obligation to supply food. But in early 1947, new hostilities broke out when the Dutch troops reoccupied the area of Bondowoso. Scattered guerrilla forces in the rough areas of the Ringit and Argopuro mountains around Bondowoso caused unrest by small attacks in the lower areas around Bondowoso and Besuki. At night, these guerrillas would come down from

their shelters in the mountains to steal armoury or food, or to sabotage roads, bridges, electricity supply, and telephone cables. During the day, they fled back into the mountains or hid as part of village life. This strategy was relatively effective since Dutch forces were seldom able to arrest the attackers. Only by making use of an extended network of spies and informants, some of them could be caught (Westerbeek, 1999). Increasingly, Dutch forces started to respond more violently to guerrilla actions in this area, thus alienating the local people even more.

Krajan was one of the bases of resistance against the Dutch reoccupation. At first, Dutch patrols rarely reached Krajan because of the distance from Bondowoso and the difficult terrain. To stop attacks, however, they decided to clear the area of Krajan with the help of a captured Indonesian spy who was willing to reveal the hiding places of these guerrillas. When the soldiers entered Wringinkurung, the place where most guerrillas live, they met with no resistance as most villagers had already been warned and had disappeared into the forest. The Dutch killed the spy thinking he was the one who had warned the villagers, and they wounded some fleeing villagers (Westerbeek, 1999). Among the victims was Bu Ti, the mother of Bagenda, the current village head of Krajan. Ti was engaged to one of the guerrilla commanders and tried to escape to Tamankursi to the northeast. She was shot in a leg, but managed to escape to the ravine of the Dluwang river and hid in the water. Dutch troops burned the 43 houses of Wringinkurung and took all the food supplies. The population fled to their upslope tegal fields, or to the forest where they lived on tubers and roots, and stayed away from the village for several months. After the establishment of a permanent Dutch military post in Sayuran, and a village head loyal to the Dutch, most of the villagers returned to Krajan to rebuild their houses and repair their rice fields. The economic situation in Krajan further improved due to the new stability in the area and the increase in trade, labour opportunities, and the food support provided by the Dutch to undermine the guerrilla base. After the Dutch troops left the village, a new village head was appointed that stability in the area remained.

According to some villagers, the period after the Dutch reoccupation in Krajan was not so bad because the military were offering paid work and food aid to loyal villagers while, before that, they had to contribute to the guerrilla. The military also improved the road and brought supplies into the village at good price. Some girls had relationships with the soldiers and still today, some children of these soldiers’ mistresses live in the village.45

45 After the agresi villagers called these relationships with Dutch soldiers kawin, or temporary marriages. After the retreat of the Dutch, these women were left behind. I interviewed Bu Mariami, one of them, about the time she lived with a Dutch soldier. She was only around fourteen years old and did not go voluntarily to the military camp but was forced by her parents who needed money. After becoming pregnant, she was sent back to her parents and received a kind of allowance from the soldier. She hid the child from the Dutchman being afraid that he would take it to Holland. After independence, she never heard from the Dutchman again and she was stigmatised for life. She never married again.
After independence, around ten Krajan villagers who had survived were decorated as liberation heroes and received a military pension. Wringinkurung villagers who had suffered heavily from the war received limited compensation to rebuild their houses. This money, however, came rather late and was nowhere near enough to cover all expenses. The independence war with the Dutch had been relatively hard for the villagers, but in interviews informants claimed that the preceding years of Japanese occupation were most burdensome. The Japanese period was a major crisis in the lives of older villagers. Besides tales of cruelty, the obligatory contributions of rice and maize to the Japanese, were a major burden for the population and many suffered from starvation and were forced to eat sago, dried cassava, or wild tubers to stay alive.

In the 1950s, the village experienced a brief economic boom and engaged in the market again. Villages cleared most of the remaining patches of forest in mid-slope Krajan and converted them into tegal, selling the wood to Bondowoso and Jember where timber was in demand for construction projects. Also almost all of the teak trees in the mid-slope area that grew between fields were cut down and used in house construction or sold. The same happened to a large number of fruit trees, thus reducing the forest cover and contributing to the increasing shortages of water in the lower areas of Krajan and the villages below. The cash incomes from logging and farming, were supplemented by wages from working in the coffee plantations of Bondowoso and Jember and in several construction projects in the area. At the same time, the last pieces of wasteland were reclaimed (especially in the upslope areas of Pakualas and Andung). However, this was only a short-term solution to population pressure. The competition for the now increasingly scarce resources had a predictable outcome: the few rich families of Krajan were able to gain control over land, thus adding to the local inequalities in land tenure. The rest of the population depended on increasingly smaller plots of land. The similarities with the Tengger area is striking: “Meanwhile, in the mid-slope region, population growth has shrunk agricultural holdings to a mean size inadequate to support families at any but the most minimal standards of living. [...] The bulk of highland peasantry remained involved in a minimally productive regime of subsistence agriculture and petty cash-cropping (cf. Kahn 1980). By the 1960s, then, upland agriculture was stagnant and society was in crisis.” (Hefner, 1990:11).

This situation continued with small ups and downs until 1963, when the Balinese volcano Gunung Agung erupted covering East Java with a thick layer of ash. The rice harvest and most maize crops were destroyed and villagers without money or assets had again to rely on tubers and the few aren trees which had survived logging. Other villagers, mainly of the middle class, had to sell gold or cattle to buy sago, dried cassava (gaplek), maize, or rice. In subsequent years, this economic crisis was followed by the political turmoil of the declining Soekarno government. In 1964/65 protracted droughts brought crop failures and famine among the majority of villagers. Rampant inflation

46 Gaplek, dried and processed cassava. Generally seen as low quality food.
made the few cash savings that people had, dwindle at high speed. Richer families, having access to food from their own land and possessing cattle, were not doing that badly. They were even able to expand their control over land from those willing to sell or pawn land.

The 1960s are remembered as one of the most tough and difficult for poor villagers by the informants. "We had some money at that time, but there was nothing to buy". After the ash rains, when complete crops were ruined, poor villagers suffered most. "Richer farmers did not help the poor with anything and stuck to their own stocks", older villagers recalled. Frequently, they compared this lack of help and solidarity from richer villagers to present day relationships: "Rich villagers were less helpful than nowadays" and "We could do nothing but cut our coat according to our cloth and search for tubers in the forest because nobody was interested in the poor landless farmer". If there were protests by poorer villagers, these were quickly smothered.

The years 1965 and 1966 mark the campaign against the PKI. Since the guerrilla war against the Dutch, several Krajan villagers had been sympathetic to communism. Most of them belonged to the secular small farmers and the landless in Pakuarah, the upslope hamlets of Pakualas and Wringin-kurung and in the neighbouring upslope areas of Andungsari. These PKI supporters were the obvious targets of vengeance from the military and the strongly anti-communist religious groups from outside the village. In the region, some were killed, many were arrested, others abducted never to return, and most were ostracised and marginalized. As communism is still a delicate subject today, villagers were reluctant to talk about it, and only slowly provided more information. After Suharto stepped down in 1998, and around the time of the elections in 1999, more people were willing to talk about this part of the history of East Java, and some people showed me some of the places where bodies were dumped. Exact numbers for those killed in Indonesia do not exist, but some estimations mention one million people, most of whom were living in East Java (Cribb, 1990; Ricklefs, 1991).

In Krajan, only a few people were killed in this period (1965 - 1966), and in neighbouring Andungsari only ten. The situation was worse in other villages in lower areas. The relatively small number of people killed in Krajan was due to the fact that, while many felt sympathy for communism, only few villagers had become active party members - which reflects the general tendency in the area to stay aloof from a strong involvement in supra-village affairs. As someone expressed it "we have always wanted to stay away from lowland influence and government control as it has never brought us any good". When the

---

47 One of the places where - according to eyewitnesses - thousands of bodies were disposed of is the Arak Arak on the road between Besuki and Bondowoso. The Arak Arak is a steep rock just below the road and the bodies could be thrown over without being seen from any other spot due to the dense teak forest below. Other spots where bodies have been dumped are limestone caves around Bondowoso, deep wells, and a river canyon in the dense forest between Subondos and Banyuwangi in the Asembagus area. According to eyewitnesses the bodies were dumped from military trucks.
killings in the Bondowoso area started, mostly carried out by the military and by semi-military bands of followers from regionally important religious leaders (kiai), Krajan stayed on the sidelines. The village head of Krajan (from the nationalist party PNI) forbade villagers to join in the killings, and tried to keep his people away from them.

When groups of religious youths from Wringin, Besuki, and Situbondo tried to enter Krajan, they were confronted by Krajan villagers and called back by their kiai. The Krajan village head had directly negotiated with them. He had drawn attention to the fact that most Krajanese were true followers of these kiai, and threatened that the Krajan population would not support or tolerate any attempt to kill fellow villagers. Although relatively successful in preventing the killings, in the long run, the village head had to pay the price for his opposition when religious leaders gained control over local and regional politics. Eventually, the changing political climate after 1966, and his resistance to the new government, forced the village head to step down. He was replaced by a representative of the religious Feisal family that maintained close ties with kiai from Wringin and Jember. Village leadership had again been transferred from upslope Wringinkurung, to mid-slope Mengkuara, and from secular to religious.

From the 1970s, under the relative stability of the authoritarian New Order regime, the village economy opened up once again: more villagers got jobs inside and outside the local economy, trade increased, and irrigation canals were improved and extended. Also tobacco became once again a successful and popular cash crop due to the demands for tobacco for the kretek industry. From this time onwards village life started to change rapidly. With huge profits from tobacco, land-rich villagers could build brick houses, two new mosques were built, more villagers were able to send their children to secondary school in Bondowoso, some large farmers bought motorcycles - although these could only be used in the dry season on the village mud roads - and, in the New Order years, twenty to thirty villagers were able to travel to Mecca to make the pilgrimage and achieve the prestigious status of a Haji.

This time, increased prosperity was not only for the owners of land and cattle, as it has been in the 1930s, but also for other villagers new opportunities emerged. Social status was no longer solely determined by the possession of agricultural assets, but also by trade, entrepreneurship, education, and government employment. These raw sources of income enabled new groups to acquire consumer goods, fine clothes, new houses, and to send their children to school.

Under the New Order, indeed some villagers were able to rise from rags to riches through these new ways of making a living. Some families earned money from the tobacco trade, or invested money earned in Kalimantan in

---

Note: The text mentions the change of fields from sawah to tegal, which refers to how fields might become dry and degraded over time.
purchasing of cattle and land. Others were working for the government, or in government projects, and made enough money to build a brick house. Also for the bulk of the poorer villagers things changed. Some of these poorer villagers who previously could only work as landless labourers, now started to work as wage labourers on fields, became carpenters or bricklayers, or started to travel in search of money and worked in Bondowoso, Bali, Kalimantan, Madura, or Sulawesi. Most of these families could afford to spend more regularly on luxury goods such as cigarettes, clothes, a radio, and more good food than before.

In the latest economic crisis, on which I will elaborate in the Chapter 8, some of these who had benefited from the economic boom were severely hit. Cash incomes were suddenly nowhere near enough to make ends meet, and many had to fall back on the village subsistence economy again. As one villager stated: "Now there are lots of things to buy, but we don't have the money". As a result of the crisis, an oversupply of labour for local agriculture prevented wages from rising. Another cycle of commercialisation and decommercialisation had set in.
“We in Krajan are better-off than the farmers of neighbouring Ardisaeng,” Heri, a young Krajan farmer told me proudly. “They only have sawah, but we have a lot of tegal to grow tobacco, and tobacco means money.”

“The only problem with tobacco is that you’ll never be sure if the profits will be good,” an older villager replied. “I would rather plant rice and maize. At least they will yield me a full stomach. Unfortunately, my tegal is not very good for maize.”

In this chapter, the features, means, and scope of mountain agriculture in Krajan are outlined. It describes the natural and material resources available to Krajan people. Compared with many other (upland and lowland) parts of Java, these features are not very prosperous. They show - besides the similarities in crops, practices, and tenure system - minor and also larger differences in agricultural practices related to the specific climatic, cultural, environmental, and geographical conditions.

The micro-climatic and ecological diversities between upslope and lower areas explain much of the agricultural and economic differences between the region of Krajan and surrounding areas. In neighbouring Ardisaeng, where irrigated rice is more prevalent than tobacco, much more shops, brick houses, credit facilities, and arisan can be found. Rice cultivation in Ardisaeng offers relative steady incomes, while in some areas of Krajan, periods of cash shortages and heydays alternate in large scale tobacco cultivation. Slight differences in rainfall can be responsible for a successful second maize crop in

---

1 We were standing on a hill looking south towards Ardisaeng and Bondowoso. It was the end of the dry season and the barren tegal terraces of Krajan stood in sharp contrast to the lush sawah of Ardisaeng below us. The tobacco harvest had just finished in Krajan and Pak Heri compared his cash profits from tobacco with the incomes he could earn by growing other crops on the same plot. He had made good profits this year and just bought a motorbike.
Krajan and a failure of the tobacco harvest while, a few kilometres down the road, the maize crop can be lost, while tobacco is flourishing. Rice production on irrigated *sawah* is less susceptible to fluctuations in income and offers reliable incomes, several times a year.\(^2\) Taking the climatic and ecological environment into account, harvest failure in Krajan might in the first place seem a matter of bad luck, but it comes down to a specific combination of knowledge, management, and opportunities of the agro-ecological system and access to capital, resources, and power, as to whether households are able to deal with the specific threats, risks, and opportunities arising from this diverse agro-ecological environment.\(^3\)

Understanding the resource-base in which villagers live is important, but should not lead to ecological determinism in which men and nature are viewed as being in opposition, leading to the interpretation that culture and societies are largely formed and structured by the natural environment and the given possibilities. On the other hand, neglecting the structural features of the natural environment and the available resources and so overvaluing the capacities of actors as being creative, interpreting, learning, changing, reproducing, and exploiting nature is also too simplified.\(^4\) Both sides of the coin are important, the agro-ecological conditions that structure human action *and* the choices people make within these limitations and their knowledgability and creativity in acting upon and reproducing nature. The introduction of the new maize seeds in this chapter is an example of how villagers experiment with, change, negotiate, and live within structural features such as climate, soil fertility, and existing long-term established labour arrangements.

Numerous researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds have studied agricultural systems on Java. Some from an economic or historical point of view\(^5\), others are more sociological\(^6\). In general, these studies have focussed upon the lowlands. Studies of upland agriculture on Java are relatively rare with a few notable exceptions such as Hefner (1990) who worked in the nearby Tengger region, Murray-Li et al. (1999) in upland Indonesia, Palte (1989) who wrote about mountainous Central Java, and Wolters (1998) who is involved in a long-term study of a Central Javanese mountain village. Leunissen (1982), who did research on Madura, produced the only available study that describes the peculiarities of Madurese dry land agriculture in detail. As my research concerns an East Javanese upland area populated by Madurese, I

---

\(^2\) In the Ardisaeng area, about two and a half rice crops a year are possible.

\(^3\) Too often in the literature on rural livelihoods, agricultural conditions are taken for granted and micro-differences that need specific adaptations and knowledge of farmers are overlooked. This often occurs when generalisations are made assuming framing practices and knowledge to be similar in large areas and for all people.


will at times refer to Hefner’s and Palte’s analyses and, when relevant, to Leunissen to consider the peculiarities of Madurese agriculture.

The agricultural system of Krajan does not fit well into any of the systems described in these studies of agriculture on Java and Madura.7 The agricultural system of Krajan has concurrently the specific characteristics of Madurese agriculture, and a distinctive highlandness that make agricultural systems in uplands so special. As on Madura, it has a long dry season, is poorly irrigated, and mainly oriented towards cattle, maize, and subsistence production; with tobacco as a supplementary cash crop offering erratic returns. The altitude and rugged terrain makes the area remote and hard to access, ecologically sensitive to erosion and depletion of resources, and gives its people a sense of stubbornness, independence, and distinctiveness, which can be observed in many mountain communities. It’s economy is neither purely based on cash crop production of specific upland crops, nor purely commercialised and market-oriented.

Land and Land Use

Sawah, tegal, and government lands

Land in Krajan is divided into sawah, tegal, plantation land, government land (tanah pemerintah/bengkok) and wasteland (tanah liar).8 Around 75% of all arable land is tegal, 20% belongs to an experimental coffee plantation, while sawah only makes up a meagre 2% to 4%. The coffee plantation is situated in the upper part of Krajan and it extends into the mountain forest of the upper slope of the Argopuro.

Krajan village statistics of land are unreliable and still based on land survey reports made in the 1930s by colonial surveyors. These surveyors made a distinction between first, second, and third class sawah: based on the productivity of the sawah and the reliability of water. On first class sawah, rice can be produced the whole year round, while third class sawah is only irrigated by small brooks in the dry season and may yield only one crop of rice a year. According to official village statistics, Krajan has around 50 hectares of first-class sawah, four percent of the total village acreage of arable land, 25 hectares of second-class sawah, and about the same of third-class sawah. On the basis of my own observations, today, only about 50 hectares of sawah remain, most

---

8 The categories of government land and wasteland are locally contested. In general, wastelands are mountainous areas and steep slopes unsuitable for any type of agriculture (except for cutting fodder). According to Bagenda, the village head, wasteland includes land along brooks, roads, and rivers, and for this reason belongs to the village officials and especially to him: ignoring all kinds of customary rights and grazing rights of villagers in these areas. During the period 1992-1998, he ordered, several times, trees to be planted in these areas, giving him (according to local law) ownership rights over these trees and the land. Most of the trees planted however died. Farmers can think of numerous accidents leading to trees not surviving. Other wastelands are the forests higher up the mountains. Here village borders are unclear and these wastelands are government land controlled by the Department of Forestry.
of which is of low quality (these fields are split up in hundreds of small pieces 
and terraces belonging to different families). Due to major deforestation and 
erosion from the 1930s until the 1960s in upslope areas; small brooks, wells, 
and old irrigation canals have become dry thus turning formerly first class 
sawah into second or third class, or even into tegal. The hamlet of Sayuran, for 
instance, was once connected by a small irrigation canal over a saddle ridge. 
It lost access to irrigation water when a huge landslide lowered the level of the 
saddle by several metres. On the other hand, New Order irrigation projects 
have made it possible to irrigate some new areas and increase the amount and 
quality of sawah.

Comparing the amount of sawah in 1922 with the amount in 1999, the total 
acreage of sawah has decreased with more than 50%. Moreover, nowadays, 
second and third class sawah make up more than half of the remaining 50 
hectares of village sawah. Further, even the best sawah of Krajan are of a much 
lower quality than those that are generally found in the Javanese lowlands. 
Rice yields in Krajan are lower due to the less favourable conditions related to 
infertile soils, a cooler climate, and less available inputs. The best sawah of 
Krajan lay in the mid and lower slope area towards Ardisaeng.

The beneficiaries of the irrigation projects were more often village elites 
than poorer villagers. Also in the division of water among different plots from 
lower to higher fields, nowadays, the poor villagers are worse off. Although 
the water divisionary official (ulu ulu) is supposed to distribute irrigation 
water equally among the fields along a canal, good relationships and bribes 
help in getting more water and an early supply. Poor farmers, usually lacking 
both good connections and money, are second in the queue.

In Krajan, good sawah can be planted two times a year with rice. As for 
most sawah water supply in the dry season is unreliable, one or two crops of 
maize are often planted after a first crop of rice. Most lower quality sawah lie 
fallow in the dry season, and are only planted with rice when the rainy season 
is well established and when the rains are most reliable. On these sawah, a 
crop of maize or tobacco follows the first crop of rice. In general, the quality, 
taste, and price of tobacco produced on sawah is lower than on tegal, although 
production is generally higher.

Farmers themselves make more distinctions in soil quality than simply 
first, second, or third class. Soils can be ‘cold’ (dingin) or ‘hot’ (panas), ‘heavy’ 
(berat) or ‘light’ (enteng/ringan), ‘shallow’ (tidak dalam/dankal) or ‘deep’ 
(dalam) and ‘thirsty’ (haus) or ‘saturated’ (kenyang) indicating different 
grades of fertility, soil texture, construction, temperature, elevation, location, 
and water-holding ability. According to older farmers it is important to 
‘know’ the soil and its character. In some soils, young seedlings can be plant-
ed, while in others, seedlings have to be taller. A sawah can be ‘sensitive’, prone

9 I do not describe the labour-intensive requirements of growing rice and preparing the sawah, 
or the tasks involved in ploughing the fields, watering, muddling, sowing the seedbeds, trans-
planting, and weeding.
to diseases or ‘naughty’ (*nakal*), hard to understand, sometimes giving good yields but low yields in other years. In some *sawah*, ‘the water source is coming from below’ indicating that water wells up in the field and therefore contains fewer nutrients while other *sawah* can be ‘polluted’ if the water sources run through a hamlet picking up dirt and nutrients. Understanding these minor, often invisible qualities is essential for success in farming the ground.

Fertilising ‘warm’ or ‘polluted’ *sawah* leads to weak rice and empty grains as the soil receives too many nutrients, whereas under-fertilising leads to smaller plants and poor yields. Important for success in farming on these varying soils the repertoires of local knowledge are.10 These are based on personal experience, common knowledge, and information from older people, and acquired from small-scale experimentation by farmers. Owning, or having access to, the right repertoire of knowledge, is essential for a good harvest.

Ownership of good *sawah* in Krajan, as elsewhere in rural Java, is highly valued as it has economic, cultural, and social functions. It not only offers food and income security, as good *sawah* enables its owner to cultivate food crops the whole year round, it also adds status. The ability to grow one’s own rice on one’s own fields is very important. Someone’s status is measured primarily according to the number of rice fields they own because *sawah* is the prime production resource. Further, owning *sawah* shows attachment to village life. In lowland Java, for instance, villagers who have become rich in the city, tend to invest in rice fields in the home village; not primarily because of its economic function, but in order to remain involved in village matters, and for its symbolic value as staying attached to the rural village and ‘unspoilt’ (meaning good) village life.11

In the past, less than half of the families who own *sawah* have ever been self-sufficient in rice.12 Nowadays, only ten percent of the families are fully self-supportive in rice. Krajan inhabitants own most of the *sawah* in Krajan. Sometimes villagers marry and move to a neighbouring village and maintain their *sawah* in Krajan. Relatively more Krajan villagers have bought rice fields in neighbouring Ardisaeng and Andung than the reverse. Although distances are far to those villages and fields, according to these landowners, it is better to buy *sawah* in another village than not to have any *sawah*.

The arable lands of Krajan also comprise 800 hectares of *tegal*. Some pieces are rather large, while others are tiny and carved out on steep slopes. Farmers distinguish dry lands of good, middle, and bad quality. These qualifications of good and bad are not always fixed, but depend on the location and the crops farmers want to plant. *Tegal* is used for growing subsistence as well as cash

---


11 In Krajan, not many villagers have become rich outside the village. But one of the first things the new village policeman and some teachers who married in the village tried to do was to buy *sawah*.

12 This figure is probably too rosy, as in the past all families mixed their rice with cassava, sweet potato, or maize.
crops. Although the fertility of Krajan tegal is not very high, sometimes with tobacco huge profits can be made. Depending on the crop, the tegal soils need various labour inputs.

Before the rains start in October or November, the tegal is worked with a simple plough and two oxen. As soon as possible after the first rains - when the soil is wet enough\(^\text{13}\) - the field is ploughed again while maize seeds are thrown into the furrow. Early planting is needed, as the growing period for maize is long (four months or more in upslope Krajan) and the rainy season is short. After the first maize crop, on fertile fields, a second maize crop can be planted. On the less fertile fields tobacco is planted. Tobacco is best planted on shallow, sandy, and poor tegal soils as this produces a much better flavour and higher price. It depends on the soil quality, the price of tobacco, maize, fertiliser, and the strategic choice of the owner, which crop is planted. A good tobacco harvest provides the opportunity to buy enough maize and rice to survive the long dry period. However, tobacco bears the risk of total crop failure and thus losses and indebtedness. A second crop of maize will at least offer some additional food, and limit expenses as local maize varieties do not require much input.

The ownership of tegal is symbolically less important than that of sawah. If someone is called rich, villagers usually mention only the possessions of sawah. If someone has a lot of sawah, then he or she will generally have a lot of tegal as well because most Krajan farmers prefer a combination of sawah and tegal. Tegal offers the opportunity to grow maize and tobacco in addition to the important rice crop. It can also be pawned in the event of an urgent need of cash, and it changes hands somewhat more readily than sawah.

A frequent leasing or long term pawning of tegal leads to decreasing soil fertility. Pawned tegal is less well cared for than privately-owned land. Soil fertility in the long run can only be guaranteed by applying cow dung or mulch and compost. The availability of dung is limited, and carrying dung to far away fields is laborious. Landowners choose to dress their own land first, before caring for their leased land. Often they do not bother about the long-term sustainability of the leased fields because of the fact that they can always be taken back. These differences between leased and owned lands are often visible in the way they are intensively or extensively cultivated.

Another crucial factor in the sustainability of tegal soils lies in the differences among sharecropping systems. If landowners give land out to subcontractors, soil quality is likely to fall. In Krajan, sharecropping maize production is rare, but with tobacco production it is more common. With maize, important labour arrangements exist, including working in turns (labour exchange groups and harvest shares), part of a share tenancy relationship where the workers get a one-fifth share of the harvest. Usually, in these

\(^{13}\) Farmers use the length of a hand as an indicator of whether the soil is wet enough. They dig small holes at several places in the field and measure to what extent the rain has entered the soil. If the soil is wet for a hand’s length, maize can be planted. As rainfall is sometimes very irregular and localised in Krajan, some fields are planted weeks later than others.
arrangements, workers are more concerned with the quality of the work and maintaining soil fertility as they receive a harvest share, not a cash income.

Fields far from houses and of already poor quality are seldom manured, and soil fertility is only restored by regular fallow periods. Most tegal fields in the distant parts of Krajan, and in the less fertile lower parts of Krajan, lie fallow every three years, or even every second crop, depending on the decisions of the owner, economic conditions, and soil quality. The most common weed grown in the fallow period is rumput kucing\(^{14}\) which cannot be used as cattle fodder. However, it is drought resistant and adds nitrogen to the soil.\(^{15}\) If only a little manure is available, people use it for their home gardens (pekarangan). Most houses have at least some gardens with fruit trees and sometimes vegetables. In these gardens, jackfruit, bananas, coffee, chillies, cassava, and taro are among the most common crops. In general, peparangan in Krajan are not big and they only contain a few fruit trees. In general, these gardens do not contribute much to household incomes, but in the event of temporary shortages, villagers can fall back on fruits and vegetables produced on them.

The forest above the village is an important resource, especially for poor villagers. Access to the forest is relatively open as with other wastelands, such as roadsides and riverbanks. The forest is used for searching for fodder, firewood, lumber, and small bamboo sticks suitable for making baskets. Poor villagers can earn Rp 3,500 to 4,000 a day by carrying firewood or bamboo down from the forest and selling it in hamlets and desa lower along the road. One return trip to the forest takes around six to seven hours and, especially in the rainy season, carrying wood is hard work.

Although the government officially owns the forest, and prohibits logging, many villagers cut trees in the forest and sell lumber. At the beginning of the crisis, around 25 people were regularly cutting wood and selling this to fellow villagers or to the village head. The latter was able to sell this wood ‘legally’ with the help of police friends and government employees in town. He explained it as help: ‘I help my children (the villagers) to make some profit and make a living’. Clearly, he does not solely intend to help the poor villagers as he has made huge profits on the wood for himself. He did, at least, provide loans to selected villagers if they needed money. These loans could be repaid in wood, and to those working for him he offered protection through his good relationship with the forest police.

As cutting and selling illegally logged wood is very risky, relatively large bribes have to be paid to local officers of the forest department and sometimes also to the police. Around the 1999 national elections, he stopped accepting wood as loan repayments and villagers were forced to find ways of selling the wood themselves. He decided to free his hands so that he could lead the election campaign of the PDI-P, and refused further help to villagers.

\(^{14}\) A thorny variety of the leguminosa spp.

\(^{15}\) Most varieties of the leguminosa family fix nitrogen from the air in the soil by symbiosis of bacteria, chemicals, and the roots of the plant. The plant uses some of this nitrogen, but some is available for other plants, or stays in the ground if the plant is cut, burned, or uprooted.
who had problems with the forest police. From that time onwards, only a few villagers had the courage, or network, to continue their forest business. Around ten percent of the population uses forest products from time to time, and for five percent of them access to the forest provides their main resource.

In other parts of Java it has been reported that pressure on forests has increased since the start of the crisis (cf. Husken, 1999). Illegal logging, which has always been a risky, but profitable, strategy to make ends meet, is only possible with some kind of protection. When the village head stopped his involvement and protection waned, logging in Krajan did not increase\(^{16}\), but the number of villagers collecting grass, bamboo and firewood did.

The final category in Krajan consists of government land and is divided into *tanah bengkok* (land for village officials) and *tanah pemerintah* (government land). Most of the villages in Java have so-called *tanah bengkok* land that can be used by the village head and village officials as a form of compensation for the work done for the village.\(^{17}\) In central Java this land, usually first class *sawah*, can exceed ten to fifteen hectares. In Krajan, there was never *tanah bengkok* in the past, and the village land that now exists, has been purchased only recently.

The history of Krajan is one of settlers and outlaws who gradually occupied the slopes of the Argopuro and reluctantly came under colonial government control. Therefore, it did not strictly belong to an area governed by Javanese or Madurese nobility, and no clear village hierarchy, institutions, and organisation, developed. Village organisation remained rather top down and unilateral and relied on individual property. Earlier, there was some communal land in Krajan, in the higher slope area, but these plots were officially declared government land in the 1930s and, due to their location on the edge of the steep Dluwang ravine, were not very valuable for agriculture.

**Land transactions**

Villagers who have been successful in trade, politics, or business eagerly try to buy *sawah* for reasons of prestige, security, and collateral, even if they could have invested their money more efficiently elsewhere. *Sawah* is rarely sold and villagers only do so if they have no other choice. As the price of *tegal* is much lower than *sawah* (good *tegal* costs about one third of good *sawah*) more people have the possibility to buy or lease a piece of *tegal*. *Tegal* is also sold easier. When people face bankruptcy, gambling debts, urgent needs of money,

---

\(^{16}\) To be successful as a logger, at least some relationships with the forest officials are needed. In a small and hilly community such as Krajan, illegal loggers and their products are easy to trace. Lower ranked forest officials who live in Krajan can be offered ‘pece bensin’ or ‘pece rokok’, small bribes for petrol and cigarettes. Powerful high officials are more difficult to bribe for ordinary villagers and meeting such an official in the forest can easily become a disaster and lead to imprisonment. Therefore, villagers need protection, and the village head can offer that as he has always maintained good relationships with police and forest officials.

\(^{17}\) Village officials get little salary from the government.
and sometimes demands from children who beg their parents for a transport van, stock for starting a shop, or a motorcycle.

In the year 1996 - 1997 an estimated ten pieces of sawah changed hands.\textsuperscript{18} Two villagers sold land to buy a pick-up truck to transport goods and villagers to and from town. They were quite successful. In 1997, another family followed their example and sold land as well. During these years, competition on the road between transporters, both from Krajan and outside, increased. When the crisis started, many truck drivers faced higher costs of spare parts and petrol, while the number of customers sharply decreased. In particular, the last family who had sold land faced severe difficulties finally sold the car. Other villagers commented: “Now you see. Never sell land”.

Sometimes, large plots of land are sold to buy a motorbike for a demanding child (three times in 1996). Parents cannot always refuse the demands of children to sell land, even if this would make them the subject of gossip. All villagers agree: selling land on the demand of children, for consumption goods, or even for repairing a house is not good.

In practice however, sometimes even sawah is sold to meet these demands. A decade ago, a number of villagers (mostly from Wringinkurung) sold sawah to pay the high school education costs of their children. When most youngsters failed to secure a good job - and could not repay the investment - other villagers would not follow this example. Selling land for the education of children is regarded as consumption rather than as an investment. Most pieces of land were sold because of urgent cash needs due to a sudden death in the family, a wedding of children, or due to harvest failure or the inability to repay debts.

Who are the buyers of land? During the village survey in 1998, many middle-class villagers told me they hoped to be able to buy sawah one day because that would enable them to reap the full benefits of cultivation and provide them with their own staple food. Some of them had already saved cows for this purpose, others were willing to sell tegal in return for sawah. In the second survey in 1999 however, none of these villagers had been able to purchase a single piece of land. In fact, some of them had had to sell land. Between October 1997 and July 1999 I only came across five small pieces of sawah that had changed ownership.\textsuperscript{19} Those who had bought land in this period were rich villagers. Among them were Bagenda, the village head, who has been the most important buyer of both sawah and tegal over the last few years, a few

\textsuperscript{18} Unfortunately, I could not get to see the books of the village secretary on land transactions. He said he did not take notes, but clearly it was a sensitive topic, as he made money from these transactions and received fees which were larger than the official payments. I came to a total of ten transactions of sawah by asking around and from the village survey. Tegal changed hands more often. I could not come across the exact number of transactions in tegal although transactions were more frequent.

\textsuperscript{19} Although these years were crisis years, I did not find that this led to more, or to less, transactions in sawah. However, according to villagers, the number of people who pawned (gadai) their rice fields increased due to the rising number of villagers who were facing urgent needs of cash.
Haji, and some rich farmers who owned many cattle. All land transactions took place in cash and except for the village head, buyers sold cattle to obtain this cash.

In contrast to selling land, pawning (gadai) is a common practice. Villagers in need of cash, pawn land in return for money, cattle, gold, or sometimes sugar. The most common way to pawn land is to ask for one or more cows or bulls that can then be sold at the market. This is a public way to transfer the use rights of land as all villagers can witness the transaction: the cows or bulls will be transferred in daylight and exhibited at the house of the pawn giver, and after the transfer at the house of the pawn taker.

Often, when families are confronted with unexpected expenses, as for instance in the case of death or hospitalisation of a family member, pawning land is a fast way to obtain money to cover the costs. The Satrawi family pawned land on several occasions to Patik. When their daughter was in hospital and the doctor's fees had to be paid, Satrawi asked Patik (their patron and neighbour) for a bull of about one year old in return for a piece of sawah. On the first available market day, he took the bull to Bondowoso with Patik who advised and assisted in selling the bull for a good price. After the transaction, Satrawi went directly to the hospital to pay the fees. By pawning his land, he still kept the option of reclaiming it whenever there would be a windfall or an improvement in his financial means. Although Satrawi had intended to pay back an animal as soon as possible, in later years he had to pawn more land. Now the family has fallen into poverty, even their children might never be able to pay back animals and so return the land to the family. Pawning land is much more acceptable than selling family property. In some cases in Krajan, children were able to get the land of their parents back after more than thirty years.

Sometimes, two bamboo sticks are cut to indicate the height of the withers of the cow, one to be kept by the pawn taker and one for the pawn provider. The party in need of cash sells the cow and can only get the field back after returning a cow of exactly the same kind, size, colour, and age. If cash is used, the amount is always expressed in terms of an animal of a certain size and age. By relating transfers to items of constant value such as cows or gold, these contracts are not affected by inflation.

In general, a gadai loan can be repaid in parts, animal by animal, or it can be increased if more cash is needed. This will naturally only happen if the creditor has money or an animal available, and is willing to increase the loan. Often he or she will try to refuse, as he or she already has the use-right and does not earn additional benefits by adding to the price. If the loan is not increased, other people can take over the gadai by repaying the loan and by giving additional credit to the owner. This is not very popular, as it reflects a severe breach in the relationship between parties, but nevertheless during my stay in Krajan, I witnessed several cases. Satrawi once tried to go to pawn his land for a higher price to Pak Heri. Heri was willing to provide two cows for

20 Or sometimes gold (reported in neighbouring Tamankursi) or rice (Ardisaeng).
the field pawned previously to Patik for one bull. Patik fiercely objected, as a cow was not similar to the bull he had provided, and he did not accept cash as repayment. Finally the deal with Heri was cancelled. He was not willing to risk his good relationship with the Patik family and their relatives and friends.

If the credit supplier does not want to increase the loan, and the owning party still needs or wants more money, the land can be sold to the creditor. If the creditor cannot, or does not want to buy, someone else can buy. When selling land, the transaction has to be registered at the village office and at the land administrative office at district level. This is rather expensive due to taxes, fees, and bribes. Village officials, the village head, and government employees at the administrative office ask rather high amounts of money for land transactions, often exceeding 10% of the price of the land.

For powerful people, land transactions with the government, or government related institutions, can be quite profitable. In the last decade, Baganda has been involved in several of such transactions making nice profits. In the 1960s, the village head (grandfather of Baganda) asked the government to buy village land to establish tanah bengkok and indeed a few patches of sawah were bought. Later, when Bagenda became the village head of Krajan in 1991, he asked the government for more land to be bought. When money was made available to buy sawah, he bought run down, cheap plots of tegal which once had been sawah. These pieces were still registered as first class sawah and Bagenda reported the purchase of first class sawah. He used the surplus money for his own ends. In this way, he both followed the government’s request to buy a fixed amount of sawah and made a nice profit. In the village, he led the people to believe he received money for tegal, not for sawah.

Over the last five years (1993-1998), farmers from Andungsari and Krajan have been selling land (tegal) to the coffee plantation on the up slopes above these desa. A number of corruption cases over this purchase of land have evolved, leading to conflicts and resentment among Andung and Krajan farmers. With the help of the head of the sub-district (camat) and the plantation management, the village head of Andung provided false purchase letters mentioning a good price. The price paid to the farmers was much lower than the fixed amount the plantation was supposed to pay. The village head and the head of the sub-district strongly encouraged farmers to sell their land to the plantation and divided the profit amongst themselves and the plantation management. Eventually, under pressure from angry villagers and rumours in town, these affairs led to the dismissal of the Andung village head and the head of the Pakem subdistrict in 1996.

21 This tegal which was officially still registered as first class sawah, had run short of irrigation water over the last fifty years and its value had decreased.

22 The effects of the sanctions were not that bad for the camat as he was somehow able to get the post of security official in Bondowoso, which in fact meant a promotion. The former village head of Andung was more harshly sanctioned, as he was pressured to pay back some of the losses of Andung farmers. He had to sell his car, his cows and pawn some land. As of 1999 he still had not been able to reclaim his land and regain his former status and prestige.
Bagenda, the village head of Krajan, played a more clever role in this affair and made much more from land deals. Due to his good relationship with the plantation management, he received information of prices, funds, and future extension plans. He persuaded reluctant farmers from Krajan and Andung, who distrusted the plantation management, the camat and the village head of Andung, to sell their land to him at current market prices. These transactions were legal and open. Later, Bagenda offered ‘his’ land to the plantation for a much higher price and titles changed hands again legally. By playing the independent and clean village head, he was able to earn the trust of the plantation, the government officials, and the villagers. Furthermore, his good relationships with the plantation officials, who were inclined to avoid conflicts with the local population, yielded several lucrative building contracts and businesses.

Land & land use

Farming for food: livestock, poultry, crops

In this section, I will describe the agricultural system of Krajan. Important sources of income are cattle production, maize, and rice. With a population of 3,400 people, over 1,500 head of cattle are raised in Krajan. An adult is able to raise only one or two cows on his own because grass has to be cut everyday and brought to the shed where the cows are kept. Most of the people who take care of cattle do not own them. They raise cattle of other people and get half of the profit or offspring. Poor villagers, or newly wed couples without cattle, can borrow a cow or bull from others to make a start, if they are considered as reliable, and capable of raising cattle. Generally cattle owners and caretakers are relatives, neighbours, or friends, and their relationship often has many features of a patron-client bond.\(^\text{23}\)

Other livestock such as sheep, goats, and horses are relatively unimportant in Krajan. The government has supplied goats a couple of times in its IDT-programmes to help ‘backward’ villages, but these programmes have been rather ineffective as villagers tried to sell their goats as soon as possible, and village officials took their cut of the benefits. According to villagers, the goats were difficult to keep inside, and then destroyed the crops of neighbours, were noisy, and smelled. Many men and women expressed their disgust of goats and the meat is rarely eaten.\(^\text{24}\) Nowadays, widows can be seen every now and then tending goats which they received from a goat programme along the roadside or on harvested fields as goats can eat nearly all crop leftovers. For them, goats can serve as an additional source of income.

In general, however, goats, and also ducks, have never become popular in Krajan. The main reason is the lack of familiarity with them, and the difficulties in keeping them out of the rice fields. With ducks, an additional problem

\(^{23}\) For a description of these caretaking arrangements for cows and bulls see Chapter 4.

\(^{24}\) People often commented: “We are Madurese, and Madurese people do not like goats, we are only happy with cattle.” This statement applies to the area around Krajan where not many goats are found, but on mainland Madura many more goats can be found.
is the lack of water and sawah in Krajan. To achieve a regular egg production, ducks need to have access to water every day. In Krajan, there is no water in the dry season. Only a few villagers have ducks, but these often get stolen or killed by jealous and annoyed fellow villagers.

Raising chickens, however, has always been common in Krajan as it doesn’t cost much effort or investment. They have economic value as a convenient source of income, are a main ingredient for selamatan, provide the eggs needed for jamu (local medicine), and the eggs or the meat can be offered to unexpected and important guests. Similar forms of profit-sharing arrangements apply for chickens as for cows. Chicken can be tended for others by dividing the profit. The price of a chicken is quite stable. For decades, the price of an adult chicken is the equivalent of around four kilos of rice (cocks are generally more expensive than hens). But while the price is stable, annual production is not, as frequently diseases cause a high mortality among chickens - particularly during monsoon changes.²⁵

Maize is less valued than rice, but it is the crucial staple food-crop in Krajan, guaranteeing most villagers a basic level of subsistence. It is cheap (one third of the rice price in 1996-1997) but does not have many attributed symbolic or religious meanings. In east and central Java, people in general prefer to mix rice with maize, while in central and west Java poorer people mix cassava (tiwul) with rice. Especially the Madurese are fervent maize eaters. According to Boomgaard (1999: 50) these food habits are very old.

Maize is important for food security because it is cheap and it can be stored for long periods and retains a good nutrition value. Maize can be cooked, processed as flour, and eaten as porridge, or baked like pancakes.²⁶ Young maize cobs are cooked or roasted as a snack.

Local varieties of maize are stored as unpeeled cobs in houses above the fireplace. When needed, the maize is peeled, ground and cooked with rice in the ratio of 1 : 2. Higher proportions of maize are not appreciated and - according to villagers - difficult to swallow and digest. However, poor people who cannot afford to buy much rice have to mix more maize in with their rice and, accompanied only with vegetables, this results in tasteless and heavy dishes, albeit of good nutritional value.

There are a large number of local maize varieties in Krajan. Farmers distinguish many of these by local names such as: jagung Madura, jagung manis, jagung putih. All the local varieties belong to the ‘pearl-seed’ type. Short varieties with cobs between 5 and 10 centimetres in length (Leunissen, 1982: 74). These varieties need little or no inputs, give only small yields, but are very reli-

²⁵ As far as I know, no one in the village has tried stronger, resistant, chicken breeds. In 1999, the village head tried to buy some of these resistant chicken, but was not able to obtain a couple. According to him, villagers from other places were not willing to sell such chickens in fear of increased competition and decreasing market prices. He also doubted if villagers would like the animals and the meat because they ‘looked ugly’. True or not, this example shows that it remains difficult to obtain improved varieties, or for knowledge to spread to remote villages such as Krajan.

²⁶ Tepak bu’u (Madurese).
able. Local maize varieties have a good taste, can be stored for long periods, and can be grown on every soil type. The growing period of these varieties is long (up to four months) and production is purely intended for the subsistence of the household: it is barely commoditised and seeds are freely exchanged among villagers.

In 1996 Pak Amrati, a middleclass farmer whose son had just graduated from university college in Jember, started to grow new, high yielding, maize varieties. At first, their experiment met with scepticism and nobody in the village expected these varieties to grow well in the uplands of Krajan. However, when villagers saw the large maize cobs and huge harvest, they were astonished. The next year, when the rainy season started, a few farmers and friends expressed the wish to experiment with more new maize varieties and asked the village head and myself if we could find improved varieties of maize seeds and the required special fertilisers.

At first, I was reluctant to intervene, but after discussing the idea with farmers and Bagenda, I finally decided to search for seeds. The farmers were eager to try them, and due to the introduction of these new varieties I hoped to gain more insights into the flexibility and rationale of labour arrangements, risk taking, farmer’s knowledge, and agricultural innovation. Bagenda would ensure a quick delivery of fertiliser by using his connections with government officials and the KUD (Koperasi Unit Desa), and I contacted the Department of Agriculture for seeds and instructions. I searched for new hybrid varieties of maize that could be planted at higher altitudes and had a better taste than those planted by Pak Amrati and his son. Everybody who was interested was invited to join and we offered seeds at Rp 2,500 a kilo (one third of the price of the shop, but five times the price of local varieties). When the seeds came to Krajan, twenty, mostly larger and middle-sized, farmers bought one to five kilos of seeds and could obtain fertiliser on credit (which could be paid back in maize).

Hybrid maize varieties need better soils, more fertiliser, more care and work, and the seeds are expensive. They are however, more prone to drought, heavy rains, wind, pests, and bear higher risks as they are more expensive. Especially on the higher slopes of the Argopuro, where rains are very unpredictable and heavy winds often occur, the risk of a harvest failure is considerable. With the exception of two farmers, only the somewhat larger farmers decided to try the seeds as they had enough land to takes some risks. They reserved a small part for the new varieties, and planted the rest with old maize varieties.\(^{27}\)

Basicallty, there were three types of responses by farmers to these new seeds. The first group carefully applied fertiliser and followed all the instructions on the seed packages aiming at a maximum yield. They spent relatively large amounts on fertiliser and labour. The second group reduced the fertiliser and

\(^{27}\) Most of the small farmers - except for two - were not willing to plant these new varieties, or to borrow, or to take risks.
labour as much as possible and so reduced costs and potential loses in the event of failure. The third group interpreted the instructions of the seed company according to their own needs and circumstances. They selected their best fields and applied little fertiliser, but a lot of manure and labour. The first group got the highest yields, while some of the farmers of the second group had the worst yields. Some yields were also lower due to damage by heavy rains and winds. The last group, in general, did not achieve the highest yields, but were the most successful in economic terms. By saving on inputs and investing in locally available techniques and resources, they farmed the most economically and made the best profits.\(^{28}\)

Overall, most farmers were satisfied with their efforts, and average production was at least twice that from local varieties.\(^{29}\) In particular, the shorter growing period was appreciated. In the lower zone, the growing period was around 90 days, in up- and mid-slope areas 105 till 115 days, which is two to four weeks shorter than with local varieties of maize.

Less positive were the opinions about the quality of the maize. Generally, it was perceived as less tasty, harder to grind, more bitter, and difficult to store. Most farmers sold their crops to shops or in town; they would plant these varieties again, but in combination with local varieties for household consumption. Others decided to plant, the next season, only new hybrid seeds on fertile fields and on second and third class sawah as a second cash crop. Interestingly, it was the larger and middle scale farmers who experimented with these seeds.

The introduction of new varieties replacing low input varieties offered me the opportunity to study innovation, adaptation, and flexibility of farmers and the impact of such changes on payments and labour arrangements. A third of the farmers used wages in kind as percentage of the harvest and used the same group of people as before, but negotiated a smaller proportion. They preferred paying a percentage of the harvest, because this ensures good quality work and the soil has to be prepared intensively. Labourers, however, were reluctant to accept this as it meant much more work and they did not want to eat the new varieties at home. The taste and quality of the maize decreases within a few months and seeds are very susceptible to insects.\(^{30}\) A smaller proportion of about twenty percent offered the workers a cash wage instead, thus radically changing the relationship between landowner and labourer. About half of the landowners did not change anything. Both landowners and those taking harvest shares were forced to sell most of the maize because of its lower quality, or exchange it for local varieties. Suddenly, maize had become a commodity in Krajan.

\(^{28}\) Profit calculated as yield minus the costs (in Rp).

\(^{29}\) In theory, with ideal conditions, production could be three times as high as with the old varieties. In Krajan, only one or two farmers have managed to come close to the optimum yield.

\(^{30}\) Usually households save wages in kind and percentages of maize harvest for periods of cash shortages and for the following year to cover the dry season and the final months before the new harvest. With the new varieties, this is impossible.
Rice is the favoured staple food in Krajan, but total rice production in Krajan is nowhere near able to meet village demands. Rice prices are relatively high when compared to other staples (maize and cassava) available. Why then is rice so important and preferred to cheaper alternatives? What are the different meanings that people attribute to rice?

As one of the main staples in Krajan, rice has a high economic and cultural exchange value. Rice can be sold, and it can be exchanged for other goods, for services, or for assistance. Rice can be borrowed, used as a gift (sumbang-gan), used as collateral, or invested in a mutual exchange, and it is needed for several religious duties (such as zakat, selamatan). Rice is an important commodity in Krajan society, and the possession and consumption of rice means a lot to villagers.

The village survey following the second harvest showed that more than 30% of all households had no stocks of rice in their house, and were not able to buy sufficient rice to make ends meet. These families had to rely on other staples to meet household needs such as maize and cassava. Most villagers eat more maize than plain rice and frequently eat their rice mixed with maize. Rich families serve this mixed rice only to servants and workers. Only at weddings, ceremonies, parties, and rituals or festivities, would pure white rice have to be served.

In Krajan, two major types of rice varieties are planted, and used mainly for household consumption. The first type includes the old long-stalk and sticky rice varieties. The second type includes, the new, high yielding, varieties. These new varieties, introduced since the Green Revolution, have short stalks, a shorter growing season, are more receptive to fertilisers and give higher yields. They are often referred to as ‘modern’ varieties and were expected to replace ‘traditional’ varieties completely. The ‘new’ varieties used in Krajan are now more than twenty years old. Still about one third of all the rice planted in Krajan are long-stalk varieties. The older varieties are not grown out of tradition, but for economic, ecological, technical, and cultural reasons.

The most commonly planted variety in Krajan is the ‘new’ IR 64, which is a quite reliable variety offering high yields, but yielding rice of low taste and low quality. In Krajan, IR 64 has been planted since the end of the 1970s. Although newer and ‘better’ varieties are available nowadays, IR 64 is still planted because it is, according to farmers, suitable for local conditions. Some farmers experimented with other varieties, such as the newer IR 66, but these tests were not satisfactory. The newer varieties offered less reliable crops susceptible to crop failure.

The old varieties planted have local names like padi Bulu (hairy), padi Bali (probably originating from Bali, or like the Bali varieties) and padi Kapor. These varieties are planted in the sawah of lower quality with less reliable

---

**Land & land use**

---

This survey (the first one, 1998) has been carried out in the months of May, June and July, which is the beginning of the dry season. I observed that stocks decreased further towards the first harvest in the rainy season.
access to irrigation water, in upslope and thus colder areas and by farmers who prefer the reliability, the better taste, and the specific cultural arrangements attached to this variety. Nowadays, in general, on sawah in the upslope region (above 1,000 m) old varieties are planted, whereas new varieties dominate on sawah in the mid- and low-slope zones. Farmers often combine both old and new varieties and prefer to plant these varieties simultaneously. It depends on the specific orientation of the farmers in terms of village norms and values, the location and quality of the sawah, family habits, and thus specific household needs, which variety is planted.

During the Green Revolution years (1970s) planting old varieties below 1,000 metres was forbidden. Although most sawah in Krajan actually lies below this altitude, these varieties have always been planted in the lower parts of Krajan and Andungsari. Most villagers managed to circumvent the rigid government regulations related to the Green Revolution and continued planting old varieties on the isolated sawahs of Krajan.

Nowadays, control on planted varieties is less strong, and old varieties can be seen in the lower areas of Ardisaeng and also close to the road. Villagers who do not have local varieties and need some of this rice for rituals or special occasions can barter for them, but not buy them. I never came across any cases of selling and buying of these older varieties.

The first purpose of planting rice is to cover household subsistence needs. Most villagers who are able to plant rice on their own land use it for their own consumption needs. After the harvest, they dry it, save it in the house, and husk some whenever it is needed. Landless villagers have to buy rice, or receive rice by wages-in-kind. Both old and new varieties are planted for home consumption, but the bulk of consumption is in the form of the new (IR64) varieties. It has been difficult to measure household consumption rates of rice. It depends on the quality of the rice, the number of meals per day, the number of household members eating at home, the quality and availability of side-dishes, and the amount of maize, banana or cassava mixed with the rice. Some four persons households consume two kilos of rice per day; others, who mix their rice with maize, or regularly receive meals while working on another's fields, can make do with less than a kilo a day. In short, household consumption or rice ranges from more than 1,000 kilos down to less than 250 kilos a year.

A strict price control has been an important instrument of the government to guarantee the livelihood of many rural and urban households in Indonesia. Conversely, higher rice prices might have stimulated rice-producing farmers, rural incomes, and innovation. Throughout history, rice prices have also been kept low in Indonesia for fear of uprisings. In 1998, the sharp price rise of basic needs, and especially rice, triggered Suharto's resignation. From 1997 to 1998 rice prices tripled from Rp 1,000 - Rp 3,500 (October 1998). Later, after government intervention, and under the influence of IMF aid programmes, rice prices stabilised at the level of Rp 2,000 - Rp 2,400 per kilogram.

The second quality of rice is its importance as a cash crop. The few families who do own enough land to grow a surplus can sell rice. Some of them
sell their crop prior to harvest to regional traders-cum-harvesters (*tebasan*), others sell rice to the owner of the rice mill along the Krajan road, but most of them who do sell rice do so in small portions to neighbours, or to some of the small shops. Only around five families regularly sell rice in large quantities to traders (some through *tebasan* but mostly after the harvest). It is a common practice for many villagers - especially women - to sell small quantities on odd occasions. Women from poor families, sometimes sell some of their rice stock when they urgently need cash and have nothing else to sell, to get some additional income, or to help neighbours or friends in urgent need of rice for sudden guests, or for a *selamatan*.

A third important function of rice is the function of payment, and the direct and indirect opportunity for exchange that it offers. It can easily be bartered, and in many transactions rice functions as a standard of exchange. Villagers with stocks of rice can offer rice to a shop or to neighbours in barter against eggs, maize, cooking oil, or cheaper rice varieties. While prices and wages fluctuate, rice offers a stable standard in exchange. Its quality and quantity is easy to check and to value, and until the 1997 crisis the relative price of rice had been quite stable over the years. Examples of the functioning of this standard are loans (interest free), where the cash amount is expressed in rice equivalents to avoid any decrease in the return due to inflation, are a woman’s day wages for planting and cleaning paddy (the payment for a day’s work should be the equivalent of one kilogram of rice) and fees for a ride with a pedicab (*betjak*) in Bondowoso where payment is the equivalent of half a kilogram of rice for short trips and one kilogram for longer ones. In some cases, people work on the land in return for rice (only in the case of food crops) and, sometimes land or cattle are pawned (*gadai*) in return for cash expressed in rice.

Fourthly, rice can be acquired on credit. This is especially important for women. Small amounts of rice can relatively easily be borrowed from neighbours, friends, or shops in situations where for other goods this would be impossible. With neighbours, rice debts are usually repaid in rice, while rice debts to shops are just a form of buying on credit. Often this borrowing of rice takes place suddenly when an amount of rice is needed in the event of an invitation to a funeral, mutual help activity, or *selamatan*. The whole economy of borrowing and exchanging rice is female-dominated.

Fifthly, rice can be used to establish and maintain social relationships. An honoured guest should not leave the house without a full stomach. Being able to offer a few plates of white rice to guests not only honours the guest, but also adds status to the household. Eating white rice - without mixing it with maize - adds to someone’s status.

Sixthly, without rice it would be unthinkable to mobilise labour and to ask for help from other people for house repairing, or working on the land. At house-building parties, a meal should be served to all workers. On each day of rotating, mutual, and reciprocal labour arrangements, one or two meals should be served.

Seventhly, rice stocks, or a standing rice crop, can serve as collateral for
smaller loans. Landowners can borrow small quantities of rice from shops with the standing crop as collateral, needing to return the same amount of rice with some interest to the shop.

Eighthly, rice is crucial as a gift at selamatan, house repair parties, and funerals (sumbangan). These gifts of rice are carefully registered and returned at a similar event in the future of the other family. For some selamatan and religious rituals, long-stalk varieties of rice are required to be part of the food or gifts. Examples include the ritual at the seventh month of pregnancy, the forty- or seventy-day rituals, and the yellow rice sprinkled on the field the night before the harvest. The same is true for the small rituals if people are ill, at weddings, and if spirits have to be honoured, or chased away.

Old varieties are much more valued than new varieties. Prices are higher, the taste is better, it fills the stomach better, it can be stored longer, and it is believed to be better for the soil (fertility) of the sawah. Around these old rice varieties an aura of mysticism and power is attached. Old varieties are believed to be essential for rituals related to the world of spirits. They may be connected with both good and bad forces. Rice used in rituals has the connotation of increasing the spiritual, human, and agricultural fertility. It is also believed that only the old varieties of rice are effective in the case of black magic and sorcery.

Finally, rice is needed for several religious activities. At the end of Ramadan, zakat, a religious tax of 2.3 kg of rice is given to the religious leader from whom people received their religious education. These alms are supposed to be distributed to needy villagers, but this does not happen in practice. The religious leaders of Krajan use the zakat rice for their own family needs, and legitimise this practise by saying that they receive many guests who eat the rice. The rice given for zakat is usually IR 64 and should be of reasonable quality.

A third important food crop in Krajan is cassava. As a staple, it is far less important than rice and maize, but as subsistence crop it is important. It is only planted on pieces of wasteland and by the dykes of terraces and rice fields. In particular, poorer villagers such as widows use every square metre of their home lot (pekaran), terraces, and the sides of food trails for cassava. Cassava is only harvested if really needed and it is a staple food of last resort. It is a very appropriate crop as it is reliable, fairly insensitive to rain shortages and water logging, and is productive on very infertile soils. It can remain on the field for over a year, and can be harvested at any time it is needed. The leaves of cassava can be eaten daily as a vegetable rich in protein and vitamins. In general, villagers can freely pick these leaves from the fields of others.

32 This is one of the reasons why cassava is sometimes called a disaster for sustainable soil fertility: it exploits soil nutrients. Without applying much fertiliser, cassava still grows and bears fruit in soils where maize no longer grows. It does not give ‘a warning’ that soil quality is decreasing irreversibly. Added to this, it is a root crop, damaging soil structure and allowing a nutrient outflow.
In normal circumstances, cassava is eaten as a snack and, preferred by children, roasted or cooked between meals. Sometimes, cassava is sliced and fried for cassava chips. Poor households regularly eat boiled cassava for breakfast, or mix it with rice. In lower Krajan and especially the adjacent villages to the east where the climate is drier and the soils are very infertile, much more cassava is planted and eaten than in the higher hamlets of Krajan. Here the cassava is dried and stored until needed. Then it is mixed with cheap rice and boiled. It is regarded as a lousy food and only for the real poor. Villagers generally try to hide it if they are eating it. However, many families do eat it seasonally to cover short-term deficits in food stocks.

Fresh cassava is not really commoditised; it has no price, and women can harvest small amounts freely from the fields of relatives, neighbours, and friends. Good varieties and cuttings are exchanged among women while its taste and quality is discussed. After the start of the economic crisis, cassava suddenly became commoditised. Traders entered the village in search of cassava for the flour industry in Lumadjang, and the poorest villagers tried to buy cassava from others who did not need it. The prawn cracker (krupuk udang) and flour processing industry were searching for alternatives to the expensive flour, which had become too expensive due to the devaluation of the Rupiah. Cassava flour seemed to be a good alternative and raw cassava started to yield high prices and trade became profitable. In Krajan, one of the local religious leaders became a major regional broker of cassava. Male villagers were ready to sell their stocks of cassava to him, surprised that this poor food could yield something. Their wives were often not happy with this, and did not always agree with the sale because they stressed its importance and felt more responsible for the food security of the household. Moreover, in contrast to cash crops, food crops for the household belong to the domain of women. They generally decide on planting, harvesting, and storing such crops. Men are more concerned with cash crops such as tobacco and commercial rice farming. In many cases, women claimed the profit from selling cassava for household needs and, in most cases, they indeed received a share of the profit.

The same as what happened to the Krajan cassava also applied to the aren palm. Its juice can be used to make palm wine or palm sugar, or it fruits can be sold as a snack. Winemaking is not really favoured by the Madurese

Regional health workers told me that they clearly see the difference between children from poor and those from richer or middle class families. "Children of poor families eat rice, maize, and vegetables everyday, but they seldom get sugar or sweets as their parents cannot afford these. These children eat relatively healthily and have therefore good skins, dark hair, and strong white teeth. Unfortunately, middle class parents with some spare cash have the feeling that they cannot refuse or limit their children's demands, and give them cheap daily snacks like mie, krupuk, and sweets, spoiling the desire for good food."

On this point, I cannot give hard figures as my survey results may be biased. In some cases my assistants and myself had the impression that informants did not admit they were eating gaplek quite often. Especially when neighbours or friends were present at these interviews, the data on this point were not totally reliable. Visits, however, at houses of key informants, showed that gaplek is eaten regularly by the very poor and on an occasional basis by poorer villagers.

Arennga pinnata / A. saccarifera (Palmae).
Muslims, the market for fruits is far away, and the process of making palm sugar is a labour intensive process needing a lot of scarce firewood. Only in the hamlet of Pakualas, was palm wine or palm sugar regularly made.

The *aren* palm's trunk can be processed into a kind of starchy flour comparable to sago starch. In the past, the *aren* tree had provided food of the last resort, but most of the younger villagers have never eaten it. The last times it was eaten on a large scale was during the Japanese occupation and during the crisis in the mid-1960s. The tree is therefore regarded - at least by younger generations - as rather useless. When it suddenly had a value, many villages were ready to sell these trees, and within a year about half of the *aren* trees in Krajan were cut down. The profit was mostly used to buy rice, maize, and clothes.

A somewhat similar crop to cassava is sweet potato. It has a good taste, yields large harvests, and its leaves can be cooked as a vegetable. However, it needs a more fertile soil, and cannot be stored for long periods in the soil or in the house, which makes it less appropriate as a subsistence crop for the very poor. For others, it offers all the benefits of a subsistence crop like cassava and, therefore, it used to be grown quite often, but in recent years, it is less popular. Probably, the economically good years up to 1997 enabled villagers to buy more rice and maize. Also no land is available to grow sweet potato in large quantities, and the mountain forest above the village is closed for clearing. In other rice growing mountain societies in Southeast Asia, sweet potato is a major complementary staple food to rice. An example of this is the extended fields of sweet potato in Ifugao, the Philippines, where it is grown in shifting cultivation in the forest above the rice fields (Nooeboon, 1995).

A very important, and often overlooked, crop for food security is the banana. It is easily overlooked because it is never planted in large quantities or on normal agricultural plots. Bananas are planted on house lots, in corners of fields, and close to latrines and garbage pits. Every family in Krajan - even the landless - have access to at least one or two banana plants. I have counted over 30 different varieties of bananas in Krajan. Some common varieties are the *pisang ambon* (the ones found generally in western supermarkets) which in Indonesia are eaten at *selamatan*, *pisang raja* (larger than the *pisang ambon*) used at weddings, *pisang susu* (soft and sweet bananas in a kind of square skin), *pisang emas*, *pisang palotan* (*ketan*) (sticky and soft suitable for cooking and snacks), and, the *pisang bunder* (a sweet round banana about the size of large billiard ball). All of these varieties have different functions and attributed meanings. Some are supposed to be good for small babies (i.e. *pisang susu*) as an additional food in the first months after being born or to treat diseases such as diarrhea and beriberi. Others are required for specific rituals and *selamatan*, or can be exchanged at weddings and in women networks. There is a lively trade of nearly ripe bananas between friends and relatives who need bananas for a certain *selamatan* or ritual. The roots of preferred varieties are eagerly exchanged between women.

Besides these major food crops, a large number of crops are grown on a smaller scale. Many of these crops are only commercially grown by a small number of farmers, or in small quantities in home gardens for home con-
sumption. Examples of specific crops meant for the market are chilli peppers, garlic, onions, beans, and *kangkung* (leafy vegetable). Only very few farmers regularly sell some of their crops (especially chilli peppers, onions, and garlic) in town or in the village. Other villagers grow most of these crops as well, but for home consumption in their home gardens. Crops which are often grown as a vegetable for home consumption are the cowpea, betel leaf (*sirih*), taro, spinach (*bayam*) and, almost as a weed in every garden in Krajan, the thorny variety of it (*tarnyak duri*), cucumber, ginger, and fruit trees (coconut, jackfruit, and papaya).

Some trees are also important for fuel wood, timber or cash generation: teak, kapok (or silk-cotton tree), jackfruit (*nangka*), coconut, and bamboo. Timber from teak and jackfruit is expensive and very popular for house building because of its durable qualities. Besides these well-known trees, many other local varieties are sometimes important for firewood, lumber, decoration, or for cow fodder in the dry season (most of them leguminous varieties). Bamboo, the poor-man’s all-purpose-wood is the main construction material for houses, cattle sheds, and baskets.

Property rights over bamboo are the same as for trees: the one who plants a tree is its owner and can sell it to others. Trees can be owned separately from the land they are standing on. Bamboo can be harvested every year, but an over intensive use easily damages the plant and can lead to destruction of the trunk-bed. Most farmers opt to harvest bamboo carefully and wait until shoots are at least two years old. The oldest and larger shoots are used for house and shed construction, or sold to the fishermen of Besuki who use them as floats for their prongs. Younger shoots of around a year in age can be used to make bamboo wall mats or bamboo baskets.

Unlike the previous crops, tobacco is purely a cash crop and in good years nearly all villagers are involved in its production. The tobacco grown in Krajan is the same as in lowland areas but, due to the altitude, it has thin leaves and is processed as cut tobacco (*rajangan*) and its lower leaves are sold as *krosok*. Its production is solely for the domestic Indonesian market (and for home consumption).36

After the first or, sometimes, the second crop of maize, the soil is prepared for planting tobacco. Ridges are made and the planting holes are filled with a mixture of burnt cow dung, fertilisers37, and small quantities of organic fertiliser (compost, old cow dung and remnants of cow fodder and crops). After a few days or weeks, the fertiliser has lost most of its aggressiveness and the young seedlings can be transplanted from the seedbeds. Seeds can be sown, or young plants can be bought from neighbours, but local seedlings are often affected by pests and are regarded as offering a lower quality of tobacco. The best seedlings are produced in the area of Maesan, between Jember and Bondowoso, of 40 kilometres of the village. Most of the larger landowners buy their seedlings there.

---

36 For a study on Madurese tobacco and tobacco trade, see De Jonge (1988).
37 A mixture of phosphate, potassium, and nitrogen fertilisers.
The family does the rest of the work alone or, in the case of large landowners, by using hired labourers. Large leaves from the teak trees, or chopped banana trunks are placed over the seedling to protect them from the sun and heavy rain. During the first month, if there is no rain, the young plants are watered at least three times a week and dead seedlings are replaced. This is very labour intensive, and in the case of small farmers, the whole family participates in the work. Sometimes seedlings have to be replaced more than five times, and water has to be hauled long distances.

After a month, the plants grow on independently, and two months later the first leaves can be picked. The leaves are brought to the house of the owner, cleaned, and stored for two days to mature. Then, the leaves are rolled and cut into fine vermicelli-like threads at night. This wet tobacco is spread on bamboo grates and dried in the morning sun. This drying is crucial, if there are clouds, or if the rains come early, the tobacco will not dry in one day and is then nearly worthless. The cutting of the tobacco is a fine art and carried out by a few people who are very gifted at this work. Sometimes others are invited to do it, and are paid for the task. All the other family members, and often neighbours, assist with the work.

Male guests receive good quality tobacco in a bin or a bag and rolling paper when visiting. During these visits, different cuts of tobacco are tried, compared and discussed. For daily use, people carry a small bag of tobacco (pak lopak), paper, and a kerosene lighter. This tobacco is often scrounged by friends, neighbours, and relatives, and is freely exchangeable.

A pak lopak with locally-produced tobacco lying on a table is in principle open for everyone to take from. Farmers constantly share, compare, and exchange in this way their tobacco and knowledge. However, poor villagers are hesitant to take from richer villagers of high status. Only if they have a certain client relationship, will they permit themselves this privilege. (Women exchange tobacco if they are chewing the betel nut and essentially, the same rules apply.) The consumption of kreték (clove cigarettes) on a large scale by most layers of society is relatively new as these cigarettes have always been expensive. During the crisis, most of the poorer villagers stopped buying rolled cigarettes, or shifted to cheaper brands.

Most tobacco is grown by farmers as a cash crop, but this forms a major source of insecurity in itself. Prices are not stable, and the production is labour intensive and needs some expensive inputs such as fertiliser, seedlings, and sometimes pesticides. Usually the production of tobacco is financed on credit, and loans have to be repaid after the harvest (six months) and sometimes after a year. In 1997, many farmers took loans from richer villagers, the village head (who received credit facilities from the middlemen of the cigarette industry), and cheap credit programmes from the BRI (Bank Rakyat Indonesia) for tobacco production.38

---

38 Officially, BRI loans are not allowed to be used for tobacco, but often farmers asked for loans for a different purpose and then used them for tobacco. There has never been any check at farms by BRI officials.
The usual interest rate for tobacco is 50% over 6 months. In 1997, the tobacco harvest was disappointing due to low tobacco prices, and in 1998 due to the low quality of the leaves following prolonged - La Niña related - rains. In these years, many could not pay back their loans or the interest, and went bankrupt.\textsuperscript{39} Despite the price of tobacco rising since the start of the 1997 crisis, the real price of tobacco has declined.\textsuperscript{40} Profits have declined due to stagnating prices, overproduction, and the rising of production costs. This process in fact started a number of years before the crisis, but then accelerated dramatically leading many farmers towards bankruptcy.

In 1997, a significant number (50) of these bankrupt farmers went to Kalimantan in the hope of finding work and money to cover their financial problems. Others were forced to sell, pawn, or rent out cows or land to cover their debts. Most of the migrants to Kalimantan, including some who were not debt-driven, did not succeed and came back poorer than they left. Because of the crisis and the rising price of transport some could not come back at all.

On the upslope area of Krajan, a new coffee research plantation for the plantation department (PT \textit{perkebunan}) has recently been founded. This experimental plantation is a test site for the Coffee Research Centre in Jember. Jember is well known for its old plantations and research on plantation crops. Its research centre has several locations to test new varieties at different altitudes and in different soil types. The annex to the garden of the Jember coffee research centre is also used to store genetic varieties of coffee and shade trees needed for future experiments and improvement programmes. The plantation is relatively small (300 ha) and most of its acreage lies beyond the territory of Krajan on upland government land. In addition to good connections to the outside world, the plantation also needed land from Krajan farmers to extend its acreage.

The new varieties were starting to be productive in 1998, but most of the labour was still needed for weeding, planting, and maintaining the plantation. Some 15 to 30 workers from Krajan were employed on a regular basis. More Krajan villagers hope to become involved in the future in picking and processing coffee beans. One of the main reasons for improving the road to Krajan was the establishment of this plantation, but Bagenda made villagers believe it was due to his rule and good relationship with the government.

In addition to the plantation, coffee is grown on home lots, on the waste grounds along the river, and recently on some of the higher and infertile \textit{tegal} grounds, by Krajan farmers. Around half of the villagers have some coffee trees on their home lots, but these trees are badly kept and not very productive. Recently, government officials from the rural extension office experimentally introduced new \textit{Arabica} varieties of smallholders’ coffee in Krajan.

\textsuperscript{39} By bankruptcy I mean technically bankrupt: not being able to repay debts.
\textsuperscript{40} The real price declined from a ten-kilo rice equivalent for one kilo of tobacco to less than three to one in the course of five years (1993-1998).
These *Arabica* varieties were supposed to be successful at lower altitudes (700-1,000 metres). In 1999, the first trees started blooming and some farmers were expecting their first crop. Due to increased prices, improved varieties, and the local demand, the prospects for this crop look good.

Coffee is not grown as a major cash crop but is important for home consumption. As with tobacco and cigarettes, drinking coffee has a very important cultural meaning in building, maintaining, and reproducing social networks. A cup of coffee should be offered to visitors to honour them and to show hospitality. Workers should receive a cup of coffee when they work on the land reflecting the good care of the landowner. Being able to always offer coffee to guests and workers adds status and shows a willingness to share. Although coffee is the most appreciated drink, not all villagers drink coffee at home, or can afford to offer it to guests and workers, and mix coffee with roasted maize or rice, or offer tea or sugar water. Many male villagers drink coffee in *warung* while chatting, and exchanging information, news, and gossip.

In Krajan, around 12 of these *warung* existed in 1998, most of them situated along the main road in the three lower hamlets of Krajan; Sayuran, Pakuarah and Krajan proper. Remarkably, Wringinkurung, the richest and one of the largest hamlets of Krajan, has no *warung*. According to local inhabitants, coffee can be made cheaper at home and there is no need to go to a *warung* to see each other. According to outsiders, the people of Wringinkurung are more thrifty and individualistic. Both groups agreed that the customs in that hamlet are somewhat different in that because they prefer to meet neighbours, friends, and relatives in their own homes.

Most of the interviewed men and women in Krajan considered coffee as a must for feeling well and for socialisation. Those, who did not drink coffee regularly, could not due to poverty reasons. This brings us to the subject of the next chapter, it is not only important to know the constraints and opportunities of the physical environment, but also the distribution and unequal ways of access that explain the specific constraints and opportunities of making a living in Krajan.
4

Social Inequality in Krajan

Krajan is a differentiated rural society, in which villagers have unequal access to land, cattle, employment, and other forms of property or income. This chapter deals with the ways in which villagers, either directly or indirectly, have access to these resources. Direct access is constituted from command over and ownership of resources; indirect access is mediated by labour arrangements, shared tenancy relationships, social relationships, or inherently by specific modes of production. This chapter considers a number of questions. How are resources distributed in Krajan? How, and by which means, do people gain access to these resources? Who are the most marginalized people of Krajan? And, finally, how are the ways of access to resources constructed, maintained, and controlled?

I will address these questions by first looking at the bases of wealth and poverty in Krajan, and at local notions of inequality, wealth, and poverty. I then proceed to discuss the concomitant differences in ownership of sawah, tegal, and cattle, as well as the ways in which those who have no or insufficient direct command over resources gain indirect and often limited access to them. Finally, I briefly consider local relationships of power and access as a crucial factor enhancing and maintaining socioeconomic inequalities and forms of social exclusion.

Wealth and Poverty in Krajan

Socioeconomic inequalities are obvious to all villagers, and in assessing each other’s wealth and status in the local hierarchy, people seemed to use a classification and ranking system on which nearly everybody agreed. In its most general form, it roughly follows a tripartite division of the population into three classes: the well off, those who can more or less manage, and the poor. In discussing individual cases, however, people make further subdivisions, and the overall local wealth-ranking system turned out to consist of six categories: ‘rich’ (kaya), ‘enough’ (lebih or maju), ‘just enough’ (cukup), ‘insuffi-
cient or little’ (kurang), ‘not enough or poor’ (miskin), and ‘destitute’ (susah or kasihan).\(^1\) Besides the extended village survey of 100 households measuring wealth and poverty, I constructed a wealth ranking of all surveyed households as perceived by the villagers themselves and discussed at length the characteristics of wealth and poverty in Krajan with village officials, religious leaders, friends, and neighbours (both female and male). After having agreed upon these categories, we ranked together all villagers ranging from rich to poor.

An advantage of using this wealth-ranking methodology is that it reveals how people think about wealth, poverty, status, and daily needs. It was not difficult to discuss topics such as differences in income, status and property, as they are frequently discussed among villagers themselves, and are at the centre of everybody’s attention. People make clear distinctions between prestige and the actual socioeconomic status in the village. I crosschecked this ranking with the equivalent of local taxes, i.e. the obligatory contributions\(^2\) to the annual village festival, as listed by the heads of hamlets. Further, I discussed the attributed social position of households with the household members themselves during interviews.

The criteria villagers use to categorise their neighbours, are rather generally agreed upon. The most important of these criteria appeared to be property (sawah, tegal, cattle, houses, motorbikes, television sets, and other consumer goods (in that order)\(^3\)), cash incomes (and the stability, reliability, and accessibility to it), networks of friends and good relationships (who might offer information, jobs, or credit), networks of support (like having caring children or kin), and personal skills (i.e. being clever in finding work, solutions, or trades).

---

\(^1\) Throughout this thesis, I will use Indonesian terms if available. Sometimes, words are the same in Indonesian and Madurese, although they can have different connotations. Here I mention the equivalents of the words used in the text in Madurese. In Madurese kaya is also kaya (or sogi, more polite), lebih is lebbi, or langkong (polite). Another Indonesian/Madurese word often used for this category is maju. Maju has the connotation of being prosperous and developing, not yet kaya. However, not everybody in this second class is making progress and for that reason I prefer to use the neutral term, lebih. Cukup is in Madurese cokop, pas, or genca, kurang is korang, miskin is tak cokop, sakoniq, mesken. Susah (sara in Madurese) means difficult and refers to people having difficulties in making ends meet. The word kasihan (neser in Madurese) is more often used in Krajan than susah and has different meanings in different contexts. In general kasihan (neser) refers to people who are pitiful, helpless, lonesome, having bad luck, or in grief. In a context of wealth and poverty, kasihan has a quite strong meaning and indicates that people are to be pitied and live a poor and destitute life. Kasihan in the context of poverty is somewhat stronger than the Madurese word neser meaning down-and-out, or poor thing.

\(^2\) These contributions by villagers vary in amount among households in accordance with their paying capacity and in this way are a good tool for comparison. Locally, these contributions are called kommitan. Poor people paid, in 1996 and 1997, about Rp 2,000 - Rp 3,500 according to carrying capacity. Rich villagers paid to maximum of Rp 7,500. Widows, village officials, and religious leaders do not have to pay. The public list of kommitan contains all the names of village households and is confirmed and negotiated on a yearly basis between kepala dusun, Pak RT (neighbourhood heads), and the villagers themselves. During the interviews, informants themselves were asked about their ranking and the appropriateness of it. In most cases, their opinion, the attributed ranking and my own ranking corresponded remarkably well.

\(^3\) Increasingly, consumer goods such as motorcycles, television sets, radios, and other consumer goods, are defining someone’s status and economic position.
According to these local criteria, one in eleven households is called *kaya* (rich), while nearly one third are seen as *susah* or *kasihan* (destitute). Among the rich we find the larger landowners who produce for the market, some government officials (including the village head and his relatives), relatives of the former village head, some large tobacco and cattle traders, and some large cattle owners. Among the *lebih* or *maju* (enough) we find well-off villagers such as large and middle-sized farmers, businessmen, teachers, and influential people such as hamlet heads and religious leaders. The *cukup* (just enough) are predominantly middle size and smaller farmers, small traders, and skilled labourers. The *kurang* (not enough) are small farmers, small cattle owners, petty traders, and wage labourers. Among the *miskin* (poor) one finds most of the landless and the people without cattle, rich relatives, and regular work. Finally, the *susah* or *kasihan* (destitute) are those who live at the margins of village society. They are often old and disabled people, or villagers who are not able to make a living and do not receive care from kin or neighbours on a regular basis. They face regular food shortages, live in small and shabby houses, and face poor health.

**Fig. 4-1 Wealth ranking and percentage of total households**

Naturally, villagers are well aware that these categories are not static, and that people may be downwardly or upwardly mobile - as the cases of Satrawi and Patik cited in the introduction show. People continually watch each other, as the relative social status of fellow villagers may change and need redefinition. Knowing the economic and social position of friends, neighbours, and relatives, constitutes strategic information. It is important to know with whom social relationships should and could be established, to know expectations about consumption levels and gifts at *selamatan*, and it is important for assessing the creditability of fellow villagers. It is clear that this watching, valuing, and discussion of each other’s wealth and status takes place in a context of rumours, gossip, and jealousy (*iri* and *cemburu*). Having a new *sarong*, radio, golden necklace, or even a new flashlight can easily lead to rumours or gossip in the neighbourhood.
One day, Hassim, one of my poor neighbours, bought a big new flashlight. Two days earlier, his wife had borrowed some money from one of the neighbours to buy a few kilos of rice. Instantly gossip started, and the neighbour asked Hassim's wife to repay the loan instantly, as she was not inclined to finance their 'unneeded expenses'. She commented: "Why did you not go to your husband for money. Are you married to me?" Hassim's wife had no cash money to repay the debt, and neither did her husband. As the rumours made her ashamed to ask anybody in the neighbourhood for a loan, she eventually decided to sell some of her maize stocks to the shopkeeper.

In the village, there is ongoing borrowing and lending and information about villagers' credibility is crucial for traders, shopkeepers, village officials, and moneylenders. Neighbours, friends, and relatives, are also keen to know every tiny detail of each other's household budgets: to know the amount of support that should be given or received, and the credibility of other villagers in mutual exchange and mutual help relationships.

Bu Patik, for instance, is well known for her skills of gathering strategic information to regain debts. She has close contacts with women in the neighbourhood, and many guests and labourers visit Patik's house in search of work, gossip, a free cup of coffee, or some free tobacco. From them, Bu Patik obtains all she needs to know about trade, profits, and prices. Being the wife of one of the richest villagers, she regularly lends money to workers, relatives, and neighbours in return for assistance and loyalty; in that way she is able to mobilise a pool of workers when she needs them urgently. Most of her loans are very small, the equivalent of a few kilos of maize or rice, but some labourers borrow larger amounts. When Bu Patik heard that Pak Sulama, one of their labourers, sold his calf she instantly went to his house to reclaim an old Rp 50,000 debt for last year's Idul Fitri. When she arrived at the house, Sulama said he had not yet received any money. The next day Bu Patik went again, but Sulama's wife said that her husband was away for work, but others reported that he had been at home. On the third day, she went before dawn and waited in front of the house until the family woke up. She did the same the next day, and finally, after five days, she received her money. "I will not lend to him again", she commented to other guests at her home, thus reducing Sulama's credit worthiness in the neighbourhood.

Even though social stratification in Krajan is not rigid, Satriawi and Patik (see introduction of this thesis) should be seen as exceptions, most people are born and die in the same wealth category, and across generations there is a remarkable socioeconomic continuity. Coming from a poor family, the odds are against becoming wealthy.

---

4 See Lont (2002) who describes these complex and multiple borrowing and lending operations for an urban kampong in Yogyakarta. Many villagers have simultaneously debts and loans, and fill one gap or repayment by taking new loans referred to locally as 'gali lobang, tutup lobang'; (lit. digging a hole, filling a hole), robbing Peter to pay Paul.
Households

Although most transactions take place between individual parties as husbands and wives tend to manage separate funds, exchanges in the village, however, such as sumbangan, gift giving, and support, go on between households. In this thesis, I therefore take households as the units of analysis, which I define as groups of people eating from one kitchen or fireplace, not necessary always eating together or at the same time, but as a unit that shares food and resources on a regular basis. They include married couples living together, widows living alone (not taken into the house of their children), widows living together, and second wives living independently. This household concept largely corresponds to the Indonesian understanding of family (keluarga) albeit that keluarga usually does not include widows living together, or widows living with their children or grandchildren.

Using this concept of household does not assume that all resources within the household are pooled, shared, or redistributed, nor that livelihood activities, incomes, and opinions are uniform or agreed upon. Naturally, households are not homogenous units with regard to resources. A household is often a place of contest, an arena of struggle, full of contradictions between the interests of men, women, children, and grandparents (Niehof, 1994; Niehof & Price, 2001: 11). As a consequence, incomes are not always shared equally within the household, and men and women do have differential access to various resources. Cattle for instance, belong to a large extent to the male domain, and only women without a husband gather or carry cow fodder. Most sharecropping activities and tobacco and cattle trading belong solely in the male domain. Harvesting maize and rice, on the contrary, belongs predominantly within the female domain, and women control or coordinate most food production, food preparation, food stocks, and seedlings.

A question that arises here is, if the analysis of wealth and poverty in Krajan would yield different results if inequalities between households were calculated per capita. Households in Krajan are not of equal size, and the proportion of single and female-headed households is higher in the poorer classes. While the weighted average household in Krajan (including children, foster children, and grandparents) consists of 3.2 members, there are clear differences between the social classes (see Table 4-1).

Most of the widows - who sometimes care for children or grandchildren - are found in the lower strata of society, and this contributes to the fact that the average household size of the destitute is lower. Household sizes of the

---


6 *janda* (widow) are women without a husband. They can be either divorced or left alone by the death of a husband. In Indonesian, *janda* can have two meanings: divorced widow (*janda cerai*) or widow by death (*janda mati*). In Krajan there are hardly any widowers, as they always try to marry again and so weddings at an age of 70 are not exceptional.

enough are also relatively small due to a lower number of children, and foster children. The poorer classes and the rich have nearly similar, larger than average household sizes, albeit for different reasons. The poor tend to have more children, whereas the rich households include more live-in youngsters who work as servants or handymen, as well as foster children.

Despite, these small variations, I use households as the unit in the following analysis of economic differentiation since households remain dominant units of ownership, access, redistribution, and pooling of resources (Niefhof & Price, 2001), and, more important, are the relevant unit of access, property right, and exchange in the village.

### Social classes in Krajan

A clear demarcation line could be drawn in the village between the 'haves', the rich, enough, and just enough, and the 'have-nots', the not enough, poor, and the destitute. The first grouping are those who have adequate land, are financially independent, and can buy more than basic needs only, while the 'have-nots' face chronic or periodical difficulties in making a living. A general point for calibration between higher and lower classes in terms of wealth ranking is the notion of cukup.8 According to Krajan villagers, cukup means being able to provide basic household needs, which means that the family can eat enough (two or three meals a day); eat reasonably well (with vegetables, soy cake, or dried fish); buy clothes for the whole family at least once a year; smoke cigarettes or tobacco; chew betel; regularly buy (once a week) tea or

---

8This is expressed in another expression for cukup: pas pasan, which I heard on some occasions. Pas pasan means just enough to survive. Pas pasan is slightly lower than 'just enough' and just above the category of 'less'. It means making ends meet, but is seldomly used in Krajan. It is used more in Central Java. See for instance: Kutanegara (f.c.).
coffee; contribute appropriate *sumbangan* and small gifts to others at weddings, funerals, and lifecycle rituals; and produce a significant number of cookies and simple meals at *selamatan* and at *Idul-Fitri* at the end of the Ramadan. In short, *cukup* implies to have enough to fulfil household needs and to be able to live decently, being able to perform all the required *selamatan* and other social obligations in the village. At least half of the households are not able to do this on a regular basis, and another 19% faces difficulties at times in doing this.

This does not mean that those who are not *cukup* do not perform *selamatan*, nor give contributions, nor buy consumer items. On some occasions, they do, but they face regular shortages, periodic difficulties in making ends meet, and cannot always meet the social obligations of gift exchange, or their consumption needs, in short below a decent level of living. In the following sections, these inter-class differences are discussed in more detail.

**The rich (kaya)**

In Krajan, only a dozen families are seen as rich. Some of them have become rich in land and cattle, others derive their wealth from business (mainly tobacco trade and cultivation), from inheritance, or from their political position. Three of the richest families of Krajan have provided all the village heads, and most of these richest families have members who are involved in village politics or active as village officials such as *kepala dusun*, water officer (*ulu ulu*), village secretary, member of the village development board (LKMD), or head of religious affairs.

Among these rich, the two leading families compete and dominate village politics, each representing one of the two factions in the society: the secular and the religious. The secular family of the village head Bagenda and his mother, *Bu Ti*, is currently on the rise. Bagenda owns a few hectares of *sawah* and *tegal*, a brick house, a car, a pickup truck, a new Honda motorbike, a large dish antenna and television set, and all sorts of conspicuous consumption goods such as a refrigerator, cameras, and mobile phones. He derives his wealth from privileges and levies that come with his position as village head,

---

9 In the 1960s, the stepsister of Bagenda (generally called *Bu Haji*) was fostered from a poor family as a young girl. *Bu Ti*, the only daughter of the most important post-war village head, did not have any children. A few years later, *Bu Ti* became unexpectedly pregnant and Bagenda was born. Soon afterwards, the father of Bagenda, an influential police officer from Banyuwangi, died. The fostered girl of *Bu Ti* remained a family member, and when she married a local schoolteacher, she inherited *sawah*, *tegal*, and some livestock. On this occasion, it was publicly announced that this would be all she would ever inherit, as she was fostered before Bagenda was born and could never replace *Bu Ti*’s son as the first in lineage. At Bagenda’s marriage, he received the same amount of *sawah*, *tegal*, and cattle as *Bu Haji* had. To compensate for this unequal inheritance of family property, Bagenda built a brick house for his stepsister when her husband died suddenly in 1985. The relationship between *Bu Haji* and Bagenda is generally perceived of as good, but between Bagenda’s wife and *Bu Haji*, relations are very bad and full of jealousy, competition, gossip, and bad feelings.
from government projects, from a variety of (legal and illegal) trades, and from his sawah and livestock. Moreover, his mother, Bu Ti, who owns another few hectares of sawah, tegal, and over 20 head of cattle, supplements his income and finances most of the trades. In addition, Bu Ti deals with most of the money lending and retailing from her thriving shop in the village centre.10

The Bagenda family has good relationships with political leaders in surrounding villages, in Bondowoso, and with the police and military in the area. Bagenda is a jack-of-all-trades, engaged in business activities ranging from tobacco trading and illegal logging, to the trade of motorcycles, radios, television sets, houses, land, fighting bulls, cocks, and paddy. His mother is in addition to being the largest moneylender in the village, an advisor on rituals, weddings and dates, and keeps a strong hold on village political affairs. They employ over twenty villagers on a regular basis and offer another ten families sharecropping contracts on their fields. Moreover, they contribute considerably to weddings and funerals by giving emergency loans, money, and rice; and they pay for the yearly village festival.

The dominant family from the religious circle in Krajan is the Haji Feisal family living in Mengkuara. The father of Haji Feisal was village head from the end of the 1960s until 1992. In that period, the family prospered and acquired much of its current wealth. Moreover, since they came to power in Krajan, seven family members have been to Mecca to become a Haji. They own a few hectares of second-class sawah, and over fifteen hectares of tegal on which they grow predominantly cash crops such as tobacco, onions, groundnuts, and improved maize. Besides this, they have at least fifty head of cattle, which are tended by poorer families in the neighbourhood. Their compound consists of three brick houses with marble floors, a private praying house to teach Koran to the children from the neighbourhood, and a shop. Moreover, they own a truck for trade and transport, a luxury car, and several motorbikes. They maintain good trading relations in the tobacco area towards Maesan and Jember, and with the most important religious leaders (kiai) in that region. During peak times in the tobacco season, they employ over 100 men, women, and children. Unlike the Bagenda family, they do not contribute much to selamatan, weddings, and funerals of the people who work for them, and they rarely loan money. Since Bagenda became village head in 1992, business and political competition between these two families is fierce. From around 1998, it seems that the Bagenda family is doing slightly better, while the Feisal family is losing some of its hegemonic position in the lower Krajan zone. The family suffered heavy losses during the droughts of 1996 and 1997, due to low tobacco prices in 1997 and 1998, and were hit hard by the crisis which forced them to pay higher wages to the labourers, while incomes remained weak.

10 Villagers say she owns over fifty head of cattle, but I could not trace much more than a twenty. Bagenda likes to boast about his richness to impress villagers, but in many cases, his wealth was not as great as he boasted. In practice, much of his wealth is derived from profits he made from government projects, and loans from credit schemes rather than from real earnings out of farming or business activities. Much of his business has collapsed soon after being started.
The other rich families of Krajan mostly live in Dluwang, Wringinkurung, and Pakualas, and derive their wealth mostly from local resources such as good quality sawah and tegal, and large numbers of cattle. Some of these families belong to the religious, others to the secular, camp and invest in land and cattle, fighting bulls, prestigious selamatam, or cattle trade. They control large numbers of poorer families in the neighbourhood who work on their lands for a share of the harvest and who look after their cattle. Although one or two of them have built brick houses, most of these families live in traditional wooden, decorated, houses, do not own motorcycles or television sets, and try to stay slightly aloof from the cash economy.

The enough (lebih or maju)

The enough villagers are well off. Among them are some nouveaux riches like such as businessmen, teachers, and some returned migrants\(^\text{11}\); influential people including hamlet heads, and religious leaders; and also families who once belonged to the village elite, but have now somewhat fallen back. The new rich usually own brick houses with ceramic-tiled floors, while the older and former elite often live in wooden, decorated, houses with cement floors. The enough generally own enough sawah to be self-sufficient in rice, but they own considerably less sawah and cattle than the rich. Many of the enough own large plots of tegal. Many of them are involved in tobacco cultivation, large-scale trade, and borrow or lend large amounts of money. Due to sharp fluctuations in prices and quality of tobacco over the years, their wealth is not always steady and their money comes and goes easily. Pak Heri (35) is an example of someone who was maju, but fell to ‘just enough’. He had enough sawah, some cattle, and a lot of tegal on which he grew tobacco. The money he thus earned, was spent on a brick house, a motorbike, consumption goods, and travel in the area. The last couple of years, his wealth went down, and he runs out of food stocks before the new rice harvest came, and had to sell cattle, borrow money, or pawn some of his land, to purchase household needs.

Other people ranked among the enough are skilled craftsmen, such as constructors, and educated people who have become members of the village administrative system. Teachers and health workers are generally ranked among the enough due to the combination of a steady income from their profession, and several additional income sources. Also upwardly mobile families (maju) are within this category. In the past, people could accumulate wealth from local resources such as cattle and land (e.g. Pak Patik) but, increasingly, maju people have made their money outside the village from (trans)migration, their profession, or business. A good example is the Mandor family from

\(^{11}\) In five cases, some villagers were able to gain money from migration. Among these were returning female migrants from Malaysia and a few families who followed transmigration programmes, succeeded, and sold their lands to return to the village.
Wringinkurung. The father had been sent to school in Bondowoso but did not finish high school. After a number of small administrative jobs in Bondowoso, he started a shop in Wringinkurung and also entered the forest department. In this job, he was in charge of the forests above Krajan, and made some money from gifts and payments from illegal loggers. Later, they sold sawah inherited by the wife, to buy a pickup truck for their only son to earn money by transporting goods and people to and from Bondowoso, Pakem, and Besuki. Todate, the combination of a government job, a shop, and transportation has proved a successful one.

Social inequality

The just enough (cukup)

Among the ‘just enough’ are those villagers who generally own some sawah, tegal, and cattle, but less than the ‘enough’. In general, they have access to relatively good or stable incomes or trades. Moreover, many of them are not that heavily engaged in tobacco farming, although some lease or sharecrop tegal from larger landowners, but rely on non-agricultural forms of income to finance household needs. Their houses are made from wood, or bamboo, with concrete floors, and sometimes they own a radio or a small battery-powered television. They do not own motorcycles, except for one or two families who gave way to demanding children and sold assets to buy their children one. Most of them do not produce enough food on their own fields to fulfil household needs and combine farming with a variety of other activities. Among the ‘just enough’ are many of the shopkeepers, owners of coffee stalls, and peddlers and small traders selling livestock, chicken, fish, or baskets. An example of a ‘just enough’ is Pak Has whose lands produce enough to feed his family for about six months. In addition, he is a tailor, hairdresser, shopkeeper, and part-time religious teacher in the surau of his father. He and his wife have put their hope in their son who they send to a nearby religious school (pesantren) hoping he will become an important religious leader like his grandfather. An uncle of Pak Has, living near the pesantren, pays most of the expenses of the boy.

Among the ‘just enough’ are also skilled labourers, such as carpenters and bricklayers, and musicians. A number of Krajanese participate in the dry season in theatre groups (ludruk) and music (gamelan) performances all over the region. Some of these earn relatively large amounts of money from these activities.

The not enough (kurang)

Those who are considered ‘not enough’, do not have enough to make ends meet the whole year round, and have never been able to establish a stable income or trade. In normal periods, these families earn enough to make a living, but periodically, they face shortages for which they could not prepare themselves. In these situations, they have to borrow, sell things, or cut down on expenses. Remarkably, the not enough have, on average, somewhat larger
landholdings and cattle stocks than the enough, but these lands tend to be of lower quality. A relatively large number do not have land, but live from a good job or trade. Among the not enough are many villagers who work the land of large landowners for a share of the harvest, and who look after the cattle of others. Also, most of the wage-labourers can be found among the kurang and here also the people who migrate (merantau) for certain periods of the year can be found. Due to periodic shortages and migration, they cannot always meet the demands of the gift and labour exchange economies in the village, and this makes their networks smaller and more vulnerable. Therefore, they do their utmost to keep up exchanging gifts and perform the main selamatan.

The not enough (kurang) differ from the just enough (cucup) primarily in that they lack property and a stable income. The not enough have smaller networks and fewer relations that might offer labour opportunities, information, or assistance. Moreover, the not enough generally lack the skills to engage in the somewhat better paid types of work.

An example of a not enough family is the Hasans from Mengkuara. They live with their two children in a bamboo house with an earthen floor, close to the road to Pakem. In the house, a bamboo bed, some kitchen utensils, an old cupboard, a table and a few chairs, and a flashlight make up their belongings. On their tegal, they grow maize, which they mix with rice, and which provides them with food for about six months. After the maize crop, they borrow money from an uncle at 50% interest to grow tobacco. In good years, the tobacco brings in an equivalent of six months of rice, in bad years they are hardly able to repay the loans with interest. At the back of the house, a bull is share-raised for the same uncle.

Every morning and every afternoon, Pak Hasan goes out to cut fodder along roads and trails, on the land of his uncle, and along the river. In the dry season, he walks hours to the forest to collect fodder, or cuts edible leaves from neighbourhood trees. He also works in the fields of others, or in the fields of his uncle. Sometimes, his uncle gives him bamboo to plait and weave for sheets for walls (dinding) in order to make some money. On other days, he goes to his fields and tries to break up the rocks in his field to sell to road constructors or house builders.

His wife sometimes works on transplanting rice seedlings, weeding fields, or cutting tobacco. She also helps regularly in cooking and cleaning at the uncle’s house in return for some rice or maize, or a meal. Sometimes, she joins her husband in going to the forest to collect fodder or firewood. In slack periods they only eat two meals a day, and skip drinking coffee or tea, smoking, and chewing betel. Sometimes, they borrow money from neighbours, the shopkeeper, or ask for a cash advance on the bull, to enable purchases. On several occasions, they have pawned or sold gold to obtain cash. A couple of times, Hasan has followed bands of men from the neighbourhood in search of work, but he was never very successful. Once he was, and he returned with some money with which he bought a radio that he then had to sell a few months later for a much lower price.
The poor (miskin)

The poor, own hardly any land, cattle, and consumer goods. They have no regular cash incomes, and cannot make ends meet. Their houses look shabby, and if their children go to school they do not have a school uniform. They live below the generally acceptable standards of living. They have small networks and, at best, a small piece of land which does not bring them sufficient rice or maize to last even a few months. Moreover, they do not have a stable income, capital or cattle, and are not well enough connected to get access to the resources of others. Moreover, they lack the strength, the health, the skills, or the information to engage in stable labour relationships. And last, but not least, they are generally regarded as not creditworthy, and can only borrow very small amounts, or only with collateral.

Each year they experience some periods of food shortages in which they need to cut down on expenses and consume only two meals a day. They structurally lack funds for additional costs such as clothes, house repairs, and medical costs. They live below the village poverty line (below cukup), but are able to work, and in that way do gain some income from working other people’s lands. They work as wage labourers, becoming migrant workers or produce handicrafts at home. Sometimes, they perform a selamatan and try, at great pains, to stay a part of the ‘decent’ village families. However, they are never able to save or plan for these occasions in advance. Many of the poor turn to potential patrons, hoping that they will provide them with some work or support. An example in this category is the Satrawi family. They face regular shortages, have hardly any land left, and maintain social relationships with great difficulties. Regularly, there is no food or money in the house, and the children roam around the neighbourhood in hope of a free meal. Often, they end up in the kitchen of Bu Patik who offers them leftover meals and snacks.

The destitute (kasihan)

The ‘destitute’ are all those who permanently live far below the village poverty line. They include widows, the chronically ill, and the unemployed who are virtually without land, cattle, and caring relatives. The destitute have lost their pride and can no longer contribute gifts, assistance, or anything else to others. Within strict boundaries of decency, they need and ask for support or assistance on a regular basis. Old and disabled people without relatives; and handicapped people not able to work, walk, see, or having leprosy; are called pitiful, or needy (kasihan), and can expect little from social relationships in terms of access to resources. However, they are - due to their obvious vulnerability - entitled to some help and might receive some social assistance and privileges from the community. This help however remains somewhat limited and does not exceed an incidental free meal, exemption from village taxation, small sums of money or food donations, basic medical care and, sometimes, labour assistance in collecting firewood or repairing a house. In gen-
eral, this category of people cannot borrow any money at shops, from neighbours or friends, and live constantly at the absolute minimum level. An example is Bu Suripa discussed in the introduction to this thesis.

Sofar, in distinguishing these social classes, I have adopted an emic approach to wealth and poverty by making use of local concepts and classifications. Adopting such an approach has a number of implications. First of all it is idiosyncratic, and will not always coincide with (but in practice it does have) an ‘outsiders’ categorisation’. This wealth ranking is relative, locally-based, and therefore comparison with other regions or populations is difficult. Such classification runs the risk of being particularistic and highly context specific. It might produce an adequate case study, but it can make it rather difficult to communicate with other researchers, to related fields of study, and to social policy and development practitioners. On the other hand, such a relative approach has a number of advantages since it overcomes some of the difficulties inherent to some mainstream definitions of poverty, that are static and overlook the social embeddedness of poverty.

In the following sections, I try to overcome the limitations of using a relative approach by relating the local wealth-ranking scale of Krajan households with more quantifiable and material indicators of class such as property and ownership of land, cattle, and labour.

**Direct access to land and cattle**

*Sawah*

The ownership of land is highly valued in Krajan both for economic and cultural reasons. Land is the main source of income, and it determines the present as well as the future prosperity of the household. It is a source of collateral in times of need, and it provides the traditional basis of social status and prestige.

The differences and inequalities between rich and very poor are most striking if one looks at direct sawah ownership (see Table 4-2). While the rich

---


13 The definitions of ownership in the survey are: 1) tanah milik dan bisa pakai (land ownership where there are usufruct rights), and 2) tanah tidak milik, bisa pakai (ambil gadai, sewa, etc.) (land not owned, but with a usufruct right at the time of interview such as rented land, land under share tenancy, and land taken as pawn or collateral. Excluded is the arrangement of babunan (taking a 1/5 share of the harvest in return for labour), which in fact is not a share tenancy relationship, but a payment for labour by giving a fixed share of the harvest.

14 By direct sawah ownership I mean ownership rights (hak milik) and use rights (hak pakai) thus including land that is rented (very rare in Krajan) and land that is taken as pawn (which sometimes stretches over several decades). In the case of long term sharecropping (rare), I take the use right as the proportion (usually fifty-fifty) of the arrangement as both parties are entitled to use half of the returns of the land. See also discussions on the differences in ownership rights in Von Benda-Beckmann, Von Benda-Beckmann and Koning (2001).
have, on average, one hectare of sawah (while some own up to four or five hectares), the other social classes have much smaller plots: 1/5 or 1/6 hectares for the enough and just enough, and 1/10 to 1/40 for the poor and the destitute. Taken together, the rich households control more than half of all village sawah, and in most cases they have the better quality fields, which produce substantially higher yields than the small plots of poorer villagers. Of the destitute, two-thirds do not own any sawah at all, and often they do not even own their home lot.15

\[ \text{Social inequality} \]

Table 4-2: Ownership of sawah and tegal per social class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>Percentage of total households</th>
<th>Percentage of total sawah ownership (ha)</th>
<th>Average village sawah</th>
<th>Percentage of total tegal ownership (ha)</th>
<th>Average village tegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaya</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebih</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cukup</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurang</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miskin</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasihan</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rich own 53% of the total sawah.16 The poorest 32% of the population own only 4% of all sawah owned by Krajan villagers. 40% of the population of Krajan have no sawah at all, and half of these can be found in the lowest wealth category. Of the poor, 53% have no sawah at all. And of the category of the not enough, 37% have no sawah at all. In the category of just enough everyone has at least some sawah, while of the richest villagers interviewed, 11% do not own any sawah. This is because they no longer need it due to other sources of income. Fig. 4-2 illustrates this inequality of sawah ownership by wealth category.17

15 One should note that most Krajan widows are ranked in the lowest category. Some of these widows had once owned land but have given it already to their children.
16 This does include the ownership of sawah outside the village of Krajan (mostly in Ardisaeng and some in Andung and Tamankursi (rice fields close to the Dhuwang River)).
17 If quartiles are calculated, the richest 25% of the survey population owns 74% of all village sawah. The poorest 25%, virtually own no sawah (0.7%). Of the 25 poorest households, only two had a tiny piece of sawah.
Although inequality in sawah ownership in Krajan is high, such irrigated rice fields make up a tiny proportion (around 4%) of the village lands, and are not the only important resource for village households. Most of the arable land (over 75%) is tegal - generally valued at one-third of the price of sawah - and is suitable for maize, bananas, cassava, and tobacco. As most villagers mix rice with maize for their staple food, maize production on tegal is an important source of livelihood and food security. Moreover, in good years, tegal fields yield higher and better tobacco harvests than the sawah. However, generally, production on tegal is much lower.

There is a more-or-less similar unequal pattern of average tegal ownership as with the ownership of sawah (see Table 4-2): the rich own, on average, about 2.5 hectares and the lebih 1.4 hectares. They control about one-third and one-quarter of all village tegal respectively. Also here, the poorer section of the village population owns only small plots ranging from 1/3 to 1/10 of a hectare. If there are differences between sawah and tegal ownership, then it is that the lebih have a greater relative proportion of all the dry fields in the

---

18 Despite these inequalities in direct ownership of land it does not follow that the owners use all their land. Direct access to land differs slightly due to sharecropping and harvest-sharing arrangements. In Krajan, sharecropping is not very important. Less then 5% of all sawah in Krajan is sharecropped, and only 11% of all tegal in the survey was sharecropped in 1997 and 1998 for the production of the cash crop tobacco, and not for maize. These differences due to sharecropping are included in the calculations where one half is added to the property of the landowner and the other half to that of the sharecropper. Applied to tegal, with a sharecropping arrangement for one harvest of tobacco, I counted one quarter for the sharecropper and three quarters for the landowner.
village, and the kaya somewhat less. The lebih concentrate more on dry land agriculture because it is difficult to purchase sawah, and because they are more often engaged in tobacco production.

It is important to own and maintain access to land as land, besides being productive in itself, offers the opportunity to obtain cash quickly if it is needed. Land can be sold, but more often the land is pawned, or rented out to others, in return for cash or one or more cows or bulls, which are then sold. Villagers prefer to pawn (gadai) land and hand it over to others, rather than sell it, even if this means that the owners lose - at least temporarily - control over their plot. Land quality and soil fertility are also likely to degrade as a result of less care by the new user. In many cases in Krajan, families have not been able to regain their pawned lands. Most impoverished families face a severe downturn in income and production when they pawn their land making it even harder to regain it.

Traditionally, land is pawned in return for cattle. It can be pawned for one or more head of cattle which can then be sold to cover expenses. In Krajan, dozens of local terms exist that indicate different types of cattle according to the age and height of the animal. Nowadays, transfers are usually made in cash, although the pawn price is still set as the price of a cow or bull of a certain colour and age to safeguard against the risk of inflation; and, still, pawned land is often paid back in animals.

19 The enough (cukup) own only 9% of all village tegal. This can be explained by the fact that most higher educated, skilled labourers, small traders, and construction workers can be found in this category. These are less inclined to own tegal or sawah, as many in this category receive wages and can buy rice on a regular basis. These people are often more oriented towards the outside economy and less inclined to eat rice mixed with maize, less oriented towards investing money in land, but rather in houses, on motorbikes, and sometimes cattle.

20 There are many arrangements for pawning (gadaikan) land. The usual form is to borrow a cow (and sometimes sugar or gold) from someone. In return, that person gets the right to use the land as long as the loan is not repaid. The use right of the land can be seen as the interest on the borrowed good. The cow, or cows, will be sold to provide the needed cash. Cows of the same size and age have to be returned to get the land back. Usually, the mortgage price is significantly lower than the value of the land. Ratios of 1 : 5 to 1 : 7 or even 1 : 8 are common. These arrangements can last for many years. In the village of Krajan, some land has still not been returned after 40 years. Notwithstanding this disadvantageous deal for the owner of the land, villagers nearly always prefer this arrangement to selling the land which makes it nearly impossible to ever get it back. To gadai land is clearly very popular because of the cultural and emotional attachment to the land, and probably because in this way the chance to regain the land remains open. People take the risk that their land will not be cared for well. In upland areas as Krajan, soil fertility degrades easily, and temporary users are not likely to invest much in sustaining soil fertility. They apply less cow dung, fewer fallow periods, weed less carefully, do not fertilise as much, do not repair irrigation systems, ditches and terraces, and plant different crops which might risk the soil fertility such as cassava and tobacco.

21 One of the negative side effects of pawning is the likelihood of decreasing soil fertility. In general, the user of the pawned land will not be willing to invest much in the land as it can be taken back at any time. Sometimes the right of the owner to take a share of the harvest (babum) on his own land solves this problem. He will be willing to invest at least some energy in soil fertility by bringing in manure and in keeping the walls of the terraces in a good shape (important for erosion protection and keeping the field to its original size).
There is barely a free land market in Krajan. Villagers can only increase their acreage by taking in pawned land from families in urgent need of cash. In general, it is the rich who have cattle or ready cash available to exchange for land in pawn. However, middle class farmers - and sometimes the better-off lower classes - also take land (digadaikan) for one or two heads of cattle. As in other parts of Java, also in Krajan, there is a tendency towards a concentration of land in the hands of richer families.  

For a number of selected families, I tried to track down how they had obtained land back at least three generations, or even further if possible. Some of the current poor families had been prosperous in the past, although the majority had always been peasants. Among the most common reason why descendants of richer families have lost access to land is the inheritance system. In customary Madurese inheritance law, male and female siblings receive equal shares. Relatively large plots of land have thus been increasingly subdivided among children leading to smaller plots per household. This was especially the case one or two generations ago when the average number of children was much higher than today. Children with small pieces of land were more likely to run up debts, move away, or become marginalized which forced them to sell the land. In the reverse sense, only a few villagers - such as Pak Patik - were able to move from smallholder to prosperous landowner. Such families managed to save and invest in cattle and slowly build up a big herd, which then could be used to acquire pawned land or to buy land.

Not only large landowners are counted among the rich of Krajan.Traditionally, cows and bulls have been an important basis of wealth because they can be converted into other forms of capital, and because of their symbolic value. Nowadays, consumer goods such as motorbikes, cars, radios, television sets, and stone houses are competing with, and replacing, the symbolic functions of cows and especially bulls.

Cattle

As described in Chapter 2 owning cattle is an important source of income. First of all, a cow or bull contributes to the livelihood of its owner. However, often, it is not the owner who takes care of feeding and cutting grass, but

23 Most people were able to indicate who their buyut (grand-grandparents), where they had lived and which sawah they had owned.
24 In general, male and female children inherit shares of equal value, with the exception that sometimes girls receive a house to live in when married while boys receive land. The house should be equal in value as her siblings' land inheritance. If the family is rich, girls also receive a plot of land, or cattle.
25 I expect that, in the future, the land of these larger landowners will be parcelled out into tiny pieces less often, as nowadays, due to family planning programmes and changing values, families are much smaller than one or two generations ago. Especially the families of middle-large landowners are usually no larger than two children. This does, however, not mean that I do not expect the gap between landowners and the landless to increase.
someone else who, for this work, receives a share (usually half) of the proceeds. In the case of a cow, the tender will be given half of the cattle’s offspring (mengobu-arrangement), and in case of a bull, the tender receives half of the profit when the bull is sold (oanan-arrangement). In the past, oanan relationships were important for status and prestige. Owners of good bulls gave them to professional caretakers who trained and prepared the bulls for aduan sapi, the Madurese bullfight. Today, the two arenas for bullfights are closed for religious reasons and bullfights are forbidden. Prices of bulls have fallen relative to normal market prices where traders buy bulls to be butchered.

Share-raising arrangements for cattle are very firm, and in Krajan always on a fifty-fifty basis. Because of this, caretakers cannot easily be changed; and caretakers of cows can use the cows to plough or for carrying goods, and usually have a say in buying or selling the animal. In practice this means that the caretaker does indeed have around 50% of the control of the animal.

The importance of cattle becomes evident from the survey that showed that 81% of all villagers are involved in cattle-raising; either as owners, or as tenders. Only elderly widows and some of the destitute, as well as households from the ‘higher middle-class’, do not raise cattle for physical, organisational, or social reasons. Thus, nearly every Krajan villager who is willing and able either owns or cares for cattle, but in no sense do they all have a more or less equal share. As with land tenure, property rights over cattle are very unevenly distributed, as Table 4-3 shows. While the rich owned on average five cows or bulls, the rest no more than one or two. As in land tenure, the rich owned

---

26 Cattle in Krajan does not roam around and graze. It is kept in sheds and fed with grass and leaves cut along roads, rivers, terraces, and rice fields.

27 Hefner (1990:107) notes for this ‘halving’ system paron. “Under the terms of this contract, the animal tender gets to keep all the manure produced by the animal. At sale, the original purchase price for the animal is deducted from the sale price, and the remaining cash is then divided equally between the tender and owner.” In the context of upland commercial vegetable-farming in Tengger, he records a market for manure. In Krajan, I came across only one case of people selling manure; to one of the farmers experimenting with high yielding maize varieties.


29 Minus the initial value.

30 Control of cattle is calculated as actual control: the sum of the number of owned cattle, owned cattle but share-raised by others (0.5) and not owned, but share-raised for others (0.5). The number of controlled cattle indicates the number of cattle whose proceeds (profit, offspring, manure) are available to a household. The manure is used by the tender.

31 This is a high figure, but not unusual in upland farming systems in the Eastern Salient. Compare with Hefner (1990:106) who shows for the Tengger that in the midslope area two-thirds of the population own or share-raise cattle. One-third of the landless, and about 40% of the landless and small peasants, are tending cattle. According to Hefner, cattle raising is less profitable than the production of commercial vegetables. In Krajan, where these opportunities are scarce, cattle is one of the few cash generating activities.

32 12% of these 19% not caring for cattle are old widows who cannot for physical reasons, widows supported by children, and destitute villagers could not get access to a cow. The other 7% are mostly upper middle class villagers (cukup and lebih) with other, more profitable, work opportunities, or seasonal migrants making it impossible or not so necessary to care for cattle.
nearly half (42%) of all cattle, while the lebih and cukupan owned one-quarter, leaving the poorest classes (miskin and kasihan, 51% of the population) with 17% of the village livestock.

Considering only the actual ownership of cattle is misleading as figures will then be distorted by the fact that most richer villagers do not look after any cattle themselves, and no-one can tend more than two adult animals by himself. Poor relatives, neighbours or friends of cattle owners, look after the other animals, in return for half of the profit or offspring (oanan or mengobu), giving them thus significant control. If we include the cattle that are cared for by share tenants, the distribution is less skewed. Then it turns out that most households have at least some control over the proceeds of cattle if they want it. The three poorer classes - who amount to two-thirds of the population - on average control the proceeds of about 0.7 animals, amounting to nearly half of all cattle in Krajan. Presented in this way, the distribution of control over cattle turns out to be slightly more equal than for other resources.\(^3^3\)

\[\text{Table 4-3: Ownership and control of cattle per household}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of total households</th>
<th>Average number of owned cattle</th>
<th>Percentage of village controlled cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaya</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebih</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cukup</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurang</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miskin</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasihan</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, it should be noted that the ability to tend cattle relates to the ability to gain access to grass. Here I cannot elaborate at length on the specific difficulties in obtaining fodder in the dry season, especially for poor families, but in general grass can be cut along roads, trails, rivers, and in the forest. Nighttime thefts of grass do occur, and sometimes competition over grass is so fierce that fights occur. Those who own sawah or tegal often plant grass along the dykes and ditches of their fields, others are dependent on the goodwill of landowners. In many cases, tenders have some rights to the grass along the

\(^3^3\)If quartiles are calculated, the inequality is still striking. The upper 25% control 48% of all cattle proceeds, while the lower 25% controls only 10%. 139
ditches of the owner of the animal. Also taking harvest shares give rights to the grass along the edge of fields and the crop leftovers. In general, the less resources a household owns, the more difficult it is for them to obtain grass of good quality (except for those living near the forest).

Consequences of inequalities: food production, self-sufficiency, and access

What does this inequality in landownership mean for the food production of households? During the survey, I asked each head of the household - and often the wife - how many months the household would be able to eat from the production of their own, rented, and sharecropped fields during the agricultural year 1997 - 1998. The results in Table 4-4 show that differences in self-sufficiency between the social classes of villagers are less sharp than in land ownership.

Table 4-4: Number of months of self-sufficiency in food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Category</th>
<th>Number of Months Self-Sufficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaya</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebih</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cukup</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karang</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miskin</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasihan</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important factor hidden here is that richer families do not mix much maize with their white rice, and so finish stocks more quickly, while poorer families generally mix in more maize with their rice to reduce costs and prolong stocks. Additionally, feeding agricultural labourers puts a strain on the food stocks of especially large landowners. Poorer villagers, especially those in the 'cukup and miskin' categories work regularly as wage labourers in the fields of others, and save their own food stocks by eating frequently at other peoples houses, while they rarely employ and feed labourers themselves.34

34 The picture is also slightly distorted because respondents sometimes did not differentiate between yields from their own fields and from shares received by labouring in the fields of others (babun). Another issue is that the classes described are not tenure classes, but social classes and that lebih and kaya also include rich people who are not dependent on farming, such as traders, returned migrants, and teachers.
Of all the households, 18% are self-sufficient in rice and maize, while 82% have to buy, for at least a few months a year, rice or maize elsewhere. The poor and destitute are worst-off as their own supplies last for no more than 1-3 months - a supply which hardly stems from their own land (of which they have virtually none) but from participating in harvests or gleaning the leftovers after harvest, from roots and tubers which they collect on wastelands, and from food given to them by children or neighbours.

Some concluding remarks on ownership

The data from Krajan show that ownership rights are vary unevenly distributed, with the richest class owning about one half of the village’s main resources: rice fields, dry fields, and cattle; while the poor own only tiny plots at best. To some degree, share-tenancy on village land, and share-raising of the village cattle, provides the poorer classes with at least some access to resources. Sharing arrangements thus mitigate somewhat local inequalities, but the overall picture of a small number of households in firm control of the village economy remains. The poorer households - who together make up two thirds of the village - have to rely on other sources of income to survive. An obvious source for the propertyless is income earned from working for other people. The next section will discuss forms of indirect access to assets.

Indirect access to land and cattle: labour relationships

Harvest shares (babunan)

Some households earn incomes from a variety of sources, other are dependent on only a few crops or sources of income for their livelihood. Essentially, for those poor who are healthy and able-bodied, the main resource they have is selling their own labour. By working they secure income, and they also maintain their social networks which are, as I will explain, crucial for their survival in the village. Access to employment, however, is not easy and can never be taken for granted. People try hard to obtain work, and they do this in many different ways.

---

35 In this section the focus is on the ownership of resources, but there is a difference between property rights over resources, and rights of access to resources. People who are not the owners of land can sometimes have usufructuary rights over a piece of land, or be entitled to a part of a special crop. Among others, Von Benda-Beckmann problematised the concept of property in rural societies and drew attention to the usually existing pluralism of property rights Von Meijl and Von Benda-Beckmann (1999), Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (1999).

36 Work and labour are not synonyms. Labour refers to the process of working while work is the whole set of physical and mental human activities that either directly or indirectly produces benefits. In this definition, I include housework, trade, and every income generating activity, either in cash or in kind, as work.
Although the land and cattle are very unequally distributed in the village this does not mean that the landless and small farmers completely lack access to land. Villagers with little or no land can get access to a part of the harvest by sharecropping or taking harvest shares. Sharecropping (paron) of sawah in Krajan seldomly occurs, and sometimes tegal is sharecropped in case of tobacco cultivation. Only about five Krajan villagers give their sawah out in sharecropping. Some 75% of the poor families in Krajan are involved in babun, a system of payment in kind through harvest-shares of friends, neighbours, patrons, and relatives. There are basically two types, babun and beton. In babun arrangements, people receive a one-fifth share (maize or rice) in return for their labour; and this arrangement lasts in principle for one cropping season. Beton arrangements are long, often life-long, arrangements with the same conditions of payment in kind. Both arrangements, babun and beton, are only used with food crop cultivation. In the rest of the thesis I will use the word babun for both arrangements.

Babun is most often used for maize. The old maize varieties are planted on less fertile soils, and in some hamlets this maize is planted using the babun system where the workers get a share of one fifth of the harvest. In other more remote hamlets such as Pakualas and Dluwang, maize is planted by making use of exchange labour arrangements (giliran). According to landless villagers, in these hamlets, there is a better cohesion and harmony between the people. Landowners in the babun hamlets, on the contrary, said that labourers were not willing to work in giliran in return for a dinner alone. I found that the babun hamlets are older, and land ownership is much more concentrated in the hands of a few families. Clearly, there is not much basis for exchange, as most villagers have little or no land meaning that taking part in rotating labour arrangements would be very disadvantageous. Landlords have had to search for other ways to mobilise labour, and the non-cash babun relationships are very beneficial as the work is of higher quality than wage labourers or in the case of exchange labour.

Usually, a babun contract is taken up by teams of two to four men depending on the size of the land. A team has a foreman, or is coordinated directly by the landowner. The workers need to provide one or more cows and a plough, for ploughing, levelling, and muddling of the field. The work includes cleaning and preparing the fields, planting, weeding, and harvesting. Men generally carry out most of this work. Women cannot take on babun, but

---

37 Babun (beton in case of long-lasting arrangements) is a Madurese term for wages in kind (in rice or maize) as a 1:5 share of the crop in return for labour. In the case of old rice varieties and maize, the workers chose one bundle out of every five. Compare with the Javanese word bawon, which means literally: “1) a share of the rice harvest received for one’s services during the harvesting [...] 2) a certain size bundle of newly harvested rice plants” Horne (1974). It is the best part, or the biggest bundle. Babunan should not be confused with the Javanese bawon, the latter of which is generally referred to as a harvesting arrangement. Babunan is comparable with the Javanese kedakan arrangement Van der Kolff (1937), Wiradi (1984) but differs because the share in Krajan is always fixed (1:5). Babunan applies to old and modern rice varieties in the same ratio (and also often to maize).
wives of babun workers can take part in certain tasks such as weeding, cleaning and harvesting. In return for doing all this work, the teams receive one-fifth of the harvest, free meals, and the right to collect cattle fodder from the edges of the field and from the leftovers of the crop. The landowner meets for all costs related to inputs.

The babun share of one-fifth has to be divided among the workers. Sometimes, the owner of the land is included if he has worked alongside the labourers. In the case of larger landowners, this is seen as greedy and indecent, as it means a lower share for the workers. Among smaller farmers who invite babun workers onto their fields, and who also take babun on the fields of others, this is generally accepted. In addition to the harvest share; two meals, coffee and cigarettes are provided during workdays.

As sharecropping through babun contracts is common practice on the fields of the large landowners, these contracts imply some kind of redistribution - albeit that, in the end, the landowner benefits most as this payment-in-kind covers all his labour expenses. Given the fact that the richer classes (kaya and lebih) together own 66% of all sawah and 60% of all tegal, and that the standard workers-share is 20%, this implies that poorer villagers, through their babun work, acquire access to 13% of the sawah harvests, and 12% of the tegal harvest - insofar as food crops are concerned (tobacco is not cultivated in babun contracts).

In some hamlets (Wringinkurung and Dluwang) betonan arrangements apply for nearly all lands, while in others babun accounts for half of the arrangements; and so, in those hamlets, workers can be replaced every season. Betonan tenants cannot be replaced so easily, even when they become less productive when they are ill or old. Betonan are always obliged to work when called upon, and have more responsibilities to the landowner than babun workers. Conversely, they have more rights and security, and can only be replaced when a field passes to another owner in the case of selling or mortgaging the land. There have only been a few cases where a landowner has tried to replace betonan tenants. One concerned Patik. He initially succeeded, but became the subject of open protest and gossip (the most powerful weapon of the rural poor in enforcing their rights), lost face and prestige, and eventually accepted the worker back.

As keeping cattle and food crop production are closely related in Krajan, gaining access to fields by taking on babun also means access to fodder. Babun workers also need to have cows at their disposal to plough the fields. On some rare occasions, people can get a babun contract without having a cow; when the worker is young, recently married, or when a cow is still in training, or when one's cow has recently died. While, in the case of betonan, the worker has to turn up when summoned, in the case of babunan, workdays can be negotiated. If one of the workers is not able to come, he can send someone -

*Except for costs on meals (one or two per working day), coffee (one glass), and something to smoke (tobacco or one or two kretek cigarettes).
usually a child or relative - to replace him. If he does not, he will lose his right
to a share of the harvest, or his share will be reduced.

Many villagers favour being paid in babun over receiving a day’s wage (deret). In opting for babun, however, some risks are involved. If harvests are bad, there is no profit to be brought home and the days worked are wasted. A daily wage offers direct and fixed returns on work, whereas returns on babun labour only come three or four months later when the crop is harvested. However, the average returns from babun are significantly higher than those from wage labour. On average, in 1998-1999, babun workers earned an equivalent in rice of Rp 8,500 for a day’s work compared with the usual daily wage of Rp 6,500.39 Before the start of the 1998 crisis, when rice prices were lower, the differences were less significant. Further, it is not only the cash value that counts, villagers prefer wages in kind over those in cash because they can store the rice and maize and thus secure sufficient food for the coming months. ‘Money cannot be saved’40, villagers often commented: they will spend it too soon and too easily, and cash savings can dwindle in a period of rapid inflation as in 1998.

Villagers opting for wages in kind often explain their choice by saying that harvests are quite stable in Krajan, so they know beforehand how much rice or maize they will receive and that thus their food supply is secured. They also say that they like to get several babun/beton contracts because this enables them to spread risks over several fields (different locations and altitudes) or over several rice varieties and over several bosses. However, the unstated main reason is that often wage labour jobs are very difficult to get.

In 1998, when many harvests failed because of diseases and irregular rains, and because the owners spent less on fertilisers and pesticides as prices had gone up sharply, many villagers even more strongly preferred babun. They said that the crisis and the rapid inflation had decreased the value of money and that it, therefore, was better to take up babun as that was a way of saving ‘in others’ (i.e. social relationships). In fact, they were building up social capital, and labour arrangements such as babun are a crucial investment for creating and maintaining solid ties between workers and landowners.

Babun arrangements contribute an important element to the food security of poorer Krajan households because they contain a firm right to a fixed share of the harvest. Some small farmers spread risks by sharing their own land through babun while, at the same time, taking up babun in the fields of others. To an outsider’s it might have seemed more profitable to work their

---

39 For one day of work, on average, babun labourers brought home around 3 kilos of husked rice.
At current prices (July 1999) that meant an income of around Rp 8,500 a day, while a day’s wage
was only Rp 5,000 - Rp 7,000 (July 1999) depending on the employer, hamlet and the kind of
work. Compared with the pre-crisis situation, differences are higher because rice prices rocketed
and wages had not increased sufficiently. In 1999, it was likely, that wages would rise significant-
ly as the wage - rice price ratio was generally used as an argument by labourers to demand high-
er payment.

40 “Karena uang tidak bisa disimpan.”
own land alone, so minimise labour costs and reap all the harvest. However, people consider working together on land in small groups to be more efficient, and to spread risks as it provides access to other plots of a different quality than their own. Moreover, it offers access to knowledge and information, and helps to finish the work more quickly. Again, the main reason is that it extends social networks and thus the chances of getting help when it is needed.

Not everybody can get a babun contract as one needs to have a good relationship with the owner. If one gets babun then social relationships with the employer can become stronger over time and the employer can be come a kind of friend. Satrawi described this dual advantage of babun by using a well-known Madurese saying: “A friend can become a relative, while a relative can turn into an enemy.” 41 By working one makes friends, and therefore labour contracts with large farmers are highly desirable. For him, this is the major reason that he prefers good relationships with many people and wages in kind, over a wage.

Betonan, and to a lesser extent babun contracts are often a part of patron-client bonds.42 Betonan workers are supposed to do other jobs for the landowners, and also their wives and children might help around the house or in the kitchen of the landowner, and help at the preparations for a selamatan. Patron-client relationships offer many benefits in getting and guaranteeing access to resources. As Hefner described for the Tengger mountain area: “Many poor villagers seem to prefer the loss of personal freedom above the insecure way of living of those who have no access to this kind of tied-land-labour relations” (Hefner, 1990: 80). It is not just a ‘fear of freedom’, but mainly because patronage relationships and friendship are the most obvious ways to gain access to land, cattle or work, and to be eligible for help in times of need: in short, to survive in Krajan.

Land owners consider babun contracts differently. They often comment that cash is usually hard to get, and therefore that paying cash wages on a daily basis is relatively expensive. It is, however, not only money that makes them prefer babunan and betonan, but also the quality of the work. Pak Patik commented for instance: “I don’t want wage labourers on my family land. They don’t understand the soil and their work is kasar (rough). You can see it for instance in the work of Pak Ervan. He is rough when hoeing maize, and many stalks are cut or bruised. He does not care about the harvest.” Generally, wage labourers are not concerned with the quality of the work, as they want to get a maximum wage and finish quickly. Unlike babunan, they do not directly benefit from assuring good and sustainable harvests. Another reason for landlords to prefer babun and beton-arrangements is that these secure the supply

---

41 Madurese saying: “Kancah bisa detdih taretan, taretan bisa detdih mosoh”, (teman bisa jadi saudara, saudara bisa jadi lawan).
42 These clientele relationships are not as strong as, for instance, in the Philippines where landlords own much larger plots, but definitely bear the general characteristics of clientele serving landlords with unpaid labour, political assistance, and other minor services. See Nootboom (1999a) for a detailed description of such a patron-client relationship in Krajan.
of labour in peak periods: such as when they urgently need to have a crop planted before it is too late. After the first rains, all farmers want to sow maize at the same time. Beton workers, who are obliged to come when called, are a perfect means to mobilise labour in peak times when all farmers compete for hands to help out.

**Heterogeneity in arrangements and regions**

Payments in kind, like harvest shares, meals, drinks, and cigarettes have been common all over Java, but locally there can be differences in the way these payments are made. In Krajan and surroundings, the one-fifth harvest share for babun is fixed, and according to villagers it has always been so. For new varieties of maize introduced in 1998 however (which are regarded as a cash crop, rather than a subsistence crop), a share of one-sixth or even one-seventh was sometimes used because landowners say that their expenses have gone up, and that harvests are bigger anyway so that, in the end, the workers will still receive the same amount of rice or maize.\(^{43}\) Though common across East Java, babunan contracts come in several shapes and there are minor variations between villages and hamlets, and also between crops. Apparently, babun is interpreted, negotiated, modified, and adapted according to local circumstances and conditions.

In most hamlets of Krajan (Krajan proper, Wringinkurung, Sayuran, and Mengkuara), babun is not only used with rice, but also with maize. In two other hamlets (Pakualas and Dluwang), maize is only produced using family labour, or by mutual labour arrangements. In one hamlet (Pakuarah), households till their own land, and pay wages for any additional tasks which cannot be done by the household itself. In Mengkuara a mix between babun and cash wages exists. These differences are all between hamlets within one village.\(^{44}\)

The hamlets of Dluwang and Pakualas are the most remote, and for long the most isolated and, probably, the most closed communities. They belong to the most recently settled parts of Krajan as the fields were cleared only one or two generations ago. The two hamlets are therefore relatively homogeneous - also from a religious perspective since most inhabitants belong to the same orthodox group belonging to one kiai represented by organisations such as NU (Nahdatul Ulama) and PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa).\(^{45}\) Land is relatively fertile and abundant, and people use few chemical inputs as cash is

---

\(^{43}\) The babunan arrangement is found across the whole district of Pakem, Wringin, and Besuki, and probably in the whole of Madurese East Java. In Javanese Java the very similar arrangement of kedokan is generally found Van der Kolff (1937), White and Wiradi (1989).

\(^{44}\) In Pakualas, and the neighbouring village of Andungsari, where rice fields are far from homes, the second meal is not eaten in the house of the landowner but taken home. In Mengkuara and Pakuarah, only one meal is provided.

\(^{45}\) In these hamlets, over 90% voted PKB during the last elections. In Krajan proper, Mengkuara, Sayuran, Wringinkurung, and Morsungai, the majority voted PDI-P.
scarce in these two hamlets. However, given its remote location, labour is also
relatively scarce as not many workers from elsewhere go to these hamlets to
look for work. Mutual labour arrangements are therefore more important
here than in the other hamlets.

In Krajan proper and Wringinkurung (including Morsungai), land is less
equally distributed than in the younger hamlets of Dluwang and Pakulas.
There are more landless people in this area than in those two most remote
hamlets. Consequently, many families need to take on babun in the fields of
others to gain access to food crops. For a long time, in this area, rich families
have maintained ties of patronage with poorer families. Since independence,
most of the village heads of Krajan originate from this area (except for the
Haji Feisal family who originates from Mengkuara). Also the most influential
religious leader and the biggest tobacco traders of today can be found here.
Since 1994, the former dirt road has been asphalted till Wringinkurung
enabling pickups and small trucks to enter.

The lowest zone of Krajan contains the hamlets of Lojajar, Mengkuara, and
Pakuarah. This area has had easier access to the outside world for much
longer, has been more commercialised, but rainfall is lower and the soils are
poorer. The majority of the land is in the hands of one family of religious
leaders, who also control the scarce water sources irrigating their scattered
plots of sawah. For the production of paddy, maize, and tobacco, they gener­
ally pay cash wages. In this area mutual labour arrangements are less frequent
and cash incomes are much more important than in the hamlets higher up
the mountain. Harvests are rarely shared.46

Harvest arrangements vary depending on crop, place, type of community,
culture, and ways ownership. In the higher areas of Krajan, often old, long­
stalk, varieties are grown for several reasons.47 These varieties necessitate the
time-consuming method of ani ani (ear by ear) harvesting. Due to this
increased workload, the harvesters receive an extra bundle of rice (1.5 - 2.5 kg.)
on top of their babun-share. Usually, the harvesters who have the right to har­
vest are the same as those who planted.48 Shares also vary accordingly to social

differences exist. Most cash-rich families in the higher hamlets only offer
one meal but add money to replace the second or offer tobacco and rolling paper instead of the
more expensive kretek cigarettes. Poorer families often replace coffee by tea, and mix maize with
the presented rice, or add some boiled cassava.

47 These reasons include climatic ones (the sawah are too high and cold for IR varieties), old
upland and sometimes Balinese varieties perform better on these altitudes (above 900 metres)
and give more stable and predictable harvests. Further, they are not so dependent on fertiliser,
have a much better taste, are needed for religious ceremonies and add to the status of the
landowner as these varieties are higher valued. Another reason for the continuing growth of these
old varieties is that above 1,000 metres, farmers have always been free to plant these varieties
whereas, during the Green Revolution, in lowland Java farmers were often forced to use new
improved varieties.

48 Leunissen (1987: 202) mentions for this arrangement the Madurese word cepancean (pancer)
which means taking or receiving an advance. In Krajan, this word was used for taking cash
advances only (like in the case of basket).
closeness: it is often only the wives or female relatives of babun-takers who are accepted as harvesters. Free access as described for instance by Geertz (1963) and others\textsuperscript{49} for lowland Java before the Green Revolution, where villagers could harvest without personal invitation, has never occurred in Krajan. Invitations depend on the labour arrangements and the preference of the farming family; if they want to tie certain labourers to them, they will only invite these labourers.\textsuperscript{50} Free access to harvests applies only to ‘new’ IR varieties of rice that can be cut with the arit, the Madurese sickle, and threshed in the field. The harvesters help in cutting and threshing and get a share of the straw for cow fodder. Sometimes these uninvited harvesters receive some food, or something to smoke. In the dry season, when fodder is scarce, these harvests are overwhelmed with such people trying to get a bundle of straw. Babun workers, also in need of animal fodder often try to keep the day and time of harvest secret, or start harvesting in the middle of the night or very early morning to be ready before dawn and be able to take all straw home.

Share tenancy (paronan)

Besides the common babun contracts, sharecropping (paronan\textsuperscript{51}) represents another opportunity to gain access to land for landless labourers and small farmers. Land can be tilled on a fifty/fifty, or on a one-third/two-thirds basis, depending on the conditions of sharing inputs and the crop. With food crops, paronan is far less common than babun. In general, land is made available for sharecropping only if the owners for various reasons are unable or unwilling to till and manage their land themselves. Compared to lowland Java, where there is a high incidence of sharecropping in rice cultivation, sharecropping of food crops in Krajan is relatively rare.\textsuperscript{52} In Krajan, only a few large landowners and migrants, who have no time, expertise, or interest to be bothered with agriculture, use sharecropping for food crops. They include Bagenda the village head, his mother, the village secretary, a Haji widow, and a schoolteacher.

\textsuperscript{50} As noted previously, the Madurese word babun might seem similar to the Javanese word bawon, but the arrangements are different. Bawon refers to the open harvest of old, long grain, varieties of rice which have to be harvested by the labour intensive ani ani method. Babun refers to a share of 1/5 of the harvest plus meals in return for all the work involved. It can be applied to the harvesting of rice and maize. It can probably best be compared with the Javanese babon, which refers to the choice of the biggest bundle after the harvest. Hüsken (1988). It is a kind of a mix of the Javanese sambatan (mutual help) and pakehan (bawon share of harvest in return for planting and harvesting) (Van der Kolff 1937\textsuperscript{2}) or pance, Leunissen 1982. According to Van der Kolff (1937:15), these forms developed into kedokan under increasing population pressure. In the original form, workers received larger shares and had to do less work. Van der Kolff notes shares of one-quarter of the harvest, without soil preparation before planting, in 1936. Due to population pressure, shares have decreased. In Krajan I did not find any indication of such an erosion of shares although population pressure increased substantially in the first half of the 20th century.

\textsuperscript{51} Paro is similar to the Javanese maro, which means half. In Madurese: ngala paro
If a contract is long lasting, sharecroppers have basically the same rights as bet-onan. Working as a sharecropper has advantages over taking babun, as returns per workday are much higher, and workers can work more independently from the landowner. Sharecroppers are villagers with a good and trustworthy reputation who maintain good relationships with the landowner. The few villagers, who manage their sawah through paron, often prefer to use distant kin and impoverished relatives to cultivate their land. In the case of the village head, his sister, and the village secretary, sharecropping contracts are given to nephews and their most loyal supporters.53

Unlike in rice cultivation, in tobacco farming tegal is share cropped, albeit on a seasonal basis only. In 1998, 11% of all the households engaged in tobacco farming shared their crop. Sharing contracts for tobacco last one growing season and, generally, costs of land and inputs are shared. Usually, villagers who lack expertise, investments, inputs, or labour give out land to a sharecropper. Whereas sawah is provided for sharecropping mainly by the richest people, it is the middle level farmers who have their tobacco sharecropped by others. This means that tobacco sharecroppers, generally the ‘just enough’ (cukup) and ‘not enough’ (kurang) villagers, through sharecropping, gain access to 11% of all tobacco harvests. The poorest (miskin and kasihan), however, are excluded from these arrangements, as they cannot share the costly inputs and are reluctant or unable to take on the huge risks of tobacco farming. The richer villagers who have enough land, cash or credit facilities to grow tobacco themselves, prefer to manage their own crop and reap all the profit.

**Rotating and reciprocal labour arrangements**

Throughout the literature on Java, one finds different forms of rotating and mutual labour arrangements for assistance and support. Most of them are neighbourhood-based and used in the event of building a house, incidental agricultural work such as harvesting, preparing for weddings, and logging for a new house. They go under different names such as gotong royong (Bowen, 1986; Koentjaraningrat, 1967), sambatan (Jay, 1969; Koentjaraningrat, 1967; Van der Kolff, 1937), at Tengger rewang and gentenang (Hefner, 1990). In some areas of Java, these types of arrangements are used for a number of activities, in others they apply to only one type of work depending on specific circumstances.

In Krajan, there are three such types of mutual labour arrangements: giliran, keajegan, and tolong menolong. Giliran is a rotating labour arrangement based on balanced reciprocity where groups of farmers, in turn, work one another’s land. One day on one plot, the next day on someone else’s. Keajegan is an arrangement in which neighbours can be asked ‘to come along to help out’.54 And tolong menolong refers to all forms of generalised reciprocal help.

---

53 The families of the village head and village officials offer nearly two third of all rice sharecropping contracts in Krajan.

54 These terms come closest to terms as sambatan (Koentjaraningrat (1967)) and rewang (Hefner (1990)).
Tasks which can be achieved in Krajan through *keajegan* include the hulling of maize grains, planting tobacco, cutting trees for firewood, preparing, drying and cutting tobacco, housework in emergencies, and assistance during parties. *Keajegan* is not used in the context of helping with work on funerals, weddings, or *selamatan*. Originally *keajegan* referred to ‘helping each other out with work’ but nowadays it is often misused and simply degraded to corvée labour. *Keajegan* is very important during the tobacco planting season. Tobacco is often planted in the very late afternoon to protect the seedlings from too much sun. Neighbours are called for help because the planting has to be done very quickly. Another example is the collective repair of rice fields destroyed by landslides or flooded rivers. In these cases, friends and neighbours can be asked for help to clear and repair the fields. *Keajegan* is not strictly reciprocal in nature. Arrangements of generalised reciprocity such as *tolong menolong* for house building, replacement, and repair, are not referred to as *keajegan*. The organiser will provide meals at *giliran*, *keajegan*, and house building (*tolong menolong*). Meals are better at *giliran* and *gotongroyong* activities since at *keajegan* the focus is more on helping out, giving assistance to a needy family, making it less important to receive a good meal.

*Giliran* reflects workgroups working in turn on one another’s land based on balanced reciprocity principles. In Dluwang and Pakualas, this arrangement is widely used for preparing the soil, planting, and the harvesting of maize and tobacco, transporting fertiliser or water, etc. In Wringinkurung and central Krajan, it is mainly used during the preparation of tobacco fields. In the lower part of Krajan, it is only used in the case of an emergency, or the illness of someone who is not able to work his fields but needs the crop.

In both *giliran* and *keajegan* arrangements, the rich gain more benefits than the poor. The exchange is unequal in work load and large landowners benefit disproportionally from this arrangement because they invite many people whose help is never returned in full, and if they do return the work, it is relatively easy since work in the small fields of poor landowners is more quickly finished than on their own large plots. However, if more days are needed to finish all the work, they have to hire labour to finish the job or use another *giliran* group. To compensate for the inequality, the large landowners are supposed to provide better meals. Even though the balance is not in their favour, most small farmers in a neighbourhood want to be part of such a workgroup. Not being part means being excluded from collective activities, potential assistance in the future, and minor help or services provided by a larger landlord.

In the case of *keajegan*, influential and important villagers can get many more helpers than poor ones. In most patron-client relationships the unpaid labour service of clients is called *keajegan* by the patron and cannot easily be refused by clients who call it help (*bantuan*).

---

55 This word can be spelled in different ways and is related to the Malay/Indonesia word *ajak* (*ajakan*), which means to ask, or to invite or motivate someone to join in or to come along. Leunissen (1982: 203) calls it *jhak-ngajak*, which refers to the same root *ajak*. *adjuq*, Kiliaan (1904).
Once, gotong royong was a common mutual help arrangement (in Krajan called tolong menolong), but later it was degraded by New Order government interference which declared gotong royong as one of the main virtues of village life. In practice, it turned out to be a government move to extract unpaid labour from the villagers (Bowen, 1986). For governmental gotong royong villagers are called to work on maintenance and the improvement of public works one day a week (in some hamlets one day a month). In Krajan, most energy has been put into road and footpath improvement and maintenance. Although every family has to supply one person for such work, I never witnessed any of the richer adults taking part. They just send a pack of cigarettes, or a young son as compensation. Poorer villagers were afraid not to participate in these activities because they feared losing face, village esteem, and the favours of the village head and village officials.

Indirect access to cattle

In securing a livelihood, cattle have similar functions as land, but the ownership of cattle is more widespread than that of land. To many of the poor, share raising cattle is productive, secure, and attributes status. Although the actual ownership of cattle is nearly as unequal as land, the two arrangements for share-raising (mengobu and oanan) are widespread and offer many poor villagers access to some relatively stable income. In the mengobu arrangement, the caretaker has total control and responsibility for a cow. It can be used for ploughing and preparing rice fields. These share-raisers are thus able to engage in babun contracts and gain access to land as well as a chance to save (in cattle) or build up property. Many villagers have an ideal of owning their own cow, but few are able to build up a stock of cattle. For the destitute, this is even more problematic. Any calves that they receive as payment, often have to be sold soon after they are born to repay debts or cover household needs. Sometimes they sell their calves before they are born at a much lower price. Over the last fifteen years only about two dozen Krajan families have managed to rise from partakers in mengobu to independent cattle owners.

Oanan is a similar arrangement for sharing the profit of cattle between owner and caretaker. Oanan applies to bulls and the cash profit on sales is

---

56 Leunissen (1982: 152/204) mentions the Madurese word ngobu for an arrangement where seed (i.e. peanut or soybeans) is borrowed under the condition that half of the produce will be returned to the owner of the seed. I did not come across such an arrangement in Krajan for seeds, only for cattle and for chicken (the caretaker takes half of the of spring). Koning describes the cattle sharing arrangement in her paper on Central Java and mentions gaduh. “For goats and cows the gaduh system (taking care of the animals owned by someone else) is practiced. In case a goat has two young, one of the young is for the caretaker who can chose which animal he wants. Usually the male animals are preferred as they grow faster and have a higher value. For cows a similar system is used but with more strict rules as the price of cows is much higher” Von Benda-Beckmann, Von Benda-Beckmann, and Koning (2001).

57 Oanan at Leunissen (1982: 154) referring to cattle without specifying for bulls or cows. In the case of cows, he uses the broad term ghiliran, which simply means 'turns taking' and which does not specifically refer to the arrangement of sharing offspring.
equally shared. If villagers need money, they can ask the owner to sell the bull they are taking caring of and split the profit, but the owner can refuse to sell. Sometimes, they can ask for cash advances on the expected profit. In this way, the oanan arrangement functions as a credit mechanism to secure income and enhance food security.

Mengobu and oanan arrangements are some of the most important sources of income for the poor, and are often part of patron-client bonds. Those who care for the cattle of a patron, usually also work on the land of their patrons, and help in domestic work, in return for which they are entitled to cash advances in times of need. While sharing arrangements over cows and bulls are crucial for the income of poor villagers, for nearly all households in Krajan cattle serve as a saving mechanism. Most middleclass farmers have managed to own one or two cows which they can sell to buy rice and maize in the dry season, or at the beginning of the rainy season while awaiting the new harvest. If enough money is left over, they buy a calf or heifer - either directly or as soon as the rains start - when plenty of fodder is again available. Also for the well-to-do villagers, cattle are important. It is a reliable savings investment which they easily convert into money, for weddings of children, to buy land, for house improvements, or to buy a motorcycle.

In the tobacco season, some villagers sell cattle to finance the leasing of land and the purchase of inputs, and then buy new cattle after the harvest. Others sell their cattle to finance their money-lending business through which they can make higher profits (as interest of 50% over six months is not unusual). Richer villagers do not sell cattle just before the planting starts as prices are then very low; they rather tend to buy them at this point.

A more complicated arrangement involving cattle, is giving a cow or bull to people in need of credit. Locally this practice is called ‘borrowing cattle’ (pinjam sapi). If someone wants to start planting tobacco, but has not enough money to pay for the inputs, he can go to a relative or acquaintance and ask to borrow an animal. Owner and borrower agree on a price - which is above the current market value - but no money changes hands. The borrower then sells the animal at the market, and uses the proceeds to finance his tobacco crop. After the harvest, he returns a similar animal, or pays the owner the agreed price. To engage in such a transaction, the owner and the borrower need to have a close relationship, as the trust and reliability of the two parties is crucial. This is particularly popular among strict Muslims as this type of transaction is a way to borrow money without paying interest.

The credit function of cattle is, therefore, an important one: when one is in sudden need of money (in case of hospitalisation or a funeral), there is no faster way to raise cash than by selling cattle. This accounts for the lively

58 For those with little or no land, it is difficult to find fodder in the dry season. Grass at public places is a highly contested resource in the dry season. Regularly, villagers stay up all night to protect their grass.
nature of the local cattle trade: more than half of the total stock of cows and bulls changes hands every year. Cattle ownership, or share-raising contracts, thus in a way serve the function of a local bank where people can put their savings and then withdraw them when in need.\(^59\)

This indicates that those without access to cattle can face serious difficulties when they need money. This applies in the first place to widows, the elderly, and the sick who cannot collect fodder, and thus are unable to get a shareholding contract. It also holds for the destitute (\textit{kasihan}) of Krajan of whom 36\% do not own or share-raise cattle.\(^60\)

\textbf{Property, power, and prestige}

Social inequality in Krajan involves more than unequal access to resources alone, it has an inherent power dimension. The wealth ranking system itself already reveals some of the existing power differences in the village. In economic and political matters, the relationship between rich and poor, influential and marginal people, has long been marked by tension. Poorer villagers have asked, over the years, sometimes loud, sometimes mute, for support and redistribution of the resources of their fellow villagers. Moreover, the poor are part of the system of power differences themselves. The labourers and share raisers of cattle for a large part contributed to the riches of the village elite and at the same time, they might form a treat for these rich. By calling themselves poor or marginal, the poor accept at least some of the authority that makes wealth and poverty a proper, even foundational, frame of reference in the local society. According Van der Ploeg (1999: 453): “Power is a relational concept. It is constituted where different projects in society are combined, and in such way, that they mutually enforce each other. There will also be situations where there is powerlessness, mutual exclusive projects. No connections are being made. The needed cohesion, without which a society cannot function for long, is lacking [my translation].” Power is not first of all an individual quality, or the ability to carry out your own will in the pursuit of goals of action, regardless of resistance, but often also part of a structure of domination. In Krajan, both the active, conscious, and intentional exercise of power, and the structural, hidden understandings embedded into society and polity, play a role (Antlöv & Cederoth, 1994; Murray-Li, 1999: 10).

In terms of access to resources, I understand the exercise and consequence of power as the capability to get a larger share of land, cattle, and money than the average villagers. This can be both intentionally, by using and enforcing a privileged position, and unconsciously as a consequence of structures of authority and domination such as local and cultural forms of hierarchy - as for instance reflected in patron client relationships, village leadership, and

\(^59\) The Latin word for money, \textit{pecunia}, is derived from \textit{pecus}, which means cattle or livestock.

\(^60\) Of the \textit{kasihan} of Krajan, 36\% (including widows) do not own any cattle, so 64\% of them do have or share-raise cattle and in that way have access to some income and stability. Of the \textit{miskin}, 21\% do not own any cattle, while all \textit{kurang} have or at least share-raise cattle.

153
state policies. Here, I will not discuss power relations at length, but these two faces of the exercise of power are reflected in two of the case studies; those of Pak Patik who has become an important patron, and of Bagenda, the village head. In the following, I will briefly elaborate on issues of power in these two cases.

Pak Patik regularly employs about ten villagers from the neighbourhood who are largely dependent on him for work, income and support. Most of these villagers simultaneously till his land, take babun contracts in his fields, raise his cattle, and are financially indebted to him. Their wives assist in some of the agricultural tasks, and often work for the wife of Patik at harvest times, hulling maize, cleaning paddy, searching for firewood, and assisting in the kitchen, without payment. In the return, they can borrow rice or maize in cases of severe shortage and receive free meals (including for their children) while carrying out those activities.

During 1998, Patik’s main activity - besides his cattle trade - was tobacco cultivation: he planted 12,000 seedlings in his own fields, and bought another 10,000 standing plants in the fields of others. The total costs amounted to Rp 2 million: Rp 500,000 on food, coffee, etc. for the workers; Rp 500,000 on wages for cleaners, planters, harvesters, and for transporting the harvest to his house. Further, he spent Rp 600,000 on the purchase of the standing crops, and on fertiliser, tools, and seedlings. Finally, he paid Rp 400,000 to the two families who worked for two months of a stretch, day and night, cleaning, storing, cutting, and drying the tobacco harvest. That year, Patik sold his tobacco for Rp 7 million, making a profit of Rp 5 million, the price of two adult bulls.61

When asked, the workers spoke of their activities as help (bantuan), or mutual help (tolong menolong, keajegan). In addition to the pleasant atmosphere during the long nights cutting tobacco leaves, they said they enjoyed the opportunity to be able to help the Patik family. On later occasions, and in other places, I heard them calling Pak Patik a scrooge because of his low payments. Even if they resented him, they had to show up and help out at every occasion when they were called. “We are only small people. We need to stay close to them,” one of the workers said. “We are totally dependent on him and his wife for work, credit, and small gifts of food in the dry season, so what should we say?”

In the case of the Patik family, their ability to mobilise labour is quite strong. In other cases of patronage in Krajan the hold on labourers can be less strong. Nevertheless, in most cases of large tobacco farmers, similar patterns

---

61 These figures were calculated carefully by noting and adding up all expenses and profits each day. This information could only be gathered through daily visits to the house of Pak Patik (often twice or trice a day), lengthy participant observation, and a good relationship with the family. Pak Patik hid information about the expenses, and especially the profits, he made in town by selling tobacco for his wife, daughter, neighbours, friends, and labourers, but told them to me. On the other hand, his wife and daughter secretly hid small amounts of the tobacco each working day, stored it under their beds, and sold it in small quantities whenever they needed money.
of patronage could be seen; a use of large quantities of unpaid labour of whole families of dependents, free meals, and low, or absent, payments. The more unpaid labour that could be used, the more successful the landlord (see also Chapter 8).

In 1998, at tobacco harvest time, the family of Satrawi, one of Patik's most dependent and most loyal client families, worked day and night, including their children, for a total wage of Rp 200,000 cash and a pair of new slippers for each family member. They all ate good meals for free during that period and Pak Satrawi was allowed to take tobacco from Patik's pouch whenever he wanted. Nevertheless, the worth of all these was far from a 'decent' wage.

Patik would never have been able to mobilise this amount of cheap labour if he had been an ordinary employer. However, through his personal charisma and especially that of his wife, and through loans, they controlled many poor families. In this way, he was able to make a considerable profit from on his tobacco crop, while most other tobacco farmers in 1998 had to sell their harvest at or below cost price. It is especially his authority as a successful farmer, and his personalised unequal relationships with individual farming families, which made the difference with these farmers. (This is in contrast to Bagenda, the village head, who has an open ambition for personal, symbolic, and governing power.)

The second example of using power to gain better access to resources is Bagenda, the village head. He ordered villagers in 1997, as part of village gotong royong, to plant hundreds of fast growing trees along the road, footpaths, the river and on other waste land. According to local law, the person who plants a tree - or ordered the tree to be planted - even if the land is not his or hers, is the owner of that tree and is allowed to cut and sell the wood years later. By using gotong royong, the village head created a huge stock of trees on the waste land of the village for future profit.

He has also been able to force many villagers to plant other crops as ordained by the government. From 1994 to 1996, he used government regulations to convince villagers that they had to plant tobacco. In the meantime, Bagenda obtained a monopoly on the tobacco trade from the tobacco factories and was able to make huge profits. The factories supplied credit facilities to the tobacco farmers through the mediation of the village head who added additional interest on the loans or lent the funds illegally to other parties. In 1999, after the economic crisis hit Indonesia, the village head could use this

---

63 Patik's tobacco pouch (pak lopak) the whole year round. Rolling paper, however, he did not receive and frequently, when he had no money, he had to use corn leaves instead.
64 For that reason, trees planted by others at disputed places as borders of rice fields or home gardens seldom survive. Neighbours do not want others to have them planted and damage them, or let them die of damage caused by either animals, fire or playing children. Trees planted on land which is rented out to others stay property of the one who planted the tree. This is especially relevant for house lots, where the house is built on someone's else land and might be transferred to another place, while trees planted in the yard remain property of planter.
favourite ploy again, by using credit facilities meant for rural development. He borrowed more than 60% of all the KUT (kredit usaha tani) funds available for the village. In this way, he gained access to at least Rp 180 million of credit meant for small farmers and rural development. This money he used to start businesses, trades, and construction activities in the village: offering work to dozens of villagers and financing his forthcoming re-election campaign as village leader. Further, he lent it to military and police personnel in Bondowoso who were in need of cash, to other village heads in the area, to villagers, and to the election campaign of the PDI-P in the area.

Although this example of the village head is the most extreme example found, it further illustrates that those with power are able to eat a greater slice of the resource cake. It also illustrates how local forms of domination can be derived from power structures at the national level. Powerful villagers are able to mobilise their networks more effectively and in this way, they get better access to resources. Moreover, they have better access to credit and information, and are thus able to trade successfully, or to influence decisions concerning who is able to work on the land or in projects, and who is not. At the same time, they can more easily withdraw themselves from social obligations.

Conclusions

This chapter has dealt with existing inequalities, poverty, and ways of accessing resources in Krajan. With a focus on inequality and access, rather than on a precise poverty line measuring incomes, I have showed the structural inequality among large groups of the Krajan population both in direct and indirect access to resources. This chapter therefore, inevitably, dealt with the old - but continuing relevant - theme of widespread inequality and poverty in rural Java. It shows the continuing structural gap between rich and poor starting from an insider's point of view, taking local definitions of rich and poor as a starting point. After exploring these local understandings, and categorising the people of Krajan, the differences were further explored and expressed in terms of ownership of land, labour, cash, and cattle.

In Krajan, poverty has an economic, a material, and a relative dimension. Poverty is not only an absolute lack of income, but it is perceived by people in relation to others and, expressed in standards of living based on shared values in the village. Crucial non-material elements of poverty such as feelings of deprivation, low self-esteem and social isolation also play a role

65 He has been able to do that by stimulating friends and followers to establish borrowing groups. He himself established some fake groups also. From the 13 established groups in the village he borrowed 10-50%. From the ones he established himself, he borrowed all. Total amount of money he borrowed exceeds Rp 200 million (of which Rp 180 million I have seen proven in hidden bookkeeping records of the groups).

(Townsend, 1993). People in Krajan often said that, social isolation was the utmost problem of poverty. Isolated people have less access to information, employment, networks, and systems of support and redistribution, all of which have the potential of offering some access to resources. A lack of resources, or access to resources, and being excluded from redistribution mechanisms as social security arrangements (Benda-Beckmann et al., 1988) make people much more vulnerable to and contingencies in life than simply a lack of income. Being poor means being restricted and vulnerable in many respects; poor people face a wide range of limitations, and have fewer options and abilities for strategic action than their more prosperous fellow villagers. The crux of the matter in understanding poverty is not the lack of incomes expressed on a poverty line, but the lack and exclusion of access to resources. For the poor of Krajan, ownership of, and accesses to, resources is very limited and difficult, making it virtually impossible ever to improve or maintain some connection with mainstream society.

Rather than measuring income, the analysis of direct and indirect ways of gaining access offers a better picture of inequality in Krajan. It was found that the large inequalities in direct ownership of sawah, tegal, and cattle are reduced by up to 20% by three factors. Firstly, the property of richer villagers is shared by sharecropping, share harvesting, and share-raising of cattle. Secondly, most labour arrangements on the lands of richer villagers include meals, thus diminishing pressure on household food stocks of labouring families. Thirdly, the poorest families are smaller in size due to a large number of female-headed households and widows reducing the per capita proportion of poor in the village. Nevertheless, after these corrections to the inequality in access to resources, the gap between rich and poor is still astonishing. A small minority of about 9% of all households controls over half of the village's resources of sawah, tegal, and cattle, while over 60% of the villagers face hardships in making ends meet on a regular basis. Furthermore, the figures show a tremendous division between the haves, and the have-nots. These inequalities are largely reproduced in the power relationships between rich and poor villagers so maintaining and perhaps even enhancing the inequalities.


When Life Gets Difficult:
Local Forms of Support

Although people in general are able to eke out a living in Krajan, as I described in the previous chapters, this is not always a stable or secure affair. Setbacks and adversities such as harvest failure, death, illness, unemployment, and sudden drops in income are recurring risks and threats to villagers' livelihoods. All people run these risks in one way or another, but not all livelihoods are threatened, and not all people perceive the risks, in the same way and as insecurities. Poor villagers are, generally speaking, more vulnerable than others (Blaikie, et al. 1994; Chambers, 1989: 2) as vulnerability largely depends on their sources of income, ways of access to resources, and the specific constitution of the livelihood (Ellis, 2000: 58-62). In this chapter, I turn to the experiences and interpretations of risks, threats, and insecurities, and to local institutions, arrangements, and mechanisms which can provide support to different categories of villagers. In the next chapter, I deal with the different ways in which people and households cope with these insecurities in everyday life.

Mimona: when the bad days come

Neighbours describe the Mimona family as poor but able to make ends meet. In the village survey and wealth ranking exercise of 1998, they came out as belonging to the category of small farmers occasionally facing shortages (kurang). A year later, in the second village survey, they had dropped to the category of destitute (kasihan). They live somewhat unnoticed in Wringinkurung, but near to the road and the mosque. Not many villagers from outside the hamlet know them and, if they do, they cannot tell you much about them. In the neighbourhood they are known as reliable and hard working people.

Their house is of the common Madurese type with the typical tapering tiled roof, bamboo walls, and an earthen floor. Inside, a simple cupboard, a few chairs, a table, and a bamboo bed make up all their material possessions. At the back of the house is a small fireplace made from clay. The Mimonas are around 30 years old and had been married for more than ten years when their child was born in 1997. They care for the widowed moth-
er of the wife who lives in a small shack leaning onto the house. She eats with the family and helps occasionally with basket weaving. Her production, however, is low due to her bad eyes and poor health. Her daughter occasionally buys some betel nut and tobacco for her to chew. Next to the house of the Mimonas lives a brother of the husband. The only sister of Bu Mimona has migrated to Kalimantan some years ago, but to date she has never sent a word, let alone, any remittances.

At the beginning of 1998, when we interviewed the Mimonas for the first time, they were able to make ends meet. They cultivated a small plot of some 0.1 hectare of low quality sawah, which they inherited from the husband's parents, and about a quarter of a hectare of tegal inherited from the wife's parents. Together, the land provided them with three to four months of food per year and they made an additional income for a few more months of the year from a second tobacco crop.

For the rest of the year they made a living by a few days of wage labour, by weaving baskets, and by engaging in mutual labour exchanges that brought them some free meals. The husband and wife often combined tasks and shared their incomes. In the agricultural year 1997-1998, the household income from their tobacco crop yielded them Rp 270,000, which they used to repay small debts, buy clothes, rice, and maize. Besides this, Pak Mimona worked that year ten days on fields of large landowners, harvesting and carrying tobacco leaves which earned him Rp 20,000 plus a meal per day, coffee, and something to smoke. With a further seven days hoeing and weeding tobacco he received Rp 10,500, again with a meal, coffee, and some cigarettes. In both 1996 and 1997 Pak Mimona went for three months - with an experienced friend - to work in Madura as an agricultural labourer and brought home Rp 75,000 in 1996 and Rp 150,000 in 1997. In 1997 Pak Minoma bought with this money a radio cassette player for Rp 55,000 and ingredients for snacks needed for Idul Fitri. Harvesting and cutting tobacco at the houses of large landowners yielded husband and wife together Rp 60,000 plus snacks, coffee, and cigarettes. This was all used to buy rice and maize to cover consumption needs in the slack (dry) season.

In this year, Bu Mimona earned on average about Rp 5,500 per week making besek.1 This money she used for buying rice, maize, and small kitchen needs such as salt and cooking oil. The rice price in this period was about Rp 1,000 per kilo (for low quality rice) and the maize price ranged from Rp 400 to Rp 600.2 By combining all these jobs, they were able to meet their basic household needs and build up a relatively stable livelihood.

After Ramadan (January 1998), due to the Indonesian crisis, wage labour opportunities shrunk and Pak Mimona only very seldomly could earn a wage, either in cash or in kind. He was not involved in any long lasting babun contract and said that his cow was not yet old enough to plough and that nobody had ever offered him such a contract. He and his wife continued to take part in many mutual labour and help arrangements, such as the weekly government gotong royong, helped at selamatan (four times), exchanged labour for maize production (twice), helped at funerals (twice), and took part in tolong menolong for house building (ten times). On 32 occasions he and his wife had worked without payment on the cultivation of tobacco for friends and rich neighbours (giliran and keajegan). In this way, he told me, they hoped to obtain the right to receive a babun contract from these landowners in the future and loans in times of need.

1 I do not know how many weeks she stopped working due to delivering the baby. After the baby was born, she told she continued making besek, but it is likely that production was lower. 

2 In 1997, on average, for one week of besek weaving, she could purchase five kilos of cheap rice.
In 1998, their only child died and things changed rapidly for the worse. On the funeral, about fifteen neighbours and relatives came to donate rice, money, or sugar. In total, they received 25 kilos of rice (10 kilos from the brother of Mimona), two kilos of sugar, and Rp 15,000 in cash. Some poor neighbours came with firewood or with nothing and helped out with cooking, serving the guests, or digging the grave. To cover the expenses of the funeral and seven days of selamatan and praying, the family borrowed Rp 250,000 from two neighbours in short term loans with interest of two and five percent per month. To repay these loans, the Mimonas pawned their tegal to Maryani, a local tobacco trader.

Later that year, when memorial rituals for the deceased had to be performed, they could use their own rice stocks (partly saved from the funeral) and four of their own chickens for the selamatan. When in late 1998, Pak Mimona fell ill for some time, they had to sell the radio for Rp 35,000 to cover the costs of medical treatment.

When we visited the family again in mid 1999, the situation had clearly deteriorated. According to them, since the start of the crisis, they had had to work harder while earning less. Food prices had gone up while the low tobacco prices caused a drop in labour demands. To make matters worse, the extended rains and cold weather had almost completely destroyed their rice crop on their small sawah, their only piece of land that time. The family was trapped by the downward spiral of falling incomes, rising prices, and large debts.

In that year (1998-1999), Pak Mimona earned only Rp 17,500 with wage labour. In search of money, he went regularly to the forest to cut bamboo which he partly sold to besek makers (twice a week earning Rp 5,000 each time), the rest he used to make baskets with his wife, the sale of which brought them in one week only Rp 8,000 (for 100 pieces). To complement their income, they cared for livestock of others. Their first cow came from the husband's brother and still had not produced any offspring. The second animal, a bull under the oanan arrangement, came from the same landlord who usually employed Pak Mimona in tobacco cultivation and this landlord would probably be willing to give cash advances on this bull in the future. As they now had to care for two animals, and as economic conditions were unstable, Pak Mimona did not have the courage to search for work in Madura again.

Overall, in 1999, they managed to earn more cash as they did the year before. However, with soaring prices for basic needs this meant a drop of over one-third in real income. Moreover, as they now earn their income mostly from the sale of besek and bamboo, the number of free meals has declined, and as they still have to repay their debts, they are in a much more vulnerable position than the year before. To make ends meet they cut on consumption costs (by eating less dried fish and tahu, no longer coffee or tea, and by mixing cassava and maize with their rice). This did not make Pak Mimona to give up smoking: he started to smoke even more and now bought a packet of cigarettes a week. The government's cheap rice programme (offering, each month, 10 kilos of rice for Rp 10,000) was crucial in keeping expenditure low.

Overall, in 1999, they managed to earn more cash as they did the year before. However, with soaring prices for basic needs this meant a drop of over one-third in real income. Moreover, as they now earn their income mostly from the sale of besek and bamboo, the number of free meals has declined, and as they still have to repay their debts, they are in a much more vulnerable position than the year before. To make ends meet they cut on consumption costs (by eating less dried fish and tahu, no longer coffee or tea, and by mixing cassava and maize with their rice). This did not make Pak Mimona to give up smoking: he started to smoke even more and now bought a packet of cigarettes a week. The government's cheap rice programme (offering, each month, 10 kilos of rice for Rp 10,000) was crucial in keeping expenditure low.

3 On an average, with one week of working besek, now - due to inflation - three to four kilos of rice could be purchased. Although the rice price stabilised somewhat at the end of 1998 and in 1999, it was nearly Rp 3,000 at the beginning of 1999. At the time of the interview, under the influence of the cheap rice programme, it had gone down to Rp 2,300 per kilo. Compared to the returns from besek, this is still a decrease in real income out of besek, and thus purchase capacity, of 30%.
When in 1999, the mother of Bu Mimona died, they covered the lion’s share of the costs. They received from neighbours and relatives 50 kilos of rice (including 25 kilos from his Mimona’s brother), a pound of coffee, four kilos sugar, two packets of cigarettes, and Rp 45,000 in cash. (In total, these gifts were worth about Rp 200,000). They spent Rp 550,000 on the first seven days of selamatan. To cover the difference, they borrowed from the owner of the cow they were share-raising and from the village head. For the 40th-day memorial selamatan, they still had some rice in stock and sold only three chickens which was enough to buy the most important ingredients for the selamatan. As of mid-1999, they had some debts at the local shop (Rp 30,000) and with one of the neighbours (Rp 15,000), while the other debts were repaid by pawning all their sawah. Pak Mimona hopes to be able to repay the remaining debts at the shop and his neighbour from his daily earnings. By next year, they also hope to redeem their pawned land with another calf of the cow they care for, so that they can grow maize and tobacco again. The cow is now being trained to plough. If trained well, Pak Mimona can try to earn some money by working other people’s land or even manage to get a babun contract. But since the crisis started, chances have dwindled.

At least for the time being, the combination of crisis, misfortune, and death have caused a drop in their incomes and the loss of land and capital. The family received some help, but nowhere near to cover all their costs. They may survive under these circumstances by working hard and by carefully spending their money, but if new misfortune occurs, they might drown and be forced to sell their fields.

This example of the Mimona family shows that a combination of several shocks and stresses can seriously threaten a family’s livelihood. Their life seemed secure enough, but turned out to be vulnerable when confronted with high funeral costs and declining incomes in the wake of the economic crisis in Indonesia. Not only did prices go up drastically, the crisis also forced many farmers to change from cash crops to subsistence crops, leading to a major drop in wage labour opportunities. Although the case of this family is special in the sense that they lost both their child and a mother within the course of two years, their situation resembles many of the village poor, who can be blown away by a single mishap. This example also shows that under such conditions, people basically have to fall back on their own. True, neighbours and relatives may come with sumbangan while others may be willing to provide loans and help - materially and emotionally - through the first difficult days, but this was not enough to cope with their misfortune. Village social security institutions and arrangements helped them in covering their first costs, but did not help them much in regaining strength, resources, work, or a sustainable livelihood. Nevertheless, without the help from others, the Mimona family would have gone down the drain.

It was the good reputation and social relationships that they had established with neighbours and large farmers that enabled them to borrow money and to tend extra livestock. Because of this network, they also remained candidates for share-raising cattle, and, probably, for babun con-
tracts. It is difficult to calculate the importance of these social relationships and their good reputation in economic terms, but it is obvious that their efforts to remain respectable and decent villagers was not in vain and made them eligible clients and labourers in the eyes of more affluent villagers, even though their reputation in the end would not protect them against a further fall into poverty.

_Pak Mimona_ told me in 1999 with a tired and sad voice: “Hopefully, the crisis will not last long, and hopefully, my living will improve, not always facing these shortages.” Thus expressing his wish for a better future but also not expecting much at the same time. The year before, he had been more confident about the future and told me he was going to spend less, cooperate more, and work harder to overcome his poverty. But in 1999, when he had to face their further downfall, he expressed deception and thought of retreating from mutual help relationships. “What can I give to others if I don’t have anything myself?”

The Mimona family is a good example of some of the possible insecurities of landless and near-landless households who earn a living from small-scale farming, wage labour, and handicraft production. Their story reveals some of the adversities people are confronted with, the ways in which they perceive and cope with them, as well as the scope, strength, and limitations of social security arrangements and institutions in Krajan. From the Mimona family, we can move on to the wider field of social security in Krajan: what are the specific threats, risks and insecurities for different categories of villagers? Are there any social security arrangements and institutions to protect and maintain access to resources in times of adversity like misfortune, contingencies, and ill fate? And if so, how do they work, and under what conditions?

**Insecurity in Krajan**

To understand village social security we have to depart from local perceptions of risks and insecurities and their cultural interpretations of the probability and possible effects of a hazard, calamity, or crisis. Villagers in Krajan never speak about risk in a broad and general sense as is common in the West. The Indonesian word risk itself (*risiko*) is a loanword (from Dutch) and only used in the context of gambling, speculative (tobacco) trade, and sometimes in contexts of opting for migration where there is a risk of not making any profit. It is used in a narrow sense and confined to a context of wagering where there is a clear and calculable possibility of gain and loss. There is no Madurese and no original Malay equivalent for risk and, in the village, other words are used to refer to the possible occurrence of misfortune and contingencies.

People in Krajan use words like danger or threat (*bahaya*), fear (*takut*), and uncertainty or doubt (*bingung*). Conversely, the word safety (*keamanan* or *jamin*) is often used to indicate the state of absence of these threats, fears, and uncertainties. _Rezeki_ (luck), means profit or blessing, and is used as the oppo-
When life gets difficult, although rezeki is never stable and can be taken away. If you have or find rezeki, you do not have to fear a lack of food, income, or safety, and thus can be called secure. Rezeki has a materialistic connotation and is often not a result of making the right choices, but rather something that occurs, a blessing that can come, or be withdrawn. In practice this means that villagers are much more concerned with the question how to gain safety or rezeki than how to prevent insecurities. For that reason, rather than discussing risks, I prefer here to use the word insecurity - referring to dangers, threats, and fears; and the specific ways of perceiving them. These insecurities form a problem for an individual and often the household and to overcome setback they need the support from others. People's main insecurities concern their basic needs: food, shelter, healthcare, and social status. When these are threatened, they need support in the form of food, labour, knowledge, cash, or some combination of these.

In the following discussion, I will focus on these insecurities at the household level while acknowledging that households are made up of different members who face different insecurities and sometimes have conflicting interests. The security of the husband, for instance, can be at the expense of his wife or children. First, I deal with threats and dangers regarding household members’ food security, then the threats to the incomes needed for the household’s livelihood. After this, I will turn to the threats related to profit and trade and, finally, to threats related to shelter, healthcare, and social relationships in the village. Here, I will not relate these threats to different categories of people, although it is clear that poor people are more affected than the rich, but describe insecurities and ways of support. In Chapters 6 and 8, I will deal with the relationship between insecurities and different categories of people, and their different ways of responding to them.

Food and income insecurities

Frequently, poor and landless villagers in Krajan have good reasons to worry about insufficient income or food. Securing a stable food supply heavily depends on seasonal variations and economic cycles, as well as on the weather and the health and skills of household members. Over the years, especially villagers in the poorer categories have experienced recurrent crises in their food supply.

Among farming households, seasonal fluctuations in agricultural output are the most common threat to food security. Ellis (2000: 58-59) mentions that seasonality is an inherent feature of rural livelihoods and that these seasonal factors apply just as much to landless rural families as they do to farming families. Furthermore, as poor households often depend on only one or a few income sources, the landless are most vulnerable while the better off tend to diversify their source of income and thus ‘smoothen’ their consumption needs. In Krajan however, this dependence on single sources of income applies mostly to the middle and middle poor categories (cukup and kurang), while the landless and poor (miskin), contrary to the view of Ellis, rely on a
diversity of income sources. The poor of Krajan need to diversify as they simply cannot live from agriculture incomes alone.  

While seasonal fluctuations pose short-term threats like crop failure or crop damage, long-term ecological dangers can also affect food security. An example is soil fertility; farmers are generally aware of the threats of soil degradation, but in mountainous environments such as Krajan, the ground is vulnerable and has to be treated carefully. If not well maintained, erosion and even landslides can occur.  

The terraces need to be constantly kept in good repair and carefully tilled to prevent degradation of the fertile top layer. Neglect can severely decrease the quality of the field and thus future food security.

Seasonality in Krajan also affects the domain of work and income, especially incomes from cash crops, food crops, wage labour, and from what they earn as migrant workers. For landless labourers and smallholders, the possibilities of earnings are heavily dependent on the season and on climatic irregularities such as the intensity of rainfall. If there is no rain, there is no work. Both for landless, smallholders, and larger landowners alike, incomes may be threatened if rains start later than usual, or if there is less rain or if crops are damaged by strong winds, diseases, or pests.

The stability of employment is another important factor. Villagers who work for a share of the harvest in the fields of others (babunan and betonan), share-raise cattle, or make besek, feel more secure and have little chance of losing their work except in the case of chronic illness, inability, or bad work. Other types of work such as wage labour and contract labour are more volatile and casual and, hence, its incomes are less stable.

The availability of irrigation water is also critical. In recent decades, water supply in Krajan has decreased due to on-going deforestation and poor maintenance of irrigation canals. As a consequence, dozens of sawah plots have had to be converted to tegal, less suitable for food crops.

Other insecurities are related to the characteristics of crops. Growing tobacco is much more unpredictable than cultivating local varieties of maize where outputs are reliable and relatively stable. Although the soils of Krajan are not as fertile as in Tengger and lowland Java, villagers perceive the Krajan soils to be good (they compare them with the lower zones east of Krajan where soils are more washed out and degraded). For tobacco production, soils should not be too fertile and hardly any manure containing nitrogen is used. The poorer

---

4 The utmost poor, such as widows without supporting children or relatives, also often rely on one, or very few sources of income (predominantly basket weaving).
5 In the 1970s and early 1990s severe landslides occurred destroying fields. In 2001, two people were also killed.
6 A very common problem in rice is penyakit kuning, the yellow disease. There are numerous reasons why premature rice might turn yellow, but in the case of Krajan it is mostly a virus disease, which affects the leaves after one month and which can destroy harvests totally. Other examples of pests are snails (keong) in tobacco (and keong emas in rice), caterpillars (in tobacco), and stem borers (rice).
the soil, the better the taste, and the higher the price of the tobacco. However, good tobacco harvests today, can degrade the soil for future food production. The shallow stony soils of Krajan, that produce fine tobacco, are no longer suitable for growing maize or rice, and quickly degrade after a few years of tobacco growing.

The insecurities in trade and markets are manifold, but villagers perceive them foremost as the presence or absence of luck (rezeki).7 The price of tobacco has fluctuated considerably over the years, and so have - to a lesser extent - the prices of rice, fertiliser, cigarettes, coffee, and food. People often feel uncertain about expected returns and whether they will earn enough to buy the increasingly expensive foods. For this reason, they regularly exchange information on prices and speculate about the future with neighbours, friends, and relatives. On the other hand, information on promising business opportunities is only shared with close friends for fear of competition.

For traders, moneylenders, and shopkeepers, financial worries are even more a part of daily life as they face insecurities through fluctuating prices, unreliable partners, stock decay, inflation, losses, and non-payment. For this reason, interest rates on loans are high.8 The main concern for shopkeepers is that people will not pay their debts.9 At some points in their lives, most middle and lower middle class women in Krajan have started small business or trading in coffee, dried fish, vegetables, maize, or rice. Many of them have failed, however, as friends, neighbours, and relatives bought on credit and never paid for the goods. The number of collapses was greatest in 1998 when, as a consequence of the monetary crisis, food aid, and the concomitant inflation, about half of the warung and toko collapsed.

Ceremonial expenses, health care, and education

Some threats are more endangering than others.10 A serious assault on household reserves in Krajan is the untimely death of a family member, as it does not only imply a severe emotional loss, but also involves huge unanticipated direct and indirect costs. The loss of a family member involves an expensive

---

7 Misfortune and losses are the absence of rezeki; and causes of the absence of rezeki are often perceived as of a supernatural nature, unlucky days, or a bad match with a marriage partner (jodoh).
8 Generally high interest rates are explained by market failures. “There are many reasons for this market failure, amongst which the high costs of setting up banking operations in rural areas, the difficulty and cost of securing adequate information on potential borrowers, the risk of default on loans, and the absence of collateral to put up against loans, are amongst the most frequently identified” (Ellis, 2000: 74).
9 Many conflicts between villagers are related to such old debts that have never been settled, and shops often collapse due to the large number of people who do not repay debts on time.
10 Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1994: 7), observed that the most devastating uncertainties are those concerning people’s most basic needs: food, shelter, health, and care; and in connection with them the experience or expectation of destitution, of a sudden loss or severe reduction in the means of existence, and of access to other people or social institutions which might provide help.
funeral (the same day as passing away) and a series of selamatan, and if it concerns a productive household member, it severely affects the household’s income-earning capacity. Both poor and rich villagers are confronted with such costs, but the poor have to spend relatively more on burial costs, as they have smaller networks of support and receive fewer contributions. A series of selamatan for an adult household member can easily cost the equivalent to one bull (or two or three if the household is more prosperous). In the case of poorer families, funeral costs often amount to more than half of the saleable or pawnable household assets (bulls, land) and it can take years to recover.

Then there are expenses related to health and pregnancy. Expenses on health care can be a source of urgent needs for cash leading to indebtedness as these may involve high costs for hospitalisation, medicines, or local healers (dukun). The costs of hospitalisation can easily go beyond the capacity of a family and may force them to sell or pawn land or cattle to pay the bills. As in the case of funerals, money has to be provided quickly and often the same day (doctors and hospitals often ask for money before treatment is given to a patient). As fast cash is expensive and hard to get, and interest is high, health expenses come dear. In the case of a need for hospitalisation, the poor often wait long periods and even decide not to go to the hospital at all in fear of these high costs. In some cases, especially when it concerns younger people, or pregnant women, they will ask the village head for help. Occasionally, he is prepared to drive the patient to the hospital and pay the costs of hospitalisation. He knows that these families will try their utmost to repay these debts, either by selling land or cattle later, or by providing labour or lumber. Nevertheless, not all succeed in doing so.

For wedding and engagement ceremonies similar, or even higher, amounts are spent (depending on the wealth of the family). But here the situation is different in that wedding dates can be planned in advance and people can prepare themselves. Although most costs should be covered by the parents, in middle and poorer households the couple themselves are expected to contribute. In these families, boys start raising a calf or care for someone else’s cow in order to save for the wedding. Only if enough money, wedding gifts, and a house are available, can the marriage take place and will be approved of by both sets of parents. Sometimes, parents, already at an early stage, start to collect the wedding goods or wood to build a house (in the case of a daughter). If all the building materials (wood, sheets of woven bamboo, roof tiles, and foundation stones) are available, then the house can be built by making use of a collective housebuilding party, tolong menolong, where neighbours, relatives, and friends join in constructing (or repairing) the house.

People often referred to the first years after marriage as the most difficult years in their household’s life. The majority did not, or not yet, inherit enough land to be self-supporting and had not yet established a strong net-

11 The price of an adult bull in mid-1998 was about Rp 3 million.
work and therefore had little chance to get work or a sharecropping contract. After setting up a separate household, these couples faced, in the first years, periodical food and income shortages.

After children are born, costs increase, and, usually, another difficult period starts due to higher consumption, an increased need for support, and lower labouring capacity. When children get older, costs of education increase. At primary school age, these costs concern some school fees, uniforms, and learning material. When parents want their children to continue at secondary school or even further, they are confronted with high, and often steep, costs. After children have grown up, engagements and weddings concern huge costs for parents. If the children stay in the village, they are supposed to take care of their parents when they get old. Last, but not least, if people grow old, and income earning capacities decrease, the need for support increases. This can be difficult if elderly or widows do not have any children, or if they do not have any children living in the village, who can care or support.

Insecurities related to other people

There are other, idiosyncratic, causes that can lead to indebtedness, forcing farmers to sell their land and lose their main source of food security, or affect income. There are good reasons to fear other people as they may cause insecurity from theft (maling), deceit, and destructive rivalry. Items which are regularly stolen in the village are radios, cigarette lighters, and even chickens, small stocks of rice and maize (both from houses and from the fields), and in the dry seasons, sometimes water and grass. In Krajan, cattle and motorbikes are rarely the target of thieves although cattle thefts in the region are regularly reported in the local newspapers. Generally, people point to outsiders as the perpetrators, but more often than not, thefts come from local conflicts, jealousy, and unsettled scores. The majority of the thieves of maize and rice who have been captured, turned out to be former workers of large landowners who had been fired by their employers, or had had a conflict with them and were after revenge.

Within the family, children or close relatives can be a threat to the livelihood of the household. Children can be very demanding for expensive consumer goods and push their parents to spend the household’s resources on such items. But also other, usually male, members of the family can endanger its livelihood by taking high risks in gambling, womanising, and conspicuous consumption.

Outside the family, relationships with neighbours can be tense because of an unsettled case of deceit (bohongan), or due to envy and jealousy (iri and dengki), or jealous rivalry (cemburuan). In Krajan, quite often, imagined extra-marital affairs lie at the basis of such conflicts. These conflicts occasionally even result in murder (carok). In the four neighbourhoods I moved around

---

12 See for similar cases of carok in the area and on Madura: Latief Wiyata (2001).
on a daily basis, under a surface of courteous friendliness, quite a number of families lived in a kind of silent conflict with one another, while, with half of the villagers, relationships in the neighbourhood seemed to be somewhat distrustful, envious, jealous, or suspicious. Such neighbours rarely visited each other, or talked much with each other on the road or in the fields, nor shared tobacco. They also were often outside the local exchange networks of goods, gifts, or labour at weddings, selamatan, house repair parties, or agricultural activities with these people, and concentrated themselves on relationships with other neighbours.

Other dangers and fears stem from local politics (i.e. contested leaderships) and relationships with richer farmers. In private conversations, villagers often expressed their fear of influential leaders, the village head, or the religious leader, and of political violence in general. Bagenda was especially feared for his power to put people down. Good relationships with him were highly valued, although this could become a threat to work and livelihood if he were to lose the next election.

In conclusion, these insecurities boil down to six major interrelated sets of problems to which people need to find solutions. The need for support might occur in the field of food provision, when organising communal activities (selamatan, arisan, housebuilding, and labour parties), around life cycle crises (death, illness, or childbirth), concern old age care, in the event of natural or economic disasters, and when desiring education. People try to overcome these adversities either at the household or nuclear family level, or with help from others. The next paragraph goes further into the available options.

Arrangements and institutions for social security

What scenarios of help are available to people and households in Krajan, when they are actually confronted with misfortunes, hazards, and both major and minor crises in their lives? In the next section, I outline those sources available for dealing with these difficulties, ranging from the nuclear family to main village and government institutions of social security.

In principle, there is a wide range of sources which can provide support in times of need. In Krajan, the most important ones are parents or children, close relatives, neighbours and friends, wider kin, patrons and village leaders, village and religious institutions (such as reciprocal labour relationships, rituals, selamatan, forms of gift and alms giving, and saving and credit associations), and government programmes or institutions (both permanent and temporary ones such as development and poverty eradication programmes, social safety net programmes, free health services, and cheap rice programmes). There respective roles are discussed in the following sections.

---

13 The case of education is somewhat exceptional since not everybody is willing (or able) to aim for a good education. To many families, the need for, and importance of, education is not clear.
Institutions and arrangements of mutual help and labour exchange

In Krajan, the basic principle for support arrangements is that those who need help, have to ask for it, and ask for it delicately; humbly and with the right tone, without losing one's pride. In the agricultural domain, this can be rather straightforward as mutual help is task-based and calculated carefully because it has to be balanced and reciprocated. In other domains, approaching other people for support needs more finesse in order to be not turned down briskly, and to build trust and reciprocity. Unlike a general view of reciprocity and mutual help as investment in social relationships which insure against certain risks and, as a collective action to support members of that community in times of need, village life shows that reciprocity is often contested. The purest forms of such reciprocity-based insurance systems are found in egalitarian and small groups, under equal conditions for all members, and with clearly defined risks. Many studies relate, for instance, to small groups of hunters and gatherers (dividing the meat), fishing communities (dividing the catch), and labour unions (dividing the costs of illness or burials). Under such equal conditions and egalitarian principles, solidarity can be maintained, norms can be enforced, and reciprocity is likely to continue.

In Krajan, however, interests of people are not equal, and not all exchanges and reciprocal relationships serve a pure insurance purpose. Most of the clearest risks are covariate and can hit everybody at once (drought, rain, pests, crop failure, economic crisis) while, as indicated in the introductory para-

---


15 Tolong-menolong means 'please help' and the Javanese word sambatan means something like 'ask help' Koentjaraningrat (1967b).


17 An insurance point of view on reciprocity has contributed much to the understanding of social relationships, exchanges, networks, and the ways in which people can manipulate these exchange relationships (on which I will elaborate in later chapters). See on insurance: Coate and Ravallion (1993), Eswaran (1989), Ingleson (1996), Platteau (1991, 1995), Van der Linden (1996).
graphs of this chapter, other forms of insecurities are not so clear and are not perceived of as risks. People do not talk much about insecurities and risks, although they do refer to the importance of being involved in social relationships. In everyday life, they are more concerned with making an income, searching for luck, and getting the work done.

From a rational actor perspective, reciprocity is the equivalent of insurance, because people involve themselves in reciprocal relationships out of a conscious strategy of risk spreading. Although people sometimes act very strategically, they are not only driven by calculated motives but also by other factors, such as custom, culture, habit, expectations, peer pressure, and worldview. Those factors, at least partly, shape their participation in local networks. I will come back to this issue in the next chapter on styles of social security. Here I concentrate on the most important forms of village support.

A special, and clearly defined, form of reciprocity is labour exchange in agriculture such as: giliran (also the Javanese word sambatan is used (Van der Kolff, 1936), and keajegan). These rotating and mutual labour arrangements are often part of patron-client relationships although, in theory, they are labour exchanges on an equal basis. Giliran is a form of rotating labour where groups of farmers work on each other's land in turn. Keajegan is an arrangement in which neighbours can be asked "to help out."18 Tasks which can be done using keajegan include the peeling of maize, planting tobacco, cutting trees or firewood, preparing, drying and cutting tobacco, housework in emergencies, and assistance during parties. Keajegan is not used in a context of funerals and selamatan, where it is just called bantuan - helping out. These labour exchanges usually take place between households, and are personalised and negotiable, as the following example makes clear.

One afternoon, Pak Patik called for his labourers to help with planting tobacco seedlings, but they were not very willing as they know him as a greedy person. The workers from the neighbourhood of Satrawi complained to Patik's neighbour, Pak Asus, and said they were fed up with planting tobacco without seeing any returns. Pak Asus approached the wife of Patik and went with her daughter to the workers to talk with them. In a cheerful way, she told some stories about her greedy husband and then asked the men to work as if she knew nothing. With a nod to her daughter, she promised to cook a nice meal for everybody who joined in. When she came home, she asked her son to ask Patik for money to quickly buy some cigarettes for the workers. He was

---

18 Keajegan is mostly used for the planting of tobacco. Tobacco is often planted in the late afternoon to protect the seedlings from too much sun. Neighbours are called for help because the planting has to be done very quickly. Other examples are repairs to rice fields destroyed by landslides or river floods. In these cases, friends and neighbours can be asked for help. Keajegan is not strictly reciprocal in nature. Balanced reciprocal tolong menolong (mutual help) for house building, replacement, and repair is not referred to as keajegan. Scott comments: "There is a particular rule of reciprocity - a set of moral expectations - which applies to their exchanges with other villagers. Whether or not the wealthy actually live up to these minimal moral requirements or reciprocity is another question, but there can be little doubt that they exist" Scott (1976). These rules of reciprocity, and sets of moral expectations, highly depend however on the context.
surprised, and thought it unnecessary, but eventually gave the money. "I work for her, not because of him", some of the workers told me, and "she's a good woman, always willing to help if needed". This illustrates that mutual help arrangements are never static and uniform, nor organised according to fixed rules and principles, but, depending on the people involved, that they can be negotiated and adapted to specific situations.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Selamatan}

The most important institution for redistribution of food and resources among co-villagers is the \textit{selamatan} with its communal meals, praying ritual, and food packages to bring home, organised around birth and death and at other certain stages in the family life cycle. The family organising the \textit{selamatan} offers free meals and entertainment to neighbours and guests, and in so doing, renews networks and social relationships. The richer the family, the larger the \textit{selamatan} and the wider the network of guests. Guests bring gifts or donations (\textit{sumbangan}), usually consisting of rice or money, and receive a good meal and a basket with rice, meat or soy cake, and biscuits to take home. That \textit{selamatan} are not purely altruistic sharing occasions, becomes clear because the gifts and donations are meticulously recorded in notebooks which are used in future occasions to decide what gifts are to be returned.\textsuperscript{20}

At \textit{selamatan}, many things come together. Such occasions reveal networks of social relationships and support, indicator of status and prestige, and the wealth and power of the organising family. Visitors are seated by order of importance and status, but generally also poor guests, and uninvited visitors can come and receive a share of the food. In general, villagers who are invited try at all costs to contribute a decent gift, although those unable to do so do not have to. In practice, uninvited guests rarely come, as most poor neighbours, friends, or relatives who are unable to contribute are too shy to join in. If they have a close relationship, or live nearby, they will try to help with cook-

\textsuperscript{19} Mutual help exists in many forms and for many reasons in Indonesia. Koentjaraningrat (1967b) gives an overview of mutual help arrangements (\textit{gotong royong, tolong-menolong}) in rural Indonesia. He makes a distinction between different domains where mutual help takes place. His four domains are mutual help in agricultural activities, mutual help in domestic activities, mutual help for activities in organising parties and ceremonies and, finally, mutual help in the case of contingencies, disaster and death (Koentjaraningrat (1967b)).

These domains do not make much sense as some forms of mutual help go across these domains. Some forms apply to different domains, and others link agricultural activities with parties and ceremonies. I further do not follow the division into spheres like Koentjaraningrat, since these forms of mutual help cannot be demarcated clearly into domestic, agricultural, and emergency spheres. \textit{Tolong menolong} for instance, can be used in the domestic sphere, but also in the case of an emergency, after a house has been burnt, or fallen down, or in agriculture if someone is chronically ill.

\textsuperscript{20} These are balanced, generalised forms of reciprocity. See Sahlins (1965). Gifts are also exchanged at funerals (rice, money), at engagement and weddings (presents, biscuits, or money), at house-building parties (rice), and at \textit{Idul Fitri} after Ramadan (biscuits, snacks, or sweets). At all these occasions, guest receive a meal, coffee or tea, and something to smoke (men) or chew (women).
ing, carrying firewood or water, serving the guests, or with organising the activities. In this way, they make themselves acceptable and become entitled to a free meal. Selamatan are expensive to organise, and although guests offer contributions in the organisational costs, in Krajan most families incur a net loss. Only at a handful of occasions were families able to make a profit (received more sumbangan than they paid out on organising the selamatan). All such families belonged to the upper classes of society and received relatively large contributions from participants, while the number of non-contributing guests was low.

Sumbangan are not only a source of support which helps in organising communal activities, it can also cause insecurity among the contributors. The high costs of gifts and many invitations may constitute an assault on household reserves. Contributions to selamatan, especially when there are many of them in the same period (such as during the house repair, wedding, and circumcision season), can cause financial headaches to those who are invited regularly. In particular poor villagers may find themselves in a position that they have to borrow money or rice from friends, neighbours, or patrons to fulfil their social obligations. The poorest among them are even unable to get a loan and therefore never contribute, or contribute only to the most important ones, and hardly ever organise selamatan themselves (except for those related to burials and weddings). Consequently, they do not receive significant contributions when they themselves do organise a selamatan.

One-third of the Krajan households contributes a minimum sumbangan (1.5 kgs of rice or the equivalent in money) less then two times a year to a selamatan as part of an engagement, wedding, or funeral.21 This means that more than one-third of the village population is only marginally included in these exchange networks. If there are events such as a birth, circumcision, or wedding, they will invite only one or two of the closest neighbours and a patron, 21 In the village survey, I asked for the number of sumbangan contributions of both wife and husband in the last year, and the number of sumbangan contributions they had given in the last five years. Sumbangan gifts are often recorded and remembered very well. Most people were able to list all their ‘outstanding debts’ as they called them, the name of family, the amount, and the occasion. For a limited number of families I crosschecked this with the other party and figures were accurate. Moreover, I collected, copied, and discussed sumbangan lists from funerals or weddings from a few families. Rich families had sometimes very long lists, while those from poorer families fitted on the wrapping of a cigarette pack. Most of the poorest households (kasihan) had not given any sumbangan in the last year, or only once or twice. Of the poor families (miskin) about half of the families did not give more than three times a year. Of the rich (kaya) and the better off (lebih and cukup), many families were found who gave more than 30 or 40 times a year (including both men and women) although they were not always able to remember exactly all the amounts. When giving sumbangan, these families did not check their lists all the time, but just gave some standard donation (1.5-2 kgs of rice, or an equivalent in money; Rp 2,500 in 1997 and Rp 5,000 in 1999) depending on the status of the family and the relationship they have with the family.

I found a considerable variation in the donations between families of similar social economic classes. Some only donated five times, while others donated for over forty times a year. More on this variation, and the motivations and reasons behind them, are given in the next chapter.
or simply not organise a *selamatan* at all. They will apologise by saying that the *selamatan* is postponed till there is money or a suitable date, which will often never come.\(^{22}\) Instead, they will have a small family meal with someone who is performing the praying ritual, often a neighbour or acquaintance who knows the ritual. The *selamatan* itself is nothing more than a slightly better evening meal than usual (rice mixed with maize, vegetables, and some dried fish, egg, mie or soy cake as a luxury). I witnessed several of these ‘unobtrusive’ ceremonies, where less than a handful of people were present and no *sumbangan* was exchanged.

Funerals are a different case. At funerals, relatively many people always come, but not all bring *sumbangan*. Those who do not bring anything, help out in the kitchen, comfort the family, care for small children, mourn over the body (women), or help in digging and constructing the grave, cutting firewood, or praying (men). More affluent neighbours are expected to bring some rice or money, but never in large quantities, and the funerals of poor people are very sober and simple. Meals are often nothing more than a simple dish of rice with vegetables and soy cake or dried fish with a cup of tea.

It is however, not just a matter of financial means which determines participation in these *selamatan* exchanges of the poor families, at least half gave *sumbangan* more than three times a year and some even up to ten or fifteen times, while among the richer villagers, there are large variations depending on their willingness to engage in these exchanges. In the next chapter, I will go into the background of these differences, people’s motives, orientations, and reasons for sharing or not.

**Credit, saving, and arisan**

Krajan men and women borrow often and a lot from each other, from credit schemes, and from the took, from neighbours, from patrons, and from moneylenders. From the household survey, I learned that the higher the class the more loans and lending took place with higher amounts depending on the economic activity. On average, large tobacco farmers had many more outstanding loans and debts than large cattle farmers, although some of the cattle farmers had given considerable cash amounts to share-raisers of their cattle. The richest had average loans of over two million Rupiah, while the ‘not enoughs’ had, on average, a few loans and debts at the same time worth about Rp 105,000, while the poorest (orang kasihan) had virtually no debts and loans at all. Widows such as *Bu* Suriipa cannot even borrow Rp 1,000, or buy on credit in shops. They can only get a cash advance on the *besek* they make. In terms of saving and credit in Krajan, the poor generally most urgently need loans, but are least able to get them.

\(^{22}\) It has to be realised that the number of widows in the poorest category is high. Widows do go to the *selamatan* of other people and can do some work in the kitchen to avoid the obligation to bring a gift, but widows usually do not organise many *selamatan* themselves except for those around burials of family members.
In many societies, alongside the old arrangements, new private arrangements have emerged (Van Ginneken, 1999: 34) such as co-operatives or mutual benefit societies, benefit burial societies, and rotating credit societies. The best-known Indonesian example of such an emerging arrangement is the *arisan*, a rotating saving and credit association in which members deposit small amounts at regular times, and in turn, through a lottery system receive the full deposit fund. These tend to be privately organised associations of a few dozen participants at most, but sometimes these *arisan* are linked to banks, government programmes, and religious and community institutions. As a means of saving and credit, *arisan* can have social security functions, although recent studies question this (Lont, 2000, 2002a; see also Smets, 1996).

Unlike in urban areas in Indonesia, where *arisan* are common and many people are a member of several *arisan* in Krajan, only a few *arisan* were found. This might be due to the high rate of illiteracy, mismanagement, distrust, and seasonability in agricultural production, leading to periodic shortages of cash in Krajan. In the terminology of Hospes (1995), in Krajan, there is no ‘fertile financial landscape’ enabling the development of *arisan*. Many households do not have daily access to cash since they receive most income in kind.

Over the years, several people have tried to establish *arisan*, but most have collapsed after one or two rounds. The *arisan* that have survived require only very small deposits and are related to village or religious institutions. The largest *arisan* in the village is run by the wife of the village head and has more than 150 members. Each week, they each deposit Rp 500 and a winner is drawn. Members do not feel particularly committed since one only receives the kitty once every three years, and as the wife of the village head is dominant and decides - secretly - whose turn it is to receive the kitty. The other *arisan* in the village are concentrated in the hamlet of Wringinkurung and are organised within religious praying groups, and aim at saving money to buy flour (women) and meat (men) for *Idul Fitri*. The direct impact on social security of these *arisan* is limited except for its saving purposes and its network function through which potential support might be channelled if needed.

In this respect the experiment with an *arisan* in Dluwang, started by Hamim, son of a minor, local religious leader is interesting. In this *arisan*, social relationships are explicitly used to save, not for security, but for making investments. Hamim recently returned from an Islamic boarding school (pesantren) near Bondowoso. Having been taught to spread and strengthen Islam by combining prayer groups with social activities such as *arisan*, he attempted to start a prayer *arisan* in his neighbourhood. His neighbours refused to join as they did not like the idea. They wanted a ‘saving *arisan*’, without a fixed deposit, thus being able to overcome periods of shortages if they had no money.

---

Eventually, Hamim started an *arisan* with about 25 members where the winner is drawn one week before the kitty is paid out. In this week, the members of the *arisan* have time to collect and think about how much money they are going to deposit for the winner. On later occasions, if they win the kitty, their donation has to be repaid within one week. Thus, the kitty fluctuates in the amount which each person receives and the *arisan* functions as a trusted channel through which to save in a number of other people. After one cycle, it seems that people use this *arisan* to deposit and safeguard money from small windfalls they received in any week, to be returned in one lump sum should they ‘win’. These payouts can be used to buy a rice or fertiliser, to pay for part of a *selamatan*, and on some occasions to invest in chicken, house building materials, or even a calf.\(^2\)\(^4\)

**When life gets difficult**

Where or whom to turn to?

*Old age care and fostering*

In the case of funerals, and the huge costs involved for the burial, the meals, and the *selamatan*, the mourning family itself pays most of the expenses. Usually, they sell cattle, sell or pawn land, gold or goods.\(^2\)\(^5\) If these resources are not enough, they search for loans from neighbours, patrons, or relatives.

Children are nurtured, fed, and raised with great love and care. Having no children is a great grief for couples, a reason for loneliness, feelings of incompleteness, and often a source of shame. In talking about the future, and who will care for them in their old age, villagers often mention children as the first and most important means of support. When people get older, and are no longer able to work, parents expect their children to care for them, provide food, basic health care, company, and organise *selamatan* if asked. However, in many cases, children are not prepared to do so.

In the village survey of 100 households, 16 families claimed to be caring for an elderly father, mother (in two cases a father and a mother), aunt, or elderly neighbour without children. Most of these elderly were still living on their own, often having their own income and they cooked independently.\(^2\)\(^6\) In general, care meant to the informants: giving whatever was needed and possible, such as food, clothes, firewood, attention, and help at *selamatan*. Sometimes this meant full daily support, but in many cases, care entailed not more than irregular visits, an incidental meal, or financial or material support on special occasions such as house repair, *selamatan* and at *Idul Fitri*.

\(^2\)\(^4\) This is a very unusual *arisan*, as members donate and receive unequal amounts. The inherent advantage of common *arisan*, a fixed amount of money, is reduced. Moreover, those who receive relatively large amounts of money should be prepared to pay back, at any time, within a week. On the other hand, both rich and poor people can join, it has a saving function, and is able to be flexible and to generate, in peak periods, more savings than common *arisan*.

\(^2\)\(^5\) If family land needs to be sold or pawned, close relatives should first be consulted and they have the first right of buying, frequently for a lower price.

\(^2\)\(^6\) For this reason, in most cases these elderly were not included in the survey.
Of the elderly in Krajan, about half are not being cared for in a substantial way, or on a regular basis. Many of them are childless, while the rest has children who do not, or only partially, care for them. Children who do not provide care for their parents include: children who are away from the village and do not send any remittances, those children who are a drain on the parents instead of supporting them (*anak nakal*), those who neglect their parents or leave small grandchildren at the care of grandparents (in cases of migration and remarriage), and children who are too poor to support their parents. Of the 25 elderly widows in my survey, 12 of them did not receive any significant help from their children. Except for one, these 12 were all considered as belonging to the lowest social class. These widows (ages ranging from 45 to about 60), had to make a living on their own, and survived by weaving baskets, taking care of cattle, gathering firewood, by small agricultural jobs (harvesting and transplanting rice), and by gleaning at rice and maize harvests. Of the other 13 widows, eight were also active in trying to earn money and only received help from children in the event of shortages. Only five widows were fully taken care of by their children (in two cases by their grandchildren).  

For those who do not have children, fostering might be an option. On average, one out of five Krajan children are fostered. Of the elderly in my survey, in eight cases widows or couples (aged over 40) had neither own or fostered children. In the surveyed families, 24 children had been fostered (20% of the households with children). By fostering a child, new or closer kinship relations are formed and existing kinship ties between families are articulated. Often richer families (with or without children) ask the children of poorer relatives to live with them. If no close kin is available, they might foster a

---

27 The age of the widows ranged from about 45 to over 70 (estimated age). Some of them were widowed because of the death of the husband (*janda mati*), others were divorced (*janda cerai*).

28 Official Indonesian demographic figures on childlessness are repeatedly reported to be unreliable and so are not used here. Older figures from independent researchers, Hull and Tukiran (1976), show that East Java ranks among the highest areas of childlessness of ever-married women, aged above thirty years, in Indonesia. The percentages were, in 1976, nearly 17% for rural and 23% for urban areas in East Java (Hull and Tukiran, 1976). This age-group is now over 50 years old, indicating that there is a large group of older people in East Java without children. Recent research in rural Malang, reports that of 21% of the elderly (men and women) claim never to have had children: Schröder-Butterfill and Kreager (2001:15). According to the authors, this figure is likely to overestimate primary sterility slightly, as “some people without children may never admit that they have had a child who died.” This 21% does not include those who will lose children and become childless later. This means that we can expect a large group of childless elderly to remain in the future. Moreover, as a similar number of people in Krajan are childless in the sense that their children are not able or not willing to care for their parents, the old age care function of children may apply in only half of the cases. This will cause problems for demographers and politicians who assume that children are, and should be, the primary form of elderly care, and that local practices of fostering can be interpreted solely as a child substituting mechanism. I found that fostering by widows can have other reasons, such as company and care provision for the child.

29 A recent study of fostering in Cameroon (Notermans, 2003), shows that, contrary to common-sense expectations, it is often not the poorer relatives who ask their richer relatives to take care of their child in order to lessen the pressure on household budgets, but that the contrary is more often the case. In general, however, richer people go to their poorer relatives to ask to be allowed to take care of a child or foster it.
child of another family. Under fostering arrangements, the foster parents pay the schooling expenses of that child and sometimes the wedding expenses as well. Depending on the situation, a foster child might be given inheritance rights on land and cattle while they may inherit from the biological parents, that is, if they care for them in their old age.

In Krajan, the fostering party usually takes the formal initiative to invite a child, although sometimes the child-giving family implicitly brought forward the suggestion. In this way, both families benefit from the relationship, and often the poorer family the most. For a poor family, the advantages of giving a child to foster parents are that one of their children receives better care, food, education, and future prospects and they save the costs of rearing a child (education, paying for the necessary lifecycle rituals (*selamatan*), and the costs of a wedding including bridal gifts). Besides this, their ties with richer family members are strengthened and so is their support network, and the foster child living with a richer family is supposed to help its biological parents in times of need. For the richer families with children of their own, moral considerations sometimes seem to be more important than economic ones. In their perspective, they care for their relatives by giving fostered children a better future which contributes to their social status. On the other hand, they are able to use the labour force of the adopted child for household chores and other jobs: in the case of boys, the fostering family can raise more cattle and frequently an adopted child can be used to do domestic and productive tasks that their own children cannot, or are not willing to, do such as hauling water, fetching fire wood, preparing meals, cutting cow fodder, cleaning stables, and watching over cattle, goats, and chickens. If a married couple remains childless, they tend to adopt at a very young age and raise it as their own child by performing and paying for all the necessary life cycle rituals showing publicly that the child is fully theirs. Such a child automatically receives the rights to inherit, but also the obligation to care for the parents. In general, it loses the right to inherit from his or her biological parents, but never the moral obligation to care.

In Krajan, I came across a few specific cases where fostering for old age care had failed. In one case, a couple had adopted a young boy, but after his marriage, he turned to gambling. He asked his foster parents for help to cover his debts and they gave him a bull, which he sold to cover his debts. After a while, he started to play again. When he came for money a second time, the foster parents refused, and declared him not to be their child anymore. The man went away and left the village. They have lost track and do not know where he is and what he is doing. Since then, the couple refer to themselves as childless again. In another case, of a childless widow, the biological parents took an adopted child back from her, as they did not believe she was taking good care. Clearly, the arrangement had failed. I got the impression that this widow was too poor to care properly for this child.

A special case of fostering concerns childless widows. Widows living alone and without caring children are often given a daughter by a relative to be cared for, and to provide care when the widow gets older and unable to work.
The child is considered to offer good company to the widow who otherwise would be living alone. If older, the girl can care for the old woman and will then inherit her belongings. From the 24 fostered children I came across in my village survey, seven of these children were living with six widows, meaning that around a quarter of all widows in Krajan have a child living with them.

I found, in the survey eight cases of childless people (not having any surviving children) of whom five were widows and three were couples without their own or fostered children. If we look at widows without caring children, either because they are not living in the village (see, Bu Suripa in the introduction), or with children not able or willing to care, the figures are much higher. Five other widows have been given a grandchild to care for, and are locally not considered childless. In Krajan, this practise of ‘giving’ children to live with old women is not explicitly seen as a fostering arrangement, but it is often mentioned that it is so pitiful (kasihan) if a grandmother has to live alone. In reality, however, these widows do not receive much care, but at least they receive attention and have daily company. On the contrary, it is these widows who have to supply care to these grandchildren, in order to lessen the burden on their own children who are not able or willing to care well for their own children. In some cases, this was a real burden for these elderly. Without the certainty that these grandchildren will support their grandmother when they get married.

Kinship

In discussions on vulnerability and social security, kinship is often mentioned as an important or even crucial mechanism offering social security and a safety net for people in times of need or adversity (Von Benda-Beckmann et al., 1988: 12; Wolf, 1966). Van Leliveld, for instance, discusses at length the rights to economic resources and assistance from relatives in Swaziland: “Kinship has its function in distributing wealth in Swazi society. The kinship system not only regulates social life and relationships of people, but also attaches, at the same time, a variety of economic obligations and rights to kinship members” (Leliveld, 1994: 168). In most societies in the world, strong normative conventions exist pointing to the moral responsibility to help relatives in cases of need. In reality, however, morality may differ from the practice and the importance of kinship differs between societies.

---

30 The number of childless widows and fostered children is too low for a statistically reliable interpretation. However, observations in the village and other studies in East Java have comparable figures. Marianti (2002), Schröder-Butterfill and Kreager (2001).
31 I did find two childless men, who remarried a childless widow. In the two cases, the men had become childless due to a divorce. In one of these cases the children stayed with the man’s former wife in another town. In the other case, the man married, at a later stage, a woman with children while his only child had died recently.
32 In two cases in the survey, I came across grandchildren who, after being married themselves, were supporting their grandparents by regular visits, some food aid and sometimes money.
When life gets difficult

In Krajan, for a variety of reasons, it is important to know your kin and to maintain good relationships with them. These relationships are expressed and reproduced at weddings, funerals and selamatan and at Idul Fitri: people go and visit kin and family to share meals, presents, sweets or snacks, and pay a tribute to their relatives, thus maintaining and rebuilding relationships. Women make biscuits and distribute them among kin. Even very poor families try to produce enough biscuits to pay tribute to their richer kinfolk. In Krajan, rich villagers know more kin, are able to trace more distant relatives, and express more often the importance of kinship as a way to keep contact, exchange information, or ask help.\(^\text{33}\)

Are relatives in Krajan such an importance source of support? A closer look at the actual support received from relatives in Krajan provides a different picture. In the case of temporary food shortages, or the need of small loans of food or money, people seldomly go to relatives such as brothers, sisters, uncles, nephews, nieces, or cousins. They first try the shop, parents (or children), or neighbours. At selamatan, weddings, and labour parties, kin is an important provider of sumbangan, and the donations of relatives are usually the most substantial, but they seldomly contribute to the costs beforehand when the family is borrowing rice, animals, or money to organise the occasion. Kin support to cover the costs of funerals, severe illness, and hospitalisation varies considerably between households. In some cases, neighbours and patrons contributed much more, in covering the costs, or were giving loans, while only in some cases did relatives covered the lion’s share. The types of support given by relatives consist of financial support, emotional support, and support in kind (with goods or rice) but, in most cases, relatives were not crucial in providing financial help. It seems that on these occasions, contrary to my expectation, that the neighbourhood is the first and foremost supporting agency, and only if the neighbourhood falls short, will kin provide all the necessary aid and loans. Except for parents to children and vice versa - and to a lesser extent between siblings and cousins - the contributions of kin generally did not exceed the contributions made by good friends and close neighbours. In many cases, brothers and more distant kinsmen asked for interest on loans provided for funerals or hospitalisation costs. In less than 15% of the funerals, relatives were the main providers of significant (financial or material) support. The same was true for hospitalisation. I came across a number of cases in which a family was confronted with a death of a household member and could not pay for a decent funeral because relatives did not give any financial support. Sometimes, there were conflicts or long lasting feuds at stake, but it also happened that relatives were said not to be willing or able ‘to waste money on a party for other people’s friends’, because they would never receive any sumbangan from these visitors in return.

\(^{33}\) Hüsken (1988: 226) observed, for rural Central Java, that kinship relationships are often more important and more extended in richer families than in poor. In general, poor villagers know their rich kin better than vice versa.
Although the assistance of relatives in the case of bereavement turned out to be limited in a financial or material sense, support is always important in an emotional sense. It is close relatives who help prepare the food, give advice, comfort, bring invitations, find buyers for cattle or land, negotiate prices, do the shopping for meat in town, and join in the praying.

In the case of engagements and weddings, old age care, and education, kin is the main supplier of financial and emotional support and care. For weddings, in a third of the cases, close relatives paid most of the wedding costs (often a loan), or lent cattle. If relatives paid for these occasions, they rarely asked for interest and, sometimes they provided loans without expecting ever being paid back. Paying for a good wedding is probably a better investment than paying for a funeral. In old age, the elderly without children can fall back on close relatives for food support, minor financial aid, and care. In cases where children are absent and the husband or wife has died, and an old man or woman is ill or can no longer earn an income, close kin often take them in their home and care for them until they die.

The support of kin becomes most visible when brothers and sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins become brokers of property and money, ceremonial leaders, organising the practicalities of the funeral. Moreover, when it comes to engagements and weddings, relatives play an even more important role in negotiating bridal gifts, extending loans, and sending out invitations. I came across several cases where uncles or other close kin paid for higher education, or parts of the tuition fees of nephews, nieces, or cousins.

It is in everyday economic life that these relatives are the most important source of support. They are of help when one needs work or trade contacts, as kin can be a valuable source of information, mediation, and brokerage. The economic value of relatives lies more in their intermediary role in gaining direct and indirect access to resources and various kinds of investments, rather than in direct financial support in the event of adversities.

Neighbours, friends, and the neighbourhood

Next to close and distant kin, neighbours (tetangga) and the neighbourhood (lingkungan) - provided relationships are sound - are a major source of small-scale daily support and assistance. Maintaining good relationships with neighbours is crucial to insure against small and everyday insecurities. At funerals, for instance, neighbours help with all the work and organising activities and, if the neighbours are wealthy, they may provide significant amounts of animals, money, rice, and loans. The neighbourhood is important not because it may provide extensive support, but because it may help with small contributions in cash, labour, or commodities. In that respect, the neigh-

34 Nephews and nieces (keponakan) are of special importance and more often take on the responsibility to help financially in times of need. Villagers indicated in the survey that they would prefer to help, and are inclined to lend more money to nephews and nieces than to other kin.
bourhood is much more important than relatives, patrons, or village schemes (although these often overlap, as neighbours may also be relatives, friends, and patrons). It is in the neighbourhood that most redistributive life cycle rituals, *selamatan*, take place. Further, at this level, small loans, free meals and snacks (for children), small gifts of food, assistance during illness, funerals, house building, harvesting, and care for small children are provided. While baby-sitting and care of the elderly are first and foremost the responsibility of the nuclear family, and of parents and children, neighbours often contribute to keep an eye on small children and take care of the elderly in a familiar and spontaneous way (see table 5.1 at the end of this chapter). The neighbourhood then is the basic locale and unit of organisation for most village institutions for support, assistance, and mutual help, although it not always functions in that way. Relationships are not always good between all members and not all neighbours join all voluntary activities. Krajan neighbourhoods are dense, relationships and exchanges can be intensive, but neighbourhoods are certainly not romantic islands of harmony.

Historically, the government has been well aware of the importance of these neighbourhoods. The smallest administrative unit (RW, *rukun warga*, size: 15 to 20 households) has, for a long time, been the basis of government organisation. It reflects the ideal (and stereotypical) view of harmonious neighbourhoods where solidarity and mutual help is supposedly strong. The New Order government always targeted these RWs in order to strengthen its local influence by introducing programmes that build upon mutual support, coherence, and solidarity in the neighbourhoods, such as savings groups (*arisan*), women's associations, and mutual work activities (*gotong royong*).

An example of the forms of support and minor care provided in a typical neighbourhood is the *lingkungan* of Pak Marjam in lower Dluwang. Pak Marjam has leprosy and over the last few years his condition has deteriorated as he somehow lost contact with the leprosy health programme, which used

---

35 Although severe tensions can exist between neighbours, relationships are never bad with all neighbours, and in case of a burial or other severe event, conflicts or bad feelings are pushed aside for a while.

36 The importance of these small forms of social security in neighbourhoods is difficult to assess. In the village survey, most informants could mention a few significant cases of neighbourly support they had provided or received. However, they never mentioned these day-to-day forms of support, virtually too natural to mention. These can be observed but will never be revealed by large surveys. In daily observations and interactions, the importance of having good relationships in the neighbourhood was stressed and stressed again. "Because we need good neighbours", or "we ought to do it here together." The saying, 'a good neighbour is better than a far friend', definitely holds in Krajan.

37 The neighbourhood (*lingkungan*) is often visible as a separate, distinguishable cluster of houses where people refer to as belonging to. It does not need to be the same as the RW, although in most neighbourhoods RW and *lingkungan* overlap. Sometimes, the neighbourhood is smaller than the RW, especially in remote hamlets of Krajan like Morsungai and Pakualas. In other cases, the neighbourhood is larger than the RW, like for instance in Wringinkurung, where generally a distinction is made between a part above the river, and below the river. The RW has first been founded by the Japanese in 1942 as the *tonarigumi* which was a means for social control.
to regularly supply medication. Due to his illness, he is not able to work and sits most of the time in front of his home watching passers-by. His wife weaves baskets, works occasionally in the rice fields of neighbours and grows some maize and cassava on their tiny plot. The money she earns is nowhere near enough to support her husband and their three children.

The parents and some aunts of Pak Marjam live nearby, but they are too poor to support him. The Marjam family’s eldest son is fostered by distant kin in Tamankursi. The two other children are five and seven years old, do not attend school, and roam around in the neighbourhood. In the mornings, when Bu Marjam is working away, they visit relatives or other neighbours and receive a free breakfast, snacks, boiled cassava, or a roasted maize cob.

If there is no food at all in the house, and borrowing has become impossible, Bu Marjam walks the great distance to her parents and relatives in Tamankursi. Sometimes, these trips are successful and she is given some money, but often she only receives a meal and some food to take home for the children. On such days, Pak Marjam also goes out to visit friends from the past, distant kin, or even the village head. In general, on these trips, he receives at least some coffee, a free meal, and something to smoke. If his children join him, these trips are more successful as they are more to be pitied (kasihan). Clearly, he uses his obvious handicap as a means to more effectively ask for help by begging. Regularly, the village counsellors give him some help and, once, his house was repaired as a gift from the village head.

Nowadays, Pak Marjam has lost most of the control over his fingers and is no longer able to roll his own cigarettes. A couple of times a day he goes to his neighbours and asks them to roll one for him. As he is coming too often, he is not invited to share a meal, and people still consider him able to find a meal for himself. As one of the neighbours commented: “I know he has leprosy, but why does he not try to work at least a little? I work hard everyday, and I still have nothing, he doesn’t work at all and receives a new house for free.”

Living closely together makes the needs of others highly visible, and between neighbours their close ties make assistance in times of need seem a logical thing. However, this closeness and visibility can also easily lead to tensions. Neighbourhoods are neither harmonious entities, nor locales of uncontested, unconditional, or charitable forms of support. Neighbourhood assistance is often enforced, calculated, and strictly reciprocal in nature. Although limited in scope and importance, social relationships in the neighbourhood remain the most fertile setting to organise selamatan, mutual labour arrangements, small loans, arisan, and prayer groups, as other sources of help tend to be even more restricted.

**Patronage**

The extent and scope of patronage in Krajan is modest when compared to other countries in South East Asia. There are no large landlords controlling peasants’ lives. However, there are two types of petty patronage in Krajan, one based on control over resources such as land and cattle, as in the case of Pak
Patik, and another based on political (and sometimes religious) power, as Bagenda. In many cases, they allow their clients to have a share in cultivating their lands or raising their cattle, but in the event of an emergency support is more of a financial and occasional nature.38

Crucial to the first type of patronage is the ‘share raising of cattle’ as described in Chapter 4. Caring for cattle and dividing the profit is one of the most common and most stable ways of making an income, of saving, and securing assets for times of need. As shown in the previous chapter, the labour arrangements of share tenancy and harvest shares (paron and babun) do offer some access to resources for landless villagers, but only to a limited extent.

For babun, cattle-raising, and cooperative mutual labour arrangements, the fringe benefits of the relationship with the employer are often more important than the direct material revenues. Establishing and maintaining good and close relationships with such landowners, the orang kaya of Krajan, increases for instance the chances on loans, cash advances, aid in times of emergency, work, new cattle sharing contracts, and small gifts at Idul Fitri. In the case of adversities or sudden deaths, a patron or his wife will, if no other support is available, often give emergency loans, provide a white burial cloth, some rice, or other small necessities needed for the burial, praying ceremonies, or selamatan. Without such a relationship, it is hard to claim support in times of need. If these relationships are maintained over time, they take the form of more permanent patron-client bonds in which both parties have rights and obligations. As Hefner (1990) writes:

“In private conversation, full time laborers underscore themes of trust and personalised attention, insisting that they work not just for their wages but because of special kindness the employer shows. In part, of course, these comments are intended to put a good face on a demeaning situation. But the social implications for the labor relationship are real. The employer-become-patron assumes responsibilities beyond those of the wages he pays. He provides a new set of clothes each year, gives bonuses when his worker has a ritual festival, and allows time off with pay if the worker has family problems. Most important, the patron provides a significant measure of social insurance by advancing interest-free loans during difficult times. In the long run, these loans may not be repaid even if the employee severs ties with the employer” (Hefner, 1990: 151).

Such observations apply to many cases in Krajan since labourers will always try to call upon the moral obligation of their patron. However, not all patrons give in. It is rare for patrons to take responsibility for all expenses or structural help for a selamatan, or during the period after a funeral. Some large landowners are able to turn down many demands for help, as in the case of Patik and Satrawi. However, Patik does provide some minor forms of help.

such as clothes, tobacco, and share tenancy contracts for land and cattle. His wife is probably more important in this respect by providing small gifts of food, small loans of money, rice, and maize, free meals for Satrawi's children, and used clothes and free biscuits at *Idul Fitri*. If a real disaster hits the Satrawi family, it is likely that even such a greedy patron as Patik would accept his responsibility and help the family through the first days.

In exchange for these gifts and incidental free meals, and employment and small loans, patrons benefit from the labour force and the loyalty of their clients. On balance, one may conclude that patrons benefit most in economic and political respects (see end of Chapter 4). As Scott (1966: 39) says about patronage in general, in Krajan, clients seem to give up individual freedom, maximum returns on labour and justice, in return for the compensating security provided by the patron. Easy access to the landlord's credit is often the motive for remaining part of patronage relationships. Security is preferred to short-term income gains.

Political patronage in Krajan is provided by local, political, and religious leaders, such as the village head, village officials, forest officials, and religious leaders (*kiai*). These patrons provide their clients with work, and access to credit and business opportunities, in return for loyal political support and friendship. Establishing a group of loyal political followers is important, especially for the village head and his village officials such as the secretary and hamlet heads, as they thus can assure votes for re-election.

Political patrons are important for support in an emergency. In about 40% of all emergency cash loans in the event of death, illness, and bankruptcy, when the family could not pay and did not receive any support from others, the village head, his mother, the village secretary, or the head of the hamlet provided credit. Even if these political patrons did not provide the cash themselves they were able to negotiate credit, assistance, or help for their clients. In the case of significant loans and material assistance, many loans have to be paid back with labour, in kind (tobacco, lumber, or wood), in services, and primarily in long-lasting political loyalty or dependency.

Especially in the cases of religious-political patronage, religious leaders seldom give direct support or credit, but use their influence to mediate in finding credit from landowners and businessmen in their network. As brokers between the needy and the affluent they have moral, religious, and political authority to call on rich followers to help out. As in other forms of patronage and brokerage, they receive long-term loyal commitment from their clients in return.

*State support and village politics*

From the early 1960s till the beginning of the 1990s, rural Indonesia used to be the main focus of government development initiatives but, in the mid-1980s, government interest started to shift to urban areas and the industrial sector. Nevertheless, government funding remains important in the village. As with most villages in Java, Krajan benefited - although rather late - from
investments in agriculture, education, health care, and infrastructure. The village head and officials benefited from all the projects, as they were the ones to handle these funds. By appropriating a sizeable amount from these funds and by distributing the rest mainly among relatives, friends, and loyal clients, they were able both to enhance their position and to improve their own livelihood.

Since the early 1980s, in Krajan not only roads, but also irrigation works have been improved, schools have been constructed, a health post with nurse (bidan) established, as well as the infrastructure of piped water, electricity, and some basic sanitation. Although some of these services are badly maintained, facilities have definitely been improved in the last two decades. With the improved road, public transport to Bondowoso has increased, and access to the market has become easier.

Besides these projects, programmes such as the founding of a village cooperative KUD (Koperasi Unit Desa) and the establishment of rural credit programmes KUT (Kredit Usaha Tani) came to the village, although the KUD has declined in importance over the years. Krajan was classified as a remote and underdeveloped IDT village (Impress Desa Tertingal) in 1990 and since then, special development projects to alleviate rural poverty have been carried out.

The benefits of all these programmes to the development of the Krajan economy are difficult to assess. Today, most irrigation canals, dams and sluices operate. Cash crop production has clearly intensified since the opening up of the area and seasonal migration has increased. The village cooperative, however, has collapsed due to mismanagement and regional government attempts to influence and control the village economy, corruption, and due to distrust among the village farmers. The village credit programmes yielded differential effects. In some periods loans were successfully obtained and repaid (mostly by richer villagers), but in other years, the schemes were a disaster like when in 1999, two thirds of the KUT-loans were appropriated by the village head and invested in his private enterprises.

These New Order investments did not directly improve the living conditions of the landless and the land poor. Richer farmers with a surplus of land and capital benefited substantially more than the village poor; in particular, village heads and village officials reaped profits from the projects and the new cash flows. Well-connected poor villagers could temporarily be employed on construction work of roads, schools, irrigation canals, and village buildings, but wages remained low. Large parts of the funds leaked away into the hands of the village head, district government employees, and junior village officials to finance luxury items such as motorbikes, television sets, radios, and cars (all purchased outside the village).

For the poor, only a few programmes were significant. A free health care scheme could have helped them, but it collapsed soon after its start. The government policy of boosting agriculture though did increase employment. Some poor families received intermittent help such as toolboxes for enhancing craftsmanship in the village, coffee seedlings, ducks, goats, chicken, and calves. In general, however, most programmes were a crushing failure: the gifts were sold as soon as possible, the goats ate the coffee trees, ducks were
stolen, and chickens died due to chicken pest. Only in a few instances were vil-
lagers able to make a difference and start something new: by raising goats, a
few people were able to purchase a cow, or improve their house; and those
who had planted coffee trees and avoided the goats reaped a windfall when,
at the start of the economic crisis, coffee prices rose dramatically. Three vil-
lagers earned substantial money by making wooden cabinets and furniture
for the local market using the tools provided by the government.

In order to obtain help and support from the government or to take part
in projects, good relations with the village head, the village secretary, the rep-
resentatives of the village developmental board (LKMD), and the heads of
hamlets are essential. If you are not well-known to these people, there is little
possibility of working for them. As money-earning jobs are scarce and there-
fore valuable political instruments, Bagenda always tries to let people from
different fractions and hamlets gain some benefit from them. The more he
spreads the benefits, the more loyal followers he can generate.

Before the crisis in 1996, a World Bank sponsored road improvement proj-
ect was launched in most of the remote desa of rural Java. The project aimed
at infrastructure improvement, and all villagers were supposed to join in and
earn some money. Krajan received, in 1996, over 50 million Rupiah to upgrade
the dirtroads towards Pakuarah, Dluwang, Pakuarah, and Andungsari, and
those who joined were paid Rp 5,000 a day, more than they could earn in other
jobs. Loyal families, close to the village administration, got most of the jobs.
Moreover, relatives and close friends of these people got the better jobs as fore-
men, instructors, or coordinators, and could earn much higher daily wages.
The project administration was supposed to be open, and long lists and docu-
ments were displayed on the walls of the balai desa (village office). However,
behind this official facade, costs could be reduced and incomes improved by
using second-class building materials, and by purchasing stones, sand, and
wood directly from the village head and village officials. A double bookkeep-
ing system was used to suggest to officials that these items were purchased at
market prices. By the time the project was completed, most village officials had
bought television sets, motor cycles, or improved their houses.

Religious charity

The Madurese consider themselves good Muslims, carrying on the tradition
of the great Madurese ulama who spread Islam on Madura and East Java from
the 16th century onwards. Other Indonesians also regard the Madurese as
pious, orthodox, or even 'fanatical' Muslims. Being Muslim, and a member of
NU (Nahdatul Ulama), has become part of the Madurese cultural identity.
Two of the three main kiai in Krajan, however, belong to a relatively moder-
ate current of Islam, while the third is of a stricter vein. Besides the three reli-

39 The village head ordained, for instance, to replace the iron bars in concrete constructions with
bamboo for small bridges, tubes, and walls. Two years after its construction, the bridge of
Wringinkurung collapsed under the weight of a truck with sacks of rice.
gious leaders, other Islamic scholars - who have been educated in one of the numerous religious boarding schools (pesantren) in East Java or Madura - teach praying and Koran reading in small schools (surau). Also among them, we find a variety of strict and liberal adherents.

In Krajan, kiai play an important role: they are seen as learned men, often able to come into contact the supernatural world. They teach the common believers how to pray, and the norms and values of Islam. They are often also healers, believed to control white magic; they advice on marriages and lead and pray at weddings, funerals, and selamatan. Besides this, they are often consulted over conflicts, marriage problems and for economic advice. In return for these services, they receive small gifts, in rice or cash, which are a significant contribution to their income.41

Officially, one of the most important Islamic institutions, relevant to providing social security, is the zakat. This is called one of the five pillars of Islam, and includes almsgiving to poor and needy people. The Koran indicates, in Sura 9:60, how the alms should be used: for the advancement of Allah's cause, for freeing prisoners and debtors, for distribution among the poor and needy, for travellers, for converts, and for those engaged in collecting alms. The amount of money or goods is not fixed (Van Dijk, 1994:104). There are two kinds of almsgiving paid to the local kiai; the zakat-mal and the zakat-al-fitra. Zakat-mal applies to richer people, is not very often practised by NU Muslims, and entails giving a percentage of the harvest or from livestock. Zakat-al-fitra is paid by everyone, after the fasting month of Ramadan, and entails a small gift of two kilos of rice to their religious leader. Usually, this is the kiai who has been their religious teacher of praying and reading Koran.

Institutionalised religious practices such as almsgiving at the festival after Ramadan hardly have any social security function, as donations are small and used by the religious leaders themselves.42 For most of the kiai of Krajan, these

40 As religious leaders have much political prestige. Their political importance becomes explicitly articulated during village elections where followers of the most orthodox kiai voted for PPP, and of the others for the government party Golkar. In the reformative 1999 elections, the former PPP following moved to PKB, and the others to PDI-P, supported by and under strong influence of the village head.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, less strict, syncretic Muslims (abangan) and religious families have always been rivals in controlling village resources and village leadership. Since 1991, Bagenda has been the village head of Krajan, he is a descendent of the first postcolonial village head who had strong ties with the military and who was also not very religious. Since the mid 1960s, strong religious families have ruled the village. Since the start of his rule, Bagenda has never become on very friendly terms with the more orthodox kiai of Krajan.

41 These contributions are explicitly referred to as gifts, not as payments. At selamatan, some money is put in the basket with food for the kiai. If kiai are visited to ask a favour, for advice, or to pray, they receive money on the first greeting hidden in the palm of the hand.

42 I observed that all villagers paid the necessary minimum amount of around 2 kg per person. Each villager paid this to the religious leader he or she he had received education from. Villagers perceived the gift as a means to honour their guru and as a kind of religious tax. Even the poorest people pay zakat, and I did not hear of anyone ever not paying, although it was said that widows did not have to pay. For the poorest families, 2 kg of white rice is yet another burden.
contributions are a welcome addition to their food stocks, as they are not rich. Nothing from the alms was redistributed among the village poor; on the contrary, the village poor felt obliged to contribute to the kiai as a form of universal taxation.

Slaughtering ceremonies, of cattle or goats, by rich villagers on the Islamic festival hari korban (idul-adha), when the birth of Mohamed is remembered, have more characteristics of redistribution. Neighbours, friends, and relatives can come to such a meal or receive free meat from the organising family. In Krajan however, few animals are slaughtered, and meat portions are very small since they are distributed among many families. Most of the poor are not invited, or do not dare to come.

A similar kind of institution with a redistributive function is kaul (vow), a sort of thanksgiving selamatan with free food and meat. These are organised when someone is very grateful for a large profit, the birth of a child, or has made a promise to Allah. Both rich and poor villagers can organise kaul but the amounts of offerings differ. So, although in theory religion-based charity could be important, their impact remains limited and in practice the major redistributive Islamic institutions contribute little to poverty alleviation.

Conclusions

From the presentation above, it has become clear that if people and families are confronted with an emergency or adversity, such as death, illness, misfortune, or a loss of shelter or assets, most of them can fall back on village institutions or on their social networks. Support of these institutions or networks however, is rarely enough to cover all needs, and to protect against all negative consequences of adversities. Moreover, those who cannot invest much in social relationships cannot expect much from the different forms of social security in the village.

If I sum up, the most significant forms of support for the included in times of an emergency in Krajan are: sumbangan, loans, labour assistance, and a helping hand from the neighbourhood, from kinsfolk, and from patrons (see Table 5-1). Among these, political patronage - as long as the patron remains in power - seems sometimes to be of benefit for those who have secured a position as a loyal client and in some cases, political patrons take care of the excluded poor. Occasionally, government assistance can play a role when money provided for village development projects or poverty alleviation is distributed to the village creating labour opportunities. However, considerable amounts are used privately by village officials, either for their own consumption, or for supporting their own relatives, friends, and clientele. Table 5-1 on the next page summarizes the insecurities and different sources of support.
A complicating factor in assessing the role of village social security is that local institutions and arrangements are often of a dual nature and paradoxical. They are not only offering security, but often a source of insecurity as well. The practice of gift giving at weddings, selamatan, and funerals, for instance, provides the receiving family with support to cope with expenses and food provision in the expensive period around such an event. However, at the same time, the contributions are a burden for those invited. Despite these difficulties, most people and households do try to remain part of, and invest in, reciprocal relationships. Others try to escape the pressures and expectations of neighbours, kin, and village institutions, and save resources for their own use (see the chapter 6). Many villagers experience this balancing of resources, claims, and obligations as a difficult dilemma, being torn between taking part in the ritual exchange economy and being eligible for return support, or opting for individual solutions which are neither sufficient, nor secure.

---

1 Own resources
2 Parents, children, brothers and sisters
3 Uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces
4 If relatives are absent
5 Patrons
6 Village leaders
7 In some cases
8 Very occasionally
Here we arrive at the key question of this chapter: how viable and how important are these forms of village-organised social security? Different views exist on the quality of these forms of social security. Some researchers state that these arrangements and institutions have been successful in guaranteeing social security for village members in the past, and have broken down due to external influences such as colonialism, capitalism, and globalisation.43 Others assume that some of the ‘old indigenous social security’ arrangements survived throughout different periods in history and functions - to a certain extent - till the current day.44

Also many Indonesian elites share these views of an existing village social security system. The mythology of mutual help and exchange in the countryside makes up an important part of national political and academic discourses. This belief in the existence of the harmonious Javanese village, where people ‘still’ care for each other, is a powerful and archetypical one. The Bupati (district officer) of Bondowoso told me, for instance, that I was very lucky to be able to live in the desa and to study ‘real’ Indonesian society. He believed in the existence of widespread forms of mutual help as strong bonds between the rich and the poor in the villages. When I told him some stories of people not receiving any support, he got irritated and quickly shifted to another subject as this was clearly what he did not want to hear, and especially not from an outsider.45

The best known early representative of this view in academia is Clifford Geertz who states: “In East and Central Java [we find] villages of “just-enoughs” and “not-quite-enoughs” in which a Byzantine maze of land, share-cropping, and labour rights have tended, until recently, to provide villagers a minimal niche, albeit at declining levels of welfare for all” (Geertz, 1963: 165). In reaction on these ‘shared poverty’ ideas, Hefner writes, “The analyses that emphasize ‘poverty-sharing’ have inevitably misperceived the nature of agrarian hierarchy and overlooked the profoundly differential effect of inequality on welfare and politics” (Hefner, 1990: 114). He continues, on mountainous Java: “First, and most important, the primary guarantor of household welfare here has never been sharecropping, privileged access to work, or any of the other patronage arrangements so widely reported from wet-rice areas of Southeast Asia (Scott 1966; Hart 1986; Hüsen 1969). Household welfare has instead depended on the ability of a man and woman to reap the fruits of their own piece of land.” In other words, village based social security have always been subdue to peoples’ access to resources, income, and poverty.

45 For many - particularly upper-class - Indonesians, the romantic image of a ‘real’ and ‘good’ Java most closely to be found in the villages is important in the ‘construction’ of Javanese identity and helps to deal with changes such as modernisation, monetarisation, and globalisation in the cities. At least in the villages, something of the ‘good’ harmonious past has remained. Reality in Krajan, however, is different. Competition over resources is fierce, solidarity between the poor is hard to find, and jealousy, rivalry, and hate are more common than cooperation.
If we look at Krajan, this does not imply that these institutions and arrangements are meaningless. One the one hand, their function and performance should not be romanticised or taken for granted; on the other hand, the majority of villagers is in principle entitled to several forms of emotional and material support. When they are down and out, they do receive considerable contributions (although never enough to cover all costs). The real problem is that a significant part of the population is virtually excluded from most exchanges and forms of support. One third of Krajan's people practically does not receive any support for the many insecurities they experience in daily life.

These poor require the support of village institutions, but cannot contribute to these institutions, arrangements, and forms of reciprocity. They have poor networks, and therefore face social exclusion from most of the potential benefits. Even if they still can meet some of the expectations of the ritual exchange economy, they pay relatively more than their richer fellows. These paradoxes of local social security can be summarized as follows: Those who have little money pay more for goods as they buy only when absolutely necessary, in smaller quantities, and at the smaller - more expensive - shops in the neighbourhood. Poorer villagers are more vulnerable to insecurities than their richer fellow villagers, and they have less means of protection. Poorer villagers pay relatively more (as proportion from their total income) for their funerals, selamatan, and weddings, while receiving less support and sumbangan on these occasions, because their networks are smaller and their friends and relatives are often poorer. If engaged in mutual help and mutual labour groups, they generally give more labour to their richer neighbours, due to their larger plots, than is reciprocated. Corvée labour and services towards richer village members, politicians, relatives, and patrons are investments and premiums which generally cost more than the social security ever provided by these politicians, patrons, and relatives. Moreover, their labour contributes to the prosperity of such patrons, and thus sustains or increases the gap between rich and poor in rural Java. Those who need credit most can borrow least and pay the highest interest. In Krajan, the iron law of social security: 'those who need most, receive least', as postulated by Macarov (cited in Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann 1996) applies: the poorest villagers are unable to secure their welfare.

Institutions, arrangements, and social relations in the village are definitely not enough to overcome the 'insecurity trap'. If this situation is to be changed, outside intervention, by poverty alleviation and social security programmes, will be needed. Until now, the Indonesian government has promoted education, health, and development in rural areas, and protected the poor by keeping rice prices low, thus contributing to the social security of large populations, but the performance and significance of these programmes was not good enough and should clearly be extended, continued, and enhanced.

In most cases in Krajan, people and households first and foremost have to rely upon their own resources. From a financial point of view, local institutions and arrangements for social security are only supplementary, and never free of charge. Thus, village institutions only work partially and are in gener-
al more important for richer, than for poorer categories. Selfless sharing and simple solidarity among the poor, or between social classes, is rare or nonexistent, and the few saving groups serve social rather than social security purposes. Institutions and arrangements such as kinship, fosterage, neighbourly assistance, patronage, reciprocal gift-giving, and mutual help do exist and can be of importance, but, their scope depends on the individual networks of villagers and they never guarantee significant welfare or social security in the long run. Under this reality, villagers are left - either partially or completely - to their own specific combinations of income sources, savings, and ways of access to resources and social relationships. In the next chapter, I focus on how they do so by combining different resources and relationships, and follow their own social security style.

46 See Lont (2002a) who also argues that the social security functions of arisan in an urban context are limited. In Krajan, where few villagers engage in arisan and the amounts of contributions are small, the importance of arisan is neglectable.
Closely knit webs of social relationships, village institutions, and arrangements for support, can be of help in the event of misfortune or an emergency, but they generally do not offer sufficient, stable, steady, and long-term social security for all villagers. On the contrary, access to support varies between social classes and, in most cases, when villagers are confronted with an emergency or adversity, they first and foremost have to rely on their own resources; either directly by using carefully their savings, cattle, land, if they have any, or, indirectly, by borrowing money and repaying loans through labour. For this reason, villagers need to balance short-term and long-term needs and between individual and household consumption and investments in social security.

In this chapter, I take a closer look at the tensions between individual consumption and saving and investment in village social security, and between habits and customary responses as opposed to strategic actions and creativity. I look at the ways in which people organize their livelihood and social security, and the inherent logic in anticipating and reacting to different kinds of setbacks and adversities. Naturally, for poor villagers, options are limited and they have little room to manoeuvre. Nevertheless, even among lower social classes different mixes of social security exist, and these mixes show similarities with those of other classes. As described in Chapter 1, I use the concept of styles to analyse these different mixes.

Guiding questions for this chapter are: how do villagers cope with contingencies and emergencies, and how do they balance investments in livelihood and in social security? Which patterns or trajectories can be found in the diverse ways of coping and preparing against emergencies? What rationales can be found behind the specific mixes of social security? In order to answer these questions, I first explore the concept of style and describe the styles of social security I found in Krajan. Secondly, I present a number of cases which show these styles within the complexities of everyday life and illustrate the different orientations, choices, and limitations of villagers. Thirdly, I present an overview of the major social security styles found in 195
Krajan and their distribution among the population. Finally, I will discuss the concept of style in a broader perspective.

Analytically, social security can be viewed as a dilemma where individual spending contrast with collective investments. With regard to individual and household security, villagers have to make choices between potentially conflicting options such as investing labour, time, or capital in communal activities and mutual help, or in livelihood activities for direct consumption and personal accumulation. Investing in social relationships, arrangements, and village institutions, requires trust, as the investments will only be returned if the majority of the members of the network are willing to return the favour. Moreover, short-term interests and immediate needs contrast with long-term concerns and less certain future needs. This is, for instance, the situation when one can choose between wage labour with direct cash returns and weak ties with the employer, or taking a babun share of the harvest which comes later, is less certain, but may be higher, and involving much closer ties with the landowner enhancing opportunities for support.

Investments can be made in social relationships and networks (by gift giving, marriage, and making friends), by engaging in reciprocal relations of mutual help; or by individual and household accumulation and saving in cash, cattle or gold. Options for accumulation and investments are confined within realistic financial and social limits and are not simply a matter of free choice. This wide range of options results in diverse, complex and, to a certain extent, unique sets of social security. Notwithstanding this diversity in social security options for individuals and households, we can see patterns in this complexity of options.

It is generally acknowledged that social security opportunities are diverse and unequal. Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1994: 9) for instance write: “People usually compose a social security mix consisting of various arrangements for social security. But not everyone has the same capabilities to draw on existing resources, or to acquire new ones.” It is people who determine that mix, but people do not have equal capacities and equal access to resources. Interestingly, in this quote, the Benda-Beckmanns use composing instead of choosing or selecting, and implicitly refer to the creativity of people in combining various options within the limits of a culturally accepted repertoire of appropriate harmonies, tunes, and social and economic opportunities.

'Composing' social security reflects the practices of combining different opportunities better than the often-heard 'strategy'. A strategy for survival, or for social security, implies that people act strategically, are goal oriented, and intentionally choose between available options. In Krajan, some people may do so, and strategically combine options and investments, manipulating situations or persons, but more often villagers react to events in a customary, stipulated, and habitual way curbed by an established pattern of expectations closely watching and following others.

On the basis of local definitions and categorisations, I distinguish four major patterns, or trajectories. I call these patterns 'styles' of social security. In the process of trying to obtain and maintain a secure and stable livelihood...
people have a specific style of doing things. These styles are the outcomes of dealing with contrasting orientations of people and the actual behavioural alternatives. The first tension is between support, mutual help, and cooperation as against self-insurance and individual accumulation. The second is the tension in economic activities between livelihood activities based on subsistence and local resources against an orientation towards the cash economy and the economic opportunities outside the village.

Styles is not synonymous with strategies or structures. Styles refer to regular patterns of behaviour vis-à-vis adversities, threats, and insecurities because such behaviour is not always, or necessarily, the result of strategic action. Sometimes, clear strategic choices are made, but more often than not, people act according to fixed customary, habitual everyday practices when they are dealing with short-term and long-term needs, and hopes and desires, constrained by social demands and expectations.

Styles are based on specific knowledge and folk concepts used by local people. These concepts reflect categorisations and stereotypes that exist in local society. Villagers order the available options and facilitate their daily choices regarding livelihood and social security. At the same time this local knowledge, and its categorisations and stereotypes, are in essence abstractions that do not fully reflect the actual hustle of activities people employ. To order the diversity of threats and options, actors themselves make qualifications to indicate differences between others and themselves concerning orientations on livelihood, survival, and willingness to support. These qualifications, such a willingness to share or not, and being oriented towards cash or non-cash forms of production, reflect the strategies and orientations of villagers in dealing with threats and insecurities. In the next section, I present some cases of Krajan families coping with these difficulties showing their various orientations.

**Cases of coping**

*The Norwana family: ‘making money by people’*

Fifteen years ago, when the Norwana couple married, they did not start out with many belongings and were ranked as a poor household (*miskin*). The father of Norwana was a peddler, but he died young, and the family of Norwana’s wife were former members of the village administration, but they had become impoverished after 1965. Except for a small piece of *tegal*, they did not inherit any land. Nowadays, they are ranked as having enough (*cukup*), able to make ends meet, organise selamatan if needed, and contribute to those of others. Recently, they bought a small black-and-white television set. “Now, it is time to take a second wife”, Pak Norwana commented jokingly.

Over the years, Bu Norwana made *besek* and secured a minimal level of household needs. In the early years, Pak Norwana was involved in all kinds of agricultural work and took *babun* on fields of large landowners. However, he did not like agricultural work very much and was always looking for other opportunities to make money. In search of work and profit, he travelled a couple of times to Bali and Madura. In Krajan, he tried to earn money by trading in *besek*, he cut forest wood illegally, and tried to find work as a car-
penter. When the new road was opened and competition increased, he abandoned the 
besek trade. In 1995, he was caught by the forest police while hauling lumber. The police 
demanded a large sum of money for his release. Only after two days, and mediation by 
Bagenda, was he freed. Bagenda paid the police, but did not say how much. Nowadays, 
Pak Norwana has abandoned his illegal activities and earns a living as a carpenter, cabi-
netmaker, speculator, trade-advisor, and go-between for large traders and Bagenda. He 
seeks out farmers who are willing to sell cattle, tobacco, land, trees, antique, etc. and 
brings them into contact with traders or Bagenda. If a deal succeeds, he receives a share 
of the profit, if not, he does not loose anything.

Members of the Norwana family go to many selamatan, assist at all mutual help activ-
ities and house building (tolong menolong) activities (often beyond their own neighbour-
hood). At these occasions, his wife donates small gifts of rice. She has got a good name 
for not being greedy, and always willing to help. He is seen as a clever and bold man in 
trade, having many valuable connections and good relationships. In the house of the vil-
lage head, he sits in the second row, is familiar with family members, and is sometimes 
consulted by Bagenda for advice on village matters. For this reason, villagers often seek 
Norwana's advice and ask him to accompany them to the village head, or to mediate help, 
a loan, or assistance. Also in the event of conflict between families, people, or in mar-
rriages, he is often asked to mediate or settle a conflict. Moreover, he has negotiated many 
weddings and bride prices for young people in the neighbourhood. Over the last few 
years, his livelihood has improved, and he and his wife are able to give small loans to fel-
low villagers who are in need of some cash. In return, those people pay interest or are 
ready to provide the family with firewood, lumber, or information on promising deals.

When a government aid or construction programme involves the village, Norwana is 
one of the first to be selected as a member. Over the years, he has received, due to his 
entrepreneurial attitude and good connections, a goat, a number of ducks, a calf, a tool-
box with implements, and several jobs in infrastructure projects. He was a foreman on an 
irrigation canal improvement project, the village piped water project, and on the latest 
road construction project. He has made good profits with the goats: when offspring came, 
he sold 'the whole bunch' in Bondowoso and, with the profit, bought a young heifer to 
be taken care of by a neighbour (mengobu). The ducks have multiplied and roam around 
the village producing eggs, which are sold by his wife to neighbours and local medicine 
traders. The offspring of the heifer formed the beginnings of a small herd of three animals. 
Two were lent to families in need of money in return for pieces of tegal and sawah. On 
these lands, the Norwanas now grow rice, high yielding maize varieties for the market, 
and tobacco. The other animal, a bull, is share-raised by a neighbour and the cash profits 
are sale will be split evenly (oanan). Of the fifteen toolboxes donated to Krajan, only two 
are still owned by the original recipients, the others have been sold, stolen, or lost. With 
these tools as a start, Pak Norwana started to make furniture and cabinets. Nowadays, 
he is one of the best furniture makers in Krajan and every spare day he spends making cup-
boards. Most of the wood used is illegally cut by poorer friends and neighbours, and 
stored at the back of Bagenda's house. In this way, he maintains access to good and cheap 
wood, but avoids the risks and dangers of illegal logging.

When asked about his success and his way of living, he mentions his good relation-
ships, risk-spreading activities, and the wish to make money without working as a manu-
ual labourer. "I cannot do heavy labour and for that reason I had to do something else. My
father taught me that it is better to be clever than to sweat.” By taking part in all the mutual help activities in the neighbourhood, and through his good relationships, he receives information on business opportunities. Due to these relationships and his rising status, he is never short of work. “If something happens to me or my house, those other villagers will help me with labour, food, and loans” he commented. “Moreover, even when I get old, or less healthy, I can continue trading.”

The Norwana family is primarily oriented towards cash earnings and social relationships although they recently have gained more land by taking pawns of tegal and sawah. Their two bulls will generate cash, which can be used for household needs or loans. The profit from trading is invested in new stock and, if possible, in new cattle or loans to tobacco farmers where interest is highest. They are strongly oriented towards social relationships, participation in village institutions and forms of mutual help. Social relationships are important according to the Norwana family: they bring earning opportunities and goodwill.

The Niwati family: looking for money, working alone

Pak Niwati was born in Tamankursi as the third child of a local artist family specialising in popular theatre plays (ludruk) at weddings and festivals. He learned the skills, songs, and jokes from his childhood and accompanied some travelling players for a few months each year. After ten years of marriage, he wanted to marry a second wife in Krajan and - according to him - his first wife agreed. However, soon problems arose. ‘Don’t say to me that there is no money [because all the money goes to the younger one] I don’t want to be pushed aside’, his first wife said. Quarrels increased and Niwati started to live with his second and younger wife, her nine-year-old son, and Bu Sunami, her mother. This was unacceptable to his first wife who sent the village officials (perangkat desa) to force his return. Niwati refused and, eventually, the case was settled through divorce leaving her the house, wedding gifts, and kitchen utensils.

At the time of my first encounter with Niwati in 1998, Pak Niwati was still head over heels in love with his second wife and quite optimistic about his future. He and his new wife had no sawah (ten years earlier her sawah had been washed away by a flood) and the income from his work as a ludruk player had dwindled during the crisis. He now hoped to find a trade, or other work to care for his new family and planned to rent sawah, to grow tobacco, and work together with his wife as wage labourers. “We will do it alone,” he said. “We don’t need other people to make a living. The best thing is to eat less for a while.”

They were unsuccessful. Shifting to another profession turned out to be difficult. Tobacco yields were low and of poor quality and, as newcomer in Krajan, moreover with a dubious reputation as a ludruk player - not many people offered him work. A year later, when I went to interview the couple again, they had left for South Kalimantan to work in the oil palm plantations to repay the debts Niwati had made in his attempts to grow tobacco and establish a trade. The child of Niwati’s wife stayed at home with her mother and I interviewed her instead. Since their departure, Bu Sunami had not received any message or money. Unfortunately, she fell ill for more than 40 days and was no longer able to earn anything. Her grandchild, being too young to officially work, could only earn Rp 500 by cut-
ting and selling grass and cattle fodder to others. Bu Sunami said: “I can live on rice with salt, but even for that we have no money.” Eventually, she sold her four chickens one by one to buy food, and some neighbours took her to the local health post for treatment and she received some injections. She then felt slightly better and could occasionally help neighbours with light work like pounding and sifting coffee beans, cleaning rice, or peeling maize, in return for a meal or some money, rice, or salt. Alternative work opportunities are not available, and she is seldomly asked to help with transplanting rice by the large landowners in the neighbourhood. “I am too old now for that work, nobody wants me”, she sighs. “If I need rice, I borrow from the shop or from neighbours, but the debt already exceeds seven kilos and, if they know that I cannot repay, they will not allow me to borrow again.”

The complicated history of his marriage in Krajan gave Niwati a bad start in his new neighbourhood (Dluwang). Moreover, he first adopted a haughty position of not being interested in his neighbours, exchanges, and mutual help, and he even offended the village officials. “I will take care of my new family, not of my new neighbours,” he said at the beginning. Conversely, his neighbours were not very willing to support him when he was later in need of help. Niwati soon had enough of his new family and neighbourhood and left with his wife in search of a new life, leaving his stepchild and his mother-in-law, Bu Sunami, behind.

It must be doubted, whether they will be successful in Kalimantan and able to send money back. So far, most Krajan migrants searching for work in Kalimantan have not done very well. Those who roam around seeking temporary work in slack periods in the region do sometimes have more luck. But by no means all of them.

Ernawa: opting out

Pak Ernawa lives in the hamlet of Mengkuara and belongs to the category of the poor (miskin). He has no land but cares for two cows. In Mengkuara, opportunities to work in return for a share of the harvest are few, so he went to work in Jember with a group of workers to cut sugar cane. While away, his wife and children cared for the cows. Wages in sugar cane fields are very low although food is provided. If careful, Ernawa can save Rp 1,000 - 2,000 a day, but sometimes there is no work and savings are used to eat and roam around in search of other work. The first time when he returned home from working away, he was successful and bought rice and a radio worth Rp 20,000 from his wages. After a month, he went away again because the food stocks in the house were finished. This time he was not so lucky. His clothes, which he had put at the side of the field, caught fire during cane burning. It were not only a set of clothes he lost, but also money. He had put his savings (after 13 days amounting to Rp 10,000) and his identity card in his sleeves. A friend from Krajan lent him a shirt and money for the trip home.

The families of Niwati, Sunami, and Ernawa are poor and primarily oriented towards cash incomes and wage labour. They prefer to work for a wage, but they also see very few opportunities to make a living in another way. They do not invest much in mutual relationships and, for several reasons, they make
as far as possible their own living. *Pak* Ernawa is an exception in that he is a member of a group of young villagers who roam the region in search of work. When at home, they spent their days gathering cattle fodder, on occasional jobs, and with playing cards together. When money or work opportunities at home are finished, they depart for job hunting again. The leaders of such bands of ‘wage hunters and gatherers’ (Breman, 1994), have useful contacts and know the places to find work. Some work in sugar cane or rice harvesting in the lowlands of Besuki, Bondowoso, or Situbondo. Others go to Madura, work as loggers, or in the coffee plantations and vegetable farms at Ijen plateau, southeast of Bondowoso. Membership of such a labour-searching gang, offers close contacts and the security of a peer group. However, it makes the establishment of, and engagement in, mutual exchange relationships in the village difficult.

*The Horati family: high ambitions, low contributions*

*Pak* Horati has no land and works as a jack-of-all-trades, a craftsman, and a gamelan musician. Both his, and his wife’s, parents were labourers with little or no land. They are ranked as not having enough (*kurang*). In the Suharto years, he was well known for his lobbying activities on behalf of the government party Golkar, and Bagenda’s faction during village head elections. Before the 1999 elections, he first continued to work for Golkar and got paid for that but, later, when he saw that most villagers were favouring Megawati’s PDI-P, he switched to that party. He often goes to *selamatan* and weddings to make music. As a musician, he seldomly pays *sumbangan*. He is quite ambitious, and perceives himself as clever and progressive, able to rise from rags to riches. In the eyes of others, he has not yet made it because he has not saved any money and working as a musician does not bring much status. Further, he is known as a notorious gambler.

The wedding of his first son in 1998 was planned as a big event, where he could show the world that he was able to achieve and organise something. He borrowed money from the village head, and other political friends, and distributed as many as possible invitations around the whole district. Each invitation contained a pack of cigarettes with a written announcement of the wedding, the place, the date, and the kind of entertainments. He bought about a hundred pack of expensive Gudang Garam *kretek* cigarettes, and more than five hundred cheaper Grendel packs. By means of the invitations, the expensive packs were given to rich and important people, and the cheaper ones to the lower and middle classes. If people accepted the pack - and people usually do - they were expected to come to the wedding and make a gift.

He openly said in the village that he had invited many rich people on purpose. By inviting many important and rich people, he hoped to receive large donations. To further stimulate more money to be given, all wedding gifts were to be announced by a speaker (which is not common in Krajan but usual practice in Tamankursi). Simultaneously, he and his wife tried to keep costs low by asking neighbours, relatives, and friends to cook and to assist in all the other kinds of work at the wedding.

The wedding was a disappointment as many important guests did not come, and even many fellow villagers did not show up. He had clearly boasted too much, and the villagers gossiped for days before the wedding about his intention to make a profit out of the feast.
Some decided simply not to come for this reason, others felt free to donate only small amounts. Unfortunately for Horati, many people came with presents in kind, rather than in cash because during the crisis, villagers faced problems in obtaining cash. After the wedding, Horati sold most of the gifts to repay his debts. After long calculations it turned out that he had made some financial profit, but much less than he had expected. His aim to make a big smash and gain some prestige had clearly failed.

Pak Horati had tried to use arrangements and the institutions of sumbangan, neighbourly assistance, and mutual help to give a huge wedding, much grander than his status would require or even allow. Cleverly, he kept costs low by making use of local institutions such as neighbourly assistance and mutual help for weddings and selamatan. Moreover, his theatre friends performed music for free. The returns however were disappointing, and he failed to accumulate wealth or status.

Horati is widely seen as frugal, neither donating much at selamatan and weddings, nor quick to join in mutual help arrangements with others. His wedding strategy was too clever and too cheap in the eyes of many richer Krajan villagers, and therefore they donated relatively little. The large wedding impressed poorer villagers and neighbours, but they could only afford to donate relatively little, partly because they had never received anything from Horati in the past. He is not regarded as a dependable investment, as he does not own cattle or land and prefers to roam around, searching for contracts to play music, for radios to repair, a good bet, or for work in woodcarving or house construction. Such activities do not make him a reliable partner to invest in with gifts, and it is not unlikely that he will become more reliable in the future. Another example of frugal and stingy villagers, albeit much richer, is the Patik family.

Patik ('Scrooge'): rich and stingy

Patik was born into a relatively poor family with many children, but has managed to become one of the ten richest villagers in Krajan. He has worked hard and managed to save and to invest in local resources such as land, cattle, trees, and bamboo. Generally, he is called the 'kreket' (Scrooge) of Krajan. A son of Satrawi once commented: “If we need help or loans, Pak Patik never has money, but if we have a cow, or land to sell, he is always willing to buy; ‘to solve our problems’ he hypocritically says.”

In the perceptions of both Pak and Bu Patik and their two adult children, they acquired their wealth by working hard and spending little. “Especially in the first years of marriage, we tried to eat very carefully, live very simply, and spent as little as possible” Bu Patik said.

1 My assistant Pak Eko and I laboriously noted down all the expenses, visitors, and gifts during the three wedding days. Weeks before the wedding, we started to write down all Horati’s expenses, and during the three days of partying, we calculated all the gifts. Many of the sumbangan in kind, such as cookies and snacks, were put on the tables and served right away to the visitors, other things were left to the married couple, so, only a few gifts could be sold. Overall, his net cash profit was slightly more than Rp 1 million where he had hoped to earn at least Rp 5 million.
They never contributed much to *selamatan*, funerals, or weddings - often Pak Patik did not go but could sustain relationships by sending his wife who was clever in making cookies and gifts, thus saving costs. If he was explicitly invited and had to go, he contributed as little as possible. “On the other hand, these occasions were moments when our children and ourselves could have decent meals, and we always took our children along to *selamatan* and weddings. In this way, we earned our contribution back right away.” Only in the case of close relatives, would they have to contribute more.

The daughter of the Patiks (married and living away) recalls these *selamatan* as big parties. “There was never something special at our home. For me, these *selamatan* were great moments and I was nervous the whole day. Finally, when it was time to go to these parties, I could not eat much and never tried all the delicious food, as I was too afraid, nervous, and shy.” She continued to discuss her Spartan upbringing: “My father was very hard and strict not allowing anything to be wasted. We never ate white rice, never got money for sweets or snacks, and were never allowed to buy something nice for ourselves even when there was money.” Her mother always supported her husband in this and became well known for saying: ‘Don’t spend; let’s buy a calf first.’ But even when they had acquired a lot of cattle, their simple lifestyle continued. Once, when the daughter was a few years old, she was so undernourished that she lost all her hair and people thought she was going to die. “Neighbours told me I was a very ugly child at that time and that my mother told others to take me for free, as she wanted to get rid of me.” Because of such statements, her grandfather got angry with Bu Patik and took her to live with him and his wife. There, she slowly recovered and felt much better. “Although I returned home when I recovered, I often went to my grandparents when I felt miserable, I helped them with small tasks and there I received care and attention.”

**Pak Patik** thinks positively about the future, and sees himself in clover now: “I own a number of bamboo bushes in various fields. I bought them cheap and harvest a few stalks to keep the bushes strong and healthy. If I become old and have given away my sawah to my children, I will still be able to sell bamboo canes every now and then, and drink coffee in the *warung* from this money. I will not be dependent on anyone.” His orientation on helping others is very clear, he says: “My poor friends and neighbours are often helped by my wife who offers them small loans of rice. Those who raise bullocks for me, I sometimes give a cash advance if needed. Other people have to work for themselves; they can never borrow any money from me.”

The Patik family is one of the clearest examples of *orang pelit* in Krajan. They have an extremely cautious way of generating their own livelihood, and share and cooperate as little as possible with fellow villagers. They clearly try to save money and not contribute much to arrangements for mutual help, and are prepared for if things go wrong.

**Supandi: hoping to save his cattle**

The Supandi family is much poorer than the Patik family and ranked as *kurang*, but are also referred to as stingy or ‘kreket’. They own some land and share a few head of cattle of larger landowners. In the previous two years, they had been able to raise two cows of their own. The husband and wife describe them as their ‘hope for the future’. Moreover,
they claim to be trying to be self-sufficient and acquire more cattle and improve their cash income. Their strategy has been quite successful during recent decades. He was able to raise two cows, and she had established a small shop and saved some gold. "If friends or neighbours come to borrow money, or buy on credit, I always refuse and answer that I have no spare money and have a debt myself at the shop in Bondowoso. Now they know, they seldomly ask." However, when their life came under severe stress due to a tobacco harvest failure, the death and costly burial of the wife's mother, and the 1998 economic crisis, they were forced to increase their debts. "God willing, I will not have to sell my cows," Pak Supandi said. "Without cattle I cannot borrow, I cannot work, and I cannot make a successful living. Without cattle I am nothing because I am not used to getting friends to help me." They decided to sell the wife's gold to cover the costs of the tobacco harvest failure.

For years, he and his wife had tried to save and accumulate wealth by remaining as independent as possible. He avoided going to selamatan, weddings, and mutual help activities whenever he could, and his wife paid over only the essential tributes at these occasions. In his view, he had never invested much in friends and social relationships and his wife had maintained only a few contacts so as to be able to accumulate some money. However, due to the relatively poor subsistence basis of the household, they have not been able to save enough to be totally self-sufficient. Now that they are in trouble, they cannot expect much help from neighbours and friends as they have never invested much in them. Pak Supandi fears the sale of his cattle that are not only his savings, but also most of his working capital. Since the start of the crisis, he feels the rebound of not investing in social relationships as this means not only a lack of social networks, but also a lack of support and labouring opportunities.

However, in reality, those who do invest in social relationships do not always get the desired returns. To give an example of people who are value close social relationships, subsistence production, and village solidarity, we return to the story of the Satrawi family first described in the introduction to this thesis.

The Satrawi family: poor but respectable

The Satrawi family are widely known in Krajan as good people who have encountered many misfortunes in their lives. They were born to relatively wealthy families and their futures looked bright enough. Their fields produced more rice than they needed, and they employed many labourers in return for a meal and a share of the harvest (babun). They had status and prestige and lived according to the expectations of their class. However, their wealth and status became a burden. Meals, selamatan, and the weddings of their children were abundant, expensive, and well attended. They never failed to contribute sumbangan to others even if those families were poor and would never be able to return the favour. Although their wealth did not increase, their reputation of being good and generous spread across Krajan. The Satrawis once said: "If we are good to others when they need it, others will be good to us when we need it." On another occasion, Pak
Satrawi explained further: “My parents always did it this way, and my father taught me to be a good and responsible villager, always ready to share and to help. That’s why I try to follow his example. My parents were good and respected people.”

In the first years after their marriage, the parents of the Satrawis were active and organised large selamatan. Years later, when their parents had died, things started to decline in the house of Satrawi. Due to a chain of misfortunes and tragedies, their wealth decreased and their incomes declined. As a result, at their selamatan, guests were fewer and sumbangan contributions dropped considerably. Moreover, many of their previous friends had died, migrated, or become impoverished, and not able to return the help that the Satrawis had provided earlier.

In short, their investments were not returned, and reciprocal arrangements of support did not help them through these difficult periods. They needed to sell land and, gradually, they lost all their property and became one of the poorest families in the neighbourhood. For a couple of years, they have been ranked as miskin. For the wedding of their third child, in 1998, their last plot of land had to be pawned to pay for wedding gifts, and they cut down their coconut trees in their garden in order to obtain some money for new clothes to wear at the wedding. After the wedding, they were regularly short of food, and Pak Satrawi was sometimes not even able to buy paper to wrap his cigarettes.

The Satrawi family is a good example of villagers who invest in social relationships and mutual help. This did not prove to be a solid strategy to secure their livelihood because contrary to their expectations, they did not get much return on their former investments when they were in need. In their present poverty, people do not think it to be worthwhile to provide large contributions as even his children will never be able to repay them. Fewer people turn up at their selamatan and their social network has shrunk.

Although their living standards have fallen drastically, and the returns on former investments have been disappointing, they still enjoy some status in the village. Pak Satrawi is often invited to pray at selamatan, freeing his wife and himself from the obligation of providing a contribution. Further, he is known as a good man because he always joins in selamatan, gotong royong, house building, and funerals and helps out with the work. This is not pure charity, because his good reputation and sociability helps him find work in the fields of others and in getting babun contracts. Regularly, when their food stocks are used up, they go to some of their wealthier neighbours and their patron Patik’s family to do some odd jobs or occasional work and receive a meal or some rice. Even the Patik family never refuses them a meal on such occasions, eventhough they complain to others afterwards about the Satrawis chronic lack of money. “Even if they have money, they cannot keep it, and spend it right away.” Perhaps the Satrawis have not had the best style if seen at from an economic angle since they have lost all their land; but due to their former relationships they at least still eat. Moreover, when the crisis put a strain on household budgets in Krajan, the Satrawi family was not that affected. To be able to compare and evaluate the different styles, we first need to know more about their characteristics. Below an overview and outline of styles in Krajan is provided.
These cases show that people can benefit and receive some assistance from existing networks such as kin, neighbours, and village institutions; that they do make choices within boundaries and opportunities. Often, this aid is inspired by moral considerations or mutual interest, and the examples show that reciprocity is indeed important, although not always reliable, and never enough. At the same time, the examples show that villagers actively choose and have some coherence in their ways of living in order to enhance their livelihood and to obtain protection in times of need. Significantly, families of equal class clearly make different choices reflecting their different orientations on the future.

The examples show that the arrangements that structure and enable human action as well as the strategies that villagers employ cannot be separated. Both dimensions of local social security action are intertwined and presuppose each other. The cases also show that the distinction between livelihood and social security is difficult to establish. A strategy that seems to be oriented towards earning money can turn out to be one that generates help in times of need.

The styles are based on stereotypes of local people and their descriptions do not always reflect the reality of activities people employ within and between styles. Styles are the outcome of tensions between different interests, needs, and priorities. The categorisation of styles is a sliding scale. Some families are much more ‘typical’ than others. The majority of villagers can be classified as being attached to a predominant style by their orientation and choice from the available repertoire, but they sometimes intermingle the various options from other styles. Moreover, having a certain style is not always a conscious decision, and can be habitual, customary, traditional, and safe. If it has proved, by chance, to be a successful one, then actions reveal the style and reproduce it.

I distinguish four major styles in Krajan based on qualifications made concerning the surveyed families. I first collected nicknames, qualifications, and categorisations in the village about these families. Then, while carrying out my survey and in the interviews, I asked, both directly and indirectly, about their orientations in life, their means of livelihood, the rationale behind their choices and their hopes and fears concerning the future. During these interviews, I also tried to get informants to reflect retrospectively on the choices they had made, and the differences between them and others.

In Krajan, villagers often use nicknames and categorise fellow villagers on the basis of their values and orientations towards livelihood and social security. Examples of these locally-used categories are ‘enterprising people’ (orang
'money people' (orang duit), 'stingy people' (orang pelit), and the 'traditional people' (orang asli or lugu). 'Money people' for instance prefer to earn cash and depend on the opportunities of the cash economy for securing their livelihood. 'Stingy people' are those who try to benefit from the support given through the old mutual exchange economy, minimise investments, and ignore the claims of others in reciprocal relationships as far as possible.

These folk concepts are interesting, as they indicate the awareness of specific differences in livelihood orientations and sharing attitudes. Moreover, they often carry a normative connotation. Being 'traditional' has both morally superior and developmentally backward connotations. Morally, they are seen as good people, who are believed to be the true followers of traditional values of support, exchange, and reciprocity. However, economically, orang lugu are seen as backward. Those who are oriented towards wage labour, trade, and beneficial economic opportunities are seen as much more successful. This successfulness, however, can change over time, depending on climatic conditions, market prices, and political-economic developments.

Folk concepts are indicative of patterns in the diversity and reflect a more or less coherent way in which people try to make a living and organise their social security mix. These 'modes of ordering' reflect their attitudes and expectations of protection, effectiveness, and stability in their livelihood. They are to a great degree ideal types and metaphors for different patterns of social security, based on distinctions made by the actors themselves. At the village level, these styles are based upon different responses of actors to insecurities which arise from the agro-ecological, economic, political, and social contexts.

Villagers’ styles also reflect different value orientations toward the dilemma of sharing and accumulation. We can put these value orientations on two axes, the first axis formed by incomes from subsistence production and local resources on the one hand versus cash incomes and outside opportunities on the other. The second axis shows the orientation towards individual accumulation versus reciprocity and cooperation. We thus arrive at four types of villagers who follow different styles in achieving a secure and viable livelihood (see Table 6-1).

Table 6-1: Value Orientations and styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation on:</th>
<th>subsistence</th>
<th>cash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>Orang Lugu</td>
<td>Orang Bisnis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(village people)</td>
<td>(enterprising people)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulation</td>
<td>Orang Pelit</td>
<td>Orang Duit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(stingy people)</td>
<td>(money people)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In analysing this information and other data about savings, the number of contributions (gifts, help, support, and labour) both to and from others, debts and savings, etc. I put each household on two axes and positioned them according to: 1) their orientation towards support and mutual help as against being self insured; and 2) in the production sphere to their orientation towards cash incomes and the outside economy as against subsistence and the local economy. Nearly all the families could be ranked according to these orientations: some very clearly belonged to an identified style, others were less clear as these households combined several different aspects in their life, or because the orientations of the husband and wife were not in line with each other. The statements made by the people themselves were important to link people to a style. As a second step, I checked their statements with their actual practices as reflected in types of income and property, number of occasions they gave help or contributed to labour activities, and contributions to selamatan.

Table 6-2: Styles and orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ENTERPRISING PEOPLE (ORANG BISNIS)</th>
<th>MONEY PEOPLE (ORANG BUTU)</th>
<th>STINGY PEOPLE (ORANG PELOT)</th>
<th>VILLAGE PEOPLE (ORANG LUGI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Money, Wage</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash, Outside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>Subsistence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Support and Mutual Help</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-insurance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were a few cases in which I could not classify people at all. Some of the destitute and pitiful people of Krajan were effectively excluded from any style, as they were so poor that they had little choice other than to eat carefully and adjust to their poverty.\(^3\) Despite this, even among the destitute, differences in

\(^3\) Orang kasihan live in a state of constant social insecurity and have few options left. Some of these people do not really follow a style as they are socially excluded from all the styles. They cannot invest in social relationships, are not acceptable as wage labourers, and do not own anything to be coveted upon (see also Singarimbun and Penny, 1973). Although they are entitled to help, since they are to be pitied (kasihan), they are often not helped, do not have caring relatives or neighbours, and are often neglected by aid programme. Among these people are commonly widows, the old and very poor, chronically ill, and other vulnerable people without caring relatives or productive assets. Orang kasihan are relatively invisible in village life and even neighbours sometimes do not know them very well. In Krajan, at least fifty widows - sometimes with grandchildren - lived in very difficult circumstances.
orientations and alternative patterns could be observed. Another odd category are the so-called wayward people (orang nakal). These are mostly young men who deliberately take huge risks by heavy gambling, womanising, and stealing, and whose behaviour can be perceived as a style in itself, or rather a contrary style with people rejecting the established ways of earning a livelihood and investing in the social security of mainstream society. The orang nakal are described in Chapter 7.

The most important feature of styles is that they do not always coincide with the socio-economic categories of wealthy or poor. Both poor and rich villagers can share similar orientations towards livelihood and thus adopt security and follow the same style. In all the styles identified both poor and richer villagers are present, although not always in similar numbers. In general, upper class villagers are more to be found among the orang pelit.4 Obviously, one needs at least some assets, to be oriented towards self-support and greed. Most of the village poor are found among the duit and the lugu categories. Some of the poor live from waged labour (and hope for stability based on and direct incomes from regular employment) and rely on incomes in cash. Others live mainly on subsistence incomes from local resources (i.e. babun); putting their hopes on village institutions and social relationships for protection and social assistance. In Table 6-3, the spread of the styles across the Krajan population is given as well as the relative number of wealthy and poor as a percentage of the total in each style. I have taken cukup as a point of calibration and combined the categories of kaya (rich), lebih (enough), and cukup (just enough) calling them upper and middle classes. Taking the upper class (kaya) as a separate category would not have had much meaning here, as they are make up 9% of the population which is a percentage too small for a proper comparison between the styles. The upper and middle classes make up one third of the population, while the lower classes comprise two thirds. The most common style in Krajan is that of the village people (lugu), followed by ‘money people’ (duit) and ‘enterprising people’ (bisnis). ‘Stingy people’ (pelit) are least.

Table 6-3: Styles and social classes in Krajan (in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>Pelit (Stingy)</th>
<th>Bisnis (Enterprising)</th>
<th>Lugu (Village)</th>
<th>Duit (Money)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASSES</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWER CLASSES</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL POPULATION</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 See Chapter 4 for definitions of rich and poor. When I speak of rich (wealthy) and poor here I mean, by rich, the categories of rich, enough, and just enough. The poor are the not enough, the less, and the destitute categories.
It is also interesting to look at the age distinctions among styles. The average age of bisnis people is 42, ofduit people 39, of the pelit 38, and of lugu 45. The average age of all the interviewed people is 42. The differences are relatively small, but the village people (orang lugu) are more often found among the elderly. As one gets older, less can be expected from wage labour, or from being stingy. However, this does not mean that their style is going to become extinguished or is doomed to vanish. A large percentage of the younger villagers are interested in waged labour or in being enterprising. Although the enterprising style includes many older villagers who use their capital now that they are older and less inclined to do heavy labour on a daily basis. Also a number of unmarried young people can be found in this style who - often with capital from their parents - wish to make a living by trade, but remain embedded in closely knit networks of support and mutual help. Often, these attempts are not successful and lead to a change of style later. The characteristics of the orientations underlying the various styles are described in more detail below.

**Entrepreneurial people (orang bisnis)**

'Entrepreneurs' (orang bisnis) are oriented towards the cash economy and opportunities outside the village to make money, and on social relationships to maintain trading opportunities and protection in the long run. For their livelihood, they depend primarily on incomes from trade, peddling, cash crop production (i.e. tobacco) or running a toko or warung. For richer and poorer orang bisnis alike, incomes are not only generated by using local resources but also by using outside opportunities, such as government or bank-related credit facilities, contacts with traders operating on a regional or national scale, and goods from markets and shops in Bondowoso, Besuki, and Pakem. Also in consumption patterns, they are more oriented towards new goods and status products from outside the village such as radios, televisions, mobile phones, motor bikes and jeans.

As trade and business opportunities in Krajan go together with social ties - to get a good deal you need to have a good relationship with someone - networks are crucial for the orang bisnis. In order to be successful in business, they need to invest in, and maintain, reliable relationships with customers, traders, suppliers, and politicians. This network of social relationships provides them with goods, credit, and information about good deals, prices, and the credit worthiness of suppliers and customers. These networks usually extend beyond the small world of the village. Access to information is very important, as the threats and risks in trading are manifold. Profits and prices can greatly fluctuate, stocks can decay, crops can fail, and the risk of default by customers is substantial. For these reasons, they need these networks not only to generate profit, but also for their protection, support, and assistance in times of difficulty. Orang bisnis realise that they need to maintain these networks for the future. Difficulties in life and urgent cash shortages are often solved by taking loans (often from outside the village), by selling or pawning...
assets, or by asking for the support of friends, trading partners, or political patrons. Moreover, most of them say they are keen on maintaining a reputation as a decent villager. They are frequent visitors to weddings, parties, and funerals; ready to share and contribute in an attempt to bind people and maintain reputations. As most orang bisnis keep ties with the village, they often operate in groups, share profits, and are cooperative. Some small cattle traders, without sufficient training capital cooperate to buy and sell cattle. In this way, they are able to pool risks and accumulate savings. Others engage in alliances with retail traders from outside the village and obtain credit. It is especially the orang bisnis who tend to be the most active in mutual saving and credit groups (arisani).

People typifying this style include Pak Norwana described earlier in this chapter. Another example is Bagenda who deals with leadership in an entrepreneurial way. Many of his income, businesses, and consumption goods come from outside the village but are ploughed into the village and invested in social relationships, which are essential to stay in power. This power he needs in order to retain access to gainful government projects and other sources of income from beyond the village. The religious Zeinuri family, is another clear example of orang bisnis. They are active in trade and consumption, and maintain large networks of trading partners, kiai, and religious politicians. In Krajan, they employ dozens of villagers, and mobilise many more with the help of religious influence. Poorer orang bisnis include small traders and peddlers selling chickens, eggs, dried fish, sugar, wood, local medication (jamu), and those who run small shops or coffee or food stalls from their homes. Among these people, daily incomes are just enough to make ends meet, and are spent immediately on basic needs. They rely heavily on the social relationships built up when things go wrong.

Money people (orang duit)

The orang duit (‘money people’) in Krajan are also oriented towards cash incomes, but differ from orang bisnis in their orientation towards social relationships, sharing, support, and cooperation by their general reluctance to contribute to village arrangements and institutions of social security. As a consequence, they do not expect much help and support in times of need. They rely primarily on cash for survival and livelihood, and hope to be able to earn money until their children are old enough to support them. They try to be, and remain, independent and be self-prepared.

Although, naturally, everybody in Krajan would like to have and earn cash, this grouping is specifically oriented towards fixed and direct incomes such as incomes from wage labour - sometimes outside the village - and they try to ensure a stable livelihood by investing and combining different sources of

---

5 Most of the poorer orang duit live in the lower hamlets of Krajan (Sayuran and Pakuarah) where land is concentrated in the hands of a few large farmers and where wages in kind are difficult to find.
cash incomes such as from waged labour, political activities, and a profession. Their cash incomes, their untied labour relationships, and opportunities beyond the village economy make them flexible and relatively independent of the social security of village institutions.

Until the end of 1997, this style was gaining popularity due to increasing work opportunities and because of changing consumption preferences. Employment in Krajan increased due to the intensification of commercial tobacco cultivation and an increase in construction activities. Also in the region of the Eastern Salient and Bali, more labour opportunities had become available. Some of the villagers were able to obtain a paid job as a security agent in town or at the local telecommunication posts, or as a domestic servant, policeman, or in a shop in town. Others migrated to Bali and Madura on a seasonal basis, while still others departed for Malaysia and Kalimantan in search of work. A few villagers found work in the shoe and garment industry of Malang, and others worked as pedicab drivers in Bondowoso or Jember. Recently, the status and importance attached to modern consumption goods increased. Items such as jeans, watches, radios, motorbikes, and ceramic floors in houses, have gained slowly in importance at the expense of cattle, wood-carved houses, and sarong.

The orang duit include many poor wage labourers who work in Krajan, or who are constantly in search of work in the East Java region, in agriculture on Madura, or as street peddlers in Bali. Their cash incomes are their main basis for coping with difficulties in life, and as long as cash incomes are relatively stable, regular, and reliable, they are doing well, meeting these wishes. The difference with the ‘entrepreneurial people’ is that this group try to earn money wherever possible, and are not very inclined to invest in relationships of mutual help and exchange, and do not engage in patron-client bonds in the village. They were doing relatively well during the second half of the New Order period and acquired higher esteem and status than the orang lugu, who depended basically on wages in kind. Particularly due to increased employment and earnings from tobacco production in this period, the orang duit families were able to afford a higher level of consumption than the orang lugu, and enjoyed a relatively stable and secure livelihood.

Care and support for the orang duit is mainly organised within the household, the nuclear family, or within peer groups of fellow workers. Elderly, handicapped, and ill people are generally cared for by family members. Difficulties in life and urgent cash shortages are often solved by taking out loans, either from inside or outside the village, by selling or pawning assets, or by asking for support from fellow workers or within peer groups. Also as part of this style, villagers having surplus money on a regular basis, may engage in saving and credit arrangements such as simpan-pinjam and arisan.

Of the described cases, the families of Niwati, Sunami, and Ernawa are examples of poor orang duit with their orientations towards cash incomes and wage labour in the first instance. They prefer to work for a wage, but they see few opportunities to make a living in another way. They do not invest in, or expect much from, mutual relationships. As long as enough labour opportu-
nities are available, and inflation is under control, their livelihoods are relatively stable and secure. Examples of richer orang duit in the village are relatively scarce. Examples include teachers living from their salaries, certain village officials, and ‘rentenir’, i.e. people living from their pensions, or interests on property or loans.

'Stingy people' (orang pelit)

'Stingy people' (orang pelit), conversely, are oriented towards the village economy and its land, cattle, and labour. They try to accumulate on the basis of local resources and make use of village institutions and arrangements, but want to avoid the social pressures of sharing, redistribution, care, and mutual help, and so keep the costs of investing in social relationships as low as possible. According to other villagers, 'stingy people' are those who want to profit from the local social security arrangements, but who do not want to invest much in them. In general, orang pelit share the opinion that not much can be expected from village institutions such as mutual help, and that it is better to insure and prepare yourself. In their view, sumbangan is often seen as a money consuming necessity, rather than an investment or social capital to secure access to future support.

They prefer not to be too dependent on others so as to avoid the pressures of social commitments, which might endanger their households' livelihoods. Many of the 'stingy people' of Krajan are only marginally involved in outside markets and are oriented towards the local economy for their livelihood. They often avoid going to selamatan - unless they have to - and do not organise large selamatan themselves. They try to keep costs low, and are wary of redistributing their wealth, even if they have enough money, rice, or assets. Family labour - sometimes added with incomes in kind (i.e. babun) - plays an important role in their way of making a living. They prefer to save in their own assets such as cattle and land - not in other people.

Although there is a general sense in Krajan that there have always been stingy villagers, this group includes many young and rich families - or families on the way to becoming richer. Moreover, it seems this style has gained popularity in recent decades. It offers the opportunity to ignore the claims of others while still reap some of the benefits of the ritual exchange economy and institutions and arrangements of mutual help. Later, in old age, some of these people may shift their orientation towards a more reciprocal attitude although they do try to prepare themselves for the needs of old age.

The poor stingy people combine wages in kind from babun and cattle raising, with waged labour, making besek and other handicrafts, to establish living. They visit many parties, funerals, and selamatan, as these occasions include free meals for low outgoings. Since poor villagers are not expected to contribute much to these parties. In times of need, they ask richer villagers for help by emphasising traditional village values of sharing and redistribution. This support they get is often not that substantial, since they never contributed much to others, but they might receive a free meal, some rice, or a
small gift of money. In this respect ‘stingy people’ are the free riders of the village social security system with their attitude of benefiting from, rather than investing in, reciprocity, sharing, cooperation, and the village community at large.

An obvious example is the Patik family, protecting their own interests and resources by using village institutions and arrangements for sharing and mutual exchange without ever contributing much. Previously, the family was even greedier. Gradually, over the years, they have become richer and Pak Patik slightly more entrepreneurial. In the future, it is likely that the family will continue to shift towards a more entrepreneurial style (towards orang bisnis) but, so far, Pak Patik mainly keeps to himself. In his perception, having too many relationships is a threat to the family’s long-term security and sustainability: “They will eat my property.” When he gets older, he will be prepared and can live from his means. His wife used to agree, and cooperate with her husband in saving money and investing in cattle and land, rather than spending it on consumption goods. Over the last couple of years, she has slowly shifted towards a more entrepreneurial style. She controls food production in the household, and is free to use the food stocks according to her desires. These food stocks are an important means of tying labourers to the household and offering small loans and gifts to the wives of these workers. During the last few years, Bu Patik has given sumbangan much more often to others, and invests more in social relationships.

Other examples of orang pelit include Horati, who was very obviously trying to drain village institutions and arrangements for his support. The Supandi family are an example of one of the few poorer families who are on their way to establishing a living on their own strengths. These poorer ‘stingy people’ are still vulnerable, and are mostly young, strong, and self-confident families. For obvious reasons, destitute villagers are never seen as pelit, since they are excluded from investing in sharing, reciprocity, and mutual exchanges.

**Village people (orang lugu)**

The ‘village’ people, or ‘traditional’ or ‘rustic’, ‘natural’ or ‘good’ people, (orang lugu) are oriented towards traditional village values of exchange, and are active in sumbangan, selamatan, rotating labour arrangements (giliran), mutual help (gotong royong), etc. They very clearly put their hopes on obtaining help and support from village institutions and in the form of mutual help if they are in need. Often, they are only marginally involved in the cash economy and prefer payments in kind. In case they do earn cash, they see this as subsidiary to their other activities.

These villagers frequently have, what are seen as, conservative ideas norms and values of sharing, gift-giving, labour relationships and exchange, but also on village hierarchy and out-marriage of children. They include the most strict Muslims of Krajan, villagers who are primarily oriented towards rituals and selamatan. Giving large selamatan, and owning land, traditional rice vari-
eties, and cattle offers status and security (both spiritual and practical); and organising these activities demands extended relationships.

The livelihood of orang lugu is, in the first instance, constituted by using social relationships and mobilising networks of exchange. Poor people who follow this style, try to gain access to work, status, and protection by engaging in social (often patron-client) relationships. Rich people in this category use their networks, land, and cattle to bind workers to them. For their social security, the poor orang lugu anticipate mutual help, emotional support, and ritual gifts (sumbangan); from fellow 'traditional' people and the large landowner they work for. Increasingly, during recent decades, this style seems to have declined, and lost much of its previous status during the New Order regime, as other when new forms of status and upward mobility than selamatan, cows and land have become available.

Religious, wayward, and educated people

Alongside these four major social security styles, some substyles can be distinguished. One of these subgroups is the religious people: orang muslim or orang santri. Being or pretending to be - a pious Muslim can be beneficial in achieving a respectable position in society as well as entitlements to support. A few religious teachers and local leaders (kiai) in Krajan earn a solid income out of their religious functions and combine it with farming and trade, while they are ensured of support in difficult times. In the way they earn a living, they show similarities with orang bisnis. They are oriented towards financial opportunities, and have a broader horizon than the village economy alone. At the same time, they are oriented towards social relationships in the village, binding people on the basis of religion or power and asking for services in terms of labour. Moreover, they have political power, are organised in factions, and make up the second most powerful political force in Krajan. Further, the kiai are key people in networks of power and influence and thus have access to crucial information, which facilitates their economic activities.

Increasingly, such an orientation is becoming popular due to the growing importance - and arguably radicalisation - of Islam in Indonesia. In other parts of Java, some such villagers are shifting towards more modernist forms of Islam (Muhammadiyah). Another subcategory of orang muslim, are those who are strongly oriented towards and loyal to a kiai. In Krajan, youngsters from pious families, often frustrated by failing government policies and poor

6 As for instance described by Kutanegara (forthcoming). They can best be described as having an orientation towards religion and individual benefit. Muhammadiyah are against selamatan and related gift-giving arrangements and retreat from the traditional interpretations of Islam, which are more associated with exchanges and reciprocity on the village level. They organise forms of social welfare within their own; religion-related, group and activities. They show the closest resemblance to the orang duit, and the orang bisnis in their orientation towards cash and outside opportunities.
economically prospects, sometimes join semi-military groups under the responsibility of a religious leader. These bands of youngsters, *pagermuska*, attend regular meetings with their leader, can easily be influenced, and they played a role in several violent clashes in the area since 1995. In their efforts to make a ‘better’ village and restoring the values of Islam, they resemble most closely the *orang bismis* and the *orang lugu* of Krajan.

A second substyle that can be distinguished is represented by those living dangerously as gamblers, risk takers, and the so-called ‘wayward, madcap and naughty’ people: the *orang nakal*. Their style of doing things is dealt with in the next chapter. However, many other villagers take risks in business, agriculture, or in other spheres of life, but usually these risks are taken within a context of security. These are seen as acceptable risks, which can be taken after a certain level of subsistence has been reached. The orientations of the *orang nakal* are different. They seem not to care about the risks of losing the things that they have, and are more interested in the chances of winning something and for the thrill of the day.

A third substyle which could have been included are those *orang duit* who pursue an education and opt for a position in the government apparatus thus aiming at a stable and secure income, free healthcare, and an old age pension. In Krajan, very few people take this educational road, and most of them have not been successful. These people are oriented towards cash earnings, have a wider horizon than the village economy, and put their future hopes and security in cash incomes generated from resources outside the village. In other parts of Java this style is more common, and has been profitable for some people in the past. A government position does offer a stable and secure livelihood. However, many educated youngsters, without the right social connections, have never been able to enter a government occupation.

In Krajan, the experiences of families who let children study and who aimed at gaining access to better and regular wages have not been good. High school youngsters have been effective in wasting family resources, but no one has ever succeeded in obtaining a good position. The village secretary of Krajan, for instance, has been educated as a teacher, but has never managed to get a teaching job. Going for education - in the eyes of many villagers - is a severe waste of money and resources, risks the livelihood of the family, and frequently will turn out to be an extra burden and source of insecurity for parents.

**Styles: between structures and strategies**

Styles of social security are analytical constructions based on local knowledge and emic categories. This does not mean that villagers are necessarily aware of their own style, or the styles of others, but that they indicate and refer to some of the apparent features of styles. Contrary to what the folk concepts suggest, it does not refer to people, but rather it refers to patterns and ways of ordering. Villagers do recognise strategies and are able to indicate their orientation towards the future and the relative stability of their livelihood.
As described in Chapter 1, a style is a coherent and distinctive manner of acting and doing things. Van der Ploeg (1999:109) argues that the heterogeneity in contemporary agrarian societies can be explained by taking into account the wide range of differential responses by farmers to the political, social, economic, and environmental problems they are facing. Styles reflect ideas about solutions, ‘good’ farming, and a desired future for the farming enterprise. In a similar way, it can be argued that social security styles reflect solutions for making a living, about a ‘good’ and secure living, and about the best ways for people and households to be prepared for the future. One thus can define a style of social security as a general mode of ordering life; a more or less systematic and continuous attempt to create congruence in all the domains of everyday life. A social security style can thus be defined as an observable and coherent pattern in the actions and perceptions of people and households in making a living and dealing with insecurities, threats, and risks that endanger their livelihood. It reflects the values and orientations of people in making, maintaining, and safeguarding a living. In this way, the style concept links the strategies for livelihood security in procuring and maintaining access to resources and social security through available institutions, mechanisms, and arrangements providing care, support, and protection in times of need. Styles are coherent in the sense that they structure the actions of villagers and at the same time reflect perceptions, orientations, and the strategies of villagers for livelihood and survival. They offer villagers and households a preset repertoire of options to choose from within a congruent and meaningful system of coping with threats and insecurities.

The social security style concept has the advantage that it includes structural, ‘habitual’, and agency aspects in social action. I observed in Krajan that most everyday decisions, when people had to make up their minds about planting, working, giving assistance, pawning cows, and visiting selamatan as well as gift giving and exchanging are made relatively quickly and consistently. In some of these cases, the villagers said that they acted strategically, in other cases, they referred to habits, obligations, expectations, customs, and values. Further, in many more cases, they could not come up with an explanation at all. Nevertheless, careful observation showed coherence in their practices. These coherent sets of practices, enable villagers to react habitually towards the claims and options of others without having to evaluate all the options and to constantly think in a strategic way. This is not to say that people are just ‘animals of habit’ since they act upon the conviction that their style is best suited to their needs, capabilities, and aspirations and that it has proven its worth in the past.

7 The style concept is loosely derived from Van der Ploeg’s farming styles (1985, 1990, 1999). He defines a farming style as: “the outcome of a particular labor process guided by certain options, structured in a specific way by a corresponding ‘logic’, and conditioned by particular social relations of production. Through the farm labor process both the social relations of production and the style of farming are reproduced.” Van der Ploeg, (1990: 19).
The style concept also solves the dilemma between the long-term and reproduced practices underlying tradition and culture, and the short-term and ad hoc strategic choices of people. A villager or household can have a certain style because of being so educated or because of the expectations of others in the neighbourhood. Apart from this, the ‘predictability’ offered by styles adds to the social security of someone who acts accordingly. A style is both an institutionalised pattern and a construction by an individual through negotiation within the household, neighbourhood, and family.

A style can be ‘inherited’, villagers may be caught in a social security style because they were raised in a family with an orientation towards strong ties with neighbours, relatives, mutual help, and reciprocal relationships. Having a certain style, and having learnt and internalised its related values, orientations, and skills, makes it difficult to abandon established ties and switch to another social security style such as being oriented towards self-support (as an individual or a family), saving, and withdrawing from mutual exchanges. If one is engaged in commercial agriculture and wage labour it is impossible to shift quickly to subsistence farming or share tenancy relations as these require a whole different set of relationships. However, this does not mean that it is totally impossible to break with a style and escape to another. Styles are constantly reproduced and ‘restyled’ by the changing needs and orientations of villagers. An example of such disruption of styles is youngsters who travel (merantau) to Kalimantan, Bali or Madura in search of work or fun and aim at a different future than the life of their parents. Also education often serves to change styles and being oriented towards education can become a substyle in itself.

Last, but not least, the gender dimension in styles is important. Styles frequently differ between the sexes, as men and women can have different orientations and strategies. Often, the women in Krajan are far more careful and concerned with household food security and livelihood protection than their husbands. In the household, the values, orientations, hopes, expectations, and investments are negotiated between men and women. At the household level, these individual styles are aggregated and coordinated as most activities require the involvement of both husband and wife. Styles are, in the first place, oriented at the household level. Although men and women generally have different orientations and responsibilities, at the village level households are the main entities for cooperation, reciprocity, and economic activities.

During my fieldwork on social security in Krajan, I became increasingly dissatisfied with explanations offered by both institutional and strategy approaches to the study of access to resources, mutual help, and support. As Chapter 1 showed, the first approach is strong on the support-side, on institutions and structures, but often fails to explain the perceptions and strategic actions of individuals in their quest for support. The second approach is strong on the strategy-side of social security, but tends to overlook structural conditions in society. A question that arose was how social security could be studied while taking into account both the institutions that provide social
security and the strategies that people follow to achieve a desired livelihood and support in times of need. In other words, how can one analyse social security in an integrated way, taking into account both structural and actor concepts of social and collective action (Giddens, 1984) in order to do justice to the complexities of local social security?

In this chapter, I have presented the life stories of villagers and households to show how they deal with the insecurities in life within constraining and enabling contexts of material, ecological, social, cultural and political natures. These stories reveal the complexities of village social security and the intermingling of structure and agency in daily life. Starting with these complexities, I wanted to discover whether common patterns could be distinguished in the ways people aim for social security and I therefore turned to the actions of villagers within their structural, cultural, and economic boundaries. The institution of *sumbangan* in Krajan society, for instance, is one of the many examples where structural constraints meet creativity, agency, and free action. The obligations to provide *sumbangan* can be very strong but, at the same time, they may simultaneously provide opportunities for various actors. People clearly make different choices. Both structure and strategic actors are inseparable components in achieving social security and presuppose each other. As the cases discussed in this chapter show, the concept of style can be of help to understand the variety of actions which aim at securing people's livelihood.

Obtaining and maintaining social security is a two-way process. In this chapter, I have come to the conclusion that, within the diversity and complexity of local social security, certain patterns can be observed. These patterns - which I call styles - are based on emic considerations and are empirically based on the orientations and practices of people. Styles represent different considerations of value orientations: on the one hand, the alternatives of joining arrangements of mutual help and reciprocity or opposed to individual economic accumulation. Secondly, the tension between an orientation towards a livelihood based mainly on the local subsistence economy and one based on the money economy, the market, and the outside economy.

Using the typology of the four major styles (*bisnis, duit, pelit, lugu*) it becomes clear that actual social behaviour (and particularly their ways of achieving social security) is determined both by social class and by the habits and customary patterns which I have called styles.
Many studies of social security in rural societies deal with a range of institutions and mechanisms for support and assistance that exist to protect villagers against the consequences of adversities. Implicitly, most of these studies appear to depart from the assumption that people prefer security above insecurity, and that social relationships and village institutions are oriented towards enhancing some form of social security rather than disrupting it. Poor villagers are assumed to be risk averse and to optimise security. In this chapter, I intend to draw a more differentiated picture by taking a closer look at certain people, both rich and poor, who are involved in apparently excessive risk-taking practices. They are the crickets among the ants.¹

Rural development economists generally point to the fact that poor farmers adopt a diversified portfolio of income earning activities, accepting lower returns because of the benefit of avoiding and spreading risks. Also in anthropology, such assumptions on the nature of peasants’ behaviour are prevalent. One example is the so-called moral economy approach (Scott, 1976) which has however been criticised from a rational actor perspective (Popkin, 1979), leading to what is generally known as the Scott-Popkin debate (see Chapter 1).² In development theory, the risk aversion assumption is widespread and seems to be even more dominant than the assumption that farmers are profit maximising. Ellis (2000: 61) for instance mentions: “The amelioration of risk helps to explain much observed livelihood behaviour in rural areas of developing countries, including the economic strategies of occupational diversification and migration, and supporting social strategies of maintaining an extensive network of kinship ties.”

¹ After a fable of Esopus and La Fontaine.
Moreover, the idea that security is of primary concern, of - especially poor - people is widespread. This emphasis on the presumed human need for security, rather than insecurity, is also clear in human needs approaches and studies of social welfare. Macarov, quoting Goodin, (1988) writes:

“All societies hold as dogma that social welfare deals with needs, rather than wants. […] Although there is no good, clear-cut reason to give meeting needs systematic priority over satisfying desires, almost all social welfare programs define themselves as meeting needs - and indeed attempt to defend themselves from the charge that they are answering ’mere’ desires.” (Macarov, 1995).

At the basis of these needs and social welfare approaches lies the psychological postulate of the hierarchy of human needs as expressed by Maslow (in Macarow, 1995). According to Maslow, the most basic needs are physiological (food, shelter, and clothing) and until these are more-or-less satisfied, other needs are not felt, or at least not strongly. When physiological needs are satisfied, security needs become potent, followed by the need for love, and the need for self-esteem. The final level of need, according to Maslow, is the need for self actualisation (Macarov, 1995). From these needs, human behaviour can be understood as a constant quest for fulfilling needs and maintaining and protecting the fulfilment of these needs. Livelihood studies (oriented towards people’s needs and strategies for fulfilling these needs) and social security studies (oriented towards the social protection of needs satisfaction) both seem to depart from the same assumptions: people want their needs to be satisfied, also in the long run, and life is a constant quest for security. In both basic needs approaches and welfare policies, the assumptions of the need for security, and thus of people being risk averse however, are rarely questioned.

Although these assumptions seem to apply to most poor villagers in Krajan, and explain much of their actions, during fieldwork I became increasingly dissatisfied with the view of poor people and peasants shunning risks and preferring stability and security. I noticed that nearly all villagers sometimes took risks, and that some of them deliberately sought risks constantly. There is a special category of people who seem to search for risks instead of for security. In this chapter, I put these people at the centre of analysis. They take huge risks, even though this behaviour may endanger security and the continuity of households’ livelihoods. How can we understand such ‘excessive’ risk taking in regard to mainstream Krajan society, and the above-mentioned assumptions?

This chapter provides examples of villagers who deliberately take and combine risks. Locally, the term ‘orang nakal’ is used for these people, meaning something such as wayward, madcap, or naughty people. orang nakal are people who do not follow mainstream norms and values of society, do not seem to care about livelihood security, but deliberately take huge economic risks.3

3 By these risks I do not mean the customary risks related to farming and entrepreneurship, but excessive risks which (at least at first sight) are not oriented towards establishing a sustainable livelihood or social security in the long run. I exclude here most information on customary risk-taking practices.
I deal with the practice of excessive risk-taking but not specifically with outcasts. It will, however, turn out that risk-taking and deviancy often, but not necessarily, go together. It is a style represented by those living dangerously as gamblers, risk takers, and the wayward, but which also may include ordinary villagers and women. Their behaviour has the characteristics of a counter-style. Unlike the four styles I discussed in chapter 6, ‘orang nakal’ are oriented towards chances, thrills and risk-taking rather than security. The orang nakal make up those few percent of the population that does not want to live in conformity with the social rules and standards of society, who take deliberately huge risks, and are ‘unreasonable and irresponsible’ in the eyes of other members of the community. The most prominent of these ‘naughty’ people are criminals, gamblers, prostitutes, some youngsters and migrants and jago (macho gang leaders).

By describing and analysing this style, I want to show that deliberate risk taking is not simply deviant behaviour in peasant societies, but that it represents an attractive style for some villagers who search for alternatives to village norms of decency and conformation, and who on purpose forego investments in social security and reciprocal relationships. In looking at these examples, and at who are taking such risks in Krajan, we see a combination between certain persons, households, and risk taking activities. Those willing to take huge risks in gambling, often also follow a chancy style of farming or trade, and show great machismo. For this group of people, the orang nakal, risk-taking is more than a livelihood strategy, but rather a lifestyle in itself. While it is generally held that people only take risks when their basic means are secured, and that people seek a favourable mix of securities and risks, many of the orang nakal are poor and combine risks with other risks. Combinations of gambling and illicit sexual affairs are a common example; although not all gamblers are promiscuous, and not all womanisers are gamblers or take huge risks in other aspects of their lives. Other combinations are also possible, such as gambling and sudden migration, or speculation, gambling, and conspicuous consumption. It is exactly the combination of different forms of deviant or wayward behaviour, which characterise the orang nakal. Just being nakal every now and then does not make someone an orang nakal.

In the following discussion, I will first take a closer look at the assumptions of risk taking and risk aversion in peasant societies. Then, I will describe practices of gambling and risk-taking in the village of Krajan, elaborated with some examples taken from the case studies. Finally, taking into account the examples of wayward people, I will discuss whether the assumption of risk-aversion in poorer households can still be considered valid.

**RISK-TAKING**

The assumption that peasants are risk-averse has been criticised from several angles. A good example from a rural-development economist’s point of view is Huijsman’s study of risk-taking by peasants in a changing context of agric-
cultural innovation due to Green Revolution technologies. He focuses on farmers' decision-making in a semi-subsistence village with rain-fed rice production in The Philippine province of Central Luzon (Huijsman, 1986).

The main focus of his dissertation is on the question as to whether peasants are risk-averse and, if so, whether they do not want to take risks, or whether they are unable to do so. After detailed field research, he concluded that farmers cannot be seen as risk-averse. Both rich and poor farmers can take risks, and many production strategies of farmers, such as diversification, which are interpreted as risk-averse, have at least two goals: achieving the best economic goals, and minimising risks. He concludes:

“it is not possible to define risk as an unambiguous concept. Risk describes different types of insecurity, where the extent of risk depends on the risk carrying capacity of the household and is prone to changes. Within homogeneous groups of similar farmers, there are huge differences in risk-carrying capacity due to the mix in production means. [...] In regard of the production risks of individual farming activities, farmers cannot be regarded as risk-aversive, or risk preferable. One and the same farmer can show both. [...] Often farmers do not adopt innovations, not because they are risk-averse, but because they have little financial risk carrying capacity. This makes up the difference between rich and poor farmers. Poor farmers are not risks averse, but are not able to take risks. Thus, the lack of risk carrying capacity increases the gap between rich and poor farmers” (Huijsman, 1986: 335).

Studies such as Huijsman's mainly concern risk-taking related to agriculture, innovation, and income activities. They often blame the structure of the society for preventing villagers from taking risks, and suggest that risk-taking is only possible if there is a basis of security, a well prepared subsistence floor, and a financial infrastructure accessible to all villagers. In practice, these seldom exist in developing countries and therefore such understanding of risk-taking means that in those societies only the rich will be able to take risks. These assumptions only partly hold. Often, insufficient attention is given to those cultural and normative decisions of farmers which are not directly related to farming but do affect their farming strategies.

Some relevant examples of risk-taking can be found in studies of farmers engaged in commercial vegetable farming in the Philippines and Indonesia. Lewis (1992) describes the excessive ecological and financial risk-taking by Philippine mountain peasants in vegetable production in Northern Luzon. “Buguias residents became professional risk-takers; their agricultural endeavor, as they perceive it, is now one of continual gambling” (Lewis, 1992: 131). He distinguishes various production strategies by peasants, among whom some are opposed to the more conservative strategies. “Other gardeners deliberately choose risk, gambling on the chance of a windfall. Precarious strategies include planting a crop during its season of maximum hazards, or sowing a dry field at the first rain, in hope that more will soon follow” (Lewis, 1992: 136). These farmers indeed preferred risks to security: “But the Bugias farm-
Crickets among the ants

ers have never shied away from the risks so entailed. Indeed, many have welcomed them, pinning their hopes not so much on steady income, as on a jackpot. Their belief that the flow of luck is largely controllable promotes this attitude; the new economic realities only affirm traditional ideology on this score. (ibid: 138). Hefner (1990) describes similar practices, and the social, cultural and political embeddedness of it, in vegetable production in Tengger in East Java.

Risk-taking in these examples of vegetable farming is socially accepted and culturally embedded in village societies. There are also examples where excessive forms of risk-taking are considered unacceptable and deviant. Vel’s (1994) description of Manu Wolu, a bird nest collector on Sumba, Indonesia, is an example of such hazardous behaviour and deviancy. She sketches the dilemma of the village poor such as Manu Wolu: “Either they submit themselves to the rules of the local community and live a life of hard work and may be sure of a basic level of existence. Or they engage in cash earning activities that are beyond the limits of what is approved of by the local community, and subsequently may be rich at times, but excluded by the community” (Vel, 2000: 35).

On Sumba, the gathering of birds’ nests from caves is a highly disapproved of activity as it is believed that entering caves brings people into contact with evil spirits. Nevertheless, a group of predominantly youngsters, sometimes described as *kuat jalan* or vagabonds, takes the risks and engages in these - often physically dangerous - activities. Although they make good money, they loose, to a large extent, access to village networks and thus to support and social security, and most of them remain poor. “Deviant behaviour such as ‘gathering birds’ nests is the option for people who are on the outer edge of the local economy, for whom there hardly is a viable alternative to make a living. Coping with insecurity is the permanent theme of their life. In their own assessment, a deviant way to earn cash can be preferable over access to local social security arrangements, if that would imply permanent drudgery merely for the benefit of patrons” (Vel, 2000: 45).

**Risk-taking in Krajan**

As we have seen in the preceding chapters, when encountering hardship, Krajan villagers are expected to first cover their expenses out of their own savings, capital, and resources. If, like the poor, they have very limited resources, they need to turn to relatives, friends, and neighbours for support; when their support is insufficient, coping becomes extremely problematic. In the case of burials for instance, the family of the deceased have to sell their assets to cover the expenses of a ‘decent funeral’. If they do not have any, the deceased will be buried without much ceremony which is considered shameful.

In general, villagers strongly disapprove of risky behaviour and squandering resources endangering the capacity of a household to fulfil its obligations and rituals in times of need. Nevertheless, some poorer (and often young) villagers do not like the prospects of life-long compliance to these established norms and try to find alternatives. They put their hope in earning quick cash
In Krajan, about one third of the male population gambles on occasions. Except for members of certain strict religious families, nearly all men have gambled at least once. However, less than five percent of these men are referred to as orang nakal, violating established village norms of behaviour. For the majority of gamblers, gambling does not directly threaten their livelihoods, it has more the character of a pastime.

Gambling

In Krajan, about one third of the male population gambles on occasions. Except for members of certain strict religious families, nearly all men have gambled at least once. However, less than five percent of these men are referred to as orang nakal, violating established village norms of behaviour. For the majority of gamblers, gambling does not directly threaten their livelihoods, it has more the character of a pastime.

The rules of the game

Most forms of gambling are illegal, but every time there is a large ceremony, a wedding, music (dangdut), or theatre (ludruk) performance, there is gambling on the outskirts of the festival terrain. Sometimes empty houses or houses owned by players are used. If there is no house available, a garden, a group of trees, or the back of a shed provides a convenient gambling place, all places which prevent outsiders from observing the gamblers will do. To prevent officials from interfering, the police, the military, and sometimes even village administrators are frequently paid off. It can also happen that the military directly sponsor gambling activities and then neither the police and village officials nor religious leaders dare to take any action.

Gambling is generally organised by a group of people. They work together with a creditor (bandar). The bandar does not need to play, others play for him. He adds or collects money every now and then, and maintains good relationships with village officials and policemen to safeguard the play. An example of such a bandar is pak Patik, not only a sly tobacco farmer and cattle trader, but also a moneylender. Because of that, he always has ready cash available, and is willing to lend it to organisers of a game. Since he never plays himself, and seldomly watches the game, he has always stayed out of

4 On the basis of participant observation - made possible by these good social relations - in-depth insight could be gained about risk-taking behaviour. Besides this, it enabled me to collect detailed life histories and to touch upon sensitive questions concerning loss, debts, conflicts, sexuality, and shame. Men and women and husbands and wives were often separately observed and interviewed. Moreover, my wife played an important role in establishing good relationships with women, in getting access to women's stories, and by crosschecking male stories in female domains.
trouble when the police arrested gamblers. He never takes responsibility when players are seized. “I have the risk of losing money, you the risk of being caught, I do not want to be in trouble,” he said.

Basically, there are three categories of gamblers in Krajan⁵: Those gambling for pastime only at special occasions such as _selamatan_ and weddings; those who gamble regularly, but carefully and strategically; and the addicted gamblers who can hardly resist playing on any occasion. Most of the gambling in Krajan is petty gambling where the bets are small and most villagers play occasionally and irregularly, often only at special occasions such as festivals. For many villagers, this type of playing has the character of a pastime and the amounts lost do not exceed a day’s wage.⁶ The most common games are cards (_judi ceki_), balls (_judi bola_), and dice (_judi klodok_). In cockfights (_aduan ayam_) and the popular Madurese bull fights (_aduan sapi_) larger amounts of money are at stake than when playing cards, balls or dice. Before the 1997 crisis, at _aduan sapi_ and _aduan ayam_ bets of Rp one million (150 US $) or more were not exceptional.

In most of the events I observed, the bets were within the financial limits of the gambler. Most occasional gamblers do not stake more money than they bring to the game. However, there are people who have ruined themselves by gambling away cash, land, goods, and even the house in which they live, and are on the way to ruin. In the past five years, at least twelve families in Krajan have lost nearly all their belongings due to a gambling husband or son. Most of these families could not be interviewed as they had left the village; many had departed for Kalimantan, on the run from creditors, and/or in the hope of regaining some of the lost possessions.

Gambling in Krajan is a purely male activity. Women do not generally gamble, although some used to buy lottery tickets from legal lotteries in town.⁸ Although many women know that their husbands play, they are strongly opposed to gambling (even petty social gambling). They believe that gambling is a major threat to their household, an irresponsible waste of money, and an illness that needs to be cured.

The women are convinced that, even if their husbands win, they will not get hold of the money, as it will not last long. Money earned from gambling is hot (_uang panas_), earned too quickly, and does not enter the household as such.

---

⁵ See in this respect Lont (2002) who describes two kinds of gamblers; those gambling for pastime, and notorious gamblers who are addicted. The group of notorious gamblers includes those gambling carefully and strategically, and people who are addicted-die-hards who cannot stop betting.

⁶ Before the 1997 economic crisis, a Rp 100 coin was the normal bet for the common games like playing cards, dice, and a kind of lottery. After the start of the crisis, due to high inflation, Rp 500 notes became the minimum bet.

⁷ Indonesian words I came across:
Card _judi_: main gaple, main ceki, main remi, cap beki,
ball _judi_: bola adil
dice _judi_: main dadu, judi klithik

⁸ Recently, these lotteries have been forbidden.
money is spent 'as fast as it is earned'. Moreover, the belief that gamblers in the end always lose is strongly rooted in society. This is borne by events to a large extent. Most of the notorious gamblers are not successful in the long run due to money leaking out of the circuit. During gambling sessions, money is spent on drinks, cigarettes, and food. Often, the night’s winner is expected to buy the drinks of the others. Moreover, organisers (bandar), patrons (often military), moneylenders, and shopkeepers take their shares, and they are usually the only ones who are make a profit in the long run. However, such stories also have a function of scaring and preventing people from engaging in gambling.

Among women, stories of women who have lost all their possessions due to an ‘irresponsible’ husband are told and retold. A well-known example is the story of Bu Sulama. Her husband’s gambling behaviour caused them not only to sell his own land, but also his wife’s property that she had inherited from her parents. Now, the couple have to work as labourers in the fields of others. One woman in the audience commented that, Bu Sulama should have divorced him before all the land was gone. “She must have noticed that he (her husband) had the fever.”

Although women cannot divorce easily in Krajan, a gambling husband is generally accepted as a legitimate reason for divorce. Women usually try to keep their husbands away from gambling in many ways. A common strategy is to ask for money for household needs as soon as a husband earns something in order to prevent the money from being wasted. From any earned money, most husbands keep a small proportion for their own benefit, used for expenses like coffee, cigarettes, sweets for children, and the like. Usually, husbands try to hide the exact amount of their earnings, but networks of women constantly exchange information about payments and earnings of their husbands and use that information to get their share. I spoke to husbands and wives separately, and observed that spouses already knew the earnings of the man before they met.

Frequently, I found women secretly saving some of this money for bad times, or for expected expenses such as a selamatan, school fees, or a school uniform. This was particularly the case if husbands were notorious gamblers: nearly half of their wives admitted privately that they owned savings (celengan). In most cases, the husbands admitted that they knew, or suspected, that their women had savings, but they were never sure about the exact amounts. The gamblers in the area around Krajan included both rich and poor villagers, and older and younger men. Although most of the gamblers were young, the gamblers for larger stakes are often older and successful villagers. A special category appeared to be the village heads. Out of seven neighbouring villages, at least four village heads were known to be excessive gamblers. Among these Bagenda, the village head of Krajan, was the most notorious, but due to his power, slyness and influence, he is classified a fighting cock (jago), a macho, rather than a wayward by the villages.

---

9 I am very grateful to my wife Jolanda who played a crucial role in retrieving this type of information. Through her, I often gained access to information I would be unable to gather alone.
An example of a poorer family fully engaged in gambling is the family of Limatus. According to neighbours, Pak Limatus is a good and clever man, strong and industrious, able to do many kinds of work. However, he has one problem, he gambles. He and his wife inherited sawah and tegal, but the sawah has now been sold to cover gambling debts, and the tegal has been pawned. Limatus works as a carpenter and rents tegalan to grow tobacco. Last year, he borrowed heavily to plant around one hectare of tobacco, but as the rains were irregular and late, the tobacco leaves were destroyed. He lost around Rp 800,000 (over half a years income of a wage labourer).

To cover his debts he sold his house and the family moved to their old kitchen. With the remains of the money from the sale of his house, he bought wood to build a new house and asked for help from neighbours (tolong menolong). “It was not difficult to find neighbours to help, I have always helped others at tolong menolong and now they can help me back”, he commented. The new house was soon finished and even looked better than the first one.

On average, he gambles five nights a week and plays numbers, balls, dice, and gambles on bullfights. During the interview, he admitted that he could not stop gambling. “It is like a fever which always comes back. If I do not play regularly, I don’t feel at ease. Playing feels like hunting deer in the forest. You want to succeed.” Despite his huge losses, he is proud because his family has never faced food shortages and has always been able to find work and money.

His wife told us in a separate interview that she is confident that he will always find a way to earn money. But she also told us that she saves secretly for times of need. “If he comes home, and has made a profit, I demand all the money for the children and hide it. If he wants to play again, he has to earn money first.” Other women had told her to leave him, “but I like him”, she said, “He is a good man, and he is always honest with me.”

I met pak Limatus regularly during the fieldwork periods, and during the second research period in 1999, I went again to his house for the second round of the village survey. He had not been doing well since the previous year, due to misfortune, further gambling and the rising prices of food and inputs. At the beginning of the year, he had lost much money through gambling forcing him to sell his last cow. Since then, he had dramatically decided to quit playing - and as far I know - he indeed never played again “I have become wise at last, but only after I had lost everything,” he told me, “but with normal work, I could never earn such huge amounts that easily.”

When I went to his house at another occasion in 1999, he looked bitter and broken. Twenty days earlier his young daughter had died of diarrhoea and he was overwhelmed with sorrow. The main rituals (selamatan) were over and had cost Rp 1 million. Neighbours, friends and close relatives had offered him some loans (with interest) to pay for the expenses and he had some savings because he was planning to buy tiles for a new roof. Due to the good relationships of his wife with neighbours and relatives, he had received relatively
much help from them. Despite these huge sumbangan, it did not relieve his sorrow. All the help meant nothing to him. He said: “My child has been exchanged for rice.”

Contrary to most Krajan gamblers, Limatus was able to stop gambling before he lost completely everything, although I am not sure he will stick to it. According to some neighbours, there will be no way back if he starts again. Due to his specific skills, creativity, and hard work, he was able to make a living and cover most losses. A crucial factor in his good name and social relationships is his wife who stands up for her children and their needs. Further, speculative tobacco farming made him huge profits in previous years. According to others: “He is a man of guts, a daredevil. Who dares to sell his house, move to a shed and build a new one?” Besides being nakal, he is active in mutual help, and has maintained a good name as a partaker in village social security arrangements and secured access to work and trading opportunities through his skills and his wife’s social network. Many neighbours admire him for having a lot of nerve (berani) and for not being too greedy.

When his child died, he indeed received much help, although most of the help consisted of loans which needed to be repaid within a few months. It remains to be seen how this family will do in the future. Due to the ongoing economic crisis, their dependency on cash incomes and the sale of their main resources (cattle and land) they are bound to face major difficulties in recovering. Things will get tough if he gets desperate and decides to gamble again on the chance of making a big win. Otherwise, he may be able to survive by drawing on a diversified pool of support relationships and on the range of jobs he is considered to be good at.

Who are these gamblers?

In four hamlets of Krajan, with about 400 families, I came across some two dozen notorious gamblers. About half of them were poor. Among them, villagers distinguish two classes: rich, or children from rich families, and the poor or newly poor. Especially children of richer families are explicitly referred to as orang nakal. These children never had to work hard and are spoiled in the eyes of the villagers. “They never learned to take responsibility.” In Krajan there are at least ten cases where children gambled away family property, sometimes with disastrous consequences. It is remarkable that parents have not been able to stop them. They often operate in gangs and very often the gambling goes together with other disapproved activities such as having sexual affairs outside the village, burglary, theft, conspicuous consumption, and drinking.

An example of such anak nakal is Abdul, the brother of Bu Sumyati (30). Her family used to be one of the richest in Krajan. Twenty years ago, they had over fifteen hectares of sawah and tegal. The decline of the family’s wealth started when Sumyati’s grandfather attempted to run for village head. He failed, and lost some, but not all of the family capital. When Abdul and Sumyati were sent to secondary school in Bondowoso, Abdul became enthralled by the glamour of urban life and wanted to be part of it. Therefore he
needed a trendy motor bike, expensive clothes, and lots of pocket money, which his par­
ents willingly provided. They paid all what he asked, as they thought it to be part and parcel of a good education. Rapidly, the family’s funds dried up because of these expenses and more and more cattle and some of the family’s rice fields had to be sold or pawned.

Abdul finished his education, but was not able or willing to find a paid job. He continued to live well at the expense of his parents and started several small trades and businesses. When these failed, and he needed money desperately, he managed to sell most of the already pawned rice fields secretly. Sumyati and her grandfather were very angry when they found out and they transferred the last two plots of land to Sumyati preventing Abdul from disposing of more family capital. When nearly all the parent’s property was gone, Abdul had no other choice than to return to Krajan where he received disapproval but obtained food and lodging in his parents’ house. Soon, however, he left for Kalimantan in search of luck or money. Not much later, his, now landless, parents, registered at a transmigration program to Sulawesi in the hope of recovering some of their lost resources. Since then, Sumyati has tried little by little to repay debts and to recover at least some of the pawned fields.

Among the rich gamblers in Krajan, traders are a prominent group. They rarely put their own livelihoods completely at risk as they are usually able to compensate gambling losses with profits from trade. They also have some additional benefits from gambling: networks of gamblers serve for them as sources of commercial information, which often provides them with new business opportunities. Apart from this, as important sums of money are circulating in these networks, they can borrow cheaply from other participants to finance their trade. For some of these businessmen, the gambling scene has become a major source of income as they operate as organisers (bandar), moneylenders, or pawn-takers.

Village officials and village heads from the neighbourhood, often playing in Krajan, form a special category of rich gamblers. The village head of Sumber Dompyong, Pak Zeinol (age 45) bets mainly on bullfights. He owns a number of bulls himself and, until the end of 1997, he went to the Bondowoso bullfights every week. Sometimes he lost millions of Rupiah in one week, in other weeks he won similar amounts. In addition to betting at the bull-fighting arena, he is a notorious cock gambler and dice (klithik) player, and makes weekly visits to Krajan gambling dens. During large weddings - or similar major events - I regularly saw him gambling. There were rumours that he compensated for losses by using village development funds.

The village head of Gadingsari lost a few cows, a car, and a motorbike, in the course of four years as a result of gambling. After the fall of Suharto in 1998, large demonstrations by villagers and official complaints to the heads of the district and sub-district led to his dismissal. The former village head of Andungsari lost a number of cows, at least one hectare of sawah, and several

---

10 In 1999, they returned to Krajan. Although not prosperous, they had at least been able to secure a plot of land in Sulawesi and then sold it. With the money, they bought a couple of cows in Krajan and recovered the pawned land of their daughter.
pieces of land which he pawned to cover his gambling losses. Also he was dismissed in 1998 and an investigation proved that he had misused village funds. As he had to repay the embezzled money as well as to cover his debts, he was forced to sell his parents’ land.

The village head of Poler lost considerable sums in gambling and turned to Bagenda, the village head of Krajan, who lend him the money and provided him with a car. Burdened with a debt of some Rp 20 - 30 million, lurah Poler was unable to take action against Bagenda when the latter had a secret love affair with his wife. When the affair became public knowledge, he was humiliated further. He sold his land, repaid Bagenda and became foremen at the isolated Ijen coffee plantation.\(^{11}\)

Of all seven village heads in the sub-district Pakem, only the new village head of Andungsari is not known as a notorious gambler. He is the oldest son of a strict religious family that has provided several village heads in the past. His strict interpretation of his religion and strong social control in the family prevent him becoming a gambler. In business, however, he takes considerable risks by speculating heavily in the rice and tobacco trade.

The largest group of gamblers can be found among the poor of Krajan. They generally come from families who had some small property such as one or two plots of land and some cattle. Men from this group do not gamble regularly, because they do not have enough cash and cannot borrow easily, but when they have some money, they become enthusiastic gamblers hoping that they can improve their lives by hitting the box. They rarely succeed and the small occasional gains go into instant consumption. They enjoy their short-lived moments of excitement and luxury and their hopes of a better future which in their eyes compensates for their dull and dead-end lives. However, more often than not, they become trapped when they run into ever higher debts to cover their gambling losses.

Being illegal and an object of governmental suppression, gambling needs protection. Bagenda and other upper bandar of Krajan have therefore good relationships with the police and the military in the area, some of whom are also personally involved in Krajan gambling. If villagers are caught by the police, they go to Bagenda and ask for his support.\(^{12}\) In return for his protection and mediation, Bagenda receives regular ‘grants’ from them. In earlier years, he sometimes played a double role. A passionate gambler himself (he is often the bandar and supplies credit, buys goods or land from those who have

\(^{11}\) The sexual affair lingered on until late 1999. I spoke to a few villagers who had seen Bagenda taking this girl to town. When I asked Bagenda in a confidential moment about going with this girl, he himself admitted he deliberately made the husband dependent on him, "he is tied to me because he owes me a huge sum of money. I am free to go to his house and do whatever I want." Besides this I received much information from one of the confidants of Bagenda who had to provide alibis to the wife of Bagenda. Further, Suparman, a local journalist and friend from Bagenda, witnessed the couple entering a hotel in town and confirmed this affair.

\(^{12}\) Village heads involved in gambling are common in Java. Among others, Cederroth (1995: 194) noticed the same for a village in the west of East Java; not only the village administration, but also the police and the military were heavily involved.
lost large amounts) he himself informed the police about gambling places in Krajan, generally those operated by competing bandar. In this way, he could pretend to seriously fight gambling in his village, to get rid of his competition and to continue receiving bribes to free the captured villagers.

Bagenda also often gambles outside Krajan where he uses similar tricks. On a few occasions, when Bagenda had lost large amounts of money to Chinese bandar, he informed the police about the gambling den. When the police captured the players and confiscated the money, they divided with Bagenda receiving his share. His excellent relationships with the police and the military make him a feared and invulnerable rival, and his success in gambling adds to his status as a daredevil and a strong man (jago).

Free but decent: extra marital relationships in Krajan

Another form of risk-taking in Krajan are extra-marital relationships as they can entail carok if discovered by the deceived husband. Although sanctions, for especially women, can be severe, the number of men and women engaging in extra-marital relationships is considerable. More than half of the sixty adults in my neighbourhood have ever had such a sexual affair. Often these affairs remained hidden, but sometimes, when a couple was discovered, the case was brought to public trial. Affairs and rumours of affairs are one of the reasons for the existence of so many relationships under tension in neighbourhoods and is reflected in feuds and a general lack of trust between certain families.

Generally, extra-marital relationships are frowned upon or strongly disapproved of but, within certain limits of decency, they can be acceptable. It depends on the people involved, who knows about it, and how the relationship develops. Love relationships outside forced weddings, relationships of widows with married men, and relationships by first wives of polygamous men, are sometimes acceptable, but only if they remain hidden and invisible, which is very difficult since houses stand close to each other and are always open. Often, the sisters, brothers or mother of a woman having an affair, protect the couple if needed. Neighbours who also know or suspect an affair, do

---

13 In the original meaning, carok means murder (see Latief Wiyata (2001)), in Krajan it also refers to other kinds of violence, fights, and conflicts related to honour and love. Murders have not occurred since Bagenda became village head.

14 About one third of these people were women. In the area I lived, several affairs have been discovered. I heard other stories from men, and sometimes women and healers, who told about their sexual escapades and of those of close friends for whom they had provided an alibi. Many of these stories could later be crosschecked by my wife, or my assistants. Sometimes we accidentally came across signs of such relationships as for instance when Mbak Titik, our domestic helper, put a bag with water in our fridge. When we asked for what purpose she had done this, she told us that a close friend and neighbour, Bu Sai, had asked her secretly for a large bag with ice. Bu Sai had not menstruated this month and she was afraid she was pregnant. Her husband had gone to Kalimantan three months earlier. Other stories gave us also indirect clues, like stories about illegal abortions, women inquiring privately for abortion pills, etc.
not bring it into the open if they want to maintain good relationships with the families involved. Also the fear of revenge by the husband or his friends makes people to turn a blind eye.

If an affair is not socially acceptable, continues for too long, becomes too visible, or is morally disapproved of by most relatives and neighbours, and leads to gossip, its discovery is likely and, in the most extreme cases, it will be reported to the village council. Most of the discoveries I studied during the research period concerned men from outside the village such as peddlers, tobacco traders, and schoolteachers who had relationships with a woman or girl from Krajan. In some other cases, the relationships became public when the relatives or neighbours of the girl did not like the man or his family. If brought into the open, cases have to be settled according to local customs: the couple is publicly scorned, huge penalties have to be paid, and the couple is often forced to marry.

Men and women who have or had, extra-marital relationships are not automatically called nakal. It depends on how often someone is involved, or said to be involved, and how he or she behaves. If the relationship and the flirting are too public, playful, macho, short term, or multiple, and leads to gossip, women run the risk of being called nakal or cheap (murah). Nakal is used in the case of women who flirt actively, take initiatives, or visit places where men can be found (i.e., at certain warung and gambling dens). Women, who easily give way to pressure from men or to temptations are called murah (cheap or easy; without having any backbone). Unlike in the case of men (who may gain awe or even respect) being called nakal has very negative connotations for women and their behaviour is disproportionally sanctioned. If they are married, they can be beaten up (or become a victim of carok), they can be divorced without receiving a part of the households assets, or lifelong sanctioned or scapegoated making it impossible to remarry.

Despite these risks, affairs can go on for many years despite the fact that some other people know about it. Pak Oke told me: “The best way and the safest is to search for a girl far away, in Bondowoso or in another village. Every now and then you meet in a place where nobody knows you. To love a girl in the neighbourhood is very dangerous, because you have to establish very good relationships with the parents, husband, and with neighbours of the girl in order to be able to make regular visits and make your presence in the house unobtrusive. You have to make yourself trusted by those most closely related to the girl.”

Another way of diminishing risks is meeting in the house of a friend or relative. This is the safest if you have a friend who will not talk. Some of the warung in Krajan, and along the road to Bondowoso, also have this function. Most warung comprise of an area to drink and sit, a kitchen and one or more bedrooms; and these beds can be ‘borrowed’ for some time. It is not difficult for women to slip into a warung from the back or to enter the kitchen, as most warung sell vegetables, tahu, or dried fish. Men often sit in the front, chatting and drinking coffee. The lover can easily slip into the back of the warung, leaving a friend in the front as an alibi. A few warung owners in Krajan make a good living out of this business.
Bu Hosniati: a case of female risk-taking

Hosniati is a modern looking woman with fancy clothes who recently returned from Bondowoso town to her parents' house after her divorce. Her former husband divorced her when he suspected her of adultery and took back all his possessions except her bamboo house and their three year old daughter. As she lost her job in a food store and could no longer make a living in Bondowoso, she asked her relatives and old neighbours in the village to help move her house back to Krajan. Several neighbours were not willing to join this tolong menolong as she was known as nakal. Nevertheless, the house was rebuilt in the village by close relatives of her mother, and in a few days she could live on her own next to her mother's house.

Back in the village, she basically had two options: marry a local man, adjust to village life with small means and become part of the network of village women and relatives, or continue her previous lifestyle and engage with men who would provide for her expenses, an option which would be openly and clearly condemned by relatives, neighbours, and former friends. Therefore, she told everyone in the village that she had remarried a man from outside Krajan. And indeed, on Sundays, a car would be parked in front of her house and her supposed husband was visiting her. For the time being, she had silenced critics, but soon the gossip in Krajan began.

Mega, a neighbour of about the same age explained: "Bu Hosniati is sombong and nakal (arrogant and naughty). She always says that her life in the city was better than in the village. She said she had many lovers there, but when her husband divorced her, she had nothing and could only return to her parents. Now she walks on high heels in the village mud." She also reported the opinions of others expressed at the village well and the public bathing place: "Bu Hosniati should keep quiet. She is lucky she could still marry a good man again. He is taking good care of her. But her baby is not his and, can you believe it, she was not strong enough to stand the massage to get rid of it. She is very nakal. As soon her husband is away, she looks at other men," Bu Tarmini, an elderly neighbour commented. A friend of hers had reacted: "It is just her turunan (it runs in the family. You know, her mother and grandmother were like her and her sisters are just the same. The problem is, Hosniati lived in town and now seems to have lost her shame."

Later, it became clear that the village head had started a liaison with her. When that happened, women started to avoid her. According to Mbak Iis, a young women of about the same age: "If I see Bu Hosniati at the washing place, I come back later. I am not taking a bath or getting water when she is there. She constantly talks about petinggi (the village head), and how smart and how handsome he is. I get tired of her stories about him. She even told me she buys medicine to make him love and enjoy her more. She is so arrogant (sombong)."

---

15 Massage refers to the practise of local medicine women carrying out abortions. This can be quite painful.
Men were much more positive about her because she was pretty and her open 'city-like' manners impressed although they thought her cheap. Pak Warda, an older neighbour on good terms with her parents said: "They say Bu Hosniati plays around. So what? She is a pretty young lady, too young anyway to live alone with her child for the rest of her life. Why bother, we know we are all nakal every now and then. She has just forgotten how to live in the village and has to cool down a bit. That's all."

Villagers judged very differently about Hosniati. Most criticisms were oriented towards her 'shamelessness' and 'arrogance' towards village life, and not so much towards what she is doing with other men. Being a little nakal, naughty, or playing around, seems not to be that bad. In the eyes of many (men and women) it is understandable that she is nakal because her former husband has left her, and her current man only every now and then comes to the village. She is only his lower and has few networks in the village and needs much money for her expensive lifestyle. But, she should not have 'played' with Bagenda at the same time.

If she had not been so boasting and open, her behaviour would have been more acceptable. Other women gossip about her, not because she is having affairs, but because she is having them too openly. Another reason for their disapproval is that her behaviour, as an attractive and 'willing' woman, poses a severe threat to the other women in the neighbourhood. They were worried she would 'steal' their husbands, as Hosniati became the talk of the day in the male community.

Her preference for rich men is risky as she looses the chance of a decent marriage in the village, while none of her present wealthy friends is likely to marry her and take responsibility for her and her children in the long run. With her arrogance, boasting, and open flirting she risks exclusion from village networks which are crucial for support in times of need. But for the moment, she does not seem to bother and enjoys her status as a free woman with enough financial means to live well.

Speculation

While those involved in gambling and sex, operate more or less outside the moral boundaries of village life, there are also others who take socially acceptable, but still hazardous, risks. This is most often in financial matters and speculation farming and trade. Insecurities in crop outputs are, as we have seen, normal as farming in Krajan is insecure due to fluctuations in rainfall, market prices, and diseases, and everybody has to face those from time to time. But some people take, what villagers call reckless risks which endanger livelihood security in the long run. Often, those people are also daredevils in other areas of society, like the family of Limatus. Although, as we have seen, they were already going down because of Limatus' gambling addiction, they still borrowed heavily to invest the money in tobacco farming. By doing so, they wagered the family's subsistence and, when they lost, they were left with few options.
Not all speculation in farming is reckless. It is almost by definition that traders, large farmers, and local businessmen constantly speculate on possible future profits; however, they usually have enough assets to prevent a total collapse in livelihood when things go wrong. Here we are only concerned with the most reckless speculators who hope for hitting the jackpot in tobacco farming. While most farmers decide how much tobacco to plant on the basis of last year's market prices, the wayward people are less bothered by conservative calculations and take huge risks. If they have a windfall, they are not inclined to save, but spent most of it directly. Also Limatus had done so in previous years and he therefore had to face the hard times empty-handed.

Many of those who lost their money on tobacco, and could not repay their debts, went to Kalimantan in 1997 hoping for a better future or to repay debts and to start farming in Krajan again. Most of them were not able to save as gambling in Kalimantan is more common, prices are high, and returns were disappointing. Given the recent outbreaks of violence against Madurese in Kalimantan, migration is a very risky choice.16

On-the-spur-migration

Finally, we find risk-taking among ramblers and tramps travelling around the East-Javanese countryside and among migrants. Migration is not very common in Krajan compared to other areas of Java.17 Around five percent of Krajan villagers have a family member working outside the village, most often in Kalimantan. Most migrants to Kalimantan belonged to the so-called spontaneous category. Few people who left for Kalimantan were able to participate in the government transmigration programmes which in general provides support during the first two years in the new land. Some of these migrants who had left decided overnight to leave the village, 'just to try their luck elsewhere', others departed well prepared. Most of these migrants went to Kalimantan to work temporary in the oil palm plantations for a couple of months up to several years. Only those who were unsuccessful remained in Kalimantan and never returned to the village. Most of the other migration can be characterised as temporary and cyclical. If there is news of good working opportunities, they depart for Bali, Madura, lowland Java, or the area of Banyuwangi to work as peddlers, wage labourers, sugarcane cutters, or as lumber jacks. Often, villagers travel in groups in search for work. Some of the poorest villagers, who seem so desperate that they depart without virtually any money, set out simply to try their luck somewhere else. Among them are the notorious nakal, who feel the fiery breath of creditors or angry villagers, or who simply want a change of scene and try their luck else-

---

16 In spring 2001, when the most violent outbreaks took place, at least 55 Krajan villagers returned. So far no casualties among Krajan people have been reported.

where. Some villagers take the bus to Denpasar, Bali, and leave with no more than Rp 10,000 (1 US $). The only thing they know is that some businessman probably is looking for people to sell brushes and bamboo shields. After paying the bus fare, they only have money for two meals. Sometimes they are lucky and return with some money or a bag of rice. Mostly, however, they return without anything and have already lost their small earnings in bad luck, theft, prostitutes, or heavy gambling, and only come to borrow some money again. In the long run, however, they become more and more estranged from the village as they are often away and as they are increasingly unable to give anything in return. Instead, they more and more rely upon their fellow traveller along the road, be it that these networks are short-lived and tend to be unreliable. Unlike transmigration, which brings new hopes but also requires substantial investments, vagabonding and travelling (merantau) in Krajan is generally a choice made by people at the margins of the local economy for whom insecurities are a permanent theme of their life.

Analysis of risk-taking practices

Gambling

There are good reasons to assume that risk-taking behaviour is not exceptional, and that it can be found in most towns and villages in Java. Some of the excessive risk takers show deviant behaviour, but this does not have to be the case. In many societies, there seems to be a small number of gamblers and non-conformists who take these kinds of risks. Cederroth (1995: 195), who conducted research in Central, East Java, notes: “However, there is a group of dedicated gamblers, many of whom have completely ruined their personal finances by gambling”. In most societies, there is a significant group of gambling deviants who violate the norms of mainstream society.

Poverty is often mentioned as a major reason why people gamble according to Cederroth (1995: 6): “For many people, their income is not even sufficient to cover their daily economic needs. Such people frequently turn to gambling in the hope of gaining instant wealth. Gambling then has an important role in the household economy of many families”. Further, he compares saving to gambling: “Those who cannot, or are simply too impatient to adhere to the boring strategy of long saving periods before getting their reward, frequently try to find shortcuts and instant fortunes by various kinds of gambling” (Cederroth, 1995: 170).

These interpretations are too simplistic. Many villagers did say that, they started to gamble in the hope of a quick fortune but, after some time, these motivations changed and the game became a reason in itself. At the gambling place, their eyes start to flicker, they meet with friends, and experience moments of total ecstasy or despair. Often, gambling is an addiction, and gamblers refer to it as the real thing, the game which makes a boring life interesting. At the gambling place, friends are made and alliances develop which compensate for the social disapproval of society at large.
In addition, from the examples in this chapter it can be seen that gambling, sexual promiscuity, and speculative trading often go together. This is not a coincidence, as these practices are often related and once becoming nakal, it is difficult to re-enter society. It slowly develops into a style with attributed orientations, values, expectations, social relationship, and an inherent repertoire of choices. The orang nakal represent a way of life which is probably economically not that attractive since most of them do not accumulate much, but is appealing to many youngsters and also older people in search of some thrills to enliven a dull village life.

Moreover, being nakal offers poorer villagers the chance to acquire some status, within some circles of society (and not only among their own folks), as a daredevil and a true male. Risk taking represents machismo, the he-man, and probably the only chance to a better life which otherwise could never be reached. Being wayward and macho enables them to win at least some prizes in the cultural, sexual, and political domain of Krajan. Sometimes, being nakal develops into a creative counter-strategy, a life filled with gambling and dangerous living that offers an opportunity to distinguish oneself from the bourgeoise, the common folk, the people who never become anything special.

An example of an orang nakal who has become successful is Bagenda, the village head. Since his teenage years, he was know and feared in the area as an uncontrollable daredevil, involved in all kinds of semi-legal enterprises, able to resist and cooperate with local leaders, the police, and the military. Often villagers used nicknames for him referring to famous fighting cocks or bulls. At the age of 26, he was elected village head. So far, much of his power and prestige is based on his past and his rigid, creative, and sometimes violent style of leadership reminds one of his previous past as a gang leader.

For villagers, the similarity between him and the fighting cock (jago) is clear. Within and beyond Krajan, he is well known for his brutality, his success as a village leader, and for his sexual escapades. Jago is a word commonly and historically used for gang leaders and their machismo in Indonesia (Schulte Nordholt, 1991). The relationship between gambling and crossing sexual borders is often mentioned by (religious) opponents, by women, by spectators, and by players themselves. Jago, for instance, not only gain status from daring bets, but also from having many extra marital affairs. Moreover, engaging in sexual affairs can be more risky than gambling.

Extra-marital relationships

Clifford Geertz in his famous ‘Notes on the Balinese Cockfight’ explicitly links cockfights with sexuality. He argues that Balinese men identify themselves strongly with their fighting cocks, a symbol of masculinity, where the fight between cocks is a fight between men (Geertz, 1973: 417). In accordance with Geertz’ observations, De Jonge analysed the Madurese bullfight on East Java as a symbol of Madurese masculinity and sexuality which offered a valuable picture of aspects of society which in other spheres of life tend to stay
invisible (De Jonge, 1990, 1994). De Jonge draws a parallel between Madurese bull fights, *aduan sapi*, in the arena of Bondowoso, and Madurese society at large:

“The *aduan sapi* is replete with sexual symbolism. The arena and its immediate surroundings are a stage for the expression of 'male sociability', and the fights as well as the surrounding phenomena serve 'male identity functions'. Bulls are symbols par excellence of sexual vigour, courage, power, and aggressiveness [...] To watch and take part in the contests, even through betting or by hanging around the arena, enhances the masculine identity of those concerned. This way their machismo is strengthened and they are encouraged to display the connected behaviour and continue in this. The sexual symbolism [of the bull] is confirmed down to the last detail, as is apparent from the rubbing of the area around the bull's genitals and the painting, polishing and decorating of its horns, which are phallic symbols (Blok 1981: 427). The high point of the event [bull fight] is perhaps [a female dancer with] the winning bull. At that moment, the bull's power is metaphorically taken over by the men and displayed to the woman. (cf. Douglass 1984: 243) The events inside and outside the arena unambiguously emphasize and reinforce Madurese ideas about relations between the sexes.”

Indeed, the sexual connotations in the Madurese bullfight and the jokes surrounding the animals and owners are manifold. In an analogy to De Jonge's analysis of the bullfight, one could say that Madurese men are like their bulls; they fight for money and women. By showing force and masculinity they get more attention from women, and gain more status. This fighting often takes the form of gambling and wagering family life, status and safety since the consequences of discovery can be high. Sexual affairs - or even rumours - easily lead to fights, hatred, and even murders (*carok*). The play for women and status involves non-material risks and chances (i.e. status) although money is often involved and the financial risks can be high (Nooteboom, 2000).

Since colonial times, Madurese men have been known for their touchiness, suspicion, temperament, hot temper, fierceness, vengefulness, combativeness, and violence (De Jonge, 1995: 13). Besides this, many sexual stereotypes exist as men are said to be macho and promiscuous, and women to be good providers of sexual pleasures. The best known feature of Madurese violence is the revenge murder (*carok*) committed when a man's honour is assaulted. Among the main reasons for *carok* are (rumours of) someone having had a sexual affair with one's wife or daughter. *Carok* is still regularly committed (Latief Wiyata, 2001). In Krajan, since 1994, no murders have occurred due to the repression by the village head, but some villagers were wounded in fights during the research period. In the same period, in the vicinity of the village, at least four men were killed by *carok*.

--

18 Madurese folk medicine *jamu* is believed to be the best for increasing men's potency while Madurese women are believed to posses skills and *jamu* to increase the pleasure of men (i.e. dry: *kering*).
In regard to the dangers and risks involved, one question is why do women take these risks and become involved in extra-marital relationships? For women, there are a number of reasons to engage in risky extra-marital relationships including love and desire, financial reasons, status and the ‘thrill’ - the wish to live more dangerously. Although it is not allowed by the government, Krajan girls often marry at the age of thirteen or fourteen. Madurese women in East Java are among the youngest to marry in Indonesia (Jones, 2001). Often this first marriage is seen by girls as a way to fulfil the wishes of their parents, or just as a logical consequence of finishing primary school. 30 - 40 % of first marriages break up after a few years and then the girl is free to marry a more desired partner.

A marriage only counts as a marriage if there has been sexual intercourse. An inability to perform sexual duties can be a legitimate reason for divorce (Niehof, 1985). Often a husband, or his relatives, will try to force or persuade the girl to sleep with him. However, girls who do not want to marry their parent’s choice, can fiercely refuse. If they resist their parents, they can be beaten, refused food, or locked up until they agree. Sometimes, relatives even take watch in the house of a newly married couple to ensure that they stay in the same bed for the whole night.

Although sexuality in Krajan is connected to marriage, pleasure, and reproduction, marriage usually has nothing to do with notions of romantic love. A popular Indonesian saying is: ‘Marriage teaches you to love your husband’; and some female informants added: ‘or to hate him’. Nevertheless, many marriages survive. Common reasons for marrying and staying married are that an independent household forms an economic and autonomous unit, and offers social security, care, and access to an income. Only by marriage can a couple can get access to crucial resources such as land, cows, and collective labour arrangements.

Hidden sexual relationships outside the marriage might be a better option then divorce both for men and women frustrated in their marriage. Mega, a young woman who was forced to get married eight years earlier, managed to continue a loving relationship with her former boyfriend. In her case, maintaining her marriage and keeping a secret love affair was satisfying. She keeps on good terms with the relatives of her husband, she respects her parents, and maintains a good image in society. With the help of her mother, she is able to meet her lover every now and then. The marriage continues, while needs and desires can be satisfied elsewhere. Some such women (and often their mothers) actively use and enjoy the room of manoeuvre created by the attention and financial gifts from lovers.

19 For marriage, a health and age certificate is needed. All girls have to be checked by the local health post to see if they are physically ready for marriage. On this occasion they receive information about anti-conception options. As girls usually do not know their age, the local nurse provides a statement that the girl is sixteen years old. Another possibility is that a girl marries with only permission from a local religious leader. As soon as the girl is sixteen, the marriage is officially registered. Often marriages are not registered at all, due to the expenses involved.
The foregoing description of engagement into sexual relationships is perhaps too rosy. Especially for women, the risks of extra-marital relationships are high. Not all young women are able to deal with their loving relationships in a positive way. Some urge their lovers to marry them and threaten suicide if he does not want to. In more than one instance during the fieldwork young women committed suicide, when their love affair came out and their lovers refused to marry them, or because meetings became impossible. Often, thwarted in love, or being deserted, leads to sorrow, frustration, and pain among young women.  

**Machismo and power: a case of rape**

Power differences play a role and commonly, if relationships are very unequal, women are simply the victims of powerful men. Just as in the following story about Bagenda, the village head, told by Bu Lelian: “Sometimes he is even more courageous and he beats regularly on doors of young pretty women if he knows their husbands are not at home that night.” If he ‘falls in love’ with such a woman, he often offers a job to her husband and then sends him away for some task late at night. In this way, he makes the household dependent on him and takes away suspicion. Sometimes he urges husbands of pretty girls to drink at parties at his house or while gambling. When the husband is totally drunk, he visits the wife.

Although not all women respond to his advances, he usually gets what he wants. If not, he can be quite rough in his methods. In 1998, the village head had a secret relationship with Bu Patik who was flattered by his attention and who was inclined to take revenge on her husband for marrying a second, younger, wife. Once she did not come out of her house for a few nights while her husband was away. She was not able go outside because she had children of her neighbours sleeping in the same room with her. When she came out on the fourth night, Bagenda beat her on her back with a bamboo stick.  

Lelian told me that Bagenda once grabbed her hand when she went to haul water from the well at four ‘o clock in the morning. The well lies in the narrow valley far below the hamlet where she was living. It is very quiet place and usually women are not expected to go there alone in the dark. However, Lelian had woken up early, just after the first call for prayer from the mosque, to prepare food since, a lot of people were going to work on their land that day.

---

20 In addition, the behaviour of *jago* is often threatening to women. Some are lured or forced into a relationship with some of the *jago* men and cannot resist their demands. In other cases, women have been raped. Women often become victims of subordination and the power of macho men. For them, machismo and other attractions of male behaviour are more often a heavy burden than a pleasure.

21 I got this story from her daughter who probably did not know her mother had a relationship with the village head, but who saw bruises on the back of her mother when taking a bath together. When she asked about this, she warned her daughter not to go out at night, because she had been beaten by the village head because of that. I later heard later from other sources that the women from the *warung* had heard the beating and seen the village head.
Suddenly she saw Bagenda standing in the neighbourhood smoking a cigarette. He talked to her, and tried to persuade her to go inside an empty house nearby to have sex with him in exchange for a golden necklace of four grams. “I am sure he would not have given me that necklace”, Lelian said. She did not answer him and continued filling her jerrycan as quick as possible. When she tried to walk back to the hamlet he grabbed her hand and tried to pull her into the house. She escaped by saying she was awaited at home by her mother. If she did not go back immediately, her mother would certainly wake up her father and brother to look for her. She promised to come back to Bagenda in a few minutes, after telling her mother she was going to take a bath and haul more water. She did not return. Bagenda clearly had been humiliated and, a few weeks later, he returned to the house of Lelian to try his chance again. Lelian told:

“One night, a few weeks later, in front of my parents house, tobacco had been cut to be dried the next morning. I was sleeping in my bed because I had been cleaning and cutting tobacco leaves already for a few nights and days and I was very tired. He [Bagenda] often took a rest at our house from his night watch at our house during the tobacco season as he was on good terms with my father. On those occasions, he drank some coffee, chatted with the family and the workers, and continued on his way. This night, he had maybe seen that I did not join the work, and he must have entered our house again from the back, walked straight to the sleeping rooms, and woke me up. I was sleeping and did not know what was happening to me. He did not say anything and I was too afraid to scream. When it was over, he tried to give me money, but I would not take it. If you accept such money it would be a sign to come again. He disappeared immediately and I cried the whole night.”

She never told her husband or anyone else about this, she said. She only dared to tell us because she considered us reliable outsiders. “I am afraid to talk about it in the village because Bu Tinggi, the wife of Bagenda, would blame me for tempting her husband.” “I also felt very ashamed and sinful and did not even dare to tell my father. What could he or my husband do? Bagenda would kill them.” And on another occasion: “No woman talks about being taken by him. They are all afraid of him and afraid that others will not believe it and start to talk badly about you. You already know how it works here, people can ruin you by words. It is a fact, you cannot talk about these things in Krajan.”

**Risk-taking, a counter-style?**

Deliberate risk-taking by the very poor seems to be a reaction to their poor prospects and dull and tied village lives. Some people no longer want to work for a small wage everyday without any prospect of improvement and a better life. They opt for the thrill and the chance of success, even if this means endangering their subsistence. Of course, many fail and destroyed their way of life completely, some come back with a lost face, to live of local charity or to become a peon of a relative who feels *kasihan* for them. Others, cut their ties with the village totally and leave to try their luck in other places.
These are the more dramatic cases of risk taking and ‘deep play’. But most villagers take some risks occasionally, be it that most of them do not go too far as to endanger their livelihood. Unlike in Huijsman’s Philippine village (1986), not only the better-off can take risks in Krajan, for some of the poor it is either a last resort or an attractive perspective in an otherwise gloomy existence. Some succeed in escaping their pitiful conditions, but most get entangled in a downward spiral. Still, their failure does not deter other to try their luck.

Being nakal (and male) also carries some prestige in the Madurese society of Krajan, but in recent years such ‘indecent behaviour’ has become more and more under moral pressure, both from the government which tries to control and suppress gambling and promiscuity, and from the more fanatical Muslim circles who have become stronger in condemning such morally inappropriate behaviour.

The growing influence of Muslim orthodoxy explains some of the furious and violent actions by villagers and religious leaders against gambling and ‘immorality’. On several occasions, they tried to ban gambling and increase the fines for adultery in the village. During Ramadan 1998, the bullfight arena in Bondowoso was burnt down, as were several brothels. At the same time, they succeeded in banning cockfights in Krajan. During the 1999 elections gambling was also prohibited and gambling places were raided by local followers (pagarnusa) of religious leaders. Despite these threats, gambling continued, but even more unobtrusively than before.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have dealt with excessive forms of risk-taking by villagers. The cases described orang nakal, who take and accumulate risks, and in this way put a severe strain on their resources. Moreover, in describing excessive risk-taking by peasants, I wanted to question the assumption that peasants are risk averse. Focussing on such ‘deviancy’ can reveal for the prevailing norms and standards in the village society at large. The cases show that deliberate risk-taking can be an attractive option for some villagers: for these orang nakal compliance to village norms and investing in social security is a price too high to pay.

Over the last two decades in Indonesia, an increasing number of people have seized new opportunities: the growing flow of cash in the villages has made gambling more attractive, the improved road and transportation networks has made travelling easier. A number of people deliberately took risks and gambled on a better life, others just gave up living decently, loosened their ties with other villagers, or became addicted to gambling or a thrilling lifestyle. In Krajan, around 5% of the population (mostly male) are engaged in this style of risk-taking and only few have ever been successful.

Wayward people are deviants in that they ‘differ in moral or social standards from what is considered normal’ (Hornby, 1990). In doing so, they more or less deliberately become estranged from the rest of the village population. They might be feared or even admired by some, but in general they have forfeited their right to support when the odds are against them. As Merton (1957) said:
common people cannot count on them, although in reality they must. Deviants are difficult to predict, to discipline, or to sanction.

Depicting wayward peasants as deviants however, does not explain why they live as they do, and why in many societies there exists a structural proportion of gamblers and risk-takers. Are they all stubborn and unfit people unsuitable to do good and follow mainstream society? Is risk-taking just a strange way to make a living, or rather a viable livelihood style in itself, an alternative to a dull life that will never yield a big payout?

It is possible that excessive risk-taking is an unintended outcome of a bad turn in people's lives, but for some reason people also deliberately take the decision of an alternative road. As some villagers put it, they just could not breathe within existing patterns. One informant said: "I just cannot work only for my rice every day. Especially, when I was young, I could not live quietly here in the village, I had to escape from it every now and then." Once depicted as nakal, such wayward behaviour can develop into a type of patterned behaviour or a style, which becomes perpetuated by stereotyping and stigmatisation. Thus, societal reactions and deviant responses create a 'spiral of deviancy' through which originally minor patterns of deviance get amplified. This is particularly the case with machismo, sexual and gambling behaviour, and itinerancy. Wayward villagers gradually develop a deviant identity, a style which is difficult to get rid of in village life.

This style of gamblers, speculators, youngsters, criminals, prostitutes, some migrants, and jago, in short the so-called 'wayward, madcap and naughty' people, constitutes a counter-style, contrary to the dominant styles of sharing, accumulating wealth, entrepreneurship or greedyness. The orang nakal are people oriented towards chances, thrills, and risk-taking, rather than towards security. They are the few who do not want to live according to the rules and regulations of society, who deliberately take huge risks and are 'unreasonable and irresponsible' in the eyes of others.

Risk-takers, breaking out of the social security system of the village, are a potential threat to society. Other villagers fear that if too many villagers, or youngsters, follow their example, the whole social fabric of reciprocity and mutual support is threatened. This partly explains the sometimes violent actions by fanatical religious groups against gambling and 'immorality', particularly since they have become more prevalent after the fall of New Order rule. Logically, their actions in particular aim at those who proved that risk-taking can be successful as they are supposed to set a 'bad example' to other villagers.

Bagenda, Krajan's current village head, illustrates that daring risk-taking can be a viable option. Having been one of the most notorious madcaps in the region, he now stands out in politics and business mainly by capitalising his reputation as a former gang leader, womaniser, and daredevil. It shows others a risky lifestyle is not always doomed to fail. The reverse might also be true: villagers who comply with standard village norms of decency and invest in social relationships and social security, might also have taken the wrong bet, as village social security is not that strong and does not always yield the expected outcomes.
In academic and non-academic literature about the nationwide 1997 crisis different, and often contrasting, views on its effects are found. In early reports and accounts on the effects of the crisis, essentially two contrasting observations dominate the debates. Some focus on the large number of losers - especially on Java - of people who lost work, income, and welfare, while others mention winners who benefited from the crisis due to their access to land, capital, and export resources - often outside Java. Nowadays, in retrospect, the heterogeneous impact of the crisis, with some areas in Indonesia suffering while others appear to be better off in absolute terms, is generally acknowledged. “The crisis has taken different shapes, and has had varied and often highly contradictory impacts in different regions, economic sectors and among different social groups. The crisis has generated both winners and losers, in economic, political and social terms” (White, Titus, & Boomgaard, 2002: 149-150). To summarize: export-oriented segments of the agricultural sector were doing well, while other aspects of the rural economy were stagnating or falling back during the crisis (Evans, 1998; Sumarto, Wetterberg, & Pritchett, 1998: 4; Warr, 1999: 24-26; 2000).¹

Although many studies on the crisis have been carried out, and new ones are still produced, little is known about who are the winners and losers in the rural areas of Java. What were their perceptions of the crisis and who were

¹ See for reports on the outer islands for instance (Angelsen and Resosudarmo 1999; Sunderlin, et al. 2000). Nevertheless, the good prices for export items, the increased incomes for farmers in the outer islands must be balanced against rising prices of production and consumer goods (Sunderlin et al. 2000: 3). When the first phase of booming prices was over, rising prices also became a problem for these export-oriented producers.
among the hardest hit, what happened to them during the crisis, and which forms of support did they receive? Moreover, what are the impacts of such a 'crisis' in the lives of weak and vulnerable groups such as the poor (miskin) and the destitute (kasihan), how has the crisis been perceived by them, and what does the crisis reveal (Solway 1994: 3) about the basic structures of society?

In this chapter, I deal with these questions in Krajan and assume that the study of crisis is an opportunity to gain more insights into underlying features and processes of change in Indonesian society. According to White et al. (2002b), the study of a crisis is a good way to study underlying features of a society which would otherwise not be visible: "Crisis also exposes the failure or predicament of particular models of social, economic and/or political development, and by definition after crisis things will never be the same again; the nostalgic desire of some groups to 'return to normal' (to a pre-crisis situation) is actually not so much a lament for the past as a lament for a future which needs to be constructed" (White et al., 2002: 150).

The aim of this chapter is threefold. In the first place, I want to know the differential effects of the crisis in Krajan; who among the village population has been hit by the crisis and how did villagers respond. Secondly, I want to know how effective styles of social security have been to cope with the impact of the crisis and whether the crisis had an impact on village social security. Thirdly, I aim to understand and evaluate the role of the government as a provider of social security at the local level in times of crisis.

Crisis in Indonesia

The 1997 crisis in Indonesia took place simultaneously on three different levels: a currency crisis, which evolved into an overall economic crisis, an ecological crisis, and a political crisis. These crises had several interrelated causes, which are not dealt with in detail here, since I want to focus especially on the local level effects. The three crises are however, described briefly below.

The currency crisis started in July 1997 with deteriorating exchange rates vis-à-vis the dollar. At the beginning of January 1998, the Rupiah had already lost 50% of its value and it came into a free fall in the first months of 1998. In response to this vast depreciation, inflation increased, and food prices started to rise. The first rise in basic food prices, started in October 1997, but the real boost up of prices started at the end of January 1998.

The ecological crisis in which El Niño caused provoked droughts which affected agricultural yields and caused forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan. Rice production fell in 1997 and 1998, some 10% below the 1996 level (FAO, 1998). At first, many smallholders in lowland Java experienced difficulties in repaying debts due to these lower harvests, but later, landowners started to benefit as prices increased.2 National shortages of rice started to enforce the rise of rice prices and, in other areas, the prices of export crops.3

---

3 Koning (2001a, 2001b); Persoon and Osseweijer (2000); White, Titus, and Boongaard (2002).
As official statistical data on prices and inflation were not very reliable in Indonesia during the crisis, I present average rice prices I recorded in Krajan, to illustrate the sudden rise in prices (see Fig. 8-1).

In the wake of the currency crisis and hyper-inflation, a political crisis developed. The New Order regime began to show cracks which finally led to the fall of Soeharto in May 1998. One of the main reasons was that the government, responded late, did little to curb the crisis, and proved unable to stop the economic disarray and the increasing prices. The fall of the New Order did not stop political tensions: 1998 and 1999 were periods of continuous turmoil enforced by competition between factions and regions. Soeharto’s successor, Habibie, could not do much either.

In the villages of Java, the fall of Soeharto as such did not impress most villagers, and it took more than three days before people were convinced that Soeharto had indeed left the stage. When villagers heard the news, they were not excited. In their world, Jakarta is far away and the national government does not do much in solving their problems. Villagers did, however, experience the consequences of the economic turmoil such as higher prices, declining labour opportunities, and a declining agricultural production, as well as the impact of the political turmoil (demonstrations and new elections).

In Krajan, most important were the ecological crisis in agriculture (harvest failures due to rainstorms, irregular rains, and droughts) and the economic crisis with its rising prices of basic needs and declining labour opportunities. As it is hard to differentiate between the consequences of these crises separately, I discuss here the combined impact of all three crises simultaneously.
During the first year of the crisis, government policies and academic analysis were predominately oriented towards urban rather than rural areas. This is partly understandable given the fact that in-depth studies on the crisis in rural areas were not ready available, fragmented, and often contradictory. Moreover, the Indonesian government took hardly any initiatives for research in rural areas and was more concerned with maintaining control over the country and staying in power (Holtzappel et al., 2002: 12). Of these early reports on the effects of the crisis, those from often World Bank related economists were among the most influential (Lont, 2002b). As a result, the central government directed its attention mainly towards the huge urban problems such as mass unemployment, budget deficits, company bankruptcy, and restructuring of the banking sector. One of the main causes of the lack of concern for rural areas in Indonesia was the lack of reliable and detailed information on effects of the crisis in rural areas.

At the beginning of the crisis, the government was very hesitant to take action. They still seemed to believe that the rural areas were not really affected and could cope with the difficulties. In January, Soeharto said on television a few months before his fall: "badai pasti berlalu", "the storm will soon be over." The initial governmental responses were not effective and had nothing to do with fighting the causes, as for instance is demonstrated by the *Cinta Rupiah* (love your own currency) campaign, an appeal on wives of rich Indonesians to donate their golden jewellery for strengthening the currency, the uncoordinated distribution of rice packages (*nasi bungkus*), and the public exchange of US dollars for Rupiahs by government officials and rich people.

---


5 See in this respect Holtzappel, Sanders, and Titus (2002) who use the metaphor of 'riding a tiger' for the Indonesian government trying to remain in the saddle (Holtzappel et al. 2002: 12-15).

6 Among early available studies were studies from the ILO (1998), Nehru et al. (1998), and Levinsohn, Berry and Friedman (1999). According to Lont (2002), these were based on large-scale surveys, such as from BPS (National Statistical Office) and the IFLS (Indonesian Family Life Survey). Lont states: "The large-scale statistical studies have been very influential in creating the dominant image of the crisis among the general public and among policy makers. Their reports are published quickly, and easily accessible through the Internet. They are quasi-authoritative and used by many economists" (Lont 2002b: 3).

7 Examples of studies oriented mainly towards urban areas or urban problems include: Hill (1999), Jellinek and Rustanto (1999); ILO (1998); Van Leeuwen (2000); Nehru et al. (1998), Yanagihara (1999).

8 See for comments on the reliability of census data also: Hull (2001).

9 With exceptions for the studies of Levinsohn et al. (1999) and Jellinek and Rustanto (1999), which were based on survey data in both rural and urban areas. During the crisis, also more micro and less statistical analyses were carried out, some of these have not yet resulted in official publications. These include: Biezeveld (2002); Breman (2000); De De Jonge (1999); Hüsken (1999); Koning (2000, 2001a, 2001b); Kutane and Nooteboom (2002); Lont (1999, 2002a, 2002b); Marianti (1999); Sandee and Andadari (2000), White and Abdullah (1999); Wiradi (1999).
After a year, in Augustus 1998, as the crisis continued and its severe effects could no longer be neglected, the new Reformasi Government initiated the World Bank-sponsored Social Safety Net programmes (JPS Jaring Pengaman Sosial). These programmes were designed to alleviate the negative social effects of the crisis. The JPS programmes entailed: 1) programmes for enhancing food security (cheap rice, subsidies for basic needs (sembako10), increased rice price interventions, etc.), 2) employment creation programmes, 3) credit support programs for small and medium enterprises, 4) and social protection programmes for education and health. This JPS-programme entailed a meagre 2% of all support given to the Indonesian government. Jan Breman comments: “When gradually the extent and consequences of the crisis became clear, fuelled by fear of political turmoil and riots, some policies targeting poor in rural areas were implemented. Most of these policies were part of the JPS, the Social Safety Net programme, reluctantly sponsored by the World Bank and the IMF, as a tiny part of an immense 50 billion US$ restructuring programme with the economic and political objective of redressing the immediate threat to the livelihoods of massive numbers of people” (Breman 2000:42).

To summarise: it had taken more than a year after the start of the crisis in mid-1997 before the national government took serious action to fight the negative effects of the crisis for the rural poor. “In opposition to those who argued that informal arrangements, to the extent that they existed, would be totally inadequate for helping the poor to deal with their loss of income and the rising prices of basic needs, other observers warned against doling out assistance which would be cost-free. These and more dominant voices exhorted the Indonesian government and major international agencies not even to explore that option because, once introduced, it would be very difficult to discontinue public provisions to which people had become entitled” (Breman 2000: 41).

The beginning of the crisis can thus be characterised by a general lack of policies and a failing government, at the national level. But also the regional administrators in the districts and subdistricts were unable to do much as they lacked the resources and the necessary information on the details of the crisis.

When the crisis came to Krajan

When in January 1998, I asked village men in the coffee stall about the crisis, I often received a stereotypical and somewhat apathic and flaccid answer “Crisis for us? We here live in constant crisis (di sini krisis terus).” This expression illustrated the indifference to the national crisis which was predominantly perceived as a national problem, not something which could endanger their livelihoods. In the early months of the crisis, the rising prices due to inflation attracted first and foremost attention from women, and only at the washing place was it the talk of the day. Price hikes were first felt by them during the Ramadan, when villagers started preparing selamatan, biscuits, and

---

10 Sembako is an acronym for 'sembilan bahan pokok', meaning nine basic needs including rice, flour, sugar, salt, frying oil, and cooking gas.
gifts for *Idul Fitri* (December 1997 and January 1998). They were not shocked as prices usually rise during Ramadan, but, then go back to normal soon afterwards. This year, prices continued to increase after Ramadan, and every villager suddenly experienced the price hikes of rice, cooking oil, flour, and clothes. In early 1998, the crisis had finally come to Krajan.

In the beginning, villagers chatted constantly about the monetary crisis (*krismon*), which for them meant inflation. During meetings of saving clubs (*arisan*), village committees, and neighbourhood gatherings, people discussed the *krismon* and its causes over and over. Harvest failures and crop losses were the topic of discussion at home, among workers, and in private conversations. Villagers did not understand where *krismon* came from, but blamed it as the source of all their problems, such as the loss of working opportunities, declining tobacco prices, households deficits, rising prices of basic needs and of pesticides and fertiliser.

People started speculating about the cause of the crisis; ranging from supernatural causes and foreign conspiracies to ‘the Chinese’. Gradually, discontent against the national and local government was rising and consensus was achieved by blaming the government and their ‘Chinese friends’. Some villagers considered the events severe, but others thought they would be easy to overcome. It was basically the young people who perceived *krismon* as a serious crisis, while the older generation saw it as a normal condition of rural life.

To older villagers, a crisis is a real crisis when it implies a famine. For them, the 1997/1998 crisis was only a minor turmoil, as basic needs were still available, albeit expensive. For them, the lack of food is the main indicator of a crisis. In the 1930s, during the worldwide depression, and during the Japanese occupation, they suffered so badly from famine that they ate the skin of cassava and roots of banana trees and grasses. These previous crises are still perceived to be much worse than the 1997 crisis.

The younger generations, however, who had never suffered from any crisis or famine regarded the 1997 crisis as a disaster. For them not only the lack of good food meant crisis, but also the lack of purchasing power for other consumer goods such as cigarettes, snacks, tea, sweets, and trendy clothes.

**Effects on migration**

At the beginning of the crisis, nearly all large construction works in the cities stopped, many factories went bankrupt, and work opportunities for low educated males decreased severely. There are however indications that most villagers, who lost jobs in the cities, were not coming back to the village, but found other work (Lont 2002a).

---

11 Five months after the first devaluation of the Rupiah in July 1997.
12 The crisis was soon called *krismon*, from monetary crisis. *Krismon* combines the words *krisis* and *moneter*.
13 Villagers call this the era of shortages, *jaman meleset*.
14 Unfortunately, I had little opportunity to include urban labourers in my survey and had to rely on the accounts of returning labourers in the village.
In Krajan not many migrants returned. Only some women who had worked in Malaysia were returned because of the crisis in Malaysia. Of these women, some had been successful and others not. Those who used to go to Bali regularly, decided to stay at home after receiving news that business in Bali was slack. Of the many villagers working in Kalimantan most did not wish to come back, as the situation in the outer islands was better than in Java, or they were trapped because they could not pay for the boat trip anymore.

It was rather an opposite development: in Krajan migration increased. As a result of the crisis and declining labour opportunities in the village, in 1999, migration out of Krajan started to increase substantially, and dozens of former wage labourers now found work in the forests of Banyuwangi and earned reasonable incomes that they brought home. Those who own land work their land first and then leave the village for some time thus complementing village income with an income earned outside. Poor villagers continued to travel to Madura to work a few weeks for low wages in agriculture, others hired themselves out as kuli to the sugar factories who still needed labourers willing to work for a very low wage. As soon as they have earned some money, they return to the village to buy rice and - if the money is sufficient - cloths, sandals, and building materials. Thus, this group of poor, mostly orang duit, were among the first to recover from their temporary setback.

There has been ample debate about the importance of the numbers of returning labourers to villages in Java. Some early reports about the crisis mentioned large masses of labourers returning to villages with little chance on work (Breman 2000: 3, 18-19; Wiradi 1999), others reported a huge increase of agricultural employment (Manning, 2000: 123) and assumed the agricultural sector to be a refuge for the superfluous urban labourers. According to Manning, “a high proportion of displaced workers found work in agriculture” (Manning 2000: 126). In contrast to these studies, others reported that the numbers of returning labourers were not so massive as expected, and if labourers came back, they did not stay long in the village (Hüsken, 1999; Indiyanto, 2001: 326-327; Koning, 1999: 7; 2001a; Nooteboom, 2001: 367).

In the years after these studies have been published, it is gradually understood that although the numbers of migrants varied between villages, regions, and industrial sectors, most fired villagers did not return, or return for long, but soon found other work in the cities. It is likely that many of these early studies took the fact of returning labourers for granted, repeated other studies and thus created a ‘returning labourers’ discourse which was not checked. The case of Krajan is interesting as it reveals that not all villages in Java nec-
essary rely on wage labour in the cities and that not all of these labourers returned, that rural - rural migration is also important in some areas of Java, and that as a result of the crisis, also new migration forms developed. Furthermore, work opportunities in villages did not increase but decrease as the following section describes.

Effects on labour and social security arrangements

Crisis in Krajan

After the crisis broke out, the demand for wage labourers in Krajan decreased more than 60% and for free (non-tied) wage labourers (most of them living in Sayuran, Mengkuara, and Pakuarah) possibilities of finding paid work nearly diminished to zero. It were especially the lower class orang duit who suffered most by the decreasing labour opportunities. On the other hand, forms of co-operative work, such as local forms of gotong royong, exchange labour, rotating work groups and helping-out labour increased in importance. The orang duit however, had difficulties to move into these ways of making money, as they had neglected social relationships and could not easily shift to another style.

The main reason for this huge decline in labour demand were the falling tobacco prices, a retreat from cash crop production by large farmers, and harvest failures of tobacco crops. To illustrate the processes behind the declining labour opportunities, I give the example of the Haji Feisal family, before the crisis, the largest employer of wage labourers.

Haji Feisal and his family members, who are the largest landowners of Krajan, plant a large acreage (more than ten hectares) with tobacco every year. Tobacco is a labour intensive and risky crop. Haji Feisal himself says about it: “It can offer high yields, but can also lead to bankruptcy. I plant tobacco every year and in that way offer a lot of work to the poor families in my neighbourhood. If I was not such a successful farmer, many families would starve here.” Feisal, not free of self-esteem, owns about half of the land in two hamlets and at heydays in the early and mid 1990s needed more than fifty workers per day for planting, clearing, watering, harvesting, and processing tobacco. People usually work a few days a week and in that way he offered work and income to more than one hundred families. At least half of the families in Sayuran and Mengkuara, are dependent on him for wage labour.

Villagers who want to work for Haji Feisal, have to fulfil some obligations. Their children are supposed to be sent to his religious school. In political matters, they should support him, and, they should live a decent life. Among the first to be asked to work are relatives, followed by neighbours, and relatives of close friends. Wage labour is not as fixed and safe as sharecropping (babun), because the employer is allowed to fire workers if he likes or needs to. However, if there is work, also in the case of wage labour, priority should be given to loyal workers who have been with them for a long time.

In the tobacco season of 1997, haji Feisal lost a lot of money because his tobacco was destroyed by heavy rains. Than he speculated on tobacco trade
and stocked up tobacco, but lost even more money because the prices went down due to the early stages of the crisis. He nearly went bankrupt in that year. In 1998 he did not dare to plant much tobacco again because the prices did not seem to recover and the crisis forced him to cut down on expenses. "I do not like to take risks now and cannot pay the high wages of the workers who ask for more money because of the rising prices," he said at that time. "I chose a safe crop now". He planted mostly maize and for that reason he needed far less workers.

As a result, the standard of living for most people in Sayuran dropped significantly and at first no other wage labour was available.\(^{18}\) A few of the former farm hands of Haji Feisal found work at the fields of relatives or others in the village but everywhere labour opportunities were reduced. Total tobacco plantings declined with 50 percent as many more farmers were reluctant to take risks, invest money, and plant tobacco.

All of the former workers of Haji Feisal I interviewed, stated that they would have preferred to work in share tenancy for him but would not think about coming back to work for a low wage. "As share tenant, if there is a crisis, at least you receive a share of the harvest and you know that you can eat something," one of the workers said. When I asked Haji Feisal if he did not feel pity for his workers he answered: "If they had been working as share tenants, they should have been pitied because than they did not get profit. But now I am the one who is nearly bankrupt. I lost millions of Rupiahs, and they did not loose anything. Moreover, because I paid only a wage in the past, I am free not to employ them now. I am happy I did not use betonan for tobacco production in the past."

In fact, the position of wageworkers has worsened since the crisis and they were hit double. In 1998, wages rose from Rp 5,000 to 7,000, a rise of 40% while prices rose in the same period around 200 - 300 percent in the village. Their purchasing power fell while at the same time labour opportunities fell too. At the end of 1998, the situation was dramatic for many formerly wage labouring families in especially Sayuran, Mengkuara, and Pakuarah. In fact, most families were not able to find new sources of income, but just tried to survive on low quality cheap food, selling assets, and approaching relatives, neighbours, and patrons for support and odd jobs.

In the tobacco season of 1999, when I returned a few months to Krajan, Haji Feisal planted tobacco again, but not so much as in the past. He heard from his friends and connections at the Djarum cigarette factory, that the prices of tobacco would be better this year. To get the work done, he now relied only on relatives and close friends. For this reason, a large proportion of the work could be done without payment by giliran and keajegan. For the hard work, he used young boys and girls who would be cheaply hired and eas-

---

\(^{18}\) Families tried to cut expenses, but this was not sufficient. Some started to make - something they had never done before - to sell them with little profit to traders from town. But, as a result of a growing supply of besek and lower demand, prices came under pressure too.
ily fired. For weeding and watering the plants he used family labour and if needed hired female workers, because women only have to be paid half as much as men. In this way he kept his production costs low.\(^{19}\)

Unfortunately for him, at the beginning of the 1999 tobacco season, there was too much rain and many seedlings had rotten away. Although prices were high and Feisal was able to use non-commoditised labour relations, he did not make a profit. It fact, he not only lost a lot of money, but power and influence as well.

Crisis in Krajan

Effects on agricultural production

During the crisis, the unstable prices of tobacco caused a drop in tobacco yields. To finance the expensive inputs, in 1997 many farmers took loans from richer villagers, the village head, and a cheap credit program. Borrowing from fellow villagers and the village head usually takes place at interest rates of 50 percent for 6 months, interest on loans from the credit programme is less, but these loans are not for all farmers and not designed for tobacco production. The 1997 harvests were already disappointing due to the low quality of the crop and the low prices. The 1998 harvest was worse. Because of the inflation in 1998, in that year, real prices of tobacco fell considerably and the quality of the tobacco was low. Many farmers went bankrupt and sold, pawned, or rented out cattle or land to cover their debts. A significant number (50) of the bankrupt farmers left for Kalimantan in the hope to find work and money to recover from their financial problems. Most of the migrants to Kalimantan - also those who were not debt-driven - did not succeed and came back in 1998 or 1999 poorer than they left.

For this reason, and for fear of further losses, in 1998 and 1999, the area planted with tobacco in Krajan declined with 50% compared to 1997 and most farmers shifted from this risky crop to a safer subsistence crop of maize. Most landowners said they were afraid that they would not make much profit because of the crisis and the rising costs of inputs and labour and preferred to grow maize, rice or cassava “karena perut harus kenyang duhu” (because we have to fill our stomachs first). The rising prices of food and labour made many of the richer farmers (kaya and lebih), who are in control of 60% of the land area, to avoid wage labour and they planted as much as they could master with non-wage forms of labour. Some farmers, however, who were used to grow tobacco on a large scale, speculated on higher prices and borrowed money to produce tobacco in the same way as they were used to do (by using wage labour and many external inputs). Most of these risktakers however went bankrupt and only some were able to make some profit, by shifting quickly to forms of non-paid labour during the growing season.

\(^{19}\) To finance this investment, he had sold one of his cars. He really needed to do this, because his cash had become limited as a result of his misfortunes in the past. Besides this, he managed to borrow 5 million rupiah from the KUT (Kredit Usaha Tani) - programme, which is officially not allowed to be used for tobacco.
Only the farmers, who could successfully mobilise family and non-wage labour, were successful in tobacco trading, and succeeded in making a profit in 1998. They were able to do so because of they controlled labour and could use non-commoditised labour arrangements in their fields. However, in relative terms their profits were lower than in previous years as prices of inputs like fertiliser, seedlings, and pesticides had risen.

**Winners and losers**

As a result of the decline of tobacco in Krajan, more maize was planted, replacing tobacco as a second crop on tegal. Not all of these second plantings brought in good yields, but both in 1998 and 1999 they at least contributed to food security of the workers, while large landowners and to a lesser degree their share tenants (babun) benefited from the higher prices of maize (Rp 350 for a kilo late 1997 to Rp 1,200 in 1999).

Table 8-1 shows how the villagers perceived the changing conditions since the crisis and the ways they adapted their consumption pattern. Families facing higher costs and/or lower returns, generally are inclined to first cut out luxury goods such as radios, flashlights, batteries, new clothes, filter cigarettes, and sandals before they cut down on food. Therefore, changes in food consumption are a good indicator of those categories affected severely by the crisis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kaya</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lebih</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not doing well</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable or doing better</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating less</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating the same</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-1: Perceptions of crisis impact and adaptation in food consumption per social class (1999) (in percentages)

20 Usually patrons who before the crisis already had a considerable number of clients tied to them, or villagers who were part of rotating labour groups (keajegan) or exchange labour arrangements.
21 See Van der Ploeg (1990: 274).
22 Pesticides are hardly used in Krajan.
23 Consumption includes food items such as rice, maize (and rice mixed with maize or dried cassava) cassava, vegetables, soybean cake (tahu or tempe), eggs, noodles, dried fish, meat, coffee and tea, and smoking or chewing betel nuts. We excluded smoking in the calculations, as a number of men had increased smoking due to stress and less working opportunities (where the landowner usually provides something to smoke), although most families had shifted to cheaper brands.
24 See Chapter 4 on social classes in Krajan.
The table shows that two thirds of the villagers felt that they were severely hit by the crisis. Of the rich villagers (kaya), 46% perceived themselves to be not doing well, but none of them had cut down on food consumption, although some of them had sold motorbikes, cattle, or television sets to finance losses made in agriculture (especially in tobacco cultivation). The majority of them, on the contrary, were doing better due to the crisis and made good profits because of the rising market prices for agricultural produce. Especially, large producers of maize were doing well, as the price of that crop more than tripled and production costs remained low.\footnote{Maize was not part of the \textit{sembako} programme, and it price was not subsidised. Some middle class farmers sold maize to buy cattle, this astonished other villagers, as maize had never been an important commercial commodity in Krajan.}

Not all of the villagers suffered from the crisis. Villagers possessing land, cattle, and other resources were able to improve their position. Those who earned an income from agriculture and combined this with incomes from non-farm or trading activities benefited most. As prices of maize and cattle increased, some villagers sold maize or cattle to buy subsidised rice and consumer goods. Due to higher incomes, some were able to rebuild their houses and buy furniture like a sofa, tables, and even gas stoves. Villagers owning a few heads of cattle benefited from rising prices by selling some of their cows to buy a second hand motorcycle, more often than not as a status symbol, as they were seldomly used, because of the high costs of petrol and repairs.

The middle to upper classes (cukup, lebih, and kaya) could still do reasonably well if they cut consumption according to their means, which meant economising on expensive consumer goods. It were especially the lower classes who perceived themselves not to be doing well. For them, every drop in income meant a direct need to cut on food consumption. Among them, the kurang and miskin were cutting down most on food consumption, while the poorest villagers (kasihan) did less so (see Table 8-1): many of them were not able to cut down on consumption any further. They had already been eating the lowest quality rice mixed with large proportions of maize, and already lived without any luxuries. They had no room in reducing food consumption anymore. Especially among this group, many were complaining about bad health, or had fallen ill.

As said previously, it is very difficult to state if these effects can be directly attributed to the economic crisis or if other factors are at stake as well. Half of those who were not doing well mentioned that was because of the failure of the second crop of maize, to shortages of rain, the destruction of the rice crop, or the failure of tobacco or to a combination of both. About 40% first mentioned the crisis, sometimes in combination with other forms of hardship. About 10% mentioned other reasons for not doing well like: illness, someone who had passed away in the family, or some other form of misfor-
tune. Nearly all mentioned the crisis at least as an additional burden. It is the specific constellation and combination of rapid inflation and climatic irregularities, that clearly affected many more households than in other years of irregular rains, harvest failures, or economic downturn.

Different perspectives on the crisis also existed between men and women. In general, women, being household managers, faced more difficulties except for women with higher independent incomes. Households where the woman was making baskets usually did better - under equal conditions - than households where the woman was not. In many cases, women’s incomes were nominally less affected than men’s, but due to their responsibility for household needs, they felt that they were hit harder.

The categories in Table 8-1 are still too broad to explain differences in vulnerability between villagers. Obviously, it makes a difference if you are young or old, handicapped or healthy, a single mother, or an elderly couple with caring children. Widows without caring relatives, poor families with little access to resources, and families with many small children, or chronically ill, were among the hardest hit. Moreover, the crisis had a different impact on those who were more involved in the cash economy from those working in subsistence production. In the next section, I want to move beyond class differences between rich and poor and try to analyse how people with different social security styles have coped with the crisis.26

**Styles and the crisis**

As the village economy of Krajan before the 1997 crisis was partly subsistence oriented, the monetary crisis affected only parts of the village economy and effects were less fierce for those who are predominantly dependent on incomes in kind. The poor who work as wage labourers, petty traders and part-time carpenters, were among the hardest hit and they were double hit: they saw prices of food and commodities soar and income from working in the tobacco field drop or disappear. Subsistence production on the contrary remained mainly untouched and even did rather well during the crisis.27 As subsistence production is generally the domain of these categories of villagers which I called *orang lugu* and *orang pelit*, who cultivate maize, rice, and cassava, they were still able to feed their own households. The same goes for those included in subsistence production relations28 like sharecropping arrangements (with most important *babunan* taking a 1/5 share of the harvest in return for labouring), exchange labour, rotating labour, and labour for helping out.

---

26 For a description of social security styles, see chapter 6 and 7.

27 I do not want to argue there is something as a dual economy on village level Boeke (1966). On the contrary, the cash oriented and the non-cash part of the society are highly interrelated. Most villagers make a living by combining these two and only by this combination are able to survive, but in these combinations, they put different emphases.

28 Sometimes called non-capitalist relations of production Hart (1986: 8).
In table 8-2, I show how people with different styles perceive the impact of the crisis on household food consumption, cash incomes, and workload (or rather working hours). The first two columns reflect perceptions of people expressed during the second village survey, the other columns are based on the aggregation and processing of figures collected in this survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crisis in Krajan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 8-2: Perceptions of the crisis and effects on household food consumption, cash incomes and workload per style (1999)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOT DOING WELL</td>
<td>STABLE OR DOING WELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisnis</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duit</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelit</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugu</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Work load</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOMES LOWER</td>
<td>INCOMES THE SAME OR MORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisnis</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duit</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelit</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugu</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On an average, the orang duit, and to a lesser extent, the orang bisnis said that they were not doing well during the first year of crisis because their incomes and purchasing power dropped. Many of the orang pelit and orang lugu did also perceive a deterioration, but for different reasons. They mentioned more often than the orang duit that they were affected by a declining agricultural production, rather than by the rising prices. All of the orang duit mentioned in the first place to be affected severely by the crisis through inflation and declining employment (partly due to the crisis, and partly due to harvest failure in some crops). Some of the orang bisnis, obviously did benefit from the crisis, with the exception of shopkeepers, warung owners, and peddlers, who faced decreasing profits and demand of their products. Moreover, many of the shopkeepers were doing less well as the large cheap-rice programmes undermined their major source of trade.
The differences between styles become clearer when we look at the changes in food consumption after one year of crisis. The *orang duit*, and then especially the poorer wage labourers among them, reportedly cut on household food consumption drastically. The majority of the *orang lugu* and especially the *orang pelit* did not cut on food consumption as they had better access to crops, incomes in kind, and networks of mutual help. Especially the *orang pelit*, who are most oriented on local resources, incomes in kind, risk avoidance, and self-insurance were cutting least. They also experienced least drops in cash incomes, as they are not very dependent on them and generate these by local resources like cattle, rice, and maize. The *orang pelit* were least affected by the crisis, and benefited most from the rising prices of agricultural produce. Moreover, where the *orang bisnis* (because of the slack trade) and the *orang duit* (because of declining wage labour opportunities) were confronted with less work, the *orang pelit*, and the *orang lugu*, were working more, or harder to increase profit or at least keep consumption levels at a reasonable level. Moreover, the *orang lugu*, due to their networks of social relations could easily find access to more incomes in kind.  

The *orang nakal* are not represented in Table 8-2, as they are a too-small proportion of the village population, and many tried their luck elsewhere during the crisis, although the number of wayward increased during the first year of crisis. Moreover, the effects of the crisis on this style are not uniform. Some of them suffered heavy losses and tried to win back by increased risk-taking and speculation on tobacco, while others saw the crisis as an opportunity to make easy money by quick trades.

Those who had borrowed large amounts of money for tobacco production, could not repay, and many left for Kalimantan. Others roamed the region in search for work, fun, or a sudden windfall. Others increasingly engaged in gambling, or organised games, and some started quick trades in goods, which came available by bankrupt people, or gold, speculating on a further fall of the rupiah. The *orang nakal* dominated and monopolised the lively trade in *sembako* aid, cheap-rice, television sets, motorcycles, and even cars in Bondowoso. Some of them bought - often with borrowed money - large quantities of rice, maize, frying oil, or tobacco, and speculated on a further increase in prices. They cooperated with the village chief Bagenda, who supplied cash, in search of good deals. In June and July 1999, the trade in second hand cars was lively as Bagenda sent some of his former gang members to Surabaya to buy cars at the large auctions of banks who sold goods from bankrupt borrowers. Bagenda and his friends sold these cars to military, village heads, plantation officers, and nouveaux riches in Jember, Bondowoso, and Situbondo. Especially the export-oriented plantation economy of this area benefited from the fallen rupiah. Further, many village heads, military,

---

29 Table 8-2 shows the differential effects of the crisis for different styles of people in the village. If there had been no simultaneous agricultural crisis, these effects would have been much more pronounced. Now, a large number of the *orang lugu* faced declining returns from wages in kind due to lower harvest in rice and maize.
and members of the government picked their grains from the large cash flows into the region from the social safety net programmes. The car trade however, stopped as quickly as it started, as the market for cars in East-Java is small and was quickly saturated.

In 1998/1999, many of the orang nakal were at the front of the numerous demonstrations and political campaigns in the area. With money from sponsors and political parties, they roamed the region in demonstrations, political campaigns, always ready to oppose representatives of the establishment and creating social and political unrest whenever needed. Most of the daredevils were found in the PDI-P camp. They played an important role in enhancing the force, and appeal of the PDI-P and frightening and thwarting their opponents. Obviously, the bull as symbol of the PDI-P matched their machismo. It is obvious, that these often-opportunistic people were sometimes hard to control by PDI-P leaders which led to internal conflicts among bands of orang nakal as well.

Surviving the crisis

Cutting consumption

An obvious way in which nearly all villagers responded to the rising prices was by cutting back on consumption. Families, who used to drink coffee, started to drink tea. The ones who drank tea, shifted to sugar water and those who could not afford sugar drank only plain water. Eggs and noodles, common before the crisis, had been cut from nearly all menus except from dinners at weddings, selamatan, and funerals of the better off villagers. Biscuits and snacks, essential for selamatan and for maintaining social relations, were less sweet and less abundant than in the past. New clothes were hardly bought anymore.

After one year of crisis for some families the lack of money for new clothes started to become very problematic. One old man said: “At the moment we eat the same as we did during the Dutch period. Just rice mixed with maize and dried fish and clothes are difficult to get. Fifty three years of freedom didn’t bring us any profit at all. Moreover, it seems I will have to wear clothes from gunny sacks or bark again. These are my last pair of cloths.”

Landless families in Krajan without high incomes responded to the crisis in several ways. Even more than in the past, they preferred non-cash benefits over cash ones. Those working in sharecropping and share harvesting were less severely affected, than those dependent on wages. Those unable to get such work could not do much more than cut their coat according to their cloth. They only ate once or twice a day and mixed their rice with larger amounts of maize or cassava. Much depended on where their income came from. The poor and destitute whose income came through wage labour (like in tobacco production) experienced most pain. Some of them were among the first victims of the crisis when they lost their jobs. Others, usually widows, could reduce the pain to some extent by falling back on gleaning after the harvest, that is if they had good relations with landowners, by weaving besek, and
by mixing maize with their rice. Living already for years on the edge of starvation, they could not fall any further. For them the governmental cheap-rice programme was a major help to escape starvation.

For the basket weavers, it was crucial that they could do this work in their spare time at home, so that they can combine it with domestic work and childcare. In that way, they have at least some additional income in cash and credit opportunities. “Tidak ada pekerjaan lain, kita cuma kerja besek terus supaya hidup”, “There is no other work available, we just make besek all the time to stay alive”, villagers often commented.

**Income diversification**

Women in Krajan played a crucial role in the households survival by earning money at home through making bamboo baskets in slack periods between agricultural peaks or when the prices of besek went up. Before the crisis, one third of the women in Dluwang and Wringinkurung were periodically engaged in this besek production. They used the income to cover short periods of cash or food shortages. Now the crisis had started, all these poorer villagers who used to make besek occasionally, made it the whole year round while other families joined them which meant that in 1998/1999 many of the lower classes (kurang, miskin, and kasihan) were involved. Basket weaving proved to be more important than the aid programs of the government in coping with the crisis. However, as demand for tapé (sweet fermented snack packed in besek) declined and the basket supply increased, real income dropped and people had to work longer to maintain the same income.30

As a side effect of the crisis and the proliferation of handicrafts, the division of labour between men and women changed as well: as women in poorer households were much more successful than men in guaranteeing subsistence and in coping with the crisis, they gained a stronger and more independent position within the household and - in some cases - in local society.31

Like before the crisis came to Krajan, most people do not depend on one source of income only, but engage themselves in different types of work (occupational pluralism) to spread risk and secure their survival. The crisis however, was a ‘revelatory crisis’ (Solway, 1994) as it put the livelihoods to the test. Those based on different sources of incomes proved to be stronger. Villagers who combined wage labour, or wages in kind with exchange labour arrangements and handicraft production at home were generally doing better than those with only one source of income.

---

30 Before the crisis in 1997 a day’s work of one person making besek was enough to buy 1,5 - 1 kilos of rice of reasonable quality. A year later, only the equivalent of 0,5 to less than 1 kg of low quality rice or maize could be earned. When before the crisis, the supply of besek was depending on the price, now the supply became inelastic and villagers continued to produce it even under diminishing returns because they had no choice.

31 The only exceptions are widows without assets, control over resources, and networks of caring relatives. They faced increased hardships and were among the real losers of the crisis. See also: Marianti (1999, 2002).
Village social security

What happens to local social security when a village is hit by an economic crisis which affects large numbers of people simultaneously? How do local arrangements and initiatives fare to protect or care for the local poor? A crisis is different from a normal situation in which arrangements for protecting people against misfortunes, contingencies, and hazards are, as we have seen (chapter 5) only of relatively limited value. The covariate characteristics of a crisis (widespread misfortunes among many) put whatever social security arrangements to a severe test.

Let us start with the ceremonial exchanges (sumbangan) which are the most common way of mutual support during life cycle ceremonies. It turned out that those exchanges became a heavy burden to many villagers who in the past had contributed at funerals and weddings. They were afraid to stop contributing for fear of social exclusion, of gossip, and of being called greedy or anti-social, but sumbangan contributions rose as fast as the rice price. But because social relationships are essential for maintaining access to social support, especially the orang lugu and orang bisnis tried, using all possible ways, to grasp money to stay part of the ritual exchange networks. Sumbangan, which in the past was referred to as a levelling institution for mutual help (tolong menolong) (Koentjaraningrat 1967b) became a major burden for the village poor. During the crisis, the poor paid out relatively more on premiums to remain entitled to social support than they ever received (Kutanegara f.c.; Lont 2002a). Selamatan were smaller, less frequent, and invited villagers could not bring as much food home as before. The richer villagers were reluctant to increase their contributions and help their poorer relatives, neighbours, and labourers, because, as they said, they felt uncertain about the future. Generally, richer villagers said to be afraid the crisis would deteriorate, or at last longer and therefore rather saved than shared. "Crisis came, and now the rich become more greedy," was a comment often heard.

Except for the village head who spent more money than before in the village and who helped several families in dire straits, support from wealthy to poorer villagers, among patrons and clients, and among villagers themselves fell well below pre-crisis levels. When several government aid programmes came to the village, the wealthy happily applauded the arrival of these aid, which clearly freed them from responsibility. Moreover, they tried to gain access to these programmes themselves as well.

The crisis revealed the weakness of village institutions of social security and the narrow base of redistribution of resources between rich and poor. In Krajan not harmony, but conflicts and competition between richer and poorer villagers increased; more gossip, rumours, and complaints about richer vil-

32 Probably he did this for the coming elections in 1999 and the village head elections (pilkades) in 2000. Indeed, Bagenda, the village head, has been re-elected in 2000. The village head did invest some of his borrowed KUT-money into the village and tried to start work projects for villagers.
lagers could be heard than before. Some of the middle and upper class villagers were jealous and complained about the poor receiving government support. According to them, they should also receive help. On the other hand, poorer villagers started to speak out louder, not only due to their increasing poverty, but also because of the political changes which gave them more self-confidence.

Unlike the poor villagers, the richer villagers did experience many difficulties in maintaining their networks of exchange and *sumbangan*, as many of them even benefited from the crisis or were able to consolidate their way of living. Quite some of them benefited from poorer families who had to pawn or sell land or cattle cheaply in need of cash. In the end, a major effect of the crisis might be that inequalities between rich and poor will continue to increase in future. This time however - in contrast to the Green Revolution - not solely by a disproportional increase of income by richer members of society, but also by the fall of income among the poor.

Hefner mentions that moral considerations in caring for weaker members of society are largely absent in mountain societies: “The social orientation emphasizes neither selfless collectivism nor self-possessed individualism. Ideally households guarantee their own subsistence and welfare” [...] “Its [moral economy] norms are most apparent not in the realms of production, but in consumption and exchange [...] Its effect is life-style conformity not selfless sharing” (Hefner 1990: 154). This was exactly what happened during the crisis in Krajan. Not much of a village-wide social safety net was visible. Also in Krajan, the ‘rule’ is that villagers take care of their own social security, and only in cases of infrequent and minor demands can the poor rely on opportunities of getting help from wealthier villagers. Examples of these kinds of support are small loans from patrons, wealthier neighbours or employers, labour opportunities, cash advancements, incidental free meals, emotional support, and contributions at lifecycle festivals or communal labour activities. These forms of care are important but, in general, only given to a limited number of people and only as long as it complies with the interests of the wealthy. They do not protect against the structural and negative effects of such thing as a crisis. Since during the crisis, labourers became more abundant than before, incentives for richer villagers to care for their needy fellow villagers were low as they could find more labourers than they needed to work in their fields. The poor villagers living in dire straits, had to put their hope on other forms of support.

**Government social security**

When I asked government employees during the crisis in 1998 what they were doing about the crisis, they answered: “The crisis is not so severe in the village as it is in the cities. Pitiful are those who cannot eat in the cities. For us here in the villages the situation is reasonable. We can still pick leaves freely for adding to our food”. They also reported in a similar way about the local situation to the regional government officials. They themselves believed that in
their own villages not many people were affected, thereby neglecting the hundreds of families who were facing serious problems in making ends meet.

There were three reasons for this clear underestimation of problems in their own villages: 1) local village officials did not know much about poor people in their own village. They hardly ever meet them, and poor villagers tend to hide their poverty. 2) They were influenced by dominant discourses in the media and higher government echelons that depicted only the severe situation in the cities. 3) Local village officials, in general, are more oriented towards serving the higher levels of the government than to serving villagers. For this reason, they were very busy carrying out government programmes and instructions from above, and therefore were not capable of tackling specific problems and needs of villagers. The local village officials were not able to communicate the villagers’ needs to higher levels, and did not do much else to enhance the living conditions of the local poor. They never proposed new ideas or programmes adapted to the needs of the poor, and they continued to carry out government programmes which in practice benefited more the rural middle class, and not the poorest sections of the population.

At the beginning of the crisis, both national and regional governments continued their routine policies towards the village level. Since the national government had no solutions at hand, the regional governments continued to carry out the standard programmes and kept busy with ceremonial visits to villages, presenting their usual stories about development, communal work projects (gotong royong), and courses on the state ideology Pancasila. A telling example is offered by the visit of the Bupati (head of regency Bondowoso) to Krajan during the outburst of the crisis: At the end of the ramadan of January 1998 the Bupati of Bondowoso came to Krajan. He broke fast with a dinner in the house of the village kiai and prayed with villagers in the mosque. In his speech afterwards, he focused on the responsibility of villagers to make a better living, to obey God and the government and to keep silent and harmonious. According to him, the best thing to do in this time of economic impair was to be active in gotong royong, following the government developmental projects, the cultivation of elephant grass and kopi rakyat (smallholders coffee), using modern inputs as fertiliser, new varieties of rice, maize and tobacco. He larded his speech with humour and populist references to religion and norms to strengthen his argument. Unfortunately, most villagers did not understand him, as he spoke upper class Indonesian and not Madurese.

When the crisis continued, regional government officials started to visit the villages more often. At first, limited funds for small local projects such as literacy programmes, public works, social development, and reforestation were increased. Soon however, the funds for these projects were exhausted. Other development programmes on the village level such as the LKMD (Village Community Resilience Institution) continued, be it on a small scale.

The first special aid programmes to help the poor, who were no longer able to purchase basic needs, started in April 1998. Some government departments, the army, and private donors (from Muslim, Christian, and Chinese organisations) supplied basic needs such as rice, cooking oil, and salt to the rural
poor. These - often spontaneous - aid campaigns, locally simply called *sembako*, can be characterised by a lot of showing off, haphazard organisation, random distributions, and not based on reliable data. In Krajan, the village head simply adjudged some families in his neighbourhood, and some of his most loyal followers, to be poor and thus entitled to these packages. Criteria for selection were not clear and often the most needy did not get anything, while others close to the village officials were able to secure one or more packages. The more remote hamlets of Krajan often received less help than those nearby. This whole campaign of spontaneous *sembako* aid was more symbolic than effective. Krajan received on five occasions around 150 packets, while the needy required much more help in these months.

Of major significance was the social safety net's (JPS) *sembako* programme which was given only later (starting in October 1998), when the government distributed cheap rice (Rp 1,000 per kg) on a monthly basis. In the case of Krajan, the *sembako* help was overwhelming due to the good relations between the village head and with regional politicians and the military.

Government support to the needy was distributed on the basis of three different data sets. Sometimes data from the village office were used, sometimes data from BKKBN (family planning department), and sometimes from the Department of Social Welfare. Sometimes simply a poor region was selected, and only inhabitants of that region or hamlet received help, letting both poor and rich members benefit, while poor people living in richer regions did not benefit at all.

In the first few months, the village received 12 tons of rice (around 1,200 packages) for a population of 3,400 villagers, including 550 poor families. This did not only deflate the rice prices in the village but led to a dozen small shops going bankrupt as their owners were mainly dependent on selling rice. The number of packages was so abundant that it was sometimes hard to find enough buyers for the rice because many poor villagers lacked cash. Therefore, middle and upper class villagers were also allowed to buy.

After the second month, the village head, and later his secretary, started selling some of the government rice illegally to shops in Bondowoso town at market prices. Also regional government officers and employees of BULOG (National Rice Distribution Agency) in Bondowoso took advantage. In neighbouring villages around Krajan, the weight of the rice bags was always 5 - 10% lower than promised. Government officers at the sub district and district levels sold this shortfall “to cover the costs of the extra work” as they justified it.

In other rural aid projects of this period, it seems that regional and village government employees in particular benefited considerably from the programmes. The cheap credit programmes (KUT) in Krajan for example were considerably extended for the 1998/99 planting season. However, few funds became available to local farmers, and two-thirds of the funds (more than Rp

33 *Sembako* is an acronym which stands for: sembilan bahan pokok; nine basic needs.

34 In one of the peak months, the village secretary sold back to town at least five tons of rice. With the profits he built a new house.
150 million) were used by the village head to finance his re-election campaign (Nooteboom 2001: 369). People in Krajan, did not know where the KUT money was flowing, but even if they did, they refrained from open criticism for fear of sanctions by the village head.

Despite these obvious failures of the cheap-rice programme, many poor in Krajan, were able to buy rice and were definitely helped by this kind of government support. But it was the poorest villagers who had most problems in getting access to this programme. For those who were not supported by relatives, or unable to engage in basket weaving, buying 10 kilos of rice at Rp 10,000 was too much. But, after a while Bu Ti, the main shop owner in the village and Bagenda’s mother offered loans to them. In return, she asked 60% of the received rice, which she then re-sold in her shop at a considerable profit. Ultimately, thus also in Krajan, it was the village upper and middle classes who took most advantage of from this programme.

These crisis impacts made painfully clear that the Indonesian government was unable to provide sufficient social safety to those who were hit hardest. The cheap-rice programme was important for a number of people, but other funds of the JPS programmes failed to improve employment, education or access to health care, and hardly reached Krajan.

This means that the village poor were mainly left to their own devices during the crisis. True, the subsidies on sembako were important in keeping the price of staple food relatively low, but this was by far not enough to compensate for inflation and loss of work and income. To survive, the poor, as long as they were physically able to work, depended upon tiny subsistence production in their home yards or on fields of relatives, friends, and patrons, and on low-paid basket weaving. In sum, they had to eat ‘more carefully’ (hidup sederhana) and at the same time, to work longer hours.

Conclusions

The losers of the crisis are among four categories of vulnerable villagers. 1) The weak and already poor such as widows and widowers, the chronically ill, and the elderly with little or no resources, or supporting relatives, who were unable to work. 2) The poor who had been poor for a long time and do not have assets such as cows, land and other production means, and who have poor access to stable income and work. 3) The new poor, i.e. those groups of people who were just able to make a decent living before the crisis, but then faced a major setback because of falling tobacco prices or loss of employment, and consequently were forced to sell, pawn, or rent out, their productive assets. 4) The temporary poor, i.e. those villagers who fell into poverty by losing their job, or by a severe drop in income due to inflation; most of them however, were able to find new work mainly outside the village.

The first two categories of villagers form the ‘structural poor’, and for them a national recovery from the crisis will make little difference. Many of the ‘new poor’ have lost crucial assets (land, cattle) or relatively well-paid jobs. If economic conditions improve, they might be able to regain their former inde-
pendence; if not, the crisis will have caused the number of structurally poor villagers to increase and the gap between rich and poor to widen further.

But, as we have seen in this chapter, it is not only assets and resources which determine whether people are winner or losers (although those who have saved in cattle and land and have an independent style (the orang pelit) were relatively untouched by the crisis). Those who have built effective relationships or reciprocity and networks of support were better able to cope with the crisis then those who had not. For this reason, the orang lugu were not doing so badly, while the orang duit who depend on wage labour and not so much on social relationships received the hardest blows.

The crisis revealed that village forms of social security generally do not apply to large-scale events like disasters, calamities, and crises. It also painfully reveals the weaknesses of the local and regional governments to come forward with adequate responses. Part of the problem lies at the higher levels of the government apparatus. In fact, the stereotypical view that rural societies are relatively homogeneous and harmonious and more adapted to cope with crisis situations, has highly blinded government officials and intellectuals for the hardships of the rural poor and the existing inequalities between regions, economic sectors, classes and within villages. At the beginning of the crisis, the national government was very hesitant to take action. It still seemed to believe that the rural areas were not heavily affected and could cope with the difficulties themselves.

During the crisis, also the local government did not pay much attention to deteriorating living conditions. They just carried on with routine jobs as they were ordered by district and subdistrict officials and did not concentrate on village problems, let alone take any initiative themselves. Only after the national government decided to intervene, and this started months after the beginning of the crisis, local officials had to act - and then it turned out that they were both ill-informed - on the real conditions of rural poverty, and unwilling to do something to help, without benefiting themselves from the aid funds. Any policy which does not take people’s diverse styles in making a living and searching security into account, runs the risk of missing most of its targets, or even the risks of complete failure. As long as general goals and general solutions are presented as solutions to specific problems of different people, social security policies will never be fully effective.

---

35 See for instance Hirtz (1995) for a typhoon in the Philippines, Blaikie, Cannon, Davis, and Wiesner (1994) for disasters in general, and De Bruijn and Van Dijk (1994), Sen (1981), and Solway (1994) for drought or starvation. These studies, in one way or another show the failure of village wide insurance mechanisms in times of calamities.
Conclusions

The stories of the Satrawi and Patik families in the introduction to this thesis recount of a rich family falling into poverty, and a poor one rising to riches. Although their stories are somewhat extreme, material in this thesis shows that poverty and wealth are not static categories in Krajan. Over the years, a number of former Krajan tenants have become well-heeled patrons, while some of the formerly rich landlords have fallen into near serfdom. In some instances, it only took a few misfortunes, sheer bad luck, or a windfall profit, to make the difference between ‘enough’ and ‘not enough’. Clearly when it comes to success or failure, some people and households cope better and easier with setbacks than others. This brings us to the underlying questions of this dissertation on social security. Why are some people better able to cope than others, how and under what conditions does this coping take place, and who supports the most vulnerable people in society?

This dissertation is thus not an attempt to study the differences between rich and poor as such, but aims to understand differences in the vulnerability, strengths, and responses of people when they are hit by misfortune, contingencies, or bad luck. To reach this goal, I have used the concept of local social security which refers to the provision of care, support, and welfare to individuals, households, and groups who have no, or very limited, access to state-organised forms of social security. This provision can be either achieved, by individual, social, and collective strategies, or provided by arrangements, and institutions, offering access to care, insurance, and general wellbeing for individuals, households, and categories of people. Both the strategies for achieving social security and the mechanisms providing support are often intermingled and therefore cannot be separated.

In this thesis, therefore, both factors and their interrelatedness are analysed. Detailed questions guiding this research were: 1) How do villagers gain direct and/or indirect access to resources in order to earn a secure livelihood and what are the structural opportunities, constraints, and inequalities...
in this access? Who is entitled to which resources and who not? How and why are differences in access constituted? 2) What kinds of adversities, threats, and insecurities do villagers encounter in their daily lives, how do they perceive and try to overcome them and what kinds of support do they receive? 3) How strong are local forms of social security; in what ways, and to what extent do village institutions and arrangements protect against these adversities, threats, and insecurities; and operate as providers of social security to villagers and what is the role of the state in this respect? 4) How do villagers prepare themselves against adversities, threats, and insecurities, what cultural repertoires do they use, for what purposes and when, and what patterns in this social security can be found? 5) How effective were these different forms of social security when they are put to the test such as during the 1997 crisis in Indonesia?

Similar questions have been captured by two different schools of thought before; one emphasising the institutional procurement of security and the other stressing the importance of individual capacities in gaining access to resources, support, and security. Both suffer from their one-sidedness: the first group of studies (i.e. social welfare studies, safety net approaches, etc.) is strong on the support-side, on institutions and structures, but often fails to explain differences, and the perceptions and strategic actions of individuals in their quest for support and security. The second group of studies (i.e. actor oriented approaches, livelihood studies, participatory approaches, etc.) emphasises on agency and is strong on the strategy-side of social security, but tends to be weak in dealing with structural conditions in society. A question that arose during my fieldwork was how social security could be studied while taking into account both the institutions providing social security and the strategies people follow to maintain a desired livelihood and achieve support in times of need? In other words, how do we analyse social security in an integrated way, taking into account both structural and actor notions of action in order to do justice to the complexities of social security at the local level?

For such an analysis, we need an approach that takes both sides into account. Applied to the study of village level social security, the institutions in society are one of the many structural conditions of action which may simultaneously provide opportunities and limitations for actors, while the actor perspective explains the existing diversity in strategies for social security through the different choices that people make. Both structure and strategic agency are inseparable elements of social security and presuppose each other. In this thesis, I present the life stories of villagers and households to show how they deal with insecurities in life within constraining and enabling contexts of material, ecological, social, cultural and political natures. These stories reveal the complexities of village social security and the intermingling of structure and agency in daily life. Departing from these complexities, I want to discover whether common patterns can be distinguished in the ways people aim for social security.
In this thesis, I first describe the sources of livelihood, inequalities of access to resources, and the risks and threats which endanger the livelihood of villagers. From there, I go on to exploring local forms of social security. These local forms of social security, such as social assistance, mutual help (gotong royong), patron-client bonds, and some forms of redistribution and reciprocity are often believed to be strong institutional frameworks protecting vulnerable villagers against threats and risks to their livelihoods. In actual practice, this turned out not to be the case and those who are excluded from access to land, cattle, income, and credit, are also excluded from access to most forms of village social security.

In the past fifty years, a number of changes have taken place in the economic, agro-ecological, and political landscape of upland Java. These developments are reflected at the village level in cyclical patterns of commercialisation and accumulation (Hüsken, 1988; 1989). Also the national governments, never fully trusted by Krajanese, were at different times less or more involved in village affairs: sometimes centralising, sometimes decentralising, or simply losing control over village affairs. Within these cyclical patterns of heydays and depressions, and different grades of government intervention, villagers have made a living and grown cash crops or food crops whenever they seemed beneficial. Over the years, some have been winning, others were losing, but, in general, social differentiation between the village rich and village poor has grown. Land and resources are concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people, and many villagers have increasingly lost access to the basic and stable means of livelihood such as sawah and tegal.

Contrary to developments in other parts of lowland Java, in Krajan, most of these near landless villagers have not migrated to the cities, but stayed and maintained a livelihood in the village. Overall economic growth provided them with the opportunities to work the lands of large landowners, growing tobacco, caring for cattle, or by engaging in handicrafts, and new wage labour opportunities, most of these villagers have been able to maintain a basic livelihood. However, many of them remained as poor as they were before, while becoming economically mere dependent upon others.

Moreover, the livelihoods of these poorer villagers have never been fully protected against shocks and stresses. The greatest uncertainties they face, are those concerning their basic needs. Poor landowners and landless villagers in Krajan regularly worry about the danger of not having enough income or food. Some labour arrangements such as share tenancy and share harvesting are stable ways of earning an income, while other types of work, such as wage labour, contract labour, and homework, always bear the risk of losing employment and income. Fluctuating market prices lead to insecurity in food security and in times of high inflation household budgets can be constrained severely. Healthcare is nor very good, expensive, and difficult to access. Children are often a source of support for parents, but they can be absent, and their behaviour can be a threat to the livelihood of a household as well.
Especially in the case of wayward children (anak nakal), household resources can be ruined. But most of all, villagers fear others for stealing or deceiving them so that they lose their possessions. This fear of deceit, jealousy, and rivalry, can hamper good relationships and the building of trust with fellow villagers. Village life is far from harmonious due to such - often hidden - conflicts.

In analysing these topics, this thesis also refers to the old, but still relevant theme of widespread poverty and inequality in Java, and adds to the shared poverty debates of the 1960s and 1970s. Although most of the shared poverty ideas concerning Java have been heavily criticised and the debates superseded in the 1980s, they still influence Indonesian politics and popular discourses among urban elites and academics. The belief - reflected in these discourses - in the existence of a harmonious Javanese village, where people ‘still’ care for each other, is powerful and archetypical. For many, often upper-class, Indonesians the romantic image of a ‘real’ and ‘good’ and ‘caring’ Java, most closely to be found in the villages, is crucial in their construction of an idealised Java and her own ways to cope with potentially threatening processes of modernisation, monetarisation, and globalisation. But also outside Indonesia, ‘romantic’ ideas about village societies linger on.

In the literature on social security, some authors have high hopes of these local forms of social security, and they way they can be integrated with state-organised forms of social security (Van Ginneken, 1999; Midgley, 1994). There are however reasons to doubt whether these have ever been strong enough to cover whole populations and insure them against all risks, and therefore if such integration would ever be successful. Such romantic views and overpositive accounts of local forms of social security run the risk of being blind to the hardships and the limited scope and access to these forms of social security by the rural poor. This does, of course, not imply that state or NGO provisions of social security are unimportant, or should not be extended. On the contrary, the lack of support from local forms of social security, calls for a more active role of the government or other outside agents in helping those excluded from any form of village social security.

This thesis challenges in the first place the assumption that local forms of social security, and poor people’s ways of dealing with vulnerability and insecurity, are strong enough, and viable to give support to vulnerable members and to face negative consequences of modernisation and individualism. A detailed look at daily life in Krajan, shows that two-thirds of the village population are not only excluded from direct access to the most important sources of livelihood, such as land, cattle, and income (see Chapter 4) but from access and entitlement to social protection against misfortune or a fall-back in income as well. Clearly, the structural gap between rich and poor in society remains, and seems to be on the increase.

Local arrangements of social security have another, less obvious weakness as well, because they not only are limited in the security which they can provide but also because they come sometimes at and therefore are a source of insecurity as well. The practise of gift giving at weddings, selamatan, and
funerals, for instance, has a clear social security function in providing the receiving family with a way of coping with the expenses and food provision in such an expensive period. However, at the same time, the contributions are a severe burden for those who are invited. Both men and women from poorer households have hard times finding the money, rice or appropriate gifts to contribute. Still they try to remain part of the local exchange society at all costs and continue to invest in reciprocal relationships. In recent years, the system of gift giving has come under pressure as villagers search for ways to escape their obligations towards neighbours, kin, and village institutions, and save resources for their own use. Many informants repeatedly expressed this as a major area of tension; the dilemma of whether to take part in the ritual exchange economy to be entitled to support as opposed to individual accumulation and ‘looking after oneself’.

An overall conclusion from my research is that local social security systems - if working at all - insure only against certain risks and only for specific groups and categories of people, and only in specific circumstances. Those who have nothing to contribute to these institutions and arrangements are largely excluded from its benefits.

About 30% of the Krajan people, among whom are many widows, are excluded from most forms of support in the village. A few examples: First, poorer villagers pay relatively more for burials, selamatan, and weddings, while they receive less support and sumbangan at these occasions, since their networks are smaller, and their friends and relatives are often poor. Second, those engaged in mutual help and mutual labour groups generally spend more labour on richer neighbours due to the latters’ larger plots. Third, corvée labour and services provided to richer village members, politicians, relatives, and patrons are investments and premiums which generally cost more than the social security ever provided by these politicians, patrons, and relatives. Fourth, those who need credit most can borrow least and, pay the highest interest. Finally, the poorer villagers are more vulnerable to risks and insecurities than their richer fellow villagers, while they have fewer means of protection.

In general one can conclude that those who need most support, and who are often most concerned with receiving support, receive the least benefits from local forms of social security as Macarow already postulated in his iron law of social security: those who need most, receive least (cited in Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (1996)).

**Styles of social security**

I did not stop at this point in assessing the scope and effectiveness of village social security, since the aim of this study was to go beyond issues of wealth and poverty by looking into the ways and patterns with which people deal with insecurities, risks, and adversities. An increase in income does not always mean an increase in welfare and social security. I found that the strength of villagers and households in coping with the difficulties of life greatly depends

---

**Conclusions**

An overall conclusion from my research is that local social security systems - if working at all - insure only against certain risks and only for specific groups and categories of people, and only in specific circumstances. Those who have nothing to contribute to these institutions and arrangements are largely excluded from its benefits.

About 30% of the Krajan people, among whom are many widows, are excluded from most forms of support in the village. A few examples: First, poorer villagers pay relatively more for burials, selamatan, and weddings, while they receive less support and sumbangan at these occasions, since their networks are smaller, and their friends and relatives are often poor. Second, those engaged in mutual help and mutual labour groups generally spend more labour on richer neighbours due to the latters’ larger plots. Third, corvée labour and services provided to richer village members, politicians, relatives, and patrons are investments and premiums which generally cost more than the social security ever provided by these politicians, patrons, and relatives. Fourth, those who need credit most can borrow least and, pay the highest interest. Finally, the poorer villagers are more vulnerable to risks and insecurities than their richer fellow villagers, while they have fewer means of protection.

In general one can conclude that those who need most support, and who are often most concerned with receiving support, receive the least benefits from local forms of social security as Macarow already postulated in his iron law of social security: those who need most, receive least (cited in Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (1996)).
on their preferences and orientations on their sources of livelihood and certain forms of social security. People have different styles of doing things. These styles are visible in typical, coherent combinations of sources of income with different orientations on social security.

In essence, social security can be seen as a dilemma where individual interests contrast with collective investments. With regard to individual and household security, villagers have to make choices between potentially conflicting options, and thus experience two areas of tension. The tension between sharing, meeting the expectations of others, against individual accumulation, being self-prepared. Secondly, economically, either taking part in the subsistence or local economy, with the wages inherently in kind, share tenancy relations, local resources and old labour arrangements; or in the cash economy of commercial agriculture, wage labour, cash earning opportunities beyond the village, etc. The actual practice, such as the willingness to share or not, and being oriented towards cash or non-cash forms of production, reflect the preferences, strategies, and orientations of villagers in dealing with threats and insecurities. These are not confined to class or social status, but cut right through these qualifications. Obviously, poor villagers are often not in a position to choose from a wide range of options and their actual room for manoeuvre is very limited. Nevertheless, I observed that, even within the lower social classes, people follow different paths in creating a mix of social security arrangements. This diversity is not new, Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (1994: 9) acknowledge: “People usually compose a social security mix consisting of various arrangements for social security. But not everyone has the same capabilities to draw on existing resources, or to acquire new ones.” I follow them in using the term ‘composing’ instead of choosing or selecting, because it implicitly refers to the creativity in assembling the various arrangements and sources of income, within the limits of the culturally-accepted choices, economic and social possibilities, and possible contingencies.

‘Composing’, in terms of social security better describes the practices of combining different opportunities, than the often-heard term ‘strategy’. A strategy for survival, or for social security, implies that people act purposefully, are goal oriented, and intentionally choose between available options. In Krajan, there are very few calculating citizens who deliberately and consciously make strategic, cognitive, and future-oriented choices. Some people may do so, and sometimes strategically combine options, investing, and manipulating situations or people, but more often I witnessed villagers reacting to events in a habitual, customary, and pre-set pattern of reactions, closely watching and following what others did. They did not have to think about each minor decision in life, but could fall back on the repertoire offered by this style.

I prefer to speak of social security styles rather than strategies since styles, as ‘compositions’ refer to regular patterns of behaviour vis-à-vis adversities, threats, and insecurities which are not always necessarily the result of strategic action, but fit in a coherent set of responses. Sometimes, clear strategic
choices are made, but more often people act according to fixed customary, habitual everyday practices when they are dealing with short-term and long-term needs, and their hopes and desires, constrained by social demands and expectations.

In the Chapters 6 and 7 the styles and the diverse outcomes of the dilemmas concerning income and sharing are analysed by showing how people put priorities and deal with tensions between making a living and searching security. It can be concluded that despite setbacks, constraints, and forms of coercion, people have their own style of doing things in respect to making a living and achieving some form of social security. These styles are structured by an internal logic, and conditioned by the social, economic, and personal characteristics of the people involved.

On the basis of local definitions and categorisations, I distinguish four major styles that people follow in the process of trying to obtain and maintain secure and stable livelihoods as well as social security. Styles are attributed to individuals as well as to households and often overlap. The styles include rich and poor people, old and the young, and people of different gender. The styles in Krajan are: ‘enterprising people’ (orang bisnis), ‘money people’ (orang duit), ‘stingy people’ (orang pelit), and ‘traditional’ of ‘village people’ (orang lugu). ‘Enterprising people’ are those dependent mainly on cash sources of income, and oriented towards social relations and networks within and beyond the village for their social security. ‘Money people’ are those who prefer to earn cash, rely on the opportunities of the cash economy for securing their livelihoods and are oriented towards and rely on, these incomes and their individual and household reserves for security. ‘Stingy people’ are those who try to benefit from the support given by the old mutual exchange economy, are reluctant to invest, and neglect as much as possible the claims of others in reciprocal relationships. Finally, ‘village’ people are those who are oriented both for their livelihood and their social security towards local resources and networks of exchange and mutual help. In this categorisation, the Patik family, mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, clearly follows a stingy style, while the Satrawi family followed a more ‘traditional’ or village value-oriented style.

Not all styles are oriented towards a sustainable livelihood, or long-term social security. In Krajan, there is a category of villagers who deliberately take and combine risks. Locally, the term ‘orang nakal’ is used for these people, which means something along the lines of wayward, madcap, or naughty people. The orang nakal are people who do not follow the mainstream norms and values of society, are ignorant of livelihood security, and deliberately take huge risks. Wayward people are not specifically outcasts, but excessive risk-takers who live dangerously such as gamblers, womanisers, speculators, some migrants, and vagabonds.

The wayward style which probably can be found in each society, has the characteristics of a deviant or counter style. Contrary to the previous styles, the ‘orang nakal’ are oriented towards chances, thrills, and take deliberately huge risks; and so are seen as ‘unreasonable and irresponsible’ in the eyes of
other villagers. They make up the few percent of the population who do not want to live in conformity with the rules and regulations of society. Among the 'naughty' people are also criminals, prostitutes, and jago (macho gang leaders). Many of the orang nakal played an important role in demonstrations and political campaigns against the establishment and during the 1999 election campaigns.

Deliberate risk taking is not an exception in peasant societies, but an attractive style for some villagers who search for an alternative to complying with the village norms and the social pressure urging large investments in social security and reciprocal relationships. Deliberate risk taking by the very poor could be a reaction to their meagre prospects and dull and tied village life. Some people no longer accept working for a small wage everyday without any prospects of improvement and a better livelihood with less difficulties. They might opt for thrills and the chance of success, even if this means risking their minimum subsistence. Probably, this lifestyle is less risky than it appears since partners in the household and social relations in society can sometimes still offer a minimal safety net. Some of those who lost rice fields, cattle, and their family by heavy gambling, switched to another style and found a place in society by becoming a client, or a labourer, on their former land. Others continue to live dangerously and roam the region in search of work and fun, often joining theatre groups (ludruk) and only return to their house, parents, or relatives when in need of a meal or a loan. If that becomes impossible, they can still run to Bali or Kalimantan and start a new life there. Migration to Kalimantan however, has increasingly become risky as ethnic violence poses a severe risk against the Madurese presence in the Central and Western provinces of the island.

The style approach offers a powerful tool to describe and explain differences between people. It reveals that adopting or following a certain style offers different opportunities and exposes one to different vulnerabilities. Some styles are more vulnerable to certain risks and treats than others. For instance, those people following a style oriented towards the money economy - such as wage labourers - were quite successful during the final phase of the New Order era. They were able to generate a good income and buy new status goods. For adversities in life such as sudden illness, they had their regular income, some savings, networks of fellow workers, and the extended family which offered some basic security and assistance. When the crisis broke out, it became painfully clear that many of these villagers had neglected their social relations and networks of mutual help with other segments of society and the village, making them extremely vulnerable to rising prices and the risk of unemployment. They could not easily fall back on the old insurance mechanisms in society or get access to resources in the village, and faced major setbacks in their livelihood, security, and status.

People oriented towards the old village economy of wages in kind, share tenancy, and patron-client relationships (orang lugu) on the contrary, were doing nearly as well as before the crisis. Their status rose, as it became clear they had a firm subsistence basis in the local economy and had viable net-
works offering access to resources or support, they were not doing that bad actually. Moreover, their description as *lugu* carries a somewhat superior normative connotation. They are seen as good people, who are truly following the traditional values of exchange and reciprocity as are believed to have existed in the past. The stingy people, freeriding on the old institutions of insurance and village social security, while reaping the benefits of the new economy, were probably doing best during the crisis. Nevertheless, it cannot be foreseen how they will do in future. If more people will become stingy, the social fabric of society will change and the social security system of the village will weaken or probably disintegrate. It cannot be said which style will become dominant in future. If the agricultural production system in Krajan increases to be commercialised and commoditised, less space will be available to non-cash labour relations and non-cash forms of cooperation and exchange. The *orang lugu* will then probably become less important, and with them, the position of many women in these households who now dominate food production and systems of gift exchange, redistribution, and food exchange. It needs to be studied what the implication of such changes will be.

The concept of styles of social security has the advantage that it includes structural, ‘habitual’, and agency aspects in social action. I observed that most everyday decisions, when people had to make up their minds about planting, working, giving assistance, pawning, and attending celebrations (*selamatan*), as well as gift giving and exchanging, are made relatively quickly and generally within established patterns of behaviour. Following a customary social security style enables villagers to react habitually on claims and options of others, without having to evaluate all the options and to constantly think strategically, while at the same time, it offers space for decisions, strategic action, and creativity.

A style approach has more advantages. It leaves space for analysing livelihood as well as the security and stability (social security) of this livelihood simultaneously. It opens the way to a comparative approach to the study of livelihood and social security in rural areas, as it focuses both on the material basis of making a living, and on the perceptions, preferences, and orientations of people in the present and with respect to the future. Although a style approach is rooted in the local economy and starts with emic concepts, it elaborates on values and orientations on life which are comparable across social class, cultures, regions, gender, and national boundaries. A social security styles approach might offer a way out of the impasse between studies focussed on structural conditions of poverty and insecurity and those focussed on the agency and strategic action of people. Such an approach might enrich both livelihood studies and social security studies.

In this thesis, I have only been able to give a rough outline of styles as patterns of behaviour echoing the value orientations towards the vicissitudes of life and it needs to be found out to which extend these styles apply outside Krajan. The implications of using a style concept are manifold. At the policy level, it implies a more differentiated approach. A style approach can be developed into a powerful tool for communication with policy makers since it
reveals rough differences between people and explains their different responses on insecurity, change, and interventions, and thus calls for differential programmes of assistance. Moreover, it enables us to explain why some villagers organise their livelihoods differently, and are more vulnerable or successful than others. Any policy which does not take people’s diverse styles in making a living and searching security into account, runs the risk of misfiring or even backfiring. As long as general goals and general solutions are presented as solutions to specific problems of different people, social security policies will never be fully effective. Moreover, it shows that vulnerability is not only a matter of poverty or inequality, but also a question of style. It opens our eyes for the fact that there is more than poverty, insecurity, and survival strategies. If we want to understand why some people and households cope better than others, indeed, style matters.
Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Abangan (orang)  Unorthodox interpretation of Islam (especially on Java), not strict or following all rules and regulations of Islam. See also Geertz’s, The Religion of Java (1960).

Aduan sapi  Bull fighting

Ani ani  Small hand knife to cut rice stalks (for long stalk varieties).

Aren  Sugar palm (Arenga pinnata / A. saccarifera (Palmae)). Its juice (after cutting the blooms) can be used for making palm sugar (gula Java, gula aren) or palm wine.

Arisan  Rotating saving and credit association (rosca).

Arit  Sickle.

Babun /Beton  (Madurese) Labour arrangement where the labourers receive a share of the harvest of rice or maize (usually one fifth) in return of the work. The landowner organises the work and pays all inputs. Beton or bet-anan is the same labour arrangement as babun, but more permanent (a fixed labour relation stretching over more than one harvest. In Krajan, babun and beton are used as synonyms).

Bandar  The organiser of gambling, often the 'bank' or creditor.

Bahaya  Dangerous (often used in a context referring to threat)

Bantuan  Help or support given.

Beras  Husked rice

Besek  Basket woven of thin bamboo strips for snacks or sweet fermented cassava (tape).

Beton -an  (Madurese) See babun

Bidan  Local health worker and midwife in villages and paid by the government.

Bingung  Doubt, unsure.

Bisnis (orang bisnis)  Entrepreneurial people

BRI (Bank Rakyat Indonesia)  Indonesian People’s Bank

Bu (ibu)  Adult woman; mother or Mrs. (polite).

Bupati  Head of kabupaten (district).
Buyut  Great grandparent (with a mystical connotation). The offspring of one buyut sees each other as belonging to one lineage.

Camat  Head of kecamatan (subdistrict).

Carok  (Madurese) Murder in revenge of lost or damaged honour (often in a context of a sexual offence).

Celingan  Savings box for cash. Often a bamboo stick filled with coins.

Cukup  Sufficient, enough

Derep  Wage labour (i.e. in case of harvest).

Desa  Village (administrative unit)

Duit (orang duit)  Money, the money people

Dukun  Local (traditional) healer, also magician or sorcerer. In case of female the local midwife (dukun bayi).

Dusun  Hamlet

Gadai  Pawning (i.e. of land, gold, etc.).

Gaduh  Share tenancy (of land or cattle).

Giliran  Lit. doing things in turn. Rotating labour arrangement, based on balanced reciprocity where groups of farmers, in turn, work one another’s land.

Golkar (Golongan Karya)  Functional groups. (Official government party of former president Soeharto).

Gotong royong  Mutual cooperation, nowadays it refers primarily to the obligatory labour assistance for public works.

Gunung  Mountain

Haji  Someone who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca

Halus  Refined, polite, well mannered.

Hari korban (Idul Adha)  Islamic remembrance day on which animals are butchered.

Hari Raya (Idul Fitri)  Day of festivities after the end of the Ramadan. Also Lebaran.

Idul Fitri  See Hari Raya.

Inpres desa tertingal (idt)  Government programmes for the development of ‘backward villages’ (idt-villages).

Jago  Lit. cock. Often used for gang leaders and daredevils.

Jalan Raya Pos  Trunk Road. Mail road built by Daendels in early 19th century along the North coast of Java.

Jamu  Traditional medicine

Janda  Widow (because of a divorce or by death of a husband).

Jodoh  Fortune; match with marriage partner.

JPS (Jaringan Pengaman Social)  Social Safety Net programme

Kabupaten  District

Kasar  Impolite, rude, uncivilised, bad-mannered.

Kasihan  Feel sorry for, pity, to be pitied.

Kaya  Rich

Kaul  Vow, pledge. A thanksgiving selamatan.
Keajegan (Madurese) Lit. 'helping each other out with work', nowadays often degraded to corvée labour.

Keamanan or Jamin Safety, state of absence of threats, or fear.

Kecamatan Subdistrict

Keong Snail

Kepala desa Head of a village

Kepala dusun Head of a hamlet

Keponakan Nephew, niece

Kiai Religious leader

KUD (Koperasi unit desa) Village cooperative

KUT (Kredit usaha tani) Credit scheme for farmers

Kretek Clove cigarette

Kurang Less, not enough

Ladang Fields cleared for cultivation (not permanent), swidden.

Lebaran See Idul Fitri

Lebih Lit. more than. People who are called lebih are having more than enough (rich), but are not the richest of society. Sometimes called maju.

Lingkungan Neighbourhood

Ludruk Popular theatre (group)

Lugu (orang lugu) Good, traditional, rustic, country people.

Maju Successful, progressive. People who are rich and successful.

Maling Thief/Burglar

Mas Friendly title for brother, friend, acquaintances (lit. older brother).

Mbak Friendly title for sister, friend (lit. older sister).

Mengobu (Madurese) To care for. In this arrangement, the caretaker of a cow receives every second calf (half of the profit). The other calves are for the owner. (See oanan).

Merantau Lit. going to foreign areas, migrate. In practice it refers to seasonal migration and has a connotation of hunting for work.

Mie Egg noodles

Miskin Poor

Murah Cheap or easy.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Religious organisation of orthodox Islam in Indonesia with the PKK as political representative.

Nakal Wayward, madcap, naughty.


Oanan (Madurese) Sharing the profit of raising cattle between owner and caretaker; half of the profit is for the owner, the other half for the care taker.

Orang People

Orang kuat Strong man

Orang nakal Wayward, madcap, people
Glossary
Ord - Zak

Orde Baru
New Order, political system under Soeharto (1965-1998)

Padi
Unhusked rice

Pak (bapak)
Mr. adult man, father or sir (polite).

Pancasila
Five pillars or ideological foundations of the Republic of Indonesia.

Paron
Sharecropping. Usually at a 50/50 basis.

PDI-perjuangan
Partai Demokrasi Indonesia perjuangan. The Indonesian democratic party of struggle (Megawati).

Pekarangan
Gardens around the house with vegetables and fruit trees.

Pelit (orang pelit)
Stingy, thrifty, greedy people.

Pesantren
Islamic boarding school.

Pilkades (Pemilihan Kepala Desa)
Elections of village head

PKB
See NU.

PT (Perseroan Terbatas)
Limited liability company

Puskesmas
Pusat kesehatan masyarakat. Village health centre.

Ramadan
Islamic month of fasting.

Rezeki
Luck, means profit or blessing. Opposite of misfortune.

RT (Rukun Tetangga)
The smallest administrative unit in a village. Size 15 to 20 households.

RW (Rukun warga)
Next to smallest administrative unit in a village. Size about a hamlet (if the hamlet is small).

Sambatan (J.)
Mutual help

Sawah
Wet rice field

Selamatan
Ceremonial meal

Sembako (Sembilan Bahan Pokok)
Government programme of subsidies on nine basic needs during the 1997/1998 crisis.

Sumbangan
Gift giving at selamatan and weddings (lit. contribution).

Sungai
River

Surau
Small praying house, religious school.

Takut
Fear, being afraid.

Tanah pemerintah
Government land.

Tanah bengkok
Salary lands of village officials.

Tanah liar
Wasteland (government property).

Tapé
Sweet fermented cassava snack.

Tegal
Dry land, not irrigated (for permanent cultivation).

Tetangga
Neighbours

Toko
Small shop

Tokong menolong
Mutual help

Ulama
Religious teacher.

Ulu ulu
Local official in charge of irrigation

Warung
Small shop, coffee house, or food stall.

Zakat-al-fitra
Alms to be given by all Muslims after the fasting month Ramadan.

Zakat-mal
Alms to be given by rich people as a percentage of rice, livestock, or income.
EEN KWESTIE VAN STIJL:
SOCIALE ZEKERHEID IN DE HOOGLANDEN VAN OOST JAVA

- Summary in Dutch -

De introductie van deze studie naar lokale vormen van sociale zekerheid in het dorp Krajan presenteert een aantal families: een arme weduwe met kleindochter, het dorpshoofd en zijn gezin, een voorraadstaande familie die aan lager is geraakt, en een familie die arm was, maar nu tot de rijkste boeren van het dorp behoort. Deze families staan in zekere zin symbool voor de verhoudingen in het dorp en vertellen van succes en verlies, onzekerheid en steun, weerbaarheid en kwetsbaarheid, en van macht en ongelijkheid.

De familie Satrawi was vroeger rijk, gaf regelmatig grote religieuze vieringen (selamatan), hield verscheidene armere families aan het werk, gaf altijd grote giften aan anderen, en hielp een ieder die dat nodig had. Kortom, de Satrawi’s waren geziene en gevierde dorpelingen. Maar de tijden veranderden. Door een aantal tegenslagen en sterfgevallen in de familie en door een uitbundige levensstijl, gaven de Satrawi’s meer geld uit dan er binnenkwam en binnen afzienbare tijd moest de familie hun koeien verkopen en stukken-land verpanden.

Toen het bergafwaarts ging met de familie Satrawi, bleken velen niet in staat of bereid om ook iets van de giften van vroeger te retourneren. Bovendien veranderde de samenleving, Soeharto’s Nieuwe Orde bracht, naast meer staatsinvloed tot op het kleinste niveau, economische ontwikkeling, een betere infrastructuur en nieuwe mogelijkheden. Sommige van de arme families die vroeger afhankelijk waren van grootgrondbezitters zoals de Satrawi’s vonden ander werk, migreerden naar Kalimantan, of werkten zich op tot kleine zelfstandigheden. Anderen bleven trouw aan dorpswaarden van wederzijdse hulp en zelfvoorziening en verkozen de stabilité van sterke (patroon-client) relaties met landeigenaren of politieke en religieuze leiders boven de (schijn)zekerheden van loonarbeid. Voor velen veranderde er niets; ze bleven zo arm als ze altijd waren geweest.
De familie Patik was een van de families die leefde van het werk op het land van de Satrawi's. Bovendien zorgden ze voor twee van hun koeien waarvan de inkomsten als tegenprestatie werden gedeeld. In tegenstelling tot de Satrawi's gingen de Patik's zo min mogelijk naar selamatan, gaven zo min mogelijk weg, en spaarden wat ze konden. Dit leverde hun het predikaat vrekkig op. In de loop van een paar jaar hadden ze een paar eigen koeien en waren ze in staat om in ruil voor die koeien een groot stuk sawah in onderpand te nemen. Daarna ging het snel. Met behulp van de inkomsten van dat land, van veeteelt en van handel kochten ze stukje bij beetje meer land. Tegenwoordig bezitten ze, ironisch genoeg, een groot deel van het vroegere land van de Satrawi familie en werkt hun vroeger baas en beschermheer Satrawi voor hen. Al zijn ze rijk, nog steeds geven ze zo min mogelijk uit.

Deze verhalen introduceren de hoofdthema's van dit proefschrift. Vooral het verhaal van de familie Satriwi en de familie Patik is interessant. Hoewel enigszins uniek, laat het zien dat armoede en welvaart geen statistische begrippen zijn in Krajan. Meer nog, de twee familiegeschiedenissen roepen fundamentele vragen op over verschillen tussen mensen, hun afkomst en hun weerbaarheid. Hoe komt het dat de ene familie beter in staat is dan de andere om te overleven? Is overleven een kwestie van afkomst, dwingende omstandigheden, het hebben van de juiste strategie of simpelweg een kwestie van geluk? Waarom is de ene familie in tijden van tegenspoed beter in staat zich staande te houden dan de andere? En wie zorgt voor de verliezers als het mis gaat of een van de kostwinners in een gezin wegvalt? Bestaat er in Indonesische dorpen zoals Krajan eigenlijk wel een sociaal vangnet van familiel, buren, en dorpsinstituties die steun kunnen verlenen in geval van nood? En welke rol speelt de overheid in dit verband? Deze vragen werden extra relevant door de uitbraak van politieke en economische onrust in 1997 en 1998 toen grote groepen van de bevolking in moeilijkheden kwamen door de crisis en de combinatie van stijgende prijzen en een dalende vraag naar arbeid. Wat waren de effecten van deze crisis op het bestaan van de mensen in Krajan, wie waren de winnaars en verliezers, en wat is de betekenis van sociale zekerheid in tijden van crisis?


Hoofdstuk 1 begint met een uiteenzetting over sociale zekerheid en geeft een overzicht van verschillende onderzoekstradities die zich door de jaren heen met armoede, ongelijkheid, onzekerheid en sociale zekerheid hebben bezig gehouden. Armoede studies, livelihood studies, risk studies, sociaal kapitaal benaderingen, en sociale zekerheidsstudies. Binnen deze vaak overlap-
Pendende studievelden vallen twee belangrijke interpretatietradities te onderscheiden. De eerste traditie richt zich op structuren en daardoor bijvoorbeeld vooral op de betekenis van instituties en arrangementen voor het verlenen van steun, hulp en sociale zekerheid. De andere traditie richt zich veel meer op capaciteiten, het individu en diens strategieën. Vervolgens probeer ik de gulden middenweg te vinden tussen beide benaderingen door gebruik te maken van het begrip stijl.

Het proefschrift valt vervolgens in drie delen uiteen: eerst richt ik me op de toegang en verdeling van de middelen van bestaan, dan op vormen van sociale zekerheid en vervolgens op diversiteit en stijlen van sociale zekerheid.

Hoofdstuk 2 en 3 beschrijven het dorp, historische ontwikkelingen en cycli van meer en mindere incorporatie van de markt en de aanwezige natuurlijke hulpbronnen in Krajan. Hoofdstuk 4 gaat vervolgens in op de ongelijke verdeling van deze middelen van bestaan. Een algemene beschouwing van de verdeling van rijstvelden, droge gronden en vee laat zien dat een derde van de bevolking genoeg heeft om van te leven, terwijl twee derde in meer of mindere mate moeite heeft om in het eigen levensonderhoud te voorzien. De helft van deze laatste groep is zo arm dat ze slechts in staat is een absoluut bestaansminimum te handhaven.

Aangezien definities van armoede en uitsluiting kunnen verschillen per samenleving, wordt er in de analyse zowel gebruik gemaakt van locale (relatieve) concepten als van kwantificeerbare verschillen. Een gedetailleerde analyse laat dan zien dat de negen procent zogenaamde rijken 53% van alle natte rijstvelden (sawah) in het dorp bezitten, 37% van alle droge gronden (tegal) en 42% van al het vee. De analyse stopt uiteraard niet bij de verschillen in eigendom, maar bekijkt ook de verschillen in toegang (indirecte controle) van de aanwezige hulpbronnen in het dorp. Via verschillende arbeidsrelaties, deelbouwcontracten en vormen van loon in natura, elk met eigen specifieke procedures en afspraken, krijgen armere dorpelingen toch nog indirect toegang tot een deel van de hulpbronnen van de rijken. Desondanks blijven de verschillen tussen armen en rijken ook na deze analyse groot en zijn er aanwijzingen dat die kloof in de laatste decennia alleen maar groter is geworden. Die kloof wordt niet alleen gekenmerkt door verschillen in bezit, maar ook door verschillen in kennis en macht.

Hoofdstuk 5 borduurt voort op deze verschillen tussen mensen en huishoudens en gaat in op de soorten onzekerheden en bedreigingen die mensen meemaken. Vervolgens wordt het geheel van sociale zekerheidsvormen in Krajan onder de loep genomen en gekeken welke vormen van sociale zekerheid betekenis kunnen hebben voor diegenen die die sociale zekerheid het hardst nodig hebben.

Het stelsel van sociale zekerheid in Krajan wordt, zoals in zoveel ontwikkelingslanden, vooral bepaald door lokale, zelf georganiseerde vormen van sociale zekerheid. De staat speelt op deze markt slechts een bescheiden en indirecte rol door het verlenen van prijssubsidies, incidentele voedselhulp, het aanbieden van onderwijs en gezondheidszorg, en door investeringen in infrastructuur. Tegelijkertijd is de staat ook een grote factor van onzekerheid.

Een evaluatie van het stelsel van sociale zekerheid in Krajan maakt duidelijk dat degenen die hulp en steun het meest nodig hebben het meest moeten investeren en het minst ontvangen. Een derde van de bevolking, de groep die niets heeft om te investeren in relaties van wederzijdse hulp, is vrijwel volledig uitgesloten van hulp en steun. De mythe van het bestaan van harmonieuze samenlevingen en wederzijdse hulp in dorpen op bijvoorbeeld Java wordt hiermee ontzenuwd.

In hoofdstuk 6 wordt erkend dat verschillen tussen arm en rijk nog lang niet alles zeggen over de kwetsbaarheid en onzekerheid van individuen en huishoudens. Het is duidelijk dat armen meer bedreigd worden in hun bestaan dan rijker, maar uit de analyse blijkt ook dat niet alle armen even kwetsbaar zijn. Bovendien blijkt dat je niet kunt spreken over één sociaal zekerheidssysteem dat beschikbaar is voor iedereen, maar dat er juist sprake is van een enorme diversiteit en ongelijkheid in mogelijkheden en combinaties. Om grip te krijgen op die diversiteit, richt dit hoofdstuk zich op de patronen in die diversiteit en beschrijft het de vier typische 'stijlen' van sociale zekerheid. Die stijlen zijn meer dan strategieën en minder dan een keurslijf van conditionering. Het zijn coherente patronen van handeling waarin ruimte voor zowel gewoonte als strategie bestaat en waar de hoop op een goede toekomst samensmelt met ervaringen uit het verleden. Bovendien zijn het niet puur academische constructies, maar zijn ze gebaseerd op indelingen die mensen in Krajan regelmatig zelf gebruiken.

De vier stijlen van sociale zekerheid zijn: 'ondernemers' (orang bisnis), 'geldmensen (orang duit), 'giezegaards' (orang pelit), en 'traditionelen' (orang lugu). De ondernemers zijn gericht op cash inkomsten, nieuwe mogelijkheden en zijn voor hun sociale zekerheid vooral gericht op sociale relaties en netwerken binnen en buiten het dorp. 'Geldmensen' zijn zij die een voorkeur hebben voor cash inkomsten en richten zich op de mogelijkheden van de geldeconomie voor hun bestaan en op consumptie artikelen. Voor hun sociale zekerheid zijn ze vooral gericht op inkomsten in cash en hun eigen huishoudelijke reserves. 'Gierigaards' zijn diegenen die gericht zijn op het verkrijgen van voordeeltjes en hulp die geboden wordt binnen de lokale economie van uitwisselingsrelaties en wederzijdse hulp. Ze zijn echter terughoudend in het investeren in deze relaties en negeren zoveel mogelijk de claims van anderen. De 'traditionelen' zijn diegenen die gericht zijn op hun bestaan en hun sociale zekerheid op de lokale economie en op netwerken van uitwisseling en wederzijdse hulp. Volgens deze categorisering, heeft de Patik familie duidelijk een gierige stijl, terwijl de Satrawi familie een meer 'traditionele' stijl heeft, die is gericht op de betekenis van normen en waarden in het dorp en op vormen van wederzijdse hulp.
Stijlen komen tot stand als uitingen van gedrag en afwegingen tussen voorkeuren en oriëntaties die aan dat gedrag ten grondslag liggen. Door voortdurende herhalingen en na verloop van tijd worden die afwegingen gedragspatronen en helpen de geminstitutionaliseerde voorkeuren en oriëntaties bij het afwegen van beslissingen. Ik onderscheid twee spanningsvelden die aan het gedrag ten grondslag liggen. Het eerste spanningsveld bevindt zich op het terrein van bestaansmiddelen en uit zich in een afweging tussen gerichtheid op de lokale economie en zelfvoorziening, of op de cash economie en de vele mogelijkheden buiten het dorp. Het tweede spanningsveld bevindt zich op het terrein van de sociale zekerheid en uit zich in een spanning tussen investeringen en gerichtheid op reciprociteit en relaties van wederzijdse hulp, tegenover zelfhulp en individualisering. Verschillen in voorkeuren en oriëntaties tussen mensen en huishoudens binnen deze spanningsvelden leveren vier gedragsstijlen op.

Niet alle stijlen zijn gericht op het verkrijgen van bestaanszekerheid of hulp en steun in de toekomst. Er bestaat een kleine categorie van mensen, beschreven in hoofdstuk 7, die niet gericht zijn op het verkrijgen van bestaanszekerheid en juist opzettelijk risico’s nemen. Dit zijn de oranj nakal, de waaghalzen, de haantjes, degenen die volgens de meerderheid van de dorpselingen absoluut niet deugden. Toch zijn ze geen echte buitenstaanders, maar ze zoeken de grenzen van het aanvaardbare, de uitdaging en willen ontsnappen aan de sleur van het dagelijks bestaan. Het zijn mensen die grenzen opzoeken, de goekkers, de rokkenjagers, speculanten en klaplopers van Krajan. In die zin kun je de oranj nakal stijl beschouwen als een deviante tegenstijl. De oranj nakal stellen zich boven de algemeen geaccepteerde waarden van het dorp en vormen een bedreiging voor de status quo en het sociale zekerheidssstelsel van Krajan. Het is dan ook niet verwonderlijk dat ze soms heftige reacties krijgen van zowel de traditionele dorpselingen als de strenge moslims. Inzicht in het gedrag van deze groep biedt ons een opening naar het begrijpen van de grenzen van de sociale structuur in het dorp en leert ons dat arme boeren niet noodzakelijkerwijs risicomijdend of zekerheidsmaximaliserend zijn.

Niet elke stijl in Krajan is even succesvol of heeft evenveel aanzien. De huishoudens met een traditionele stijl werd door de 'geldmensen' bijvoorbeeld toch als een beetje achtergebleven beschouwd. Maar toen door de economische crisis in 1998 de prijzen stegen en werkgelegenheid daalde werd pijnlijk duidelijk dat veel van de geldmensen weinig in hun sociale relaties hadden geïnvesteerd en daardoor moeilijk toegang konden krijgen tot andere vormen van inkomen. Zij kregen de zwaarste klappen, terwijl de volgers van de traditionele stijl veel beter tegen de moeilijkheden bleken opgewassen. Bovendien heeft hun stijl een moreel overwicht als ware dorpelingen die nog 'goed' weten te leven. De gierigen doen het over het algemeen vrij goed. Zij vormen een bedreiging door het feit dat ze niet echt willen bijdragen aan het systeem, maar er kan niet met zekerheid gezegd worden dat deze stijl dominanter zal worden in de toekomst en dat het sociale zekerheidssyteem in Krajan zal afkalven.
Het stijlconcept heeft als voordeel dat het structurele, strategische, creatieve en gewoontegetrouwe aspecten van handelen combineert. De meest alle-
daagse beslissingen met betrekking op keuze van het gewas, werk, het ver-
lenen van hulp, het meedoen met collectieve activiteiten, sparen, lenen, ver-
panding, en de uitwisseling van giften worden snel genomen en vallen binnen
en reproduceren een kader van gewoonte en traditie. Een stijl maakt het voor
dorpelingen mogelijk om deze beslissingen uit gewoonte te kunnen nemen
zonder over elke beslissing apart na te hoeven denken. Aan de andere kant
biedt de stijl ook mogelijkheden voor veranderingen, strategie en creativiteit,
al kun je niet zomaar van de ene op de andere dag op een andere stijl over-
gaan. Bovendien blijkt dat zowel rikkere als armere huishoudens dezelfde stijl
kunnen hebben en stijl niet afhankelijk is van sociale klasse. Het stijkconcept
levert daarom een krachtig instrument om de verschillen tussen mensen te
beschrijven en te analyseren, en het biedt de mogelijkheid om livelihood en
sociale zekerheid tegelijkertijd en in hun onderlinge samenhang te onder-
zoeken. Bovendien opent het de weg tot een comparatieve benadering van de
studie van livelihood en sociale zekerheid in rurale gebieden omdat het zich
zowel richt op de materiele basis van het bestaan als op percepties, voor-
keuren, smaak en oriëntaties van mensen in het heden en met betrekking op
de toekomst.

Bovendien kan sociaal beleid beter inspelen op de specifieke behoeften van
verschillende mensen als er van een stijl- in plaats van klassendenken wordt
uitgegaan. Mensen reageren immers verschillend op onzekerheden, veran-
deringen, nieuwe mogelijkheden en op interventies. Het helpt ons om te ver-
klaren waarom mensen hun bestaan anders indelen dan anderen en suc-
cessvoller of kwetsbaarder zijn dan anderen. Kwetsbaarheid en toegang tot
sociale zekerheid zijn niet alleen verklaarbaar door te kijken naar de ver-
schillen tussen armen en rijken alleen, maar zijn een kwestie van stijl.
Gerben Nooteboom is born October 31, 1970 in Apeldoorn. He is lecturer and affiliated researcher at the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies at Nijmegen University, The Netherlands, teaching MA courses on poverty and social exclusion and fieldwork methodology. His current research project is on Madurese migrants in East Kalimantan entitled: 'Social Security Styles of Madurese Migrants in East Kalimantan and the Threat of Ethnic Violence' funded by NOM (Nijmegen Research School on Social Sciences). The research is part of the KNAW-research programme 'Coping with Crisis in Indonesia'.

In 1995, he achieved a MSc degree in Development Sociology at Wageningen University, The Netherlands with research in mountainous Ifugao, The Philippines, looking at changing social security and ecological degradation in a context of, and as a result of, excessive out-migration. After graduation he was a junior lecturer at Wageningen University from 1995 - 1996 teaching fieldwork methodology.

For his PhD he did research in Indonesia from 1997 till 1999 focussing on social security, livelihood, and insecurity in Madurese East Java as part of the KNAW (Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences) research programme: Social Security and Social Policy in Indonesia. During his fieldwork period, the economic crisis in Indonesia started and the differential effects of crisis echo throughout the thesis.