

THE INNER ISLAMIZATION OF JAVA

by

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chapter 1

EXPLORING JAVANISM

In Java's rural religious pattern the mosque is often no more than a gateway to the grave--Islam is integral to but not the heart of local culture. Important graveyards have a small mosque or prayer house near their entrance, but are visited essentially as ancestral shrines. This conjunction properly indicates the impact Islam has had on interactions between the living and the dead. Burial is universally an Islamic ritual and constitutes the clearest evidence that Javanese practices were substantially altered through the advent of Islam. However this perspective can be reversed to suggest that the mosque remains principally an anteroom, a space for cleansing and protection prior to dealings with spirit realms which continue to be a central preoccupation. This physical conjunction is apt metaphorically, as for most Javanese Islam has not been exclusive. Islamic terminology, like Indic discourses before it, amplified pre-existent Javanism (*kejawen*) through new idiom and without displacing it.

The nature of the relationship is illustrated in a story about Diponegoro, hero of the Java War against the Dutch from 1825-1830. He took Islam more seriously than most members of the royal family of Yogyakarta's *kraton* (court), but was also involved with Ratu Kidul (also called Nyai Loro Kidul) the queen of the South Sea. She is invoked in court myth and rituals of royal. Diponegoro meditated in caves to contact her for assistance in war. Javanese understanding of such relations, rooted in Indic conceptualisation of *karma*, is that individuals who depend on spirit assistance in this life will enter the spirit realms upon death.¹ According to Yogyanese mystics in the 1970s in Diponegoro's case the strength of his Islamic conviction (*iman*) was such that he did not have to pay this price. Faith in Allah 'delivered him', and Islam may thus be used as a protection for those engaged with spirits. The same perspective on spiritual realities is implied in the claims contemporary spirit healers make that their power derives from God, not from spirits.²

As these examples suggest, Islam and the *kejawen* world of spirits have been interdependent fields of discourse, not exclusive domains. Islamic idiom did establish grounds for reorientation, but within an established realm of

¹ Primary information used in this context is based on fieldwork in Java, mainly taking place initially from January 1971 to February 1974 and then during short visits at least every alternate year since.

² This observation is confirmed also in M. Woodward, "Healing and Morality: a Javanese Example", *Social Science Medicine* Vol. 21 No. 9 (1985) p 1016, as at least one of his informants put similar stress on God as the ultimate source of his spiritual authority.

spiritual discourses. Linguistic analogies are appropriate to suggest the nature of the closely related religious history. An underlying indigenous grammar has been continually interplaying with imported Islamic idiom. The lexicon of Javanese was enriched by Sanskrit and then Arabic loan words. While each extended it; its structure remained Malayo-Polynesian. Notwithstanding students of culture who present linguistics as queen of the human sciences, or emphasis within some religions on language (as in Islam on Arabic) language and religion are not coterminous. This is thus only an analogy, not a perfect representation of the balances of spiritual forces and discourses in Java, but it properly suggests the nature of historical interactions and the depths to which they can be considered.

Many Javanists still feel Islam is essentially foreign, not part of their identity in the way Indic culture came to be. The culturalist revivalism they prioritise looks back to the spiritual synthesis of Indic Majapahit, over five hundred years ago, rather than to the later Islamic Demak. Folk traditions which have detailed the fall of classical Majapahit include prophecies that Java was to fall under the sway of foreign culture for five hundred years before a *Jaman Buda*, a new golden age, would resurrect indigenous spiritual identity.³ Similarly recent advocates of Buddhist revival I knew in the early 1970s held that villagers had no need to convert as implicitly they were already Buddhists and had only to acknowledge it.⁴ For Javanists a deconstruction of overlying cultural influences has been intrinsic to affirmation of cultural independence and a key cultural aspect within the national revolution.

The competing mythology, in other sectors of society and scholarship, is that Java is fundamentally and already overwhelmingly Islamic.⁵ From that

³ The extended relevance of this complex was noted already by B. Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence* (Ithaca, New York, 1969) pp 1-20; the most authoritative general discussion of Javanese millenarianism is S. Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java* (Singapore, 1972); I have expanded on the prophecies most relevant to the Suharto period in, "Interpreting Javanist Millennial Imagery" in P. Alexander (ed.) *Creating Indonesian Cultures* (Sydney 1989).

⁴ Such statements were repeated with emphasis rather than being occasional or incidental. During early 1971 I accompanied Pak Pramono and Pak Gondo, Buddhist teachers from different groups in Salatiga, as they spoke at village ceremonies in Kopeng, Kayuwangi, and Kemiri. In 1972 and 1973 I observed Waisak celebrations at Borobudur and related ceremonies in Klaten, Wonogiri, and Manyaran. Contacts with urban Buddhists, mainly in Jakarta, Semarang and Surakarta (Solo) did not bring out the same message, but in relating to villagers in the above contexts urbanites always stressed this continuity.

⁵ The most forceful recent exposition of this school of thought is by M. Woodward in his book, *Islam in Java: Mysticism and Normative Piety in the*

perspective tensions between orthodoxy (*santri*) and Javanism (*kejawen*) may exist, but are best seen as "inside" a Muslim frame. These alternative gestalts provide a fundamental axis for Javanese debates about what it means to be Indonesian. Representations of recent social life refer to this as tension between syncretic Javanism (*kejawen*) and orthodox Islam or as divergence between *santri* piety, *abangan* animism and *priyayi* mysticism.⁶

inner Islamization

In any event Islamization stands out as a primary theme in the religious history of insular Southeast Asia during the past five hundred years, everywhere implying interplay with local customs (*adat*). Indigenous histories provide ample evidence of tension between the court (*kraton*) culture of Sultans and the religion of the *ulama* or *kyai*, the teachers in Islamic schools (*pesantren*). Traditional Javanese literature is filled with reference to debates between related monistic and dualistic philosophers.⁷ Polarities pervade scholarly analysis no less than they may primitive mythologies or medieval cosmologies. Some discussions go so far as to relate contemporary tensions to prehistoric moities and division between Shivaite and Buddhist sects.⁸ More recently we are reminded that the interplay between forces such as Islam and custom has been subtle and dialectical, that each pole is continually redefined through their interaction.⁹ That new styles arrive as commentaries on earlier patterns is underlined ironically by the fact that indigenous people use Arabic terms to define the domains identified with pre-Islamic custom (*adat*) and spirituality (*kebatinan*).¹⁰

Sultanate of Yogyakarta (Tucson, Arizona, 1989), and in an essay, "The Slametan: Textual Knowledge and Ritual Performance in Central Javanese Islam", *History of Religions* V 28 (1988-89).

⁶ This is the issue, in the context of national politics, as I outline it in "'Legitimate' Mysticism in Indonesia", *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* Vol. 20 No. 2 (1986). The classical statement of the *santri/abangan/priyayi* thesis is in C. Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago 1976); the most important counterstatement is Koentjaraningrat, *Javanese Culture* (Singapore 1985).

⁷ A fine summary discussion of these issues as canvassed in the archipelago is provided in G. Bousfield, "Islamic Philosophy in Southeast Asia" in M.B. Hooker (ed.), *Islam in South East Asia* (Cambridge 1982).

⁸ W.F. Rassers. *Pandji the Culture Hero, a Structural Study of Religion in Java* (The Hague 1956) especially pp 65-91.

⁹ Particularly fruitful discussions of this interplay are embedded in T. Abdullah, "Adat and Islam in Minangkabau", *Indonesia* No 1 (1966) .

¹⁰ R. McKinley provides a fine perspective on the interplay between religious domains, showing how each is a commentary on its

Beyond polarities it is emphasised that Javanese, like most borrowers, adopted Islam in their own terms, maintaining continuity with earlier teachings. Geertz used the story of Kalijaga to suggest that change, insofar as conversion implied some, was on the surface rather than in the depths of spiritual life.¹¹ According to legend Sunan Kalijaga was the offspring of royalty from Indic Majapahit but founded the traditional Islam of Mataram, the ethnic Javanese core surrounding Yogyakarta and Surakarta. Kalijaga's conversion is supposed to have taken place near Demak, on the north coast (*pasisir*), the zone of trading states through which Islam entered Java. His conversion by Sunan Bonan, involved spiritual asceticism of an Indic sort and thus suggested completion rather than denial of the qualities of spirituality prioritised already in earlier Indic Java.

Later shadow puppet drama (*wayang kulit*) presents this same continuity quite explicitly. In it Kalijaga encounters Judistira, the eldest of the Pandawa, who releases him, from what would otherwise have been endless wandering. Kalijaga is said to have revealed that the written talisman which Judistira carried, one held to be the most powerful magical weapon (*pusaka*) of the Pandawa in the Javanese versions of the Indian *Mahabharata*, was none other than the *kalimah sahadat*, the Islamic confession of faith. Decoded this amounts to direct statement that the most powerful magic of the Indic era was Islam, which was present implicitly even if unknown.

Kalijaga's orthodoxy is counterpointed in related legends by the heresy of Seh Siti Jinar, a radical mystic like al-Hallaj, who was executed by a council of the *wali*, the founders of Javanese Islam. Traditional accounts hold that the *wali* agreed with Seh Siti Jinar in holding that mystical union lay at the end of Sufi (*tarekat*) praxis, that the gnosis at issue was most consistent with monistic philosophy, and even that in the final analysis its attainment did not depend on maintenance of the *shariah*. However they objected violently to his public announcement of this secret knowledge. This key debate became an archetype for later contention over the bounds of orthodoxy and positions often converged with competing preferences for Indic or Islamic philosophical idiom. Thus a contrast, classically defined in Islam through counterpointing of al-Hallaj and al-Ghazzali, is replicated in Java between Seh Siti Jinar and Kalijaga. The issues involved later resonated with themes which were prominent during the

predecessor, in his, "Zaman dan Masa, Eras and Periods: Religious Evolution and the Permanence of Epistemological Ages in Malay Culture", in A.L. Becker & A. Yengoyan (eds.), *The Imagination of Reality* (Norwood, New Jersey 1979).

¹¹ C. Geertz, *Islam Observed* (Chicago 1972) pp 26-29.

Nakshabandiya revivalism of the nineteenth century and correlate more recently with debates since independence concerning "*kebatinan* and Islam".¹²

Surveys of Islamization in Java also emphasise the gradual waves and continuing quality of the process--different regions, different levels of society, and different aspects of culture have been touched at different times and by changing forms of Islam.¹³ Islamization has involved gradual penetration of a series of distinct currents which have syncretised with earlier strands of tradition. At each point there has also been continuing redefinition of what precisely it means to be Muslim. Sufism, following Johns' work, has been a crucial key to recent reassessments of Islamization.¹⁴ Geertz's prominent interpretation of Islam in Java had been based too much on the scriptural senses of it which were prominent in Indonesian modernist circles at that time of his research in the early 1950s.¹⁵ Recent reassessments of Javanese Islam, such as Woodward's, based on work in Yogya, reflect increasing understanding of Islam, differences of context between Pare and Yogya, and also a difference of perspective due to continuing Islamization, at increasing pace, in the past four decades.¹⁶

There has been growing awareness among local Muslims that in the strictest terms Islam remains a minority practice.¹⁷ This internal reassessment was speeded by the progressive political marginalisation of Islam in the 1950s and the failure of Islam to politically capitalise on the coup of 1965. Then it combined with the post oil boom worldwide revival of Islam to result in the revivalistic *dakwah* movements. These movements parallel the reborn Christian revivalism of the United States, aim at internal conversion, and have been prominent since the late 1960's. In *dakwah* movements and through government legislation doctrinal orthodoxy and ritual participation are given increasing emphasis as the markers which bound and define the community of the faith, the *ummat*. Neither focus on the political balances of power in the

¹² A. Kumar, *The Diary of a Javanese Muslim* (Canberra 1985) pp 90-103, details the way these debates were reformed in the experiences of a prominent Javanese *santri*.

¹³ The best overview is M.C. Ricklefs, "Six Centuries of Islam in Java", in N. Levtzion (ed.) *Conversion to Islam* (New York 1979).

¹⁴ A. Johns has produced a series of important essays on the theme, but his opening general statement of the thesis, "Sufism as a Category in Indonesian Literature and History", *Journal of Southeast Asian History* V 2 N 2 (July 1961), is the best known.

¹⁵ M. Hodgson was the first to clearly signal this deficiency in his, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago 1974) Vol 2 p 551.

¹⁶ See note 4 above. Woodward's corrective is important, but does not take sufficient account of these axes of difference.

¹⁷ McVey, Ruth. "Faith as the Outsider: Islam in Indonesian Politics" in J Piscatori ed, *Islam in the Political Process* (Cambridge 1983).

country nor on literal senses of what constitutes Islam properly indicate the depths of contemporary Islamization. Drewes observed long before recent shifts that although Javanese Islam does not have the austerity Europeans habitually associate with Middle Eastern orthodoxy, the religion deeply influenced the interior of local spiritual life.¹⁸

The *dar-al islam*, the house of Islam, refers exoterically to the community of believers and esoterically to the psychic space within which the condition of surrender to the will of Allah exists. Thus orthodox views of the *jihad* refer at once to the outward expansion of the community of the faith and, as its higher form, to the inward expansion of the spiritual territory characterised by the condition of submission. With this in mind "Islamization" can be reread: it refers not only to outward professions and actions, but also to the spiritual state of submission. This inner domain has features and textures we can allude to and those become accessible through attending to meditation practices which guide the deployment of attention within the body. Shifts in deployment of attention, and correlatively in consciousness, are a distinct domain of religious change. Attending to the way attention is directed within the body can lead us to unexpected conclusions.

In this context the resulting perspective establishes grounds for reinterpreting the interplay between *kebatinan* and Islam in Java. Contrasts between animistic, Indic and Islamic spiritual orientations have meanings other than those which can be found through comparison of formal philosophical systems or social practices. Sumarah, the movement from which my main examples will be drawn, ostensibly represents mystical Indic culture. Certainly established analysis of Javanese religion, based on outward criteria of Islamization, would position it in opposition to orthodoxy. While this reading has validity in some respects, when we focus on internal practices and keep the inner aspect of Islamization in view, the movement can be read, ironically, as a prime vehicle of Islamization. Establishing the significance, features and accessibility of this interface is a prime objective here.

contemporary spiritual movements

For Javanists the essence of Javanism is *kebatinan*, meaning mysticism, or literally the "science of the inner being".¹⁹ Originally it was impossible to talk meaningfully about that apart from the overall pattern of Javanism because its components made no sense in isolation from each other. Now it is increasingly possible to distinguish *kejawen* from *kebatinan* because movements are defined

¹⁸ G.W.J. Drewes, "Mysticism and Activism in Indonesia", in G.E. van Grunnebaum (ed.), *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilizations* (Chicago 1958).

¹⁹ N. Mulder, *Mysticism and Everyday Life in Contemporary Java* (Singapore 1978).

more clearly as a recent result of modern forces. In the traditional artistic world of *wayang*, the drama based largely on the Indian epics, the mystical aspects of it remained implicit, for most being vaguely present but not consciously articulated. Only among mystics, as illustrated in classical texts such as the *Serat Centini*, was the spiritual symbolism articulated mentally as well as felt intuitively.²⁰ If in traditional Javanism the mystical dimension was pervasive and latent, with an intuitive emphasis, presently it is less pervasive but increasingly cohesive as a distinct complex of ideas and practices.

Within Javanism tension between older styles of *kebatinan* and *kraton* culture, always related to the spirit realms and the acquisition of powers, on the one hand and modern variants, more exclusively dedicated to consciousness of union (*manunggal*), is a major theme. While rarely public, practices relating to spirit forces remain popular and many sacred sites, including graveyards, springs, mountains, caves and temples, are visited regularly on propitious occasions for specific magical purposes. The objectives may include sexual conquest, promotion or success in examinations, and wealth. Getting the national lottery number in advance has been a very common object. Meditation movements include these *kejawen* practices, enmeshed in tantric styled occult powers, and others, generally including the more Muslim wing, who work to expand consciousness without focussing on powers or their social by-products. Divisions of this type exist in every spiritual context and in Java correlate with varying commitment to animistic, Indic, and Islamic strata. As each of these is still strong, contemporary contention is rooted in the same tensions which were immediately evident when Islam first arrived.

There are several dozen major *kebatinan* organisations recognised by the government. The largest movements were founded during the first half of this century and then organised on a mass scale, with officers and statutes, only around the time independence was recognised by the world in 1950. The large sects, such as Pangestu, Subud, Sumarah, Sapto Darmo, and Manunggal, have national or international memberships of up to several hundred thousand. When those numbers are claimed they include many who may have been initiated, but most of whom are not serious practitioners. At the same time, aside from members in nationally established sects, there are many informal and secretive groups--it is naturally difficult to estimate how many are involved in mystical practices. In any event the significance of *kebatinan* movements extends beyond memberships to those who believe in or have a mystical orientation. Several million people must be actively associated with mystical practices; well over half the population must take mysticism seriously.

The basic psychological grid employed within the sects is remarkably uniform.²¹ All share conviction that union and harmony with the cosmos, nature

²⁰ S. Soebardi, *The Book of Cabolek* (The Hague 1975) pp 35-53.

²¹ Outline examples of Javanese mystical psychology are available in D. Howe, "Sumarah: A Study of the Art of Living" (unpublished PhD thesis,

or God is not only possible for every individual but ultimately necessary. They share a sense that the normal state of humanity is one in which consciousness is confined to thoughts (*pekir*) and not sufficiently developed in the inner intuitive feeling (*rasa*). As a consequence of inadequate inner awareness, people tend to be guided in their actions by egoistic impulses directed by personal desires (*nafsu*). In effect we thus function to gratify personal desires instead of as vehicles for the unfolding of God's will, natural harmony, and the growth of consciousness. These basic spiritual ideas differ little from those found in other esoteric traditions. The Javanese have a firmly established sense of *karma* and reincarnation and they use many other Indian terms to describe and deal with the spiritual path. At the same time, Islam has left a deep imprint on the *kebatinan* world in terminology and style, much of which is straight Sufism, and in their stress on God.

The techniques used are as diverse within Java as in other mystical traditions: some groups meditate (*semadi*) through use of *mantra*, others by concentration on particular *chakra* (occult centres within the body), using Sufi *dhikr*, or *tirta yoga* (immersion in water). The range of these techniques reflect the plurality of religions active on Java now and influencing it during its history. Few publications reveal the techniques or flavors of practice, though useful glimpses can be found.²² There is no need for a catalogue of practices but it is worth noting that older styles generally involved mediumistic contacts with the spirits, though it is also worth emphasising that no specific technique is characteristic of *kebatinan* as a whole. Some general cultural orientations are closely related to *kebatinan*. The conviction, found widely in Asia, that "the essence of all religions is the same", that only forms of practice and teaching differ, is related to mystical inclination and a widely avowed distaste for fanaticism.

One by-product of revolution has been crystallisation of new patterns within Javanism. Traditional *kebatinan* was so interwoven with *kejawen* it was difficult to speak of one without the other. Mystical ontology and conceptions suffused the cultural world of etiquette, arts, and politics while mystical practices in their turn were couched in culturally ingrained imagery and social relationships.²³ In effect to know *kebatinan* required immersion in *kejawen*,

U. North Carolina, 1980) and J. Weiss, "The Folk Psychology of the Javanese of Ponorogo" (unpublished PhD thesis, Yale University, 1977).

²² In this respect, that is as a window into practices, N. Epton's journalistic descriptions of Sumarah in *Magic and Mystics of Java* (London 1974, pp192-212) are superior to those of C. Geertz in *The Religion of Java* (Chicago 1976 pp 343-344).

²³ The intertwining of *kebatinan* and *kejawen* can be seen in books such as Geertz (1976); Ulbricht, (1970); and in a fine essay by Zoetmulder (1971).

techniques of liberation were bound up in the Indic *wayang* symbolism, in relations with ancestral spirits, and in *kraton*-centred politics.

This interdependence no longer applies; it is increasingly possible for non-Javanese to appreciate and relate to *kebatinan* without 'Javanisation'. Simple put, *kebatinan* is becoming less culture-bound, it is expressing itself in more universal terms.²⁴ Traditional *kebatinan* organisation was defined by networks of personally based loyalties focusing on spiritual teachers. Since the revolution removed the colonial lid from social life, *kebatinan* groups have adopted more or less modern institutional forms, as associations and foundations. While there has been a shift away from personal loyalties of the patron-client sort, a switch toward institutional membership has not always implied 'routinisation of charisma'.

introduction to Sumarah

'*Sumarah*' is a Javanese word meaning the state of total surrender, is a nearly adequate description of the aim and nature of Sumarah spiritual practice. The aim of meditation, usually called *sujud*, is to surrender every aspect of the personal being so that the self functions as no more than a channel, *warana*; or vehicle, for God's will. Meditation sessions take place on a weekly basis, usually in the home of the advanced members who function as *pamong*, or guides, for the dozen or so participants. Most of the membership participates in one group session each week while continuing individual practice at home.

The core of dedicated mediators and active *pamong* often spend every night of the week with the Sumarah groups. But no matter how much time is spent in meditation or in sessions with other members, all Sumarah members continue to lead normal existences of working for a livelihood and participating in family life. The aim of practice is not isolation from society or personal eccentricity, but a balance of *lahir* and *batin*, of the outer and inner being. When practice pays off, it leads to proficiency and dedication to society as a whole. According to Sumarah it is only when we manifest compassion for all

²⁴ The very debate over the meaning of the word *kebatinan* says a lot about the nature of the changes going on within Javanese mysticism. I have used "kebatinan" to mean Javanese mysticism as a whole but there are many groups which refuse to call themselves that because they feel the term has become too bound up in popular associations with occult practices of power implicit in *kejawan* mysticism. As a result the SKK, the umbrella organisation of *kebatinan* groups, has an awkward name including *kepercayaan*, *kebatinan*, *kejiwaan*, and *kerohanian* (beliefs, the science of the inner, and the spiritualist). The name was an effort to satisfy all of the groups the SKK has been working to represent, but that effort has not been entirely successful.

beings through service to society that we are really showing we are in tune with God's will.

Currently Sumarah is an association of about six thousand. The seat of the organisation, the Dewan Pimpinan Pusat (DPP) is in Jakarta, at the same time a regional centre, or Dewan Pimpinan Daerah (DPD). Other regional centres are in Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Semarang, Magelang, Madiun, Ponogoro, Kediri, Malang and Surabaya. West Javanese membership is small, confined largely to ethnic Javanese civil servants and professionals who were members before moving there. In the *kejawen* heartlands of Central and East Java membership is more heterogeneous and in a few regions, notably Madiun, a large number of villagers have joined. In the seventies Sumarah was of national significance due to its role in the SKK (Sekretariat Kerjasama Kepercayaan), a national umbrella organisation for *kebatinan* (now the HPK, or Himpunan Penghayat Kepercayaan).

The origins of the Sumarah lie in the experiences of Sukinohartono during the 1930s. By then Pak Kino, as he was usually called, had been an active spiritual seeker for several decades. His exposure to a wide variety of spiritual practices included indirect contacts with Nakshabandi Sufism. He was born at the turn of the century in a village in the Wonosari area, not far from the court city of Yogyakarta. His father had been a minor village official and he began as a teacher, then working for longer periods as a minor court official and as a bank clerk. After his revelatory experiences of 1935, a small circle of friends began to share in his practice and by 1940 the seeds of an organisation had been sown through most of the major towns in the Javanese heartlands of Central and East Java. Those seeds lay dormant during the closing years of Dutch colonialism and began to germinate during the Second World War, under the Japanese occupation. During the revolutionary struggle of the late 1940s an influx of many new and younger members gave rise to the need for a formal organisation.

Thus just as Indonesia gained acceptance in the world of nations, the association crystallised into what is now "Paguyuban Sumarah", usually referred to as just "Sumarah". Since 1950, when the formal organisation was established, the most important changes coincided with leadership shifts in 1966, when Arymurthy in Jakarta replaced Dr. Surono in Yogya, 1986, when Zahid Hussein replaced him.²⁵ Throughout the period since independence

²⁵ It is worth commenting, as I begin to discuss specific Sumarah leaders, that I knew Sudarno from 1971 until the year before his death and have known Suwondo, Arymurthy, and Zahid Hussein, all of whom are still active, well since 1972. As this exploration covers sensitive ground, upon which misunderstanding arises easily, I must stress that my use of illustrations in this instance is to expose a domain of religious history,

Sumarah has been one of the several dozen most prominent national movements within the sphere of *kebatinan*. Although not one of the largest movements it has been especially important, because its leaders have been particularly active within the umbrella organisations which represent *kebatinan* on the national scene.

Sumarah is *practice* and has no canon of official teachings. Practical interaction does not involve formulaic rituals. The reading of texts, which Geertz observed, reflected both an early phase of practice and the immaturity, in the spiritual terms applicable within Sumarah, of the guides he was exposed to in Pare.²⁶ Sumarah teachers stress that the awakening of consciousness is a natural process which cannot be forced by will or activated by a formula. Generally guides speak spontaneously on the basis of their attunement to those participating and if their words have value it understood to be because they function within a field of experience. Alternatively meditation may take place in silence, or with only a few pertinent comments, and even conversation is meant to catalyze movement on a path each participant is understood as treading individually. When fragments of the teaching/learning process find their way onto paper appreciation of the message is considered to depend on contextualising it in spiritual practice and inner realisation. There is no fixed form of teaching, nor even of technique; practitioners and guides find their own styles and and this variation is validated by Sumarah theory.

Nevertheless, those who enter the practice have often begun with the *sesanggeman*, a set of "vows" or principles which identify the prime convictions and objectives underlying the practice. In summary these indicate that:

Sumarah is a brotherhood dedicated to total meditative surrender. It is grounded in certainty that one Truth underlies all religions. It works toward spiritual and material harmony; toward health of body and peace of heart. It works to strengthen the brotherhood of man through compassionate acceptance of daily responsibilities, response to social needs, and harmony with life as it is. It needs neither force, haste, pretension, nor egoism; but respects others and endeavours to raise consciousness of our common goal. It is not fanatical, but grows from and relies on the Truth which benefits all.²⁷

not to focus on the intrinsic interest, which is in fact considerable, of the politics or personalities. I am indebted deeply to all of those I speak about for their openness as my teachers and my respect for each is not diminished in the least by the differences I refer to --I am also entirely responsible for errors of substance or distortions of perspective which arise through this description and interpretation.

²⁶ C. Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago 1976 p 343)

²⁷ This is my distillation and full versions of the Javanese, Indonesian, and English, as have been used by Sumarah, are available in my thesis (*Op. Cit.*) p 358-360. One Jakarta Sumarah leader complained to me in late 1989 that an Indonesian translation of an earlier English version of the *sesanggeman* was misleading. Javanese students in Yogya now read

The *Sesanggeman* begin with affirmation that members "are certain of the existence of God" and the practice is fundamentally defined as one of total surrender. This is what the term "*sumarah*" means, though more precisely it refers to the condition suggested by the Christian phrase "Thy will be done". This is as close as one word could come to describing the nature of practice and the state it is directed to. Because it essentially means in Javanese what "*Islam*" means in Arabic, the practice can easily be interpreted as a deconfessionalised Islam.

Most members are Muslim, but usually of the sort who would say explicitly, as many other Javanese also do, that they are "statistical" members of the faith. Sumarah emphasises the autonomous revelatory origins of its practice and leaders use the term "*wahyu*" for that internally, but soft peddle it in public to avoid offending orthodox Muslims, who hold that term in reserve for Mohammed's revelation. While the movement has always emphasised that it is not a religion and has no connection with a particular religion, the keynotes of the practice nevertheless resonate clearly with Sufism.²⁸ Certainly as a practice is geared toward conscious realisation of and surrender to God it can be seen as focussed on what orthodox Islam terms "the greater *jihad*", the path of inner and self critical purification.

In Sumarah the revolution brought together two contrary vectors of change. Socially there has been institutionalisation; spiritually a democratisation, spreading of charisma.²⁹ From its origin in 1935 until 1945 only a loosely connected circle of friends shared the practice; from 1945 to 1950 there were preliminary attempts to organise; from 1950 to 1966 a formal organisation existed, centering in Yogya and headed by Dr. Surono. It included

Geertz in Indonesian translation, ironically placing its twice translated version in a more prominent position than the original even in its city of origin. Literal translation especially falsifies in relation to meditation, as it treats messages as though content has no relation to context, the dynamic of interplay between people is lost.

²⁸ While researching the history of the movement, over a period of three years in Java, I was not made conscious of the extent of its implicit debt to Sufism. I registered that only when, on reading R. Eaton's, *Sufis of Bijapur* (Princeton 1978), I realised how many Sumarah terms were the same.

²⁹ Argument that the history of Sumarah has been a democratising process, associated with the decline of feudal elements along with the revolution, came from Hadi Sumartono, one of the oldest Sumarah members in the Bandung region and an old associate of Pak Kyai Abdulkamid during the revolution.

all but a few fragments of the original group. After 1966 there was a reorganisation, centering in Jakarta and headed by Arymurthy, Zahid Hussein and most recently Marsono.

From a social perspective turning points came 1950 and 1966, and from the spiritual one, the basis for Sumarah's internal historiography, the major transitions have occurred in 1950 and 1957. Sumarah marks its own history in phases characterised by different stresses within the meditation practice--and corresponding maturity of spiritual consciousness among members. Phase I began in 1935, phase II in 1950, phase III in 1957. Phase IV was recognised in late 1974 and several others followed in rapid succession. From this spiritual vantage point the core process has been a diffusion of *hakiki* from the centre down to the roots.

Hakiki, the defining characteristic of Sumarah as a spiritual association, is the source of spiritual authority and authenticity, the channel through which spiritual guidance comes directly from God to the individual.³⁰ Between 1935 and 1950 *hakiki* was concentrated within the small circle of half a dozen founding members; from 1950 to 1957 it became accessible to leaders throughout the organisation; since 1957 it has reached a far larger circle of advanced members. The spreading of *hakiki* has not been a matter of a few leaders gradually loosening up and revealing secrets' to initiates. By definition *hakiki* cannot be controlled by individuals - the process has been based on the gradual maturation of practice and fuller consciousness on the part of practitioners. While there have been associated changes in meditation techniques and patterns of guidance, from an internal perspective the central process has been a spreading of *hakiki* and increasing surrender to God's will that receiving implies.

Each major strand of Javanese experience has relevance to the Sumarah case and in its own terms Sumarah is acutely attuned to the Indonesian process. Animistic, Indic, Islamic, and modern influences are all evident within the Sumarah history and it is impossible to understand many internal developments without knowledge of national political struggles. The Javanist perspective on larger Indonesian events is a feature within them. From the Javanist perspective broad pattern of history are both clearer and more important than particulars, historical process is a spiral linked to the deepest roots of local culture. Each phase of the history is viewed by Javanists as presenting a new challenge to indigenous spiritual identity. Javanese mystics view themselves as attempting to adapt to modernity by presenting an ageless spiritual awareness through new forms.

³⁰ *Hakiki* (and I am relying on Suhardo's word on this point) means essentially the same thing as 'guru sejati' (the true teacher), as is symbolised by Dewaruci in the wayang, it is related to the Christ' aspect of the man Jesus and to the Nur' aspect of the man Muhammed.

Although smaller than many movements Sumarah is significant in national terms. It has played an active role within several critical periods of national history and in the seventies it moved toward prominence through its commitment to representing mysticism within the national structure. Sumarah sees its own history as a microcosm of the national pattern. Its roots lie in traditional esoteric lore, it was founded within the colonial society of the thirties, became a movement during the national revolution, and took organisational form in the fifties. In the sixties, and like the nation, it experienced a crisis and in the seventies it became active within the national mystical revival.

Sumarah has a membership of perhaps eight thousand. Almost all are ethnic Javanese, but they cut across the spectrum of social groups, including villagers, the middle class and local Chinese. Sumarah is not monastic and has no physical focus--either in the form of buildings or people. Members practice individually and join in group sessions regularly; leaders meet periodically for organisational purposes. All members lead ordinary family lives, none subsist through the organisation. Practice is usually framed by commitment to surrender to God, but no particular or formal religious affiliation is required, there are no changes in name or clothing, and members are indistinguishable within their context. The aim of practice is total surrender so individuals become perfect agents for the expression of cosmic will or life energy. When practice pays off then individuals believe they experience increasing inner peace which automatically extends into harmony with and constructive action in society.

studying mystical movements

In all dimensions of life there is a dialectic between consciousness and socio-cultural forms of expression. Our awareness is shaped and perceptions altered by structures which are, paradoxically, our creations. When structures become ends in themselves organisational and collective logic subordinates individuals to abstracted systems and people experience alienation. As a result actions become increasingly void, their purposes receding into obscurity.

Religions present themselves as responses to the alienated human condition, as pathways offering renewed connection with an absolute meaning in life. Aims are generally framed universally in terms of awareness and truths which transcend the givens of any specific culture or time. At the same time within religions there is generally intensification of attachment to cultural imagery and social practices which are unique in space and time.³¹ Religious

³¹ By associating religious rites, beliefs and practices with culture I am, in this context, taking an 'outsider's' position. As Clifford Geertz points out (in *Islam Observed*, Chicago, 1971) for those who hold religious images, or

conviction usually implies certainty that the absolute is fused within a particular image, person, book or ritual. Typically this fusion is mediated by faith based on authority. Within the Indic religions the basis of authority is meant to be experiential; in the Semitic family authority derives from prophetic revelation.³²

Any discussion of mysticism must begin with recognition that it is an aspect of and dimension within religious experience. As mysticism and religion interpenetrate, distinctions are a matter of identifying contrasting tendencies, there are no rigid lines only differences of emphasis between them. Mystical spirituality places emphasis on the inner, individual and direct experience of union with the absolute, an absolute which remains beyond definition.³³ Within religions people generally identify essence *with* form; within mysticism they see essence as working *through* form.

In principle the varied practices of mystics are intended to result in increasing consciousness that all forms, including those used, are passing. The core of mystical quest, direct awareness of union, is seen as lying beyond the dimensions of both concrete and abstract form. While mystical experiences may result in intellectual notions or emotional faith, the core experience is not dependent on either. According to those who claim it, the core experience is interpreted as a dissolution of the internal boundaries which generate isolation, separation, and ego.³⁴ It is at the same time both self-validating and empirical. It is self-validating in the sense that it depends on no authority beyond the inner authority of the experience itself.³⁵ It is empirical in the sense that it does

are 'held by them', they appear as givens and are at once unique and transcendent.

³²The "Indic" family of religions includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and others. "Sinic" religions, including Taoism and Confucianism, are similar in this respect. The "Semitic" family of religions includes Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The types are distinguished in Max Weber's seminal essay "On the Social Psychology of the World Religions" in H. Gerth and CW Mills eds., *From Max Weber*, NY, 1948, pp.267-301.

³³"Ineffability" is the first point by which William James defines mysticism in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, NY, 1958, p.292.

³⁴Almost any of Krishnamurti's writings make these points with special clarity. For example see Mary Lutyens ed, *The Second Penguin Krishnamurti Reader*, London, 1970, pp.11-13 or Krishna-murti, *The Awakening of Intelligence*, London, 1973, pp.21-56.

³⁵In this there is a contrast with 'religious' styles--within them there is a similar circularity of logic, but authority is also invested in something 'visible'. I.M. Lewis acknowledged this feature of religion in general. He commented that "... the anthropologist's task is to discover what people believe in .. he has neither the skills nor authority to pronounce upon the absolute 'truth' of ecstatic manifestations in different cultures ... Such judgements might more fittingly be left to the jurisdiction of the powers

not involve a priori faith or assumptions, but derives from experience.³⁶ Mystics universally assert that the core experience is not accessible to or through the intellect; authenticity cannot be judged by the *forms* of its expression, and ultimately it is recognisable only to itself.³⁷

It is vital to distinguish between the core and forms of mysticism. All claims to universality and unity refer only to the core. No matter what their relationship to the core experience the phenomenal expressions of mysticism participate in the same diversity and are subject to the same forces which work in other spheres of social life.³⁸ It is especially important to emphasise this because here I refer both to the core experience and to those oriented toward it. In this context that means "mystics" are not only those who claim or are presumed to have attained the ideal, but also those who define spiritual quest in terms of it.

While distinguishing between phenomenal and essential senses of mysticism, we need to be cautious. In intellectual terms we distinguish them, but contrasts between mystical and intellectual perspectives complicate understanding of the phenomenal as well as the experiential dimensions of mysticism. Academic discussions are rooted in intellectual epistemologies, in sensory and mental bases of "knowing". Mystics see "gnosis" as subsuming mental and intuitive knowledge and hold that intellectuals can not hope to grasp its essence--so long as they remain only that.³⁹

which are held to inspire religious feeling." (in *Ecstatic Religion*, London, 1971, p.16).

³⁶This is emphasised by James, *Op.Cit*, p.324, and by Frits Staal, *Exploring Mysticism*, Berkeley, 1975, esp. pp.54-59.

³⁷For example: Don Juan, speaking to Carlos Castaneda, said, "If you say you understand my knowledge, you have done nothing new." (*A Separate Reality*, NY, 1971, p.310). The Sufi master al'Alawi responded to a question with, "If you came to me as my disciple I could give you an answer. But what would be the good of satisfying an idle curiosity? ... The study of the doctrine and meditation ... are not within the scope of everyone." (from Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*, Berkeley, 1973, pp.27-28).

³⁸Among others, this point is made by Agha Khan in *The Light at the Center*, Santa Barbara, 1976, pp.81-86. His point is that mystics may be saints, but may equally be rascals.

³⁹This is the most pervasive problem in study of mysticism. For many it simply generates frustration, for others it does not appear to be an issue -- not because it is not, but because they cannot see it. I am not going to great lengths to explain my position here, but would suggest that mystical techniques always assert the necessity of consciousness beyond intellect. Meditation practices universally aim at stilling, silencing, or passing beyond mind. Zen koan, Sufi tales, and Taoist sages work to force

Thus from the standpoint of mystics purely intellectual discussion, no matter how philosophically sophisticated, deals only with the shadow rather than the inner substance of the subject. Even attempting to comprehend events within a mystical movement the contrast between internal and external perspectives can lead to radically different conclusions. Contrasts arise not so much because participants and observers "see" different things, but because their gestalt differs. Social scientists tend to view actions through their relationship to norms and context; mystics to interpret them in terms of an ineffable experience of the absolute.

For example some sociologists view mysticism as "esoteric" because mystics employ "code languages" laden with secret meanings designed to exclude outsiders.⁴⁰ Yet even when this is the case it has little to do with the *basis of the esoteric* as gnosis is seen by mystics. In mystical principle gnosis is fundamentally dependent on an internal journey through meditation or other 'opening' procedures. The 'secrets' of mysticism lie *within* rather than being 'held' by other people. The 'internal' view is that normal consciousness systematically blocks individual awareness; 'the secret' is something which, in mystical terms, we keep from ourselves. Most traditions hold that the gnosis sought by mystics is readily available to anyone whose internal receptivity allows it, to *anyone* and regardless of whether they relate to a 'mystical' movement.⁴¹

awareness beyond thought. For those who can see no way of knowing beyond sense and thought, these strategies remain opaque no matter how genuine the intention to understand. The problem is that 'understanding' is not enough, imagination cannot bridge the gap.

⁴⁰Edward Tiryakian interprets mysticism this way, saying that mystics purposely conceal their knowledge by using language designed to "put off members of the larger society" (in "Toward the Sociology of Exoteric Culture", *American Journal of Sociology* V 78 N 3, p.502). Harry Benda and Lance Castles show the same misunderstanding in interpreting the Samin movement in Java: "The exact nature of the religious beliefs ... cannot be described confidently, as they came to the knowledge of the authorities largely in the form of sayings with secret meanings." ("The Samin Movement", *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Lande en Volkenkunde* V 125 N 2, 1969, p.225) In the same article the material they provide appears to include straightforward explanations, from my perspective, of Saminist thought.

⁴¹The South Indian saint Ramana Maharshi stated: "... there is nothing more to be known than you find in the books, no secret technique, it is all an open secret in this system." (in Arthur Osborne, *The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi*, NY, 1971, p.139) Castaneda's Don Juan explained that there is no reason to 'indulge' in secrecy -- if you are not meant to know

Two further examples clarify the basis of the exploration which follows. Each presents us with a paradox which is resolved only when we place it within the context of the contrast between internal and external perspectives. In the first place, if mysticism is directed toward an unconditioned and absolute consciousness, if it is the "unmediated" awareness it claims to be, how can there be long lines of transmission claiming to communicate it? This question is especially bothersome when we are speaking of "mystical traditions" since traditions are generally understood as shaping and conditioning human consciousness. Rephrased and put more sharply the issue is: how can unconditioned consciousness result from conditioning structures?

Certainly at some levels mystical movements do function as conditioning mechanisms. The greater the distance from the core experience the more that will be the case. However as mystics see it the closer we move toward the core the more every tradition will cancel itself out. For outsiders and beginners mystical teachers are generally viewed as the sources of gnosis; techniques are seen as infused with the consciousness.⁴² But in the end and from within teachers are meant to function simply as catalysts. Instead of passing on some "content" they serve to facilitate an environment within which realisation takes place by itself.⁴³ If viewed only from outside it can only appear as though teachers and techniques are conditioning agents. Seen from within, especially as "higher" states are reached, the outer forms of mysticism are simply passageways to something else, something beyond time and space.

Secondly it is worth pausing to consider the sense in which I am speaking of an "evolving consciousness". In this history I am suggesting that there has been a development of awareness within and through the organisation. Yet the centre point of the mystical lies in a consciousness which is, by all internal accounts, beyond the coordinates of time and space. I need to be explicit as to what I mean by "consciousness" and precise in identifying what "evolves".

Within the academic literature on mysticism there have been extended arguments as to whether there is or can be a consciousness beyond culture and history. Some employ rational arguments to assert that no such consciousness can exist. They generally also imply that mystical claims to this

something, you will not see it even if it is in front of you. (in *Tales of Power*, NY, 1974, p.16).

⁴²Alan Watts (*The Way of Zen*, NY, 1957, p.104) comments that Zen masters often found themselves training young boys in ordinary social discipline prior to Zen training proper. More generally there are conditioning forces working through the social habits, beliefs, and practices of mystics. However, and right to my point, Arthur Diekman argues that mystical techniques function to 'decondition' ("Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience", in Charles Tart ed. *Altered States of Consciousness*, NY, p.39)

⁴³For a lucid statement, clarifying the principles of transmission, see Chogyam Trungpa, *Meditation in Action*, Berkeley, 1969, p.30-35.

effect are irrational.⁴⁴ Others who either claim to experience or sympathise with the mystical position also use intellectual arguments to substantiate it.⁴⁵ In my view both positions are futile and on this fundamental issue no argument can either prove or disprove the validity or reality of the core experience.

Although I will not elaborate, my point is as follows. Mystics emphasise that gnosis only arises through direct inner apprehension.⁴⁶ If so then no external (even abstract) manifestations (descriptions, emotions, behaviour) can be fully identified with the core experience. To argue against this logic on intellectual grounds is to exclude the core experience on an *a priori* basis. On the other hand such claims cannot be taken as givens. What we can do is accept and report *what the claim is*. This does not imply endorsing it, but means in this context we leave aside arguments about the ontological status of mystical experience.

In taking this position I am agreeing with William James, who also argued that in rational terms the mystical position is "inviolable".⁴⁷ The fact that I also agree with Eliade's opinion that there *is* mystical experience beyond culture and history is a different matter altogether.⁴⁸ In the first case I am making an argument; in the second simply being explicit about a personal viewpoint.

I am not arguing the core consciousness of mysticism evolves. Change occurs only in the *forms* and *contours* of mystical expression. Consciousness

⁴⁴Steven Katz does so implicitly when he states, as a premise, that "there are no pure (i.e. unmediated) experiences". Since he takes this as a premise within an argument, in philosophical terms, about the unity of mystical experience (which he naturally denies), the premise is striking. (in Steven Katz ed. *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis*, NY, 1978, p.26) The whole book is directed at establishing, on intellectual grounds, that the putative unity of mystical experience is impossible. The more general association of mysticism with irrationality is by no means dead. In the Indonesian context see Ruth McVey's review of Sutherland in the *ASAA Review* V2 N3; also see the book by Alan Sievers, *The Mystical World of Indonesia*, Baltimore, 1974.

⁴⁵The argument for unity is made by students such as James, Underhill and many others, though not all of them claim to back belief with argument. One who does is Frithjof Schuon, *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*, NY, 1978 (1948).

⁴⁶This feature of mysticism is adequately acknowledged by most writers, though I believe the implication I am drawing from it is not. For examples see Ben-Ami Scharfstein, *Mystical Experience*, Baltimore, 1973, pl-4; Staal, *Op.Cit.*, p.125.

⁴⁷James, *Op.Cit.*, p.324.

⁴⁸M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, NY, 1964, p.xviii: " ... any cultural moment whatever can provide the fullest revelation of the sacred to which the human condition is capable of acceding."

includes not only the core experience, but also the ordinary sense of the word--the range of states of awareness within everyday life and in altered contexts. In this sense use of the term 'consciousness' is no different from that of the term 'culture'--either refers to a diverse range of phenomena. It would be possible to exhaustively explore terms such as consciousness, but it is enough here to use it in an everyday sense as long as it is understood I do not use it only in special reference to the core experience. Even "mystical consciousness" does not always refer to the core experience. There are many shades and levels within mystical consciousness, as in everyday consciousness, and it is within those shades that mystical consciousness evolves.

The evolution I am speaking of is framed in terms of dialectical interplay between consciousness, techniques, conceptions, organisation and context. By techniques I mean the practices employed by mystics either as individuals or in groups. Whether meditation, dance, asceticism or ritual these are seen as mechanisms which directly affect individual consciousness. "Conceptions" refers to the cultural dimension of ideas--whether intellectual, philosophical, doctrinal or dogmatic. This ideological sphere is both a framework which rationalises practice and a mold which may both reflect and shape experience. In speaking of organisation I mean the social structure and patterns of interaction within particular traditions or movements, the observable dimension of behaviour and action. By context I am generally referring to the setting beyond a specific movement. This context includes the cultural world as well as the social and political setting of mystical practices.

Although each of these terms are drawn from everyday language, I take the time to clarify them as a framework for presentation of the Sumarah case. I am not attempting to exhaust analysis of technique or philosophy nor aiming to focus exclusively, as a political scientist might, on the interaction between organisation and context. Instead focus here lies on the *configuration of relationships between levels*, on the internal dynamics of a mystical movement. Understanding those does require awareness of context, but context is only relevant as it affects internal history. Despite this caveat I do not present purely descriptive micro-history, the pattern of interactions I draw attention to contribute to understanding the wider relationship of consciousness, culture and society.

My philosophical position should be explicit, although I cannot develop it fully, as it underlies interpretation of interactions in the thesis.⁴⁹ It is unnecessary to engage in arguments as to which level (e.g. political, social, experiential, etc.) 'determine' the course of events. I share ground with monists here. Mystics are not generally idealists, though it is often assumed they are.

⁴⁹For elaboration, even if as a synopsis, of my position see my "Mysticism: the Atomic Level of Social Science", *WAIT Gazette* V 12 N 3 (1979).

Their position (and mine) is that at the ground level there is a unity of being which obliterates distinctions such as that between material and spiritual. This relationship is fundamentally the same as that between mass and energy are comprehended within physics.⁵⁰ We cannot rigidly or absolutely distinguish them; they are transformations of each other and are only comprehended in dialectical relationship. I am not arguing causality, at least in teleological terms, but view the subject in holistic and dialectical terms.

This position implies there is no need to attempt to explain events according to the logic of one structural level. Instead I focus on clarifying the pattern of relationship between levels--in this case between consciousness, techniques, conceptions, organisation, and context. The framework of debate within the social sciences between idealistic and materialistic schools is rooted in dualism. Arguments generally reflect reification, particular levels are attributed with 'autonomous' existence and others explained in terms of them. Causal sequences have a place within the relative context of relationships between specific structures, but the overriding controversy between materialistic and idealistic schools is irrelevant. Even when attention and emphasis falls more heavily on some dimensions than others, that need not be tied to teleological explanation, the interplay of structures is a dance rather than a march.

field experience and research

Although the basic pattern of my analysis had begun to take shape before research began, the logic of relationships within the evolution of Sumarah emerged through the research experience. My preoccupations did direct me toward particular aspects of mysticism and they helped determine emphasis within presentation of the case, but the logic of informants appears here on its own terms. Prior to encounter with Sumarah I was already especially concerned with understanding the relationship between consciousness, culture, and society and looking for movements which emphasised practice (and consciousness) in a way that allows us to relate to it without necessarily sharing cultural givens.

There is no doubt subjective biases guided me toward Sumarah as a subject, especially since the basis of selection was compatibility with its practice. However this has not meant that in viewing the subject I filter material through particular 'beliefs' and assumptions. On the contrary. The movement was compatible precisely because it required no prior beliefs or

⁵⁰See Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, Fontana, 1976; Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy* NY, 1962; Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*, Rider Hutchinson, 1979.

statements of commitment.⁵¹ Its practice was open, based only on commitment to internal self criticism and growth. So although this study has been shaped by personal and subjective factors, those have not implied prior interpretive frameworks.

The interpretive framework emerged through research process. In the early stages of involvement with Sumarah I avoided systematic research. I was, of course, aware of (and open about) the fact I would be writing a thesis. However for roughly a year and a half I did not let that fact dictate the pattern of my activities. Instead I followed the practice and came to know the movement as others within it do. I did keep a journal, a record of conversations, meditation sessions, and reflections. Gradually entries became less personal and more directed and descriptive. Within it I frequently explored ways of organising material and there was a constant interplay between my thoughts and Sumarah material.

In notes I have referred to documentary sources wherever possible--they can be confirmed more easily than information through informants. I began to use written sources actively only after leaving Java. At that point I used them as a complement to and check on information and images which had become clear through conversation. Most of the details presented here had been brought to my attention in conversation, though I provide written references insofar as possible. During conversations I actively expressed my understanding of events and solicited corrective feedback. In this the structure and logic of interpretation, as well as the material, result from the dialectic between my preoccupations and images and those of Sumarah.

Interactions were always informal, I rarely took notes and never used a taperecorder. I would sometimes jot down names, dates, or details during a conversation, then, following each meeting, note the topics of conversation in order. Within several days I would use these scratch notes as a basis for reconstructing conversation in my journal. Meditation practice had direct relevance to both reception of information and accuracy of recall. Sumarah practice is directed toward continual exercise of awareness within everyday life, toward unfiltered receptivity. In my case capacity to receive and register was exercised continually through service as an interpreter. In interpreting I was pushed, by circumstances I did not chose, to activate meditation *within* conversation. That carried over into interactions which resulted in both the material and images presented here.⁵²

⁵¹This is, in the least, a report of my experience; I believe that in fact this is also a general principle within mysticism, though it is not always so in 'mystical groups'.

⁵²This relationship between participation and observation, within mysticism, is in striking contrast to Geertz's position about the possibilities within study of religion (*Op.Cit.*, pp.108-111).

Connection between practice and research has also been fundamental to comprehension of dynamics within Sumarah history. Although others will have no difficulty accepting that participation opens special access to information, they may question the deployment of 'mystical logic' within interpretation. First I suggest that in its interpretive dimension there is descriptive value to this study--it presents *perspectives* as well as material which would not have otherwise been available. More crucially experience of Sumarah practice has been a foundation for insight into larger patterns of change. I could not have begun to grasp either the pattern or meaning of transformations within Sumarah without having experienced its practice.

There have been restrictions arising from this personal involvement, though absolutely none have been imposed on me by Sumarah. The restrictions reflect my own commitment to accept the etiquette implied by my situation as a 'foreign guest' dealing with friends. I saw it as appropriate to 'knock on doors', but not to force entry. This limited the information I acquired on sensitive issues. I did express interest and ask questions, but I did not probe for or use devious means to acquire information which was not offered freely. Limits of this sort are more than compensated for by the added wealth of material which was made available freely.

While the subject of my study is the history of one case, exploration is framed by issues which arise within mystical movements generally. In addition to presenting a sequence of phases, each chapter concentrates on a theme. My interests helped determine focus, but each theme is also critical within the Sumarah perspective on itself. Nevertheless, as I attempt to cast light on wider issues thematic emphasis often takes precedence over narrative and this is not a balanced distillation of Sumarah history. The analytical framework influenced presentation. I aim to interpret the relationship between consciousness, technique, conception, organisation, and context, and thus to cover each dimension within each phase of Sumarah. So in addition to the narrative and thematic aspects of the case study, each chapter is geared toward a concluding analysis.

I will focus on two trajectories within Sumarah: increasing organisation and 'spiritual democratisation'. In treating the origins of the movement I am especially concerned with the paradox implied by a claim to 'new' revelation expressed in traditional imagery. Next focus is on how individual experience of a gnosis, which must be 'direct', became the basis for a following. In dealing with the genesis of a large scale movement, I focus on the relationship between inner quest for spiritual liberation and revolutionary action. In exploring the basis of formal organisation I aim to identify how individual practice relates to collective experience. With organisation came a tendency toward cultism, a focus on personality counter to Sumarah ideals. Effort to 'transcend' cultist patterns is another thematic focus. Finally, dealing with

recent developments, I explore Sumarah effort to comprehend practices in terms which are not restricted by group or cultural boundaries.

In concluding my prime target is to clarify the significance of transformations. Within each spiritual phase and organisational period there have been distinct and interrelated changes in consciousness, technique, conception, organisation, and context. Interpreting the precision of parallelism I argue that the nature of Sumarah practice helps explain why internal structuring has altered in the way it has. Within each phase group structures changed in direct relation to shifts in the national setting and the evolution of consciousness within the group itself. This responsiveness reflects a degree of practical commitment to consciousness which cannot be defined by forms which is directly and fundamentally related to what mysticism is in essence. With these general comments as background, I turn to examination of crucial transitions within its history.

chapter 2

EXPERIENTIAL ORIGINS

If the seeds of Sumarah were sown during the last years of Dutch rule, they germinated under the Japanese occupation and sprouts appeared during revolutionary struggle. The movement took shape in the Parliamentary period, matured through the strains of Guided Democracy and has bore fruit under the New Order. Every phase of development has been profoundly linked to national process and within each phase Sumarah spokesmen have presented its experience as a microcosm of that process.⁵³ In the exploration undertaken here my aim is to focus on points of transformation which illustrate the nature of the interplay between spiritual experiences and their social context. As I have this specific purpose in mind I stress that this treatment is not a balanced survey.

The first natural focus falls on the period from conception to birth, on the dynamics through which the experiences of one man became the foundation of a movement. In Sumarah this is to speak of the period up to 1937. By that point the founder had experienced his initial revelation and realised the necessity of sharing it with others. During the decade from 1935 to 1945 a nucleus of several hundred founding members emerged and the roots of Sumarah spread through the Javanese heartland. Most of founders were born around the turn of the century and reached maturity just as Indonesian nationalism did.

During this decade the growth of Sumarah was slow, reflecting the dampening atmosphere of Dutch and Japanese domination. After 1945 Sumarah experienced a massive and almost instant influx of several thousand young people belonging to the revolutionary generation. As a result it was transformed not only in composition, but also in technique and structure. So in this chapter my focus lies on the period of gestation during which Sumarah began to crystallise as a style of spiritual practice, but before it emerged as a movement and became an organisation.

⁵³This view is clearly embodied in Sujadi, "Sejarah Pagujuban Sumarah", Ponorogo, March 1958; in Surono, "Latihan Pamong C dan D di Sawodjadjar", January 1959 (in Suwondo ed. *Himpunan Wewarah Pagujuban Sumarah* Vol V, p.171-172); and in Arymurthy, "On Guidance in Sumarah", September 1973 (in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*, Perth, 1977, pp.24-26).

Focusing on the origins of any new mystical movement draws attention forcefully to interface between experience of void and the conceptions and practices which relate to it. It is at this point that sensitivity to the nature of the core experience is most critical to analysis. Arguments or assumptions about the truth qualities of the experience are neither legitimate nor necessary. We cannot establish whether it was or was not a "core experience"; we can deal with the nature of the interactions among founders, exploring how they viewed relationship between "forms and essence". In the first place I aim to clarify how old forms came to be seen as agents of a new, authoritative, and universal revelation; in the second place to suggest a movement emerged only when the founder felt it was not his ego, but the absolute, that 'taught'. At that point he became a new focus for the transmission of mystical gnosis. Truly mystical experiences transcend the roots which give them form. Recognition of authenticity within the mystical is possible when direct experiences in the present lead to new awareness of principles which underlie and provide a basis for practices maintained within tradition.

Sukinohartono's background

The threads of Javanese spiritual evolution are revealed in microcosm within Sumarah as a movement and in Sukinohartono as a man. Sukino was born into village culture, educated in the environs of the court, trained within syncretic sects, and dedicated to national independence. The Javanese threads of animistic, Indic, and Islamic tradition each left their mark before the revelation, at the midpoint of his life, which led to Sumarah.

Sukino was born on December 27 1897 and lived in and around the court city of Yogyakarta until his death on March 27 1971. He was born in the village of Semanu, in the teak forested chalk hills of the Gunungkidul region. His first dozen years were spent in the normal routine of village life--caring for his siblings, taking the water buffalo out grazing, and working in the fields. Although for a time his father was a deputy village head (*kamitua*), the family was not well off. After three years of village schooling he moved to Yogya in 1914 to continue studies. For several years he earned room and board by helping his host with housework (*ngenger*) and in 1916 he passed the teacher's examination (*kwekeling*) and set out to look for work.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Biographical information on Sukino has been drawn from the DPP, *Sejarah Perkembangan Paguyuban Sumarah*, Jakarta, 1974, pp.3-30. Assessment of Sukino's status within Javanese society, especially of the situation implied by the term "ngenger", is facilitated by reference to Heather Sutherland's, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, Hong Kong, 1979, pp.21-

During the following year he worked as a clerk in the Demak Ijo sugar factory near Yogya. Then for two years he taught at a school subsidised by the Pakualaman, the lesser of the two Yogya courts, in the village of Plered. At this point he was also supporting his parents, who had lost their position. Then in 1919 Sukino became a tax clerk (*mantri pamicis*) within the main court of Yogya. He continued in this position until near his retirement in 1946, though his last several working years were spent with the newly formed National Bank (Bank Negara Indonesia). Sukino married in 1920 and raised eight sons and three daughters. He lived right up to his death in the neighbourhood (*kampong*) of Wirobrajan, several kilometers west of the *kraton*. Although his roots were near the top rungs of village society, his position as a clerk in the *kraton* placed him in the lowest echelons of the traditional Javanese elite, of the *priyayi* group.

Neither Sukino nor his followers relate the growth of his spiritual interest to specific or traumatic occasions within his career or family life. Although his income was never high, it appears to have been stable. One child did die young, a normal occurrence in Java, and another has always seemed unstable, but nothing within family life generated special pressure. Javanese are typically quite willing to relate the growth of mystical interest to traumas rising from poverty, sickness, or conflict; absence of emphasis on them in Sukino's case is fair indication that such events were not of primary importance.⁵⁵ In any case it is easy to understand the origins of Sukino's spiritual quest as a reflection of the ethos and environment he lived in.

During his youth in the villages of Gunungkidul he breathed an atmosphere of magic--the region is famous throughout Java for the intensity of its Javanism, as a centre of belief in Nyai Loro Kidul. As a member, however marginally, of the *kraton* hierarchy Sukino entered a world in which cult practices and the occult remained the norm, not a departure from it. Sukino's experience of youth involved practice of *pencak-silat*, popular Javanese martial arts (*kadigdayan*) often involving automatic movement rising from inner psychic power (*kanuragan*). He dabbled, as young Javanese still do, with techniques designed to awaken clairvoyance (*kawaskitan*). He also experienced a number of particularly powerful dreams, though it was only later that he came to see

26, 31-34. As a child of village "elite" culture, Sukino was apprenticed to and dependent on the lowest rungs of Yogyanese *priyayi* hierarchy.

⁵⁵Many Sumarah members did not hesitate to explain their entry into the organisation as a response to personal trauma or illness. Suryopramono (interview in Surabaya, August 1973) mentioned not only that it accounted for his entry, but also that this typified entry in phase one. The official history, henceforth referred to as simply DPP, *Sejarah* acknowledges the prominence of healing practices in the first phase (pp.22,55).

them as foreshadowing of the responsibilities he was to have.⁵⁶ There is no doubt that in his general education to "being" Javanese, mysticism was part of the picture from birth.

If Sukino showed an immediate interest in the spiritual dimensions of the culture he grew into, in adulthood he entered intensely into the cult practices of Yogya. In his youth he had already become conscious of powers beyond the mind, but entry into disciplined practices came after he had settled into the parallel disciplines of career and family. Two distinct cult involvements helped shape the revelation which led to Sumarah. The first was a decade of commitment to Hardopusoro; the second a brief encounter with Subud. Each involvement both influenced the textures of his later expression and introduced him to fellow seekers who later joined Sumarah. There is no doubt that these involvements were formative; there is often confusion as to how such formative experience relates to "revelation". That confusion demands clarification if the source of Sumarah is to be clear.

Hardopusoro, which still exists, was among the most influential sects of the late colonial era. Its Java-wide membership, mainly *priyayi*, included the father and uncle of the late President Sukarno along with the future founders of half-a-dozen of the leading contemporary sects (most notably Pangestu and Sumarah). To some extent, it functioned as an esoteric and Javanist adjunct to the Theosophical Society; a large group of *priyayi* belonged to both.⁵⁷ In the Theosophical Society they had the rare chance to interact on the basis of equality with Europeans who shared spiritual interests; in Hardopusoro they had a slightly modernised form for Javanist practices.

Kusumowidjito, the founder of Hardopusoro, was originally a village head from the district of Purworejo. In the 1880's he left his family and fled the village in order to avoid prosecution for abuse of tax funds. Over the next

⁵⁶Sukino, "Sedjarah tjekakan bibit wontenipun pagujuban Sumarah", and DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.6-7.

⁵⁷Hardopusoro is mentioned briefly in Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java*, Singapore, 1973, pp.130 & 139. A recent Pakem talk described its current practices: Prawirobroto, "Kawruh Kasunjatan Gaib Hardopusoro", Purworedjo, 1970. Histories of Pangestu (Reksodipuro, *Sedjarahipun Reringkesan R. Soenarto Mertowardojo*, Surakarta, 1971 and Hoesodo, *Dwi-Windu Pangestu*, 1967) do not mention any connection with Hardopusoro. However, the connection was emphasised during interviews with Drs. Warsito in Magelang, June 1973. Warsito, then a member of Pangestu and Sumarah, grew up in a Hardopusoro family--both his grandfather and father had led the movement in East Java (in Malang and Madiun).

several decades he wandered the forests of East Java, spending long periods fasting and meditating. No particular teachers are credited with leading him, but eventually he experienced a revelation (*wahyu*) and began to acquire a following. Official memory of his offense must have faded, because he began to surface in towns. In 1907 he and his followers were forced to leave Banyuwangi, apparently because the Dutch feared revolt. He retreated for some time into the forests of the rugged mountains between Malang and Kediri, then surfaced publicly again as his following grew. In 1913 he addressed the Theosophical Society in Semarang and a printed version of that talk became one of the very few public statements of his practice.⁵⁸

For the most part his teachings remained arcane and inaccessible. Most Hardopusoro meetings were carried out secretly, due to the intensity of Dutch suspicion of all sect activities. Most often meetings were held covertly while ordinary *slametan* provided a pretext for gathering.⁵⁹ Internally the teachings were as difficult to follow as the meetings would have been to find. The teachings (*wiridan*) were forbidden to non-initiates and any debate about them was ruled out. Only the formalised interpretations (*tafsiran*) were open to questioning. The core teachings were never written, but transmitted orally during midnight meetings where Pak Kusumowidjito presented them while dressed in a white robe. During each session he would go through all seven levels of initiation. As he completed the recitation of each level of the *wiridan*, members who had only been initiated up to that level would leave. In a single session only those who had received all seven initiations would stay through to the end.

Progression within the initiation system depended both on memorisation of the appropriate *wirid* and practice of specific techniques geared to each level. The teachings have been described as being extremely difficult--dense with paradox, laden with complex symbolism, and beyond the grasp of logic. Techniques at each level of initiation were geared to awaken specific occult powers associated with the primary occult centres in the body. The main technique used was *kungkum*, meditation with mantra as the practitioner sat immersed to the neck in the waters of sacred springs or at the confluence of two streams. Gradually the stringency of requirements relaxed, until finally it became sufficient to meditate with the feet in a bowl of water.⁶⁰ Although

⁵⁸This general description of Hardopusoro was duplicated in interviews with Warsito (see above note) and Martosuwignio in Yogyakarta, June 1973.

⁵⁹Interview with Dr. Warsito, Magelang, October, 1973.

⁶⁰As above. It cannot automatically be assumed that this evolution meant degradation. Although that is a possibility, it is also conceivable that the change brought increasing emphasis on inner experience at the expense of ritual. Currently other groups also practice modified forms of *kungkum*. Followers of Hardjanto, in Solo, often practice at home in tubs when it is inconvenient to visit power points.

magical powers were an essential element of achievement at each level of initiation, the final aim of practice was *moksa*--total dissolution of every physical and psychic element of the self.

After entering Hardopusoro in 1923, Sukino progressed rapidly through the seven levels of initiation and devoted much of his energy to the practice. It was only gradually, after 1930, that he began to withdraw from the organisation. As he did, his practice took a more thoroughly personal and introspective turn. In describing his withdrawal from Hardopusoro, Sukino stressed the overwhelming feelings of shame and sin (*dosa*) which grew within him after involvement with that group led him to doubt the existence of God.⁶¹ His quest then began to centre on continuous practice of surrender (*sujud*) during every free period available. Set practices gave way to a more purely individual search which was directed increasingly by spontaneous inner guidance, by forces he felt within himself rather than instructions from others.

At the same time his exploration of the cult world in Yogya expanded. Like the wandering *santri* of the early Mataram period, as within the contemporary *kebatinan* world, spiritual quest was not restricted by group membership. For Sukino and those like him in Java, group membership is not usually exclusive of contact with other practices. Sukino joined in the meetings of numerous sects during the early thirties, seeking out new gurus and teachings wherever they became available. Given the preoccupation he had begun to feel with belief in God, it is not surprising that his inclinations led him from the Indic toward the Islamic pole of mystical practice. Hardopusoro clearly embodied Indian conceptions and practices; Subud, the next practice Sukino touched, participates fully in the Islamic. Both remain Javanist and neither formally identifies with a world religion, but the contrasting emphasis is striking.

Subud is known to the world - it has been the only Javanese movement to go international on a large scale. Although originating from Semarang and Yogya, during the period since 1955 its headquarters have been at Cilandak, on the southern outskirts of Jakarta. Currently, Subud has branches in roughly eighty countries as well as a substantial Indonesia wide membership.⁶² The

⁶¹Sukino, "Sejarah tjekakan...", pp.4-5. This wording, including use of the word "dosa", is in the original Javanese (*doso*). In his own wording Sukino emphasised his sense of sin and failings, his sense that his actions had been bad ("awon"). These terms clearly indicate the depth of dualistic and Islamic influence on his sense of self.

⁶²Even Kertohardjo, who works for the Department of Religion, does not give statistics in his lengthy discussion of Subud (in *Agama dan Aliran Kebathinan*, Jakarta, 1972). Subud is generally assumed to be one of the three largest groups, even in terms of its purely domestic membership,

movement began to spread internationally in the fifties, especially after its establishment in Britain in 1957. It drew considerable attention from the press during its early period of international expansion.⁶³ Prior to its global diffusion, however, Subud remained small and relatively unknown even within Java.

Its origins are dated to the revelation received by Muhammed Subuh in 1932. Although Pak Subuh had already experienced an intense spiritual awakening and cleansing during the three years from 1925 to 1928, it was in 1932 that he received his clear commission to transmit the Subud 'contact'.⁶⁴ Prior to this revelation Pak Subuh had sought out numerous spritual teachers, but they repeatedly informed him that his teaching would come direct from God, rather than through them. His most significant involvement appears to have been with the Nakshabandi Seh Abdurrahman, from the Blora region. Seh Abdurrahman is said to have refused Muhammed Subuh the normal initiation and teachings, saying "You are not of our kin - it is not meet that I should teach you".⁶⁵ Nevertheless, Pak Subuh did continue his contact with the group for some time. In fact his own first follower, Wignosupartono, had been the senior pupil of the Sufi Seh.⁶⁶ In any event, Pak Subuh stresses that his contact came straight from God, that it was not the result of any prior training, teaching, or practice.

Subud practice began when Pak Subuh started to transmit it to others in 1932. The full name of the organization, which was formed in 1947, is Susila Budhi Dharma, but it is commonly known simply as Subud. Subud practice begins with a trial preriod, as a test of the seriousness of prospective members. Then there is an initiation, termed 'opening', in which Pak Subuh or a 'helper' is witness to the establishment of the contact in the initiate. The helpers are people who have received the contact and become aware of its workings. Subsequent practice is known simply as '*latihan*', which means exercise or practice. Subud members are supposed to experience the *latihan* two or three times each week, but otherwise to lead ordinary social lives.

ASong with Pangestu and Sapto Darmo, it is spoken of as having a membership of approximately 100,000.

⁶³For a description of Subud's international expansion, see Bennett, *Concerning Subud*, London, 1958, pp 50-70 and Rofe, *The Path of Subud*, London, 1959.

⁶⁴Bennett, *Concerning Subud*, pp 53-55.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p 56. This Sufi connection is also mentioned in Kertorahardjo, *Agama dan Aliran Kebathinan*, Jakarta, 1972, p 226.

⁶⁶Bennet, *Concerning Subud*, p 56; Sujadi, "Sejarah Pagujuban Sumarah", Ponorogo, March 1958, pp 1-2.

Although Subud practice is not open to outsiders, its nature is well known.⁶⁷ The key is relaxation and total surrender to God's will, the force touched is divine, and the experiences are interpreted as releasing of karmic blocks and resistance, most members experience outward and automatic movement or speech, as well as inward cleansing. Because these manifestations are seen as purifying, this is related to the fact that typically their vigor decreases over time. At the same time informants suggest that the intensity of the contact is gradually experienced on a more continuous basis.⁶⁸

The Islamic cast to Subud is revealed in several ways. A large number of Western followers do convert to Islam, though there is no sense in which the practice itself depends on religious affiliation.⁶⁹ The terminology and expression of Subud practice does conform closely to those of Javanese Sufi tradition. Although Subud is just a practice, having no scripture or dogma, many of Pak Subuh's talks and writings have been published. His major book, *Susila Budhi Dharma*, was written in the late forties just after the group adopted formal organization. There is a clear emphasis within it on the seven planes of existence and consciousness known within Sufi tradition--ranging from mineral, vegetable, animal, human, perfected, compassionate, to God. Although Pak Subuh's experience of revelation could be termed direct; the terminology, cosmology, and even certain features of practice are squarely in the line of Sufi expression.⁷⁰

Sukino came into contact with Pak Subuh during the earliest years of Subud development. There are various interpretations of their relationship, though few arguments of fact. Pak Subuh relates that after his experience of 1932 he began to share it with other advanced mystics, demonstrating as he puts it that the direct power and consciousness activated through his contact transcended the normal practices of the day.⁷¹ Although Pak Subuh lived in Semarang during the thirties his first pupil, Wignosupartono, lived in Yogya. He became the center of a small group including Prawirodisastra, Sumantri (another ex-pupil of Seh Abdurrahman), Sudarto, and by 1934 Sukino,

⁶⁷For the most accessible description (and one which Subud members have found sympathetic) see Jacob Needleman, *The New Religions*, NY, 1970, pp 103-128.

⁶⁸Interview with Sudarto, Cilandak, June 1972.

⁶⁹Bennett, *Op Cit.*, pp 175-179.

⁷⁰Although this main source of Subud teaching is not available to outsiders, a lengthy summary and commentary on it is found in H. Rofe, *Reflections on Subud*, Tokyo, 1960. The emphasis on the seven realms is clear in all sources, and in fact in the official Subud symbol (which consists of seven concentric circles cut by seven lines).

⁷¹H. Rofe, *The Path of Subud*, London, 1959, p 83.

Suhardo, and a few of their long-time friends.⁷² At this point Subud practice was in no sense crystallised, there was no formal organization. Those involved were close to the same age and standing in mystical practice and likely related more as friends and contemporaries than as masters and disciples.

Sukino and Suhardo, his close associate since they both joined Hardopusoro in 1923, were in a period of extensive exploration of cult practices. When Wignosupartono arrived in Yogya he rapidly acquired a reputation as a healer (*dukun sakti*) and it became known that his powers came from a profound and direct spiritual practice (*ngelmu*).⁷³ Consequently Sukino and Suhardo visited and expressed openness to exploration of the practice. Suhardo later described the practice they were introduced to as a "total surrender of both body and spirit to the will of God." Neither he nor Sukino suggest that there was anything special to differentiate it from what they later called Sumarah.⁷⁴ The friends became closely associated with this early nucleus of what became Subud, as in 1935 Muhammed Subuh specifically asked Sukino and Prawirodisastra to arrange a rented house for him in Yogya.⁷⁵

The only clear hints into reasons for the subsequent split and separate evolution of Subud and Sumarah, suggest that there may have been a difference in attitude toward healing practices. Within Subud healing has remained a central by-product of the *latihan* from the earliest days to the present.⁷⁶ Suhardo states that Wignosupartono's impact in Yogya resulted from

⁷²This list of individuals, and the image of their relationship I am presenting here, is my own effort to synthesize separate pieces of information acquired through conversation with Sudarto in Cilandaklin June 1972; through Sujadi, "Sejarah Pagujuban Sumara", pp 2-3; and through Sukino, "Sejarah tjekakan..", pp 14-18; and Sukino's talk recorded in Suwondo ed., *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol IV, pp 58-61.

⁷³Suhardo, "Sejarah Riwayat Hidup Bapak Soehardo", Yogya, 1973, p 10.

⁷⁴This appears clearest in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p 51. At the point when Sukino and Suhardo agreed to separate from Wignosupartono, they described doing so because of the clarity of their own inner experience, not because of any particular difference in the nature of the practice. In Suhardo, "Sejarah Riwayat ..." p 10, he uses the word "sumarah" to describe Subud practice. In conversation Suhardo does stress that he felt Subud began to emphasize powers, personality, and healing, suggesting that in his opinion the practice became mixed with material motives (conversation in Yogyakarta, July 1970, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol IV, opp 58-61.

⁷⁵Sukino, in Suwondo., *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol IV, p 254.

⁷⁶In fact healing is primary feature of Subud's public image in Java, often also a source of difficulty. The Temanngun Subud branch experienced difficulty in 1970, the Madiun branch in 1973. In both instances local leaders attracted unfavorable official attention due to emphasis on their healing powers - and the fact that apparently they began accepting payment. Of

his reputation as a healer. A Sumarah history produced in Ponorogo is even more explicit: it labels Wignosupartono's practice as a "kyai system". The implication is that there was strong emphasis within it on powers and deference to personality, both built into the traditional Javanese Sufi system. The Ponorogo document also states that Sukino received only the initiation and no further guidance or instruction from Wignosupartono. Instead, the latter is said to have informed Sukino that he was not Sukino's spiritual father, that his teachings would come direct from God.⁷⁷

The hint provided into the later separate development of Subud and Sumarah comes through the stress on the "kyai system." After Sukino's revelation in 1935, and in the first steps toward definition of Sumarah practice, there was insistence Sumarah would *not* be in the style of traditional cults.⁷⁸ Although Sumarah founders made no effort to distinguish the core of their practice from Subud's, there is reason to suspect contacts in personal style and emphasis from the beginning. Despite differences, the two movements remain close cousins within the larger *kebatinan* family. They share stress on practice rather than teachings; on surrender to God; and on the reality of experiences which are transmitted and witnessed. Differences of style help explain separation, but cannot resolve the fundamental issue of separate claims to authority.

The fundamental issue lies in separate claims to revelation. The close association between Muhammed Subuh and Sukino, especially the fact that Sukino experienced Pak Subuh's "contact" prior to his own revelation, has resulted in some awkwardness between the two movements. Subud has tended to view Sumarah as a splinter group without separate revelation. The issue would have been exacerbated by the much more rapid early growth of Sumarah. In 1951 Subud remained a nucleus of around fifty people, by that point Sumarah was a Java-wide organisation of several thousand.⁷⁹ Since then Subud has become a diversified, multi-purpose, and mainly internationally geared organisation; Sumarah has stabilised, remained simply a meditation group, and continued as a mainly Javanese entity.

Since the issue is important, it deserves probing in depth. In 1953 Pak Subuh sent a letter to Husein Rofe clarifying his position:

course the initial spread of Subud was also connected to the miraculous recovery of Eva Bartok through her contact with Pak Subuh in England.

⁷⁷Sujadi, "Sejarah Pagujian Sumarah", p 2.

⁷⁸See DPP, *Sejarah*, pp 50-52 and pp 175-176 in the following chapter.

⁷⁹H. Rofe, *The Path of Subud*, London, 1959, p.46. Rofe gives a relatively clear picture of the scope of Subud at the time he first came into contact with it in 1951.

With reference to the person whose training resembles Subud, and who claims to be a pupil of Sukinohartono, this is correct. Sukinohartono was formerly a pupil of Prawirodisastra, who lived in Djogjakarta, now deceased. He in turn was a pupil of Wignosupartono, still living in Djogjakarta.

The latter obtained this contact from me in 1932, when I was still resident in Semarang, just after I had received the revelation from the Almighty. Wignosupartono then, was the first person whom I ever trained or instructed. He has many pupils in Djogjakarta ...

To return to Sukinohartono, Prawirodisastra mentioned before his death that this pupil of his had not long been studying, and that his inner state was not very advanced. His commentaries on the Seven Heavens and such matters could have been obtained either from the stories of the Nine Sages, or from a book I myself wrote in 1934, called *Djatimakna*, or 'True Facts'. All commentaries required for spiritual matters are to be found in that book.

...Sukinohartono ... eventually established his own movement with the name of Sumarah (surrender). Its methods remain those I use in Subud. They cannot deny that they have not yet obtained a system of their own, that is to say, they have not themselves been vouchsafed a Divine revelation ...⁸⁰

Much later however, during Pak Subuh's visit to Perth in February 1978, I enquired about the connection through the local organisation. In response Pak Subuh said that there had been no direct connection between the origins of Subud and Sumarah.

Sukino, Suhardo, and other Sumarah sources do not differ with Pak Subuh on factual points--they make clear Sukino had experienced the Subud contact and been involved with Wignosupartono prior to his revelation.⁸¹ Sumarah sources do differ in assessment of Sukino's revelation. For them it is clear that whatever prior experiences Sukino had, the source for his claim to authority came 'direct from God through revelation'. In effect they make the same claim Pak Subuh did about his prior mystical contacts: that all prior exposure had no causal relation to the experience of revelation.

This issue, in precisely this form, is a central theme not only within all *kebatinan*, but also in other traditions. Pangestu, whose founders had been influenced by Hardopusoro and currents centering in the Mangkunegaran court,

⁸⁰This letter is reprinted in full in an appendix to H. Rofe's, *Reflections on Subud*, Tokyo, 1960, pp.173-174. On p.118 Rofe clarifies that his query arose as a result of encounter with a Sumarah group in Palembang which was led by an army sergeant named Abdul Gani. As a result of Pak Subuh's clarification, the latter merged his group with Rofe's Subud group.

⁸¹DPP, *Sejarah* pp.41-42.

stresses that its source is revelation (*wahyu*).⁸² Sapto Darmo, despite imagery rooted in Javanism and practices recalling Islam, reiterates constantly that Sri Gotama, its founder, had experienced *no* prior religious training.⁸³ Subud, Sumarah, Sapto Darmo, and other movements like them have all experienced repeated fissures--with former members going out on their own to create new movements. Within Sufi, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions the same hiving off, claims, and counter claims are the norm rather than the exception.⁸⁴

There is paradox on several levels. In every case the images, styles, and practices of new movements are derivative. Yet in Java such movements repeatedly deny spiritual lineage even while affirming continuity with Javanist roots. The puzzle, as with many others in the realm of mysticism, is its own solution. The *forms* of mystical expression *are* derivative. Each movement is insisting that their identity and integrity is *not defined* by those forms but by *direct* experience of union. At the same time such authenticity can only be confirmed through mystical participation in precisely that which is beyond "knowing" in ordinary terms. This assertion of direct, rather than derivative, experience is precisely what defines a movement as mystical.

If this principle is clear, then paradoxically, Pak Subuh's teachers *were* giving him the core of mystical teaching precisely by informing him it would come to him directly. Wignosupartono taught Sukino by telling him the teaching would come from God rather than through him. By the same token, once such awareness comes directly, no reference to prior experience is called for. Experience of revelation does not mean what ordinary observers suppose. Most people, including mystics, confuse "union" and "transcendence" with the annihilation of existing forms. Realisation does not imply changing the forms of expression. Linguistic and cultural forms are not altered by realisation any more than the colour of hair or skin. All forms, including the language of mystical expression, are derivative. What changes is that *in* the experience of realisation there are no divisions, tensions, or blocks which inhibit the flow of energy and consciousness. The universal, insofar as it is perceived, experienced, and

⁸²This was emphasised throughout my contact with Pangestu in Salatiga during 1971 and during meetings with Supandji and his wife in Magelang in June 1973. It is also clear in the description of the origins of Pangestu teachings in Reksodipuro, *Sedjarahipun_Reringkesan ...*, Surakarta, 1971, pp.15-24.

⁸³Interview with Sri Pawenang, Yogya, May 1972.

⁸⁴Sapto Darmo is divided into two main groups, neither being happy with the other. One centres in Yogya, the other in Surabaya. Within Sufism the nature of these tensions are clarified in Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*, Berkeley, 1973, pp.48-78. Some of the tensions in Zen lineage are mentioned in S.J. Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, Boston, 1963, pp.80-87.

expressed, uses all the forms of socialised consciousness associated with the particular and transcendence means 'transmutation', not 'elimination'.

When placed in this light, it should be clear that we can understand Sumarah's evolution as a reflection of historical and social roots. The qualification we bear in mind is that such understanding may help clarify why Sumarah expressed itself through the *forms* it has had; but cannot resolve the claim that the *source* of practice is direct. When members make that claim, they refer to the core, to the experience of the absolute *within* conditioned structures operating in society and history. There is no contradiction in principle between the historical claim that Sumarah is derivative of Javanism, Hardopusoro, and Subud and juxtaposed assertion it arose from a new revelation--the first refers to forms, the second to essence.

The revelation of Sumarah

To speak of Sukino's revelation is to refer to the point when, in his own terms, he began to experience the absolute directly.⁸⁵ From the internal perspective it is at this point that the motivating consciousness, behind expression, finds roots in truths which are beyond ego, experience, or memory. As with others who undergo such experience, Sukino faced intense self-doubt and reservation. Even passing through such internal hurdles, beginning to accept the nature of such realisation, does not automatically make the nature of the consciousness obvious to others. Personal transformation does not always result in teaching. In exploring Sukino's revelatory transformation my attention falls on two things: the nature of the experience itself and the process which gradually led him to share it with others.

Having grown into mystical spirituality as a birthright, Sukino progressed through clear phases prior to revelation. His father's involvement with *kebatinan* and experiences of village magic formed a basis, childhood set him on the track of esoteric knowledge. As a youth, during the time of his teaching years in Plered, he practiced martial arts and experienced the powers they gave. He gave them up when one experience led him to realise that the power and magnetism he had acquired could result in capacity and willingness to kill.⁸⁶ That realisation set him on the quest for peace and gnosis. In adulthood this drew him into years of ascetic and esoteric practice within Hardopusoro. In his terms that 'Indic phase' ended when it brought him to the point of doubting God, doubting the existence of an ultimate. By the thirties he was dedicated to

⁸⁵I must emphasise that at this point the phrasing and interpretation is strictly my own, though I am confident that the thrust of my interpretation is grounded in Sumarah's internal perspectives.

⁸⁶Sukino in DPP, *Perkembangan Panguden Ilmu Sumarah dalam Paguyuban Sumarah*, Jakarta, 1971, Vol.I, p.12 (henceforth simply DPP, *Perkembangan*).

introspective and surrender, practice of opening and submitting. He shared that with others and spent hours of meditation alone, usually in the garden at his home.

Sukino's revelation came not in one flash or time, but in a series of experiences beginning in August 1935 and continuing into 1937. In his own later summary of them, he gives dates for a few, but not all, of the stages he passed through. In the summary which follows I am condensing from the version Sukino related to a Sumarah Congress in the early fifties.⁸⁷ Sukino dealt in succession with: childhood, his path to God, judgement and cleansing, experiences of spiritual realms, prayer for independence, union with God, and compulsions to teach. The same statement continues into discussion of his second, qualitatively different, revelation in 1949, but I will not be referring to that until dealing with the emergence of an organisation in 1950--a process to which it was tied. Sukino described childhood as the source of his mystical interest, saying his father and ancestors had been spiritual so it was natural for him to gravitate that way. He related this to his involvement with assorted movements and to his commitment to independence.⁸⁸

In August 1935 Sukino says he began to experience numerous tests and trials. At that point he began to experience clear inner contact with *Hakiki*. *Hakiki*, often simply "*Hak*", is the term used by Sukino, and others in Sumarah since, to refer to direct contact with God. Suhardo confirms that *Hakiki* in Sumarah usage refers to the same principle others would call *Guru Sejati* (the True Teacher); to what in *wayang* imagery Bima encounters by meeting Dewaruci.⁸⁹ In Western spiritual traditions this has been called variously "the voice of silence", "the still small voice", the "True Self", and many other names. The word comes from the Arabic Sufi term which simply means Truth. Within Sumarah *Hakiki* has remained perhaps the most common, but not the only, term of reference for the principle of direct guidance from God, guidance which only people of spiritual maturity can receive clearly.

⁸⁷The Indonesian translation of Sukino's narration is in DPP, *Perkembangan*, Vol.I, pp.11-24; the Javanese is in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol.IV, pp.248-261.

⁸⁸Sukino, in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol.IV, p.249.

⁸⁹Conversation with Suhardo in Yogyakarta, July 1978 and in Suhardo, *Ceramah Bapak Soehardo Panakawan Paguyuban Sumarah*, Surakarta, 1974, p.9. There are a very large number of short books dealing with the Dewaruci story, which remains a favourite among kebatinan people. For example see Sastroamidjojo, *Dewarutji*, Jakarta, 1967 and Siswoharsojo, *Tafsir Kitab Dewarutji*, Yogyakarta, 1966. This symbolism is also clarified by Mangkunagoro VII, *On the Wayang Kulit ...*, Ithaca, NY, 1957.

So for Sukino, the strength and clarity of his experience of *Hakiki* marked a turning point of great significance. Until August of 1935 he had looked to books, teachers, and authority of other sorts for spiritual knowledge. At this point that knowledge began to come directly within his own consciousness of an indwelling link to God. The result was an intense period of self-realisation, of heightened awareness of the whole span of his life. Through dialogue with *Hak* he reviewed every critical phase and involvement, realising precisely what the impact of his activities had been. At first he doubted the truth of the messages received. But some dealt with experiences he had had while in the womb, and he was able to get strong confirmation on those through his father. The most powerful regret he experienced came through reflection on the 'fanatic' (*panatik*) position Hardopusoro led to, his doubts about God.⁹⁰

Secondly Sukino experienced a judgement and cleansing.⁹¹ This occurred on June 29 1936. To begin with he saw a beautiful set of scales, on which the balance of his life was measured. The good was weighed on the right, the bad (*awon*) on the left. The result was a greater weight of error and the judgement was that he had to be sawn in three and burned. This was done. Although conscious, Sukino experienced himself being sawn apart at the neck and stomach, then burned completely to ashes. Finally the pieces were put together and he was brought to life. Although Sukino leaves off with description, a note in the Sumarah history goes on to clarify that the significance of the threefold division and burning was that the three major occult centres (the "*trimurti*" including the *Janaloka*, *Endraloka* and *Guruloka*) were purified.⁹² Such experiences are found in countless shamanic and mystical descriptions of spiritual death and rebirth. Despite the cleansing, Sukino continued to feel his sins (*dosa*) were overwhelming, that he was destined for hell (*naraka*).

Shortly afterwards, while still weighed down with his own feelings of inadequacy, Sukino was told (*kadawuhan*) to follow whatever guidance came to him through *Hakiki* and the Angel Gabriel (*Malaekat Jibriil*). He followed and was taken in sequence through nine spiritual planes. The dimensions he passed through parallel the realms discussed in classical mystical literature, mirror the descriptions found in the *wayang* and in Sufism. Whatever the parallels, and the contribution to terminology tradition may have made, Sukino narrated in the spirit of description, conveying his own sense of experiences he passed through.⁹³

⁹⁰Sukino, in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol.IV, p.249. The word "panatik" was his own, even in the Javanese version.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p.250.

⁹²DPP, *Sejarah*, p.8. For parallels with shamanic experiences of "death and rebirth" see Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism*, Princeton, 1964.

⁹³Sukino, in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, pp.250-253. It should be clear that such descriptions cannot be comprehended literally, the language is "mythic" or symbolic even when the presentation appears "descriptive".

First he entered a pleasant and peaceful realm without sun, moon, or stars--but from which he could see the earth as though through a mist. There were all sorts of inhabitants. Sukino was then warned to continue total surrender as he faced a temptation. A spirit army, the soldiers of Nyai Loro Kidul, approached him to the sound of alluring music. Although they threatened him, his meditation stayed firm until they gradually marched off into the distance. Secondly he entered the green realm of plants; thirdly the lively world of animals. Each transition involved passing through what felt like a screen of light. Then, for only a moment, he was returned briefly to the realm of ordinary human consciousness. Very soon he returned to the journey, entering the fifth realm. It was a world of spirits who seemed relatively at peace, in a state of faith.

Despite that, he heard the crying of his own dead son and saw behind him a crowd of relatives and followers. All seemed to be following and asking help. But Sukino felt incapable of helping, too sinful himself, and assumed that all of them were suffering for his sins. Sixth he entered a dimension of pure spirits and the masses of those following him seemed to multiply. Sukino continued to feel they were suffering on account of him. He prayed to take on responsibility for his own sins. Seventh he came into a realm with very few, but very peaceful inhabitants, a realm of white light. At this point the mass behind him increased again, until finally he transcended both pity and guilt, surrendered completely to God. In the eighth realm he caught a glimpse of a state in which there was nothing but crisp, cool, clear and delightful space. The final realm was beyond description, but he knew that it was the sphere of saints.

In the final dimension, he still felt that his own place was to be in hell, in payment for his past sins. Not long afterwards he felt the tremendous power of God's light, the unimaginable and unnameable (*mboten saget dipun tembungaken utawi dipun gambaraken*). At that point a white light ushered in the white robed and magnificent figure of the Prophet Mohammed. Not long after these experiences, he had a vision of Jesus, surrounded by his followers. He asked Christ if all the religions of the world could join together in harmony, but got no response. On another occasion, Gabriel took him for a short visit to hell, where he saw all forms of suffering souls. Gabriel explained that karmic law ensured payment for misdeeds in life, especially for the sins of those who broke their own promises. He called attention to the heavy payment which would be made by leaders who betrayed the aspirations of those they led.

Sukino's description of his experiences is offered straight, without commentary. Some explanation is provided in the official Sumarah history, but it is worth emphasising that these experiences attract little attention or in Sumarah circles.⁹⁴ Most are not familiar with details of Sukino's description and

⁹⁴I came to know of Sukino's descriptions only through written sources within the organisation. In encounters with current members, the most commonly recalled features of Sukino's revelation were: that he had

there is no sense in which such knowledge is considered vital. The nine realms are related to: spirits and *dewa* (angels), the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom, the physical plane (of the four desires and four elements), the dimension of human thoughts and spirit (which is still subject to reincarnation), the two dimensions occupied by spirits with some strong purity, the realm of those within the sphere of God's guidance, and the dimension of spirits who are entirely free to express God's work. Suhardo added a footnote to the history, clarifying that all of the realms referred to are beyond the time and space coordinates of the physical universe.⁹⁵ This was to stress that Sukino's descriptions are of subtle planes in the inner realm of consciousness; not of literally comprehensible physical events.

One major theme, indicative of later Sumarah experience, is suggested by the nature of Sukino's encounters with spirits. During his visionary journey he encountered the spirit of his own dead child, on another occasion he met the spirit of a dead brother. Each spirit asked for aid toward more favourable rebirth; each time Sukino felt incapable of anything but surrender to God; each time the result *was* a favourable rebirth.⁹⁶ The lesson Sukino learned from these experiences was that living people could aid spirits more by demonstrating surrender to God than by trying to help. In subsequent Sumarah development, this insight was to be ignored by some, raising complications which took some time to resolve.

Sukino's posture toward the realm of ancestral spirits was even more forcefully illustrated by his description of an encounter with Senopati, the founder of the Mataram dynasty.⁹⁷ On the eighth of September in 1935, Sukino meditated in the garden outside his home. In his meditation he prayed deeply for Indonesian independence from all forms of imperialism. Almost immediately he was approached by Senopati, who expressed warmth and agreement, offering the aid of his spirit armies and magical skills to help accomplish their common desire. Although respectful, Sukino refused the offer, indicating conviction that independence would come about in accordance with God's will,

been praying for independence and that he picked up a marble that had been chipped, seeing it then as a symbol of the fragmented quality of human faith. New members are introduced to the Sesanggeman, but not to the details of Sukino's revelation.

⁹⁵Suhardo in DPP, *Sejarah*, p.12.

⁹⁶Sukino in DPP, *Perkembangan*, Vol.I, p.20.

⁹⁷*Ibid.* p.22. Arymurthy has commented several times, in conversation, that he points out to Javanists that their cultivation of contacts with powerful ancestors is an odd basis for attainment of liberation in the current national context. He argues that the same ancestors were the national leaders who helped give rise to colonial dependency in the first place.

that spirits should continue in their own business rather than becoming involved in human affairs.⁹⁸

These experiences, and others of a similar nature, all make clear that Sukino did not see himself as following in the mould of Javanist ancestral cult practices. It is clear that the spirits were real to him and that spirit and human dimensions had potential to interact. Sukino's stance, however, implied neutrality and insistence that people and spirits should go their own ways - each relating directly to God rather than forming alliances for worldly purposes. This posture may, with some reservation, be interpreted as an essentially Islamic position. It represents a break not only from the ancestral practices of traditional Javanism, but also from the practices common within Javanese Sufi syncretism. It typifies the principle reflected in many contemporary *kebatinan* movements and highlights a major cleavage which distinguishes them from earlier cults.

It is evident throughout Sukino's description of his spiritual journey that he had fully internalised a basically Islamic and dualistic cosmology. The stages described, the imagery, and the sense of relationship to God are all closer to the Islamic than the Indic pole of Javanese culture. He repeatedly refers to his sense of sinfulness and encounter with Mohammed occupies a prime place. This imagery reveals the depth of Islamic impact because Sukino used it to evoke and recall the textures of his deepest experiences. His descriptions make clear nationalism was felt and approached in spiritual terms, terms explicitly related to ancestral influences. He was given a vision of Japan's southward expansion and a firm indication that Indonesian independence was close.⁹⁹ It is clear from his point of view spiritual maturity was interwoven with depth of nationalist aspiration.

The capstone to Sukino's revelation came with realisation he had to teach. This came after experience of union had pushed him beyond self-doubt. Before receiving instructions to become a spiritual teacher, Sukino underwent what he called a cleansing of impurities in his blood. He described it as like a flooding of his body, beginning from the feet, with electrical power. In the final moments he feared death, then that passed. Later he received guidance to the effect he had to 'lead humanity toward total submission to God'.¹⁰⁰

His attention was drawn to a marble while he was in the garden meditating. Picking it up, he noticed that a third of it had chipped off. He was told that, like the marble, most people lacked wholeness of conviction in God

⁹⁸Sukino repeated this understanding when explaining to young followers, during the national revolution, that there was no reason to "enlist" spirit armies in the national struggle. Sukino in DPP, *Perkembangan*, Vol. I , pp.39-40.

⁹⁹Sukino in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol.IV, p.249.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, pp.252-253.

and that it was to be his duty to serve so that others could also find total faith (*iman bulat*). He realised that if human faith became solid, then there would be true harmony and brotherhood, a peace throughout the world between peoples as well as within communities. He realised that it would only be at that point that genuine brotherhood would emerge so that race, nationality, and imperialism stopped dividing man from man.

Sukino balked. As he describes it, he had not dreamed of becoming a guru, but had entered *kebatinan* practice as a family heirloom. He expected that it implied effects on his family and immediate circle, but no more. Beyond that, he was intensely conscious of the devastating risk for those who teach. He recognised that spiritual teachers are easily distracted by power, easily exercise profound influence on others, and therefore risk multiplied karmic penalties.¹⁰¹ But he also recognised that the force compelling him allowed no contradiction - his duty had become clear.

Nevertheless, internal evasion persisted. First he suggested that the mission ought to fall to Muhammadiyah, the activist and modernist Muslim association centred in Yogya. The response was no, *he* had to do it himself. Then he wanted helpers to share the burden. He asked first for Sosrokartono, the famous healer living in Bandung. In a dialogue of the spirit, Sosrokartono declined on account of old age. Secondly he requested Muhummed Subuh, whose spirit expressed willingness. But Pak Subuh, still in the spirit, explained that his wife was sick, he could not go to Yogya. Third Sukino asked for Sumantri. Sumantri's spirit said yes, and that he could come to Yogya. However in fact Sumantri moved to Wates, near Yogya instead, leading a group; there rather than aiding Sukino in Yogya. Finally the critical break to Sukino's reluctance came. It was made clear that he himself, in the ego sense, would be only a screen (*warana*); that the teaching would be simply God's expression, that *Hakiki* itself would be the teacher.¹⁰²

Interpretation of these waverings is vital, without it they could raise misunderstanding. It should be clear first that all of the individuals and groups mentioned entered Sukino's awareness because he felt positively that they

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.253-254. Sukino's words were ... "kula boten remen nedya dados guru utawi kjahi memulang ngelmu; dene anggen kula remen ngudi ngelmu wau, ing pangangkah namung bade ngudi kawiludjengan tuwin kamuljaning badan saturun-turun kula ... djalaran kula mangertos, manawi tijang memulang ngelmu kasunjatan punika gawat; manawi ngantos klintu, bade nasaraken djiwaning ngasanes; wohipun bade mewahi dosanipun pijambak."

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.255. The point is elaborated and explained within the DPP, *Perkembangan*, Vol.I, p.24. There the wording is "Semua tuntunan diserahkan kepada Chakiki. Sebab hanja Chakikilah jang berkewadajiban menerangkan tentang ilmu Allah. Adapun tentang wudjudnja tugas, Pak Kino hanja sanggup menjadi WARANA sadja."

were aligned with the divine mission. Secondly it must be emphasised that designation of Sukino rather than Muhammadiyah or the others implied nothing negative about them.¹⁰³ The final message Sukino received was that *he* had to act in absolute submission to a transcendent expression, that fulfilment of personal spiritual responsibility fell totally within. This amounts to nothing but classic realisation individuals must assume full responsibility for their spiritual life, depending on no external sources for authority or assistance. It was only with realisation that teachings would come from *Hakiki*, not from himself, that Sukino accepted the possibility of action.

Even realisation his ego was not to be the teacher failed to quell all doubts, Sukino still felt incapable as a vehicle and remained reluctant in the face of what he considered his ignorance of spiritual texts and lack of status. He doubted whether a message through would find positive reception. As a consequence, he did not begin to teach immediately. Then Sukino experienced union. He described it as following a dialogue with God: "Sukino! I am going to enter into you. But Sukino replied, "Oh God, it does not make sense that you should enter an impure body like mine." Sukino was answered with, "Enough, it makes no difference any more, I must sit within you."¹⁰⁴ After that Sukino felt as though God entered into his head, into the *Baitalmakmur* to be precise. For the duration of the experience he was disoriented and awed, then it passed.

Some time later, on July 4 1937, he was given the revelation (*wahyu*) which was to be the vehicle for Sumarah guidance up to 1949. It came in the form of a crown (*mahkota*) which radiated sky-blue light. When first placed on his head it felt heavy and he questioned whether it might be a trick of the Devil. Gradually the weight decreased, his fears dissolved, and his heart lightened. By the end of seven days he felt normal.¹⁰⁵ From that point onward he became open, clear and unreserved in the transmission of Sumarah experience.

¹⁰³It is important to note that these names do not appear in the official history. There the wording is intentionally vague, "an Islamic organisation", rather than specific. Sumarah has no desire to generate possible misunderstanding on this point. I am using the names here because they are given in Suwondo's transcript of Sukino's talk, and because I am confident that it will be clear that nothing negative could be read into the fact that Sukino had to take responsibility for himself.

¹⁰⁴Sukino in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol.IV, p.252. The words are: " ... ladjeng wonten dawuh makaten: 'Sukino, Ingsun kagungan karsa lenggah ana ing sira.' Inggang mangsuli djiwa kula, makaten: 'O Gusti Inggang Maha Sutji, kula punika reged boten sutji, boten pantes manawi dipun lenggahana.' Dawuhipun: 'Wis ora praduli, Ingsun mesti lenggah ing sira.'"

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p.255.

Both Sukino and the Sumarah history insist that his experiences of union and revelation do not imply what most people suspect. They emphasise that personality in no sense becomes identical with the divine.¹⁰⁶ Within the experience his whole being was subsumed within the sphere of God's presence and will. The guidance which came through him may be seen as coming from God, but never the personality. In qualitative terms Sukino's experiences are viewed as highly unusual, but as unique only in the sense that each individual is. It is stressed that the aim of subsequent guidance has been to direct others toward precisely the same transformation. It is never suggested that Sukino as a man was superhuman.

The seed of Sumarah was formed within Sukino through a process intrinsic to mystical experience. Once an individual begins to touch the roots of the mystical, there is an organic break with earlier experience. That break occurs because of the experiential quality of mystical gnosis - once reached it stands on its own, it needs no reference to the authority of any prior experience. Tradition nevertheless provides forms which shape and explain the textures of internal experience. Those forms become passageways for the mystical only when transformed into vehicles through contact with the "unnameable" absolute which is beyond them.

Although essential features of subsequent Sumarah practice are clearly rooted in Sukino's visionary experiences, the specific textures of his personal progression have never been taken as a model, neither have the images he used become standard for others.¹⁰⁷ He attempted to make clear from the start

¹⁰⁶DPP, *Sejarah*, p.17. This is an important issue, the Sumarah perspective on it is worth recording: "Pengalaman diatas hanya memberikan pengertian, tidak harfiah (letterlijk) 'duduk'. Jadi Pak Kino sudah diduduki itu berarti *ia sudah diterima atau diliputi, dilindungi oleh Tuhan*. Janganlah diartikan secara harfiah diduduki dalam arti biasa. Jadi para warga sumarah semuanya, kalau sudah benar2 mengerti dan faham tentang hukum dan ilmunya sujud sumarah kepada Tuhan, tentu akan diduduki oleh Tuhan, yang berarti bahwa Tuhan dengan hukumnya telah berkenan memberikan perlindungan-Nya terhadap mereka, baik terhadap jiwanya maupun raganya. Jadi janganlah salah mengerti, bahwa Pak Kino saja yang memberoleh berkah itu. Pengalaman Pak Kino hanya memberikan pengertian kepada para umat sumarah. Demikian pesan Pak Kino kepada warga sumarah." (emphasis as in the original)

¹⁰⁷Other Sumarah leaders, including Arymurthy in Jakarta, Martosuwignio and Surono in Yogya, and Suwongso in Solo, provided lengthy descriptions of "peak experiences" they had passed through. Their language, in each instance, differed from that of Sukino; matching it only in the sense that every description of such experiences leads to similar problems with

that Truth (*Hakiki*) speaks for itself, that guidance came not from but through his personality. At the same time Sumarah practice has echoed Sukino's introspective and self-critical direction; his recognition that each individual has to assume total spiritual responsibility, looking inward rather than depending on external teachings or people. In the simplest terms what Sukino set out to share was experience of total surrender and openness.

language. Personally, I found many other descriptions more evocative - as they were communicated directly rather than simply recorded on paper. The limits of written descriptions should be obvious.

chapter 3

FOUNDING FOLLOWERS

Sumarah came into Sukino's consciousness not as a private experience, but as a message for humanity. This suggests that the movement's foundations lay in missionising and that interpretation is justified on the surface because Sukino and his friends did reach out to others. However this interpretation can be misleading--they were not spreading a doctrine or even a technique. Instead they saw themselves as sharing a state of being, as opening the process of their own internal transformation to others. Others, for their part, came to join in the practice not because they shared common belief in the power of a teaching or the efficacy of a technique, but because they came to share a single experience of consciousness--an 'experiential chain reaction' began.

The first person to join Sukino was Suhardo. The two had been inseparable since meeting within Hardopusoro in 1923. They had been 'star' pupils together, they drifted away from it together, and they experimented with Subud together. The first steps toward definition of Sumarah as a movement came through interaction between them. Suhardo was drawn toward Sukino's practice on his own initiative and during the period when Sukino felt reluctance to share it. But when Suhardo initiated contact, Sukino did respond actively. As Suhardo described it, he went to Sukino's home and they meditated together. Suhardo asked for correction or confirmation of his practice and Sukino, in affirming its validity, asked who had taught him. Suhardo replied:

I heard a voice from within (*batin*) saying, "Sukino's way (*laku*) of worshipping God is correct. If you want to do the same then calm your senses and desires, centre your mind (*angen-angen*) and feeling (*rasa*) in the heart (*indraloka*), and repeat the name of God (*dikir*)." I did follow the advice from within and it genuinely did lead to calm and peaceful feelings.¹⁰⁸

Sukino then responded with enthusiasm, asking Suhardo to return the next night to be initiated. That midnight Suhardo arrived and the two entered into a two hour standing meditation, Suhardo's initiation. Sukino began with a Javanese version of the Islamic profession of faith--which is to say the first half of it ("*Asyhadu Allah Ilaha Ilallah. Satuhune ora ana Pangeran Kang wajib disembah kajaba mung Allah*") Then for the rest of the period Sukino acted as a

¹⁰⁸DPP, *Sejarah*, p.51.

vehicle (*warana*) for lengthy teachings which he expressed in Javanese poetic form.¹⁰⁹

Sukino and Suhardo shared another critical exchange on the day following Sukino's realisation that he had to form a separate group and begin teaching. The exchange went:

Sukino: Last night I received instructions from God indicating that our practice (*Ilmu*) has to be spread to religious teachers (*Alim Ulama*) and society, but that we have to separate from Wignosupartono and his group.

Suhardo: Then what do we have to do?

Sukino: Just an opening ritual like those of other brotherhoods (*perguruan*), a *slametan*, white cloth and the rest.

Suhardo: I don't agree. This initiation can take place at any time or place without any conditions whatsoever. Beyond that, the Science of God is His alone, so there is no need for offerings and the rest. I think we are obligated to share the Science of God with anyone who wants to practice it, without any restrictions (*pamrih*) whatsoever.

Sukino: Yes, that is correct. As we look for members I will be responsible for initiation and you will be responsible for education and guidance (*kepamongan*).

Suhardo: Agreed!¹¹⁰

This exchange reveals fundamentals of Sumarah. It makes clear Suhardo participated in shaping association and that ritual and secrecy were ruled out from the start, Sumarah was not traditional. The most significant implication of the exchange lies in the evidence it provides about the attitude Sumarah has had toward organisation. There is no suggestion, in content or tone, of revelatory authority underlying the forms of practice. Although the impulse to create them has been seen as divine, the manner in which the brotherhood became organised is presented as entirely human.

Within Sukino's revelation it had been made clear that his practice would not centre on spirits; through interaction with Suhardo it became clear rituals were unnecessary. Tradition did, nevertheless, provide a language of expression. Several elements of practice were drawn directly from the vocabulary of the day. Sukino's revelation was termed *wahyu*, Suhardo did receive an initiation (*beatatan*), and both took it for granted that practice required guides (*pamong*). Implicitly, Sukino's capacity to confirm Suhardo's meditative posture, depended on another essential ingredient of Sumarah experience--

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.51.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.51-52.

witnessing or "contacting" the experience of another. As keys to Sumarah practice, these features require introduction.

The growth of Sumarah as a brotherhood cannot be comprehended apart from the dynamics of spiritual guidance within it. Those dynamics cannot be fully understood outside the sphere of practice. Description may suggest what experience appears to be from within, but verification is impossible except through practice.

Prior to Suhardo's initiation, Sukino confirmed that the internal direction of Suhardo's meditation was correct. This was based, as he experienced it, on direct 'attunement' to or 'contact' with Suhardo's inner experience. Within Sumarah guidance it appears people share internal as well as external experiences, experiencing each other's thoughts, feelings, and bodily tensions. In Sumarah understanding such attunement is seen as possible for those who are centred, in a state of total faith. Even then the function of guidance (*pamong*) as an expression of truth (*Hakiki*) is activated only when internal and external circumstances require--when it is God's will. Individuals are not themselves 'guides', but they may be potential vehicles of guidance. The term '*pamong*' refers in principle to function rather than person.¹¹¹

When the function is called forth by the situation, then the process of guidance is activated. At that point, in Sumarah experience, the expressions of a *pamong* are valid not only within the internal meditation of the guide, but also as directives aiding the internal growth of others. It has been clearly emphasised from the start that such validity is entirely dependent on what others, sharing meditation with *pamong*, experience for themselves.¹¹² Guidance then, is not a matter of one person telling another what to do and proclaiming divine authority. It is an entry into a sharing of internal space within which authority and truth speak directly to each individual. When Sukino "tuned in" to Suhardo's meditation, the authority for validation of it came through the fact that they both experienced that meditation against the ground

¹¹¹Although this perspective on Sumarah guidance represents a clarity achieved through later developments, the basic principle enunciated here is precisely the same principle that was activated from the earliest stage of Sumarah guidance. Arymurthy has made this same point repeatedly, others in the seventies have as well. This specific framing is aligned to Arymurthy's talk on guidance in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*, Perth, 1977, pp.20-23.

¹¹²In the earliest phase of Sumarah expansion considerable emphasis fell on the linking of "proof-witnessing-reality" (*buktisaksi-nyata*); on the fact that individuals needed to experience and demonstrate for themselves, rather than relying on the authority of others. In DPP, *Sejarah*, p.55 it is stressed that Truth, rather than individuals, is the source of guidance.

of a sphere which was higher. Suhardo did not accept Sukino's word, but rather experienced for himself.

The dynamics of the process can be suggested by analogy. Sumarah members often refer to attunement as a matter of receiving vibrations (*getaran*). They recognise that all life forms both give and receive vibrations, that those vibrations are potentially recognisable within intuitive feeling (*rasa*).¹¹³ Clear reception, however, depends not just on the messages, but also on the receiver. If, for purposes of illustration, our *rasa* is compared to a radio, we might say that most people in the West leave their radios turned off--they neither expect nor direct their attention to reception of vibrations in feeling. Most Javanese may have their "radios" on, but the power of each receiver and the clarity of reception differs widely. Some tuners are rough and result in a jumble of messages. Clear reception depends on the intrinsic capacity of the receiver and the fineness of the tuning. Within Sumarah a *pamong* is "turned on", meaning that awareness is fully centred in feeling, and "finely tuned", meaning that the source and content of messages is clear.

Another analogy was used by Sudarno Ong, a Solo *pamong*. Pak Darno said that two matched *gamelan* resonate to each other. If a gong is struck in one, then precisely the same note, and no other, will resonate in the other. Then he points out that people all have the same internal psychic organs. Each is always sending messages, not just physical and verbal expression. Each of us always receives messages, but usually the "noise of our own instruments" and lack of awareness, combine to prevent recognition. Sumarah guidance occurs when the person acting as guide has reached inner stillness and awareness. When that happens then reception of messages becomes clear.¹¹⁴

Arymurthy uses another analogy to make the same point. He spoke of a *pamong* as "mirroring", providing a space within which meditators can see themselves more clearly. It is as though, he suggests, each of us has a mirror internally, but most have allowed them to become scratched and clouded. Lacking the use of our own, temporarily we can look into the mirror of another--seeing for ourself what a clear mirror can show us. Pak Arymurthy emphasises,

¹¹³The term "rasa" is given many meanings in Java. To some it means "essence", here I am referring to it as an organ. While it is clear that everything has "rasa", that even inanimate objects have "feeling" or give "vibrations", my use of the term is aligned to Sumarah use. Most commonly, within Sumarah, the term is used to refer to the intuitive faculty, to what some might call the "sixth sense". In Sumarah it is felt that "rasa" is simply the organ, associated with the chest and heart, through which we perceive inner, spiritual realities.

¹¹⁴Based on conversations with Sudarno in Solo.

by use of his analogy, that this is not a matter of one person telling another; but of each person seeing himself.¹¹⁵

It must be stressed that these analogies merely suggest and do not define the nature of guidance within Sumarah. Insofar as they do that, they do provide insight into both the nature and reasons for Sumarah practice. The key is a sharing within which beginners come to realise their own potential, realising in themselves what others reflect. These analogies also cast light on Sukino's revelation and the force which compelled him to share it. Sukino's reception of *Hakiki* marked the point when his own "mirror" became clear; his commission to teach was simply a recognition that what he saw in it was as relevant to others as to himself.

Experience of "union" was not simply a dissolution of divisions within the self; but equally a realisation of connectedness to others. His action rose not from belief in the ideal of harmony, but from realisation that his own experience was also the experience of others; that he was experiencing not just the same sort of thing, but the very thing. This became revelation because he eventually realised that his consciousness had passed beyond the relativity of normal human awareness, it came to express an absolute Truth which for him had the name God.

So when Sukino and Suhardo began to open their practice to others, they were setting out to share experience within meditation practice. They were not committed to a teaching, doctrine, or even technique. Although they termed their practice "Sumarah", which is a Javanese word for total surrender, they were setting out to share direct experience, not a formula through which others could mimic them. Initiation (*beatan*) referred to the experience, collectively witnessed, when prospective members clearly recognised the internal working of divine power. Although the initiator, usually Sukino, provided the sphere or mirror which facilitated the event, the process was never described as a passing of realisation from one person to another. Subsequent guidance by Sukino, Suhardo, or the others who began to serve as *pamong*, worked on the same principle of shared experience.

Sukino and Suhardo began to communicate their practice by attending the same *kebatinan* meetings they had already been involved in. They especially mention going to sessions of Hardopusoro, *Ilmu Sejati*, Suci Rahayu and Wali Songo.¹¹⁶ Many early members were men like themselves, people who had been "floating" from group to group, or leaders of informal mystical cells. It was only natural that their friends became attracted as well. In this sense, Sumarah grew out of networks of earlier mystical association and friendship, networks

¹¹⁵Arymurthy in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*, p.21.

¹¹⁶Sukino, "Sedjarah tjekekakan ...", pp.21-23 and Suhardo, "Sejarah Riwayat ...", p.10.

which pre-dated Sukino's revelation. Sumarah spread organically rather than through advertisement or "propaganda"; its earliest growth is described as resulting from a chain reaction through the "grapevine" (*getok tular*). All contracts were direct.¹¹⁷

By the end of 1937 there were about two dozen members; by 1939 about one hundred; and by 1945 perhaps five hundred.¹¹⁸ In that period the basis for later Sumarah development was laid. By 1945 a solid nucleus of Sumarah *pamong*s existed not only in Yogya, but in Magelang, Solo, Cepu, Madiun, Ponorogo and a few other towns. Sukino performed most initiations himself; but after 1939 Suhardo, Sutadi, Sukeno, Abdulhamid, and a few others began to open people to the practice.¹¹⁹ A few young people began to join after 1939, but most members up to 1945 were mature men who had already experienced a variety of mystical practices before encountering Sumarah.

The basis for Sumarah expansion was clearly that of the *priyayi* network expanding outward from the courts of Yogya and Solo, but even in this formative period membership diversified. Some founding members in Yogya and Ponorogo had belonged to or been educated within Muhammadiyah. Local Chinese in Muntilan, Cepu and elsewhere became associated with Sumarah. Then in the Madiun area a large following of traditionalist Javanese Muslims were drawn in through Kyai Abdulhamid. The organisational basis may have been *priyayi*, but membership quickly reached across the spectrum of Javanese social groups.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.19-20.

¹¹⁸These estimates are drawn from Suhardo, *Ceramah ...*, p.11. It is not clear whether "membership" meant only adult initiates (*kasepuhan*), or whether it also included youth (*kanoman*). It would not have included "candidates" (*magang*) and it can be assumed that quite a few people would have remained in that category--especially during the first phase.

¹¹⁹Until the end of the first phase of spiritual practice, in 1949, only Sukino, Suhardo and Sutadi performed initiations for *kasepuhan*. But for some years prior to that other leaders such as Sukeno and Abdulhamid initiated *kanoman*.

¹²⁰Suhardo, "Sejarah Riwayat ...", pp.12-14 describes early expansion in some detail, including reference to his contact with Chinese communities. The clearest confirmation of the range of social groups included within early Sumarah membership is found in a February 1948 list of members in the Madiun region (among Sutadi's papers). This list included listing of political affiliations, those in turn reflect socio-cultural orientations. Of the 203 members listed, only 99 gave party membership (none of the 25 *pamong* or organisational leaders listed any affiliation). Of the rest, 48 belonged to Masyumi (which still included the NU), 14 PNI, 14 Sosialis, 10 Sarekat Rakyat, 6 PKI, 4 BTI, 3 Pesindo. It is clear that by 1948 membership included pockets of local Chinese and a strong basis within

The earliest followers came to Sumarah for a variety of reasons. Some, like Suryopramono of Magelang, sought spiritual practices to resolve physical ills.¹²¹ Others, such as Bariunhartono in Yogya, sought balance after intense psychic traumas.¹²² Still others entered into contact out of curiosity, then became convinced. In some cases, as with Kyai Abdulhamid, initial contact took the traditional form of testing powers (*mengadu kasekten*). That involved demonstrating and comparing the spiritual powers resulting from mystical practice, with the "loser" submitting to the practice which proved most powerful. Men like Kyai Abdulhamid entered Sumarah only after demonstration that total surrender proved invulnerable to psychic attack.¹²³ From the perspective of Sumarah, such encounters and tests could only be met by

both rural Islam and urban bureaucracy: the membership was not defined by *abangan/priyayi* rather than *santri* cultural orientation, at least half of the members identified strongly with organised, even modernist Islam. The same document listed dates of initiation, and attributed responsibility for it. In the Madiun area at that time only one person, Abdulhamid, had been initiated by Sukino. Suhardo, who was still living there at the time, initiated 10 members between 1942 and 1945 and another 35 by 1947. The rest, 156 members, were initiated by Sukeno early in 1948. As many *pemuda* were already involved with Kyuai Abdulhamid by 1945, receiving the *kanoman* initiation from him in the process, it seems likely that this membership list only included *kasepuhan*. The age grouping of members listed would confirm this judgement: only 15 of those listed were in their 20's, 53 in their 30's, 55 in their 40's, 39 in their 50's and 12 in their 60's or above--most were mature, beyond the age of active guerrillas fighting.

Unfortunately no similar lists are available, to me, for other regions. It is also certain that the Islamic element has been stronger in Madiun than elsewhere, but "Madiun" effectively meant "East Java" in this document and there were many members with strong Islamic backgrounds in Yogya as well.

¹²¹Interview with Suryopramono in Surabaya in August 1973.

¹²²Interview with Zaid Hussein in Jakarta October 1973.

¹²³Interview with Sukardji in Surabaya in August 1973. Sukardji was, at the time, a young army officer designated to accompany Suhardo, who was connected as an adviser to the national army battalion in Bojonegoro. The same pattern was involved in Suhardo's initiation of Mangun, in Ponorogo; in Bariunhartono's initiation of Mostar (which took place in Yogya, although Mostar was from Gresik and became the founder of that branch). It is also clear in the way Suhardo activated Sutadi - see following pages. Several informants commented that Suhardo, who was the "workhorse" of Sumarah expansion, borrowed techniques from Suryomentaram, who was also very active during this period.

openness and surrender, not by manipulation of occult forces through personal will.

The impact of social networks on the pattern of Sumarah' growth is revealed through the activities of key founding members. After Sukino and Suhardo, Sutadi, Sukeno and Abdulhamid were among the most significant founders. Others were of virtually the same standing, but mention of these three is enough to clarify the way Sumarah spread. All three came into contact with Sukino through their friends in mystical circles in Yogya, each spread Sumarah through networks rooted beyond the sphere of mystical movements.

Sutadi, who became the dynamo of the Solo centre, met Sukino through their mutual friend Djojosudarmo. In 1933 Sutadi and Djojosudarmo had spent a full year travelling throughout Java by bicycle. During the year they visited numerous temples, mystical teachers, and *pesantren*. They remained close friends, so when Djojosudarmo met Sukino he soon brought Sutadi into the Sumarah circle. Sutadi was a journalist and had been a member of the colonial parliament, he was active in numerous mystical and nationalist organisations. Once he became activated within Sumarah, it began to have a strong following in Solo.¹²⁴

Sukeno was highly placed within the bureaucracy of the Madiun regency, he was the head of the government pawnshop network for the whole region. Like Sutadi, he came into contact with Sumarah through spiritual friends in Yogya. Once activated he also became a major force for the transmission of Sumarah practice. Although his influence was not confined to his official sphere, it is notable that a large number of his subordinates became Sumarah members.¹²⁵

Kyai Abdulhamid is largely responsible for having made Sumarah a mass movement in the Madiun region. Elsewhere Sumarah has also developed significant pockets of village membership. but it is only in the Madiun region that villagers number in the thousands. Kyai Abdulhamid always stressed that

¹²⁴Sri Sampoerno, "Riwayat Hidup Bapak Hirlan Soetadi", Surakarta, 1973; DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.32-34.

¹²⁵This has been clear through the number of local leaders in other East Javanese cities who have been connected to the government pawnshop network. The founder in Ponorogo was one of Sukeno's subordinates, as was the leader of the Pare branch at the time of Clifford Geertz's fieldwork (see *The Religion of Java*, Chicago, 1976, p.343). The Madiun membership list of 1948 (see note 13 above) listed 13 members working for the pawnshop offices in cities spread throughout East Java (the list does not include occupation in most instances, but does list it for some, perhaps all, government employees - amounting to about 30 who worked in pawnshops, as teachers, policemen, or in other offices).

his title of "*kyai*" was a birthright rather than achievement - he did not style himself as a *kyai* in the *santri* sense. He inherited the title by virtue of birth within a lineage of spiritual teachers in the *perdikan* village of Banjarsari. At any rate, lineage combined with his personal experience to give him great prestige in the region. His expressions were always direct and simple, his vitality was tremendous. As a result he became the focal point for several thousand village members of Sumarah in the region. As with Sutadi and Sukeno, Abdulhamid entered Sumarah through contact with Sukino and Suhardo in Yogya.¹²⁶

Although several dozen founding members would deserve mention in a full description of the period up to 1945, three are given a special place within the official Sumarah history: Sukino, Suhardo and Sutadi. From 1938 until 1950 the three served as acknowledged leaders of the brotherhood. They were responsible, respectively, for spiritual guidance, education and organisation. The three were variously referred to as the '*trimurti*' (trinity), as '*tritunggal*' (the three in one), and as '*pinisepuh*' (elders).¹²⁷ Sukino's contribution to the foundation of the movement is already obvious, but the activities of Suhardo and Sutadi deserve further comment.

Suhardo contributed not only by helping define Sumarah practice, but also through the fact that he was primarily responsible for spreading it outside Yogya. Although people from outside Yogya became involved almost immediately, they did not automatically become Sumarah leaders when they returned home. Suhardo became an essential catalyst, stimulating other people and then activating them as teachers in their own right. He left Yogya in 1938 and lived in Solo, Cepu, Madiun and Bojonegoro until 1950.¹²⁸ Each place

¹²⁶Interview with Kyai Abdulhamid in Banjarsari in August 1973. Abdulhamid repeatedly stressed the hereditary, rather than achieved, origins of his "title". Although Banjarsari is not specifically mentioned, the general background of the *perdikan* villages in Madiun is outlined in Onghokham, *The Residency of Madiun*, unpublished PhD, Yale University, 1975, pp.45-48. Onghokham also makes clear that the fierceness of tension between Islamic and Javanist camps in the region is connected to the violent nature of the conversion process, especially in the Ponorogo and Pacitan areas (pp.21-26).

¹²⁷DPP, *Sejarah*, p.39. In acknowledging the special significance of these three, the DPP history is especially careful to avoid overemphasis on personality. It states: "Dalam Paguyuban Sumarah tidak ada orang yang disebut Guru atau Nabi. Yang dikenal ialah sebutan warana, itupun tidak dimonopoli oleh orang tertentu. Siapapun dapat berfungsi sebagai warana. Dalam hal ini ia memang mencukupi kondisinya sewaktu diperlukan dalam latihan dan berjama'ah untuk menyampaikan petunjuk dan wewarah Hakiki."

¹²⁸Suhardo, "Sejarah Riwayat ...", pp.9-14.

became an active Sumarah centre while he was there, although not all of them remained so after his departure. Suhardo experienced the same sort of reluctance Sukino had passed through and it was only after he came to recognise direct inner guidance that he moved into action.

Suhardo's roots were very much like Sukino's, though his personality differs considerably. He was born on May 24th 1901 in a village near Boyolali, but then spent his youth in the neighbourhood of Salatiga. His parents, like Sukino's, were minor village officials with a strong interest in spiritual matters. He attended the teacher training school in Salatiga, after winning a scholarship, but left in 1919 before getting his certificate. Upon leaving school he became a clerk in the Estates Office in Semarang, then moved to Yogya when a branch was opened there in 1921. In 1926 he worked in the Irrigation Authority of the *kraton*, then until 1931 as a clerk within a Chinese business. When that firm went bankrupt in 1931, Suhardo entered a period of irregular employment. Although occasionally doing clerical jobs, he subsisted and raised eight children by working as a barber and sign painter. From 1950 until retirement in 1960 he worked mainly in technical schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture - for short periods in Jakarta, but mainly in Yogya.¹²⁹

In the beginning of 1938 Suhardo received the direct guidance which sent him outside Yogya. At that point there were already about twenty-five Sumarah members, including Sutadi in Solo. Suhardo's guidance informed him that he had been designated to spread (*babad*) Sumarah practice throughout Central and East Java; that he had to begin by working on Sutadi; and that he should leave everything except his family. Suspecting that the directive rose from his own thoughts and desires, he checked with Sukino. Sukino confirmed that the guidance came straight from God. For days Suhardo remained in confusion. As it was he had been living hand-to-mouth, so he could not imagine how he would provide for his large family. But by the middle of the year his resolve and conviction settled and led to action. He sold his house, banked the money, and moved with his family to Solo.¹³⁰

Sutadi then helped them by arranging rented housing in Nirbitan, the neighbourhood right behind his own large residence. Suhardo then managed to find clerical work in the Records Office. Although some of his office co-workers also joined Sumarah, the focus of Suhardo's spiritual work was Sutadi. His guidance had made clear that Sutadi was to become important within Sumarah, all Suhardo had to do was activate him. Although Sutadi had already been initiated into Sumarah practice, he had resisted the total commitment which leads to action. His resistance was powerful. On numerous occasions Sutadi evaded meetings with Suhardo, frequently having his servants inform Suhardo that he was out. Once he tried to leave the *pendopo* when Suhardo approached, but found himself immobilised in his chair. On another occasion

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.2-8.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.10-12; DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.42-44.

Sutadi became suicidal, but Suhardo dissuaded him. Finally Sutadi's resistance was broken, he came to recognise the spiritual responsibility Suhardo was confronting him with. When that happened, Suhardo's work in Solo was complete. When he left Solo at the end of 1939 there were about thirty Sumarah members there, including a solid cadre of *pamong*.¹³¹

Subsequently Suhardo moved to Cepu, where the Solo pattern was repeated. A local Chinese friend helped him find clerical work and housing, office-mates were drawn into Sumarah, and the nucleus of an organisation crystallised. When Suhardo moved again, in 1940, there were about sixty members in Cepu and the neighbouring towns of Blora, Ngasem, Kalitedu and Padangan. From 1940 until 1945 Suhardo lived in Madiun and returned to his work as a barber. Under his guidance Sukeno and Abdulhamid became increasingly dynamic, so the regional membership reached two hundred by 1948¹³² New centres emerged not only in Madiun and in Abdulhamid's village of Banjarsari, but also in Ponorogo, Magetan, Ngawi, Nganjuk and Kertosono. In Ponorogo leading members were drawn from local *batik* families and included several activists from the Nahdatul Ulama. In Kertosono railway employees ranging from station master through to brakemen joined Sumarah. *Priyayi* office workers and officials were drawn in by Sukeno and a peasant following focused on Kyai Abdulhamid.

Suhardo's personality suited his pioneering function. Although his origins matched Sukino's, their styles contrasted markedly. Sukino epitomised the *halus* qualities of *kraton* society: his personality was peaceful and "soft", his guidance came dressed in elaborate traditional poetic singing (all spontaneous). Suhardo was direct and blunt, some say *kasar*.¹³³ He never minced words or

¹³¹DPP, *Sejarah*, p.36 briefly mentions the difficulty Suhardo had in activating Sutadi; on p.43 it reports that membership, when Suhardo left Solo at the end of 1939, was about 30. In his description, Suhardo ("Sejarah Riwayat ...". p.12) stresses the speed of Sutadi's progress. He stated that within three months Sutadi was able to connect directly to Hakiki, to receive full and direct guidance. Other details on the encounter were provided through conversations (Martosuwignio, Yogya, 6/73).

¹³²See note 13 above. The Madiun membership list is the clearest confirmation of Sumarah scale at the time. Suhardo (*Ceramah ...*, p.11) estimated that membership was 3000 by 1950. As explained above, it is likely that the Madiun list did not include a large number of pemuda, who appeared initially as a separate category. In fact, as will become clear, the Madiun pemuda began to create their own organisation in the late forties and its relationship to the mainstream of Sumarah was not always clear.

¹³³These aspects of Suhardo's personality were particularly stressed by Budiman in Salatiga during a conversation in September 1972. The Salatiga branch of Sumarah never got off the ground, though there were small groups active there in the late fifties and again in the mid-sixties.

avoided awkward confrontations. While Sukino's guidance came through difficult high Javanese (*krama inggil*). Suhardo leads meditation in everyday Javanese (*ngoko*). These characteristics suited Suhardo's activities in the market towns of East Java. Although the difference is of norm rather than ideal, East Javanese society is typically more direct, emotive, and *kasar* than that of the court societies of Yogya and Solo.

Contrasts of personality and regional culture combined to influence the growth of distinct styles within Sumarah. Each region in Java is rich with local tradition. The strongly Islamic tone of Sumarah in the Madiun area reflects both the personality of Kyai Abdulhamid and the qualities of regional life. Even Yogya and Solo have differed from the start. During the late colonial era Solo was a much more dynamic economic centre than Yogya.¹³⁴ So in Yogya Sukino's personal style combined with the general tone of the city to result in strong association with *kraton* culture. That association was reflected in membership and in style of meditation. Sutadi had his own version of Sumarah practice. While Sukino's guidance came through a melodic flow of poetic speech and Suhardo's in conversational Javanese, Sutadi's came through long silences, merely punctuated by terse verbal directives. Sutadi's directness matched Suhardo's and placed him to reach not only elements of *kraton* bureaucracy, but also the business community. Some local Chinese became early followers and the Laweyan *batik* families have contributed a strong following. The Laweyan families are *priyayi* in social terms, but often *santri* in religious style.¹³⁵ Involved as they are in the marketing of batik, their style of interaction

Budiman reported that in 1957 Suhardo appeared to "pressure" him into activism, when he himself continued to feel incapable of taking responsibility.

¹³⁴There are a growing number of regional studies which provide insight into variations within the Javanist zone. For example see Onghokham, *Op.Cit.* and Julia Howell, "Javanese Religious Orientations in the Residency of Surakarta", *Regional Analysis V II* (1976). It is difficult to pinpoint consequences of these differences, but the split between Yogya and Solo based Sumarah groups in 1950 was almost certainly, in part, a reflection of tensions between the two *kraton* complexes. Those tensions have been longstanding (see M. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta Under Sultan Mangkubumi*, London, 1974) and they were exacerbated by different responses to the national revolution (see B. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, Ithaca, 1972, pp.349-369). At the same time, as I am trying to suggest here, regional contrasts within Sumarah were also influenced by personality, by the idiosyncracies of founding members within different regions.

¹³⁵The most notable of the Laweyan and batik related leaders of Sumarah in Solo have been Suwongso and Suwondo. For a time, in the late sixties and early seventies, the Laweyan group was especially active and

tends to be direct and frank. So even in the origins of Sumarah, in the earliest phase, no single form dictated the style of expression and interaction - it has always varied with personality and locality.

Sutadi assumed the organisational leadership of Sumarah virtually as soon as he had been activated by Suhardo. In Sumarah terms it is seen as natural that Sutadi's social position and organisational skills would reflect themselves in spiritual leadership.¹³⁶ Socially his origins were higher than those of Sukino or Suhardo. Sutadi was born in 1893 and his father was an official employed by the main Solo *kraton* - he managed royal estates in the villages around Tegalondo. Although Sutadi never finished school, he did complete bookkeeping classes. His first notable public activity reveals something of both his personality and commitments. He presented himself in the *kraton*, while on official business, wearing Western clothing. That transgression reflected early commitment to democratic ideals and nationalist politics. Following his breach of etiquette, he was "exiled" to Semarang, where his political consciousness was rapidly sharpened.¹³⁷

During the First World War, around the time when Indonesian nationalism was exploding as a mass movement through Sarekat Islam, Sutadi began working as a journalist and editor. He worked as a correspondent for *Harian Matahari Jakarta* and *Harian Pemandangan* and for shorter periods edited *Darmokondo* and *Harian Neratja* (the last having been a newspaper headed by Haji Agus Salim). Although not a teacher by training, he became a Taman Siswa teacher, then the head of the teacher's association (*Perkumpulan Guru Bantu*). As such he was elected to three terms in the colonial parliament (the Volksraad), from 1922 to 1931. During that period he assisted Professor Poerbatjaraka by contributing to the Javanese periodical, *Kalawarti Basa Jawi*. For a short period in the early thirties he managed a rubber plantation, but returned to work as a journalist when that went bankrupt. During the Japanese occupation he collaborated for a time within the Solonese bureaucracy, but was eventually jailed for two months along with fellow nationalists. During the revolutionary period he held a series of high administrative positions in Solo's government, then became a PNI representative to the constitutional convention

distinct, though by the mid-seventies it had become less discrete, less autonomous as an element of the practice within the city.

¹³⁶This is obvious in Suhardo's description (in "Sejarah Riwayat ..." p.12) and in the DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.36-38 - which emphasises Sutadi's political experience and organisational skills.

¹³⁷Sri Sampoerno, "Riwayat Hidup ..."; and Sutadi, *Warisan Adi*, Vol.I, Surakarta, 1961, pp.9-14.

in Bandung. Up to his death in 1958 he continued actively as a journalist and PNI leader.¹³⁸

Sutadi's spiritual activism had been as rich as his political life--even prior to Sumarah involvement. In 1920 he married a granddaughter of Kyai Girijaya, a famous mystic from the Sukabumi area in West Java.¹³⁹ Around the time of his marriage he spent a lengthy period of spiritual retreat with the Kyai, who became his teacher as well as relative. During the twenties he became involved briefly with Hardopusoro, then very active in the Theosophical Society in Solo. In 1933 he undertook the year long tour, already mentioned, of Javanese spiritual teachers and power centres. The urgency underlying his quest was reflected in a suicidal moment at one point in the journey. After that brush, he and his friend Djojosudarmo stayed for a time at one hermitage near the southern sea, then returned to their respective homes when their guru informed them that they had learned what they could for the time. A few years later, in 1937, Djojosudarmo invited Sutadi to meet Sukino.

Sutadi became responsible for the first hints of formality within Sumarah organisation. Although modified, cultural norms set the tone and provided a framework for personal relations within the group. In that sense interactions among founding members were routinised from the start, but it was through Sutadi that formal organisation began to crystallise. The forms which were adopted came naturally to the founding members--they reflected the style of organisation embedded within other spheres of social life.¹⁴⁰ In any case, formal organisation remained extremely limited up to 1945. In practice Sumarah was still small enough so that all of its active members knew each other personally. In fact they not only knew each other, but frequently met. The most important leaders were highly mobile, visiting newly formed groups regularly. Highly motivated regional members often made trips to Yogya and Solo. So basically, during this period Sumarah remained simply a network of friends, interacting continuously on an individual basis.

¹³⁸Sources as in note 30 above.

¹³⁹DPP, *Sejarah*, p.35. This Kyai Girijaya is mentioned briefly in Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java*, Singapore, 1973, p.55.

¹⁴⁰Benedict Anderson, "Religion and Politics in Indonesia since Independence", in Anderson et.al., *Religion and Social Ethos in Indonesia*, Clayton, Vic, 1977. Anderson draws attention to the impact of colonial "club styled" organising on kebatinan. The point is well taken; though his related argument, that the public (contemporary) representatives of kebatinan are separate from an "inner" circle who they represent is not entirely accurate. The limits of that argument will become clearer, at least implicitly, in my discussion of Sumarah's role within national kebatinan process (see Chapter 8).

Nevertheless, patterns were articulated. The three leaders were known as "*pinisepuh*" and their individual functions were recognised by the group. Other local leaders were already labelled *sesepuh*, *wakil sesepuh*, *kamisepuh*, and *wakil kamisepuh*. Each described an organisational function, most of which were filled by people who were also *pamong*.¹⁴¹ The *pamong*, as spiritual guides for the group, were also distinguished by degrees of spiritual seniority. So roles within the group were clear and the distinction between spiritual and organisational functions also emerged early. That distinction was implied in the roles of the *pinisepuh* and reflected in functions farther down the ladder. In principle organisational activity never depended on spiritual standing, but in practice only those of recognised spiritual seniority tended to perform organisational functions in the early period.

The organisers became involved not only with co-ordination of local meetings, but also with correspondence between centres. Sutadi became responsible for arranging itineraries for the trips Sukino made to visit regional groups.¹⁴² Letters also became vehicles for contact relating to spiritual experience. Early leaders often checked with each other as their experiences of guidance grew. More often, people wrote letters to Sukino to get clarification of their private experiences and progress in meditation. In responding, Sukino activated the same principle of attunement that applied in face-to-face guidance. He would not only relate to the verbal expression, but also, through vibrational attunement, to the inner experience referred to.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹These functions are clarified in Sutadi's *Ancer-ancer Toemindakipoen Pagoejoban Sumarah*, 1947. As the outlines of the organisation began to take shape during 1947 and 1948, Sutadi sent formal confirmations of local functions. These letters, Serat Pikukuh, are among his papers.

¹⁴²Among Sutadi's papers are copies of letters to Suhardo, then in Bonjonegoro, and Sukino, in Yogya. For example, in May 1948, Sutadi arranged details of rail transportation, tickets, and a full itinerary for a visit Sukino and Suhardo made to a whole series of branches in East Java (Babat, Cepu, Bojonegoro, Madiun, etc.).

¹⁴³I have copies of some letters in which Sukino advises individuals, but they are from later periods (in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* V II, pp.245-250 and from Ponorogo in the mid-sixties). The only letters I have from the forties are among those he sent Sutadi (October 1, 1946); August 9, 1947; May 15, 1948; and August 9, 1948). These deal mainly with organisational and general spiritual matters. However many individuals mentioned their private correspondence with him and the principles upon which contact worked are still practiced. Sukino was a natural focus for many questions, but others, and many current leaders, continue correspondence on this basis. For example, Sri Sampoerno has carried on active correspondence, including spiritual advice, with foreign followers throughout the seventies.

As the group gradually expanded in scale the need for guidelines emerged. This need was felt almost as soon as Sumarah reached beyond its geographical origins in Yogya. The statement of Sumarah aims known as the "*Sesanggeman*" (see appendix) came as a response to that need. They became a guide so that prospective members could check their attunement to the aims of Sumarah practice. Although they have occasionally been treated as "vows", being memorised prior to initiation, usually they remain a reminder or clarification of aims. Like the early organisational structure, they were articulated by Sutadi. He first formulated them in 1938 through meditative consultation with Sukino and Suhardo. Then in 1940 the wording was reworked and they were officially adopted by the group. Although the wording was refined in 1947, they have remained the same in substance and they continue to function as a statement of Sumarah aims.¹⁴⁴

The conference which adopted the *Sesanggeman* took place on April 22 at Sutadi's residence in Solo. It was the first formal Sumarah conference and included representatives from Yogya, Pati, Magelang, Madiun, Bojonegoro, Kediri, and Surabaya.¹⁴⁵ It is quite significant that it required a conference rather than just the *pinisepuh* to adopt the statement of aims. This was the earliest indication of the decision-making principle which has applied all through Sumarah history. Steps which affect the whole have to be affirmed by the whole, not just by leadership. As in the conferences which have followed, the procedure requires not only a consensus, but one which follows a collective witnessing of *Hakiki* within the sphere of a guided meditation.¹⁴⁶ As Sumarah experiences it, this principle is an activation of the dynamic which explains cultural traditions--not a conditioned reflex of social norms.

¹⁴⁴Minor changes are still made, even since 1947. For example, in 1978 the word "kepercayaan" was substituted for "kebatinan" (which in the original Javanese was "kabatosan"). These changes are minor, however, whereas the change in 1947 was apparently substantial. The earliest copies of the *Sesanggeman* that I have are from 1947, so I do not know exactly what the 1940 version was. In the DPP, *Perkembangan*, pp.35-36 it is explained that the first version was not clear because of the colonial and repressive atmosphere. As a result it was only in 1947 that the aims of the organisation were completely clear and open. ("Sajang Sasanggeman tadi pada waktu itu belum diperintjhi dengan djelas, masih belum blak blakan. Karena apa? Karena dibuatnja masih dalam alam pendjadjahan Belanda, djadi belum bisa terus terang.")

¹⁴⁵DPP, *Sejarah*, p.20. The wording was sorted out first in a meeting at Sutadi's house in late 1938. Apparently the wording agreed on by the three, Sukino, Suhardo, and Sutadi, remained incomprehensible to other members. As a result Sutadi was given the job of clarifying them, then his version was adopted in the 1940 conference.

¹⁴⁶This process will be clarified in connection with the discussion of organisation in Chapter 6.

The Sumarah process resonates with Javanism. It is clearly linked to the village process of *musyawarah-mufakat*, consensual meeting of elders. It also recalls the classical notion of *Ratu Adil*, of the Just King as no more than a channel, mouthpiece, or focaliser for the collective. Finally it conforms in form to the Islamic concept of *ijma*, of a consensus reached collectively by the *ulama*. There is every reason to associate these forms of Sumarah process with cultural traditions--Sumarah people actively point to such associations. However when they do, they suggest that their experience rises internally as a demonstration of spiritual impulses which gave rise to those traditions, not as a reflex of social forms.¹⁴⁷ On the surface patterns 'conform to tradition'; internally they arise not because of tradition, but through experience of the 'Truth' which underlies them.

This same paradoxical relationship between experience and tradition is reflected in private experiences of founders. Like Sukino, Suhardo and Sutadi went through intense struggle before overcoming reluctance to act. This struggle was also more than conditioned response to the demands of authority. Tradition carries warnings against the dangers of *pamrih*, selfish or ulterior motives in those in power.¹⁴⁸ Javanism also admonishes against putting oneself forward--suggesting leadership is only proper when called forth by circumstance. As in the case of collective decision-making, so in the individual experiences. Within the context of realisation it is spiritual principle, not cultural norm, which animates experience. From the standpoint of internal experience there is contact with the same fundamental reality which produced traditional maxims, a resonance far beyond 'conditioned reflexes'.

Sukino went through a long period after revelation of doubting capacity to communicate. Suhardo doubted whether the guidance which led him beyond Yogya rose from beyond ego. Sutadi resisted the call to action. Each recognised guidance 'beyond ego' long before being willing to act. This reluctance has been experienced by numerous members, leading many to avoid functions as *pamong*. There are several sources which generate reluctance. In the first place spiritual practice is experienced by those who undertake it as an awakening to the subtle powers of ego. Intense introspection, as is fundamental to Sumarah, leads to self-awareness, consciousness of ways in

¹⁴⁷As a "cautionary" note, I might add that my aim here is simple to report the perspective of insiders, not to assert or attempt to demonstrate that Sumarah practices unequivocally result from any one source.

¹⁴⁸"Pamrih" is explored within Benedict Anderson's, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture", in Claire Holt et. al. ed., *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, Ithaca, 1972, pp.38-43; also within Niels Mulder, *Mysticism and Everyday Life in Contemporary Java*, Singapore, 1978, pp.36-38. Mulder especially emphasises its centrality within the ethics of kebatinan, and rightly so. I believe it is quite precise and sufficient to define "pamrih" as action based on ego.

which personal actions are dictated by subconscious self interest. Individuals become aware they cannot trust even conscious intentions; they know that 'meaning well' is not enough to by-pass ego. Secondly through spiritual practice people become increasingly conscious of the impact of their actions, even their feelings. Meditation produces awareness of interconnectedness as reality.

Increasing awareness of vibrational interpenetration also becomes an experience of power. It is in precisely this sense that consciousness is linked to occult powers. As self-realisation grows, the force behind individual thought and action increases. This power is tied to the attunement members grow to experience with the internal states of others, a recognition implied in the process of guidance. In sumarah terms people continuously interact through exchanges of vibration far more subtle than those evident to the senses. The greater the purity, clarity, and awareness of an individual, the more they have capacity to influence others, in short the more *power* they have. Increasing power can be understood in two ways. First it increases through concentration, as a spiritually aware person does not dissipate energy through multiple thoughts, but is more fully present in the moment. Secondly power increases because dissolution of internal blocks results in increasing reception of energies from beyond the body.

So those moving toward fulfilment of mystical quest experience a powerful tension and challenge. On the one hand they become intensely aware of the subtle power of ego and the subconscious; on the other they develop increasing consciousness beyond ego, power. It is this tension, not cultural conditioning, which generates reluctance to act. Like other mystics, Sukino, Suhardo, and Sutadi grew to realise their responsibility toward others *through* increasing awareness of their own ego limits. They recognised all too clearly that increasing consciousness brings increasing power and hence greater responsibility. For those with power, as Sukino's visions clarified, errors are multiplied. Karmic penalties grow heavier simply because of the increasing depth of impact a realised person begins to have on others. Here a spiritual maxim applies and is clarified: the higher you are, the farther you fall, a principle giving rise to cultural emphasis on the spiritual responsibilities of power.¹⁴⁹

By 1945, at the end of the Japanese occupation, the roots of Sumarah were firmly established. Although Sumarah membership was no more than five hundred, many of those members had been mature and respected mystics

¹⁴⁹I believe that the principles I have outlined here explain, in terms relevant to Javanese culture as a whole, why actual practice of kebatinan is thought to be essential for those in positions of power and responsibility: egoless action is only possible, in these terms, through direct personal realisation, it cannot result simply from belief or adherence to etiquette.

even prior to contact with Sumarah. This meant that the nucleus, the cadre of *pamong*, was solid. There were firm roots not only in Yogya, but also in all of the major urban centres of the ethnic Javanese region. The impact of these early roots on subsequent expansion is clear: Sumarah's strongest centres now are, with few exceptions, the same places it became established in prior to 1945.¹⁵⁰ Many of the key features of later development were already established. Organisational patterns have been thoroughly overhauled twice; but the absence of ritual, the *pamong* system, the principle of collective witnessing, and the division between spiritual and organisational spheres have been consistent. Texture and emphases have altered; but keynotes--surrender, introspection, attunement, and experiential verification--remain.

There is great significance to the fact that Sumarah was born during the last decade of colonial domination. Dutch rule and the Japanese occupation determined limits. Movements such as Sumarah were subject to surveillance and suspicion--they could not become public organisations. As a result Sumarah's first period was characterised by intensity and depth of experience rather than mass and expansion, roots became solid before it appeared above ground during the revolution. Sumarah confirms Anderson's notion that the Japanese occupation functioned as a spiritual preparation for revolution.¹⁵¹ The intensity and penetration of Sumarah's roots became a source of strength during the revolutionary years. Because the nucleus was solid, its leaders remained tuned to their central aims in the midst of intense social dislocation. At the same time, the atmosphere of colonial domination provided an impetus for preoccupation not only with spiritual, but also with physical liberation.

¹⁵⁰Jakarta, Semarang (including Demak), and Surabaya (including Gresik) have become much more important centres since the revolution; prior to that real strength lay only in the Javanist zone. Activity along the *pasisir* is the exception to continuity which otherwise links current centres to pre-1945 nuclei.

¹⁵¹Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, Ithaca, 1972, pp.1-15. I am giving this point a different "slant", but believe that it converges with the argument Anderson is making.

chapter 4

SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

A passing of generations is in process and the transition has become rapid recently. However since the Indonesian declaration of independence in 1945 it is mainly those who came of age during the "revolution" who have dominated the nation. Privileged by their role in and rise through that collective rite of passage, the cohort which reached maturity then have been disproportionately influential since. As the youth of Anderson's "*pemuda revolution*" they helped shape events of that time; ever since their visions have had special power.¹⁵² Their influence has not been restricted to elite discourses; it has reached all levels of local, educational, cultural and religious life. In this respect the phase of military engagement and diplomatic transition, from August 1945 to December 1949, conventionally delineating "the revolution", marked the beginning of a cultural transition which is still contentious.¹⁵³

Studies of the Indonesian revolution have probed far beyond analysis of the politics of states and parties.¹⁵⁴ Following lines opened up by John Smail's theoretical formulation, focusing on the importance of local history, and his thesis, on *Bandung in the Early Revolution*, excellent studies have probed local social movements rather than being restricted to focus on narratives of "national" events.¹⁵⁵ In reviewing recent contributions in this vein Frederick

¹⁵² Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP 1972).

¹⁵³ Even at the political and military levels this conventional dating, as in Anthony Reid's *The Indonesian National Revolution* (Melbourne: Longman 1974), could be problematized. An array of rebellions (Darul Islam, PRRI, Peristiwa Tiga Daerah) continued intermittently through the 1950s. Even agreements with the Dutch and in the international community were renegotiated (with nationalization of major foreign enterprises in 1956 and conflicts over both Irian Jaya and Malaysia) suggesting that the establishment of the state has been "in process" since 1950. Essentially, however, my point here relates to cultural rather than political-military processes.

¹⁵⁴ At this level the early work of George Kahin, *The Indonesian National Revolution* (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP 1952), had covered the ground to the satisfaction of most.

¹⁵⁵ The key essay he contributed, and one still often referred to with good reason, was "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia", *Journal of Southeast Asian History* V 2 N 2 (1961). His

suggests we have reached the end of this line of inquiry. He notes that informants, those who recall the revolution, are on record or dying off; that the major archival sources for the social history of the period have been tapped; and that theoretically the potential gains from this track have been made. In concluding he suggests that new perspectives may yet be opened through Annales styled and comparative work.¹⁵⁶

Social, economic and political domains usually retain center stage in local histories and they are shadowed by preoccupation with agendas of power. If popular visions are constrained by the perspective of "winners", local histories may focus overly on "losers" and both views tacitly reflect the same senses of power and purpose. Some sources on the Indonesian revolution provide glimpses of collective will and spiritual depths, but even amidst a cacophonous diversity of voices ordinary individuals rarely emerge.¹⁵⁷ Issues of power submerge the everyday so that if the draught of 1945 overshadowed politics for villagers, that fact does not loom large in our vision of the time.

Here my aim is to highlight yet another dimension of ideas and practices intimately embedded in the revolutionary process, to supplement the array of perspectives already in view.¹⁵⁸ This excursion works through local micro history and operates with ethnographic logic. In ethnography village studies have general relevance through the *dynamics* they bring into view. Similarly here the significance of narrative does not rest on the national role of actors alluded to. Assessment of the "importance" of Sumarah is not at issue. Sumarah perspectives on its wider role ought to be taken into account, but my accent is on the window the experiences of members opens to spiritual concerns within the revolutionary process. Such spiritual impulses were

thesis was published as *Bandung in the Early Revolution 1945-1946: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1964).

¹⁵⁶ William Frederick, "Two new studies of the Indonesian revolution: the end of local history?", *Asian Studies Review* V 15 N 3 (April 1992) pp 151-6. Frederick's comments arose through consideration of Robert Cribb's *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin 1991) and Anton Lucas's *One Soul One Struggle: Region and Revolution in Indonesia*. (Sydney: Allen & Unwin 1991).

¹⁵⁷ Colin Wild and Peter Carey editors, *Born in Fire: The Indonesian Struggle for Independence* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP 1986). In this volume, generated through BBC radio, contributions by Nishijima (pp 86-91), Trimurti (pp 103-7), and Abdurrahman (pp 132-5) are especially notable for the extent to which they touch "popular will".

¹⁵⁸ A fine sampling of views, many of which are expanded in books by the same authors, is available in Audrey Kahin ed. *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution: Unity from Diversity* (Honolulu: U Hawaii P, 1985).

expressed not only through mystical, millenarian, and magical practices, superficially akin to Sumarah but equally through radical Islamic aspirations which, in subtle but important respects it also echoes.

Movements such as Sumarah are largely invisible, they do not appear in public records of events and they elude, by their nature even when not by intent, the eyes of recording authorities. Even local newspapers make only the most marginal mention of them and this may be so, as in the case of Sumarah, even when leading figures are also sometimes public names.¹⁵⁹ In standard histories the people I am referring to are faceless, they are the "rural *kyai*" Dahm, Anderson, and Frederick refer to. Usually such movements are mentioned when speaking of rural eruptions into the urban political contexts of revolutionary struggle, especially in relation to the battle for Surabaya after the British landing in October 1945.¹⁶⁰

Sumarah vision

The movement originated in Yogyakarta, the same court city which housed Republican government during the revolution. Like the "nation", Sumarah surfaced publicly in 1945 but only became established as a formal

¹⁵⁹ In commenting (thoroughly and usefully) on my thesis, Ben Anderson urged me to further check newspapers from the revolutionary period, especially to track the activities of Sumarah related *lasykar* units. Since then I have gone through, in Yogyakarta, Monash, Australian National, and Cornell libraries, the following: *Patriot* (1946), *al-Djihad* (1946-7), *Suluh Indonesia* (1953-65), *Menara* (Solo 1945-6), *Merah Poetih* (Solo), *Perintis* (Solo) *Soera Moeda* (Solo), *Darmo Kondo* (Solo 1907-39), *Banteng* (Solo 1946-7), *Soeloeh Tentara* (Yogya 1947-8), *Benteng Negara* (Semarang 1953), *Pandji Poestaka* (1922-45, a spot check only), *Sikap Kita* (Yogya 1948). Military histories, especially publications of the Diponegoro division available in the same libraries have also been checked. These efforts were worthwhile in relation to other projects, but here only serve to confirm that, as I expected, the normal routines of historical research do not even provide surface reference to such movements.

¹⁶⁰ Bernard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence* (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP 1969, pp 1-11); B Anderson, *Op Cit*, pp 156-7); William Frederick, *Visions and Heat: The Making of the Indonesian Revolution* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP 1989, pp 259-67). An important caveat here: Sumarah bridged urban and rural domains, as did many movements of the time. Its leadership in the 1940s was mainly urban, but membership, especially in the Bojonegoro and Madiun regions, was heavily rural. My reference to "rural eruptions" is specifically tied to comment, clarified later, about *Kyai* Abdulhamid's Madiun following during the struggle for Surabaya.

organisation in 1950. Like the nation, the movement was conceived in the consciousness of a pre-war generation but birthed through the dynamism of revolutionary youth in the late 1940s. Sumarah origins lay in the experiences of Javanese mystics from the generation which had matured by the end of World War I, the first wave of those who experienced Dutch education. It became organised through the same wave of *pemuda* activism which brought the nation into being.

During the revolutionary period members of Sumarah were one with that struggle. Although the focus of their practice lay beyond the material sphere, they found in the process of working toward it they were led to commitment within revolutionary process. In their context it seemed natural that private experiences, even of meditation, were shaped by preoccupations they shared with others around them. The brotherhood they belonged to was also transformed in the process. Its membership jumped from around five hundred, as it stood during the Japanese occupation, to over three thousand in 1950; its composition was altered by an influx of youth and with them came new forms of organization.¹⁶¹ Even private spiritual practices within the group were geared directly to respond to the revolutionary situation.

The intensity and vitality of the revolution raised fundamental spiritual issues which remain of interest now. It is often thought, in Java as in the West, that mysticism results in an escapist mentality, that people are driven to it when "realities" are too intense to accept, that they take refuge in "irrational dreams" as a defence against intolerable conditions. To imagine that mystical practices decrease interest in and activity within the social world, that it is "other worldly" and "world rejecting", may be valid as a comment on some particular practices.¹⁶² Practices of "surrender" or commitment to "harmonizing

¹⁶¹ As of 1950, with the establishment of formal organization, it becomes possible to estimate membership more precisely. In the first congress the membership totalled 3262, of whom 147 were *pamong* (Dewan Pimpinan Pusat, *Sejarah Paguyuban Sumarah*, Jakarta, 1973. p.69). Note: this Sumarah history, produced in the early 1970s, was republished by the Direktorat Pembinaan Penghayat Kepercayaan, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Jakarta 1980. This occurred in the context of Drs Arymurthy's efforts as Director to produce materials on *kebatinan* generally. My references here are still to the earlier internal Sumarah version.

¹⁶² Weber argued that Indian mysticism was based on rejection of the physical world (see "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions", in H. Gerth and C.W. Mills eds, *From Max Weber*, NY, 1948, pp.323-330). He recognized the relevance of "transcendence" to action, especially in discussion of Christian and Sufi attitudes toward economic activity and, in "The Social Psychology of the World Religions" (in the

with natural process" are easily read as implying fatalism. But practitioners misread to this effect for the same reason rationalistic observers may: each begins with the premise that individuals are discrete and separate. However the principle underlying practices of mystical union is the opposite. Fundamentally conviction that "all is one" implies that each individual is integral within wider process and when that principle is *realized* in practice, the result is not disengagement from social process, but attunement and action harmonized within it.

Sumarah experience within the national revolution provide an opening to understanding. The revolutionary activities and inner experiences of its members interpenetrated. For them mysticism provided a practical and direct way of coping with intense realities, not irrational escapism. Meditation practice was a pathway to facing and acting meaningfully within the realities of a stressful time. Their spiritual experience was directed toward surrender and openness *within and to* the revolution, not to an abstracted "spiritual" construed as beyond the social events of their time. Even if these qualities of Sumarah may not be typical, in any case they cast light on a matter of principle relevant to consideration of mysticism as such.¹⁶³

The relationship between Sumarah origins and nationalism was fundamental. Sukino described nationalism as *producing* revelation, as it came in response to "prayer" for independence on September 8, 1935.¹⁶⁴ Ever since then Sumarah members associated their origins with nationalism, though the

same volume pp. 267-301) states: "Only the religious virtuoso... strove for sacred values, which were 'other-worldly' as compared with such solid goods of this world as health, wealth, and long life... Psychologically considered, man in quest of salvation has been primarily preoccupied by attitudes of the here and now." (pp.277-278). At the same time he differentiated between "Western" and "Eastern" mysticisms, arguing the latter have been more hostile to economic life (p.289). Niels Mulder, in *Mysticism and Everyday Life in Contemporary Java* (Singapore, 1978, pp.99-113), comments on the "inner" orientation of Javanese culture.

¹⁶³ The limits of my argument need to be explicit: my point is of principle and is not affected by the extent to which public practices contradict it; principles and practices never correspond in any social domain.

¹⁶⁴ The origins of the movement are detailed in "The Sumarah Movement in Javanese Mysticism", my PhD thesis (University of Wisconsin-Madison 1980) under Prof JRW Smail's supervision. This essay, based on chapter 3 of the thesis, reframes and supplements the original. I have drawn on research undertaken since the thesis to some extent, but the month between commissioning and submission dates for this piece, was heavily committed; this limited opportunity to update, expand and probe newly available sources.

logic of that connection was not always clear. It was only during revolution that the cry for freedom (*merdeka*) and call to total conviction (*iman bulat*) merged. Sukino's prayer, the one which preceded experience of revelation, had been addressed to the situation of Indonesian people; his revelation, the "answer", was directed to humanity. On the one hand there is the paradox of spiritual teaching rising from political impulse; on the other a universal message in response to a parochial issue.

During the decade from 1935 to 1945 Sumarah activities reflected consistent nationalist preoccupation such as had become common among urban Dutch educated Javanese. Sumarah meetings were watched by colonial authorities. On one occasion a police informant attended a Yogya meeting but left in silence. Several times members were called in for questioning, especially about their practice of martial arts (*pencak-silat*), an adjunct to Sumarah as well as other practices. Sukino asked his followers to name him and make his personal responsibility clear so that he would be called in rather than others. Apparently the Dutch were satisfied, as inquiries at that point ended with the mild comment that Sumarah practice might be more appropriate for police than for the public. While no major incident is recorded, an atmosphere of suspicion existed.¹⁶⁵

Some suspicion would have been justified. Sukino's visions did result in increasing conviction that independence was imminent. The influence of and preoccupation with Dutch domination is recognized in Sumarah histories. One informant commented that in 1940 the first version of the Sumarah "vows", the *Sesanggeman*, which function as guiding principles for the group was vague and evasive. He linked that lack of clarity to the dampening atmosphere of colonialism, and suggested that clarity of consciousness and expression only became possible with independence. Preoccupation with independence was pervasive for those drawn to Sumarah, but no radical actions by members are recorded prior to the Japanese occupation.

¹⁶⁵ Dewan Pimpinan Pusat, *Perkembangan Panguden Ilmu Sumarah didalam Paguyuban Sumarah* 1991 Vol.I, p.36. According to this description the Dutch police frequently called Sumarah members for interrogation about *kanoman* practices: "*Dalam waktu pendjajahan Belanda, meskipun Pagujuban Sumarah sudah mempunjai Sesanggeman termaksud, akan tetapi masih mengalami bermacam-macam rintangan dari pemerintah Hindia-Belanda, dan banjak warga sumarah dipanggil ke Kantor polisi.*" Although frequently called, apparently none were detained. The police were apparently mainly concerned with ensuring that practices adhered to their view of acceptable social etiquette, not involving offerings or implying "worship" of people, for example.

Like many Javanese, Sukino envisioned the Japanese occupation during the late 1930s. At the time he interpreted his vision of the arrival of Japanese troops as indicating that they would join Sumarah and along with many others, he initially believed that the Japanese arrived as true liberators.¹⁶⁶ Some of his friends, such as H. Soetadi in Surakarta, initially collaborated within the Japanese administration and in 1943 Sukino publicly urged young men to join Peta, the Japanese sponsored defence corps. While speaking at a celebration of Hari Raya Idul Fitri, marking the ending of the fast month of Ramadan, he suggested that the *pemuda* should join Peta in order to get military training as preparation for the establishment of a national army.¹⁶⁷ One Sumarah youth who did join, Zahid Hussein, was the adopted son of Sukino's special secretary (*penulis Hakiki*), Bariunhartono. Zahid recalls having been summoned by Sukino, who related his earlier visions and stressed the significance of Zahid's responsibility.¹⁶⁸

Sukino and his friends gradually joined others who realized that the Japanese had no intention of honouring promises of independence. As that understanding grew during 1944, the senior Sumarah members in Yogya gathered to probe the reality of their situation. They met in the home of Prawiroatmodjo to meditate on the relationship between the Japanese occupation and Indonesian independence.¹⁶⁹ After the collective meditation one of the group, Hardjogoeno, shared the vision he had experienced during their meditation. He described having seen a world map as though projected on a screen in the sky. On the map he saw the Japanese returning northward to their home. Sukino responded with conviction that the vision indicated that independence would follow Japanese military defeat--he then warned that Sumarah should keep its understanding secret, for obvious reasons. On the basis of this clarity, the collected elders (*sesepuh*) entered meditation on a

¹⁶⁶ For comments on the general Javanese response to the Japanese occupation see Harry Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, The Hague, 1958, pp.106-108.

¹⁶⁷ Sukinohartono in Suwondo, ed. *Himpunan Wewarah Paguyuban Sumarah*. Vol.IV, Ngawi. p.258. This source, a bound compilation in six volumes of correspondence and organizational documents from 1949 to 1961, was compiled by a leading secretary within the East Javanese organization.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Zahid Hussein (Jakarta July 1973). Interviews referred to in this context are recorded in field journals underpinning thesis research (January 1971 and February 1974) but also during return visits since.

¹⁶⁹ An early member of Sumarah in Yogyakarta who was later well known for the Javanese-Indonesian dictionary he produced.

second question: who would lead the free nation? They got the unequivocal answer: Sukarno.¹⁷⁰

Given the timing of these visions, there is nothing remarkable about their content. The Japanese were already in Manchuria when Sukarno predicted their progress toward Indonesia; the Pacific war had begun to swing toward the Allies when the Yogya elders met in 1944; and Sukarno was already in a commanding position due to his pre-war following and occupation activities. It nevertheless bears reminder that such facts are never so self-evident as they appear in retrospect. In any case in each instance Sumarah members sought guidance and the authority of *Hakiki*, a spiritual guidance they believed came straight from God, rather than acting on calculated estimation of the situation. From their standpoint directing of questions to *Hakiki* meant effort to base action on attunement to the undercurrents of power which determine historical process, to act in accordance with the divine. Sumarah sources make clear that often the meaning of these visions only became clear in retrospect, so the fact that they are highlighted is not tied to belief in their literal predictive value.

Predictions (*ramalan*) are a common feature of the Javanist system. Tremendous attention used to be devoted to interpretation of *primbon*, calendrical almanacs which underpin Javanese "astrology". The Joyoboyo cycle, Ronggowarsito's predictions and other prophetic cycles resurface periodically in public awareness.¹⁷¹ Many Javanese still trust in contacts with spirits for information about the future. On the whole Sumarah members devote little attention to such issues; their practices are firmly oriented to the "present". Nevertheless Sumarah's founders apparently made conscious efforts to comprehend their historical moment as an element within a divine plan. Not satisfied to act on the basis of "reasoned interpretations", in effect, they aimed to tune to cosmic patterns and meanings, revealing conviction that past and future are woven into the present.

Sumarah members did act on the understandings received. Sukarno wrote to Sukarno in December 1944 to inform him of the existence and nature of the brotherhood.¹⁷² He underlined the nationalist orientation of the group and asked for advice as to how it could best contribute to the struggle. Sukarno

¹⁷⁰ Sukarno in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, pp.258-259; and DPP, *Sejarah Paguyuban Sumarah* (Jakarta 1973), pp.24-25.

¹⁷¹ See Kamadjaja, *Zaman Edan* (Yogya, 1964); Tjantrik Mataram, *Peranan Ramelan Djojobojo dalam Revolusi Kita* (Bandung, 1950); and Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP 1969) pp.1-20. I have explored the relevance of related ideas within the Suharto period in my "Interpreting Javanist Millenarian Imagery" in Paul Alexander ed. *Creating Indonesian Cultures* (Sydney: Oceania Publications 1989).

¹⁷² Sukinohartono in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, pp.259-260; and DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.25-26.

sent a postcard response, in April of 1945, urging Sumarah to organize itself as efficiently as possible. As a result the Sumarah leaders designated R. Sidarto, a young member, to lay the foundations of an organization. That effort in 1945 failed to produce results.¹⁷³ It did, however, indicate a willingness within the association to adapt to changing circumstance. It is also notable that in those first days of the revolution Sumarah's founders already felt that the *pemuda* should be responsible for organizing.

Some young members were active in the months prior to declaration of independence. One Sumarah youth within Peta, Oemar Slamet, worked with friends to form an underground. They succeeded in taking several cases of ammunition from the Peta stockpiles in Bantul, to the west of Yogya, and reported them as stolen. Later Oemar Slamet became a leader within the *pemuda* upsurge to claim Yogya, in the days immediately following the proclamation.¹⁷⁴ In those few days the context of national struggle was radically transformed, as the long period of suppressed waiting gave way to public organizing and physical conflict.

wartime activities

Although members were active individually and shared senses of what the revolution implied, "Sumarah" did not exist as an organization which could take formal positions on military or ideological issues. Some actions, especially those of the *pemuda* Sumarah in the Madiun area and the Barisan Berani Mati did involve collective activity related to Sumarah membership. For the most part Sumarah members participated as individuals, involving themselves in a spectrum of parties and activities. Given its politicized context, it is important to note that Sumarah managed to avoid being ideologically tagged. Leaders did, on the other hand, frequently and explicitly vocalize commitment to nationalism, and in this they implicitly seemed closest to the PNI. However locally, in the varied regions of its activity, members were as likely to identify with Masyumi, the leading Muslim party (which in this period included both Nadhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah styled Muslims).

Following the declaration of independence there were several months of increasing conflict, especially centering on the Allied reoccupation, under British auspices, of the port cities of Jakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya. Sumarah youth from Yogya joined in the fighting in Semarang; a more substantial group participated in the battle for Surabaya. In both cases popular military units (*lasykar*) were formed under Sumarah leadership and with substantially Sumarah composition. In Central Java the unit, a collection of squadrons in fact, as its units operated separately, became known as the Barisan Berani Mati, the corps of those "unafraid of death". In East Java the unit is sometimes

¹⁷³ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.21.

¹⁷⁴ Surono, *Pagujuban Sumarah*, Yogya, 1965, pp.9-13.

referred to with the same name, but was more often known simply as "*pemuda Sumarah*".¹⁷⁵

According to one member of the Barisan Berani Mati, Wahyono Pinandaya in Yogyakarta, their brigade was part of Battalion 13 led by Bung Tomo and existed from July 1947 to April 1948. Its leader was Colonel Hasanuddin Pasopati, who coordinated units operating in Yogya, Solo, Wlingi and Madiun, and apart from Mostar, a well travelled sailor from Gresik, all its members were very young. Wahyono, a second year high school (SMA) student at the time, became a lieutenant in "A company", led by a school friend of his, Abuhassan, and they were active during the first clash against the Dutch in 1947.¹⁷⁶

From the perspective of the revolution as a whole these Sumarah units numbered among the countless irregular forces of the popular revolutionary army. Both were dissolved in 1948, with their members returning to civilian life. Only a few Sumarah members became active in the regular army and remained in the military after 1950. Among the latter was Zahid Hussein, the Peta trainee mentioned above. He eventually attained the rank of General and worked during the 1970s and 1980s in President Suharto's offices in Bina Graha, next door to the Presidential palace in Jakarta. In the same period he was one of the key national leaders of Sumarah and active in umbrella movements which aimed to take in all of the independent spiritual movements, in the SKK (*Sekretariat Kerjasama Kepercayaan*) and then HPK (*Himpunan Penghayat Kepercayaan*). Zahid Hussein is an exception however, as most Sumarah members participated in guerrilla units without becoming careerists in the military.

The character of the two Sumarah units differed somewhat. The Barisan Berani Mati included a number of ex-Peta leaders and became well known, even finding mention in a few Western histories of the revolution.¹⁷⁷ It developed a reputation for honesty, meaning that its members were not

¹⁷⁵ According to Surono (in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.VI, p.162) the name 'Barisan Berani Mati' only applied to the group that was organized during the Second Dutch Police Action and led by Hasanuddin Pasopati. Surono related that Sumarah youth were involved in fighting under Abdulhamid in Surabaya and under Oemar Slamet in Yogya during 1945. There were almost certainly other, non-Sumarah, units which used this name, but the Sumarah group by this name was well known.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Wahyono Pinandaya (Yogyakarta July 20, 1981).

¹⁷⁷ Charles Anderson, "The Military Aspects of the Madiun Affair", *Indonesia* No.21 (1976), p.46. Anderson quotes *Pacific* (14/10/48) as reporting that the Barisan Berani Mati kidnapped a number of prominent *kyai* in the Pacitan area in 1948. It is not clear whether this was the Yogya based Sumarah unit by that name. Anthony Reid refers to the unit in discussing *lasykar* actions (in *Indonesian National Revolution*, Melbourne, 1974, p.22).

generally guilty of private pillage--as characterized many *lasykar* activities. It also became very closely associated with Sudirman, the commander-in-chief of the regular army. The East Javanese unit led by Kyai Abdulhamid, a "*perdikan kyai*" from the village of Banjarsari, southeast of Madiun, remained more anonymous. His unit, "Barisan Pembrontakan Rakyat Indonesia", appeared to be one of the countless "Kyai led" units which responded to the calls of Bung Tomo during the battle of Surabaya. Although neither was politically affiliated, the Barisan Berani Mati was attuned to Sudirman's Javanist and populist stance while Abdulhamid's unit probably tended to empathize more with the traditionalist Islam of the NU.¹⁷⁸ These inclinations reflected Sumarah's pre-revolutionary roots and the tone of the regions they rose from.

Little detail of their activities is available. Kyai Abdulhamid's group was most active during the fighting in Surabaya and continued to exist through 1948, but little mention is made of specific activities by any of my informants.¹⁷⁹ The Barisan Berani Mati was active during the Dutch actions of 1947 and 1948. During the Madiun affair in 1948 one of its units operated in the Pacitan region; during the Dutch occupation of Yogya it was in the hills of

¹⁷⁸ Sukino's connections with Sudirman are described, following his own account, in the DPP, *Sejarah*, pp. 27-28. Though the official Sumarah history relates that Sukino was "entrusted with the care of Sudirman's family", apparently he did not know the general personally. In an interview with Roestiyah, Sukino's daughter (in Jakarta July 8, 1981) she explained that Sukino never cared for the family physically. According to her he only "tracked" them spiritually to guard their condition. In probing this connection with Arymurthy (Jakarta in July 1981), he explained that senior actors within national politics generally downplayed specific connections they had with spiritual groups. Conversely, spiritual groups emphasize and exaggerate their connections to elite actors. The evidence I have only serves to establish that Sumarah collectively felt aligned to Sudirman. Several informants connected the Barisan Berani Mati to Sudirman; one even reported it had been associated with Suharto, now President (Ratmin interview Gresik, August 1973). The Islamic orientation of Abdulhamid's following can be inferred from the NU affiliation of close supporters like Sujadi (whose father was a founder of NU in Ponorogo in 1926), from the strength of Masyumi membership in Sumarah (evident in the Madiun membership list of 1948), and from the strength of his village following in that region since.

¹⁷⁹ In meetings with Kyai Abdulhamid in the early 1970s I attempted to draw him out, to solicit stories of the revolution and spread of Sumarah in the Madiun region. His response, that it happened "little by little with the help of God" was classic. The archives kept in Banjarsari were a significant source I knew of that was not opened up to me. In contrast Solo, Ngawi and Ponorogo records were made freely available.

the Gunung Kidul region along with Sudirman, the Commander in Chief of the Republican forces.¹⁸⁰ Although both units were affiliated with Sumarah, neither took shape purely as a collectivity of Sumarah members.

According to Wahyono, Bariunhartono and other leading Sumarah figures regularly led meditation practice for his unit, but he remained unaware of its connection to Sumarah until after the unit had dissolved, when he joined Bariun's meditations back in Yogya. Another informant in Solo, later known in Kampong Sewu as a healer and medium, belonged to Kyai Abdulhamid's unit and received his spiritual initiation within it, yet remained unaware of its connection with Sumarah until 1972. Certainly many joined these units without prior knowledge of Sumarah. From their standpoint the units appeared mainly as mystically based guerrilla units, led by respected teachers who had the capacity to teach the martial arts--including their standard Javanist component of invulnerability (*kekebalan*). I will return to discussion of spiritual practices within these units later, but concentrate for the time being on the "external", physical, activities of Sumarah members.

Beyond the sphere of the two units which had Sumarah affiliation, individual founders were involved in a variety of ways. Several founders became unofficial spiritual advisers to military groups. Suhardo, a barber from Yogya and Sukino's first spiritual associate in the practice, lived in Bojonegoro during most of the period from 1945 to 1949. Although not leading a fighting unit, he became a key adviser for Colonel Sudirman (*not* the commander-in-chief, of the same name), the regional leader of the Republic's regular army.¹⁸¹ This Sudirman had been a close friend of Soetadi's in Solo and became involved with Suhardo through Soetadi, from Surakarta and another prewar founder of the movement.

Sudirman designated a junior officer named Sukardji as liaison between Suhardo and the regiment, he also provided Suhardo with an unlimited railway pass. Sukardji remained in the regular army until retirement as a Major in the late 1960s. He eventually consolidated a large Sumarah following in Gresik in the early 1960s and then became the leader of the Surabaya regional branch. In the 1970s he also became a driving force within the East Javanese SKK. Sudirman's contact with Suhardo thus had important by-products. Sukardji's contact, and especially the railway pass he and Suhardo had, facilitated contacts between the branches of the organization during the revolution and

¹⁸⁰ See Anderson *Op Cit.*

¹⁸¹ Anderson, *Op.Cit.*, p.60 lists this Sudirman as commander of the 30th Regiment of the Ronggolawe Division. Sukardji described the connection (interview in Surabaya in August 1973). Suhardo confirmed it (interview in Yogya in October 1972) and added that Sudirman practiced Sumarah. According to Suhardo Sudirman decided to support the government during the Madiun affair only after much agonizing and finally through meditation.

may account for the notable strength of Sumarah's following among railway officials and workers in the Nganjuk, Kertosono, and Jombang area during the 1950s. For his part, Suhardo drew on spiritual knowledge to advise Sudirman.¹⁸²

A somewhat different situation existed in Surakarta. Soetadi was not merely a spiritual adviser to activists, but himself also a politicized participant and a prominent figure within local prewar nationalism. Soetadi, who was born in 1894 and died in 1958, was a member of the Volksrad, the colonial parliament, from May 15, 1921 to June 30, 1931.¹⁸³ In that context his speeches centered on working conditions for school teachers, reflecting the fact that he held his seat as a representative of the teachers union (he had taught in a Muhammadiyah school). He was more widely known through journalism. He edited newspapers including *Neratja* (Jakarta; January 1922 to December 1923), *Darmo Kondo* (Surakarta; from January 1929 to December 1935), *Matahari* (Semarang; January 1936 to March 1942) and *Pemandangan* (Jakarta; January 1938 to March 1942).¹⁸⁴ Soetadi had also played a significant role in the Surakarta Insulande, apparently working to restrain Haji Misbach, in accord with *kraton* injunctions, in March 1918, but then quit during its annual meeting of December 1918. Subsequently he was a commissioner of Budi Oetomo's central committee during 1921.¹⁸⁵

There are no references to Soetadi in literature on the revolution, perhaps because he was most active during the time of greatest chaos, when the city's

¹⁸² Interview with Sukardji (Surabaya August 1973). According to Suhardo's autobiography ("Sejarah Riwayat Hidup Bapak Soehardo", Yogyakarta, August 17, 1973, p.13) the Bojonegoro group was extremely well connected. Its following included: the Bupati (Soerowijono), Patih, Wedono, Ass. Wedono, several *lurah*, and an assortment of policemen, teachers, railway, and forestry officials. Adiman, then Wedono of Babat, remained important within Sumarah in the Pacitan and Madiun areas. However the Bojonegoro branch itself declined rapidly when Suhardo left. When I visited in 1973 it had only about a dozen members, though in Babat and a few neighbouring villages it remained strong.

¹⁸³ John Ingleson, in *In Search of Justice: Workers and Unions in Colonial Java 1908-1926* (Singapore: Oxford UP 1986, p 263 note 135). Soetadi's papers included a certified note that, provided to him on April 21, 1954 by Soeroso, Menteri Social RI, affirming his earlier Volksrad position.

¹⁸⁴ Certified in a letter from Sudarjo Tjokrosisworo, Sekertariat Serikat Perusahaan Surat kabar (Jakarta April 5, 1954) which was among personal papers made available to me by Sri Sampoerno.

¹⁸⁵ Takashi Shiraishi's *An Age in Motion* (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP 1989, p 143-5; pp 230-35).

Republican government was in the Wonogiri hills.¹⁸⁶ He played a role within the formation of a Republican government for the Solo region as a vocal member of the local PNI.¹⁸⁷ Solonese process was more traumatic than the related Yogyanese transformation. In Yogya, where the Sultan initiated profound changes during the Japanese occupation, the Pakualaman accepted and followed the Sultan's lead and both became solid supporters of the Republic. As a result Yogya became a natural center for the revolutionary government and the traditional courts ironically retained their prestige and power precisely by being willing to surrender it. In Solo the Sunan was weaker, rivalled by the Mangkunegaraan, and both wavered in their response to the revolution. The city became a center of populist opposition to the diplomatic strategies of the Republican leaders in Yogya.¹⁸⁸ As a result the formation of a new local government brought confusion.

Within the Solonese context Soetadi's PNI nationalism and his commitment to the Pancasila, the syncretic state philosophy as Sukarno formulated it, would have made him a moderate and he was implicitly alligned to the *pamong praja*, the rising Javanese/ Indonesian bureaucratic class through his association with Soediro, the Resident.¹⁸⁹ Although politically active through the whole period of rapid turnovers in local government, his period of office came just at the point when it could not function. In late 1948 he became head of the city's economic office, just as the Dutch reoccupied the city.¹⁹⁰ Leaving the city to the Dutch, Soetadi retreated with most of its Republican government to guerrilla centres in the hills near Wonogiri. While in the hills he organized intensive spiritual retreats and was frequently called on to "bless" the guerrilla forces as they prepared for battle. In doing so he would give them Sumarah's first initiation, though like Abdulhamid he never stressed its relationship to the brotherhood.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ Soediro, the Resident, provided an appointment letter (November 28, 1949) confirming Soetadi's role as head of the regional Financial office, an earlier letter by his secretary described this as "*dinas rahasia*" (secret duties); little official record is likely to have existed.

¹⁸⁷ Sampoerno, Sri. "Riwayat Hidup Bapak Hirlan Soetadi", Surakarta, January 1973.

¹⁸⁸ Anderson, *Op Cit*, pp.349-369; Soejanto, "Revolution and Social Tensions in Surakarta", *Indonesia* N 17 (1974).

¹⁸⁹ Soetadi is mentioned, but not prominently, in Sudiro's biography. I.N. Soebagijo, *Sudiro: Pejuang tanpa henti* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1981, p216).

¹⁹⁰ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.37.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid* ., p.37. While the government was in retreat Soetadi was chief of staff for the Resident, Soediro. Once the government returned to the city he remained as an adviser, but his official position was as head of the city's economic office.

Soetadi's political activities bore the PNI rather than Sumarah label. Throughout the revolution he organized meditation sessions, geared to the struggle, to which he invited a wide range of mystics from beyond Sumarah. After the revolution, in a series of radio talks from 1950 to 1952, he spoke at length about the spiritual element within the revolution but without referring to his Sumarah identification.¹⁹² During the same period he was extremely active within Sumarah's organization, playing a leading role during the 1940s in planning organizational conferences and carrying on extensive correspondence. He instructed Sumarah members to meditate daily at sunrise and sunset, devoting themselves not only to self purification, but also to collective commitment to the revolution.

Soetadi's letters, even those with purely internal purposes, were headed by the exclamation "*merdeka 100%*", or "total freedom". Throughout the revolution he sent letters to local leaders (*sesepuh*) to arrange times for meditation and fasting. The aim was to designate moments so that the group could meditate collectively despite physical separation. Soetadi's letters underline the imperative and stress that every Indonesian had to be totally dedicated in spirit and body. In 1947 he designated Anggarakasih (Selasa Kliwon, January 28) and Mohammed's birthday (Senin Legi, 12 Mulud, February 3) for special fasting and intensive group meditation. In 1948 he suggested the same for the national celebration of May 20 (*Hari Pergerakan Kebangsaan*). In June of 1948 he circulated a letter asking all members to keep the Islamic fast month in the purest and fullest sense--of purifying the self spiritually.¹⁹³ On these and other occasions he named times of Javanist, Islamic, or national significance; urging Sumarah members not only to keep the rituals others would follow, but to do so in fully spiritualized terms.

All through the revolution--and since for that matter--Sumarah followers have felt that collective meditations are a positive contribution to liberation and peace. Such co-ordination is seen as significant because it leads to a prismatic focusing of spiritual energies, a linking of human consciousness with the transcendent. That linking is viewed as an aid to activation of the divine within events. This sense of connection between spiritual and social spheres is shared by other mystical movements in Java as implicitly elsewhere, where it is reflected in religious patterns of directed prayer. From the Sumarah standpoint the relationship between meditation and events is even more clearly demonstrated by Sukino's experiences in 1947.

In mid-1947 the Dutch launched their first major effort to crush the Republic by force. The revolutionary forces suffered several major defeats and the Dutch were able to occupy all of Java except the Javanese ethnic heartland.

¹⁹² Soetadi, *Warisan Adi* Vols. I & II (Surakarta: mimeo 1961).

¹⁹³ These letters were addressed by Soetadi to all '*sesepuh*', or regional leaders, of the organization. They were written on: January 20 1947, May 11 1948, and June 17 1948.

They might have gone farther, except that their action resulted in an international wave of sympathy for the Republic, especially in strong pressures from the UN for the Dutch to accept a cease-fire. In August of 1947 Sukino wrote a letter describing his experience of the July crisis prior to UN intervention. On the evening of July 23 he went to the home of Sastrosudjono for a meditation with other Yogya leaders. Aside from the host only one other had come, and he left before Sukino got there because the others were absent. Sukino and Sastro meditated together and they spoke about the recent outbreak of fighting, casting about for understanding as to how it would be resolved. In meditation Sukino received guidance that he personally was to pray to God to bring resolution, that his prayer would be instrumental. He asked Sastro who would be responsible for ending the crisis, but Sastro's response was, "Sukarno". Sukino disagreed, saying that he had received a special instruction and had to return home to carry it out alone.

That night, between one and two in the morning, Sukino prayed in meditation until he felt the exercise sufficient. As he describes it, he "prayed to God [*mohon kepada Allah Yang Maha Kuasa*] so that the fighting could result in Indonesian victory, leaving the means entirely in God's power [*penguasa Illahi*]". Several days later, on July 30, Sukino made a *raja* intended to effect Indonesian victory. A *raja* is a piece of automatic writing, sometimes in words but often just as a pattern, infused with spiritual power. Javanese often use them within amulets designated for healing or invulnerability. In this case Sukino's followed clear commitment to leave not only the power, but also the details, in God's hands--distinguishing his *raja* from others which are seen as drawing on personal or spirit powers. Nevertheless, Sukino clearly felt that there was a relationship between his actions and the process they were addressed to. He later noted in his version of Sumarah history that UN intervention followed his prayer and *raja*, but makes clear that he made no causal claims while pointing to the conjunction.¹⁹⁴

As in the case of the collective and directed meditations of Sumarah as a whole, Sukino's experience suggests Sumarah conviction that their actions on the spiritual plane were fundamental to the revolution. To observers the connection can never be as clear as it is in the case of the *pemuda* who went to battle, but from within there was no doubt that such meditative activity was not just produced by, but also important to the struggle. Yet even while feeling the link between meditation and political events, Sumarah leaders (as distinct from young members) did not make instrumental or causal claims. Even at the time, Sukino's statements make clear that such causal issues could only be "resolved by God".

¹⁹⁴ The above comes from Sukino's letter of August 9 1947. This was most likely sent to all local leaders of the brotherhood, it is not addressed to an individual and carries the heading "*Poedyas-tuti*" (meaning prayer or supplication).

Sukino's wartime endeavours were not restricted to the subtle planes. Along with friends, he provided urban support for the guerilla movement. Sumarah was just one network among many, but in any case the group of friends shared a depth of trust which provided a solid ground for wartime co-operation. Among them was one Western trained doctor named Surono. Dr. Surono joined Sumarah in 1946 and was to become its organizational leader from 1950 to 1966. He came into contact with Sukino through Oemar Slamet, who he had met while they were both in Peta. During the revolution his clinic, located just east of the *kraton* and with a handy exit into dense *kampung*, became a dispensary for aid to guerrillas.¹⁹⁵ For his part Sukino was continuously in contact with Soetadi and Suhardo, with regional centers of Sumarah, and of course with the Barisan Berani Mati and its leader Hasanuddin Pasopati. Although acting individually, Sumarah members experienced a bond which made the brotherhood a natural channel for revolutionary activity.

At one point Sukino was summoned by Sukarno for advice in a moment of crisis. He was called because of his contacts with guerrilla forces, not because Sukarno was seeking supernatural portents, as some non-Javanese observers may have felt. To outsiders Sukino would have appeared as one of the "*dukun*" who Sukarno looked to for esoteric guidance, but there are no indications of a special relationship between the two--even in sources prior to 1965.¹⁹⁶ Sukarno looked to Sukino because it was known that he had strong contacts with General Sudirman, the army commander. According to his daughter Roestiyah, Sukino never met the general face-to-face, but there was a link through the Barisan Berani Mati, which appears to have been closely connected to Sudirman. There is no doubt that Sudirman's spiritual and Javanist sense of the revolution would have been the basis of a natural empathy with Sumarah. In August 1948 Sudirman attended the opening ceremony of Sumarah's first congress (suggesting they must have met). Then when the Dutch occupied Yogya in December Sukino took the responsibility of "protecting" Sudirman's wife and new-born son.¹⁹⁷ These contacts indicate empathy, trust, and the existence of informal lines of communication.

Sri Sampoeno, for two decades the leader of the Surakarta branch after Soetadi's death in 1958, affirmed that he had seen Sudirman at the 1948 Sumarah congress in Yogyakarta. According to him Sudirman had suggested in that context that the movement should use the term "*beatan*" instead of

¹⁹⁵ Dr Surono, *Pagujuban Sumarah*, Yogya, 1965, pp.12-17.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.18; DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.28-30; Sukino in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, pp.260-261. Sukino's narration was probably presented at the third congress in 1955, as it appears along with other material from that congress, but no date is attached to it. The DPP version is a translation, with some commentary, of Sukino's version of the history.

¹⁹⁷ Sukino in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, p.260.

"*bukaan*" for initiations.¹⁹⁸ Wahyono also said Sudirman was there, but only as a VIP. He also commented that at the time politics was discussed, partly at the instigation of radical members from Madiun, who pushed forcefully for the formation of formal organization.¹⁹⁹ The first Sumarah meeting, on August 29th 1948, nearly coincided with the Yogya congress of BKPRI (Badan Kongres Pemuda Republik Indonesia), held between August 24-28th.²⁰⁰ It is notable that the push toward organization was led by youth, especially from East Java, and that Soetadi, who some older members urged to keep on, also affirmed in letters that the youth should take over.

Those contacts may have been the reason for Sukarno's interest in Sukino. All through the revolution there were severe strains between political and guerrilla forces. The political leadership was continuously involved in diplomatic negotiation; the populist guerrillas resented any concessions. Those strains grew during 1948, leading to crisis in Solo and armed conflict in Madiun. Early in 1948 the government began attempting to rationalize the military, pressuring *lasykar* units to return to civilian life and demobilizing several divisions of the regular army.²⁰¹ As both military commander and populist hero, Sudirman was at the center of the storm. Tensions were never more severe, nor communications weaker, than in the wake of the Roem-Royen agreement of May 1949. That agreement led to Dutch withdrawal from Yogya and the return of Republican government under Sukarno on July 13.

Although the political leaders had returned to Yogya, for a brief period it remained uncertain whether the guerrilla forces under Sudirman would accept the terms of the agreement. At that point R.M. Margono Djojohadikusumo suggested to the Interior Minister, Dr. Sukiman Wirjosandjojo, that Sukino would be able to inform them of Sudirman's attitude. When Sukino was called, he arrived along with Ibu Suyitno, one of the senior Sumarah women.²⁰² Sukarno began by explaining that he had heard that Sudirman did not agree with the Roem-Royen agreement. Sukino responded that he was certain that Sudirman would agree once he received a full explanation of them. Sukarno

¹⁹⁸ interview (Solo July 10, 1981). Surono (*Op.Cit.*, p.14) gives 1947 as the year of this congress; other sources make clear that it was held in 1948 (for example Sujadi, "Sejarah Pagujuban Sumarah", Ponorogo, 1958, p.8). Martosuwignio, a young member during the late 1940s and subsequently elder statesman of the movement, said (interview in Yogyakarta July 19, 1981) that Sukino met with Sudirman near Wonosari (near Sukino's birthplace of Semanu).

¹⁹⁹ interview (Yogya July 20, 1981).

²⁰⁰ *Revolusioner* August 30, 1948.

²⁰¹ The politics of the process are clarified in C. Anderson, *Op. Cit.*; in B Anderson, *Op. Cit.*, and in George Kahin, *Op Cit*, pp.186-96.

²⁰² According to Martosuwignio (interview in Yogyakarta July 19, 1981) Ibu Suyitno knew Sukiman and arranged this interview.

explained that he was unable to give a full explanation, because Sudirman was so sick his doctors would not allow lengthy conversation. He then asked whether Sudirman would submit to a direct order. Sukino replied that he would- -but did not go on to clarify that his confidence came from *Hakiki* rather than through communication with Sudirman.²⁰³

The conversation continued for some time on other topics, during the course of which Sukino explained that all Sumarah members would definitely return to civilian life once fighting ended. He also assured Sukarno that the federal structure resulting from the peace talks would quickly give way to a unitary Republic. Then Sukarno asked whether, in view of the opposition, his own leadership would continue. Sukino affirmed that it would, going on to instruct Sukarno to carry out his duties freely and confidently, without uncertainty. Finally, Sukino gave a detailed description of the nature of Sumarah practice in relation to the revolution.

Shortly afterwards Sudirman and his guerrilla companions re-entered Yogya. Observers describe the march as powerfully emotive, as a more poignant and dramatic occasion than the earlier return of Sukarno's government.²⁰⁴ Throughout the Dutch occupation of Yogya the guerrilla forces had maintained intense pressure, contributing substantially to the force of Republican negotiators. During most of 1949 dissatisfaction with diplomacy ran high in the Yogya region; identification with the guerrillas was strong.

When the military engagements with the Dutch were firmly ended by the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, Indonesia entered a period of consolidation. Conflicts, even armed struggle, continued internally. The Westerling incident of January 1950 and the continuing activity of Darul Islam guerrillas in West Java, South Sulawesi, and Aceh challenged the new state. At that point the Sumarah leadership felt compelled to contact the national government, which was in the process of shifting to its permanent center in Jakarta. They did so to assure it that Sumarah supported the Republic and was in no danger of becoming involved in separatist political activity.²⁰⁵

This assurance was a reconfirmation of the "a-political" (in *its* terms) stance Sumarah aimed to adopt, a neutrality which does appear to have passed the test of the Madiun affair in 1948. At that point tension between communist and populist and Islamic Republican forces were translated into civil war. Sumarah members from Madiun, where the outbreak centered, suggested that most of the killings were matters of grudge retribution rather than ideology, but in any case the severity of polarisation was a crucial test of Sumarah neutrality. Individually members in the area belonged to the full spectrum of political groupings; as a group Sumarah adopted a low profile and remained apparently

²⁰³ Sukino in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, p.260.

²⁰⁴ Abu Hanifah, *Tales of a Revolution* (Sydney, 1972, p.318).

²⁰⁵ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.30.

untouched in the midst of devastating slaughter.²⁰⁶ A Madiun membership list compiled in February, six months prior to the outbreak, did list political affiliations. None of the two dozen *pamong* and *sepuh* listed any preference and only half of the other two hundred members listed did. Of those half listed the right leaning Masyumi (including NU); about one-third identified with the political center (PNI and Partai Sosialis); and a smattering belonged to the left-wing (Sarekat Rakyat, PKI, BTI). Sumarah membership neither determined nor corresponded with political affiliation.

The revolution brought Sumarah closer to public consciousness and led a large number of young men to join. Although many of them left when the fighting stopped, a substantial proportion of the *pemuda* who remained have since become leaders of the association. In the revolutionary period they had already initiated moves toward organization; since 1950 they have led it. These *pemuda* became the second generation of Sumarah membership. Most of the founding generation had entered during the colonial era, the leaders among them had been mature and experienced in mystical practice even prior to their contact with Sumarah. Most of the *pemuda* entered during wartime, as young men (and women, though fewer of them) without much background in mystical practice. Naturally these contrasts in grounding and context resulted in different experiences of Sumarah practice.

spiritual freedom

It is frequently noted in the literature on Indonesia, and on mysticism in general, that periods of crisis generate a renewal of spiritual motivations. In interpretations of this pattern contemporary historians tend to emphasize the negative, explaining such interest as a consequence of physical or psychological deprivation.²⁰⁷ There is a validity to the correlations these interpreters point to, but often little comprehension of its meaning to participants. Times of crisis, whether at the individual or collective level, definitely generate intensified quest for meaning. Radical changes may serve to eliminate the socio-cultural "crutches" which sustain the complacency of normal everyday life. When communal structures disintegrate there is increasing consciousness of the need for structured relationships, a need which is sometimes met by membership in voluntary associations such as Sumarah.

There is no doubt that many Javanese looked to Sumarah, as to other *kebatinan* sects, not only for meaning and consciousness, but also for

²⁰⁶ Interview with Sayogyo (Madiun August 1973).

²⁰⁷ Deprivation is a major theme in sociological interpretation of millennial and mystical movements. Sartono Kartodirdjo consistently bases his analysis on it in his works on Java: *The Peasant's Revolt of Banten* (S'Gravenhage, 1966) and *Protest Movements in Rural Java* (Kuala Lumpur: ISEAS & Oxford UP, 1973).

protection (*pelindung*) and safety (*slamet*). Many joined in search of invulnerability and others in a quest for healing, according to their own testimonies.²⁰⁸ The motivations driving people toward Sumarah are one thing; what Sumarah offered was another. Interplay between the two resulted in either withdrawal of the individual, or in the transmutation of motives. A wide variety of mainly materialistic motives may impel people toward spiritual movements, but a process of natural selection determines which will stick with them. Sumarah did offer brotherhood and the companionship of mature people rooted in conviction, it offered contact with people securely connected to meaning in life. Yet even the most cursory encounter makes clear that Sumarah's brotherhood is in silence. Anyone looking for action and external support would find little comfort in intense silence and introspection. Of those who came to Sumarah with instrumental motives, only a minority responded by joining in realization of a classic paradox: the fruits sought by desires are only offered to those who give them up.

The physical deprivations of the occupation years and the psychic traumas of revolutionary transition affected many in the way ascetic practices also often do.²⁰⁹ Beyond those, however, fighting during the revolution raised ultimate confrontation with death, bringing that spectre close. Nothing raises questions of meaning so intensely as prospect of immediate annihilation. Impelled by a sense of destiny and convinced that resistance required physical struggle, *pemuda* faced that prospect. All logic defied their actions. Lacking arms, they entered battle as a ragged and untrained mass clutching bamboo spears (*bambu runcing*)--a romantic image extremely prominent in the memory of survivors. Some observers interpreted Islamic cries as indication of irrational fanaticism, fervor beyond reason. Here it is enough to note the situation appeared irresistible and the prospect of death imminent. There is no need to "explain" why, to probe social context here, as my aim is to examine related spiritual experiences within Sumarah.

The *pemuda* entered the same Sumarah system which had been established prior to the revolution. Within Sumarah this was the "first phase" (a terminology they employ) of spiritual practice, the second did not begin until 1949 when fighting stopped. Basically there were two levels of practice, and by implication consciousness: *kanoman* and *kasepuhan*.²¹⁰ Prospective members went through a period as candidates (*pemagang*) before receiving the first initiation. This waiting period was prescribed to ensure that initiates genuinely knew (and wanted) what they were getting into, also so the group could be confident of serious intentions. "*Kanoman*" and "*kasepuhan*" are literally Javanese terms for periods of youth and maturity. Within *kraton* culture the

²⁰⁸ This is frequently acknowledged. For example in DPP, *Sejarah*, p.22.

²⁰⁹ See B Anderson *Op Cit* pp 1-10 for a related suggestion.

²¹⁰ The two styles are clearly outlined in DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.55-57.

terms already resonated with distinct styles and phases of spiritual practice.²¹¹ Young men practiced physical and martial arts; elders silent meditation. Both styles were spiritual, but folklore held that the desires of youth are too powerful to make inward journey safe.

This understanding applied within Sumarah, but it is important to note that reference was to "spiritual" rather than "physical" age. It was accepted that some, even the physically young, may be mature in spirit. A number of *pemuda*, including Arymurthy, then a young man in Magelang and subsequently leader of the movement, were initiated directly into *kasepuhan*. By the end of the revolution a large number of *pamong* could initiate into *kanoman*, but few could take responsibility for *kasepuhan* initiation. Only Sukino, Suhardo, Soetadi, Sukeno, and one or two others had recognized authority to supervise the higher initiation.²¹²

At risk of simplification, it is possible to associate the two initiations (*beatan*) with power and consciousness.²¹³ The first referred to a witnessing, by the guide, *pamong*, responsible, of the movement of God's power within the initiate. For candidates this meant the point of conscious recognition of an indwelling power beyond ego. In terms of Sumarah's sense of levels of awareness it meant the point at which the body was physically relaxed, thoughts were still, and senses passive. *Kanoman* practices were interpreted as cleansing of subconscious karmic blocks. The next initiation referred to the point at which desires relaxed, resulting in internal witnessing of the meditative process. In contemporary Sumarah terms the first stage is simply preparation of the body and the second is the beginning of true meditation.

²¹¹ The significance of the magical element within traditional military training is mentioned in Soemarsaid Moertono, *State and Statecraft in Old Java*, Ithaca, 1968, p.69. The terms '*kanoman*' and '*kasepuhan*' are used in the Yogya and Solo courts and in Cirebon the two courts bear those names (Sharon Siddique, *Relics of the Past?*, PhD thesis, U Bielefeld, Germany, 1977). Most of the terms originally applied within Sumarah, to functions within the organization as well as styles of practice, derive from the *kraton* through Sukino's relationship to it as an *abdi dalam*. Moedjanto, in his book *The Concept of Power in Javanese Culture* (Yogyakarta: U Gadjadarmah P, 1986, pp 33-5) details court terminology also used in Sumarah circles. Terms such as *pamong*, *sesepuh*, *magang*, and *warana*, all central within Sumarah, were from the courts and, not incidentally, became less central as terminology within the movement shifted through the phases since.

²¹² This was repeatedly emphasized by informants in speaking about first phase practice; it is clear in a Madiun membership list from 1948 and it is mentioned in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p.38.

²¹³ Although this arose as a result of conversations with Sumarah friends, it is a personal interpretation.

Kanoman exercise took three principal forms: *karaga*, meaning automatic movement; *karasa*, meaning sensitizing of intuition; and *kasuara*, meaning spontaneous speech.²¹⁴ The three are woven into richly symbolic metaphysical psychology of the Javanese. They relate to: genital, heart, and head centers (the *trimurti*); to higher intelligence (*budi*), intuition (*rasa*), and memory (*angen-angen*); to Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva; and to the cakras within kundalini yoga. Like the terms *kanoman* and *kasepuhan*, the forms Sumarah experience took are established within tradition. Most often, however, traditional exercises were related to spirit powers and trance states. Sumarah members who experienced these practices insist they retained self-consciousness; though surrendering to expression beyond ego control or capacity they were neither contacting spirits nor entering trance.²¹⁵

Much of what individuals experienced came in the form of releasing pent up energy or activating aspects of awareness which had been suppressed. Pranyoto, later one of the national leaders and an administrator within the Forestry Department, describes having experienced himself as a crocodile, "realizing his animal nature".²¹⁶ Others describe bursting into song in foreign languages, dancing traditional forms they had never learned formally, and of course many found themselves fluidly practicing *pencak-silat*. Every individual's experience varied, each reflecting different lessons or karmic pathways. Exercises took place in a group, usually at the home of a guide in the cities, but often within intensive retreats in the guerrilla centres such as Kyai Abdulhamid's home outside Madiun.²¹⁷ Often practice was directed toward activation of particular skills. Exercise of intuitive feeling (*rasa*) sometimes took the form of finding articles that had been hidden. Development of *rasa* was emphasized so that beginners could grow to distinguish the vibrations received from feelings emerging from within. The revolutionary setting produced special emphasis on martial arts. Whatever the form all of the *kanoman* practices were

²¹⁴ DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.56-57.

²¹⁵ There is ambiguity about the meaning of 'trance'. Nina Epton used the term in referring to Sumarah (*Trances*, London, 1966, pp.215-220), but also clarified that Sukino warned against interest in spirits. I reserve the term for experiences involving loss of conscious memory.

²¹⁶ Interview with Pranyoto (Jakarta October 1973). Pranyoto interpreted his experience as a 'reliving' of a past life as a crocodile, also as a cleansing in this life.

²¹⁷ The atmosphere of retreats with Kyai Abdulhamid was evoked in conversations with Sichlan in Ponorogo during September 1973. In Solo another friend, Sudarno (not the Sumarah *pamong* of that name), recalled having received his first spiritual initiation through Abdulhamid. Hadisoemartono was also associated with Abdulhamid during the revolution. The atmosphere was like that within many *pesantren*: people lived in and practiced martial arts as well as meditation.

seen as leading to purification and increasing sensitivity to and awareness of power beyond ego--specifically God working within.²¹⁸

The system of guidance throughout this first phase of Sumarah was characterized by what Sumarah practitioners have referred to since as "*nyemak*".²¹⁹ This meant that guides tuned in to other people's meditation and then directly informed them of blockages or errors. The guide might "see" that a person was experiencing tightness around the neck, active thoughts, or a "narrowed concentration" rather than "relaxed opening" attitude. Realizing the "problem", the guide would instruct the person to relax, shift the center of attention, or whatever was appropriate. Recently it is more common for guides to simply verbalize what they experience, leaving it to each person to realize which comments are relevant. Several men who were junior *pamong* during the late 1940s have told me that they could function as guides then, but were not themselves clearly aware of the dynamics of the process. It was only with the second, and especially the third phases of Sumarah development, during the 1950s and 1960s, that mental consciousness balanced action even in the performance of guides.²²⁰ During the first phase only a few senior guides comprehended the endpoint and contours of the process they were guiding people through.

This limitation in the extent of understanding within the practice was demonstrated by the "shift of centers" which took place in early 1946. In guiding *kanoman* exercises the youth were instructed to stand, relax, direct attention inward, and surrender to God. At the same point the guides tuned in both to the sphere of the group and to the inner center appropriate to it. The leading guides were fully aware of the functions of the seven occult centres known as *cakra* in yogic tradition and *lataif* by Sufis. The seven centres are a refinement of the three, identified above as the *trimurti*. It is understood that each center has a specific function--when activated it leads to specific powers. Up to 1945 Sumarah guides of *kanoman* practice centered their own awareness in the lowest *cakra*, the locus of kundalini or divine life energy within the microcosm.

²¹⁸ DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.55-57. The history describes the practices and the powers which resulted from them, but also makes clear that the awakening of those powers worked as a way of increasing awareness of God. By touching powers beyond ego control, individuals were made more conscious of their limits, and by implication of greater things. The aim, of surrender to God, was naturally always clear in the *Sesanggeman* as well as in the instructions members received.

²¹⁹ DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.50,55,58.

²²⁰ This was confirmed by several people who had been *pamong* during the early period, but especially through conversation with Martosuwignio (Yogyakarta June 1973).

As the leader of Sumarah youth in the battle of Surabaya, Kyai Abdulhamid rapidly found that this focus indeed produced bravery and willingness to fight. In fact some *pemuda* became foolhardy and there were more deaths than necessary. In early 1946 Sukino contacted the *pinisepuh* and Abdulhamid and called them to a conference in Solo.²²¹ He informed them that he had received an instruction (*dawuh*) clarifying that they should shift their awareness from the first to the third cakra (from the base of the spine to the navel). The message was communicated to all *pamong* involved in guiding *kanoman*.²²² As a result Sumarah fighters were able not only to devote themselves to battle, but also to survive.

The significance of the shifting of centers was manifold. It indicated a shift not only of individual, but also of group consciousness. *Kanoman* practices involve centering on the first three cakras; *kasepuhan* meant centering on the heart.²²³ Progression through the centers is understood within Sumarah as involving increasing degrees of consciousness, each higher center subsuming those below. As a spiritual brotherhood Sumarah has not experienced itself just as a collection of individuals of differing consciousness. It is that, but it experiences itself equally as having a collective consciousness. Just as individuals are seen as progressing through degrees of realization, the group has viewed itself as moving through the same process.²²⁴ Collective process of this sort may be inaccessible to outsiders, but belief in it can be noted as a feature of Sumarah member's internal vision of their own history.

While centering on the first cakra brought surrender to the movement of divine power, shift to the third was seen as bringing invulnerability. Both power and invulnerability (*kekebalan*) are easily misunderstood. Dozens of Sumarah members described their experiences to me and all the internal histories of Sumarah mention such experiences. Yet it has never been suggested that

²²¹ Meeting with Kyai Abdulhamid in Banjarsari in April 1973; recorded in Sutardjo, *Selayang Pandang mengenai Perjalanan DPP Paguyuban Sumarah ke daerah Jatim dan Jateng* (an 8 page report detailing a DPP tour of branches between April 7th and 16th 1973). This information was considered, by the leadership at the time, a crucial communication.

²²² In Solo Sri Sampoerno, who was involved with *kanoman* guidance at the time, recalls having received the new instruction.

²²³ This progression is especially clear in Suhardo's guidance, as he explicitly links yogic, Sufi, and Javanist frameworks. This is clear in his *Ceramah Bapak Soehardo Panakawan Paguyuban Sumarah*, Surakarta, December 1974 (stenciled booklet) pp.13-19.

²²⁴ The linkages I am constructing here are not explicitly articulated within Sumarah literature, but when I began formulating them for myself and suggesting it to Sumarah friends, they uniformly confirmed it. Many of them obviously do think in precisely these terms about their own evolution.

invulnerability meant capacity to stand with impunity in front of a machine gun. The powers touched by *kanoman* practice are said instead mainly to explain the paradox of total involvement in raging battle and the miracle of survival. The stories emphasize the "amazing", but not "magical" quality of experience. The official Sumarah history of the 1970s states only that experiences were extremely varied, that the value of practice was seen as demonstrated through the fact that the youth fought hard *and* returned home.²²⁵

A Solonese informant who fought under Kyai Abdulhamid described amazement that, though he found himself boxed into impossible situations and trapped by hailing bullets, he survived.²²⁶ Dr. Surono, in his written version of Sumarah history, comments on the fact that people were impressed when a Sumarah *pemuda* returned from Surabaya--clothes ripped to shreds by bullets, but untouched. Surono's own experience was strongest when he was arrested by the Dutch, who suspected the truth--that he was providing medical aid to guerrillas. Feeling trapped, he felt compelled to simply surrender to God, finding to his relief that the interrogation went his way.²²⁷ In these reports it was consistently the fact of survival and safety in extremely dangerous conditions which was emphasized.

Zahid Hussein, already mentioned, related his experiences to me in depth. He described how every intense battle provoked a profound prayer for peace and complete surrender to God. Each time resolution came, but he did not feel personally responsible for it. Once he was involved during heavy fighting on the coastal highway outside Semarang. The battle had begun at daybreak and continued to mid-afternoon. At that point a renewed wave of planes began diving to strafe the guerrilla position. Utterly consumed by "a powerful feeling", Zahid lay down in the road asking God if it had not been enough. Immediately fighting stopped.

Later, during 1948, he was on patrol in Kulon Progo, outside Dutch occupied Yogya. While walking across rice paddies between two hamlets he found himself unexpectedly without cover and in front of a Dutch patrol. His friends were hidden among houses several hundred yards away and he was completely vulnerable. Zahid wrestled with the tension between fear and surrender, but as the situation appeared hopeless he gave himself up for lost, surrendering to God. He continued walking in front of the Dutch patrol until he neared the protection of his friends. As physical support neared his trust evaporated and finally he broke into a run for cover--just as the shooting began. When Zahid checked his experience with a *pamong* later on he was told

²²⁵ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.27.

²²⁶ Conversation with Sudarno (Kampung Sewu, Solo, May 1973).

²²⁷ Surono, *Pagujuban Sumarah*, Yogya, 1965, 12-16.

that while in surrender he had been invisible, but when he faltered the God-given sphere had left him.²²⁸

Another career officer, Sukardji, credits Sumarah practice not only for survival against the odds, but also for the fact that he never had to kill anyone. Sukardji was involved in front line combat during the revolution and reports that during the tensions after the 1965 coup he was on a PKI death list. Yet somehow he was able to perform his duties without having to kill. While such statements appear paradoxical, they highlight elements of the teachings received by Sumarah youth.

Sumarah guides emphasized not only that the guerrillas should commit themselves totally to the struggle and surrender the results entirely to God, but also that they should not hate their enemies or engage in looting and hoarding. Within the revolution many units did undercut collective effort by concern for personal wellbeing. Circumstances made that natural. Within Sumarah, as also in other spiritual circles during the revolution, it was stressed that whatever was won should be for the nation rather than the individual or even the unit. *Pemuda* were instructed to completely surrender both their own life and the results of battle to God.²²⁹

Invulnerability then, was the product not of personal power, but of complete willingness to die. The practice, as understood by those teaching it, involved complete submission of ego rather than defence of it. Emphasis on God was reflected in the cries of "*Allah Akbar*" as Kyai Abdulhamid marched from his village retreat and around Madiun on the way to battle.²³⁰ It was reflected in another way when Sukino, quite early in the revolution, patiently explained to several enthusiastic youth that there was no need to enlist armies of ancestral spirits. When the *pemuda* told him they had been doing so, Sukino responded that his business was to guide people toward purity, spirits had "other business" to attend to, and anyway God's power was total--trusting and submitting to it was the way to Indonesian independence.²³¹

²²⁸ Interview with Zahid Hussein in Jakarta, October, 1973.

²²⁹ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.26: "*Pesan Pak Kino kepada para Kasoman Sumarah ialah jangan mementingkan diri sendiri dalam berjuang. Kalau mendapat rampasan barang dari musuh mitsalnya senjata, kendaraan dan lain sebagainya, hendaknya diserahkan kepada pemimpin kesatuan, agar menjadi milik Negara dan dapat dimanfaatkan juga untuk kesatuan2 lain. Kalau jalannya perjuangan demikian, maka jiwanya akan selalu dilindungi oleh Tuhan.*" Suryabrata (Perth August 1978) confirmed that from his knowledge of the revolution the Barisan Berani Mati had a reputation for honesty.

²³⁰ Conversations with Marsono (Madiun August 1973). Marsono, the organizational leader of the Madiun DPD in 1973, had been one of Kyai Abdulhamid's followers during the revolution. He described both retreats and repeated "marching" around the city when on the way to battle.

²³¹ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.27.

The capstone to Sumarah experience of the revolution, the practice closest to the heart of the process, was *sujud perjuangan*, literally meaning "surrender to the struggle". This practice was most forcefully articulated by a *pemuda*--not by the older generation of founding members. The practice was clarified most through the solid character of Joyosukarto, then a young man in the Magelang branch of Sumarah.²³² Joyosukarto, a tailor, has since been among the leaders of the Magelang regional center, but in 1947 he was a fresh initiate. The practice of *sujud perjuangan* came to him through *Hakiki* during the course of his personal effort to relate meditation to his own particularly intense nationalism.

When the experience of *Hakiki* came to him his friends scoffed at the notion that such a recent initiate could claim knowledge of Truth. Others objected to suggestion that meditation had any relation to revolution. But when Joyosukarto consulted Sukino, the founder confirmed the authenticity of his experience, saying at the same time that only those feeling drawn to *sujud perjuangan* would need to do it. As Arymurthy later on pointed out, this early acknowledgment foreshadowed what many came to see as a key to the later evolution of Sumarah.²³³ One reflection of the collective growth in consciousness has been the fact that awareness of *Hakiki*, the ultimate authority at the root of Sumarah, has spread. As the movement developed and its members matured, increasingly individuals find the baseline of revealed Truth internally--rather than looking to the authority of the founders. From Sumarah's perspective, it was not only *sujud perjuangan* that contributed to clarity, but also the way it came, as on both counts it reveals dimensions of the revolutionary process.

Joyosukarto describes *sujud perjuangan* as a standing meditation in which the individual consciously attunes not only to personal cleansing, but also to the social process. Through that attunement, realisation grows that total surrender to God implies total attunement to the cosmos, surrender within rather than apart from the struggles of life. Joyosukarto underlines that surrender never comes mixed with requests for results (whether personal fortune or national independence). Ulterior motives preclude surrender. He also stresses that total surrender precludes dependence on others--that at root individuals have no choice but to learn on their own. For him there was (and is) no doubt about a total interpenetration of historical process and spiritual liberation.

In this sense Joyosukarto's reception of *Hakiki* provided explicit clarification of the link between Sukino's prayer for independence and the

²³² Joyosukarto narrated his experiences at length during the annual conference of 1972 in Bandung, which I attended. A written transcript is among the materials relating to that conference. Most of the information was also repeated and elaborated during my conversations with him in Magelang throughout 1973.

²³³ Interview with Arymurthy in Jakarta in July 1973.

revelation of Sumarah. For Joyo the national process intrinsically requires release of the latent Indonesian identity, it demands "honest growth and expression of the self rather than imitation of an assortment of outside cultures". Completion of the revolution, in his terms, was meant to lead to free establishment of "internal and autonomous" cultural identity, recognition of an Indonesian national "being" as an entity on its own.²³⁴

At the same time his message was that realization of the microcosmic spiritual quest is identical to total integration within the macrocosm of social process. Between nations there is imperialism and power struggle; internally there is an imperialism through which the ego suppresses the spirit, forcing the body to worship the mind as king. Just as the outer revolution requires painful elimination of repressive forces, the inner liberation requires an awakening of the spirit and transmutation of the mind. Joyo's formulation pronounced that the internal and external revolutions are one and the same--only appearing, through the trick called ego, to be separate. His formulation of the practice brought the meaning of Sumarah's revelation, especially its connection to the wider process of the national revolution, one step closer to the surface of its members' awareness.

²³⁴ Interview with Joyosukarto (Magelang February 1974).

chapter 5

EMERGENT ORGANISATION

In awakening to the reality of spiritual forces, individuals typically pass a honeymoon phase of excitement and drama. The glamour of discovery stands in high relief against backgrounds of existential void or personal trauma and the freshness of realisation is sharp and clear. Often the joys of entry into a world of magical powers generates naive enthusiasm, a bubbling over which draws others into the esoteric. With maturity earthquakes of awakening are replaced by long plateaus, changes become elusive and the distinctive qualities of early experience shade into subtle consciousness. Eventually mystical awareness is both more subtle and less easily distinguished from the waves of everyday life.

The enthusiasm of the revolutionary struggle and the preoccupation with physical survival conditioned the foundations of Sumarah. Many young people who entered during the forties came in for healing or in hopes of invulnerability and experienced Sumarah mainly as a variant of traditional martial arts. However even during the revolution some new members entered deeper dimensions of practice and a few contributed directly and immediately to organisation. For all Sumarah members 1950 was a year of transition. During that year the nation achieved global recognition, the Sumarah organisation was transformed, and the qualities of personal meditation changed.

Although historical process is always more complex than dated periods suggest, there are times when deep transformations coincide with surface events. For Sumarah and for the nation 1950 was such a time. For Indonesia the end of armed struggle meant that the government could shift from its temporary headquarters in Yogyakarta to its permanent capital in Jakarta, it meant the start of the period known as "Parliamentary Democracy". Within Sumarah a new phase began in both spiritual and physical dimensions. In 1949 Sukino experienced a second revelation, marking the beginning of a qualitatively 'higher' phase of practice for the brotherhood. In 1950 the movement was restructured, formally organised for the first time.

For the nation Parliamentary Democracy lasted into the late fifties. On the surface of national life, popular attention was drawn to newly emergent political parties which contested elections. Such new organisations characterised the era, spreading into every sphere of society, penetrating village as well as urban life. The period is remembered as 'the time of mass organisations' (*ormas--organisasi massa*), a new English word entered Indonesian language and an indigenous term, *aliran* (stream), acquired new significance. Many new movements had roots in pre-war nationalism or in social clubs of the colonial

era. In all spheres removal of colonial restrictions meant Indonesians were freer to represent local or sectional interests through formally constituted movements. In each, local movements adopted self-consciously the norms radiating from a new Jakarta centre. "Organisation", in the colloquial sense that applied in this context, meant adoption of modern Western-styled structures--formalised written regulations, collection of dues, and election of officers.

Within Sumarah, there had been an organisation prior to 1950 in the analytical terms of social science. However according to the new Indonesia the pre-1950 movement was not considered proper organisation.²³⁵ Early Sumarah structure grew organically and imperceptibly out of traditional norms. When a new structure emerged in 1950 it appeared as a self-conscious adaptation to modern national standards. In any case, change radically affected activities, reflecting adaptation to external conditions and shifts in practice.

For many mystics, formal organisation appears contrary to the thrust of practice. In meditation they aim to move beyond conditioning structures of socialised consciousness into directly experienced, individual realisation of an ineffable. Formal organisation ostensibly violates the individual and experiential qualities of quest. So yet another paradox: if consciousness aims to transcend forms, why generate new ones? In general terms, examination of the process of organising provides a field to explore interplay between consciousness and social structure. Through this exploration it is possible to clarify specific qualities and functions of organisation for mystics.

preliminary movements

Although there had been significant changes within Sumarah in 1940 and again in 1945, the whole period from Sukino's revelation in 1935 to 1949-50 is considered Phase I. Sumarah histories distinguish between spiritual and organisational development. Organisational changes have been clearest in 1950 and 1966; spiritual shifts in 1949, 1956 and 1974.²³⁶ So the transformation around 1950 has been the turning point in which spiritual and social changes were most clearly related. Although demarkation was clear, it had been foreshadowed--transformation was neither instantaneous nor unrelated to structures which preceded it.

²³⁵Although later histories speak of the first phase as the one "prior" to "organisation" (Surono, *Pagujuban Sumarah*, Yogya, 1965, p.13; DPP, *Tuntunan Sumarah ...*, Jakarta, 1978, p.5), in the conference at Sutadi's home in January 1948 they already spoke of "organizational matters" (*Perselah pendek ...*, Surakarta, 1948, p.2).

²³⁶See summary of Sumarah phases and periods in Chapter 9 and DPP, *Tuntunan Sumarah ...*, pp.4-6 (for an especially clear and dense summary from the current perspective).

Basic features of early organisation have been described but are worth recapitulating. During the first phase the movement remained small enough so personal contact and informal meetings were sufficient, with membership in the hundreds, founding leaders knew everyone. During the revolution membership grew, reaching three thousand, many had little contact with founders. Naturally increased scale created an internal pressure toward formalisation, an internal force which dovetailed with the external demand for co-ordination of revolutionary activity. These pressures focused most clearly on the *Pinisepuh*, the *Trimurti*--that is, Sukino, Suhardo and Sutadi. While Sutadi actually was the most active in organisational matters, in line with his acknowledged function, he did share responsibility with a core of founding members which included Sukeno in Madiun, Bariunhartono in Yogya, and several dozen other active founders.²³⁷

The *Sesanggeman* had become a crystallisation of Sumarah aims as soon as they were formulated by Sutadi and adopted by the others in 1940. They remained, and have continued as, an expression of Sumarah identity. Then in 1947 Sutadi contributed a major statement, the first written guidelines for Sumarah structure "*Ancer-ancer tumindakipun pasinaon Paguyuban Sumarah*".²³⁸ In the guidelines (*ancer-ancer*) it was first clarified that Sumarah was not an "ordinary" association, but a family of friends who shared commitment to total surrender to God; that no effort was made within it to attract members; that no fixed dues were required; and that there were two sections--*kanoman* and *kasepuhan*. Then it was made clear that Sumarah practice was directed, on the basis of certainty that God exists, toward meditation and daily actions which are aligned to divine purpose and which lead to balanced growth of both material and spiritual dimensions. The guidelines made clear that membership was not restricted by nationality, that it was open to all who accepted the *Sesanggeman* and found the nature of the brotherhood congenial. Throughout the guidelines there was repeated emphasis on the fact that admission, initiation, or assumption of responsibility could only take place if there was clear inner indication of God's will.

Most of the eight page document dealt with guidelines for initiation, meditation, guidance and leadership. Reference was made to the *Pinisepuh* as national leaders, but with insistence that in principle leadership was not restricted to Sukino, Suhardo and Sutadi. At the level of residencies it was specified that Sumarah leadership rested with a "*sesepuh*"; at the *kabupaten*

²³⁷The official histories do tend to concentrate on the *Pinisepuh*, but sources from the first phase make clear that there were at least several dozen major figures, each of whom made a significant contribution.

²³⁸I have "modernised" spellings for consistency in the text. The document is called: *Antjer-antjer toemindakipoen pasinaon Pagoejoeban Soemarah*, Surakarta, 1947. It is mentioned in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p.40 as one of Sutadi's prime contributions to the foundations of Sumarah.

(district) or urban level with a "*kamisepuh*"; and at the local level with the *pamong* who provided practical spiritual guidance to membership. Following adoption of the "*Ancer-ancer*", Sutadi corresponded with all the local branches. Then during 1948 formal letters of confirmation (*serat pikekah*) were circulated to detail leadership responsibilities within each branch.²³⁹ During the same period Sutadi continued to arrange itineraries for Sukino's travels; to maintain routine correspondence; to organise retreats within the Solo region; and to host conferences for the whole association.²⁴⁰

As the acknowledged organisational leader during the first phase, Sutadi became the focal point for all discussion of structural change. As ideas or movements grew in different centres, he co-ordinated and ensured that local groups remained in touch with developments elsewhere. This did not mean that he dictated patterns of growth. In principle that was not his aim; in practice the intermittence of wartime communications ensured he could not. Sutadi's organisational experience and aptitude not only accounted for his function, but also meant that within the Solo region he kept active contact with grass-roots changes. Within that area his influence set the tone and a mature cadre of like-minded *pamong* aided his efforts.

Outside Solo Sutadi's relationship to developments differed, and the nature of regional forces set contrasting patterns in motion. Many ex-Hardopusoro members, scattered throughout Sumarah, opposed organising in principle, believing it would be contrary to genuine practice.²⁴¹ Older members, those less touched by modern education in particular, felt no taste for formal structures. At the same time, *pemuda* membership, especially within guerrilla units near Yogya and Madiun, actively sought organisation. In both areas youth became a distinct component of membership, through the nature of their activity also having uncertain contact with urban based elders. In East Java *pemuda* pushed elders toward organisation; in Yogya *pemuda* were responsive to the suggestion. Everywhere youth assumed a key role in the emergent structure. There were several false starts, each both indicated the presence of a ground-swell, confirming the guidance of founders, and provided a context clarifying the basis of organisation.

²³⁹Among Sutadi's papers there are seven of these (sometimes the spelling is "pikekah", sometimes "pikoekoeh"). Several are dated 1947, the rest from 1948. They detail leadership responsibilities within the Yogya, Solo, Magelang, and Bojonegoro areas and refer to the *Ancer-ancer* as the document defining each function.

²⁴⁰Among Sutadi's papers the most useful, beside the *Ancer-ancer*, are reports on the conference of January 1948 (*Perselah pendek ...*) and a report on a retreat held in Wonogiri in June 1948 (*Tjataan dari ...*). Several dozen letters deal with travel arrangements and organisational questions.

²⁴¹Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973.

According to official history, the intention to formalise organisation came as a response to Sukarno's post-card message to Sukino in April 1945. In that message, near the end of the Japanese occupation, Sukarno advised Sukino to solidify the structure of Sumarah so it could contribute to the national struggle.²⁴² After consultation among themselves, the *Pinisepuh* agreed not only that it should be done but also that the task should be given to *pemuda*. The founders designated Sidarto, a Yogya *pemuda*, to form an organisation and they held a conference in Yogya in 1948 (attended by General Sudirman). This incipient structure dissolved before the Madiun affair erupted, its leaders handing responsibility back to the *Pinisepuh*. Apparently unsettled times, even prior to the Madiun affair and second Dutch offensive, meant the youth felt unable to take responsibility.²⁴³

Other sources present a far more complex image of developments, suggesting *pemuda* enthusiasm was spontaneous rather than a response to advice from above. Early in 1946 Sukeno urged *pemuda* under his supervision in Madiun to organise. He was certainly following advice from the *Pinisepuh*, but it is clear he was attuned to local activism. Sukeno suggested the organisation should be just a *pemuda* movement, one in which older members acted purely as advisers. In 1946 Ponorogo youth led the way, forming 'Organisasi Pemuda Sumarah'. Groups in Madiun, Nganjuk, and Kertosono followed in rapid succession and they held their first conference in Madiun in 1947. The name "Pemuda Sumarah Indonesia" became official, they elected officers, and decided headquarters were to be in Madiun. Officers were instructed to form further branches and draft statutes. Sujadi and Hadisumartono, two of the most active of these *pemuda*, were designated as special assistants to Kyai Abdulhamid. Sujadi and Sichlan were given responsibility for forming new branches. Although the organisation was strictly of *pemuda* on paper, in practice most members in the region joined, including *pamong*²⁴⁴

Sujadi and Sichlan were among the most dynamic activists. Both were from Ponorogo, they were then in their mid-twenties, they were related to prominent *batik* families, and had strongly Islamic backgrounds. Sujadi joined Sumarah in 1945; Sichlan in 1946. Sujadi's parents had been founding members of the Ponorogo Nahdatul Ulama in 1929, he became active in the NU during the occupation, helping found a co-operative in the process. Sichlan had gone through Muhammadiyah schooling, married into a *batik* family, and become a successful businessman on his own. Both became intensely involved with Kyai Abdulhamid, attending retreats at his residence in Banjarsari and devoting their free time and money to Sumarah. Although Sujadi apparently felt no conflict, his NU friends (most also relatives) tried to force him to choose between the two groups. When he refused to chose they ostracised him.

²⁴²DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.25-26; Sukino in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, p.259.

²⁴³DPP, *Sejarah*, p.21.

²⁴⁴DPP, *Sejarah*, p.21.

Though Sujadi thus gave up his role within the NU, strong Islamic inclinations remained. He and Sichlan typified East Javanese *pemuda*, many of whom continued to belong to the NU. Islamic foundations accounted for their special distaste for the occult, a preoccupation some members indulged. During the sixties they surfaced again as a source of activism within the Ponorogo group.²⁴⁵

The formation of the Pemuda Sumarah Indonesia occurred during the same period in which Sutadi and the *Pinisepuh* formulated and adopted the *Ancer-ancer*. Those guidelines, and the name "Paguyuban Sumarah Indonesia", or Pasi, became official through a conference of elders in Solo in May 1947.²⁴⁶ In the guidelines it was clear Sumarah was 'not like ordinary movements', but more akin to a family--without written statutes or regulations. The East Javanese movement seemed, to many older members, contrary to national guidelines for Sumarah. Some older members wrote Sutadi, objecting Sumarah should not have a separate *pemuda* faction; others, like Sujadi's teacher Martohandojo in Ponorogo, refused to join.²⁴⁷

The air was cleared somewhat by a conference at Sutadi's home in January 1948. There the *Pinisepuh* gathered with representatives from each residency for an all-night celebration of the eighth anniversary (*satu windu*) of the *Sesanggeman*. They affirmed decisions embodied in the *Ancer-ancer*, meditated on the spiritual posture required by the national situation, and explored organisational matters. Madiun representatives asked for confirmation of the status of Pemuda Sumarah Indonesia. After lengthy discussion it was agreed the youth movement should continue temporarily, pending a vote by all branches and with provision that it was subordinate to Pasi and accepted both the *Sesanggeman* and *Ancer-ancer*.²⁴⁸ Incidentally, on another matter, the conference endorsed a Madiun motion to carry out Sumarah business in Indonesian rather than Javanese. Foreshadowing later preoccupations, Yogya representatives suggested petitioning government to urge the Ministry of

²⁴⁵Interviews with Karyono and Sichlan in Ponorogo in August 1973. Sujadi did not actually withdraw formally from NU until 1952, but he had been ostracised well before that.

²⁴⁶Sujadi, *Sedjarah ...*, p.7.

²⁴⁷Letters to Sutadi from Yogya, Bojonegoro, Tulungagung, and Purwodadi all strongly opposed establishment of a separate youth organisation. Several of them referred to and rejected the example of the political parties. This is a useful indication that Sumarah was not merely mimicking political patterns when it began to organise formally. Karyono described the rift between Martohandojo and the activists, Sujadi and Sichlan. In fact this never healed and the former continued to have a small separate group for several decades (interview in Ponorogo in August 1973).

²⁴⁸Sujadi, "Sedjarah ...", pp.7-8; *Perselah Pendek ...*, pp.2-3.

Religion to be defined by '*Ketuhanan*' rather than '*Agama*'--highlighting reference to belief in God rather than religious affiliations.²⁴⁹

After this conference movements began to focus on a larger sequel which was to take place in August 1948. The *Yogya pemuda* belatedly formed an organisation modelled on the East Javanese group, then argued that the national headquarters ought to be in Yogya along with the centres of Sumarah, the parties, and the government.²⁵⁰ Meetings between Sidarto, the *Yogya pemuda* leader, and Sujadi and Sichlan resulted in agreement to hold a preparatory conference in Madiun in June. In that conference it was agreed to hold a national meeting in Yogya in August, to be hosted by the *Yogya pemuda*.

The conference was held on August 29 and it was attended by representatives from all residencies and branches. The tone of the meeting was set from the start by the fact the *Pinisepuh* announced guidance to the effect that time was not ripe--the *pemuda* could only act at all if they accepted their movement was temporary. The leaders stressed that even though it was appropriate for leadership to rest with *pemuda*, membership had to include all of Sumarah and new leaders would need to work with an advisory board of *pamong*. In describing the congress, Sujadi underlined his observation that *pemuda* felt completely in accord with what the *Pinisepuh* said.²⁵¹ On this basis the congress adopted the name "Paguyuban Sumarah Indonesia", rather than the more restrictive "*pemuda*". It went on to establish temporary headquarters in Yogya and to elect Sidarto, Dr. Surono and Sujadi as leaders responsible for drafting statutes and regulations.²⁵² Immediately following the congress, even before the new leadership could meet, the Madiun affair and the Dutch re-occupation proved the *Pinisepuh* right--the new organisation was stillborn.

second phase practice

Failure of the new leadership was obviously and directly linked to national events beyond their control. With renewed guerrilla fighting in late 1948 the *pemuda* set aside Sumarah preoccupations to enter into a second, for many more intense, period of warfare. Preliminary efforts to organise had brought out and resolved numerous issues. After the congress of August 1948 most members were aware of and in agreement with move toward formalisation. It was also clear the new structure had to be unitary and that it could emerge through consensus. Neither announcements by the *Pinisepuh* nor spontaneous *pemuda* movement could alone provide foundations of organisation. During the same period there were also more subtle, but equally critical developments.

²⁴⁹ *Perselah Pendek ...*, p.3 (this was a Yogya proposal).

²⁵⁰ Sujadi, "Sedjarah ...", p.8.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.8.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p.8.

From the Sumarah perspective the shift to organised structure required development of new awareness. For many of *pemuda* rush to organise reflected imitation of national patterns without awareness of their spiritual implications--formalisation appeared as an end in itself, not a by-product or reflection of spiritual maturity.

By 1948 there had been signs of a shift into a higher order of spiritual practice. In 1946 Kyai Abdulhamid met with the *Pinisepuh* to clarify a change in the point of concentration for *kanoman* exercises. Joyosukarto, though a *pemuda* himself, then received direct clarification of the spiritual significance of revolutionary struggle. During the Solo conference of January 1948 Sutadi already spoken of a "second phase", a phase in which Sumarah people would realise they needed to reach outward, expressing meditation through active service in society.²⁵³ It was recognised explicitly that the movement toward organisation was not simply a response to increasing scale or national situations, but also a move toward assumption of responsibility, a reflection of the point when individual meditation expands to influence society. No "proof" of higher consciousness can be demonstrated, however it is possible to clarify changes in practice and report what Sumarah people said of the change.

Conferences prior to 1950 already involved voting, but majority decisions were only relevant to selected issues; fundamental matters required consensus and collective "witnessing" within the sphere of spiritual guidance. Sutadi and other leaders continually stressed that even organisational matters had to be dealt with through meditation, that significant steps required a collective confirmation of divine will. This is what was meant in the *Ancer-ancer* by clarification that Sumarah was not an 'ordinary' association. Not all people are attuned to such a process. To recognise a "spiritual consensus" individuals have to pass beyond their own thoughts and desires. "Spiritual consensus" means much more than mental agreement--it involves, at least within Sumarah, apprehension of a collective sphere.

The imbalances and confusions of early efforts to organise reflected the spiritual immaturity of the group, not just chaos of the times. Many youth felt overwhelming certainty Sumarah had significance beyond relevance to them, but most saw organising simply as a matter of creating a more efficient vehicle for making that "fact" public. Only gradually, through error, did they learn the necessity of attuning awareness to collective process.

To speak of collective evolutions of consciousness is touchy. It is hard enough to suggest the meaning of individual changes, here I argue the significance of a dimension farther removed from ordinary experience. Nevertheless this need not involve conjured images of the esoteric. To simplify and suggest what is meant by "spiritual consensus" it is only necessary to point

²⁵³*Perselah Pendek ...*, pp.1-2.

out that this is a matter of refining awareness of dynamics always at work in society. Crowds generate atmospheres--moods are different at a football match than in a religious celebration. Office workers are touched by the enthusiasm or apathy of co-workers. In debates people may be pressured into submission, but continue to "feel" something is wrong. Spiritual attunement to collective process involves awareness in which there is not only agreement mentally, but also harmonised feeling, a feeling at rest internally, one which confirms that surface patterns are comfortably aligned to inner purpose. Whenever feelings remain in confusion or meetings exist in tension, that is demonstration that consensus is lacking.

As Sumarah entered into the transition of 1950, the nature of individual practices also changed--many members became aware of the collective dimension of the process. For beginners meditation appears as a solution to personal problems. As personal problems recede and are gradually resolved, awareness opens to those around. Survival, healing and magic seemed important to members in the first phase. Guidance received through the *Pinisepuh* appeared extraordinary, beyond the ordinary. Individuals depended on instructions from founders and even *pamong* indicated they had limited awareness of what they were doing.²⁵⁴ Sichlan, in retrospect, only somewhat in jest, spoke of the first phase as one in which members competed for *pamong* status, chasing rank because only *pamong* had close contact with the *Pinisepuh*.²⁵⁵ Others commented that in first phase practice individuals used their will, trying to "force" the meditative sphere--"pushing the river" as a Zen phrase aptly suggests.²⁵⁶ The exercises of *kanoman* highlighted unusual abilities, verging on magic. Extraordinary experience of healing and survival filled stories which circulated.

These dimensions--dependence on authority and orientation to the occult--dovetailed with the environment of struggle and the 'beginner' mentality of members. When fighting ended in 1949 the atmosphere changed for the nation and emphasis also shifted from physical struggle to internal consolidation and development. At the same time even the new influx of *pemuda* membership had undergone testing experiences which drove them to realise, as Joyosukarto did so clearly, that practice was neither purely physical nor purely individual.

²⁵⁴See Chapter 9 Note 51.

²⁵⁵Interview with Sichlan in Ponorogo in August 1973. Sidik Pramono, another long-time leader in the area, was even more blunt. He simply called the first phase a 'cult of the individual'.

²⁵⁶Conversation with Suwondo in Solo in July 1973. Suwondo explained that during the early years the *pamong* typically made a special effort to establish a 'sphere' which would influence those present--he emphasised that this was no longer the case. The early practice would have been linked with the emphasis on will, which characterised that phase and went along with focus on the lower chakra.

At precisely this point Sukino experienced his second revelation, marking a transition in collective, as well as individual practice. Even for outside observers this change can be understood as a shift from preoccupation with physical and magical dimensions toward pure mysticism. In terms of Indic chakra it meant a shift from the navel toward the heart. In Sufi language it meant progression from *tarekat* to *hakekat*, from quest for to perception of truth. In the language of Sumarah's first phase it meant that the physical practices of *kanoman* began to drop away, leaving emphasis on *kasepuhan* practice of sitting meditation. The pattern of guidance changed, from overwhelming dependence on the *Pinisepuh* toward greater responsibility for *pamong* as a whole. In terms of the way Sumarah conceives levels of consciousness, this involved collective transition from *tekad*, the drive or desire to surrender, to *iman*, experience of its reality. At the same time and in accordance with the national shift, the focus of collective attunement shifted from 'struggle' toward 'development' --Joyo's '*sujud perjuangan*' became '*sujud pembangunan*'.

Sukino's second experience of revelation is harder to grasp as a distinct experience than his first, but for him it had as much drama and power. It marked a change in the way he experienced guidance and this was especially clear in his expression of it. The experience came just as the Dutch were leaving Yogya, on the evening before the first of July 1949. Sukino⁹ was slyng down while his wife worked in the kitchen. She saw a light approaching the house and assumed it was from the spotlight of a passing Dutch patrol. Concerned, she asked Sukino whether it was and he replied, "could be (*bisa uga*)", leaving it at that. Later neighbours related that they had seen a *wahyu*, meaning celestial light, fall on Sukino's house during the night. They interpreted it as a sign that Sukino's daughter would be taken as a consort by the Sultan. Sukino did not respond, though he recognised their observations as an external manifestation of the revelation he had experienced during the night. To him it had been the "*Wahyu Iman Suci*", the revelation of pure faith, the experience of clear white light. As he described it, this marked the beginning of his reception of much clearer explanations and teachings, of a higher level of understanding about the meditative process. From that point onwards his spiritual instructions became explanations as well as poetic directives.²⁵⁷

As the Sumarah history explains, the timing of this change in spiritual level was related to the beginnings of organisation and to the fact that a substantial number of *pamong* had already reached the level of real faith. During the first phase most Sumarah experience involved physical movement, automatic feeling responses, and spontaneous speech. Those experiences did reflect direct perception of the reality of forces beyond ego, but rarely mental comprehension. They were a starter for true spiritual development, working to cleanse and awaken, but not involving high spiritual consciousness. Even in Sumarah terms, the pattern of guidance involved in the first period is termed

²⁵⁷Sukino, "Sedjarah tjekakan ...", pp.19-21.

"imperialistic"--*pamong* attuned to the inner experience of initiates and gave direct instructions (*nyemak*).²⁵⁸

Second phase practice involved a general level of consciousness within which the group shared experience of the vibrational sphere of the heart. *Pamong* began to understand the nature of guidance as they performed it, they began to attune only inwardly rather than "examining" the inner states of others.²⁵⁹ This did not mean that inner contact was lost, only that it was subsumed within a sphere the whole group began to experience directly. On the basis of common entry into the sphere of the heart, the *sanubari*, the role of authority and guidance changes. Instructions no longer appear as sayings which have to be accepted on authority, but as more generalised comments which each individual applies to himself. So with the second phase special emphasis fell on the fact that guidance did *not* require dependence on the authority of *Pinisepuh* or *pamong*.²⁶⁰

In this respect Sumarah transition into the second phase represented a practical spiritual mirroring of national events. Just as colonialism lost its legal grip on the nation individual meditators began to mature to the point of realising what was happening inside without having to be "told". Just as the physical tensions of the revolution ended, Sumarah members became conscious of subtle levels beyond the dimension of powers they had been preoccupied with during physical struggle. With these developments in consciousness, grounds for establishing an organisation became solid.

formation of organisation

The creation of an organisation was official only with the first congress it held in 1950. Much of the ground, even of its structure, was to rise directly out of patterns laid down during the late forties. Sutadi's *Ancer-ancer* influenced the preliminary rules and statutes drafted by the early conferences; those in

²⁵⁸DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.55-58. The basis of this practice of tuning in vibrations is explained in Chapter 8.

²⁵⁹It is certainly difficult to pinpoint changes of this sort and I do not want to make things appear more straightforward than they have been. This is an image of 'general evolution' and must be counterbalanced with acknowledgement that practices within each phase have included elements of all of them. Individuals may be in different phases, but the 'phases' are a reflection of maturation of the group--both as a collective and through the fact that individuals within it were progressing personally.

²⁶⁰This is especially stressed in statements by Surono and Bariunhartono within the first congress in 1950 (in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjataan ...*, pp.13, 18-25.

turn helped shape the statutes adopted after 1950.²⁶¹ Individuals who had become active during the revolution, including many *pemuda*, became leaders within the new organisation. At the same time, despite the broad agreement to organise, some people and several large parts of the first phase movement chose not to join the new structure. Despite complications, the organisation which emerged did become the unquestioned vehicle for mainline Sumarah development. It continued with only minor modifications up to 1966, when another restructuring led to consolidation--eventually bringing in the groups which had failed to join in 1950.

The spiritual guidance which led directly to establishment of the new organisation came through Dr. Surono, the man who was to be its leader. Dr. Surono had just passed through several months of intense personal trial. During the Dutch occupation of Yogya he had been actively working with the underground, experiencing Dutch interrogation and several tense trips to the front lines. He related later that those trials raised the level of his Sumarah practice, preparing him directly for the increased responsibility he was to assume.²⁶² During 1948, at the abortive first congress, he had been designated as an organisational leader, so there had already been indications he was to have a role. Nevertheless, he describes reception of the instruction (*dawuh*) to form and become the leader of the new Sumarah structure as a surprise. The message came to him on March 8 1950, while he was in the midst of writing prescriptions for his patients.²⁶³ Within a few days he wrote Sutadi to inform him of the message. On the 18th the *Pinisepuh* met at Sutadi's Solo residence to evaluate Surono's *dawuh*. On the 19th Sutadi sent their formal response, affirming the truth of the message, that it had come from *Hakiki* rather than Surono's ego. They further surrendered (*masrahakan*) leadership to him, asking him to form an organisation within which they would remain as advisers (*tetap tut wuri andayani*).²⁶⁴

²⁶¹In addition to the Ancer-ancer, Sutadi's papers include copies of the AD and ART of the Pemuda Sumarah Indonesia (June 1948); of the AD of the Pagujuban Sumarah Indonesia (July 1948--this was just a draft version); and of the preliminary draft of Surono's PB AD and ART (prepared for the first congress of December 1950). Subsequent official versions are given in full within Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, and have been published separately in 1966, 1974 and 1978. The format of the Ancer-ancer differs considerably from that of later constitutions and statutes, but the statements dealing with the aims of the organisation and the nature of membership have been consistent.

²⁶²Surono, *Pagujuban Sumarah*, pp.15-17.

²⁶³*Ibid.*, pp.20-21; repeated during interviews.

²⁶⁴Broad description is in the DPP, *Sejarah*; more detail is given in Sujadi, *Sedjarah_Sumarah ...*, p.9. Suhardo, who was directly involved, reports that he and Sutadi made their objection to Surono's leadership clear.

On March 27 the new organisation was officially established. It was now called simply "Paguyuban Sumarah" and its leadership the "*Pengurus Besar*" or "P.B." (in somewhat awkward literal terms, the "big leadership"). The new leaders began the process of drafting the statutes and rules (*anggaran dasar* and *anggaran rumah tangga*, or A.D. and A.R.T.), formally constituting branches, and preparing for the first congress. Surono expressed strong desire to standardise both the organisational and spiritual dimensions of Sumarah. In the preceding period circumstances had left local groups to evolve distinct patterns, even differing understandings about the practice. Naturally Surono felt that a key task of the new structure was to provide coherence and unity. Both at the time and in retrospect, Surono has emphasised that he had no prior organisational experience. He described the statutes and rules as resulting from ordinary mental process, but the structure of leadership and the listing of those who were to fill it came through a purely intuitive process of automatic writing.²⁶⁵

Considering the sensitivity of the issue, Sumarah histories are remarkably forthright about the tensions which surrounded organising. It is consistently acknowledged that Sutadi and Suhardo refused to join Surono's PB; it is also clear that the first formal congress involved considerable tension.²⁶⁶ Although

According to him ("Sejarah Riwayat ..., Yogya, 1973, p.14), if Surono became leader there would be serious deviation from Sumarah's aims. Despite their protest, Sukino pressured them to agree. This was hardly a happy beginning. Suhardo's wording is: "Sababipun pak Hardo lan pak Tadi sami protes kanti mengundurkan diri: miturut dawuhing Allah 'Yen kang dadi Pengurus Besar Paguyuban Sumarah iku Dr. Soerono, ing tembe burine Paguyuban Sumarah bakal ngalami penyelewengan, para Pinisepuh lan para Sedulur kang dikersakake ambantu bakal disingkirake saka Organisasi Paguyuban Sumarah dening Pengurus Besare.' Sampun mrambah-rambah pak Hardo lan pak Tadi ngaturi pariksa bab dawuhing Allah kasebat nginggil dateng pak Kino; ananging boten dipun rewes dening pak Kino, pramila minangka kangge protes saklebeting Konggres pak Hardo lan pak Tadi sami mengundurkan diri saking Paguyuban Sumarah Ngayogyakarta. Sabibaring Konggres Paguyuban Sumarah pecah dados kalih, inggih punika Ngayogyakarta lan Surakarta ..."

²⁶⁵As this was debated within the congress, some feeling that the AD and ART were not well founded, Surono went to some lengths to explain the process (in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjataan* ..., pp.36-45).

²⁶⁶*Ibid.* As the discussion within the congress makes clear, many members had great difficulty sorting out how meditation practice was meant to relate to formal organisational discussion. Underlying debate was a constant concern with procedure, with the basic issue of relating meditation to logic. This, rather than substantive issues, was the central theme of the congress. Behind the scenes lay the split between Sukino, who

the problems are dealt with, little explanation is provided. According to several informants, it appears that Sutadi and Suhardo agreed with Sukino that 1950 was the correct time to organise, but disagreed as to whether Suroño should head the group. They apparently felt that Suroño was too new to Sumarah, not sufficiently mature in the practice, and too fixed in his opinions. It was even suggested that Sukino was blind to Suroño's nature, overly influenced by the prestige which attached to the latter's status as a doctor.²⁶⁷ Sukino's confidence and the general agreement of most Sumarah branches overruled Sutadi and Suhardo's objections, so Suroño did have a clear, even if hardly unanimous, mandate.

Nevertheless, Sutadi and the whole Solo branch decided not to join the PB. For the whole period of Suroño's leadership, reference to a "Solo branch" within the PB meant a small group of about a dozen--not the several hundred urban and regional followers of Sutadi. Suhardo, having just returned to Yogya from East Java, had no regional base, but declared himself inactive. In fact that meant "inactive" in the PB, but not in Sumarah matters. Suhardo continued to guide the mainly Chinese membership of Muntilan, which likewise stayed outside the PB. He also remained in close contact with Sukino and with Sutadi's Solo group.²⁶⁸ Other fragments of Sumarah failed to join the PB, though often

supported Suroño, and Sutadi and Suhardo, who did not. This never came into congress discussion, but must have been close to the surface of awareness. According to Soebagyo's notes, Sutadi was present--he is listed as speaking, by name, twice (most of the time speakers are identified only by place of origin, excepting principal leaders). Most sources either state or imply that neither Sutadi nor Suhardo attended the congress, though Suhardo (note 30 above) reports that the split came immediately following the congress.

²⁶⁷DDP, *Sejarah*, pp.67-68 acknowledges the tensions and the split, including the fact that Sukino did not get the agreement of the other Pinisepuh on the issue of leadership. However little detail is given and no resolution is offered to the apparent contradiction--that the Pinisepuh verified Suroño's message, yet two of the three failed to support him. The only interpretation which would allow both, is that the Pinisepuh did agree with the substance of Suroño's "dawuh", namely that it was the moment to organise; but not with the implication that Suroño had to lead the group. Martosuwignio mentioned, in Yogya during June 1973, that Suhardo and Sutadi felt Sukino had been "swayed" by Suroño's education, and the status which resulted. The comment was in no way an endorsement of the opinion.

²⁶⁸Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973. After Suhardo joined the PB in 1957, he became a link with Solo. During the years until the two regions became united (in 1966) there were continuous, but often difficult, negotiations through Suhardo. These are extensively documented in Suwondo's *Himpunan Wewarah*, beginning with a report

with different reasons. Martohandjo's group in Ponorogo never joined the PB; another group in Tegal lost contact with the rest of Sumarah (regaining contact only in the mid-seventies); and a scattering of individuals from the first phase continued on their own. In some cases refusal to join reflected principled objection to formalisation; in others dissatisfaction with Suroso's personality; and in still others egotism, refusal to accept higher authority.²⁶⁹ Fissiparous tendencies were both rooted in age old *kebatinan* patterns of fission, and paralleled by continuing divisions within the nation.

The early problems of consolidating organisation were seen as reflections of national issues: the continuing Dutch control of Western New Guinea, Dutch domination of the post-1950 economy, and foreign ideological influence within domestic parties. When the Tegal group rejoined Sumarah in 1976 one Jakarta leader of Sumarah saw the process as linked to the Indonesian acquisition of east Timor.²⁷⁰ Similar tensions and conflicts persisted at the personal level, where intense cleansing sometimes led to imbalance and aberrant behaviour--termed "*evolusi*" within Sumarah. Many of these experiences appeared very much like traditional experience of possession. It was sometimes suggested during the second phase that personal difficulties arose from incapacity to make the transition from phase one to phase two, a psychic equivalent to national failure to fully achieve independence.²⁷¹

Suhardo made to the PB in 1958 (Vol.V, pp.70-71) and including discussion of Sri Sampoerno's correspondence with the organisation in 1962 and 1963 (Vol.VI, pp.262-263, 283-284).

²⁶⁹In some cases, as with Joso's group in Yogya, relations with the PB remained amiable even though he refused to join (interview with Sutardjo, who entered Sumarah through Joso and then joined the PB, in Jakarta in July 1973). Puguh (interview in Jakarta in July 1976) described the rediscovery of a "Sumarah" connection in Tegal. In Tegal a Pak Agus, formerly a pupil of Sutadi's, founded his own organisation called "Prabawa". Then in 1975 he came into contact with Sumarah through the SKK. As a result he decided to merge with it--though the process has involved some complications, it has been underway.

²⁷⁰Interview with Puguh in Jakarta in July 1976. The parallel could be extended, each process has involved confusion about mechanics. When the leader of the Prabawa group, Agus, got agreement in principle about the merger, he dissolved his own organisation formally. From the Sumarah standpoint it then appeared that Prabawa had no legal existence. This meant that instead of merging with Prabawa it had to build a "new" branch from the ground up. Similarly, the Portuguese "release" of East Timor occurred without groundwork for subsequent developments.

²⁷¹Suroso made the connection between individual experience of "*evolusi*" and inability to make the transition from phase two to phase three (in Suwondo, *Himpunan_Wewarah* Vol.V, p.171). In Ponorogo Sichlan

Significant as some recalcitrant fragments were, only the departure of Sutadi and Suhardo appeared as an open wound within the organisation. Both were so highly regarded that many who joined the PB could not help feeling loss, an incompleteness. In mid-1956, as the third phase of Sumarah spiritual practice began, Suhardo received inner guidance to join. In confirming Suhardo's guidance, Sukino instructed his old friend to work toward unification by bringing Sutadi and the Solo group back into the mainstream of Sumarah. Some progress may have been made in that direction, but Sutadi died in January 1958. His successor, Sri Sampoerno, was not sympathetic so the Solo region remained separate until 1966.²⁷²

Throughout the period of separation there were tensions between the Yogya and Solo centres. Sutadi's following objected to the speed, and by implication lack of depth, of the PB's growth. They have felt that Surono's leadership resulted in rapid increase to the membership and often premature acknowledgement of *pamong* status. From their perspective this meant sacrifice of quality and spiritual depth in favour of quantity.²⁷³ Tensions became explicit in areas like Semarang. When the Sumarah group was forming there in 1950, both the PB and Solo were sending *pamong* to supervise. Martosoewignio was sent from Magelang by the PB; Sri Sampoerno was sent from Solo by Sutadi. Occasionally the two had awkward meetings at Darso's Semarang home. Eventually the Solo group stopped pressing its case, but some Semarang leaders, particularly Sardjoe, retained stronger links to Solo than Yogya--despite the PB affiliation of the branch.²⁷⁴

described his own experience of *evolusi* between 1950 and 1952 (interview in August 1973). At that point he lost his capacity to meditate and found that, although he continued to attend sessions, he immediately fell asleep. He related his difficulty to false pride resulting from his own contribution to the foundation of the regional movement.

²⁷²The framing of this, especially the deliberate use of the word "flaw", is strictly mine. From the PB and DPP perspectives the word would probably not be appropriate, though each did view the split with regret. Suhardo speaks of his renewed activism, during the period from 1956 to 1966, in "Sejarah Riwayat ...", pp.15-16. Also see Note 34 above. The problem was two-way: neither Surono nor Sri Sampoerno had much time for each other.

²⁷³Conversations with Sri Sampoerno in Solo; with Suhardo in Yogya in October 1972. Sri maintained and Suhardo supported the view that the Solo group has consistently placed more emphasis on consciousness.

²⁷⁴This is based on conversations with all four principals: Sri Sampoerno, Martosuwignio, Sudarso and Sardjoe. Sardjoe was especially insistent that, although following Sutadi's advice and affiliating with Yogya, he had remained oriented toward Solo (interview in Semarang in July 1973). Like Sutadi, Sardjoe was active in both the PNI and the BKKI;

Elsewhere, as in parts of East Java, other prominent members of the PB organisation, such as Dr. Toha and Soerjopramono in Surabaya, held strong sympathies for Sutadi and kept in touch with the Solo group.²⁷⁵ When Suhardo rejoined the organisation in 1956, his Muntilan following did as well. However amalgamation with the local PB group failed, so they withdrew again and affiliated with Sutadi. Suhardo's following were mainly urban, Chinese and educated; the PB group in Muntilan was rural, Javanese and uneducated. Obviously social as well as spiritual tastes contributed to disjunction.²⁷⁶ Although tensions persisted, there were continuous contacts between the Yogya and Solo centres. This informal continuity became important later on, when the Solo group began to rejoin the mainstream of Sumarah in the mid-sixties.

From the perspective of Sukino and Suro's PB, there was no doubt that the "non-joiners" had cut themselves off from crucial developments. Even informal contact appeared as no substitute for formal membership. Despite the problems which eventually developed within the PB, contemporary Sumarah members generally agree that those who remained outside the organisation "missed" key developments in consciousness. From the perspective of the PB there was always a direct link between organisational consolidation and spiritual growth. Events at the social level were experienced as reflections of the heightened consciousness which came with transitions into second and then third phase spiritual practice. These transitions were experienced through collective witnessing of *Hakiki* during the congresses between 1950 and 1958. Naturally those outside the organisation neither shared in the collective witnessing nor participated in the implied changes of consciousness. From the

like Sutadi he preferred to minimise organisational affiliation with Sumarah. It must be emphasised that the tensions about organising were not entirely centred around Solo--within each local group both views were represented.

²⁷⁵Conversations with Dr. Toah and Suryopramono in Surabaya in August 1973. Both men joined the practice in the first phase, but felt little inclination to connect with the PB. Suryopramono never joined it, remaining in contact with Sutadi instead. He formally affiliated with the organisation in 1966, when Sukino requested his help on the Dewan Pertimbangan. Dr. Toah was part of the PB, but only because the local branch automatically listed him when he moved there from Solo in 1952. In the early sixties he broke with Suro. Neither of the two stressed membership, reflecting their orientation toward Sutadi and the Solo style.

²⁷⁶Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973.

PB vantage point the other groups tended to appear static, persisting in phase one practices beyond the time they belonged to.²⁷⁷

The relationship between *Hakiki* and the organisation is both fundamental and elusive. From the Sumarah perspective no meaningful understanding of the movement exists unless it is grounded in awareness of it. At the same time full appreciation of the interplay is only possible through practice. Although there are limits to clarification here, events within each Sumarah congress provide lessons which suggest the nature of the relationship. As becomes obvious, the congresses were not the smoothly meditative events which idealised images of the mystical suggest. Latent conflicts became explicit within each, creating situations which forced participants toward deeper surrender. It was precisely this process which pushed the group into higher realisation of the ways Truth relates to social structures. It is interesting that neither contemporary nor retrospective Sumarah descriptions white-wash these events. Instead difficulties have been presented as lessons, teachings which raised collective awareness.²⁷⁸ Each lesson depended on commitment to introspective, self-critical, meditation by participants.

²⁷⁷This was clear in sources from the PB period, as well as in attitudes expressed since then. At least until recently it has been widely felt that the Solo group continues with phase one style practice. Sukino implicitly reflected that feeling in his letter to Sri Sampoerno of December 27 1969. In it he warned Sri against the use of terms such as 'kawruh', because they made people think in terms of traditional Javanism. This comment came during the period when kebatinan remained very much on the defensive, the nation was extremely sensitive to klenik. With the seventies the air has changed. In fact ironically the DPP commemorated Sukino, at the opening of the pendopo which was added to his old home, with a plaque marked: 'Nata Kawruh Sanggem Manunggal' (this was surya sengkala for 1935). The ceremony took place in 1975 (DPP, *Tuntunan ...*, p.8).

²⁷⁸Transcripts of proceedings are fairly reliable, even from the period predating use of tape-recorders (which is now the norm). Nina Epton commented on the number of people recording Sukino's talk at the Logi Kecil in Yogya, also on their endurance (in *Magic and Mystics of Java*, London, 1974, p.205). The record kept by Soebagyo, and those of Suwondo, are unlikely to have been distorted or tampered with--both were unofficial and each includes a great deal of very frank discussion. The histories naturally do not provide the same depth of detail, but the DPP *Sejarah* certainly makes no effort to conceal problems. It refers to them constantly, and always as potential 'lessons'. However the histories do not probe and explore problems. This is based on Sumarah practice, which never assumes that mental resolution or demonstrations of 'fact'

The first congress took place in Yogya on the 25th and 26th of December 1950. It became heated on two counts. First there was the conspicuous absence of Sutadi and Suhardo; second an extended debate about the way the agenda had been handled, especially how statutes and rules were to be approved. The congress programme, which had been sent out in advance, had three parts: a question and answer session, consideration of the statutes and rules (AD and ART), and designation of leadership. The draft programme included suggestions for revision of the AD and ART, calling for written submissions by branches.²⁷⁹

Each part of the programme began with meditation and ended with guidance by Sukino. On the whole Sukino played little part, except that in his long closing meditations his guidance touched on issues under consideration, as well as providing concrete direction for the specific meditation. As leader of the already constituted PB, Dr. Surono was chairman of the congress. Representatives and observers came from twelve branches (*cabang*) and two sub-branches (*ranteng*). Altogether the organisation included 3262 members, 147 of them *pamong*.²⁸⁰ Matters of procedure were dealt with through voting (each branch had one vote); issues of principle were to be resolved through consensus rising from common experience of *Hakiki*.²⁸¹

The official Sumarah history attributes the heated atmosphere of the congress to the fact members failed to remain centred during discussion, insisting on personal opinions rather than opening themselves in spiritual attunement.²⁸² Representatives, especially from Solo and Ponorogo, questioned Dr. Surono aggressively. On the whole Surono was able to satisfy questioners, but at times he was drawn into debate. As a result, several "elders" of the

will solve difficulties. Problems are seen as reflecting not disagreement of fact, but failure to remain centred and in meditation.

²⁷⁹This draft, including Sutadi's notes on it, was among his papers.

²⁸⁰DPP, *Sejarah*, p.69. At this point, within the first congress, the distinction between kanoman and kasepuhan membership was dropped, so there was no longer ambiguity in the figures as to whether or not they included both principal levels of initiation. In his opening report to the congress, Surono made clear that this membership total referred to those listed within the 12 branches and 25 sub-branches (*ranteng*) which had been officially incorporated into the PB prior to the congress (in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjatatan ...*, p.6). By implication it did not include the Solo region or others which chose not to affiliate with the PB.

²⁸¹This was clarified in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjatatan ...*, pp.38-39; also in the DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.76-77. Both mention the difficulties involved in reaching a consensus.

²⁸²DPP, *Sejarah*, p.76; Sujadi, "Sedjarah ...", p.9. Sujadi explained the 'rough vibes' as a reflection of the fact that members were unable to remain in meditation while talking.

movement were called to speak--notably Sukeno from Madiun and Bariunhartono from Yogya. Together with Sukino and Surono, they made the most important statements of the congress, clarifying the basis of the organisation and guiding others to realisation of how it needed to function.

Bariunhartono rose in response to questions attacking the basis of Surono's authority, suggesting that organisers had preempted congress by leaving no room for discussion and revision. This question emerged in part from the fact that written responses had been required from the branches; the agenda had arrived late and some branches had no chance to consider it.²⁸³ Bariun responded with a prepared statement, forcefully pointing out that developments leading up to the congress had been dictated by *Hakiki*, that individuals involved had no choice except to follow. In the process he explained (in summary):

...that movement toward organisation was an inexorable response to changing times. Traditional spirituality required submission to guidance from *kyai* or *guru*, men like Sukino. Independence brought entry into the era of democracy and organising (*jaman organisasi*), Sumarah had to organise to make it publicly obvious that it was not a cult (*paguron*). Because the practice focused inwardly and on the heart (*kalbu*), developments had followed direct inner guidance rather than external or mental directives.

This had meant that when Bariun and the other Yogya elders met with Sukino to discuss Surono's *dawuh*, they acted not in terms of what they 'thought right', but rather followed guidance even when the meaning was not immediately clear. For them, at that time, it had been made clear that Surono's actions were correct even if he himself lacked spiritual comprehension of their significance. This made it clear that although the elders were to surrender organisational responsibility to him, they needed to remain active as guides both within and for the organisation. Bariun stressed that organisation was a tool of the spirit, not a force dictating to it.²⁸⁴

Sukeno's contribution came spontaneously in response to queries as to why the PB structure drew so heavily on *pamong* rather than *pemuda* for leadership. His comments emphasised the cardinal significance of balance between spiritual and material spheres. He pointed out that organisational activity was itself spiritual process, not just ancillary to it as some of the earlier *pemuda* leadership thought. That leadership had been unable to function; the new one was about to assume larger responsibility for spiritual guidance of the nation. To enact its role it had to be simply a vehicle for the spirit. Drawing on the *wayang*, he recalled the relationship between Kresna and Arjuna in the

²⁸³In Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjatan ...*, pp.16-17. The Solo representatives raised the most persistent objections on this.

²⁸⁴*Ibid.*, pp.18-25.

Bhagavadgita. There Kresna, symbolising spirit, guided Arjuna even on the battlefield. Sumarah could not, he said, function the way most organisations did. If participants interpreted freedom as license to express desires, then decisions would be based on mind and emotion and the result would be chaos dominated by spirits (*elementaal*). Alluding to the debate and innuendoes within the congress, he clarified that everyone needed to employ full spiritual and mental awareness simultaneously. Attunement of inner and outer realities did not mean merely meditating first and then thinking; neither did it mean only 50% consciousness of each. In fact it required 100% consciousness of both spheres. For this reason, he explained, Sumarah leaders needed to be spiritually rather than just organisationally advanced.²⁸⁵

Surono himself clarified a number of key points. Most significantly, he explained his own sense of the way congress related to *Hakiki*, to the highest spiritual authority. He said that although he could report his own experiences, such as the way he had determined the structure and leadership of Sumarah, only the movement as a whole could certify its status as *Hakiki*. The process did not involve faith or acceptance of authority--each person had to experience the Truth for himself, through meditation. Decisions by congress were the final authority, but they needed to come as confirmations through meditation and not just as the result of discussion. He said:

Even if it is *Hakiki* it also has to be proven. It is up to us to experience the Truth in all these matters, not just to adopt suggestions on faith. We differ from religions, within which people accept God on faith and without knowledge. Even Sukino asks us for our agreement.²⁸⁶

He went on to explain, as indeed Sukino himself had, that there had been a misunderstanding about authority during the first phase. Members had thought that the term "*trimurti*" meant Sukino, Suhardo and Sutadi; expecting *Hakiki* to flow through them. Now, with the second phase, it was becoming clear that both the *trimurti* and the source of *Hakiki* were internal. The *trimurti* meant the mind, heart and spirit (*angen-angen, rasa, budi*). Through purely internal meditation, members would begin to recognise Truth for themselves, rather than arguing over authority and depending on others.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.31-35. An extract from Sukeno's talk was also included in the DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.71-72.

²⁸⁶ Soebagyo, *Op.Cit.*, p.38. Surono's words were: "Meskipun Hakiki harus djuga dibuktikan. Sebab semua Hakiki dalam hal ini kitapun harus membuktikan. Tidak hanya schema2 tadi lantas dipertjaja sadja. Berlainan dengan agama, belum pernah tahu (tetapi sudah pertjaja) manakah Tuhan itu. Bapak Sukino sendiri djuga memintakan persetudjuan dengan kita orang."

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.13.

Not everyone at the congress clearly understood the collective workings of *Hakiki*, in fact far from it. However those who did were able to point to tests which could convince the others: the events of congress were themselves the tests of truth. Leaders might receive *Hakiki* and even know that it had relevance for the whole, but unless the collective directly experienced its relevance, guidance remained unconfirmed. Certification by congress was to be the highest authority within Sumarah, not the authority individuals might claim. Truth might lie in a plane beyond ordinary ego awareness, in a dimension more readily accessible to some than others, but its application was not to be separated from the concrete experiences and living realities of the collective.

In practice this did not mean that each member of congress had to be able to affirm grasp of an 'absolute truth'. All each person had to do was meditate, tuning in to the group and the issues, and express what felt right to him. The collective response then became the guide as to whether a directive or decision was correct. Self-critical meditation was obviously essential to the process, but it did not require an idealised harmony, belief in authority, or convincing argument. However varied individual awareness of this process, its fundamentals were articulated within the first congress. Every subsequent conference and congress has been seen as a stage for the expansion of group consciousness and the basis of organisational activity is shared experience in group meditation--not the authority of an individual, teaching, or regulation.

From its foundation Sumarah placed emphasis on organisation as a vehicle for group spiritual process. It was suggested that organisation was simply an agent to facilitate physical contacts, not a source of spiritual practice but a physical reflection of collective consciousness. It was meant to be related to spirituality in the same way that the individual body relates to the spirit within it. This implied that even though the material usually dominates, the aim was to align it to the spiritual. It was not the *practice (panguden)* which was being organised, but the *people*.²⁸⁸

As understanding and acceptance grew within the first congress, debates dwindled away and tensions eased. Discussions of procedure dropped away not because they had been formally resolved, but because growing unanimity made procedure itself irrelevant. Agreement was not complete. Even in the final stages, as delegation of authority to the PB leadership approached, the Solo representatives asked for time to express their view. It can be assumed that the Solo view was well known anyway, so it was not surprising that there were only two votes in favour of exploring the Solo position.²⁸⁹ At the end of the

²⁸⁸*Ibid.*, pp.26, 33-34. This analogy, and its use during the early stages of organising, was brought most forcefully to my attention by Mrs. Siswono in Magelang in June 1973.

²⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p.45. The vote was 12 to 2 against Solo. Earlier there had been a much more extended debate about the procedure for approving the constitution and statutes (pp.35-41). The Solo group was also at the

congress the Surono leadership had solid support, workable statutes and rules, and a clear structure. In addition to designation of leadership and agreement on structure, the congress passed a number of smaller resolutions. Along with routine determination to increase efficiency and standardise local patterns, there were resolutions to review the status of all *pamong* (which was to be done by the PB) and to establish contact with the Ministry of Education and Culture.²⁹⁰

With the transition to phase two and the establishment of a formal organisation, Sumarah became, ostensibly at least, both more democratic in structure and more purely mystical in practice. During the first phase the structure had been traditional, emphasis on personalities strong, and the taste for magical powers obvious. With the second phase, authority rested more clearly with the group as a whole and practices focused more directly on the internal experience of surrender which characterises pure mysticism: consciousness rather than instrumental power became the only target. Individuals expanded beyond preoccupation with personal experience, coming to see Sumarah as a collective with a role in the nation, and, for members at any rate, it seemed this process represented experience and expression of a higher order of Truth, a shift from individual to collective consciousness.

centre of that storm, though in that instance the vote against it was much closer: 8 to 6. The Solo group, obviously inclining toward Sutadi (who may have also been the speaker, as he is listed as speaking in defense of the substance of the AD and ART on pp.43-44), disagreed mainly with the way in which the congress was being organised--not so much with the issues of form.

²⁹⁰DPP, *Sejarah*, p.70. It is notable that Sumarah determined from such an early stage to link itself to the Ministry of Education and Culture. See Chapter 8 for recent developments.

chapter 6

TRANSCENDING CULTISM

The foundation of organisation implied movement toward routinised communications. At the same time the process was theoretically linked to devolution of spiritual authority: organisational consolidation was meant to be paralleled by spiritual democratisation. Although both trajectories were clarified during the first congress, it is hardly surprising the two lines of development did not always converge in practice. Confirmation of each meant affirmation of principle, not fulfilment in reality. Common recognition of a spiritual sphere within the brotherhood did not mean all members were fully conscious of a continuous and harmonised attunement, far from it. Internalisation of principles often only comes through traumas of growth.

Surono's leadership and the PB structure continued through the period from 1950 to 1966, but fell into two distinct phases. The first coincided spiritually with phase two, organisationally with the period of congresses until 1958, and nationally with the era of Parliamentary Democracy. The second was connected to the beginnings of phase three, with authoritarian tendencies in Surono's leadership, and with Sukarno's Guided Democracy. The parallels between spiritual, organisational and national experience were overwhelming--and Sumarah people spoke of them at the time. During the first part of Surono's leadership his actions seemed attuned to the majority of the membership; during the second part intense tensions led to a dramatic explosion. Within Sumarah the transition of 1966 was as sharp and difficult as the national experience of the coup--though in Sumarah the tensions found psychic and in the nation physical expression.

From 1950 to 1958 authority within Sumarah clearly rested with the congresses; nationally the same period saw focus on Parliament and the elections of 1955 and 1957. After 1957 and by 1959 national power centred increasingly on Sukarno; in the late fifties Surono began to assume a parallel role within Sumarah. During the early sixties spontaneous confrontations occurred throughout rural Java, but especially in East Java. At the same time increasing tensions developed between Surono and the regional leaderships of Jakarta and Ponorogo. Nationally the period of mass movements had led to growing concern about *klenik*, defined as "black magic". This was internalised within Sumarah as an effort to break away from accommodation with ancestral spirits and the power claims of individuals. Since 1966 the Suharto government has attempted to "purge politics of ideology"; in the same period Sumarah has dropped efforts to standardise concepts and practices, accepting the internal authenticity of variations in practice.

Despite the precision of parallels between national and Sumarah developments, tensions within Sumarah also squarely centred on problems of authority which arise in all mystical movements. While mystical principles suggest that authority and gnosis are to be experienced internally, there are always various degrees of realisation and, by implication, differences of authority and power. Many traditions emphasise the transcendent and "absolute" qualities of energies working through realised teachers, masters or guru. In those seekers or followers submit in unquestioning obedience. In theory contradiction with principle is resolved through clarification that submission is *not* to the person of the teacher, but to the absolute *expressed through* him. As every tradition acknowledges, reality is an abuse of ideals. Leaders, as likely as their often naive followings, confuse ego with Absolute.

Even in its origins Sumarah had claimed departure from traditional emphasis on guru. Yet it was admitted that in first phase practice the ideal remained unrealised. With the inception of phase two those in positions of spiritual authority made a positive effort to step down, urging everyone to seek only the Truth they could know directly. Some did. Then as they expressed themselves, patterns of interpretation diverged, reflecting variations in background and personality. Surface difference seemed contrary in some eyes to organisational standardisation. If the organisation affirmed and maintained purity of direction, how could it sanction diverse expression? As devolution of spiritual authority progressed, with individuals gaining new clarity, there was a natural tendency for Surono, as leader responsible for the organisation, to interpret the process as anarchic. In principle the organisation served merely to facilitate communications, as the physical body which contained practice. Conflict arose because the leadership was eventually unable to distinguish between organisational and spiritual authority, there was imbalance between outer (*lahir*) and inner (*batin*).

This imbalance was not an aberration, it is the norm. Most people and movements, even (!) mystical sects, are simply 'directed toward' ideals. At no level do they automatically embody perfection. Sumarah experience was not of "disease" unless in the sense that normal social phenomenon may be "sick". Difficulties focused in the period after phase three began and before the Surono leadership gave way to Arymurthy's Jakarta centre. My interpretation--and it is only mine--is that this period involved a disjunction between spiritual and organisational trajectories. Surono remained aligned to phase two while overall growth in the association moved into phase three.²⁹¹

²⁹¹Informants within Sumarah did agree that problems arose mainly after the third phase had begun, but it is my interpretation that those problems reflected Surono's inability to make the transition. Martosuwignio (interview in Yogya in June 1973) agreed that problems began around

patterns of PB growth

Consolidation of the PB structure during the early fifties led to clear patterns of leadership, new explanations about practice, and regularised meetings for shared experience. Contacts became continuous not only through congresses; but also through regional meetings and routine visits Surono and Sukino made to branches. Membership was clearly defined, lists of branches were circulated, and functions within them were clarified. Each member was "graded", their level of consciousness being related to a scheme of stages. Sukino's important teachings (*wewarah*) were printed in booklets. The plan to establish a journal never materialised in this period, but Sukino's *wewarah*) and the circulation of organisational guidelines did define and standardise practice.

Following Dr. Surono's outline, the structure of the PB was confirmed by the first congress and continued with minor modifications until 1958. Leadership was allocated to four sections including the general (*bagian umum*), social (*bagian sosial*), educational (*bagian pendidikan*), and communications (*bagian penghubung*). Each section had a chairman, secretary, and assistants. In addition the social section included a treasurer. At every level of the organisation the four sections worked with the board of *pamong* (*dewan pamong*) which had a chairman and secretaries and included all *pamong* in its membership. Sukeno, Suhardo and Sutadi were designated as advisers (*penasehat*) and Sukino remained formally outside organisaitonal structure. In practice he was extremely important, acknowledged as *warana*, the "screen" upon which teachings were apparent.²⁹² Soon after the first congress instructions from the PB leadership made clear local branches should model themselves on the PB, but did not need such elaborate structure and could adapt to realities suited to their scale.²⁹³

Full congresses were held in 1953, 1955 and 1958 and a conference was held in 1956. The latter was significant as within it phase three was formally

1960; Suhardo (*Ceramah ...*, 1974, p.7) spoke of the period from 1960 to 1965 as the era of Surono's deviation.

²⁹²The outline structure of the PB organisation is clarified in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p.70. Although Sutadi was included in the original list of advisers, he never assumed that function. Sukino's formal designation as *warana* was a continuation of his first phase function. Moertono (*State and Statecraft in Old Java*, Ithaca, 1968, p.35) comments on the use of the term "warana" as a term for traditional kings: "In literary language, *warana* means 'deputy' or 'representative', but its literal meaning is 'screen'; thus, in this context, the king is the screen through which man must pass to reach God and, conversely, through which God must pass to reach man."

²⁹³DPP, *Sejarah*, p.77.

announced. Throughout this period PB leadership toured branches twice annually, keeping in contact with members on a personal basis. In some years these trips occurred more often, in response to requests from branches. Contacts within Central Java were more frequent, trips to East Java regular but at longer intervals, and the leadership rarely visited the small branches in Jakarta and Bandung.²⁹⁴ Often members from outside Yogya attended monthly sessions led by Sukino at the "Logi Kecil", a school building near the centre of Yogya. Others, less able to visit Yogya, corresponded with Sukino directly to get clarification on personal or organisational matters.²⁹⁵

At the local level branches (*cabang*) existed at the kabupaten or district level of national administration. In areas where membership was especially large, branches were divided into *ranteng* (meetings, or sub-branches). *Ranteng* were formed in some cities where membership remained small. In those cases, as in Semarang, *ranteng* related directly to the PB rather than through a branch. Although a branch existed in Medan for some time, contacts with it were slight and eventually it appears to have dissolved. A Madura branch was mentioned in one congress, but it was an off-shoot of the group across the straits in Gresik--the two groups were relatives within one community, though divided by straits.²⁹⁶ Though conceptualised nationally, Sumarah remained

²⁹⁴*Ibid.*, pp.75-76.

²⁹⁵Both the PB trips, and the correspondence many carried out with Sukino, were described by a large number of informants. Sichlan, in Ponorogo, described his own frequent visits to Yogya during this period. One of the meetings in the "Logi Kecil" is described by Nina Epton, *Magic and Mystics of Java*, London, 1974, pp.205-211.

²⁹⁶Conversations with Ratmin, Sudarto and Marmin in Gresik in August 1973. The Gresik area was 'pioneered' by Mostar and Suladi, both of whom joined Sumarah during the first phase. To begin with they lived at the village of Tanjungan, on Madura. As many of their early followers were sailors, offshoots of this group developed in Tanjung Priok (the port of Jakarta), in Surabaya, and just outside Gresik. In the early seventies there was still a ranteng at Tanjungan, but most of those remaining there were women. In the fifties the group came to centre in Sidorukun, just south of Gresik, but it did not connect to the PB until 1960. Up to that point Mostar's personality and charisma thoroughly dominated the group. In the sixties Sukardji moved there (he was still in the army at the time) and began 'updating' the local movement, bringing it into line with Sumarah developments elsewhere. At the same time it began to expand rapidly. In 1973 the branch claimed a membership of 1000 or more--it is the largest branch in the Surabaya region. The regional membership is mainly Javanese, despite the Madurese population. Although the area is a centre of historic Muslim strength, Sumarah members commented that local Islam was very strongly oriented toward the saint cults, toward ascetic practices at the graves of early saints.

overwhelmingly Javanese and its strength has always been in the heartlands of Central and East Java.

Very little English language literature touches on Sumarah, but there are two glimpses into "phase two" organisation through foreign observers at the time. Clifford Geertz reported briefly on the Pare (East Java) branch as it was in 1953 and Nina Epton wrote about her contacts with Sukino and the Yogya group during 1955.²⁹⁷ Together they provide genuine insight: Geertz into local organization and Epton into practice.

Geertz described Sumarah as the most "tightly organised" of the Pare sects and as "sharply anti-intellectual", with stress falling heavily on group meditation practice without discussions. The forty members included a strong *abangan* element, though it was led by *priyayi* clerks and school teachers. The only *pamong*, and therefore leader of the branch was a pawn shop employee (here an obvious link with Sukeno, head of the government pawnshop system in Madiun). Geertz described the membership as divided into four categories: youth (above twelve), ordinary older members, advanced members and the one *pamong*.²⁹⁸ He describes meetings as including not only silent meditation, but also chanted repetition of the founder's teachings--most likely meaning the *Sesanggeman*, but also possibly the printed *wewarah*, Sukino's talks during 1950-1952.

This last point, and the resemblance to Islamic chanting which Geertz notes, provides particular insight into local practices. From the standpoint of Sumarah elders, such repetition has never been encouraged, though I am

Reservations about Sumarah, at least within the region, appeared to come because those who saw themselves as Muslim remained involved with spirits, while Sumarah people chose not to. This is a complete reversal of the stereotype contrast between Javanist and Muslim identification. A similar pattern exists in Demak, where the local Sumarah branch has also been quite strong since the fifties (interviews with Suseno in Salatiga).

²⁹⁷Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Chicago, 1976 (1960) and Nina Epton, *Magic and Mystics of Java*, London, 1974 (1956). Geertz uses a pseudonym for the town, but its real name is well known and in 1972 I spoke to several of his Sumarah informants in Pare. I see no reason to continue the 'disguise' here.

²⁹⁸Geertz, *Op.Cit.*, p.328. There are two possibilities here: either Geertz's information was incorrect--on small points--or the local practices did not conform to Sumarah norms. Even in the earliest period there was no reference to admitting boys of 12 into Sumarah practice. Normally the youngest members would be about 18; formally they may be as young as 15.

aware of other, more recent, instances of the same practice.²⁹⁹ It is interesting that Geertz was given a very lofty image of the Sumarah leadership in Yogya--an exaggeration of the social origins of its founders.³⁰⁰ He does mention that advanced members and *pamong* were "checked" by the Yogya leadership before their level of meditative achievement had been established. It is clear from this, an outsiders report, that by 1953 the effort to organise Sumarah, including clarification of levels of consciousness, had reached even relatively remote branches: the organisation did not only exist on paper. It is also clear that local practices diverged somewhat from the guidelines of the PB.

While Geertz presents us with a very "lofty" image of Sukino--as a "guru" whose words were repeated literally by an uncritical following, Epton gives us a striking contrast. As a journalist with a personal interest in mysticism, she joined in Sumarah practice after friends recommended it to her as the "most reliable mystical fraternity" in Java.³⁰¹ She joined in several ordinary meetings, accompanied by the Sardjonos (he was the secretary of the PB), and attended one of Sukino's meetings at the Logi Kecil. Like Geertz, she mentioned levels of practice and "checking" by the leadership--though in her description the immediate attunement of *pamong* to those they were guiding is clearer.³⁰² She was very impressed by the "unaffected" humility and natural ease Sukino demonstrated in relating to other Sumarah members.

She found none of the arrogance or exaggerated respect characteristic of so many spiritual guru or "masters". It was clear to her that Sumarah warned against preoccupation with the glamorous and occult dimensions of the

²⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p.343. In fact I know of no groups who have 'chanted' in a way that would resemble Islamic chants, but I do know that several groups have regularly read printed teachings. One *pamong* in Ngawi has been doing this; the Bandung group was criticised for it. I do not doubt that during the second phase far more of this sort of repetition was practiced, representing, from the standpoint of Sumarah practice, failure to internalise and personally activate the principles spoken about in words.

³⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p.330. Geertz got the impression, from his Pare informants, that the founders of Sumarah were high court people, and that some of them held high positions in the Ministry of Education and Culture. Sutadi did have high connections; so did Surono (in the Pakualaman). In the early fifties no Sumarah people held high office. In the 1950 congress Surono responded to one questioner with clarification that the police were the only officers with any formal knowledge of Sumarah--it had no connection to the Ministry of Education and Culture (in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjatatan* ..., 1950, p.9). The only possible connection with that Ministry would be the fact that Suhardo taught in a technical school under its jurisdiction.

³⁰¹Epton, *Op.Cit.*, p.193.

³⁰²*Ibid.*, p.201.

mystical, presenting spirituality as a relaxed and natural dimension. She observed that Sukino advised against rigid asceticism and enforced discipline, emphasising that physical adjustments would naturally follow spiritual maturation.³⁰³ Although both reports mention substantial peasant membership, Epton put more emphasis on the democratic quality of Sumarah. She noted that respect and spiritual standing did not depend on social origins.³⁰⁴ As in Pare, some especially local traits stand out--such as firm separation of the sexes and the practice of facing Mecca. Both have been, and remain, more marked in Yogya than elsewhere in Sumarah.³⁰⁵

The two images complement each other and the Sumarah sources on the same period. Exaggerated respect, assumption of high social status, and uncritical repetition of Sukino's words--all naturally reflected Pare's distance from Sumarah's centre. For those in Yogya, and continually in personal contact with Sukino, his human qualities and the practical inner emphasis of Sumarah appear to have been clearer. Farther from the centre, and the guidance of mature *pamong*, the tendency to translate Sumarah into a "religious" exercise became stronger. Internal Sumarah sources and developments dealt explicitly with exactly this discrepancy.

Geertz and Epton both comment on division of Sumarah membership into "grades" of consciousness. Geertz mentions four categories, Epton seven initiations, but in each case clearly linked to the scheme of levels (from "A" to "G") enunciated by the PB. Suroño spoke of these levels as equivalent to progression through classes in school, an image also used by Geertz's Pare informants.³⁰⁶ In addition, the PB established guidelines clarifying who could function as a *pamong* for members at each level. It was noted, when these levels were formally listed in July 1955, that no members belonged to the two highest levels. Assessment of consciousness (*peninjauan martabat*) was not all done by Yogya leaders. Local *pamong* "checked" the stages of members from level A to level C; Arymurthy in West Java and Kyai Abdulhamid in East Java assessed levels within their regions; the PB, ultimately Sukino, checked the highest levels.³⁰⁷

³⁰³*Ibid.*, pp.206-207, 203.

³⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p.201.

³⁰⁵*Ibid.*, pp.196-197. A large number of groups do separate the sexes in meditation, but in Yogya this is practiced far more consistently and in many areas they are not divided at all. During the first congress several branches queried Suroño about both this practice and the advice to face Mecca. He responded that neither was fundamental to Sumarah practice, but that each was a matter of conforming to social norms so as not to offend Muslims (in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjatanan ...*, p.17).

³⁰⁶Geertz, *Op.Cit.*, p.328. This image was frequently used by Suroño (for instance in Suroño, *Pagujuban Sumarah*, 1965, pp.24-26.).

³⁰⁷DPP, *Sejarah*, p.95.

This system appears elaborate and the process of "checking" mysterious, but letters overlaid earlier frames, providing uniform reference for initiations and levels which were clear to the founders--they matched the realms Sukino passed through in his initial revelation.³⁰⁸ Level "A" meant *kanoman*, the physical practices which typified meditation among young members in the 15-25 year old age group--even in the second phase. Level "B" meant *kasepuhan*, or ordinary mature meditators. Levels "C", "D" and "E" generally, though not always, implied capacity to function as a *pamong*. Without explanation the system means little. Since later understandings have been clarifications, as well as revisions, of earlier systems, current understandings cast light on the phase two schemes.

Kanoman or level A meant individuals were at the stage of releasing gross desires and emotions, they had a drive to surrender, but little inner awareness of its meaning. At this level intention exists, but capacity to turn consciousness inward, even still the body, is limited. *Kasepuhan* or level B meant the level of those able to let desires and senses relax. At that point it is possible to develop inner awareness, meaning thoughts and the body have stilled. Level C, equivalent to the current sense of "*iman*", refers to the stage of being centred in that attention is no longer in the thoughts or head, but in the chest, the *sanubari*. At this stage meditators experience direct awareness of the sphere of inner energies, awareness is fully at rest in the *rasa*, or intuitive feeling (eg the mind has entered into the heart). At level D there is not only firm centring, the solid faith of level C, but also direct experience of the *kalbu*, the inner heart which is awakened when there is complete surrender and pure life energy suffuses awareness. At this point the mind, heart and spirit (*angen-angen*, *rasa*, and *budi*) are united and that is what the term *sumarah* actually designates. Level E, which applied to very few, meant consciousness beyond self and perfectly aligned to God's will.³⁰⁹

The practice of checking and assessing levels was a refinement and continuation of attunement Sumarah *pamong* experienced even in the first phase. For *pamong* who were themselves only at level C, this process appeared mechanical, resulting in automatic oral or written answers. Often this would be done by listing names and numbering them, then listing the numbers on a separate sheet. The person doing the checking would tune in to each number, noting the appropriate letter (A to E) next to the number.³¹⁰ For advanced

³⁰⁸DPP, *Tuntunan ...*, pp.3-5. Also see Appendix B.

³⁰⁹DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.95-97.

³¹⁰Sichlan, in Ponorogo, described his nervousness when given the responsibility of 'ranking' levels of consciousness. At one point he was given a list which included Kyai Abdulhamid--the implication is that this process of 'checking' could be done even if the list included people more advanced than the one doing the 'ranking'. (Ponorogo, September 1973).

pamong checking implied conscious attunement to the inner experience of the individual in question. This meant that if the *pamong* was centred he would experience in himself whatever anxiety, confusion, relaxation or clarity the subject felt. In principle this intuitive reception of vibrations is not affected by distance or personal knowledge of the subject. In practice the procedure appears mysterious because people rarely have direct consciousness of their own inner states, leaving them little grounds for realisation of the ways in which experiences interpenetrate.

The nature of the checking process during the second phase resulted in a mystique. Ordinary members could hardly see it as application of normal capacities--it appeared to reflect extraordinary skills. In view of the expanding scale of the brotherhood, "grading" meant division of membership into sub-groups, each meeting in different sessions to minimise vibrational "interference". Understanding was that experiences interpenetrate in meditation and the clarity of advanced meditators would be disturbed, the sphere "lowered", if less advanced members joined in.³¹¹ In principle this was refinement of recognition that any group is influenced by collective moods and feelings. Sichlan joked of "competition" for *pamong* status in phase one; he commented on its translation into "competition for consciousness" (*rebutan martabat*) in phase two.³¹² Whatever reality there may be to differences of consciousness, there is no doubt that formalisation of the system of levels produced exaggeration, members obsessed with 'progress' and comparing themselves to each other rather than attending to inner realisation. The procedure of checking, no less than one-on-one guidance (*nyemak*) of phase one, led to dependence on those invested with "spiritual authority".

transition to phase three

The movement into phase two had been clearly marked. Socially it was associated with formal organisation; conceptually with new emphasis on faith (*iman*); and in practice with a shift from the navel chakra to the heart. It meant movement from *tekad*, from the drive or will to surrender, into *iman*, the direct recognition of inner realities. In terms of progression upwards through the chakras, the movement toward total surrender, the shift in the third phase was less distinct. Like the second, the third phase focused on the heart. Like the second phase, it dealt in the "middle realm", that of *iman*. Although still

³¹¹Some division of this sort is still practiced, but no longer with the same formality which characterised it in the second phase. Typically there are still special meetings of *pamong*, of those who are near *pamong* status, and often also of youth.

³¹²Interview with Sichlan in Ponorogo in September 1973; also comments (to similar effect) in Sujadi, *Penjelasan Tentang Fase Ke III dan Pelaksanaannya*, Ngawi, 1970 (1957), pp.7-8.

involving emphasis on the same broad stage, on the same region of the body, phase three brought refinement. General emphasis on the chest area, the *sanubari* within which *rasa* operates, became more distinct awareness of the inner heart (*kalbu*).

On the outer layers of Sumarah, the transition did have clear effects. During phase two there had been a sense that *Hakiki* became associated with the organisation, or brotherhood as a whole--no longer just with the founders. During phase three it seemed clear that *Hakiki* was being received clearly by regional centres, not just in congresses and through the PB. In phase one Javanese had been the language of both spiritual and organisational functions. In phase two Indonesian was adopted for organisational activity, but Javanese and Sukino's personal talks remained fundamental in the spiritual sphere. With phase three, use of Indonesian became common for both organisational and spiritual activity. At the same time recognised teachings were expressed not only through Sukino, but also through Surono, Arymurthy, Abdulhamid and a few others.³¹³ With phase two there had been increasing awareness of the collective Sumarah "entity"; in phase three there was more conscious attunement to national events--and to Sumarah's place within them.

Recognition that a new phase was at hand came not through Sukino, but through Martosuwignio, a member of the PB and one of the leaders of the Magelang branch. This was a reflection of the fact that in the second phase reception of *Hakiki* was linked to the organisation, not just to the founders. Recognition of a third phase meant realisation of a collective transition, not just experience of a "higher" realm for a few leaders. The leadership saw itself as merely noting and articulating the nature of a change which was taking place automatically, prior to their comments about it. Although this did not mean that all Sumarah members immediately experienced heightened awareness, it did mean that many became conscious of a clearer linkage between Truth, *Hakiki*, and the actual functioning of the brotherhood. This new awareness was fostered through the experience of the congresses in phase two.

The second congress took place from May 23 to 25 1953. As with all national meetings of the Surono era, it was held in yoga. Representatives from 22 of the 24 branches attended, only those from Bandung and Medan failed to arrive.³¹⁴ There was renewed discussion of the statutes and rules, also

³¹³The shifts in language use are obvious within Suwondo's *Himpunan Wewarah*. Almost all of the spiritual material up to 1956 is in Javanese, most of it is from Sukino. After that both the organisational and (increasingly) the spiritual materials are in Indonesian. At the same time Suwondo began to include more talks by Arymurthy, Surono, Martosuwignio and a few others. The increasing use of Indonesian was not a 'policy', so much as a reflection of the fact that younger leaders felt more at home in it than many of their elders did.

³¹⁴DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.79-80.

reconfirmation of the PB leadership. Neither process was easy, but the most notable feature of the congress was Sukino's absence. His absence was due to illness, but its significance was manifold. Sukino sent a letter to explain. In it he forcefully exhorted members to stop clinging (*nggandul*) to him, to move toward direct reception of guidance for themselves. He said he was not meant to attend because he was not supposed to mix in organisaitonal matters. He also clarified that the traumas many members experienced in meditaiton were directly linked to the fact that national independence was incomplete: the Dutch continued to dominate the economy and foreign ideologies dictated domestic party lines.³¹⁵

Sukino's illness was thus implicitly connected to the incomplete nature of both Sumarah and national independence. Members continued to depend on him rather than achieving the spiritual autonomy phase two required. At the same time this individual failure was tied to their attunement, through meditation, to a national process which was itself incomplete. As a result some Sumarah members experienced imbalance, "*evolusi*", and many looked outside themselves, to Sukino, for comfort and support. This was not the proper direction of Sumarah practice. The result was not only false practice by individuals, but a direct and heavy weight on Sukino. The intensity and focus of imbalanced attention directly contributed to his physical weakness. In fact his illness reflected both misdirection of Sumarah meditation and continuing national problems--at least it was interpreted that way within Sumarah.³¹⁶

³¹⁵Sukino's letter is included within the DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.80-81. The text is, in part: "Kawontenanipun para saderek wekdal samangke, katah ingkang sesuci sarana sakit sarta sajak sami kirang gembira, jalaran Negari kita ingkang kita suwun dateng Allah sagedipun merdeka, wekdal samangke saweg manggih riribet bab ekonomi lan politik. Mila para pendukung batos (perjuangan batos) katingal tuwin rumaos lemes. Alaran ekonomi kita miturut perjanjian taksih sesarengan kalian Welandi saking pinteripun Welandi, saged andamel kacau. Bab politik, rakyat kita taksih ingkang purun dipun peralat dening Negari Asing. Awit saking punika kita wajib ambudidaya sageda Negari kita mulya. Menggah caranipun sami nyuwuna tuntunan Allah."

³¹⁶Illness is generally interpreted as cleansing of karma. Most often the cleansing is personal, sometimes as an immediate consequence of errors. For example, Suhardo linked Kyai Abdulhamid's illness of the late sixties to the fact that for a time he had seemed as though he was about to establish a separate movement (interview in Yogya in October 1972); others linked the same illness to the fact that Abdulhamid had begun initiating people to iman. At the same time, however, illness is often viewed as a consequence of 'taking on' the karma of others, especially if the person involved is a focus of energy for others. It is extremely

The same dynamic had been expressed in local experiences. Members in Malang have recalled one occasion which brought their error to consciousness. In the process of planning a visit to Malang, Sukino had stressed that there was no need to make a fuss about it, he needed only ordinary attention. Despite that, the Sumarah member who was to be his host became flustered by the prospect of the visit. He went through considerable trouble to repaint and improve the house, making special plans in line with his own sense that the visit was an extreme honour. Sukino arrived, but immediately fell sick. He then sent a letter explaining that the sickness was related to false expectations on the part of Malang members--he had felt and been affected by the intensity of misdirected vibrations.³¹⁷

In addition to reminding members of their proper relationship to Sukino, the second congress reconfirmed the significance of collective attunement and consensus. Reports from the PB sections and the branches reflected a general dissatisfaction, feeling that the organisation had barely begun to function properly. This led to discussion of revisions to the statutes and rules and review of personnel in leadership. One result was that regulations were brought into line with practice which had emerged in the regions--for example, it was confirmed that the East Javanese creation of a "*Konsulat*", a regional co-ordinating body, had facilitated better organisation.³¹⁸ At the same time discussions generated tensions, as they had in the first congress, and it took some time before reminder to base action on meditation had effect. Tension was released only when Arymurthy put it to the congress that they had to choose between mental and spiritual bases for action. The choice was obvious, congress turned to group meditation for guidance, and reconfirmation of the leadership went smoothly.³¹⁹

common for Sumarah members to feel the pains of others, through the same contacting which forms the basis for guidance.

³¹⁷Interview with Pradonok in Malang in August 1973. Apparently Sukino was checked by doctors, who found nothing wrong. Then after he left Malang because of his illness, it disappeared. This was in 1957.

³¹⁸The East Javanese 'Konsulat' was formed soon after the first congress and has functioned as an important sub-centre of the organisation ever since. Although similar bodies were constituted in Jakarta (for west Java) and in Semarang (for central Java) in the late fifties, neither has had similar significance. The Jakarta body has been a duplication of the city's branch leadership--excepting Bandung there have been no other branches in the region. The Semarang Konsulat was always overshadowed by the PB in Yogya, though its leaders did play a role in the congress of 1966. The PB sanctioning of the East Javanese Konsulat is mentioned in DPP, *Sejarah*, p.82.

³¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp.83-84.

The third congress, from May 28 to 30 1955, brought the group near crisis before consensus (*musyawarah-mufakat*) based on *Hakiki* became clear. This time 32 branches were represented by 57 delegates and 76 observers, the organisation had expanded to include 5115 members.³²⁰ Again there was debate about procedure, especially as to whether the PB should chair congress. Again only reminder turned the group inward in meditation, leading to solid agreement that the PB (meaning Surono) should lead it. Crisis came nearest when delegates from Jember queried why a motion from Bandung had not been floored. Surono explained that he had been physically incapable of opening the envelope containing it--when he tried he felt like vomiting. The delegate from Bandung stood and announced that he had no desire to do anything but follow the will of congress. At that point the atmosphere became very heavy, most of the congress began to cry. Then, as Bandung withdrew the motion, the air cleared and a succession of individuals arose, each speaking automatically (*kasuara*) in expression of direct guidance. In fact, as was almost certainly known, the Bandung motion had called for a complete change of structure. The vibrational reaction of the collective was interpreted as direct indication that it was not necessary. It was an intense, emotional and heartfelt experience of unified feeling. The group experienced it as a powerful instance of collective guidance from *Hakiki*.³²¹

On the basis of growing clarity, new sensitivity to the fact that the gut-level responses of the group constituted a vehicle for the expression of Truth, signs of a third phase began to appear. As always, movement into a new phase brings retrospective insight, new awareness of the limitations and errors of old ways. The second phase had been seen as a movement away from the powers and cultism many indulged in the first; the third brought criticism of the second. It began to become obvious that many members had accepted Sukino's new teachings purely on faith, failing to internalise and express them through their own being. In doing so, and in viewing *pamong* as people of "elevated consciousness", Sumarah had tended toward religious instead of mystical practice. So with the third phase there was a strong emphasis on balancing understanding, the mental, with direct internalisation, the practical. Even attention to organisational efficiency then came to be understood as a process of alignment to God's will--so that through submission members could activate love and then express it through service within society. The awareness of intuitive feeling which had been clarified in the second phase now came to be seen as a vehicle for inner experience of compassion and unity. Guides were presented less as authorities and more as people who lent themselves to a function.

³²⁰*Ibid.*, pp.85-87.

³²¹Not only was this experience given considerable emphasis in the official history, but several informants recalled it when reviewing Sumarah history. Pranyoto (interview in Jakarta in July 1973) pointed to this experience as a foreshadowing of the third phase.

Clarification of the new phase took many forms. Although some had felt that a new phase had been foreshadowed by the powerful experience of *Hakiki* in the third congress, explicit articulation came later through Martosuwignio. Martosuwignio's reception of guidance came in Javanese poetic form during a meeting of the advanced members (level D) in Magelang on June 16 1956. In the message it was clarified that a third phase was about to begin and that it would be one of purification. In the second phase there had been genuine inner experience and direction, but it had not been exclusively directed toward God--at least this was the implication.³²² A complete transcript of Martosuwignio's guidance was sent to Sukino and Surono almost immediately. Surono affirmed its correctness and passed it on to Sukino, leaving immediate clarification to the latter. Sukino's confirmation came with elaboration on the meaning of the new phase. He said that the third phase was one of 'pure faith' (*iman suci*). He explained that in the second phase many members had become selfish, focusing on their private experiences and often feeling pride when they "achieved high states". The new phase was to increase the imperative to align every aspect of practice to the aims of Sumarah: carrying out rather than simply agreeing with the *Sesanggeman*.³²³

Following announcement of the new phase, which reached branches by August, a conference was held at Surono's Yogya home. It took place on 14 and 15 October and was attended by: all of the PB leadership, representatives from the *Konsulats* of east and west Java, delegates from 34 of the 36 branches, and several dozen observers. Altogether about 120 people attended, so the gathering was on the scale of the congresses.³²⁴ The whole of the meeting was devoted to clarification of the new phase through meditation and discussion. Surono gave an opening talk, which was followed by discussion of a series of five documents, each dealing with an aspect or interpretation of phase three.

Surono began by summarising the nature of Sumarah's phases. He pointed out that up to that time only the PB had been using the term "phase" (*fase*), that as the term was of foreign derivation many members might not understand. He said it was roughly equivalent to the Javanese "*babak*" or Indonesian "*tingkatan*" and implied progression such as was experienced in the stages of an illness. Then he touched on the keynotes of earlier phases. In the

³²²Materials relating to this 1956 conference were widely circulated in the organisation. Several individuals gave me copies of the collected conference papers, including Moerhadi in Baturetno. Copies of the letters exchanged between Martosuwignio and Sukino were sent to regional centres, Karyono (in Ponorogo) supplied me with copies of them. Martosuwignio also described his experiences of this period (interview in Yogya in June 1973).

³²³*Tjataan Konperensi ... 1956.*

³²⁴*Ibid.* and DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.97-99.

first phase he said only the two levels of *kanoman* and *kasepuhan* had been recognised; that only the *Pinisepuh* had been able to initiate to *kasepuhan*; that sometimes magic (*ilmu sihir*) had been allowed; and that the prominence of automatic movements (*karaga*) had been used as propaganda to attract new members. In the second phase *pamong* looked to their own meditation rather than to that of the pupil; separate meetings had been set up for the seven recognised levels; and guides had begun to explain the meaning, rather than just the direction, of meditation. Now with the third phase, it became clear that there were not only levels, but also different aspects of consciousness. Specifically, there were separate levels of understanding (*martabating ilmu*), meditation (*martabating sujud*), and purity (*martabating kasucian*). For the first time this explained why meditation had not always harmonised with understanding during the second phase. Simultaneously, it implied a shift of emphasis from understanding and meditative achievement to the purity of being which ought to result.³²⁵

The documents, which had been circulated beforehand, presented a new and more systematic explanation of levels of consciousness. Two of them were records of teachings which had come through Arymurthy during meetings in Jakarta in September, a month prior to the conference. In the first he stated that the basis of practice was always direct guidance from God through *Hakiki*. However this could only be experienced by those who were genuinely centred (*duduk didalam sanubari*). For those who could not achieve that, instructions came through *pamong*, acting as "bridges" for God's guidance. This could only be properly understood if it was clear that contact came through activation of the function, not through the person. Much of his message dealt with the meaning of the organisation. It was stressed that the organisation only existed on God's permission, as a base upon which to receive *Hakiki*. Consequently it had to remain aligned to the revelation which had led to it, it had to base its rules on *Hakiki*, ultimately on the Truth as experienced within congresses. For functionaries of the movement it was critical to maintain consciousness of the fact that it existed to serve *all* people and that true service was a spontaneous expression of meditative surrender--it could not be forced or dictated. *Hakiki*, he clarified, does not outlaw anything; it only explains what is.³²⁶

Arymurthy's second teaching (*wewarah*) dealt with the relationship between will (*tekad*), intuitive feeling (*rasa*), and mind (*angenangen*). It was emphasised that when will is pure, it serves as an agent of the life essence (*budi*), leading to alignment of the outer layers of the body and desires with the inner expression of the divine. The point of meditation was so that consciousness became a direct awareness of pure life energy--at which point awareness simply receives and expresses life.³²⁷ This focus on the will, on *tekad*, was a reflection of the fact that at this point Sumarah was moving

³²⁵Surono in *Tjatangan Konperensi ...* 1956, p.2.

³²⁶*Ibid.*, p.5.

³²⁷*Ibid.*, p.8.

beyond it. Arymurthy's clarification served as a "rounding off" putting will into perspective now that it was no longer seen as essential to practice--at least not as a point of focus. The point is that in the first stages of practice will appears almost indistinguishable from desires. Only after considerable purification does it become clear that the will can also serve as an agent for *budi*, that is for the life essence which is the indwelling manifestation of divinity. At this point attention naturally shifts from a will which seems personal, to awareness of the inner working of an energy from beyond ego. This shift of gestalt was a fundamental element of the movement into phase three.

In the teachings which came through Sukino during the conference, there was renewed clarification of emphasis on purity of direction and being, stress on the significance of balance between understanding and internalisation. In retrospect perhaps the most important statement Sukino made was that the organisation would only reach maturity when there were one thousand members who fully entered the stage of *iman*. It was made clear that only at that point would it be possible for Sumarah to become open to the public and truly responsive to its national role. This announcement, that organisational maturity would only come when a considerable proportion of the membership reached personal experience of direct guidance, made it clear that the collective consciousness of the group, rather than the awareness of the leadership, was the measure of its stage of development. This statement was recalled with new understanding when its fulfilment was announced in 1973--at which point signs of the fourth phase were becoming strong.³²⁸

For most members the clearest result of the conference was embodied in the new outlines detailing levels of consciousness. Sukino, produced one of them, known subsequently as "*lampiran A*" (Appendix A). In it he put new emphasis on terms which had appeared within some of his earlier talks: *Jinem*, *Junun* and *Suhul*. His outline made clear that the nature of practice alters as individuals progress through different levels. *Jinem* referred to what had been known as levels A and B. For those at level A it meant learning to calm the senses and body. For those at level B it implied relaxing or neutralising of thoughts and desires (*manah*). At level B, which corresponded roughly to phase two practice, growing consciousness of intuitive feeling (*rasa*) resulted in the beginnings of true faith (*iman*).

Junun referred to the practice which was to be the keynote of phase three: learning to align awareness and expression to the inner movement of life essence. At this point Sukino clarified that meditation involves experience of calmness (*eneng*), clarity (*ening*) and awareness (*eling*). This meant that the vibrational sphere of meditation was perceived directly. For those at level C this meant that the mind (*angen-angen*) or attention began to centre on feeling and there was potential to receive *Hakiki*. At level D consciousness began to stabilise in a permanently centred state. This meant that the trinity of mind,

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.9-10. Also see Chapter 8 for recent implications.

heart and life essence (*trimurti of angen-angen, rasa, budi*) were constantly linked so that the individual could begin functioning as a screen (*warana*) upon which God's guidance could be projected through *Hakiki*.

Finally, Suhul referred to level E, to those who had already "graduated" from the self-consciousness of "practice". At this level the lessons of life come directly from the ultimate without human mediation. This meant that individuals could function in the way the prophets (*rasul*) had--as agents for God's will in society, communicating divine presence through their very being. Internally the state of Suhul was described as a continuous awareness of the inner heart (*kalbu*), continuous submission so that every dimension of personality and ego expresses attunement to God's will. This state was the aim of Sumarah practice for everyone.³²⁹

Although Sukino's outline was dealt with in the conference, Surono's interpretation of it became more commonly known within the PB organisation. Surono's scheme was intended to be a clarification of Sukino's statement, it became known as "*lampiran C*" (Appendix C) and came complete with diagrams. Though the statements were similar in substance, they differed in emphasis. Sukino had begun to stress three primary levels of practice; Surono's scheme stressed five levels (from A to E), muting the contrast with phase two understandings as a result. At the same time Surono's statement placed less emphasis on the qualitative significance of changes in the nature of practices associated with each level. Later on this contrast was to become the subject of extensive debate, with several Ponorogo leaders emerging as "defenders" of *lampiran A*.³³⁰

Like Surono's *lampiran C*, his other statements about phase three consistently underlined the importance of systematic understanding. He initiated a review of *pamong* status within the organisation, putting stress on the need for *pamong* who could balance practice with clear understanding of the meaning of stages. In practice this tended to elevate younger and better educated *pamong* were "retired" from active guidance. Surono's talks frequently touched on science and human entry into the atomic age, themes which surface increasingly with the beginnings of the space race. During the fourth congress, in 1958, his talks offered systematic explanation of the relationships between different psychic forces. He linked his images not only to the *wayang*, Koran and Bible, but also to the model of republican government. He described the first phase as one in which Sumarah had been influenced by lower passions, the inner representatives of the Devil. Phase two appeared in

³²⁹*Ibid.*, p.4

³³⁰*Ibid.*, pp.6-7. Sichlan recalls having been "fanatical" in his efforts to draw people's attention to 'lampiran A' during the period of the 1969 conference and 1970 congress. In conversations during 1973 he still emphasised its significance, but no longer felt the same attachment to it.

his framework as transitional, an entry into the purity of direction which became clear with the third phase.³³¹

Commenting that Sukino's *wewarah* in the third phase amounted to repetition of his earlier teachings, he urged members not to remain attached to the poetic form and mellow feeling associated with Sukino's guidance.³³² He pointed out that many members had tended to fatalism and passivity during the second phase. Urging them to become more socially conscious, he stated that the national condition depended on the progress of Sumarah, on the extent to which its members expressed themselves in social service.³³³ During 1957 Suroño circulated extensive new guidelines to bring organisational practice into line with third phase PB understandings. In the process local practices were influenced by the PB more directly than they had been during phase two.

Although Suroño's diagrams, explanations and directives set the tone for movement into phase three, his statements were rapidly supplemented by others. In fact one of the characteristics of phase three was that there was a great deal of discussion and elaboration of its meaning. In Jakarta Arymurthy issued a series of important statements. He persistently reminded members of the importance of the linkage between organisational activity and *Hakiki*. He also warned strongly against delusion, the falsification of *Hak*. Using the message of the Buddha, he reminded Sumarah members that action and service were only true when they flowed outward from the inner opening of the spirit. They were false if they remained gestures of fine intentions based on thought.³³⁴ At the same time he spoke often of three basic stages of Sumarah evolution, using terms which were somewhat less obscure than those of Sukino. His phrasing, which remains important today, focused on progression from *tekad* to *iman* to *sumarah*, from drive to conviction to surrender.³³⁵

While Arymurthy clarified something of the meaning of phase three from Jakarta, the leaders of the East Javanese *Konsulat* became active interpreters on their own right. In East Java separate regional conferences were a frequent occurrence. With phase three several of those conferences were more open, being attended by local officials so that Sumarah could clarify its image

³³¹Suroño in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.V, pp.89-99, 109.

³³²*Ibid.*, p.146.

³³³*Ibid.*, p.146, 171-172.

³³⁴*Ibid.*, pp.255, 258-261. Here Arymurthy also repeated what Suroño had stressed, that the condition of the world depended on the practice of Sumarah (p.261).

³³⁵Arymurthy began to use the words heavily during the teachings that came through him between 1956 and 1960, but they only became firmly established through the guidelines for meditation practice which were announced in May 1968 (DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.125-126).

publicly.³³⁶ Perhaps the most important East Javanese clarification of the new phase came through Sujadi during the regional conference held in Ponorogo from December 28 through 30 1957. In his statement, which has since been published and widely circulated, he emphasised the errors of phase two, the necessity of organising, and the need for expression of social service as a reflection of continuing commitment to the national revolution. The themes and tone of his talk clearly revealed local traits. His frankness recalled the aggressive nature of local *warok*, the "men of power"; his phrasing drew heavily on Islamic orientation toward social service as a sign of submission to God. He clarified changes in the nature of practice and guidance, pointing out that many members had failed to attune themselves to change, remaining stuck fatalistically in earlier molds. Some of these people, he commented, had been forced to withdraw from the organisation because they remained unable to grow with the times. His strongest emphasis fell on the significance of applying (*pengamalan*) and embodying practice. This meant members could no longer rest with what they experienced internally, but that they needed to express their awareness outwardly through actions directed at service. He forcefully explained that personal sacrifice through good works constituted a bridge toward spiritual purity--without action inner purity was incomplete. This emphasis was to remain strong throughout the third phase, but East Javanese leaders used phrasing which, more than that of others in Sumarah, recalls the Protestant ethic and modernist Islam.³³⁷

Throughout the organisation the effect of restructuring and restatement was an intensification of awareness of change. It became apparent that individual practice required not only direct experiences and awareness, but also active expression in action. It became clearer that the organisation of the brotherhood would continue to evolve in tune with changing times. Announcement of the third phase, even clarification of its meaning, was simply a beginning. For many the new phase appeared first in the mind, remaining an understanding rather than becoming a state of being. At all levels the transition in practice required adjustment and realignment, a process which involved pain as well as peace.

internal cleansing

Discussion of the new phase brought clarification that Sumarah as a collective needed to undergo cleansing, that its process would parallel that of individuals. Individuals experience spiritual development as involving crisis, not just smooth transitions. Each breakthrough into a new level requires sacrifice of the old. Attachments ensure that there is resistance. Habits imply the power of

³³⁶Interviews with Karyono, Sidik Pramono and Sichlan in Ponorogo during August 1973.

³³⁷Sujadi, *Penjelasan ...*

inertia. Ingrained patterns do not adjust instantly to the emergence of higher awareness. In Sumarah terms the imbalances which often occur in spiritual development can take the form of "*evolusi*". In some cases this means that practice has been intense, resulting in the awakening of more spiritual power than the system can handle. In some the expression of *evolusi* resembles experience of possession. To a considerable degree, the collective experience of Sumarah during the early sixties was an experience of *evolusi*, of imbalance between spiritual and material dimensions.

Although collective tension eventually focused on Surono, it was clear in many ways that his errors were reflections, as well as causes, of difficulty. During the last half of his leadership there is no doubt that he erred, falling victim to the egoism which almost always attacks those in positions of power. At the same time, his mistakes were encouraged in some respects by the continuing misdirection of followers. At every level of the brotherhood there was a persistent tendency to attribute too much authority to leadership. Although announcement of phase three had brought renewed reminder to look within, many continued to seek truth outside themselves. It is not surprising that Surono, like many others within Sumarah, eventually succumbed to the temptations of authority.

Dependence and authoritarianism had many sources. In the first place Javanese social structure has been built, at every level, on patron-client relationships. Traditionally it appeared natural for individuals to accept subordination in exchange for favours. Patronage characterised not only the political structure, but also spiritual relationships--traditionally every aspirant attached himself to a guru or *kyai*. Social and cultural factors help account for the persistence of dependency, but a more general spiritual dynamic is also involved. Regardless of culture, the tendency to "externalise" spiritual authority emerges in mystical movements. It arises because every movement draws on members of varied spiritual awareness. No movement exists unless people are drawn to it out of a feeling that it responds to their needs or offers solutions to their problems. Implicitly the founders and leaders who embody, or at least articulate the ideal, appear as external sources of knowledge. It is extremely difficult to actually realise the principles involved, especially for beginners who may not comprehend the final goal. In the Sumarah case, even statement that the *aim* was to direct people to internal apprehension of the Truth is tacit acknowledgement that normal reality--even in the brotherhood--is the opposite. At the national level the democratising thrust of the revolution has often been interpreted as a movement away from patronage, from "*bapakism*". For Sumarah, the movement toward spiritual independence represented the inner basis upon which outer, even national, developments depended. From within

the movement it was felt that the struggle against dependence was to be a positive contribution to the parallel national process.³³⁸

To place Suroño's deviation in perspective, comments on other localised cultism may help. In fact the patronage or guru mold was rejected in principle from Sumarah's origins, but in practice the pattern of its expansion had depended on the magnetism or charisma of both founders and local leaders. Some of the small fragments which never joined the PB failed to do so because of the implicit threat to local *pamong* who feared loss of an essentially personal following. In Gresik, though the group did join the PB, there has been a long-standing struggle against cultism. There the founding *pamong* was an extremely colourful character, Mostar. Mostar had an unusual history, including years as a sailor and a considerable period in New York. For a villager from Madura, this marked him as a man apart. From an early age he had personal physical charisma, in fact he became famous for his skills in the martial arts (*pencak-silat*). When he entered Sumarah, he only did so after a battle of occult powers with Bariunhartono in Yogya. After he did he rapidly attracted a following in the Gresik area. Although he maintained contact with the PB, his relationship with it was tenuous throughout the fifties. In fact he continued to instruct followers in phase one styled practice. So the Gresik group only began to come into line with the PB when Major Sukardji, the army officer who had been associated with Suhardo during the revolution, moved to Gresik. In the early sixties Sukardji gradually introduced the Gresik membership to updated Sumarah practice. The process involved delicate tensions which persisted, though only as a residue, into the early seventies.³³⁹

Similarly, within the Madiun area there has been a strong inclination to elevate Kyai Abdulhamid to guru status. Again, Abdulhamid was a man of great personal charisma, a man who had attracted a large following during the revolution. Many of those followers had hardly known the name "Sumarah", though of course they knew him. In the fifties Abdulhamid remained within the PB and was consistently acknowledged as being of high spiritual authority. For villagers in the region, most of their Sumarah contact centred on him, or on the

³³⁸Arymurthy in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah*, Vol.V, pp.261, 304; Suroño *Ibid.*, p.172; Suwondo *Ibid.*, p.197. All of these speakers emphasised that Sumarah was not dictatorial, that it was not a cult (paguron), and that all members could receive direct guidance. In emphasising the distinction between Sumarah and earlier spiritual patterns they were demonstrating a clear self-consciousness about the effort to transcend patronage patterns.

³³⁹See Note 6 above. All informants in the Gresik area mentioned the prominence of Mostar's personality, many mentioned their own earlier dependence on it. Several told stories of omens associated with Mostar's role. Although Mostar was living in Surabaya at the time I visited, I did not have a chance to meet him.

cadre of *pamong* who entered Sumarah through him. Within East Javanese cities Sumarah had grown through relatively balanced influence. There Sukeno and Suhardo had brought many into the movement and the extreme tendency to "deify" Kyai Abdulhamid was never so strong. Nevertheless, particularly in the villages around Madiun, his personal following was immense. Even in the early seventies, just before his death, emphasis on his personality was strong. Many members, even leaders of the organisation, placed a great deal of emphasis on stories implying that "Pak Kyai" had inherited the mantle of Sukino, that he had become the "highest" guardian of the spiritual practices of Sumarah.³⁴⁰

Illustrations of similar "cultisms" could be expanded endlessly, but my point ought to be clear: the problem of cultism has been general within Sumarah. Within almost every active branch there has always been a tendency to exaggerate the purity, stature and authority of the most dynamic leaders. Within every individual there are inclinations to expect "answers" from outside. No "problem" of authority can arise unless followers indulge their dependence. Having said that, it remains essential to underline the significance of Surono's deviation. He was, after all, responsible at the national level, he remained a focus for and influence on the whole organisation. Finally, in spiritual terms, the responsibility of leadership is to transmute dependence into autonomy.

Tensions within the PB began around 1957. During that year, in response to the beginning of phase three, Surono's PB issued a series of instructions to the branches. Among them was a letter announcing that Sukino was to "retire" from active spiritual guidance. On the surface this letter simply extended Sukino's own insistence that members should stop depending on him. Surono's letter went farther, he clarified that all future correspondence with Sukino was to pass through the PB. As many members had actively corresponded with Sukino, this appeared to cut them off from one of their main sources of guidance. Nevertheless, on the surface there was considerable justification for Surono's announcement and the reaction to it was mixed. Many local leaders accepted it, understanding its relationship to the struggle against dependence.

³⁴⁰When Surono broke with Kyai Abdulhamid in the sixties it immediately raised the possibility of a separate organisation in the Madiun area. This did not eventuate and Abdulhamid later worked closely with the DPP. I do not want to exaggerate the dependence on Abdulhamid in the Madiun area, there have always been other fully matured leaders in the region and many members who did not look to him for guidance. However, even some of the leaders of the Madiun branch, like Sumarsono, placed considerable emphasis on Abdulhamid's last exchange with Sukino (interview in Madiun in August 1973).

Others, especially in East Java, complained loudly, interpreting Surono's instruction as an effort to maximise his own influence.³⁴¹

Later, during 1959, two contrary forces began to work. During that year the PB issued certification that the *Konsulats*, the regional co-ordinators for east and west Java, were to be autonomous from the PB. This meant acknowledgement that regional leadership was clearly receiving *Hakiki* directly, that it did not need to go through the PB. In the same year, however, informal meeting of the PB leadership began to assume a different character. Although the meetings took place in Sukino's home, he played little part in them. In fact these informal meetings were gradually invested with authority to replace congresses. First the meetings were christened the "*Lembaga Permusyawaratan Sumarah*" (roughly, "institute of Sumarah consensus"), finally the "*Badan Kongres*"--meaning that they replaced congresses. As this was done without the sanction of congress, it clearly contravened statutory recognition that authority rested with the collective. Although some of Surono's associates in the PB brought the contradiction to his notice, he repeatedly vetoed them. Throughout the period which followed, objections of this sort were always silenced with Surono's "catch 22": he was following direct orders from God (*dawuh Tuhan*) and only he could receive those clearly.³⁴²

Surono's assumption of power paralleled that of Sukarno during the same period. Guided Democracy became official in 1959 and from that point power rested with the President rather than Parliament. Sukarno claimed power on the basis of his role as the "mouthpiece of the people" (*penyambung lidah rakyat*), insisting that he was personally able to articulate what the populace "really wanted". Surono likewise laid claim to higher knowledge. From his point of view it seemed clear that he was personally attuned, especially to the organisation as a whole, more than any other individual. He describes having experienced a change of consciousness in 1957. At that point, in his terms, he stopped feeling as though he was meditating. His interpretation was that this meant he had moved into "level E", resulting in an end to the self-consciousness of

³⁴¹DPP, *Sejarah*, p.91. The letter, called 'Pengumuman PB No.164/U/57', was dated September 7 1957. It is included in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.IV, p.200.

³⁴²DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.90-92. The formation of the Badan Kongres was formally announced on December 16 1963 (Surat PB No.25/U/63). It is almost certainly no accident that it constitutes the last entry in Suwondo's *Himpunan Wewarah* (Vol.VI, p.365). Although Suwondo remained active for the next several years, the formation of the Badan Kongres meant a hiatus of organisational conferences and documentation. Although I have separate copies of talks by Sujadi (in Ponorogo), Surono and letters by Sukino, there are no records of formal organisational proceedings between 1963 and 1966.

meditation, achievement of the Sumarah goal.³⁴³ Others, and the events which followed, made it obvious that he had misinterpreted the change. From their perspective it became gradually clear that Surono had lost the ability to assess his own consciousness critically.

Surono's assumption of authority ran directly counter to the movement of *Hakiki* to the regions, a movement he had acknowledged. Personal tensions developed into open breaks, undermining his relationship with other senior Sumarah leaders. Suhardo described the whole period from 1960 to 1965 as the period of Surono's error.³⁴⁴ By 1960 Arymurthy, Abdulhamid and Sujadi were all involved with Surono in public presentation of Sumarah. They spoke of "opening" the inner meaning of their practice to general audiences (specifically of a "*beatan pamikir*" and "*beatan umum*"). In response to differences of expression, Surono eventually asserted that he was the only person with authority to speak publicly in this sense. Arymurthy was gradually ignored; Sujadi was said to be in a state of *evolusi*, his meditation false (*batal*).³⁴⁵ Other lesser leaders and *pamong* were also gradually alienated, many branches drifted into apathetic passivity. Martosuwignio, who frequently accompanied Surono on trips to the branches, recalls many signs of discontent. Often members would corner him after the formal session had ended, sometimes spending the whole night detailing their dissatisfaction with Surono's leadership.³⁴⁶

Despite the signs of imbalance it would not do to exaggerate. Nothing is ever so clear in process as in retrospect. Within even the last phases of Surono's leadership there was often clear and correct statement of Sumarah practice. It was not as though he lost touch completely with the practice or the principles on which it has been based. Many members remained attuned to him and many of the directions he took only seemed wrong with hindsight. In most cases there was an element of truth underlying his posture. When he announced Sukino's "retirement", for instance, he was simply extending admonitions the latter had made. Whatever the source of reaction, the very fact of discontent was a positive sign of disjunction. In the abstract, on its own, Surono's statements might have been "correct". Proof of error lay not in the nature of his statements, but in their relationship to the collective.

The result was a gradual separation between Surono's directives and collective experience. In asserting truths based on a claim to higher authority Surono opted for abstract instead of practical realities, he lost track of the degree to which truth became manifested through collective experience. This

³⁴³Interview with Dr. Surono in Yogya in July 1973.

³⁴⁴Suhardo, *Ceramah* ..., p.7.

³⁴⁵DPP, *Sejarah*, p.91 specifically mentions Surono's breaks with Sukino, Abdulhamid, Sujadi and Arymurthy. Similar breaks also came with Ilham (Malang), Toah (Surabaya) and many others.

³⁴⁶Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973.

amounted to a breaking of the link between *Hakiki* and the organisation. In the most literal sense, this amounted to dictatorship--the life experiences of others were subordinated to "revealed knowledge". However much this pattern resembles common structures of religious authority, in Sumarah terms such patterns are not a manifestation of living Truth. So the critical break in principle lay not at the surface level of Surono's actions, but in the fact that he began to make claims without regard for their reception.

The breaking point came over two clear issues. Either of them alone might have been sufficient to provoke explosion, together they ensured reaction. The two issues surfaced during 1965 and 1966, during the period in which the nation experienced the coup, counter-coup and purges which brought Sukarno's downfall. The first issue centred on Surono's claim that he was the ultimate and only "certifier of Truth" (*penyalur dawuh tunggal*). This led to his final break with Sukino and generated an immediate, heated response from the branches. Secondly, Surono began to feel that he had been designated to convert the spirit realms to Sumarah. Toward that end he entered into regular contact, through a medium, with the kingdoms of Nyai Loro Kidul. While earlier tensions had been clouded by the possibility that some truth underlay Surono's actions, surfacing of these issues left no doubt. Surono had departed from the thrust and aims of Sumarah practice.

The "*penyalur dawuh tunggal*" announcement came in December 1964 and was a culmination of the conflicts Surono had been experiencing with other leaders. Surono's interpretation of the phrase was that only his personal reception of *Hakiki* was valid, that only he could receive and articulate the proper lines of organisational development. This ran directly counter to the practical experiences of both leadership and members in phase three. It contradicted Sumarah insistence that only collective meditation could confirm expressions of *Hakiki*, that Truth is only clear when its expression dovetails with the positive experience of those receiving it. In a special meeting of the PB and *Konsulat* leaders, the group arrived at a clear sense of the "*penyalur dawuh tunggal*" announcement. For the collective leadership, it appeared obvious that the phrase meant that Surono, as leader of the movement, needed to check and confirm the expressions others might receive. From their point of view he only needed to do so if the statements in question concerned the whole brotherhood--for which he did have acknowledged responsibility. There was no agreement with Surono's interpretation, but he persisted despite the protests.³⁴⁷

Surono's relationship with Sukino had begun to deteriorate as soon as the third phase began. The first sign of tension came with his letter announcing

³⁴⁷DPP, *Sejarah*, p.92; interview with Arymurthy in Jakarta in July 1973. According to Arymurthy Surono became more and more concerned with his personal role within the organisation, losing sight of the collective in the process.

Sukino's "retirement". That letter was dated September 2 1957. Shortly after that Surono put an end to Sukino's efforts to bring Solo into the PB. Sri Sampoerno in Solo had enough reservations to make the prospect doubtful, but Surono himself ensured no progress would be made. When he was approached with feelers about Solo, he flatly stated that he neither knew nor wanted to know the Solo people. Sukino's interest in reconnecting with Solo therefore remained at the level of increasing informal contact. In fact Martosuwignio recalls his impression that after 1960 the Solo group began to become more dynamic while the Yogya organisation fell into decline.³⁴⁸

Sukino's withdrawal from active participation in the PB was not just a reflection of difficulties with Surono. After 1958 Sukino began to experience frequent illness, which also restricted his activity. Tensions with Surono were close to the surface. Even observers from outside the organisation have commented that Surono publicly contradicted Sukino during 1965.³⁴⁹ The final break came when Surono sent a letter to Sukino stating that they could no longer work together because Sukino's meditation was false. Sukino received the letter during March 1965, just prior to a celebration marking the fifteenth anniversary of the PB organisation. Calling about a dozen old friends together, Sukino led a meditation and then read the letter. Hearing it, the whole group felt drained and depressed. They uniformly deplored what Surono had said.³⁵⁰

Surono's active involvement with spirits came after the problems associated with the *penyalur dawuh tunggal* announcement. Though there was no explicit link between the two, each reflected his exaggerated sense of self-importance. In principle Sumarah meditation never involves spirit dealings; in practice Sumarah members frequently encounter spirits. Spirits and the ancestral kingdoms are living dimensions of *kebatinan*, their reality is not questioned any more than one could argue the existence of politics. Although Sukino had dabbled extensively in spirit contacts in his youth, frequenting graveyards and practicing asceticism, after his revelation he firmly rejected that inclination. Nevertheless, occasionally he and other Sumarah members encountered spirits. Sometimes the encounters came in the form of uninvited possession, interpreted as "*evolusi*". More often contacts have simply involved awareness of spirit presence. In some cases these contacts have led to positive exchanges, with the living making an effort to communicate the experience of surrender, of *Sumarah*, to the spirit.³⁵¹ So even in attempting to "convert" the spirit kingdoms to Sumarah, Surono was not without precedent.

³⁴⁸Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973.

³⁴⁹Conversation with Harun Hadiwijono in Salatiga in May 1972.

³⁵⁰DPP, *Sejarah*, p.93.

³⁵¹According to Sayogyo, who led a small group in Salatiga during this period, the membership had some sympathy for Surono's involvement with spirits, though they did object to the 'penyalur dawuh tunggal' announcement (interview in Madiun in August 1973). Arymurthy

However, there was no tolerance within Sumarah for relationships based on mediums. Arymurthy objected with particular vigour to Suroño's use of a medium. Along with other Sumarah members, he felt no doubt that contacts of that sort have a harmful effect on the spiritual progress of the medium in question.³⁵² Beyond this, most Sumarah members disagreed with Suroño's assessment of the interaction. From his perspective it appeared that he was converting the spirits; from theirs it seemed he was being undermined.

The timing of Suroño's spirit involvements is hardly surprising. On the surface his activity suggested backsliding, a return to the magical preoccupations of the first phase. Yet the direction he took was linked to national and Sumarah patterns. It was not just a reflection of personal deviation. The experience of the coup and purges generated an atmosphere not unlike that of the revolution. Unsettled people looked for security and *kebatinan* movements flourished, the occult (*klenik*) became a public preoccupation. Speculation about marching spirit armies went hand-in-hand with nervous anxiety about national politics. Within Sumarah there was a distinct revival of phase one practices. In Madiun and Solo *kanoman* exercises were resumed with intensity, there was a return to automatic movement and emphasis on the navel.³⁵³ Throughout Sumarah a general resumption of *sujud perjuangan* reflected internalisation of extreme national crisis.³⁵⁴ However odd

described his own encounter with his father's spirit, including the fact that during that encounter he felt that he was able to remind his father of the possibility of surrender--his objections to Suroño's practice focused on the use of a medium (interview in Jakarta in June 1973). Suhardo (in Solo in July 1976) spoke of making efforts to help spirits; Sukino described encounters in his early experiences. In all cases, however, these other experiences came as simply responses to uninvited spirit encounter. In Suroño's case the fact that he felt he had become a 'pangeran', in the struggle against desires in the spirit realms, implied initiative which did not characterise other Sumarah contacts with spirits. It is also worth noting that 'missions' such as Suroño's have numerous precedents within other world traditions. For just one example, Milarepa, see Evans-Wenz, *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa*, NY, 1971. Milarepa's relationship to spirits suggests precise parallels with Suroño's.

³⁵²Interview with Arymurthy in Jakarta in June 1973.

³⁵³This revival of *kanoman* in the mid-sixties was described to me by Kyai Abdulhamid in Madiun, by Sri Sampoerno in Solo, and by Prajitno in Malang (who said that the instruction to revive it had come from Surabaya to Malang, so the revival was certainly widespread).

³⁵⁴This had been revived in conjunction with the national campaigns which focused on New Guinea and Malaysia in the early sixties. Suroño referred often to both of these efforts, suggesting that Sumarah people needed to attune themselves to these struggles in order to facilitate their

Surono's dealings may seem in retrospect and from a Western perspective, in context many factors converged to make them seem natural.

In recalling this period many Sumarah members have been reticent. In part this hesitation is linked to a cultural unwillingness to face conflict, in part to the continuing political sensitivity of the coup, and in part to reluctance to relive extreme trauma. Most of the individuals involved are still alive and active, lingering traces of old wounds remain, and no parties want to exacerbate dying tensions. Within Sumarah this reluctance is also related to the principles of meditation, to the fact that from that point of view no problems are resolved by dredging details of past events. As Sumarah sees it, problems are only resolved through full attunement to present realities.

Paradoxically this principle suggests another dimension of the problems implied by spirit relations. Spirits are the shadows and remains of tradition and preoccupation with them, even focusing attention on them, reflects concern with the past rather than present. However some individuals did freely narrate their recollections and these included Surono himself. As he was frank and unreserved, I believe it is appropriate to summarise his background and experiences. In doing so I am relating his version of events, supplementing it with a few details provided by others.³⁵⁵

In addition to the general atmosphere of the time, Surono's personal background was a vital factor. Surono was born into a family with roots in Kulon Progo, to the west of Yogya, and strong ties to the Pakualaman, the lesser Yogyanese court. His mother was deeply committed to traditional *kejawen* practices. She spent periods of fasting and meditation and even entered into a compact with spirit forces to guarantee the success of her sons. As always in such agreements, the living must pay a price. In this case she understood that one of her three sons would disappear. Her sons did do well, Surono becoming a doctor and another brother a *wedana* (local official) in the Wonosari area. Eventually the price was paid. On his way to a village festival in the hills along the southern seas, the *wedana* simply disappeared--along with the horse he was riding. It was naturally assumed that he had gone to join the spirit kingdom of Nyai Loro Kidul. Though this happened some years prior to Surono's involvement with the spirit kingdoms, there is every reason to expect

completion. He refers to this in *Pagujuban Sumarah*, 1965, pp.22-23. These preoccupations are also clear (not only for Surono) in Suwondo's *Himpunan Wewarah*, especially around 1958 and 1959.

³⁵⁵I had two lengthy conversations with Dr. Surono at his home in Yogya. These meetings were in May 1972 and July 1973. I explained that I was involved in Sumarah practice in Solo and also writing a thesis about its history. Dr. Surono was very open and frank--he helped me a great deal. I also met with the Basiruns, at their home outside Yogya, in February 1974. They also shared their experiences with me.

that it resulted in a feeling of personal debt, in personal reasons for wanting to aid the occupants of the ancestral realms.³⁵⁶

Surono had no active relationships with spirits until 1966. Until that time his interest had been purely and emphatically negative. Many patients came to him precisely because they knew he was capable of releasing them from spirit disturbance. In Sumarah Surono admonished against *klenik* and spirit relations. Paradoxically this insistence resulted in contact. In June 1966 he was approached by Mrs. Basirun, a Sumarah member from the Mantukismo sugar refinery. Having been possessed, she came to Surono for help. Surono recalls having felt an immediate and powerful attack on his person. Giving Mrs. Basirun an injection, he experienced it as a vehicle for projection of a ray of pure light--this rapidly neutralised the power of the spirit.

After that Mrs. Basirun began to act as a medium. Through her the spirit pleaded for Surono to share his teachings with others in the ancestral realms. Eventually Surono came to accept that he had been designated as *pangeran*, as a prince responsible for converting the spirits to Sumarah. He came to feel that spirits could move toward purity and surrender more rapidly than people. Lacking a physical body, existing only in the astral and etheric realms, all they had to do was surrender their desires and they could move into God's dimension.³⁵⁷ Within a very short time Surono's work in the spirit realms expanded to take on global significance. First all the major spirits within Nyai Loro Kidul's kingdom, then those of the related Javanese realms, and finally spirits from around the world became members of Sumarah. Surono continued to relate to them through Mrs. Basirun, becoming aware of gatherings of spirits from all over the world, communicating with them to mute potential disasters.³⁵⁸ In his view this mission became a primary responsibility, one with significance affecting the peace of the whole world.

³⁵⁶This information was kindly supplied by Peter Carey, after his conversation with the Bupati of Purworejo in mid-1972. Friends in Sumarah were also aware of the story, but none emphasised it and Surono himself made no mention of it.

³⁵⁷Both Surono and the Basiruns explained that this was their understanding as to why spirits could progress directly to liberation.

³⁵⁸Dr. Surono explained in our meetings that he was still involved in communicating with the spirits of Merapi, for example, in an effort to prevent it from erupting and causing havoc. Ironically, in the same period I also spoke to Hardjanto in Solo, who claimed to be working with the spirits of Merapi to achieve the opposite effect. In Hardjanto's view there has been a great deal of karma which needs releasing and it will be released either through natural disasters or through wars. Preferring the former he has occasionally directed his occult energies toward natural disaster--only as the lesser of two evils.

Others in Java doubted the significance or even reality of Suroño's experiences. The *kejawen* styled groups affiliated with the Yogya *kraton*, all deeply involved with the spirit kingdoms, laugh at the suggestion that Nyai Loro Kidul had left.³⁵⁹ Though I can only make it as a comment, it does seem striking that Suroño's activity coincided with Suharto's move to power. In doing so it paralleled surfacing of emphasis on Semar, on Semar's return to prominence in association with Javanese identity and prosperity. Whatever the status of Nyai Loro Kidul, many Javanists have felt that Semar was to replace her now. Nyai Loro Kidul rose to power with the fall of Majapahit, becoming queen at the point Semar, through his incarnation as Sabdo Palon, announced his five hundred year retirement. Suharto's rise, even the letter known as "*Supersemar*" which marked it, evoked the prophetic legend of Sabdo Palon. All through the seventies awareness of that cycle and of Semar have been moving closer to the surface of *kejawen* awareness. There is no doubt, at least at the level of public preoccupation, that Semar now draws much of the energy which previously focused on Nyai Loro Kidul.

Regardless of whatever political shifts there may have been in the subtle realms, the overwhelming majority of Sumarah members had no taste for Suroño's new direction. It appears to have been the last straw, resulting in immediate reaction. Intensification of Sumarah activity coincided with the coup and purges. National events drove the membership into renewed quest for inner peace at the same time as internal politics began to reach a breaking point. During the early sixties both Arymurthy in Jakarta and Sujadi in Ponorogo had gradually withdrawn in the face of Suroño's opposition. With the *penyalur dawuh tunggal* announcement they were reactivated. The announcement made Suroño's deviation clear and therefore called for corrective action. Sujadi and his friends in Ponorogo began to hold a series of open meetings, recalling other Sumarah members and presenting the Sumarah sense of national process.³⁶⁰

Sujadi's re-entry on the organisational stage ran contrary to Suroño's directives in itself. Then he and others began to overtly and persistently call for a congress and review of the whole Sumarah structure. Although they had remained on the sidelines up to 1965, the Solonese group entered into active contact not only with Subardo and Sukino, but also with other branches of the PB. Despite calls for a congress, Suroño continued to insist that only he could know whether it was called for--and he had received no guidance to suggest it was. Finally it was Suharto's activism which catalysed discontent and forced corrective action. Informal discussions had begun to lead to willingness to hold a congress regardless of Suroño's sanction, if necessary to establish an alternative leadership.

On August 7 1966 a meeting was held in Suharto's home. It was attended by members from Solo, Ponorogo, the *Konsulats*, and a few members of the PB

³⁵⁹Interview with Hendrobudjono in Yogya in May 1972.

³⁶⁰Interview with Karyono in Ponorogo in August 1973.

leadership who were brought by Martosuwignio. Discussion centred on determination to select a new leadership and return Sukino to his position as *warana*. Prior to this meeting Martosuwignio and the rest of Surono's associates in the PB had confronted Surono, saying they would resign unless he agreed to a congress. Under this pressure, Surono had agreed to give PB approval. He asked, however, that attendance be restricted to advanced members and suggested that Martosuwignio act in his place as the representative of the PB. Having received no guidance himself, he wanted no part in the event.³⁶¹

On this basis the danger of overt division was avoided. The fifth Sumarah congress then took place in Yogya on September 24 and 25 1966. It was attended by all the leaders of the PB and its *Konsulats*, as well as by representatives from 40 of the 42 branches.³⁶² Sukino and Surono attended at different times to give lengthy explanations of their respective positions. Prior to the congress Sukino had already suggested that Sumarah should follow the national model, locating its leadership in Jakarta. This proposal was readily adopted, making it a foregone conclusion that Arymurthy, Pranyoto and Sudijono (the only Jakarta members present) would become the new leaders. In recalling the transition Arymurthy emphasised that Surono gave him a formal letter of authority. Despite the difficulties everyone acknowledged, this meant that no "illegal coup" had taken place. This was significant not only within Sumarah, but also for the watchful government agencies.³⁶³

In addition to investing a new leadership, the congress handed it responsibility to work out details of the new structure, statutes, rules and guidelines. Final approval was to follow circulation of drafts to the branches. The congress also emphatically rejected the notion of "*penyalur dawuh tunggal*" and reinstated Sukino to his role as *warana* and *paranpara*, as spiritual adviser. Finally, and for the first time, the Solo group was formally taken into the organisation--healing the split which had occurred in 1950.³⁶⁴

The mandate given to the new leadership commissioned it to rebalance the organisational and spiritual dimensions of Sumarah. If clarity of direction had come with movement into phase three, only the fifth congress brought solid collective commitment to move beyond cultism. Attachment to personalities and powers had been powerful. It was understood that Surono's errors had

³⁶¹Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973. A number of the others involved described pieces of this process, including Suhardo and Sukardji. It is also summarised in the DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.93-94.

³⁶² DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.111-113.

³⁶³Interview with Arymurthy in Jakarta in July 1973.

³⁶⁴The term 'paranpara' is also used in Pangestu, in reference to its founder, Sunarto. It is almost certainly from the same root as the Burmese 'parampara', which means "the general organising principle of transmission ... from monk to monk" (according to Mendelson, *Sangha and State in Burma*, Ithaca, 1975, p.44).

become a catalyst, provoking everyone to correct themselves. It was clear that Surono's errors were not the only problem, that in fact his deviation reflected general laxity. Without the experience of deviation, others might have remained unconscious of the inner indulgences they fostered privately. Adjustment of the collective state obviously took much longer than the surface change of leadership.

For several years following the change the residue of cultism remained a strong preoccupation. During the late sixties Sukino's correspondence often focused on warnings against the internal presence of magic (*klenik*). In corresponding with Sri Sampoerno, the leader of the Solo branch, he cautioned against the use of terms which evoked images of cultism.³⁶⁵ In a series of letters to Sujadi in Ponorogo, he clarified the spiritual significance of *klenik*, insisted that there was evidence of its persistence within Sumarah, and urged continual cleansing.³⁶⁶ While there is no doubt that the Sumarah preoccupation with *klenik* echoed parallel national concern, it should be equally obvious that it represented commitment to completion of the process which had begun with the change of leadership.

Although Surono was given an advisory role within the new organisation, he chose to terminate his membership. For the next decade he continued to meet with several dozen friends. They identified themselves as private Sumarah members (Sumarah *perorangan*), making clear to those who asked that they were not part of the Arymurthy organisation. During this period Surono felt that the organisation had fractured, splintering into fragments.³⁶⁷ Despite the break Surono maintained informal contact with friends, ties were personal rather than simply organisational. Within the organisation there was no effort to purge Surono's memory--on the contrary. His contribution to the foundations of the

³⁶⁵Sukino's letter to Sri Sampoerno, dated December 27 1969.

³⁶⁶These letters are lengthy, sensitive and complex, they touch on many aspects of the effort to purge the organisation of residual interest in magic. I have copies of letters Sukino sent to Sujadi, as leader of the East Javanese Konsulat, on: August 7 1967 and November 13 1968. These amount to ten pages of dense typescript. In January 1966 and June 1967 Sukino sent letters to Kyai Abdulhamid (these focused on clarification of meditation and announcement that, as of 1966, it was appropriate for Sumarah to be more public in its organising). In these letters Sukino constantly underlines conviction that the only possible response to chaos is a full surrender which can re-establish consensus. He viewed the 'coup' as a consequence of indulgence in desires, on the part of PKI members who were manipulated by China. He stated that if they had practiced surrender, then the aksi sepihak would not have taken place and the national trauma could have been avoided. At the same time he advised compassion toward those who had been led astray by their desires.

³⁶⁷Interview with Dr. Surono in Yogya in July 1973.

movement was emphasised. The bonds which had been generated remained as a psychic linkage.

By 1978 the Basiruns had rejoined the organisation, in 1979 Surono renewed his membership.³⁶⁸ By reconnecting they contributed to the process of consolidation which has characterised the period since 1966. During the Surono period the continuing existence of Sutadi's separate following had stood as a constant reminder of incompleteness. Many within the PB had "felt" the psychic absence of Solo. Lack of connection served as a reminder that even those who shared Sumarah practice were unable to experience physical unity. Reconciliation and the healing of wounds may have taken years, but Surono's return was both noted and welcomed: it meant that all major strands of Sumarah development were finally woven into one rope. The pains which had passed in the process have been accepted as lessons, as growth pains which are integral to the path of union and harmony.

³⁶⁸In July 1978 Martosuwignio reported that the Basiruns had rejoined Sumarah; Mrs. Sardjono also described how she had come into renewed contact with them through attendance at the funeral of a mutual friend (who was also a Sumarah leader). Dr. Surono's re-entry was reported in the *Bulletin Sumarah* (October 17 1979), p.19. At Dr. Surono's request, he re-entered as an ordinary member, not as a pamong.

chapter 7

BEYOND BOUNDARIES

After 1966 internal consolidation resulted immediately in external responsibilities. Paradoxically, just as organisational identity stabilised, Sumarah began to disregard its boundaries. Movement beyond personality and ego was organically connected to simultaneous expansion beyond cults and culture. This process has been most clearly revealed through increasing activity on the national stage and openness to an international body of seekers. Achievement of inner balance and assumption of external duties have coincided with recognition of a new phase of practice.

Signs of a fourth phase began in the late sixties and culminated with formal acknowledgement in 1974. If *Hakiki* had seemed tied to the founders in phase one, to the congresses in phase two, and to the branches in phase three, now it was supposed to be recognised directly at the individual level. With this shift it also became clear that guidance simply meant activation of truth through compassionate service. Concern with initiations and levels of consciousness declined and the sense of *pamong* functioning extended into public settings. Individual meditation of the heart expanded into surrender of the whole being, including the mind. With this development it has been felt that consciousness merges with everyday life and meditation becomes a process of continual attunement.

Diffused awareness of the whole body went hand-in-hand with extension of practice in daily life. Continuity of meditation led naturally to commitments beyond organisation--since spiritual attunement became less exclusively internal. The body of Sumarah's membership has felt it has direct access to *Hakiki* because so many individuals have started to experience total surrender and openness, that is *sumarah*. Experience of union implies dissolution of all boundaries and harmony between inner and outer, between *batin* and *lahir*. From the Sumarah perspective it also seems natural that ego transcendence is related to transcendence of group--just as individuals move beyond ego, groups move beyond themselves. So individual balance has been seen as the basis for group alignment of material and spiritual dimensions. The national and international dimensions of recent Sumarah activity have been seen as physical manifestations, demonstrations, of concrete movement toward unity and oneness.

This has been experienced not only as an outward expansion of inner peace, but also as a sign of attunement to historical change. Sumarah's national activity has coincided with revitalisation of and recognition for

kebatinan; Sumarah has contributed to the process. International contacts have begun to connect the inner impulse toward human unity with global 'new age' movements. Within this process the dissolution of individual ego appears to be integrally bound to transcendence of group identification and realisation of the universal in man. Outsiders see mystical commitment to union as an ideal; for insiders it appears that realisation of union can be demonstrated through harmonious social relationships. From the mystical perspective which applies within Sumarah, realisation within the individual microcosm is integral to macrocosmic process.

The national setting of recent developments has been that of Suharto's New Order. In the years since 1966 the whole nation has experienced acceleration of integration into global structures. Though this has been clearest through the rapid growth of multinational investments, it has taken many forms. Sukarno made an effort, however roughly, to extricate Indonesia from global power networks. Leaving the United Nations and rejecting American aid, he confronted neighbouring powers and renounced established forces. Suharto's reversal has been complete. The New Order ended confrontation and entered alliances within ASEAN. It has facilitated multinational expansion, making domestic politics dependent on external sources of power.

Yet this expansion of globally integrating networks has been anything but a purely Indonesian experience. The seventies brought global awareness of interdependence--at least at the level of energy resources. Even Chinese isolationism was muted by increasing interaction. Everywhere local politics are complicated by the forces weaving internal events into international patterns. In most countries politicians flounder to cope with inflation and recession, rarely admitting the extent to which local manifestations reveal global economics. The ideal of national autonomy remains sacrosanct, but internal developments are dictated by forces which circulate freely across national boundaries. Whatever power nationalism retains ideologically, the realities of global ecology and economics have made it a fiction.

Halting though recognition of interdependence may be, it is a global parallel to the process of individual realisation. Individuals usually experience separation and isolation, assuming the autonomy of ego. Through mystical practices some come to experience the ego as a shadow without true substance. In doing so, from their point of view, they achieve direct awareness of forces which interpenetrate, binding people to each other and the world. To them this makes it obvious that individual quest for union is integral to world progress, that inner realisation is a basis for rather than retreat from achievement of peace as a human aim.

internal consolidation

Sumarah's first phase organisation had been centred in Solo; efforts to establish a new structure were stimulated by activism in Madiun and Ponorogo; and Surono's PB was firmly centred in Yogya. Since 1966 the Sumarah leadership has been in Jakarta. This shift converged with internal maturation of practice and membership. It also naturally meant that the leadership was more fully aware of national issues and international currents.

Most of the several hundred Sumarah members in Jakarta are ethnic Javanese and almost all of them joined Sumarah before moving to Jakarta. A high percentage of them have been in the civil service, many of them moved there when the national government did in 1950. Although a few new members have become active, on the whole the group is relatively homogeneous, sharing longstanding commitment. This has meant that there has been a compact, mature and internally harmonised quality to the Jakarta branch. At the same time a significant number of Jakarta members have been active in government-usually within the bureaucracy rather than through the parties. So the group as a whole is not only internally balanced, but directly concerned with national developments. In contrast to the membership within the Javanese heartlands, the Jakarta group began to relate meditation to working responsibilities very early. Within their sessions there tended to be both less time and less inclination to persist in lengthy silences. Living within the fast-moving Jakarta world, having received considerable modern education, and holding responsible positions, they have had a strong interest in relating meditation to action.³⁶⁹

It was no accident that Arymurthy was selected to lead the organisation in 1966: he was already of both high spiritual standing and great organisational experience. Although his family roots lay in Purworejo, he lived as a child in Semarang and went to high school (HMS) in Salatiga. He became active in Sumarah while living in Magelang during the revolution, then moved to Jakarta in 1950 as a young official in the taxation section of the Ministry of Finance. During the fifties he completed his degree in economics (Drs.) at the University of Indonesia. By the early sixties he had moved up within the bureaucracy, reaching the rank of Director General (*Dirjen*). From 1962 to 1965 he was Secretary to the Deputy Minister of Finance.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁹My own meetings with Sumarah groups in Jakarta made these features obvious, but members there were also quick to draw attention to them. Arymurthy, Sutjipto, Pranyoto, and other members all commented on the Javanese origins, bureaucratic functions, and activism which characterised the group.

³⁷⁰As a student of economics in the fifties, Arymurthy had both Sumitro and Glassburner as teachers. After 1966 he became a teacher at the government tax college, training prospective employees of the taxation department. These biographical details came through an interview with Arymurthy in July 1973.

In the course of his work Arymurthy received a number of important lessons. In the last days of Sukarno's leadership, he tried to remind the President of the need to act in attunement with God's will. When Arymurthy's superior, the Minister of Finance, shied away from delivering his letter, Arymurthy took it personally to Sukarno's secretary. Like Sukino, who had made a similar effort, Arymurthy got no response. For Arymurthy the lesson was that some things just have to happen: no matter how misguided they appear, they may be necessary from a vantage point we cannot appreciate. Similarly, he received premonitions of impending danger while preparing for a Ministerial visit to Peking. At first he interpreted his feeling as a warning against the trip, then he received guidance to go--even though the nation was about to experience an "unforgettable" trauma. While he was away the coup broke out.³⁷¹

Arymurthy entered Sumarah in 1946 through Suryopramono. When he was initiated to *kasepuhan* by Sukino he experienced a state of possession, briefly feeling vast superiority to those around. This elation met a wall when it encountered Sukino. Ever since then Arymurthy reports feeling special clarity about the distinction between experience of Truth and possession by spirits. By 1949 he became a *pamong*, so when he moved to Jakarta he immediately became a leader within the new branch. During the fifties he played an active role in the PB, first within its educational and then within its spiritual section. As has already been made clear he was active within Sumarah congresses and became one of the main vehicles for clarification of the third phase. His *wewarah* during the period from 1956 to 1960 became a well known part of the organisational heritage. As tensions with Surono emerged in the sixties, Arymurthy withdrew temporarily, resigning his functions in the PB in 1962 (though retaining responsibilities within the Jakarta branch).³⁷² Although Sukino's suggestion of a Jakarta centre had come without reference to personality, it must have been self-evident that Arymurthy would lead the organisation. Excepting the reservations expressed in the national conference of 1969, Arymurthy has had whole-hearted support since assuming leadership in 1966.³⁷³

³⁷¹Interview with Arymurthy in Jakarta in July 1973.

³⁷²Interview with Arymurthy and with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973 (Martosuwignio replaced Arymurthy in this function).

³⁷³Around 1970 the reservations about Arymurthy's leadership, which he spoke of himself, centred on his activity within the BK5I. Some felt that his role there threatened to associate the organisation too closely with Golkar. More recently, there have been some regional leaders who have felt that Arymurthy has been taking too much responsibility, more than he can reasonably handle--this feeling has grown now that he is not only the leader of Sumarah, but also one of the main leaders of the SKK, and now a Dirjen (letter from Warsito, in Magelang, on February 7 1980).

Naturally his personality, as expressed through guidance, has had an impact on the whole of Sumarah. Arymurthy's guidance of meditation is characterised by constant verbal commentary--as was Sukino's. In contrast to Sukino's use of poetic high Javanese, Arymurthy's commentary alternates between Javanese and Indonesian and comes in discursive, often highly analytic, form. Occasionally a few other leaders, like Sri Sampoerno of Solo, have complained that ordinary members could not follow the intellectual level of Arymurthy's guidance.³⁷⁴ Some have poked fun at his constant harping on *Hakiki*, joking that the word is *Hakiku*--meaning *your* truth. Generally such comments have not overridden profound respect for Arymurthy's capacity to articulate guidance which is attuned both to the experiences of the membership and realities of their context.

With the congress of 1966 came alterations in the structure of leadership. The PB, or *Pengurus Besar*, of Suroño's period was replaced by a DPP, or *Dewan Pimpinan Pusat* (Central Board of Leadership). DPP leadership consisted of three leaders and a secretariat. The three functions have been general (*Ketum--Ketua Umum*), spiritual (*Keroh--Ketua Kerohanian*), and organisational (*Ketor--Ketua Organisasi*). During the first period of DPP leadership Sukino, who died in March 1971, remained active as *Paranpara*, as the spiritual guide for the collective. At the same time a special board of *pamong* (*Dewan Pertimbangan*), which was led by Martosuwignio, took responsibility for realigning the spiritual and material dimensions of Sumarah activity. This board was dissolved in the early seventies, when it was generally felt that balance had been achieved. The national secretariat has been headed by Sutardjo and located in Jakarta. Sutardjo has been extremely active, accompanying the leadership on its trips and playing a considerable role in routinising the paperwork of the organisation.³⁷⁵

In the first period of DPP leadership, that is until the congress of 1970 in Jakarta, Arymurthy's co-workers in national leadership were Pranyoto, as spiritual leader, and Sudijono, as organisational leader. Pranyoto, who had been an official in the Fisheries Department until retirement, was active despite declining health. Sudijono appears not to have been very active. In the congress of 1970 both were replaced and their replacements have worked

³⁷⁴"Usul-usal dalam bentuk uraian pada Konggres Pagujuban Sumarah", Surakarta, 1970.

³⁷⁵Sutardjo headed local offices of the Ministry of Information in Central Java and then Yogya in the later fifties and early sixties, he was moved to Jakarta in the mid-sixties. He became a member of Sumarah in 1961, after being introduced to it through Joso. Sutardjo commented that he always ended up serving as secretary--while in Yogya he had frequently filled that function on the Mayor's committees or in work associated with the Pakualaman. He became Sumarah's national secretary in 1968. Interview with Sutardjo in Jakarta in July 1973.

closely with Arymurthy and Sutardjo all through the seventies. Neither of their replacements had experienced responsibility within Sumarah and both expressed shock when initially confronted by it.

The organisational leader since 1970 has been Ir. Sutjipto, an engineer responsible for maintenance of machinery in government sugar refineries. Although he grew up in a strongly Islamic village near Salatiga, his parents were deeply involved with Sosrokartono, the famous mystic and healer who lived in Bandung. After his studies he was posted to Semarang and then Solo before settling in Jakarta. Although he had never been a leader within Sumarah, he did help organise the Jakarta congress in 1970. In fact the process of doing so left him so tired he was asleep when discussion of the leadership took place. When friends woke him with news of his responsibilities, he replied that he had no desire for them--but could only accept God's will.³⁷⁶

As organisational leader Sutjipto's primary responsibilities have been co-ordination of the special sections which have been under the control of the DPP. In general he has been extremely sensitive to regional variations in Sumarah structure, arguing that national leadership should not dictate local patterns. At the same time he has played a role in attempting to harmonise sectional interests with the collective. The women's section, for instance, tended to regard itself as having a separate membership. When it had been created by the 1970 congress that was not the collective intent. The section was meant to provide a focal point for special women's issues, but not to act as a sub-organisation. Sutjipto helped clarify this during the national conference in Solo in 1973. Similarly, he expressed caution when advising the active youth section of the Surabaya membership--warning against crystallisation into a separate body and against its inclination to treat Sumarah mentally, as just a body of teachings.³⁷⁷

Sutjipto initiated several activities. In each case action was suggested by guidance he received, then confirmed collectively in national meetings. One project did lead beyond confirmation into action; progress on a second has been slight. Effort to create Sumarah cooperatives, local structures for buying rice and exchanging goods and services, have been restricted to a few branches. Like almost all efforts to regularise finance and extend Sumarah into functions which are not explicitly spiritual, the cooperative idea received approval in principle but not in practice.³⁷⁸ Establishment of a new foundation, however, has led to action .

³⁷⁶Interview with Sutjipto in July 1973 in Jakarta.

³⁷⁷*Ibid.* and documents from the 1973 Sumarah conference.

³⁷⁸The cooperative idea is referred to in notes from the 1972 and 1973 conferences; it is no longer mentioned in the 1978 congress. In the early seventies the Jakarta group did cooperate to buy rice in bulk,

The concept came to Sutjipto prior to the 1971 conference in Yogya, the conference which came only six months after Sukino's death. The conference then approved the idea of creating a foundation in Sukino's honour, the Yayasan Sukino. Although the foundation was to provide some services for poorer members, its prime function was to renovate Sukino's house and care for his family. Response to the establishment of a foundation has been guarded in some quarters and enthusiastic in others. The leader of the Ungaran branch of Sumarah expressed the feelings of many when he criticised the project, suggesting that it reflected undue focus on Sukino's personality.³⁷⁹ The Surabaya Sumarah centre responded actively, however. Major Sukardji, the regional leader, personally arranged for the erection of a large *pendopo* at Sukino's old home. Many others supported him with contributions, so the project reached completion by 1975. The *pendopo*, a pavilion fifteen metres square, has been marked with a plaque commemorating the founder. The *pendopo* has become a permanent site for Sumarah conferences and there are intentions of developing the site to include accommodation space and archives. Although some members have been guarded about the project, each step has come with insistence by the leadership that there is no intention to deify Sukino or turn his home into a museum.³⁸⁰

The spiritual leader selected by the 1970 congress came into his position as a complete unknown to many members. Zahid Hussein had been a Sumarah member since the early forties, when he had also been one of the few Sumarah members of Peta. As the adopted son of Bariunhartono, his contacts with Sukino and other early leaders were considerable, but until 1970 he played no active role in the organisation. After training in Peta and active guerrilla service during the revolution, Zahid remained in the national army. During the fifties he saw continuing conflict as a front line officer during fighting against Darul Islam and the PRRI-Permesta revolt. He became an intelligence officer and received a brief period of training in Sydney during the early sixties. Since the Suharto period began, he has been a Colonel working in Binagraha, the military nerve centre right next to the National Palace in Jakarta. Quite often his function has been to confirm the security of places Suharto intends to visit. In that role there

distributing some of it to more needy families as well as ensuring against inflation for themselves.

³⁷⁹Interview with Subagio in Ungaran in June 1973.

³⁸⁰In describing a celebration which took place at the *pendopo* the DPP explained: "... peringatannya diadakan di Pendapa Agung ialah Pandapa Sumarah, bukan untul mengkeramatkan pendapanya melainkan untuk melestarikan nilai sejarah lahirnya Sumarah di Bumi Indonesia." (in DPP, *Tuntunan ...*, Jakarta, 1978, p.9). It might be noted here that Pangestu has turned its founder's home, in Surakarta, into a museum. In fact they did so while his wife was still living there. I visited the house with a group of Pangestu members from Salatiga in late 1971.

is little doubt that Zahid's spiritual attunement to vibrations has been recognised by the President as a vital complement to intelligence training.³⁸¹ In 1975 he became a *haji*, making the trip to Mecca as an emissary of Suharto's and with instructions to "test" the inner, mystical, meaning of the Islamic pilgrimage.³⁸²

Zahid Hussein's designation as spiritual leader of Sumarah resulted in striking personal growth. When he was first designated he felt insecure and inarticulate. During late 1970 and until Sukino's death in March 1971, Zahid turned to Sukino for support. Within a short time, however, he began to experience the extent to which external functions can evoke inner realisation. Faced with spiritual responsibility, he was pressed into deep personal meditation. During conversations in 1973 Zahid explained that his duties had forced him toward complete surrender. Each time mental reservations arose in response to his situation, he had to give them up. As he did, letting meditation and inner guidance direct him, he found that he was able to facilitate peaceful proceedings. At the same time, through that process his own meditative awareness became much sharper.³⁸³

There is no doubt that "external" factors suggested mental basis for Zahid's elevation to leadership. In the first place his position, close to those in power, provided an anchor of security for the organisation. Secondly, his official duties required frequent travel, which was to facilitate his contact with Sumarah branches. From within Sumarah these physical advantages merely converged with intuitive guidance. Zahid's selection by congress came unexpectedly, it "felt" right. The proof that it was lies in his demonstration of spiritual responsiveness. External factors suited him to the role, but internally he had to rise to meet it. The inner development he experienced became the basis for confident expression of spiritual guidance which has been confirmed in the experiences of others. Throughout the seventies Arymurthy and Zahid Hussein worked closely as the primary leaders of Sumarah. In the process they have kept in close touch with the branches and checked each other continually for guidance.

³⁸¹ Interview with Zaid Hussein in Jakarta in January 1974. Zaid did not say that the President specifically trusted his intuitive sensitivity, I am deducing that from what he did describe of his role, and of the fact that he has had serious talks with Suharto about spiritual concerns. Zaid affirms that Suharto's interest in spiritual life is genuine.

³⁸² Interview with Zaid Hussein in Jakarta in July 1976. Zaid commented on the mixed reaction his trip had received in SKK circles. Some felt that as a national leader of kebatinan it was incongruous for him to have become a haji. Zaid himself felt no discomfort about it, in fact he appreciated the fact that as a result of the trip he was able to communicate better with Islamic leaders.

³⁸³ Interview with Zaid Hussein in Jakarta in July 1973.

The DPP, unlike Surono's PB, has been committed to respond to the membership. Congresses have been regular: in Jakarta in 1970, in Surabaya in 1974, and in Yogya in 1978. In addition there have been annual conferences, taking place each year in different regional centres. Now, with the completion of the *pendopo* in Yogya, there is a permanent facility for meetings. Contacts have been intensive during tours by the DPP leadership. During March 1973 the DPP visited almost all of the regional centres. Then, after announcement of phase four in 1974, it organised a series of "*panataran*", meetings geared to systematically introduce the whole membership to the inner meaning of the new phase. Otherwise, contact within the organisation takes place through correspondence and personal visits. Many local leaders make trips to Jakarta and the national leaders make irregular visits to the branches. On both sides these visits tend to combine family or business needs with maintenance of internal Sumarah contact.³⁸⁴

Conference attendance is usually restricted to national and regional leaderships. Congresses have been attended by representatives from every branch and often by a large group of unofficial observers. Regional meetings, whether in response to DPP visits or local celebrations such as Suro (the Javanese new year), have involved the whole membership. Typically several hundred members attend regional meetings, though some gatherings in Madiun have drawn several thousand. Although major meetings most often take place in rented public buildings, occasionally government *pendopo* have been made available.³⁸⁵

Despite continuing unreliability of membership lists, estimates indicate gradually increasing numbers. Registration is required by Pakem, the agency for government supervision of *kebatinan*, but many members become inactive without formally withdrawing affiliation--lists are difficult to maintain.

³⁸⁴ These trips are quite frequent. Urban Indonesians seem extremely mobile, families are very often dispersed due to the nature of work within government offices and schools, and business people often find trips to Jakarta necessary (both for marketing and to facilitate official permission for their activities).

³⁸⁵ The government is usually quite cautious about the use of its building by private organisations, so this is rare even when individuals within government are connected to such organisations. It was especially notable, therefore, when the Bupati of Madiun made the government *pendopo* available for a massive Sumarah meeting in Madiun in April 1973 (noted in *Selayang Pandang* ..., 1973). According to Warsito (letter of February 7 1980) the governor of Akabri in Magelang had given permission for its facilities to be used for the SKK Munas III in late 1978, but that was vetoed by higher military authorities in Jakarta, who did not want to associate the military with a 'factional' interest.

Nevertheless, it is reasonable to estimate a current membership of at least eight thousand, perhaps of as much as ten thousand.³⁸⁶

None of the national meetings have generated tensions like those of earlier days. There have been differences, many of which have been brought to the surface. During the late sixties several East Javanese branches expressed disagreement with Arymurthy's involvement in the BK5I. That body was formally affiliated to Golkar and as a result to the government. The BK5I was a small working group, mainly in Jakarta, which convened the major *kebatinan* conferences of late 1970. Those resulted in the foundation of the SKK as an independent umbrella group of *kebatinan* movements, but the Golkar affiliations of its predecessor raised Sumarah eyebrows.³⁸⁷

All through its history Sumarah has remained independent of political parties and interests, in fact its legitimacy in the eyes of government has been strengthened by a public reputation of neutrality. Arymurthy tried to emphasise that his membership in the BK5I was private, that the organisation was not affected. Sukino confirmed Arymurthy's position when it came under discussion during 1968, but many members continued to feel doubts. These persisted even through the congress of 1970, but dissolved gradually once the independence of the SKK became clear.³⁸⁸ From the DPP point of view it has seemed, in retrospect, that its actions have been confirmed by events--Sumarah as a whole eventually became a primary actor in the SKK.

The functioning of Sumarah's organisation became clearest to me through attendance at the conferences in Bandung in 1972 and Solo in 1973. During the 1972 conference there were reports from each region and from each section of

³⁸⁶ The most recent official estimate I have is in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p.120. This notes that in the 1970 congress the DPP had records indicating a membership of 6644 (2412 female; 4232 male), but that quite a few branches had not supplied figures. There has certainly been some expansion of membership in the seventies, though the information I have on the latest congress (of 1978) does not include membership figures. Of this membership there are many who are not very serious about their practice, though a substantial number are. I had direct contact with at least thirty separate branches, less than half of the total number, and in general it seemed that there were at least a dozen, often many more, thoroughly committed leaders and members in each. This suggests that the core of the organisation may be about 1000 people of serious and longstanding commitment; the DPP sense of 1000 members who had reached 'iman' does not seem exaggerated to me.

³⁸⁷ These reservations and discussions were mentioned by Arymurthy during an interview in Jakarta in July 1973; also in conversations with Sichlan in Ponorogo in August 1973.

³⁸⁸ Sukino's confirmation of the BK5I connection is documented in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p.115.

the DPP. Discussions of organisational history were particularly extensive. These discussions were part of the preparation for the DPP's official version of Sumarah history, which was completed during 1974. Naturally, many intellectually complex issues were involved. At one point Suhardo interrupted proceedings, suggesting that the meditative sphere had been lost, that purely mental activity had replaced it. The group disagreed overwhelmingly. Collectively there was a strong feeling that meditation had remained continuous, even in fast-moving debate.

This meant that from a literal point of view Suhardo's reminder had been incorrect: collective experience contradicted and had primacy over Suhardo's perception. Nevertheless the reminder had drawn explicit attention to collective integration of intellect and meditation, to a new dimension of group practice. While this experience clarified the limits of Suhardo's authority, it came hand-in-hand with a new level of acknowledgement for his role as a founder. Simultaneously there was announcement of Suhardo's continuing responsibility as "*punakawan*" (Semar's role in the *wayang*) of the organisation.³⁸⁹

During the Solo conference of 1973 participation provided a powerful demonstration of the meaning of *Hakiki*. For six months prior to the September conference I had been travelling throughout Java, spending several weeks with each Sumarah centre. In the process I had explored local histories and participated in exploration of current concerns. As a result I was very well aware of issues and preoccupations within the membership. Some concerns were general, but others were quite local and specific. As a participant within the practice, I also felt a personal need for resolution. On the one hand I felt the problems within myself, on the other I was well aware of the extent to which others shared them. In some branches there was uncertainty about the nature of initiations, their function appeared to be changing. In others a new sense of "*Hakiki*" was emerging: some felt it hardly needed announcing as such, since it only existed when collectively confirmed. Others wondered how to reconcile regional diversity with membership in one brotherhood. In all there were eight items near the surface of my awareness. Each reflected not only my own, but also a general preoccupation.

³⁸⁹ Based on my own observations during the 1972 conference in Bandung. Formal designation of Suhardo as 'punakawan' was foreshadowed by Sukino's description of his own role within the organisation. Sukino described himself that way during the meeting in Yogya of November 30/December 1 1963, when the formation of the 'Badan Konggres' was being announced by Suroso (in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.VI, p.359-361). Some current Sumarah leaders suggested in conversation that they felt Suhardo was not keeping up with changes in the nature of meditation practice. My own observation of the changes in Suhardo's emphasis in the seventies suggest that he has been, to a remarkable degree.

When Arymurthy opened the conference he guided a long group meditation. In his commentary he dealt directly and explicitly with each item, not only touching on them but also throwing them into a new perspective. He had spoken for me better than I could have myself. This experience was not just mine, others shared it. Arymurthy's focus constituted a perfect demonstration of what *Hakiki* means within Sumarah. His attunement could be verified not because of claims to a "higher knowledge", but because his expression articulated the inner concerns of the collective.³⁹⁰

No amount of reiteration by the leadership could establish the reality of practice. DPP functioning as a focaliser, as a catalyst and crystalliser, has been clearest through its interaction with regional centres. In the early days of the DPP it produced a number of important statements, guidelines for initiation, guidance, and organisation.³⁹¹ Sukino contributed as well, adding his clarification to a DPP summary of the nature and significance of levels of consciousness.³⁹² By 1968 these guidelines resulted in a system which emphasised the three levels of *tekad*, *iman* and *sumarah*. At the same time they were related explicitly to earlier senses of progression.

Alignment of regional organisation to DPP patterns, structural consistency, was achieved through the congress of 1970. Local leadership has rested since then with a DPP styled division of general, spiritual and organisational functions. The three are supported by a secretary, sometimes by a separate treasurer. A new level of structure was created, the regional centres or DPD (*Dewan Pimpinan Daerah*). In 1970 there were nine of them, by 1978 eleven. These DPD have become the primary focus for local organisation, in some respects overshadowing the branches (now called DPC or *Dewan Pimpinan Cabang*) and the local meetings (*ranteng*).³⁹³

³⁹⁰ Arymurthy's talk was transcribed and is in the records of the 1973 Surakarta conference. The substance of the talk cannot, in itself, confirm the comment I am making. Many of the issues he touched on were obvious, some were items of routine comment. Nevertheless, the extent to which he covered all issues seemed remarkable to me and this comment is really simply a reporting of my own experience: not all issues were obvious.

³⁹¹ Many of these instructions are included in the DPP, *Perkembangan*, Vol.II; many of them were also circulated independently by the Ponorogo Konsulat in 1968.

³⁹² In DPP, *Sejarah*, pp.114-115; also Sukino's letter to Abdulhamid of June 10 1967 (this seven page letter, detailing guidelines for practice, received wide circulation).

³⁹³ This structure is outlined in DPP, *Sejarah*, p.119. In fact the DPDs began to take shape during Surono's leadership in the early sixties. In 1960 Surono began constituting DPDs as a part of the effort to align organisational structure to direct regional reception of Hakiki, which

Early efforts to foster consistency have been gradually replaced by acceptance of diversity. In fact the regional diversity within Sumarah is striking, extending to contrasts between branches. Ultimately it is expressed through the often sharply contrasting styles of individual *pamong*. These contrasts do reflect regional qualities embodied within the membership, but they also rise from idiosyncracies of personality. Differences are marked not only by varied organisational practice; but also by divergence in the terminology, conceptualisation and exercise of meditation. During the late sixties the DPP's interest in uniformity indicated persistence along the lines of Surono's PB. By the early seventies this reflexive impulse had been dropped. Instead there is acknowledgement that diversity is a positive demonstration of the vitality of practice.

Close observation confirms the existence of genuine differences. In Jakarta Arymurthy is not alone in emphasising *Hakiki* and the progression through *tekad*, *iman* and *sumarah*. In Madiun Kyai Abdulhamid's emphasis on the "*sujud trimurti*", on the merging of *angen-angen*, *rasa* and *budi*, persisted past his death. In the same region there is continuing practice of *kanoman*. While Arymurthy's guidance comes in lecture form, Solo *pamong* continue to sharpen one-on-one guidance patterned after Suhardo. In Salatiga Seno has a distinctive personal style, in Ponorogo Sichlan continues to poke fun at magical inclinations, in Yogya the residue of Surono's influence remains alongside Sukino's. In many areas the term "*sujud*" is understood as contrary to "*meditasi*"; in Solo Sudarno often calls his practice "relaxed meditation".³⁹⁴

These contrasts are often interpreted as conflicts. Within most branches there remains a very human tendency to comparison and value judgement. Each style tends to assert its primacy, resulting in criticism of others. Jakarta members have commented on the lengthy silences of their rural counterparts, suggesting that other members have failed to adapt to the realities of modern spirituality. Within Solo there is a persistent feeling that other branches sacrifice depth and consciousness for speed and quantity. From Yogya the Solo group still appears renegade--slow to adopt efficient organisation and reluctant to drop the magical practices of phase one. In Madiun there have been strong arguments that only Kyai Abdulhamid truly maintained the purity of Sukino's revelation. In Surabaya there have been suggestions that only its practices

was associated with the beginning of the third spiritual phase (in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.VI, p.40).

³⁹⁴ The above comments are based on personal observations. The use of the term 'relaxed meditation', which originated with Sudarno and Suyono in Solo, was noted by Arymurthy in speaking of the Westerners (in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*, p.24).

balance all of the strands of Sumarah style. With few exceptions, each group harbours judgements on others and a sense of its own special qualities.³⁹⁵

During my travels I was repeatedly bothered by the contradiction between claims to regional superiority and the ideal of unity. In principle, from the earliest stage of Sumarah practice, it has been well understood that conflict and diversity pervade the realms of form, that oneness only exists in an undefinable dimension beyond thought. Yet only practical realisation can result in *feelings* which are aligned to this formulation of the ideal. While consciousness remains in the mind, contrasts of form will result in feelings of distinction. As long as individuals remain in thought, the very human tendency to judge remains. Sumarah commitment to internalisation of principle has not meant that ground-level experience constantly demonstrates it.

Nevertheless, in the seventies there has been a new clarity and acceptance of internal diversity. Sumarah leaders no longer try to use organisation as a tool of uniformity. Instead it has been recognised that diversity reveals authenticity. Uniformity could only reflect victory of organisational norms, set teachings, or formula; sacrifice of essence for form. When that happens, as it appears to within so many movements, practice becomes second-hand. Individual experience is then moulded and shaped by the form level expressions of other people's experience. So diversity is now accepted within Sumarah as a testimony to the continuing immediacy and primacy of individual realisation. Organisational development no longer involves effort to standardise practice.³⁹⁶

external involvements

Arrival at a positive outlook on internal diversity naturally extended into increasing tolerance of others. It has become commonplace, within all levels of Sumarah, for members to comment that *sumarah*, the state of surrender and realisation, does not belong to Sumarah, the organisation. Several people told stories of meeting non-members who embodied the practice more fully than those in the organisation.³⁹⁷ Tolerance of this sort characterises all Javanese mysticism in principle; it is also linked to the national motto of 'unity in diversity'. Within Sumarah the commitment to unity beyond religious diversity is clearly enunciated in the *Sesanggeman*. The aims state not only that one Truth

³⁹⁵Personal observations, based on conversations with members in each region referred to.

³⁹⁶Both Sutjipto and Arymurthy emphasised this increasing tolerance, during conversations in Jakarta in July 1973.

³⁹⁷Sudarno, in Solo, repeated experiences of his several times; Dr. Toah in Surabaya said much the same.

underlies all religion, but also that Sumarah was to work toward realisation of unity among all faiths.³⁹⁸

Although this ideal was embedded in Sumarah origins, its expression in action took time. There were early signs of concern, within the general membership, with the national status of *kebatinan*. In the preliminary congress of 1948 the group had endorsed motions suggesting that the Ministry of Religion ought to be renamed to allow for other 'paths to God'. Then during the first formal congress there was agreement to establish contact with the Ministry of Education and Culture.³⁹⁹

During Suroño's leadership however, Sumarah refused to join the BKKI. When questioned about his resistance, Suroño explained that many groups remained snarled in politics and concerned with magic. As Sumarah was oriented simply toward God, he did not want to expose its practice to corruption.⁴⁰⁰ This attitude has also been strong within other movements. Pangestu and Subud have been extremely reluctant to associate themselves with the SKK, expressing reservations about the assortment of practices within it. Although Suroño refused to participate in the national *kebatinan* effort, Sutadi did. Sutadi was especially active during the BKKI congress in Semarang in 1955 and during the creation of that organisation he is supposed to have worked hard to 'insulate' it against political influences.⁴⁰¹

So until 1966 Sumarah spent little energy on its relationship to other *kebatinan* movements. When Arymurthy began to connect the group to national movements there was resistance, as has been seen. Once the SKK had been created in 1971 Sumarah as a whole began to respond positively, endorsing Arymurthy's commitment. Since then it has been both formally affiliated and active. Internal resistance to Arymurthy's BK5I involvement, especially to the Golkar connection implied, had been particularly strong in East Java. Paradoxically, the East Javanese branches of Sumarah were to become especially active within the SKK. Sukardji, the leader of Sumarah's Surabaya DPD, rapidly became the head of the East Javanese section of the SKK. Under his leadership the East Javanese SKK has been far more active than its Central

³⁹⁸See appendix (note phrases six and nine).

³⁹⁹The 1948 resolution appears in the notes taken by Sutadi on the meeting (*Perselah pendek...*); the resolution of the first congress is recorded in the DPP, *Sejarah*, p.70.

⁴⁰⁰Suroño clarified his stance on several occasions, for instance during a talk in Sawodjadar in June 1961 (in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol.VI, p.90).

⁴⁰¹The nature of Sutadi's role was described by Sardjoe, during an interview in Semarang in July 1973. Sardjoe had been active with Sutadi at the time, sharing both his PNI affiliation and his interest in preventing the PKI from taking over the BKKI.

Javanes equivalent--partly as a reflection of the intensity of religious polarisation in the province.⁴⁰²

At the national level, Sumarah representation within the SKK leadership has often seemed too strong, suggesting imbalanced representation and Sumarah dominance. Sumarah's role has reflected internal commitment and national acknowledgement of its neutrality. Arymurthy and Sutjipto both helped organise the Yogya symposium, *Munas I*, the former as head of the steering committee. Naturally this led to responsibilities. When the SKK was formed Wongsonegoro, the elder statesman of *kebatinan*, became its titular head; Sukanto Tjokrodiatmodjo his deputy; and Arymurthy the secretary general.⁴⁰³ During the second symposium, *Munas II* in December 1974, Sukanto became formal head, Zahid Hussein became his deputy, and Arymurthy continued as secretary general. Then, after the Sawito affair undermined Sukanto's reputation in 1976, Zahid Hussein and Arymurthy became the most important leaders of the SKK.⁴⁰⁴

This activism contributed directly to changes in *kebatinan* status during the seventies. Progress was most clearly marked by the Parliamentary decree of 1973 which legalised exclusive *kebatinan* membership, meaning that members of the sects no longer needed to also list a religious affiliation. Then in 1978 Parliament created a new directorate, responsible for spiritual movements, in the Ministry of Education and Culture. Though still a paper exercise, this technically released *kebatinan* from the grip of the Islamic Ministry of Religion. In 1979 Arymurthy was made the first Director General (*Dirjen*) of this new department.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰² Based on meetings with Sukardji in Surabaya, mainly during August 1973. Arymurthy, and Central Javanese SKK members, were well aware of the activism which characterised their East Javanese co-workers. At times the East Javanese group has pushed harder than the others, edging into confrontations which the national leadership attempts to avoid. This has resulted in some internal tension within the SKK, especially in the past several years.

⁴⁰³ The original leadership of the SKK is detailed in *Buku Kenangan Munas I*, 1970, p.3; the 1974 leadership (following) in *Keputusan Munas II*, 1974, 'Surat Keputusan No: 1/MUNAS/1974'.

⁴⁰⁴The changes resulting from Sukanto's association with the Sawito affair were explained by Arymurthy during a conversation in Jakarta in July 1978, also in Warsito's letter to me of February 7 1980.

⁴⁰⁵ *Bulletin Sumarah* (October 17, 1979) pp.16-22. The Bulletin includes a transcript of a talk by Arymurthy to a Jakarta Sumarah meeting, in which he explains the relationship between his different functions within Sumarah, in the SKK, and as Director within the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Sumarah participation within the SKK has been most notable in Jakarta and Surabaya, but extends to regional activity as well. SKK regional activity is uneven, some centres becoming very active and others remaining dormant. In Kediri and Madiun Sumarah leaders have responded to SKK activity, in Ponorogo they have been hesitant. In Magelang Joyosukarto and Dr. Warsito have been extremely active within the local SKK. Dr. Warsito, who has been active in Pangestu as well as Sumarah, became a nationally noted--and controversial--spokesman for *kebatinan*. In Yogya Sumarah has been moderately active in the SKK from the beginning; in Solo Sumarah was slow to participate, but became active in the late seventies.⁴⁰⁶

When acting as national representatives for *kebatinan*, Sumarah leaders have made conscious effort to put aside their "Sumarah shirts", they have attempted to speak as individuals. Arymurthy and Zahid Hussein have appeared frequently on national television, giving talks to clarify the national significance of spirituality. Within SKK meetings they have often been called on to guide collective meditation. From their point of view it seems they have been able to avoid "pushing" Sumarah traits. General response to their role suggests success. There is no doubt that Sumarah's significance within the SKK, and now within government, reflects internal commitment to action. But at the same time it ought to be clear that several hundred groups belong to the SKK, membership within it is anything but a Sumarah monopoly. All member groups have had a voice in designation of leadership. Selection of Sumarah people has reflected both their activism and the fact that most *kebatinan* groups have not found their identity threatened by it.

One of the primary constraints on SKK development has been the fear that participation in the umbrella group will mute individual identities. Many groups remain suspicious of outsiders, refusing to divulge aspects of their inner practice. These reservations were obvious during SKK local meetings in Yogya and Magelang. During some of those sessions participants objected to efforts to clarify terminology, suspecting they would result in pressure to conform to national guidelines.⁴⁰⁷ As within Sumarah itself, there has been fear that organisational strength might lead to spiritual dictation. So the lessons Sumarah leadership learned internally have been applied on the national stage--they have made clear that organising need not suppress diversity of understanding

⁴⁰⁶ In Yogyakarta the SKK was active in the early seventies, with Sri Pawenang of Supto Darmo as one of its early supporters. I attended SKK meetings in Yogya and Magelang during 1973, by which point the East Javanese section of the organisation was already much more advanced. The Solo group began to be active only after 1975, but has become a significant focus since. In Solo Soewidji, a non-affiliated ex-BKKI activist, and now Sudarso, of Sumarah, have both been active.

⁴⁰⁷ Observations during local SKK meetings in Yogya in October 1972 and in Magelang in June 1973.

and practice. Confirmation that other groups within the SKK have recognised and accepted Sumarah's understanding is expressed through selection of Sumarah people as leaders.

In addition, it is widely and genuinely felt that the directness and simplicity of Sumarah practice suits the needs of the SKK. Most *kebatinan* meditations involve highly specific ritual, movements, mantra, or points of concentration. In most cases collective SKK practice of them would raise issues of identity. Sumarah leaders have been acceptable as guides for SKK meditation because no specific formula is required. As a result others can join without the threat of having to perform motions or utter phrases which seem foreign. Arymurthy has remarked several times that his guidance of SKK meditations has received collective confirmation--others reporting experience of a very high sphere.⁴⁰⁸

The process of interaction with other sects has brought internal changes within Sumarah. Sumarah branches have followed the SKK in holding local celebrations of Suro, now an official *kebatinan* festival. Every Sumarah conference and congress of the seventies brought some mention of its "external" responsibility in the SKK.⁴⁰⁹ The interaction has provoked intensification of effort to distinguish the core of spiritual commitment from its uniquely Sumarah forms. The challenge of guiding SKK meditations while remaining true to Sumarah aims has pressed Sumarah leaders to move beyond attachment to internal norms. Through this process the SKK became a context which stimulated internal consciousness.

When individuals encounter mystical practice they typically experience anxiety that practice of surrender will somehow dissolve personality and private identity. Through the mirroring and feedback which takes place within a group, many individuals find instead that they are made more aware of uniqueness and individuality. In fact many experience realisation of oneness as a release which liberates expression of personality, expression which is normally constrained by social norms. Sumarah and some of the other groups within the SKK have found that their interaction generates a similar release, a consciousness within and freedom for group identities. The sects have only been able to experience a common identity when they have relaxed attachment to the forms which distinguish them.

This movement beyond cults has been paralleled by international contacts which raise issues of culture. Though the scale of Sumarah's international involvement is extremely limited, it has been noted alongside the SKK as a sign

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with Arymurthy in Jakarta in July 1976.

⁴⁰⁹ Suhardo, *Ceramah ...*, pp.8-10; DPP, *Tuntunan ...*, pp.10-11; and issues of the *Bulletin_Sumarah*, each of which includes transcripts of SKK as well as Sumarah materials.

of growing external responsibility.⁴¹⁰ International connections were foreshadowed by early commitments. The founders spoke consciously of the "universally human" significance of movement toward total faith in God; Sukino predicted international expansion. Then, when the group became organised in 1950, it explicitly rejected reference to Indonesia in its name, asserting the potentially international relevance of its practice.⁴¹¹ Nevertheless, the movement remained overwhelmingly Javanese, not even reaching other ethnic groups in the nation.

During the mid-fifties Nina Epton did join briefly--and seriously--in Sumarah practice. A few Dutch residents in Indonesia also experienced limited contact with the group. In all cases foreign involvements remained brief, limited and individual--none resulted in establishment of continuous contact with foreigners.⁴¹² During the Surono period there was very little mention of international audiences for Sumarah. Most of the leadership had little, if any, experience of other cultures. There have always been some members with international contacts. Through the Theosophical Society there has always been awareness of international spiritual interests. None of these contacts resulted in either a foreign following or strong links with international movements. Significant international involvement came with the shift to a Jakarta leadership, though not through Jakarta.

Arymurthy had travelled in the course of his government work, Zahid Hussein had training in Australia, Sutardjo spent six months in Canada in the fifties, and Sutjipto also visited Europe. DPP awareness of the West was naturally much greater than PB awareness had been. The first formal indication of foreign contacts came through Puguh, then living in Bandung. In the late sixties Puguh, an engineer, spent a short period in Holland in connection with his work. In the process he had a particularly meaningful exchange with several Dutch friends: he personally realised that Westerners could be genuinely drawn

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ Sukino spoke about potential international implications for Sumarah from early on, more recently, he emphasised it in *Wahyu Awas-Eling*, Ngawi 1972 (1968) (partially translated in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*, pp.27-33). Surono placed strong emphasis on the fact that Sumarah's name did not include the "Indonesia" which it had in the forties. In fact he said that this was one of the main reasons that the congress of 1950 should be considered the 'first' Sumarah congress (in Soebagyo, *Rentjana Tjatangan* ..., pp.11-12).

⁴¹² Sri Samporno, in Solo, mentioned having known some Dutch people who had some contact with Sumarah; Mrs. Sardjono, in Yogya, spoke about Nina Epton's involvement.

to Sumarah.⁴¹³ After Puguh reported his experience to the 1970 congress, a new section was established, as an "embryo", to deal with international contacts.⁴¹⁴ The DPP naturally assumed that contact would be most likely through centres in Jakarta and Bandung. Western presence is more generally felt in those cities and the Sumarah practices within them have been consciously attuned to modernity.

It came as a surprise then, when contacts began through Solo. Solo still appears backward to the rest of Sumarah. The branch there never joined the PB and always harboured resistance to formal organising. In fact the routine process of filling forms and maintaining correspondence remains erratic there. Lack of interest in formal organisation naturally resulted in limited contact with other branches--so the inner workings of the Solo group are little known to those outside it. For a long time only Sri Sampoerno was really known by the organisation, though Suhardo always had strong contact with the whole Solo group. More fundamentally, the rest of Sumarah has felt that Solo retains forms of practice left over from the first phase.

Solo practice does, in some respects, continue patterns which other Sumarah branches have dropped. The pattern of explicit one-on-one guidance (*nyemak*) is still used by Solo *pamong*, until several years ago *kanoman* exercise remained common. The contrast with other groups is only partly explained as "persistence". The contrast is also a direct expression of the styles of Sukino and Suhardo. Sukino's personal style had direct influence everywhere except in Solo. Suhardo pioneered the Solo group and remained actively in touch with it through every stage of its development. Suhardo's personality is direct and frank; Sukino's was refined (*halus*) and soft. Sukino guided through poetic high Javanese; Suhardo uses everyday Javanese in a conversational manner; and Sutadi often maintained long silences. During the first phase all three influenced the whole brotherhood. After 1950 Sukino replaced his co-founders, becoming an exclusive influence within the PB. At the same time only Suhardo and Sutadi were active in Solo. As a result there remains some confusion within Sumarah between phases and the personalities which have influenced them. Sukino's guidance, especially its melodic qualities, resonate within Arymurthy's. In Arymurthy's commentaries there is a strong undercurrent of *wayang* narrative and Islamic chanting. Suhardo's everyday tone and Sutadi's silences have persisted within the Solo group.

Most of Sumarah has had no awareness of Sudarno Ong or his style of guidance. Sudarno joined Sumarah in the late fifties, a year or so prior to Sutadi's death. As a *peranakan*, of mixed Javanese and Chinese descent, his

⁴¹³ Interview with Puguh in Bandung (he now lives in Surabaya) in October 1972; a copy of his report to the 1970 congress described the encounter in Holland.

⁴¹⁴ DPP, *Sejarah*, p.118 (summarising the structure of the organisation after the 1970 congress).

earlier involvements had included not only a wide range of Javanese practices, but also the Theosophical Society and Theravada Buddhism. When Sudarno began Sumarah practice he was especially attracted to its relaxed approach, a sharp contrast with the concentration techniques he had employed. Almost immediately, he related to Sumarah in a very individual way. Instead of focusing on the heart, as most practice did then, he practiced general relaxation, letting everything go. Some *pamong* tried to correct him, but both Sutadi and Kismomartoyo allowed him to practice in his own way. Although progressing within a few years to *pamong* status, Sudarno only became an active guide in the late sixties.⁴¹⁵

In becoming active, he never emphasised Sumarah membership, but provided guidance openly. Every Sunday evening he led a long session in the Theosophical Society building, leaving the door open for anyone who wanted to attend. He also began guiding meditation monthly at the Buddhist temple (*vihara*) at Tanah Putih in Semarang. Frequently he responded to invitations to guide meditations for non Sumarah people in Surabaya, Malang and Bandung. Sudarno not only de-emphasised Sumarah membership, but also introduced a distinctive style.

He is consciously monistic rather than dualistic. Rather than speaking of practice as surrender (*sujud*), he speaks of meditation and refers to the Buddha and Krishnamurti. From his point of view it seems that as long as there is "surrender to God", then there is separation and division--the self is considered distinct. Instead of stressing the experience of letting go, he stresses consciousness, relaxation and openness to nature and existence. The Buddhist, rather than Islamic, elements are obvious. Most often he has referred to his practice simply as "relaxed meditation", though he emphatically maintains genuine Sumarah identification.⁴¹⁶

My entry into Sumarah, and through it the beginning of a Western following, was through Sudarno. Having spent nine months of intensive search for a *kebatinan* practice which suited me, I had remained dissatisfied. For both personal and academic reasons I was committed to finding a practice which did not rest on cultural givens. Although in search of a Javanese practice, I felt no need of one that extracted a cultural price. Most of the *kebatinan* groups I had encountered seemed embedded within specifically Javanese wrappings: without accommodation to Javanese cultural terms and social norms the spiritual dimension remained inaccessible.

When I was introduced to Sudarno in October 1971 he was described as an individual, not as a Sumarah *pamong*. Through an American friend, a

⁴¹⁵ Interview with Sudarno in Solo in July 1973.

⁴¹⁶ The above is based on contacts with Sudarno throughout the period from October 1971 to February 1974; the same still applied in July 1976 and July 1978.

student of Javanese music, I met Ananda Suyono Hamongdarsono. Suyono's involvements have always been multiple. His parents had been active Theosophists and among the founders of contemporary Javanese Theravada. Suyono had spent a year visiting spiritual movements of all sorts in India and was already in active contact with Ogamisama, which sponsored trips he made to Japan. He also had contact with and knowledge of the newer spiritual movements in North America--he already spoke in the language of "new age" spirituality. Although already a Sumarah member in 1971, his other Javanese involvements continued. He had belonged to Subud and Pangestu; remained a Buddhist; maintained a leadership position in the Theosophical Society; and participated in a small group of mediums who kept contact with Sosrokartono. When I described my purpose to Suyono he presented me with a smorgasbord of possibilities. Then, when I made clear that my commitment to consciousness overshadowed curiosity about powers and the occult, he immediately determined that I should meet Sudarno.

Without having been summoned, Sudarno arrived at Suyono's home. Within just a few moments I was firmly drawn into the Sumarah network. Sudarno's unassuming manner required no artificial formality, no membership restrictions were implied, and I immediately experienced and appreciated the clarity of his attunement to my own inner experience. From that point my activity began to centre in Solo, though I continued to work in Salatiga during the following year. It was only after several weeks of attending sessions with Sudarno, in Semarang as well as in Solo, that I learned through other participants of his connection to Sumarah.

After becoming aware of that connection, I began to attend other Sumarah meetings in Solo, especially those guided by Sri Sampoerno, then still the leader of the Solo DPD. At first and for some time I was unable to relate. Even as my contacts within the organisation developed, I felt personal resistance to the dualistic Islamic framework of most Sumarah expression. It was only gradually, largely out of commitment to this thesis, that persistent contact resulted in genuine appreciation for Sumarah as a whole. It took additional time, and development within my own experience of meditation, before I felt comfortable with and attuned to the organisational dimension of Sumarah experience.

As soon as I encountered Sumarah others also became involved. At first a number of Westerners I knew living in Central Java joined sessions. Then a chain reaction extended through tourist centres in Yogya and Bali. Within a few months it became known Solo offered a door into meditation practice. Most of those drawn there since have been travellers, young Westerners on holiday or in the process of trips around the world. From the Indonesian perspective, their dress and accommodation marked them as "hippies", raising problems of

cultural adjustment and suspicions of a-morality. Eventually this Solo connection entered into the tourist guides.⁴¹⁷

Although partly responsible for this development, I felt resistance. As others arrived I was drawn into the role of interpreter, along with Suyono. Cultural differences raised problems; Suyono and I became intermediaries, working to soften shocks of interaction. Interpreting during meditation sessions appeared at first as a hindrance to personal meditation; attending the needs of others drew energy away from "work". Gradually both activities fell into perspective, I came to share Suyono's appreciation of their status as a spiritual process in themselves. My hesitation bears mentioning only because its resolution reveals something of the nature of practice of how meditation, even for a beginner, develops through action. Exercise of responsibility as an interpreter was in no sense mechanical--it required attunement to vibrational exchange and inner meanings. Rather than interfering with growth, this demanded it.

Initially the Westerners were mainly interested in Sudarno. Gradually this changed. Other *pamong* became involved, notably Sri Sampoerno, Suwongso, Suwondo and Suhardo and contacts with other movements developed. As a result foreigners have been involved with Tantric practices under Hardjanta, with Tai Chi, with Zen and with acupuncture. At the same time the nature of interests has shifted. In the first years of contact most travellers stayed, if they did, exclusively for meditation. Increasingly, as the seventies progressed, they have been interested in Javanese culture--dance, music and the *wayang*. During the first few years Westerners required an interpreter, except in dealing with Suyono or Hardjanta. Eventually an increasing proportion of Westerners knew Indonesian, even Javanese. Generally those who stayed for a period of months shared rented housing.

Beginning in 1972 there has almost always been a group of between one and two dozen foreigners involved with Sumarah. A large number passed by after brief contact; several hundred stayed for a period of months, gaining genuine appreciation of it; and several dozen have stayed for over a year.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁷ Bill Dalton's *Indonesia Handbook* includes almost a page describing Sumarah in Solo. Although there are a few errors of fact (for instance the statement that Hardjanto is a Sumarah guide, which he is not) much of the information is correct in substance, though some remains misleading in tone.

⁴¹⁸ Both Suyono Hamongdarsono and Sri Sampoerno have kept full records of foreign visitors. Suyono has always been the primary point of contact, Sri Sampoerno has been the *pamong* who has been most active in corresponding with Westerners. Lists have been kept because they are required by Pakem, which has been aware from the beginning of the foreign interest in Sumarah. I presented a talk to the Pakem forum in Solo to attempt to explain that interest. I have copies of lists completed

Solo remained the major centre for Western contact with Sumarah, but in the seventies several dozen had contact through Ibu Sardjono in Yogya (who interpreted in the fifties for Nina Epton). Since 1973 a few experienced contact with Arymurthy and the Jakarta group, at first only as they are about to leave Indonesia. During 1973 a dozen foreigners went to Sumarah branches in Madiun and Ponorogo.

Although the attractions of Solo remained a mystery to the rest of Sumarah, they were clear to travellers. Lack of emphasis on organisation in Solo made it more open, as none of the formalities common within other branches were required. At the same time Westerners have always been attracted to the direct guidance practiced by Solo *pamong*. In contrast few related in the seventies to Arymurthy's "lecturing" style. Outside of Solo, where membership includes many Chinese and a balance of Muslims, Christians and Buddhists, the Islamic tones of Sumarah converged with more exclusively Javanese membership to make it appear culturally bound. Even now, though several hundred Westerners have had significant exposure to Sumarah practice, few have a sense of the organisation.

Sumarah was not immediately receptive to this new interest. Even within Solo there was resistance. Many Javanese members felt sure that the Westerners, most of whom appeared to be "hippies", had only frivolous interest. Suwondo, one of the leading Solo *pamong*, refused to meet with Westerners during my first six months of contact. When he did, however, he responded with enthusiasm, rapidly becoming a primary source of guidance. Reversing earlier assumptions, he now points out that the Westerners are typically more committed than local members. While the Javanese members often drift, assuming they have time and progress will be slow; the Westerners approach practice intensively, pushing for rapid development.⁴¹⁹ This has been a common pattern. Most Javanese members have harboured prejudices prior to contact. As with Suwondo, contact has almost always dissolved doubts, replacing them with special interest. Although many branches have still had no direct contact with the foreigners, enough members have so that the organisation as a whole accepts its guests.

The process of accommodation has not been easy, on both sides individuals had to compromise. Westerners generally arrive with no knowledge

in August 1978, which include the addresses of all foreign participants up to that point.

⁴¹⁹ Suwondo has made these comments repeatedly, often during his visits to regional Sumarah branches outside Solo itself. For some years he has been responsible for guiding the branches in Klaten, Sragen, Sukohardjo and Wonogiri. During 1973 I accompanied him frequently during his trips to those branches.

of local culture and habits Javanese find incomprehensible. Sexual relationships among foreigners have been a special problem. Taking marriage and family for granted, Javanese have trouble with notions of "free love", the differences of ideal stir deep feelings. Because Sumarah members are committed to social harmony, they take norms more seriously than their neighbours. At the same time, although Solo's population nears a million, foreigners are visible and their connection with Sumarah general knowledge, meaning the behaviour of Westerners reflected on Sumarah's public image. Westerners have not been required to accept regulation by Sumarah, but the door to participation has been open. This meant only personal senses of responsibility balance potential roughness: inter-cultural harmony rests directly on consciousness without the aid of regulation.

The potential danger of the situation has been obvious to those in Sumarah. When Drs. Warsito, from Magelang, visited Solo in 1973 he was so disturbed by the possibilities that he wrote to Arymurthy warning against the Western involvement.⁴²⁰ Fortunately few Westerners have abused their position; most cultivate sensitivity to their environment as a dimension of meditation practice--which is of course the Sumarah posture. Exploration of the relationship between practice and the cultural interaction has been a consistent theme among the Westerners in Solo.

Sumarah itself, though to a lesser degree, has been pressed to clarify its relationship to culture. This has been particularly difficult due to the close association, within the experience of the membership, between their practice and Indonesian national process. When Westerners began participating in Solo meetings, local *pamong* felt no organisational constraints. Notably, they never mentioned either initiation or membership. When foreign involvement came to the attention of Arymurthy he immediately made clear the door was open to serious interest. From his perspective openness to foreigners was no different than the openness Sumarah had already been maintaining for Indonesians.⁴²¹ The organisation as a whole became aware of Western interest during the Bandung conference in September 1972, when two of us attended. Sri Sampoerno included comments on the significance of Western involvement in his report to the conference. With that mention of foreign involvement became a regular feature of national meetings.

⁴²⁰ This letter, sent by Warsito on November 22 1973, resulted in a flurry of confusion. The DPP felt no need to act on it, Sri Sampoerno and I both wrote letters in response to it, but the concern Warsito expressed was not generally felt in Sumarah and the matter resolved itself naturally. Subsequently Warsito has become entirely positive about the Western involvement.

⁴²¹ Arymurthy in his "meeting with Westerners in Solo" in September 1973; translated in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings* (see pp.17-26).

The formal Sumarah posture, its relationship legally and spiritually to foreigners, was enunciated by Arymurthy in September 1973. After the annual conference, held in Solo, a special meeting was held for the Western group. Arymurthy guided a long meditation, within which his aim was to clarify the relationship between Sumarah and its "guests". Arymurthy's talk was taped, transcribed, and then translated. I interpreted during the session and provided the translation on his request. It has remained the definitive statement of Sumarah's position.⁴²²

In substance Arymurthy dealt first with the nature of Sumarah practice and guidance, emphasising the autonomy of individuals as a basis for meditation. Although his clarification on these points served many purposes, in this context his statements dealing with organisation, its relationship to *Hakiki*, and foreign participation are all that require emphasis. He emphasised Sumarah's historical connection to Indonesian national events. In doing so he made clear that formal organisational membership was only possible for those who shared Sumarah involvement with that process, that as currently constituted Sumarah was not an international body. He placed emphasis on the relationship between organisation and *Hakiki*, the process of collective consciousness, and pointed out that Sumarah was not just "relaxed meditation", but a practice directed toward individual reception of *Hakiki*, personal guidance by and recognition of an absolute Truth. He made clear that the aim of practice was not personal peace, but extension of realisation through service to humanity as a whole.

Precisely for that reason, he said Sumarah had to respond with openness to Western interest--at whatever level it was expressed. However, the organisation was to treat foreigners as guests, sharing practice openly but not imposing regulation or constraints. Although Sumarah itself felt that its practice would become significant to the world, he said that this would not result from human plans or intentions. *No* external forces could lead to genuine Sumarah growth, it could only occur as an expression of God's will. So Westerners were in no way to be constrained by Javanese or Sumarah norms, their practice was to take its own direction, attuned to the cultural realities of their respective homes. He said that Sumarah was to remain open to future contacts in the spirit of brotherhood, but never as a force of "spiritual imperialism", never as a dictator of events elsewhere. All the organisation could do would be to guide foreigners toward their own reception of *Hakiki*, providing confirmation when that point had been reached. After that developments would occur spontaneously and in tune with the living realities of their own culture--not as an extension of something Javanese.⁴²³

⁴²² *Ibid.*; this was referred to as definitive in 1978, in the DPP, *Tuntunan*, p.11.

⁴²³ Arymurthy in my *Selectred Sumarah Teachings*, pp.25-26.

With this it became clear Sumarah practice was not bound by the organisation or culture which house it in Java. For foreigners who have experienced Sumarah, this seemed perfectly appropriate. Few wanted organisational affiliation, all moved in different directions on their own. Many, however, became dependent, experiencing difficulty on leaving Solo. While there they have usually been intensely and, even exclusively, committed to practice. Singlemindedness results in an artificial association of meditation with environment. For Javanese Sumarah involvement remained an aspect of life context. For foreigners experience of Solo seemed to provide a cocoon, a supportive atmosphere. As a result, despite Arymurthy's guidance, many associated Sumarah only with experiences and *pamong* in Solo and were unable to sustain practice on their own.

For some this led to correspondence, especially with Sri Sampoerno, for others repeated returns. Otherwise, foreigners who have been through Solo have been geographically dispersed, especially those from North America or Europe. There people have tended to become involved in other spiritual groups--ranging from reborn Christian to Sufi to Tibetan Buddhist. In the seventies a number of Australians became involved in Findhorn, the spiritual community in the north of Scotland and generally interchange between Solo and global networks of the 'new age' developed.⁴²⁴

In Australia, where friends from Solo were less scattered, informal groups maintained practice. These began in Canberra and Perth in 1976, Sydney in 1977, and in Melbourne in 1978. Within these groups there has been only erratic experience of guidance in its Sumarah form, often friends simply meditate together. Each group has involved not only friends who met in Solo, but others with no exposure in Java. The clearest source of difficulty for Westerners leaving Solo is that they have been given no distinct forms to identify their practice. There is no label for commitment, initiation, no set teaching. If there were, then recreation of them in other contexts would be easy and expansion an extension of Javanese forms. Sumarah has not allowed that, even individual efforts in that direction have been thwarted.

⁴²⁴ This contact began through David and Ann Sutherland, who spent most of 1972 in Solo, then three years at Findhorn. Subsequently it also involved Neil and Kathleen Goodall, Margie Elliott, Nicky Vardy and a number of others who have spent periods of over a year in both places. Ann is now Anna Hawken. This connection has continued in several ways within Australia. During 1978 half-a-dozen of the Sumarah related people in Perth were actively involved in preparing the Findhorn tour's Perth leg; in Melbourne the core of the group which practices Sumarah are people who have also had long experience of Findhorn.

chapter 8

CONTINUOUS MEDITATION

Sumarah movement beyond its own forms is a reflection of the fourth phase of its spiritual practice. If *Hakiki* seemed connected to regional groups in the third phase, then the movement toward the individual level in the fourth has brought tolerance of diversity. As Truth is recognised more commonly at the individual level, acceptance of many forms results in de-emphasis on any one. At the same time the emphasis on special states of consciousness and the intensive meditations which result in them has been replaced with stress on consciousness within daily life. This has meant intensification rather than relaxation of effort; acknowledgement that practice is a continuous rather than occasional exercise. Linked to this there is emphasis on awareness which is open and diffused through the body, rather than focused on parts of or functions within it. This has meant that mental functioning now takes place within meditation, replacing the earlier and more exclusive concern with sharpening of intuitive feeling.

From the vantage point of current practice it is clear that each phase has subsumed those leading to it, including rather than rejecting the lessons of prior experience. Awareness of mind has not meant that physical tensions and intuitive feeling have been ignored but that the field of awareness expanded, becoming more comprehensive and simultaneously working within every dimension. Entry into the new phase is thought to have led to more rapid progress for beginners. The collective evolution implied increasing directness and clarity of guidance, resulting in what appears to be more rapid development. This feature of Sumarah evolution had been noted early in the third phase, but received frequent comment as the fourth phase approached.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁵The clearest statement of this principle came through a talk Arymurthy gave in Jakarta right after the third phase had begun (recorded in Suwondo, *Himpunan Wewarah* Vol .IV, pp.144-146). Speaking in December 1956 Arymurthy explained: "... berbahagialah mereka jang memasuki Pagujuban Sumarah didalam phase ke-III ini. Sebab mass persiapan sudah berlalu. Mereka jang masuk langsung berkenalan dengan iman jang sewadajibnja sudah menjelma didalam kolbunja para pamong, sehingga pertumbuhan sudjudnja djika diukur dengan masa keduniawian, akan djauh lebih singkat." In the early seventies Sumarah leaders frequently made similar comments about the increasing directness of practice, and the resulting speed with which new members

Even the way in which each phase has been announced continues to reveal something of its nature. The second had been announced by Sukino and the third by Martosuwignio--each representing the level of *Hakiki* experienced at the time. The fourth phase was experienced as a reality by ordinary members throughout the brotherhood, then confirmed in the congress of 1974. The very process of grassroots recognition confirmed the completion of the third phase, indicating that *Hakiki* had reached the branches and a new level of collective awareness was close. This time the emphasis on continuity of meditative experience meant entry into *sumarah*, completion of the stage of *iman*. In terms of the chakras this is connected to activation of the spiritual functions associated with the head: the throat, forehead, and crown. In terms of Sufi stages it meant movement from *Hakekat* toward *Makripat*, the final stage of union.

Sudarno's practices of the late sixties foreshadowed the fourth phase. Dropping emphasis on the heart, he guided people toward conscious relaxation within everyday life, "daily meditation" (*meditasi harian*) became a keynote. Sudarno's capacity to articulate and explain the meditative process has been notable. Because his language is simple and logical, understanding of the process has been cultivated within each stage of meditation. Sudarno continued to use one-to-one guidance, clarifying inner posture through attunement, but the force of his logic meant no assumptions were required. Within earlier practices beginners needed commitment before the instructions of *pamong* became meaningful. Although Sudarno's emphasis on continuity of and explanations about meditation came early, now many other *pamong*, most notably Suwondo, have developed similar emphasis.

At first glance, and for most beginners, the notion of meditation in daily life seems a contradiction. Beginners feel that inward movement of meditation runs counter to outward involvement in action. If attention turns inward, how can consciousness remain attuned to external events? Within Sudarno's framework the answer is relatively simple, though its simplicity hardly ensures practical application. As he explained, attention is normally in thoughts, in the head. Naturally this means when beginning meditating our sense of it is that we turn from 'looking outward' to 'looking inward'. At first it appears as though our centre, our attention, remains in the head. Mentally meditation and action seem exclusive and in contradiction. However meditation means centring within, not turning attention inward. Attention, once just in thought, becomes rooted in and diffused through the whole being. Once attention *is* internal, rather than just being aware *of* the inside, then inner awareness and outer receptivity merge.⁴²⁶

could progress. Mrs. Sardjono, Martosuwignio, Suhardo, and others all made such comments.

⁴²⁶For an introduction to Sudarno's style of guidance, see my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*, pp.7-16. Sudarno's guidance on the relationship between

Sudarno's stress had precedents. His terminology evoked Buddhist senses of "mindfulness" and "right attention", and can be linked to the continuity of awareness exercised within Vipassana. Others in Sumarah had a different frame of reference. For Javanese generally the term "*eling*" means "remembrance", just as does the Sufi *dikir*. The *dikir* is not simply a chanting of God's name, but an instrument to achieve connectedness. Sukino began to draw renewed attention to continuity of meditation during the same period in which Sudarno introduced his style. Sukino's language continued to reflect Sufi and Javanist roots, but the thrust of the message was very close to that of Sudarno's.

The clearest presentation of Sukino's final spiritual teaching came during a small group meditation at his home in June 1968. Only a few friends were present at the time, but the talk was taped and then circulated as a booklet: *Wahyu Awas-Eling tuwin Wahyu Alam*.⁴²⁷ Although this was termed "*wahyu*", revelation, it was not presented as a revelation in the same sense as Sukino's original experiences. Sukino explained later, in a letter to Sri Sampoerno, that he had received many experiences of revelation, but that only the experiences of 1935 and 1949 had a direct effect on the nature of spiritual practice. Other experiences were also direct receptions of God's Truth, but their significance was not at the same level.⁴²⁸

This talk, which could be roughly titled "The Revelation of Constant Awareness and of Nature", was interpreted as a sign of a new phase. During mid-September 1969 another small meeting at Sukino's home led to explicit linking of the revelation to phase four.⁴²⁹ It was widely felt that most members could not understand Sukino's message, that it amounted to foreshadowing rather than announcement of a new phase. Sukino's talk stressed continuity of meditative awareness, attunement of life as a whole to natural energies, and the activation of intellect within the sphere of meditation. The elements of his talk were not new, but their arrangement and emphasis was.

During the early seventies a number of senior Sumarah members mentioned the beginnings of a new phase. In response to my questions,

thought and meditation was clearest to me through his comments in response to my continued questioning about the relationship between my practice and this thesis.

⁴²⁷Published in Ngawi in 1972 and translated in part in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*.

⁴²⁸Sukino's letter to Sri Sampoerno of December 27 1969.

⁴²⁹Interview with Martosuwignio in Yogya in June 1973. I could not help but be struck by the fact that this meeting took place at the same time as the experience which led me to look for Sumarah. The visionary experience which led me toward this thesis took place on the second Saturday of September in 1969--that was the date of the experience I am referring to in the beginning of the preface to this work.

Suhardo, Martosuwignio, and Mrs. Sardjono each confirmed that advanced members had begun to experience a qualitative change in the level of general Sumarah practice.⁴³⁰ During visits to East Javanese branches in 1973 there were two confirmations a new phase was opening up. On each occasion local members spontaneously spoke of a fourth phase after a group meditation. The clearest experience came in Malang, where the new phase was connected to both internal and external dimensions of Sumarah. Internally it was linked to openness, continuity, and comprehensiveness of practice; externally to the national and international involvements of the group.⁴³¹

Perhaps the most important foreshadowing came during the DPP tour of East Java in March 1973. The peak experience of the tour came in a massive public meeting in Madiun. At least two thousand members attended and it was the first time that local leaders were initiated to their functions in public. The meeting was notable not only for its scale and openness, but also for the fact that it took place in the main government *pendopo*, indicating a new level of public acceptance of Sumarah. The collective meditation seemed especially powerful and peaceful. After this session the DPP contingent paid a special visit to Kyai Abdulhamid. The DPP group included Arymurthy, Zahid Hussein, Sutjipto, Sutardjo, Martosuwignio, and Suhardo. In addition Sri Sampoerno from Solo, Sukardji from Surabaya, Sichlan from Ponorogo, and I attended.⁴³²

The group had an extremely moving meditation. Arymurthy, Suhardo, and Abdulhamid each deferred to others, leaving no individual as guide. It was noted, nonetheless, that the group experienced an extremely smooth and clear meditation. Afterwards Arymurthy spoke briefly as a vehicle for *Hakiki*, announcing that "there are already more than a thousand who have reached *iman*, the conditions have been fulfilled."⁴³³ It was later recollected that this

⁴³⁰Based on interviews in Yogya during both 1972 and 1973. During this period, prior to formal announcement of the fourth phase, many were already quite explicit in speaking of its beginnings.

⁴³¹These experiences came during meetings with local Sumarah members in both Malang and Punten during August 1973. In both places local members began speaking of a fourth phase after we had meditated together. In each instance my presence, and our common experience, served as a stimulant, increasing awareness of the international dimensions of Sumarah practice.

⁴³²This meeting, and the whole trip, was described in detail in the report Sutardjo made about it, *Selayang Pandang...*, 1973.

⁴³³*Ibid.*, p.3. Arymurthy's words were: "Wis asna sewu cacahé sing pada iman. Wis nyukupi syarat." In a notice communicating the implications of this experience to the branches, the DPP reprinted a portion of Sukino's 1956 talk, drawing attention to the connection. Although the announcement made it appear quite new, in fact there had been experiences, beginning in the mid-sixties, which referred to Sukino's 1956 comment.

connected to Sukino's comments at the beginning of the third phase, in 1956. The implication of Sukino's words had been that the phase would be completely realised when one thousand members fully reached *iman*, coming to receive *Hakiki* directly as a result. In 1973 it was felt that fulfilment meant that Sumarah could open itself publicly and fully for the first time. The internal base, the sphere, was such that external pressures would not shake commitment to internal aims.

Arymurthy announced the fourth phase during the congress of 1974 in Surabaya. When he did, the keynotes of his interpretation naturally began to influence general understanding. For him the new phase was directly linked to organisational openness, to awareness within working situations, and to movement into the sphere of *sumarah*. He speaks of constant readiness (*kesiagaan*) and action aligned to cosmic law (*hukum purbawasesa*). Each then becomes a basis for activation of the *pamong* function through a spiritual role as "guide for the age" (*pamong umum* and *pamong jaman*).⁴³⁴ Instead of seeing meditation as a preparation for service, he speaks of life as the context for spiritual development. Regional meetings took place during the following two years, introducing the whole membership to the DPP sense of the fourth phase.

Since 1974 the notion of daily meditation (*sujud harian*) has become characteristic of Sumarah as a whole. Many *pamong* have distinctly altered their emphasis. Old styles have been replaced with emphasis on openness, action, and balance. It is especially notable that Suhardo, Sukino's first follower, has remained at the cutting edge of collective growth.⁴³⁵ Initiations and levels of consciousness have been de-emphasised and every level of practice is open.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁴Based on conversations with Arymurthy in Jakarta in July 1976 and July 1978, and at my observations during the Sumarah 'panataran' in Madiun in July 1976. These phrases are all strongly emphasised in the conference and organisational materials of the late seventies. The implication is that neither personal practice nor functioning as a *pamong* is restricted to the boundaries of the organisation.

⁴³⁵Some members do disagree, but I feel that in doing so they are often basing their judgements on memories of Suhardo's past activity, rather than on current contact. Infact this sort of gap is a characteristic explanation for the sometimes distorted images different branches have of each other. I was especially struck, during meetings with Suhardo in July 1976 and July 1978, by the fact that he advised me against emphasis on deeply and purely internal meditation, directing me instead toward openness and balance through which meditation can relate directly to action.

⁴³⁶The strongest demonstration of this is the fact that I was allowed free access to Sumarah meetings at every level, including meetings of the leadership and sessions which would definitely have been closed in the past. There were often times when I was distinctly aware of not being able to

Sumarah practice appears increasingly not as a skill, but as an exercise of beingness every moment. Diversity of expression may now be taken as a confirmation of authentic individual quest, of the fact each individual must ultimately find their own path. Fulfilment of Sumarah, as seen from within, is indicated by movement beyond itself, beyond identification with set forms. In all forms of expression--terms, concepts, organisation, and guidance--Sumarah has been fluid, forms responsive to changing times and experiences.

monism and dualism in Solonese practice

Geertz identified mystical movements with the *priyayi* elite socially and with the Hindu-Buddhist *kraton*, or court, oriented tradition historically. Hadiwijono argued more directly that these movements, with their tendency toward a "pantheistic monism", are extensions of the classical Indic rather than recent Islamic culture of the island.⁴³⁷ Residual Indic philosophy, including strong monistic (eg non-dual) currents, do exist in Sumarah. More to the point, despite the generally Muslim tones of the movement, explicitly Buddhist and Islamic styles of meditation practice have existed side by side within it. This coexistence exposed the meditative interface between Islamic and Indic styles. Incidentally it also illustrates the range of emphases possible within one movement and resonates with contrasts between concentration and relaxation techniques, a contrast found within most meditative traditions.⁴³⁸

In this context the counterpointing of monist and dualistic approaches is what is critical, as it highlights differences in inner orientation associated with Indic and Islamic orientations toward meditation practice. In its own terms

perceive what was happening--there were times when I was aware that the limits of my awareness functioned as a natural barrier, preventing me from knowing what I could not properly absorb. But these barriers were internal, the organisation was remarkably open.

⁴³⁷ H. Hadiwijono, *Man in the Present Javanese Mysticism* (Baarn 1967) . He applied his analysis to Sumarah specifically (pp152-163), but only worked on the basis of one pamphlet It was produced by Dr Surono, and even at the time of Hadiwijono's book he was viewed by the organisation at large as having no authority.

⁴³⁸ R. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness* (London 1975) pp 103-140. While entertaining, implicitly, the suggestion that internal practices within Buddhism and Islam may have characteristic flavors, it is important to note that every major esoteric tradition includes a diversity of techniques, certainly in most cases including both concentration and relaxation styles. We may nevertheless suggest, as I have elsewhere (in "The Logic of Rasa in Java", *Indonesia* No. 38, 1984), that particular zones of the body are prioritised generally within different cultures--as the *hara*, or navel is in Japan or the *kalbu*, the spiritual heart, in Java.

Sumarah is neither Indic nor Islamic, but simply spiritual, with a membership which happens to include Muslims, Christians, Buddhists and even (mainly among foreign followers) agnostics. Everywhere both branches and individual teachers have distinct orientations. The Sufi undercurrent is strong in most of the East Javanese branches of the movement, especially in the Madiun and Ponorogo area. Central Javanese members are more likely to distance themselves from Islam.

Even within the Surakarta branch of the movement there were two distinct styles of guidance which were particularly influential during the 1970s, centering on the most dynamic *pamong* in the city. Suwondo became active in the late 1960s, gained recognition as a senior *pamong* in the early 1970s and now still serves as a guiding light for the movement in the city and for its branches in outlying towns. Many of the members in the region see him as carrying the spiritual mantle of Suhardo, Sukino's earliest and closest founding associate, who remained active until his death in 1982. Suwondo is the director of a private market bank and comes from the network of wealthy *batik* producing and merchandising families which centers on the Solonese district of Laweyan. His style of guidance reflects the qualities of that social origin both in its directness, which is related to the business orientation of the group, and in its emphasis on what are essentially Islamic terminology and values.⁴³⁹

In contrast, the guidance given by Sudarno Ong, the other most active *pamong* in Solo during the 1970s, resonated with Buddhist rather than Islamic philosophy. Sudarno, who died in 1982, was a *peranakan* Chinese who spoke Javanese as his first language. He was born in Madiun in the 1920s, spent his childhood in the small market town of Nguter, south of Solo on the road to Wonogiri, and lived for the rest of his life in Solo, working as a collector of subscription fees and bills for a Chinese cultural association. His Buddhism can be traced to a grandfather in Madiun who had been active in the local Chinese temple, a *klenteng*. These house Javanese versions of syncretic south Chinese religion, combining Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism into what Indonesians called '*Tridharma*', the three teachings. Prior to Sumarah Sudarno had experienced several mystical practices during the 1950s. He had also been active in the Theosophical Society and on the periphery of the recent revival of Theravada Buddhism. Through the former he came into contact with Sumarah around 1956. Throughout his life he avoided the administrative aspects of the organisation. He became an active *pamong* in the 1960s and by 1967 had developed a distinctive style of guidance, one which set him apart from most guides.

While Suwondo's activity and guidance centred fully within the Sumarah organisation, remaining aligned as well to the terminology and style

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Suwondo's practices are treated in depth in D. Howe (*Op. Cit.*).

characteristic of it, Sudarno's guidance departed obviously from the mainstream. He guided meditations for the Theosophical Society in Solo and for the mainly Chinese community of the Theravada Buddhist *vihara* of Tanah Putih, on the outskirts of Semarang. The Bhikkhus he knew through these associations accepted his practice as a Buddhist teaching, but generally thought it too advanced to be of practical relevance to many people. Sudarno paid little attention to the Sumarah label, though he affirmed it when asked. In dealings with non-members he never emphasised Sumarah; I knew him several weeks before realising the connection, and he most often termed his practice "relaxed meditation". At the same time the most common reservation of other *pamong* about his practice was the opinion that it touched only the first stages of practice instead of leading to the heart of Sumarah.

The question of precisely how Sudarno's and Suwondo's guidance converged or differed became a frequent issue in Solo. According to Sumarah principles, practice of individuals is not centred on a specific teacher and members are indeed almost always exposed to guidance through a variety of *pamong*. Nevertheless people tended to have favourites in the same way that Christians might choose a church by its minister, and only a minority engaged seriously with both guides. The number of followers who worked with both increased sharply when Westerners began to follow the practice after 1971. Initially they were most attracted by Sudarno's guidance, because he was open without prerequisites. Other Sumarah *pamong* including Suwondo, were initially skeptical of Western interest, also holding that conviction in God was necessary before people could begin. Nevertheless within six months Westerners, like the Javanese and *peranakan* membership of Sumarah in Solo, were involved with both guides. Like others they have had preferences, but most have been pressed through that circumstance to grapple with contrast between essentially Sufi and Buddhist meditative discourses.

Suwondo's sessions are dynamic and fluid. No set pattern prevails and the flow of practice, including discussion about it, depends very much on the group present, issues raised, mood and atmosphere of the day. Suwondo clearly sees himself as an active catalyst. He encourages prospective guides to actively experiment in tuning in to others they are meditating with, not to fear errors but to make them so as to learn from them, to seek openings, to reach out and stir movement. Like most in the organisation he uses the Arabic term '*sujud*', meaning "surrender" in Sumarah usage. At times his guidance is punctuated by use of his version of the *dhikr*, "Allah...Allah"--though not in any standard Sufi form. In his teaching he stresses the linkage between total surrender to God, using the term "Allah" or less often its Indonesian alternate, *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, and service to humanity as an expression of God's will.

He often describes the spiritual process in terms of an inner fight (*pertarungan*) between areas of the psyche which resist and those which aspire to the condition of "*sumarah*", that is the state of surrender. This formulation matches the Islamic sense of the "greater *jihad*" particularly closely. He enjoins

people to exercise their commitment and will (*tekad*) to carry through the often unpleasant inner confrontations spiritual quest may open. In relating practice to daily life he speaks of the necessity of attuning at once to the "horizontal" and "vertical" dimensions--which is to say at once to the condition of existence around and to surrender to God. The Javanese term "*eling*", which he and others in Sumarah use for the latter, means the same "remembrance" which is common to Sufi practices. Although he does frequently use the term "Oneness", he also advises people to "ask" (*nuwun/bertanya*) for answers or clarification from inside. This active seeking of inner clarification, ultimately theoretically deriving from God, works as an inward process of research and reflection (*renungan*) moving toward the Truth, called "*Hakiki*" in Sumarah, from the Arabic '*Khak*'.

Sudarno's sessions were characteristically more methodical than Suwondo's, with emphasis on long silent meditation. His sessions also varied and their tone depended on both context and mood, as all sessions do. But Sudarno's sense of his role clearly differed from Suwondo's. Sudarno made himself available for questioning and probing or advise, but if no questions eventuated he was content to let the session remain short and silent; he did not see himself as an "activator", but as a receptive and responsive guide. His preference was for the term '*meditasi*'; and his key words included: '*kendor*' (loose, slack, relaxed) and '*sadar*' (conscious). He empathised with the way Krishnamurti describes meditation, as a natural process of becoming increasingly conscious within and of the moment, of a dissolution of the division between observer (*pengawas*) and observed. His terminology was of "merger" and "union" rather than surrender. While Suwondo speaks of "surrender and service"; Sudarno spoke of "consciousness and compassion". From Sudarno's perspective it appeared that all we need to do is open ourselves and relax, first physically and then by automatic extension at deeper levels, so that as events arise within inner awareness consciousness dissolves them and we move toward a condition in which boundaries of ego, thought and feeling no longer exist.

His instructions assumed an increasingly methodical form over the 1970s and he introduced dramatically different styles in his last years which I will not dwell on. Generally, in the period I knew him best, he advised against clinging to "method" (*patrap*) and insisted that the "teacher" was whatever circumstance or event (inner or outer) we encounter in the moment. He frequently advised against concentration practices involving focusing of awareness on a thought, *mantra* or specific area of the body, directing people toward opening and relaxing. He described concentration practices as implying separability of "self", "method" and "object" rather than leading toward an open field of awareness. Implicitly he rejected dualism and monotheism by not referring to or invoking "God"; explicitly he rejected devotional approaches, using the term "*bhakti*" for it and referring to the example of several other local guides, and the ethical systems connected to them. Instead he held that when barriers have fallen away consciousness of others is no different from

consciousness of self, leading actions to be responsive and automatically attuned to the real inner needs of others. He even disavowed Buddhist practices of invoking compassion (*mettakaruna*) because he held that they lead to imitation of something that only truly exists when arising spontaneously. Similarly he explicitly held that no idea of what God is can help in meditation. Instead of filling meditation with an aim, as he said most Sumarah people did, he admonished students to be emptying themselves of everything.

To summarise contrast between them: Suwondo's teachings are framed in reference to God, surrender, service, active quest, inner struggle and the eventual purification which results in the individual functioning purely as a channel for God's will; Sudarno's teaching was framed in monistic terms of union (without a referent), consciousness, compassion, relaxation, openness, and the eventual dissolution of the boundaries and desires which constitute ego, so that the person, insofar as any "thing" remains, exists in responsive harmony with the totality of existence. I am able to identify only the keynotes, tones and emphases which differ; I neither can nor intend to comment on whether there is difference in the qualities, or levels, of consciousness attained or claimed (neither made explicit claims anyway). Simply speaking of contrasts, as I do here, exaggerates differences. The two had a great deal in common and their differences were certainly not an issue between them, though other similar differences in the environment were problematised.

The point that I want to draw from this synoptic characterisation of their styles of discourse and phrasings is limited enough so that the many caveats and qualifications I might have to linger on are unnecessary. Even sustained analysis would bear out that Suwondo's mode of discourse was usually dualistic (never simplistically so), key terms and tones are consistent with Islam and Sufism, relating directly to the activist approach he has toward his own spiritual life, one which spins off into eagerness to share with others. On the other hand Sudarno's terminology was emphatically monistic and consistent with Buddhist practice and discourse. If Sudarno's style was "exemplary", Suwondo's is "emissary", to borrow the distinction Weber made between Indic and Semitic styles of prophecy.⁴⁴⁰ These philosophical framings relate to styles of teaching, inner orientations, and the tones of experience. In presenting loosely Sufi and rigorously Buddhist philosophical outlooks their difference, especially in attitude toward reference to God, was substantial.

Wider Sumarah perceptions of Solonese practices were affected by other issues, having to do with the evolution of phases in Sumarah practice, which are not directly relevant here. Leaving those aside, while Suwondo's style has

⁴⁴⁰ M. Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions" in H. Gerth & C.W. Mills (eds.) *From Max Weber* (New York 1947). The same polarity is explored at great length, exposing many connections this set of examples relate to, in excellent essays in P. Berger (ed.), *The Other Side of God* (New York 1981).

been relatively consistent with organisational norms there has been little awareness of Sudarno's style beyond Solo. In several instances when relaxed meditation was mentioned it was suggested that it was not altogether acceptable. During Arymurthy's enunciation of Sumarah's international stance, during a meeting with Westerners in Solo in 1973, he stressed that relaxed meditation was not Sumarah. In his terms practice only became Sumarah when it leads to direct inner reception of *Hakiki* (Truth), that is of absolute Truth which can be recognised at the collective level within guided meditation. Elsewhere Sumarah people frequently rejected the term "*meditasi*", saying it was different from "*sujud*" because it led to void and not God. Thus even people who were not engaged with how Suwondo and Sudarno directed practitioners easily registered differences in their discourses.

For those who engaged with both teachers in practice, as well as theory, the complexion of difference took another dimension. Followers who passed between them were often struck and sometimes confused by the orientations referred to. For those who were just entering into the practice the differences of framing, terminology and suggested inner orientation seemed at odds. Those differences affected qualities of experience and invoked contrasting feelings, attitudes and internal postures. Often what registered as correct from one perspective seemed counterproductive to the other. Insofar as their focus lingered on mentally sorting out consistency differences were never resolved. On the other hand these contrasts raised no confusion for those whose meditation passed beyond thoughts, in the process becoming their own.

While this point tests the limits of what may be sayable, it can be reported that for those involved it was apparent in the context of practice that different atmospheres, zones of bodily awareness and qualities of feeling are invoked by differences in guidance. To some extent the understanding within the movement is that this would be the case in any two people's practices: every individual brings unique qualities, even beyond verbalisation, bearing and expression, into interaction. At the same time in this instance the contrasts relate to issues of principle, converging with the macrocosmic contrast between Indic and Islamic, beyond personality. In referring to the contrast between the two teachers here my aim is to report that practitioners both noted and worked to sort out the contrast on the basis of recognition that their clearly differentiated discourses corresponded to differences of emphasis which had an effect on activation of specific, and to some extent different, functions of awareness.

orthodoxy and heterodoxy

A much more widely relevant divergence within the Sumarah movement connects directly with political forces affecting Javanese religious life. The connection is strong because Arymurthy and Zahid Hussein have been both leaders of the Sumarah movement and actors on the national stage.

Differences in their perspectives can be traced and correlated through several dimensions. Their view of meditation practice differs: Zahid emphasises surrender on the basis of absolute conviction (*iman bulat*) and centering on the heart; Arymurthy's more elaborated system calls attention to his version of the range of occult centers (*cakras*), stressing awareness through the whole body in the way that is emphasised within tantra. Zahid is more orthodox and Arymurthy more heterodox in relation to what how mysticism relates to religion. These contrasts converged with distinct social positions: Zahid works closely for and with President Suharto; Arymurthy takes an independent position in his representations on behalf of autonomous mystical movements. Zahid has been aligned with the government's increasing orthodoxy while Arymurthy has been marginalized in opposition due to holding the heterodox view.

Shifts in government policies relating to mysticism occurred as the 1970s became the 1980s. In the 1970s the issue of *kebatinan* and Islam was prominent and at the time it seemed increasingly possible for people to present themselves as members of mystical groups without also signalling membership in a world religious community. In the 1980s the pendulum of Javanese religious politics swung the other way. Now it is generally held that everyone must have a world religious affiliation and that, while it remains legal to belong to mystical movements, membership is strictly as an adjunct to what must also be an active religious commitment. This essentially represents return to the orthodox Islamic view, that of al-Ghazali or Sunan Kalijaga, on how mysticism relates to religion. This rise in orthodoxy, one Suharto has fed so as to avoid angering the Islamic community (the most conspicuous potential opposition to his government) is reflected more deeply in the textures of individual spiritual lives than we might expect.

Arymurthy has the Indonesian equivalent of an MA in economics and spent most of his professional career with the Taxation office and, until recently he has taught part time at its training college in Jakarta. He became the national leader of Sumarah in 1966 and, beginning in 1970, became a leading national representative of mystical practices as well. In 1978, through that role, he became the Director within the government office responsible for faith (*kepercayaan*) movements, thus taking a leading role in the national politics of mysticism. At the time his posture was accepted and it is the New Order government, most likely Suharto personally, approved of his stance implicitly.

Parliamentary legislation in 1973 was interpreted by most *kebatinan* adherents as indicating that it was legitimate to profess mystical practice without also nominating membership in an officially sanctioned world religion. Subsequently the establishment of a directorat, for the first time giving mystical movements representation in the bureaucracy, appeared to release mystics from supervisory oversight through the Ministries of Religion and Justice.

Suharto had clearly encouraged the mobilisation of *kebatinan*, probably on the basis of both personal sympathies, deriving from his upbringing in Central Java, and as a political counterweight to the oppositional force of Islam. In the late 1970s the complexion of the political climate began to change and with it the policy of the government.

Zahid Hussein occupied a critical position within this shift. His role is clear simultaneously within Sumarah, for *kebatinan* generally and in national administration. Zahid had joined Sumarah early and as a youth, around 1940, through his foster father in Yogya. The latter had been active in Muhammadiyah, the prominent modernist Muslim organisation, then became a follower of Sukino, the founder of Sumarah. Zahid is now simultaneously the national leader of Sumarah, a key leader of the (theoretically independent) umbrella organisation of mystics, and an army general working in Bina Graha (the suite of Presidential offices next to the Palace in Jakarta). During the 1970s he played a trusted role in intelligence, for at least a decade being responsible for Suharto's security during travels within the country. During the 1980s he has managed *Banpres*, the President's discretionary funds, much of it used as gifts and subsidies to *pesantren*, Islamic schools. On the one hand, in his private capacity, he plays a key role in Suharto's efforts to domesticate and incorporate the *kebatinan* activists; on the other hand his formal job functions partly to neutralise the often critical Islamic establishment of the *pesantren*. The New Order's remarkable success in both these spheres has been important to political stability.

It can hardly be co-incidental that Suharto instructed Zahid to take the *haj* to Mecca in 1977. Because Zahid was then already prominent, as a representative of *kebatinan* in national politics, his trip to Mecca raised eyebrows. Some *kebatinan* people thought it was counterproductive for one of their public spokespeople to implicitly give such credence to the *shariah*. When Pak Zahid commented on the trip to me he said that it was to assess whether Suharto should take the *haj* himself, joking that he went to test the vibrations. This could be more than a joke, as it would have been consistent with Zahid's security function inside Indonesia: Zahid's spiritual sensitivities were no doubt relevant to his intelligence work. In any event there is no doubt that by becoming a *haji* Zahid's standing within the Islamic community changed. He became a more acceptable emissary and this may have been a deliberated prelude to the role he soon did assume in helping ease the Suharto government's relations with the *pesantren* communities. Not incidentally becoming a *haji* and interacting increasingly with *pesantren* people also affected Zahid's own discourse. Even his way of framing Sumarah meditation practice shifted during this period. This shift coincided with an independent factor, the maturation of Zahid's practices and functioning as a leader, and that process may quite separately have brought the *santri* roots of his early youth closer to the surface.

During the 1970s Zahid was clearly junior to Arymurthy within Sumarah. Both have been well known nationally through their roles as presenters in the national TV time slot allocated to the movements, a program called *mimbar kepercayaan*. Their relationship was intimate, their work at all levels closely interwoven, right through the 1970s; in the early 1980s they moved apart. Though there have been tensions within Sumarah throughout the 1980s, as individuals they continue to collaborate actively in many contexts. Their divergence has been complicated and I could not pretend to represent either position completely. It is relevant to emphasise, given the sensitivity of these issues in Indonesia, that I know both well and hold each in high respect which is no way undermined by the differences in perspective I refer to.

Their positions on national policies relating to *kebatinan* are suggestive of the classical contrast between al-Hallaj and al-Ghazzali or Siti Jinar and Kalijaga. In the national politics of religion the shift between the two is connected to the swing, already alluded to, from radical to conservative mysticism. The displacement of Arymurthy from his national role, as Director within the Ministry of Education and Culture for the "Faith" movements, was on Suharto's instructions. Arymurthy held to the position, one he related to the Parliamentary legislation, that membership in a legitimate mystical or ethnic faith was enough to satisfy the constitutional requirement--it is read that way in the New Order--for citizens to believe in one God. Whatever his personal predilections, Suharto was apparently convinced by the early 1980s that such a posture risked severely alienating elements of the Muslim community which he could not afford to offend so deeply.

The policy which dominated the 1970s was tested during the lead up to the 1980 census. Funds within the Ministry of Religion are allocated according to statistics on religious affiliation collected through the census. On the basis of the 1973 legislation some *kebatinan* activists encouraged members to list themselves only by their mystical affiliation, as was held to be legal for their "residential cards" (*kartu penduduk*). In many areas local authorities have not accepted this in practice, but as this was theoretically legitimate the forms for the census were initially drawn up with columns for the accepted world religions *and* another labelled "other". At the last minute the "other" column was eliminated, meaning that all citizens had to nominate a world religion on their forms. Implicitly this meant that mystical engagements could be viewed only as an adjunct to and never as an independent alternative to religious affiliation. This shift correlated closely with a political swing toward the conservative mystical position, at least as that would be defined by tradition.

Because Arymurthy stuck doggedly to his understanding of principles rather than accepting the shift in government thinking, Suharto concluded he had to be removed. Zahid Hussein followed the President's view without difficulty and not only because of his job. His function did require require agreement more directly than Arymurthy's did. But I am sure that, quite independently of that, his personal perspective converged with the new line.

His perspective was and is influenced by the national role that he has played as a mediator, acting quite directly on behalf of the President, in relation to both the Muslim and *kebatinan* communities. This difference in perspective reverberated through the relationship between Arymurthy and Zahid Hussein in their government, umbrella movement, Sumarah and meditative interactions. The contrast between their positions on the national front can be related directly to divergent emphases within their approach to meditation practice.

A detailed explication of the contrasts would be possible and worthwhile, but within the limits of this context it is enough to suggest correlations to indicate how external and internal domains related to each other. From Arymurthy's perspective the nature of Sumarah practice has been maturing continually since its origins in the 1930s and it is now increasingly inclusive of the whole body. For Zahid Sumarah practice arrived complete, through the revelation Sukino received, and rests from start to finish on rounding the conviction (*iman*) in God's power as it moves through our individual life. From his point of view it is not the nature of the practice which has evolved, but only the maturity of individual practitioners. Furthermore, to his mind this does not require elaborate explication, which Arymurthy is prone to, but simply a practice of surrender which centers, as earlier Sumarah practice used to generally, on the heart (more technically, the *kalbu* within the *sanubari*). Convergence between Zahid's views, his upbringing, his career, his sense of the practice and even a position analogous within Sumarah to the Muslim view of Muhammed as the "seal of the prophets" is substantial and obvious.

chapter 9

MICROCOSM AND MACROCOSM

When attention is focused on the surface forms of mystical quest, it is easy to lose sight of the consciousness which works through them. Insofar as practice is mystical at root no forms define it. If individuals are committed to inner transformation in mystical terms, then the forms they work through are shadows, barely hinting at the substance of experience. Since I have drawn attention to the evolution of Sumarah forms and suggested a development of consciousness, it would be easy to misread my intention. The absolute cannot change and still be. The core experience, direct realization of or union with the absolute, is the centrepiece of mystical quest. If we are to refer to an experience conceived in those terms then we cannot speak of an evolution within it, it simply is.

Insofar as Sumarah experience may have connected to truth (*Hakiki*), then there has been a baseline which remains consistent through all phases of its history. However, everything we can grasp or see, whether conceptual or physical, lies in the realms of form. It is in those dimensions that we can speak of evolution, adjustment to the times, and even the growth of collective awareness. Forms extend into the subtle dimensions of consciousness and the inner experience of individuals is affected by changes in conception and practice. In mystical terms the *only* thing that does not change is the endpoint of quest, only it escapes definition, only it lies beyond identification with forms.

Sumarah people speak of individual evolution of consciousness, related it to the growth of collective awareness, and suggest both are linked to national patterns. Techniques of practice altered not only for individuals, as they progress, but for the collective. The conception and language of practice has certainly changed with time along with the structure and leadership of the organisation. As members see it, all these forms only functioned as vehicles of consciousness when seen and used in the context of introspective practice. Forms have not been conceived, in principle, as objects in themselves, but as agents of transformation. The centrality of practice is fundamental in all true mysticism, but it is not always true that a collective evolution matches individual development.⁴⁴¹ That feature of the Sumarah case is notable and it requires explanation.

⁴⁴¹I believe it would be both extremely interesting and fruitful to construct a typology of mystical and religious movements on the basis of the degree to which internal structures are fluid. Many movements do demonstrate

Here my aim is to summarise the patterns of Sumarah evolution, to assess and interpret dynamics within it, and to extract insights relevant to understanding mysticism in Javanese culture. First I focus on two aspects of Sumarah experience. The first is 'mirroring', referring to the precision of parallelism between individual, group, and national trajectories; the second is the 'dialectic', interplay between the 'dimensions' context, organisation, conception, technique and consciousness.

Sumarah is representative in important respects of Javanese mysticism and dynamics within it do provide insight into wider process. I thus use the case to clarify cultural emphasis on consensual politics; the role of mystics as political advisers and of sects as 'barometers' of well-being; the relationship between mysticism, social action, and modernity; and the interaction between mysticism, Islam, and social conflict. In the least I can clarify local perspectives, but I hope to do more. Focusing on practical/experiential rather than cultural/ideological aspects of mysticism provides a substantive basis for reassessing interplay between consciousness, culture, and society. Thus I am not aiming just to present an 'indigenous' perspective, but to argue for revision of the gestalt through which we view consciousness. Finally, on a suggestive basis, I extend from the case to outline a Javanist spiritual sense of history.

As micro-history this study adds to knowledge of Javanese mysticism and at that level there is no difficulty affirming its relevance. In addition, and in the same way that ethnographies provide microcosms of social patterns, the case offers a lens for wider understanding of local culture. Sumarah is not only an actor within that society, it also reflects and expresses general features and perspectives.

Social conditioning and cultural conceptions clearly shape the expression of consciousness. In its own terms, however, mysticism, cannot be defined with reference to a particular social structure or cultural system (e.g. doctrine or ideology). Instead mysticism defines itself in terms of an experience or practice which inverts and transmutes the socialised awareness of individuals.⁴⁴² Because of the centrality of practice in mysticism it is especially clear the 'meaning' of systems, images, and events lies in dialectical play with the elusive

the same sort of structural adaptation present here in Sumarah some, such a Findhorn in Scotland, see this evolution in precisely the same terms. See Paul Hawken, *The Magic of Findhorn*, NY, 1973 and François Duquesne, "Evolution of Government at Findhorn", *One Earth 3* (spring 1977).

⁴⁴²For a particularly useful analysis, in these terms, of mysticism within a wide variety of traditions see C. Naranho and R E Ornstein, *On the Psychology of Meditation*, NY, 1971.

substance of human experience - not in some logic intrinsic to abstracted structural relationships.

To be explicit about the limits of argument, I assert the descriptive value of this study, extending into presentation of indigenous perspective. But this perspective has objective existence as a *construct* or *image*. and even those who hold it do not necessarily see it as literal statement of truth. I am not aiming to 'prove' Sumarah experience has been 'vibrationally' linked to national events or that a core experience exists independent of conditioning. I *report* that such thoughts are held by Javanese mystics.

evolution of Sumarah

In summarising internal patterns of Sumarah evolution I need to distinguish between conception, within the organisation of its evolution and patterns which can be demonstrated to outsiders. I do that by presenting primary patterns of development in two ways. In outlining the 'mirroring' of individual, group, and national lines of development I summarise patterns as they appear with the organisation; in commenting on the relationship between changes in context, organisation, conception, technique, and consciousness I take an analytical posture.

As Sumarah people see their own evolution, there have been a variety of distinct vectors of development. Even from an early stage of the movement's history, Sumarah spokesmen have seen its development in dynamic terms, conceiving of constant adaptation to internal development of consciousness and the external pressures of context as natural. They have spoken of movement away from preoccupation with magic and powers toward consciousness in everyday life and relate that shift to diffusion of spiritual authority, a 'spiritual democratisation'. Internal movements, of consciousness and organisation have also been seen as integrally linked to national patterns; a parallelism conceived not only as a result of similar forces working within each, but also as a reflection of special attunement within the group to wider events.

Members see the individual progression of spiritual consciousness in terms of movement from experience of magical powers to conviction and faith to consciousness; from will to compassion to surrender; from ego to collective to universal. In the beginning the members usually report feeling that meditation requires will-power to awaken consciousness beyond ego. Initially those seem distinct from experiences of everyday life, generating a sense of separation between mystical practice and everyday life. In describing subsequent developments of consciousness, members report movement toward open and diffused awareness, techniques involve less concentration and experiences merge with ordinary realities.

This progression is understood in a variety of ways, but the clearest system they relate it to is that of the yogic chakras. Within this framework

spiritual progress is related to the activation of psychic centres from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. As energy works through lower centres awareness of powers is strong, as it works through the heart faith and compassion are activated, and as it activates the head consciousness of union is touched. Sumarah people may also link awakening to Sufi senses of progression through realms of consciousness, to a shedding of the veils or shells which are ego.⁴⁴³ (see appendix)

In the case of Sukino's experience the stages are particularly clear, but other founders, Indonesian members, and foreigners report progression from interest in powers to faith to consciousness. The same progression is related to movement from preoccupation with personalities and technique to direct reception of guidance, from feeling someone special is 'the source' of gnosis to realising all of reality is the teacher.

Sumarah acknowledges that group development has been influenced by the fact that the membership has matured just by growing older. During the revolution a large percentage of the membership was young. They have grown older and remained active, so the tone of organisation has altered as membership matured in age and spirit. At the same time, however, maturity and clarity of collective practice has been presented as implying a change in the *nature* of individual progression. New members are still seen as progressing through stages similar to those others passed, but now they may pass rapidly through preoccupation with powers and personality. The collective is seen as providing a mirror within which even new members see themselves more clearly and immediately.

Collective evolution is related within the group to organisational, conceptual, and practical levels. At the organisational level the group began with a traditional patronage system. In principle founders rejected that, in practice the first period was one during which members did focus on personalities. There has been movement toward 'rationalised' structure which self consciously mirrors national patterns. To begin with language and conceptions within the group grew straight out of the Javanist context--mythic imagery and Sufi technical jargon were the vehicles of practice and there was little explanation of practice. Over time technical language of traditional spirituality gave way to modern images. Techniques have altered. In early days there was emphasis on initiations, power, healing or physical movement. Over

⁴⁴³Images of spiritual progression and levels are fundamental in all mystical traditions. Sumarah not only borrows terminology from many traditions, but also applies it in typical fashion. Even in Zen, which emphasizes the possibility of instant awakening, the 'ten bulls' presents a clear image of stages very similar to these (see P Kapleau, *The Three Pillars of Zen*, Boston, 1965, pp 301-11).

time initiations have been de-emphasised, meditation has merged with daily life, and the esoteric tone of first phase practice softened.⁴⁴⁴

Sumarah sees events within the brotherhood as both a microcosmic reflection of larger patterns and an element contributing to them. As they understand it the practice of meditation results in greater openness and receptivity. As a consequence inner experiences come to mirror outer realities with increasing precision. So parallels between individual, group, and national trajectories appear not only as the result of forces which work on all levels of the nation, but also as a result of the fact that meditation results in experiences which are directly linked to outer realities.

Sumarah's self image, its sense of an evolution toward 'higher' consciousness, its sense of 'progress', has no doubt influenced both events within and reports of Sumarah history. Some elements of Sumarah's self image are related to general Javanist cosmology, others specific to the group. In presenting Sumarah events I checked narratives and recollections against documentary evidence wherever possible. Contemporaneous sources, albeit almost exclusively internal to the organization, provided the most reliable basis for reconstruction; I have had access them for all but the first decade of Sumarah history.

Sumarah histories, especially the one written by the DPP in 1974, have been an important source and they include collections of documents rather than simply summaries based on current perspectives. There has been a tendency to 'tidy up', revising events to fit within the framework of current thinking. There has been confusion between 'phases' and personalities active within them and readings of the second phase are not consistent with the documents available from it. The personal recollections of informants have no doubt been affected by recent texts (though these are marginal in most minds) and in reconstructing events I cross-checked personal narratives with documents where possible.

At the same time, moving toward assessment of this evolution, it is worth noting the self-critical quality of Sumarah. Introspection and self-criticism are the basis of practice not unrelated to frankness of personal recollections and willingness to acknowledge problems within written sources. Internal histories have been adapted in some respects to current thinking, but they do not white-washed events or ignored sensitive issues. Most written sources I use have not been intended for public consumption. Internal changes, such as decision to organise in the first place, are presented by internal sources as responses to national events, other changes have preceded national events they parallel.

⁴⁴⁴Again, this is characteristic within what Needleman calls *The New Religions* (NY, 1970) and the image of movement away from the esoteric is common within 'new age' movements.

Sumarah's historical self image has been as much concerned with 'deviations' as it has been with 'progress'.

Within Sumarah's own histories there is distinction between spiritual and organisational developments. Spiritual development has been spoken of as taking place in phases, as development of the '*panguden*' or practice. Organisational periods are also recognised--not only on the basis of changes in leadership but also as structural adjustments in the '*paguyuban*' the association. In Sumarah terms spiritual phases have been: phase one from 1935-1949, phase two from 1949-1956, phase three from 1956-1974, phase four from 1974-1979, and more recently phases five and six (which I am not dealing with). Organisational periods have been: the period of Pinisepuh leadership from 1937 to 1950, the period of Surono's PB from 1950 to 1966, and the period of Arymurthy's DPP from 1966 to the present. Although there have been significant changes associated with the dates which mark phases and periods, in most cases transitions have been foreshadowed and earlier patterns have lingered on. While changes have been clear, they have not been instantaneous. (see appendix for a summary)

In overview, Sumarah's history has spanned major transitions within Indonesia. It began during the last decade of Dutch colonial rule and its founders were influenced both by Dutch education and the nationalist movement. A following was consolidated during the Japanese wartime occupation, then Sumarah became a popular movement during the revolutionary fighting of the late forties. Sumarah's second phase, and the beginning of its second period, coincided with parliamentary Democracy. Then from the late fifties until the mid-sixties Surono's role within Sumarah closely paralleled Sukarno's role within Guided Democracy. In 1966, and almost as Suharto's New Order became a reality, Sumarah restructured itself again under Arymurthy's leadership. National changes have been clear, Sumarah's organisational transitions are easy to identify, and the correspondence between the two is striking.

Changes in Sumarah conception and technique are not difficult to relate to changes in context and organisation. There are documentary sources for insight into all phases of Sumarah practice, so I have not had to rely exclusively on personal recollections in effort to reconstruct them. In the first phase the predominance of Javanist terminology, emphasis on initiations, and interest in healing and physical movement are clear. These existed in the context of concern for physical survival and commitment to revolutionary struggle. In the second phase the shift did not involve just a rephrasing of practice, though one did occur. At the same time the role of guides did change, emphasis on physical movement did decline, a shift from the genital to the heart chakras did occur.

The shift to phase three is less distinct, which can be explained through the fact that in Sumarah terms it was a progression within the heart region, thus not as significant a change as those which led into phases two and four. Signs of phase four began shortly after transition to Arymurthy's leadership, but it was not recognised until 1974. This change was distinct, involving emphasis on awareness in everyday life, meditation as continuous process rather than special exercise. Subsequent shifts to phases five and six are less significant; like the shift into phase three they represent emphasis within one major region of the body.⁴⁴⁵ It is clear even in documentary sources that practices did change, moving from emphasis on the genital to the heart to the head centres. It is also clear this shift has not simply been a progression all individuals pass through, but that those who have entered in later phases have been practicing techniques which differ from those of early phases.

There is no difficulty reporting that tone and emphasis, within statements referring to consciousness change. It is possible to infer consciousness from actions, to note, for instance, that guides are no longer viewed with exaggerated respect. But, rather than aiming to 'argue' about qualities of consciousness, I aim to draw attention to description informants provided of shifts in experience and awareness. All committed members report 'indescribable' experiences, few claim to have achieved a final goal. They do relate changes in their consciousness to the fact that in early phases they relied on more mechanical senses of technique and depended on personalities; they do suggest that increasingly they have been able to receive direct inner guidance and that meditative consciousness becomes continuous with everyday life.

Although we cannot establish the nature of shifts in consciousness, we can relate reports of such shifts to changes in technique, conception, organisation, and context. It is obvious the evolution of Sumarah involved substantial shifts in all of phenomenal dimensions of group experience. This observation does draw attention to dimensions of change which are not always characteristic of religious or mystical movements. The pervasiveness of change within all levels of Sumarah experience can be explained partly by the nature of practice, especially commitment to a consciousness in mystical terms.

Sumarah does not define itself by any set technique, doctrine, personality, or event. In this it contrasts with many religious and mystical systems. The

⁴⁴⁵I learned of these last two phases only in July 1980, during a visit to Java. In introducing me to them Arymurthy did say that they represented less significant shifts than the move into phase four, so what I have said of that shift applied in many senses to even the most recent developments and there has been no radical re-orientation beyond what I have described.

degree and depth of change may be a consequence of this practical commitment to consciousness which cannot be defined by forms. Sumarah practice is directed toward openness, receptivity, and attunement, toward unfiltered awareness, there is no effort to cut consciousness off from outer realities.⁴⁴⁶ On the contrary emphasis lies on attunement to and responsiveness toward the outer world. The precision of parallelism between Sumarah experience and changes in its context, the depth to which changes have reached into individual experience, may be a reflection of actual openness to the realities of context.

Insofar as spiritual life is defined in terms of historically unique revelations, established religious structures, prescribed ritual practices, or accepted doctrines, movements so defined will resist changes. Monastic structures create vibrational cocoons, rituals and doctrines ensure their own persistence, and many mystical techniques are designed to insulate consciousness against worldly influences. The normal pattern of religious life is of 'routinisation'. Structures generate inertia, becoming ends in themselves rather than pathways to the objective which may have inspired them. Ideals of union usually congeal into doctrines which restrict human practice. Such structures may achieve their purpose. From the mystical perspective any structure may still be used as an agent of spiritual transformation. It is reasonable to suggest, however, that insofar as movements are defined by set forms they fall toward the religious pole of spiritual life. To the extent that practices reflect commitment beyond any form, they approach the mystical.

In observing that the pattern of Sumarah's historical development is fundamentally linked to the nature of practices within the organisation I am reemphasizing the centrality of practice within analysis of mystical movements. 'Practice' is not reference to idealised conception of techniques, but to the way living people use them. We cannot understand mystical movements simply through the logic of structured systems, not even through attention to interplay between structured dimensions. We must base understanding on dynamic interplay between those structured realms and an 'ineffable' experience of consciousness. Doing so does not depend on specific beliefs nor even on precise definition of these, it simply requires acknowledgment that *life* is an element within the human equation and willingness to refer to it.

mysticism in Javanese culture

⁴⁴⁶See Naranjo and Ornstein, *Op Cit* for distinction between concentration and relaxation techniques. Sumarah places considerable emphasis on its 'relaxed' approach - see Sudarno's comments in my *Selected Sumarah Teachings*.

There are crucial implications of interpreting Javanese mysticism on the basis of its experiential focus. In scholarly studies mysticism has been viewed as a thread within Javanese tradition and as a residue of earlier orientations. It is generally identified with Indic roots, court society, or monistic philosophy.⁴⁴⁷ The cultural emphasis on mysticism is associated with other-worldly, non-material, or irrational preoccupations.⁴⁴⁸ The rise of mystical movements is explained in terms of psychological distress arising from extreme socio-economic circumstances, it is associated with 'escape' from reality when coping with it seems difficult.⁴⁴⁹ When viewed as a lingering remnant of outmoded traditional culture, the mystical orientation is thought to be fundamentally in conflict with 'modern' life.⁴⁵⁰ These interpretations are current, explicit in criticisms leveled by native critics, and often advanced by foreign scholars. Each position may be justified by tendencies in Javanese practice, but whatever accuracy they have at that level, they are misguided. Mysticism cannot be defined by a philosophical posture, social grouping, or historical influence. Each of those influences movements which express it, but none constitutes a basis for *definition* of mystical movements.

My points do not rest on assumption Sumarah is typical or normative. It is unique, but in the same sense individuals or villages are--each is also embedded in and a reflection of larger patterns. Placed in the context of world movements it is not difficult to identify Sumarah as Javanese, expression of the mystical within it is profoundly related to cultural setting. Sumarah emphasis on intuitive feeling as the entry to the spiritual, is related to Javanese cultural stress on *rasa*. Its relaxed rather than stringently disciplined approach to practice is characteristic of Javanese movements. Sumarah is not just incidentally Javanese. Sumarah emphasis on shift from occult power to emphasis on consciousness is also part of a wider pattern. The national government has kept watch on sects and dealt harshly with millennial or magical currents. This has not meant that the undercurrent of millenarian thought has declined, it has meant that publicly legitimate organisations all, like Sumarah, distinguish consciousness from power as a goal of practice. In this respect, and in formal structure, Sumarah is certainly typical of national patterns.⁴⁵¹ Sumarah may be 'representative'. It became active in umbrella

⁴⁴⁷Many sources could be identified with this and the following but examples will suffice. In this case the associations are like those made by Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Chicago, 1976.

⁴⁴⁸For instance see N Mulder, *Mysticism and Everyday Life ...*, Singapore, 1978, esp pp 111-3.

⁴⁴⁹For example see S Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java*, Kuala Lumpur, 1973.

⁴⁵⁰See Allen Sievers, *The Mystical World of Indonesia*, Baltimore, 1974.

⁴⁵¹Gertz, *Op Cit*, drew attention to the new structure of Javanese mystical movements in the Republician period. He extended his comments in "Religious Change and Social Order in Suharto's Indonesia", *Asia* N 27

organisations in part because other movements felt it could speak for them. Critics point to national pressures influencing the SKK and they moderate the strength of my point, but prominence was also related to the degree leadership articulated views others empathised with.⁴⁵² The most fundamental basis for extension from the case to the context has to do with principles rather than idiosyncracies.

Javanese emphasis on consensus, harmony, and balance is often noted and is related to the agricultural basis of economic life, to rhythms and cycles which have been a preoccupation within all peasant based societies. Within villages stress on harmony is evident in the way village heads are traditionally supposed to have articulated a consensus through the process called *musyawarah-mufakat*. In the Indic courts it was elaborated into the conception that rulers were supposed to maintain cosmic harmony on the basis of their mystical communion with the spirits and deities of subtle realms, on their contact with ancestral and natural forces. In national life this emphasis is evident in continuing sensitivity to *rasa* even in bureaucratic structures and modern offices. Sukarno evoked these concerns explicitly in calls for Guided Democracy and Suharto reaffirmed them in downplaying 'divisive' ideologies.⁴⁵³

In Javanese political culture the moral basis of authority rests on a claim that leadership articulates underlying and perhaps hidden unity, leaders have a moral claim to power to the extent they are attuned to and serving the interest of the collective. To the degree that their role is a result of personal will, ambition, or self-interest (*pamrih* or ego), they do not have a moral right to

(1972). My conclusion that all of the large sects have tended to distinguish consciousness from power is based on fieldwork, including a six month involvement with Pangestu and intermittent but substantial contact with Subud, Sapto Darjo, and others.

⁴⁵²Criticism of Sumarah's role began when it was first contemplated in the late sixties, subsided in the early seventies, and increased again in the late seventies, by which point Sumarah leaders had become dominant within the SKK. Political developments have influenced the SKK both directly and indirectly - for instance Sukarno withdrew from leadership through association with the Sawito affair. Suharto apparently exerted direct pressure, through Golkar, on the SKK meeting at Tawangmangu in late 1979 and this did influence decisions of the SKK. Sumarah's role is now, however, a reflection of outside influences. It is also a reflection of widespread commitment within the group.

⁴⁵³For the best presentation of these ideas, relevant to all of the following discussion, see B Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture", in Holt ed. *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, Ithaca, 1972. On the emphasis on harmony see van der Kroef, "Javanese Messianic Expectations", *CSSH* V 1 (1959-60).

their position.⁴⁵⁴ Precisely this connection underlies the extreme sensitivity of the Suharto regime to criticisms of corruption or claims that the *wahyu* has come to rest elsewhere. Sumarah has been meant to function on the basis of collective witnessing of *Hakiki*, of Truth. In practice deviations are normal and the reality never embodied. Nonetheless the *mechanism* associated with this principle is clear in Sumarah--meditation forms a foundation on which the collective attunes to realities beyond 'opinion'. Correct decisions are seen as having their origins in *attunement* rather than thought. Decisions are not judged on the basis of logical consistency, but on the basis of whether they mesh (*cocok*) with collective feeling, with *rasa*.

It does not matter whether this aspect of Sumarah life is to be explained as a consequence of general Javanist thought and custom or whether it emerged spontaneously from meditation experience. In *either* instance it illustrates dynamics underlying a cultural orientation. In Sumarah's practice, the legitimacy of leadership rests on sensitivity to *rasa* and the degree to which individual thoughts, desires, and will has made way for perception of an objective collective reality. Realisation of the consensus ideal is critically assessed, it is not assumed but depends on confirmation by the collective represented by elders in congress. Leaders cannot assert claims to revelatory knowledge and expect others to follow, if statements are correct others will see relevance in their own terms.

This critical process within consensus decision is directly linked to recognition that positions of responsibility activate a 'higher' logic, meaning that individuals are pressed to subordinate personal perceptions and concerns to those of the collective. Leaders report new levels of spiritual awareness *resulting from* responsibilities thrust on them. At the same time responsibility, or power, is not held to ensure correctness. Leaders have erred, errors have been a source of internal conflict and tension, and those who may have been 'correct' can fall into delusion. A sense of progress is not confused with assumption that events are always moving in the 'right' direction on the surface.

No matter how 'high' the state of consciousness it is held people can 'fall', even that the 'higher' the status of responsibilities and consciousness the more serious the implications of error. Sutadi, Suhardo, and others were able to disagree with Sukino's judgements. Membership questioned and eventually rejected Surono without challenge to ideals. Arymurthy's leadership has been subject to continuous critical comment and it is not assumed that it is perfect. People remain aware the possibility of error is present, they are critical and self-critical rather than complacent and believing. This open posture, rather than complacent conviction that those in power are right, explains a logic of political criticism within the nation, suggesting the ideal of consensus is not

⁴⁵⁴On this point, the relationship between 'power' and 'morality', I am distinguishing my position from that of Anderson (*op Cit*).

merely a concept, but also a principle according to which practice can be gauged.

The Indonesian motto of unity in diversity (*bhinneka tunggal ika*) is closely related to consensual basis of political thought. Sumarah offers insight into the way this ideal translates into practice as well. Some tensions in have been related to the fact leaders sometimes interpreted 'unity' as 'uniformity', imposing consistency at a form level. Yet the organisation has approached genuine unity to the degree it has affirmed, rather than just tolerated, diversity in practice.⁴⁵⁵ The ideal of unity is understood in terms of a mystical sense that it exists *beyond* rather than *within* form levels. Quest for unity is not just a conception of the ideal, but an affirmation of conviction about ground level reality. As a statement of ontological posture (like other such religious ideas) the implication is that insofar as the polity exists in division and conflict it is because people fall short of realising the truth of underlying unity. I am not suggesting these ideals have not been understood, only that they have been viewed too often just as 'ideals' and too rarely as framework for action.

If the critical correlate of notions of consensus and unity is clear, then the case can also be used as a basis for insight into the relationship between mystics (as individuals and as movements) and the body politic. Two features of this relationship have been subject to comment. In the first place rulers have relied on advice from mystics when making decisions. In the second it has been noted, prominently by Schrieke and Anderson, that the surfacing of mystical movements may be a 'barometer' of well being. When the polity is healthy movements are quiescent and the *wahju* rests clearly with the ruler; when dislocations bring millenarianism to the surface then by implication the *wahyu* has left the ruler and is 'floating'.⁴⁵⁶ These observations suggest that in Java general recognition of a relationship between awareness and the state has been framed by mystical notions.

The relationship between mystical gnosis, the mystics who are 'experts' in it, and rulers who guide policy may extend back to reliance of village heads on shamanic sensitivity to proper times for planting. Perhaps it began with dependence of Indic rulers on Brahmanic access to esoteric texts as a basis for the rituals which sustained power. In any case observers comment that Sukarno sought the advice of *dukun* and Suharto's relationship with mystical advisers was initially prominent. Dependence of rulers on guidance by divination or mystics appears first as a reflection of tradition, a persistence of belief in nonrational rather than pragmatic bases for decisions.⁴⁵⁷ Sumarah

⁴⁵⁵I am thinking specifically of the way this issue was resolved in the first years of Arymurthy's DPP (see chapter 8).

⁴⁵⁶See Anderson, *Op Cit*, and BJO Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, V II, The Hague, 1957, pp 78-81.

⁴⁵⁷This position underlies some of the comments in Mulder (*Op Cit*) and Sievers (*Op Cit*) . See Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*, Ringwood, 1971 for

experience suggests mechanisms which may underlie and explain the widespread notion that mystics have access to practical knowledge relevant to those in power.

The 'all-knowing' or clairvoyant quality of traditional rulers is thought to have had practical application. One friend in Salatiga, whose grandparent had been a *bupati* in Sragen, commented that his clairvoyance was a basis for awareness of and sensitivity to the feelings, and potential unrest, of the population within his sphere.⁴⁵⁸ To the degree that rulers were not sensitive to and responsive toward the feelings, as well as economic well being, of followers, they relied on networks of informants and mystical advisers.⁴⁵⁹ As I have commented, I speculate that Zahid Hussein's sensitivity to vibrations, *rasa*, was seen by Suharto as functionally relevant to intelligence work.⁴⁶⁰

In general terms Sumarah practice illustrates a principle which is widely acknowledged. The basis of Sumarah guidance is 'attunement' by *pamong* to the inner condition of others. It is felt guides have a sensitivity to *rasa* that is a basis for objective comment on subtle vibrational states in others, states others may not be aware of in themselves. Similarly members hold the open and receptive emphasis in practice resulted in collective 'mirroring' of national events. Suro's authoritarian tendency is understood not only as parallel to Sukarno's inclinations, not just as a reflection of similar confusion between ego and collective, but as a microcosmic pattern causally related to the macrocosm of national process. Whether as individuals or as groups the conviction is that *mystical practice generates a consciousness which brings wider patterns into sharper focus*, providing a basis for clarification of and insight into them.

These principles are present within other movements. Mystics 'experience' their reality; others, including political leaders 'believe'. This is why rulers sought mystical advice and the public expresses interest in both statements and movement of mystics. In the New Order this suggests an additional reason for public debate about mysticism. No doubt the Suharto government initially fostered mystical revival in part as effort to find a counter to the strength of organized Islam.⁴⁶¹ At the same time it suppressed millenarian movement and sought the sanction of sects to vindicate its position. Sensitivity to popular beliefs related to conviction that mystics may be more attuned to subtle

general discussion of the Suharto ethos. The point is also related to Feith's distinction between pragmatic and charismatic types of politician in Indonesia - the Javanists are at least implicitly not pragmatic.

⁴⁵⁸Conversation with Ibu Effendi in Salatiga during 1971.

⁴⁵⁹S Moertano, *State and Statecraft...*, Ithaca, 1968, p 108.

⁴⁶⁰Zaid Hussein never suggested this directly, but the fact that his function has been to check security in areas the President is about to visit, and that he was 'sent' to mecca in order to 'test' the spiritual value of the haj, strongly suggest this.

⁴⁶¹D Emmerson, *Indonesia's Elite*, Ithaca, 1976, pp 236-8.

currents of objective reality. Thus from a Javanist perspective the insights of mystics and inclinations of their movements are statements about the vibrational dimension of collective life, a dimension present alongside political parties and economic policies.

Many Javanese practices remain wrapped in technical cultural jargon which obscures principles such as these. Even those who believe in and apply these notions may not articulate them as I have. Nevertheless, the Sumarah case allows us to identify principles which underlie notions many people accept. Finally we may revise interpretation of the notion of 'correspondence between microcosm and macrocosm', a key Indic concept alive within Javanese culture. This notion does not simply mean patterns are parallel, with similar dynamics working at different levels. Instead all levels are seen as causally linked to each other.

Mystical practice is seen as activating realisation of forces which connect differing levels directly. Activating consciousness of connection, which is what 'unity' implies, is also thought to result in especially direct responsiveness between microcosm and macrocosm. As is suggested by the precision of 'mirroring' within Sumarah evolution, this should result in clearer perception of actual national patterns. The 'openness' of energy flow between levels is related to the special qualities of insight attributed to mystics and to the idea that mystical movements will 'mirror' the national condition with extreme precision, with an accuracy not matched elsewhere. Finally it is fundamentally related to the linkage between mystical consciousness and power itself.

Whether as rulers, advisers, or neutral people, mystics are thought to have unusual power to influence the feelings and actions of others. Their power is thought to rest not only on greater attunement to objective realities (not just to spirit realism), but also on the fact that their openness results in direct vibrational contact with the inner or spiritual, forces in others. There is both paradox and danger in this. The danger is thought to apply both for individual mystics, who may awaken more power than they can handle, and for society, insofar as mystics may abuse power. In mystical terms consciousness results from transcendence of concern with material gain and the capacity of ego to influence others, practice is justified by the extent to which social and ego forces are put to rest. Yet it is precisely through transcendence of ego, as mystics see it, that the potential for true power arises. The test, as it is constantly underlined within Javanese mystical theory, is in whether the powers which may flow through mystics are directed by ego or by God.

Mysticism and social action are often presented as mutually exclusive. Weber made a special point of associating Asian mysticism, as distinct from European mysticism, with an 'other-worldly' orientation, with lack of concern

with material realities.⁴⁶² In a variety of often romanticised forms this has been linked to stereotypes of a 'spiritual' Asia. In treating contemporary Javanese cultural attitudes, Mulder links them to mysticism and suggests that they do decrease concern with practicalities of social life.⁴⁶³ Modernist Muslim critics of *kebatinan* are explicit in denouncing what appear, from their point of view, to be the impractical and therefore dangerous implications of mystical commitment. Sievers explains the problems of Indonesian economic development in terms of the mystical basis of its culture, suggesting that so long as the cultural commitment to mysticism remains then entry into modern economic life will be impossible.⁴⁶⁴ The idea is common in colloquial understandings. Within cultures which emphasise the mystical there may be a deflection of attention away from resolution of practical problems.

There is some justification for these interpretations, but *only* to the extent that *mysticism as such* is identified with practices which refer to it. As they are not identical it is logically wrong to arrive at conclusions about mysticism on the basis of practices alone.⁴⁶⁵ Confusion of the two can and does lead to fundamental misunderstanding of mysticism: it ignores the primary dictum that the essence of mysticism cannot be identified with its forms. This argument deserves emphasis for practical and political rather than purely academic reasons. In Indonesia this has political significance in the context of debate between modernist Islam and mystics. The point is little different from one modernist Muslims make in defending their identity. Muslims are in the process of 'modernising' and an element within the process is effort to disassociate from the 'deviations' and 'abuses' of social practice. They do not identify with the actions of all of those who call themselves 'Muslim'.

Within Sumarah commitment to mystical quest was experienced as *convergent* with active revolutionary struggle. Action, even in a military context, was not viewed as contradictory with practice. Quite the opposite, practice was seen as the basis for total commitment to action. Mystical interest arose not so much because fear led people to seek 'alternative realities', but because people looked for ways of coping with the intensity of reality. Sumarah guides often note misconception that 'surrender' means 'fatalism' or 'passivity' (the 'wrong' surrender is '*sumarah geledung*'). As they point out, the '*sumarah*' does not mean passivity except that of *ego*. To those with no sense of existence beyond ego realities, this naturally appears to mean *total* passivity as they cannot

⁴⁶²See note #2 chapter 5.

⁴⁶³Mulder, *Op Cit*, pp 93-98, 111.

⁴⁶⁴*Op Cit*, pp 301-2, 316-8.

⁴⁶⁵My sense, as I have tried to suggest throughout this study, is that actual practices are always a 'parody' or distortion of the ideal. I am not suggesting here that 'mysticism as such' exists except as an ideal, but I believe it makes considerable difference to conceptually distinguish between ideals and practices.

conceive (even many who 'believe' in God cannot) that when ego surrenders there is anything left to act. In Sumarah however, ego surrender is precisely what allows total and attuned action. It sets the basis for especially effective action because then it is 'God' or life energy that acts, not the more restricted powers of ego.

Within Sumarah this understanding only grows gradually and all members see themselves as falling short. At the same time the 'trajectories' of experience suggest that mental confusion on this point is greater in the early stages. In the early phase of Sumarah, and for most beginning members, practice does appear to *preclude* thinking and acting. Only later, as practice approaches the ideal of union and total surrender, does meditation become continuous with thought and social action. In any case it is clear the Sumarah that the ideal and essence of its practice is a form of surrender which *results* in harmonised social action. Daydreaming, fatalism, passivity, or irrationality may be qualities of many, within Sumarah, who think of themselves as mystics, but they are not cultivated as either objects or by-products of practice.

This same distinction between forms and essence, or principles of mysticism, suggests a basis for reassessing relationship between mysticism and tradition. There has been a tendency to associate mysticism with Indic historical influence and identify contemporary manifestations with court oriented groups. Geertz does so by associating mysticism with the *priyayi*. Although he does mention Permai as an '*abangan*' sect, he follows Weber in characterising peasants as 'magical' and only the gentry as 'mystical'.⁴⁶⁶ Javanese, even mystics among them, do associate mysticism with the greatness of Majapahit. Like scholarly commentators they may identify mysticism with historical phases and see contemporary movements as a revival.

This point is relevant to popular and academic interpretation and to the political issue of whether the sects can be identified with Islam through association with the *walisanga* in folk history. The orthodox Islamic position is that the sects originated from heresies within Islam which were partly a consequence of accommodation by Islam to Indic Javanese tradition. From that point of view they are viewed as fragments of Islamic community - as 'sects' in the denominational connotation of that term. The logic of the Islamic position is that as the sects represent persistence of traditional heresies, they need to be re-educated through the contemporary insights of modernised Islam.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁶see Gertz, *The Religion of Java, Op Cit*, parts one and three.

⁴⁶⁷B J Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, The Hague, 1971 outlines the recent Muslim attitude. See Djumali Kertorahardjo, *Agama dan Aliran Kebathinan di Indonesia*, Jakarta, 1972 and works by Hamka and Rasjidi for the Islamic statements of view.

For their part Javanists have felt that there has been a continuity of mystical commitment linking all stages of their history, they do not identify themselves fundamentally with tradition. Instead they represent, in their terms, commitment to the mystical or inner dimension which exists across historical and cultural boundaries. Insofar as mysticism is seen in these terms then no matter how it may have interpenetrated with historical conditions and cultural forms it remains independent of them. Within the specific context of contemporary mysticism the implication of this perspective is that they are not identified with 'tradition' and commitment is not defined by either Indic cosmology or Islamic doctrine--it is simply mystical, a commitment to the inner, vertical, or spiritual dimension of religious life.

Insofar as the Javanese mystical position is reflected in practice, it is related to the 'modernisation' taking place within the sphere of mystical movements. This aspect of contemporary Javanese mysticism is sometimes noted, but its implications are rarely understood. Commitment to adaptation in the modern context is a primary theme of movements such as Pongestu and Subud and it evokes mention in other movements. Leaders, even in traditionally cast movements associated with Semar, emphasise what they see as special modern qualities of practice. Professions of commitment to modernity are one thing, the substance of change may be another.⁴⁶⁸

However if we review the pattern of changes within Sumarah it is evident that adjustments to national changes in the social context have been profound and just like those taking place in other quarters. The theme of commitment to adaptation has been pervasive within internal discussions; actual changes in form, which do reflect wider patterns of change, have been substantial. In Sumarah, then, the identity of mysticism is not associated with a particular form, forms adapted to modern situations. Although the degree of change within Sumarah may not be typical of other movements, the point can be made in general terms. Javanese mysticism may have evolved from tradition, but contemporary movements within it are not defined by that tradition.

Yet another implication, closely linked to my last point, bears emphasis. Hadiwijono and scholars whose work centres on texts, in the philological tradition, identify mysticism by its supposed roots in Indic philosophy.⁴⁶⁹ Textual bases of study naturally lend themselves to a philosophical and

⁴⁶⁸I was especially struck when the 'modernity' of practice was stressed by a Solonese leader within the Semar group while we were both at Sendang Semanggi, the sacred spring south of Yogya, in February 1974 - the context was one of very traditional forms of meditation, but he stressed their technical neutrality.

⁴⁶⁹H Hadiwijono, *Man in the Present Javanese Mysticism*, Amsterdam, 1967, p 248 and throughout his argument.

conceptual basis for defining the subject. Geertz associated mysticism with the *priyayi* cultural types and by implication, though less forcefully, with the *priyayi* social group. Definition of Javanese mysticism according to the *idea* common within it, or in terms of the social groupings which are most inclined toward it, does lead to misunderstanding.

Definition of Sumarah in terms of Indic philosophy could only be sustained on the circular basis of assertion that the mystical position is peculiarly Indic. I believe that Hadiwijono, like Zaehner, operates on this circularity.⁴⁷⁰ There are of course Indic ideas and orientations within Sumarah--the idea of karma, of the chakras, of reincarnation, and of a unity underlying the diversity of religious life. However presence of those terms, and of a few Buddhists who prefer a monistic framework, would have to be countered by observation that fundamental terms within the organisation are Islamic--beginning with *sujud* as a term for the practice, the nine realms of Sukino's experience, and not least the emphasis on God and surrender in dualistic terms. The term '*sumarah*' essentially means in Javanese what '*islam*' means in Arabic. The language of practice shows distinct preference for Islamic as opposed to Indic terms and most members remain suspicious of terms such as *semadi*, many even underlining qualification on the concept of union. On balance the terminology and conceptualisation of Sumarah practice is Islamic, not Indic.

Assessing Sumarah sociologically we could stretch to place leadership within Geertz's *priyayi*. But in characterising the leadership that way the understanding of '*priyayi*' would have to be that of Koentjaraningrat rather than Geertz--both Islamic/*santric* and Javanist/*abangan* components are clear within it.⁴⁷¹ Many of leaders are from strongly Islamic backgrounds: Kyai Abdulhamid in Madiun and Sujadi in Ponorogo representing traditionally framed village of NU elements, Sichlan and Bariunhartono and others having experienced Muhammadiyah schooling, and others, such as the Laweyan group in Solo, having a strong Islamic flavor. The predominantly *priyayi* composition of Sumarah leadership bears further qualification. Leadership includes non-Javanese, for example Ali Umar in Jakarta, and a few Chinese Indonesians. To identify the leadership as '*priyayi*' we have to stretch that term to include the upper rungs of the village hierarchy. The social origins of Sukino, Suhardo, and other leaders are not *priyayi*. If they gained claim to that status it was *through* their positions of leadership, not prior.

If the membership as a whole is taken into consideration, it is more difficult to identify Sumarah as *priyayi*. Instead we find that membership covers the spectrum of social groups. Statistics are inadequate for detailed analysis. The proportion of *priyayi* is larger than that of the *priyayi* as a class within the

⁴⁷⁰I am referring to Zaehner's argument in *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*, NY, 1969, pp 19-20, 109.

⁴⁷¹Koentjaraningrat in *Majalah Ilmu Sastra Indonesia* V 1 N 2 (1963).

population, but the majority of membership would not be *priyayi*. Rural following in East Java, Central Java and Yogya are substantial, numbering in the thousands and more than balancing the largely *priyayi* urban membership. My conclusion is that Sumarah membership is a slightly askew cross section of major Javanese groups (including Chinese). It is *priyayi* only in the sense the whole society is, as leadership is or becomes identified with that class. It would be inaccurate to identify Sumarah as a *priyayi* organisation.

Whether in terms of culture or social composition it would not make sense to overemphasise the Indic and *priyayi* aspects of Sumarah. Neither its conceptual language nor its social composition allow clear definition in those terms - it can be defined as Indic or *priyayi* only on a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* basis. As in many other Javanese movements the membership has been drawn from extremely varied, though of course not random, backgrounds. The fact that they come to share common ideas through participation in a group is not a basis for assumption that their cultural or social conditioning was uniform. Within the framework of Geertz's trichotomy, at least as it has been applied, significant components of Sumarah membership are *santri* in origin (they would accept that the fact of membership excludes that identification in the end).

Because Islam is a textually based religion it naturally identifies itself and therefore tends to categorise others in doctrinal terms. Scholars who base their works on texts are inclined to do the same. Focus on cultural systems and social structures leads to somewhat different, but very often convergent, categorisation. As a result it is natural and logical that Indonesians and academics have defined tension between Islam and Javanism in 'cultural' and 'social' terms, in terms of historical influences. With a social frame of reference this categorisation makes sense. From the mystical perspective the basis of tension does not lie in those differences.

Sumarah, for instance, defines itself simply with reference to mystical practice, not by social status or ideological identification. Most members honestly believe that they are Muslim, though in saying so they will often qualify that by affirmation that they are 'not fanatical'. It sees its difference with modern scripturalist Islam as a contrast of practice rather than doctrinal belief, as a matter of whether beliefs are simply held or also practiced. Together with all of the Javanese mystical movements it sees itself as being committed to practicing what others merely believe. From the standpoint of the movement this is simply to emphasise the *vertical axis* of spiritual life, that of depth and inner realisation, rather than the horizontal, of culturally based doctrine or socially oriented ritual. From a mystical perspective it appears those who are opposed cannot distinguish, as they do, between literal material forms and the essence which works through them. As they see it any association in rigid terms of the absolute with set forms is materialism, even if applied in the religious sphere.

The primacy of Javanist mystical emphasis on distinction between spiritual and material, *batin* and *lahir*, vertical and horizontal, or mystical and non-mystical can be related back to categorisation of Javanese social groups and interpretation of religious tensions. If Geertz's use of the terms *abangan*, *santri*, and *priyayi* is understood simply as a reference to 'cultural types' rather than one to social groups, then the terms can be applied *within* the sphere of Javanese mysticism as easily as to the society as a whole.⁴⁷² Although I have rejected association of mysticism with *priyayi*, in cultural or social terms, I am not proposing substitution of 'Islam and Javanism'. From the perspective of Javanese mystics another basis of distinction presents itself: the contrast between mystic and non-mystic. This overlaps with Islamic/Javanist divide, but its basis is distinctly in contrast.⁴⁷³ The degree of overlap means that for social analysis of Javanese groupings my point is relevant only insofar as it clarifies the mystical perspective within them--and that concern remains marginal to most discussions. However my point has great significance to understanding Javanese mysticism.

Illustration may help. All of Geertz's cultural types are to be found within Sumarah, not as exceptions to a dominant pattern, but as major elements. Animistic, Indic, Islamic, and modern patterns of thought are substantially represented. Prior to Sumarah involvement members had been significantly shaped by village spirit beliefs, court traditions, Islamic doctrines, and Dutch schools. If we began by excluding, for the moment, the fact of mystical orientation, we could say that elements of *abangan*, *santri*, and *priyayi* are all present. Within my discussion of Sumarah I have actively referred to the relevance of spirit beliefs. I have suggested that Sukino's experience was shaped by Indic and Islamic cult involvements. The same line can be traced within the evolution of the collective: a movement from village and court based traditional practices through Islamic styled emphasis on faith to modern stress on non-technical language and integration of spirituality with everyday life. In historical, cultural, or social terms all of the elements of the Javanese context are present within the microcosm of group experience.

The point becomes stronger if the whole world of the sects is considered. It would be possible and useful to build a typology of movements on the basis of shamanic, Indic, and Sufi orientations. My point is that in Javanese mysticism we find all of the historical influences, cultural orientations, and social

⁴⁷²I understand this to be Geertz's original intention--he is well guarded in his conclusions about the interplay between types, but unfortunately the impact of his layout and presentation is overwhelmingly otherwise and has led to unintended reification.

⁴⁷³My point is that whatever the degree of coincidence between these two bases of distinction, even if it were 100%, mine is dependent on practice--meaning the way people *relate* to social and cultural forms, not on the *structure* of the forms.

groupings present within the society as a whole.⁴⁷⁴ The fact that all of these elements are present confirms the danger of associating it exclusively with roots in a particular period, culture, or class. This observation is significant to effort to place mysticism in Javanese society.

Objective evidence converges, on this point at least, with the prominence mystics themselves give to simple distinction between mystical and non-mystical, between spiritual and material bases for 'self-definition'. From the standpoint of those who belong within it, Javanese mysticism belongs to no particular time or place, it is as easily modern as traditional, as often activist as quietist. In the end it finds its identity primarily through its concern with a dimension which exists within human life in all times, cultures, and religious systems--whether Indic, Islamic, or modern. No single doctrinal position or social action can define it. Ultimately it is defined only by orientation toward an awareness of something which cannot be identified with any form.

toward spiritual history

It should be no surprise that the definition of mysticism as practice and experience has relevance to understanding of Javanese movements which define themselves in terms of it. Yet often, concerned with more concrete categories of social and cultural life, we lose sight of the life within them, forgetting that our subject is human rather than abstract. If the natural sciences can press toward understanding of biological life and energy, in their relation to chemical and atomic process, then the social sciences can work toward comprehension of human experience in relation to the social and cultural structures which mediate it. If the substance of life, energy, and experience remain elusive, even evading clear definition, that is no reason to ignore their centrality. So in drawing attention to the significance of the experiential dimension within mystical movements I am not simply affirming what appears to be the central issue from within them, but also attempting to relate experience to the social and cultural world.

In speaking of the relevance of consciousness and experience in the context of Javanese mystical movements I am also working toward understanding of their place within history. Though I cannot present a

⁴⁷⁴I have suggested this implicitly by the way I outlined the patterns of traditional Javanese mystical practice in chapter 21, suggesting in doing so that within each cultural complex there is a different primary form for mystical practice. In the contemporary period very much the same outline would apply--the hermitage pattern still exists, some sects are distinctly Indic in style, some remain thoroughly Sufi (even apart from those which identify themselves as such), and alongside those there is a wide range of combinations, some of which have a very 'secular' and modern flavour (for instance Orhiba).

systematic theory on this front, I can end by suggesting the way Javanese mystics interpret interaction between their spiritual experience and historical setting. In outlining this image I aim only to present a 'mythic' image, a paradigm through which the process can be (and by mystics is) viewed. I am not attempting to establish the validity of this paradigm. In this instance the image has clearly taken shape within me through interaction with the field of my 'research'--my perspective converges with that of my subject and in my presentation I will not distinguish between them. I will note, however, that this is only *my* version of the Javanese mystical perspective. Essentials have been confirmed, but in this form the image cannot be taken as 'official'.⁴⁷⁵

I believe this image has a place within the ongoing effort to develop an 'autonomous' and indigenous framework for interpreting Indonesian history. Since the Second World War, and paralleling the process of nationalism, Western scholarship has been concerned with releasing the blinders of colonial historiography. It has been generally accepted that as historians we need to both perceive and present the internal, indigenous perspective. It is acknowledged that history is constantly rewritten, that it is adjusted to the times. It is understood that the movement toward a 'universal history' requires an intellectual base beyond the givens of any specific culture. Nevertheless it is also clear that biases are deep rooted, reflecting profound cultural conditioning rather than just misguided distortion. Our effort to interpret other cultures properly demands awareness of the extent to which we have been shaped by our own.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁵In my own terms I have been consistently trying to 'make sense' out of the often esoteric terminology of millenarian thought. I believe the patterns I am talking about here, in at least relatively tame language, can be taken as a 'modernised' interpretation of the same historical image presented in Javanese terms within millenarian frameworks. I must hasten to add, that as I am using the term 'millenarian' here it need not imply the "ultimate end" often associated with it.

⁴⁷⁶DGE Hall's magnum opus, *A History of Southeast Asia*, London, 1955, speaks to this issue; but here I am referring most specifically to JRW Smail, "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia", *JSEAH* V 2 N 2 (1961) and H Benda, "The Structure of Southeast Asian History", *JSEAH* V 3 N 1 (1962). The parallelism between movements in scholarship and within Indonesian history is remarkable. Van Leur began the enterprise in the thirties, just as nationalism matured, Kahin mirrored the process of political independence, Geertz helped connect political to social process (just as Guided Democracy came), the Anderson pushed toward cultural images animating the social groups (as the New Order came). I see my own focus on kebatinan, on the spiritual dimension, as a progression along the same line, also reflecting the prominence of my subject in recent times. To foreshadow, the image

From the perspective of Javanese mysticism, presentation of the indigenous framework (even in speaking of the society as a whole, not just of mysticism within it) requires more than attention to local events and people or the use of indigenous sources. From their point of view it is clear that even some indigenous scholars, who claim to fulfil the demands of 'autonomous' history, are betrayed by the use of 'foreign' cultural lenses. Presenting history, even if here only as a paradigmatic image, can be on indigenous terms independently of the cultural origins of the author. Being Javanese does not ensure use of indigenous frameworks, being Western does not preclude it. I believe, and report it here only as belief, that the study of Javanese mysticism in the terms of my approach here does more than add to our accumulation of information about elements of Javanese culture.

It also provides a gateway to awareness of it from within. From the Javanese mystical perspective neither life nor history can be seen only as a progression of material forms. So long as history is presented as a treatment of abstractions about human relationships, so long as it touches only the 'outer forms', then it reflects the materialistic mentality which dominates the Western world. When indigenous scholars present history exclusively in the framework of Western social science, it appears then as though they have based themselves on foreign ground. Even though the mystics know they are only an element within their society, they believe that mystical ontology underlies Javanist culture as a whole, that the spiritual perspective is fundamental within indigenous historiography.⁴⁷⁷

This does not mean that Javanists favour casting aside the rigours of critical scholarship in favour of hazy myths. But if concern with rigour leads to exclusion of subjects which are elusive, then scholarship has let its tools become barriers to rather than agents for understanding. Mystical principles do not exclude concern with economic or political life. Like the physical body which houses individual life, social forms are seen as vehicles--as the cosmic battleground, Kurukshetra in the *wayang*, upon which spiritual and material forces dance, as the space which provides a home for spirit. Javanese mystics, in particular, constantly emphasise *balance* of the spiritual and material, inner and outer, *batin* and *lahir*. Their practices are notable, in contrast with those of many mystical traditions, for emphasis on activity within rather than isolation from and rejection of the routines of social life. Finally, in the context of

of 'unwinding' I present here, also relates directly, in my terms, to Benda's conclusion and projection--that Southeast Asian history would flow increasingly according to the most deeply laid channels.

⁴⁷⁷See Berg in Soedjatmoko ed, *Indonesian Historiography*, Ithaca, 1965 and Zoetmulder, *Kalangwan*, The Hague, 1974--the cosmological preoccupation of traditional Javanese court histories are often noted so it does seem reasonable for contemporary mystics to assert that the spiritual has been fundamental to Javanese historiography.

mystical union all dualities dissolve, the boundaries which distinguish between material and spiritual disappear and they appear not as opposites, but as transmutations of each other.

From the mystical perspective the Indonesian national process is a macrocosmic version of the individual spiritual journey. The vision is holistic. Just as individuals need the body, food to sustain it, and language to relate to others; the nation needs economic health, a culture harmonised to its world situation, and modern institutional forms. But at the same time the nation, like the individual, is a vehicle of life, it has a spirit as well as a body. From the mystical perspective the national revolutionary process has been as much a struggle to define and realise the collective spirit as it has been to achieve economic well being and political independence. The significance of the spiritual within the national process is equivalent to its significance for individuals--only it can resolve the ultimate issue of meaning. Javanese mystics, insofar as they are concerned with national events, see themselves as speaking for the heart, as representing the spiritual dimension within the body politic.

As they see it their task is to lead others toward a sense of national being and purpose which is not rigid and uniform, which is not defined by the crystalline structure of a religious dogma, political ideology, or economic model. To the extent that any material or cultural construct defines the nation, then from the mystical point of view people will remain alienated from the absolute ground and meaning of life. For them it appears that no form can fully convey the essence of what to them is God. The path to realisation of that essence, nationally as well as individually, is as varied as people are, the core is beyond form. When social life is made rigidly uniform, under any pretext, or meaning is attached to literal orthodoxies (whether religious or political), then there is victory of form over essence, the spiritual meaning and fulfilment of life is subordinated to alienating material forms.

Only a few mystics articulate this perspective explicitly, not many Javanese conceive of even Javanist commitment in these terms. However the sense of a spiritual dimension within contemporary history is strong within the population, it is not just the preoccupation of religious and spiritual elites. This is one of the reasons that religious issues have been so strong within politics. From the orthodox Islamic point of view their goal is to define the polity in Muslim terms, to shape politics and society according to religious teachings. From their perspective there is no doubt that politics is simply a vehicle for a religious purpose. Even beyond the sphere of practicing mystics and committed Muslims, active belief in God and sensitivity to the intuitive, to the spiritual, is the *norm*. The Indonesian national commitment to belief in one God is nowhere taken so lightly as the similar American affirmation.

It is only against this background, of genuine popular concern with the spiritual dimension, that we can make sense of the significance, within the history of modern Indonesia, of debates about national personality, about what

is called '*kepribadian nasional*'. Throughout the period since 1945 public debate about national personality has been extremely active. These have centred on issues such as interpretation of the Pancasila, of the national motto (of unity in diversity), and of the Jakarta Charter and the relationship between Islam and the state. For all but a small minority of genuinely secular modernists these debates are not simply symbolic--they centre on a national spirit which is palpable even if it remains elusive. Westerners naturally interpret these debates as symbolic, discussion of the Pancasila seems to them to be filled with sterile slogans, and affirmations that the national goal is balance of spiritual and material are treated as cliché (if mentioned). In fact balance is actively conceived as a national goal, even if that is phrased in terms of stereotyped Western materialism and Javanese spirituality (as it very often is). This balance is a point of reference for national debate and political decisions. The ideal, even as represented nationally within *kebatinan*, is not one sided spirituality or Javanese cultural renaissance, but balance of all dimensions and consciousness beyond form.

Interpreting Indonesian history from this perspective, as Javanese mystics do, takes us beyond exclusive preoccupation with economics or politics, even beyond attention to the power of culture and the significance of social alignments. As Javanists see it, through the cycles of history first Indic, then Islamic, and now modern forces have each overlaid an indigenous spiritual identity which has remained separate from them. Each of these forces has worked to recast society, remaking it in what seems to them to be a foreign mold. From the Javanist perspective it seems that their autonomous identity was strong enough to meet, to reach accommodation with, the Indic challenge. As a result they believe that in the final stages of the classical era, in Majapahit, their guardian spirit was incarnated again, that as Javanese they could be truly themselves. Then Islamic culture presented another challenge and in Javanist terms the Mataram period was a long process of striving for renewed synthesis. That process appears to them to have been cut short and now stalemated by the complications of modernity.

If the spiral of history leading toward the present involved progressively higher levels of synthesis between indigenous and imported patterns, then the revolution was truly a zero point and the period since has been an unwinding. If history is a matter of the whole being then it involves the spirit which is its heart as well as the society which is its body. Viewed from the social, political, and economic perspectives, recent Indonesian developments present us with grim images of disintegration, authoritarianism, and stagnation. There can be no doubt that Indonesians both experience and are concerned with all of those. At the same time, however, the period since the revolution has witnessed the reassertion of 'primal' indigenous patterns and identity. On the one hand there is a trajectory of increasing penetration of the forces which bind Indonesia within the growing global network; on the other hand there is a millenarian counterthrust of primal tradition, of a tradition within which Javanese mystics see themselves as speaking for the heart.

Immediately following the zero point of the revolution the forces of modernity and Islam attempted to define the national being. Parliamentary Democracy was adopted as the model for government, the most thoroughly Westernised Indonesians were dominant within it, and popular Islamic movements challenged even the modernist Muslims who often had power. Under Sukarno's Guided Democracy these forces were suppressed and the Indic Javanese pattern came to the fore. Finally Suharto's New Order brought the peasant ethos of spirit cults into a paradoxical play with multinational capitalism. The two trajectories, growing global integration and resurgence of indigenous identity, combine to generate the extraordinary pressures under which Indonesians labour.

Javanese mystics see themselves as represent an ageless and timeless spiritual commitment. They believe that their tradition is rooted in the origins of Javanese ethnic identity, that throughout history other forces have been imposing themselves on, subordinating, indigenous spiritual identity. Because they feel that mysticism lay at the heart of their own traditional culture, they feel it is natural that Javanism should express itself both indirectly, through its increasing visibility as an influence on those in power, and also directly, through the rise of new mystical movements which assert autonomous and indigenous, rather than derivative or foreign, roots. Traditionally mysticism was fused with culture and consciousness was identified by its reflection in caste, status, and power. Now mysticism finds increasingly distinct identity and in its expression consciousness is distinguished from the forms which convey it. As within the context of the classical states, despite the changes in and modernisation of the forms they work through, despite the new relationships with society implied, Javanese mystics still feel that they represent the spiritual dimension of the body politic, that they speak as the heart of the nation.

the politics of deployment of attention in the body

There are a number of ways in which attending to the practical domain of meditation inverts standard images of the relationship between Islam and Javanism. A primary theme within the history of Sumarah has been effort to reorient people away from involvement with and dependence on the ancestral spirit kingdoms. According to Sukino's explanation when the *Wahyu Sumarah*, the "Sumarah Revelation", was received there were offers of assistance from the spirit of Senopati. In the late 1940s young members in Yogya enlisted spirit armies for the revolution until Sukino vigorously rejected this strategy. In repudiating such links Sumarah was breaking with the pattern embedded in and illustrated by Diponegoro's style of Javanist Islam. When Dr Surono, the leader of the movement from 1950 to 1966, began to extend Sumarah through conversion of the spirit realms, the movement rejected his leadership. Informants from the strongly Islamic areas of Gresik, Demak and Ponorogo all told me stories of opposition to Sumarah based precisely on magical practices

rooted in local Islamic saint cults which focussed on the *Wali*.⁴⁷⁸ What was normatively perceived as "Islam" was inwardly magical and spirit bound; while Sumarah, normatively perceived as a Javanist heresy, was inwardly committed to the submission to God which Islam is supposed to represent.

Extending this suggestion it is possible to identify a widespread current of inner Islamization within Javanism. The Subud movement is, like Sumarah, explicitly devoted to cultivation of an inner condition of total surrender to God. Its terminology is more pervasively and overtly Islamic than that of Sumarah. The Sapta Darma movement terms its practice "*sujud*" and its practice can be seen as a modified, tantric tinged, variant of the normal Islamic prayer. Ibu Pandji, a leader of the Pangestu movement, explained that their "*panembah*" (prayer) could not be termed either "*semadi*" or "*meditasi*" because both those terms implied void rather than God centredness. Monotheistic senses of the spiritual, deriving essentially from Islam, have penetrated profoundly into popular consciousness. Even if the *wayang* mythology remains a more active frame of discourse than the *Koran*, the first and primary pillar of the faith has taken very firm hold.⁴⁷⁹ As mentioned already, folk healers, the same *dukun* who are associated with residual animism, invariably assert both that their power to heal comes from God and that they remain conscious when transmitting messages from spirits--in the latter bowing to Islamic distaste for practices of possession. The emblematic imagery of Kalijaga's conversion has been used to argue that nothing really changed, but perhaps what did change was in "a reorientation on an inner plane". The nature of inner orientations has been a domain of contention along with disputes about social practices and cultural concepts.

Attunement to the sliding meaning of the term Islam, especially to the fact that shifts in that dimension of meaning constitute a key aspect within historical process, provides entry to reassessment of Islamization in this context, especially in its relation to mysticism. Even in orthodox terms Islam is not just a doctrinal and ritual system, as registered through religious texts and social process. Beyond the social realm, where ritual defines religion in terms conventional consciousness grasps easily, Islam can be understood as a mode of cultural discourse. This is clearest in Gilson's imaginative work, where it is evident that "Islam" can refer to conventions of conceptualisation and practice beyond those explicitly articulated by people, even experts, who call themselves "Muslim".⁴⁸⁰ Islam also comprises, and this is in addition to the discursive domains Gilson highlights, characteristic orientations of attitude and attention

⁴⁷⁸ This complex is treated in J. Fox, "Ziarah Visits to the Tombs of the Wali, The Founders of Islam on Java" in M. C. Ricklefs (ed.), *Islam in the Indonesian Social Context* (Melbourne 1990).

⁴⁷⁹ This assessment, that the *wayang* still has predominance, is suggested in M.C. Ricklefs, "Six Centuries of Islamization..." (*op. Cit.*).

⁴⁸⁰ M. Gilson, *Recognizing Islam* (London & Canberra 1983).

within individual spiritual practice and these can become clear in the context of meditation practices.

Scholars more easily and thus habitually engage the social and cultural faces of mysticism. In those domains it appears as "styles of movement", "characteristics of ideology", or as philosophy. In its own terms, as the inner aspect of religious life, mysticism refers in the first instance to precisely the domains of experiential spiritual knowledge which cannot be definitively mapped by these phenomenologically accessible expressions. Classically terms such as "gnosis", in the Javanese context *nglemu*, refer quite precisely to knowledge of and through the whole body rather than to that which is mediated by intellect in isolation. This aspect of spirituality is recognised clearly by many of those who explore the perennial philosophies, as it is by Needleman for example.⁴⁸¹ I mention this only to recall what is well established, that in dealing with the inner aspects of religious knowledge we always engage issues, zones, aspects or functions, among the fields of awareness accessible through the body, other than intellect. Thus Rosaldo's exploration of *liget*, "the knowledge of the heart" among the Ilongot in northern Luzon, suggests, as I have in commenting on *rasa* in Java, that cultural difference involves differential activation of aspects of awareness which centre in different portions of the body.⁴⁸²

Cultural difference is thus not merely an issue of translation within a single plane. On the plane designated as "ideological" translators may wrestle with mapping cognates in terms of the ways ideas and terms are situated in fields of meaning defined by what are, as Derrida has it, continually shifting linguistic constellations. But difference is also amplified by divergent deployment of attention; as it is channelled through different senses such as sight, sound, touch, intuition; and by differential consciousness of messages registered in different parts of the body. If mental constructions dominate our sense of difference that reflects the micro-ecology of scholarly life in its modern context--mental functions are commonly alienated, separated within our experience as intellectuals, from the fields of other cognitive functions. Traditional esotericism, in all classical cultures framed by recognition of correspondences between micocosm and macrocosm, construed mentation as one function among many and the highest consciousness as one which integrated diverse functions.⁴⁸³ Intellect has always been centrally positioned but never, until the Enlightenment, considered as autonomous in the way we are now accustomed to assume it is.

⁴⁸¹ J. Needleman, *A Sense of the Cosmos* (New York 1975).

⁴⁸² M. Rosaldo, *Knowledge and Passion* (Cambridge 1980); Stange, "The Logic of Rasa..." (*Op. Cit.*).

⁴⁸³ A. Wayman, "The Human Body as a Microcosm in India, Greek Cosmology and Sixteenth Century Europe", *History of Religions* Vol 22 No 2 (1982).

I refer to these issues suggestively, to provoke consideration and establish the wider context of the approach to religious history I attempt. If differences between cultures involve shifts in prioritisation of different aspects within the fields of awareness accessible to human beings, so also do changes through time. If we attend to the inner spheres which all religions prioritise in personal practices the history of religions, a field we may usefully gloss as "transformations in access to the real", is usefully redirected.⁴⁸⁴ It becomes a history not only of shifts and substitutions in the phenomenological realms of social organisation or ideological image but also of the way attention is directed within the domain of individual psychic experience. This suggestion resonates with Weberian emphasis on shifting value orientations and cultural ethos, as those affect social actions, but my priority is quite different. It lies with the history of consciousness rather than the evolution of societies. The ethnoscience movement in anthropology drew attention to cultures as systems of knowledge; recently textual analysis and postmodernism stress the autonomous and plural modes of discourse within different cultures and times and the constraints operating on our own theorising. As recent Western theorising is broaching this territory we can expect extended resonances within the history of religion.⁴⁸⁵ The time is right to capitalise on new sources of insight.

Those domains are mapped more richly by the esoteric psychologies of Sufism, Taoism or Tantra than by our modern psychologies. Although heretical wings of modern theorising, such as Jungian or humanistic psychology, do consider those traditional models seriously, they take them more as sources of data than as theoretical wellspring. My suggestion is that such theories are potentially contributions to general knowledge in theoretical as well as empirical terms. So Sanskrit *rasa* theory, as appropriated by Javanese mystics, can be a critical underlying working tool. Rhetorically such a stance is accepted in postmodernist circles, in terms of normative scholarly practices it remains eccentric. But if we view non-Western systems exclusively as objects, a habit deeply ingrained in scholarship, we are party to an established cultural imperialism few would defend explicitly. Related issues have been widely noted and debated in the wake of Said's book *Orientalism*.⁴⁸⁶

Recognising an issue is different from putting it to rest and if cultural imperialism and ethnocentrism are macrocosmic analogues to the ego structures we experience individually, then intellectual liberation is analogous to

⁴⁸⁴ This gloss resonates with C. Geertz's phrasing of changes in, *Islam Observed* (Chicago 1972), as the final chapter of that book is "The Struggle for the Real".

⁴⁸⁵ Extended evidence of coinvergent thinking is present a recent and excellent three volume collection of writings, edited by M. Feher, *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* (New York 1989).

⁴⁸⁶ E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York 1978).

practices of spiritual purification. Rather than cathartic resolution, we must expect continuous process in both domains. In the context of studies of Java I have aimed to highlight a dimension of change which is normally left out of view, often excluded as unknowable. I can neither relate inner shifts to the overall religious history of Java nor conclusively establish the direction of contemporary change. This excursion is nevertheless worthwhile if the viability of intellectually articulating insight into this domain is established, if it provokes consideration of "deployment of attention within the body", as a sphere of contention and change within religious history.

I. FIELD JOURNAL

Fieldwork was carried out mainly in the period between January 1971 and February 1974, during which I was continuously in Java. It has been supplemented and updated since then by return visits of one month each in July 1976, July 1978 and July 1980. During 1971 and 1972 field research was a part-time activity; the most intensive period of research was 1973 and the most important material for the thesis was collected during that year.

Throughout the period of fieldwork I kept my notes in the form of a journal. This has taken the form of ten bound volumes of two hundred pages each. Generally, during conversations or interviews I did not take notes, nor did I use mechanical aids such as tape-recorders. Instead I would jot down specific items such as names or dates, but beyond that I simply participated in conversation which did not take a question and answer form. As soon as I was by myself, after the encounter, I would write down the topics covered, in the order in which they had arisen. Then, usually within a few days, I would use those notes and work from memory to reconstruct the entire conversation, in essay form, within my bound notebooks.

The material in my journals is not simply a record of information gleaned from conversations. In the early phases of fieldwork much of the content takes the form of personal reflections and observations, comments on the environment, self-critical analysis of the difficulties I had relating to it, and reports of conversation relevant to the research. At the same time I also experimented with ways of formulating my understanding, constantly refining and reworking thoughts throughout the research. In the second year most of my notes cover practice within meditation sessions, rather than historical aspects of Javanese mysticism. In the third year, and through natural evolution on my part (combined with the increasing pressure of time!), the content became much more objective, factual and relevant to the immediate subject of the thesis. The most intensive period of collecting narratives came during trips outside of Solo which took place throughout 1973. While in Solo my concentration generally fell on the practical aspects of Sumarah, on activity as an interpreter and participant. Approximately 700 pages of notes are directly relevant to this thesis; the rest to other, future, projects.

Once the period of writing began I began by rereading and indexing the journals. I indexed them by subject, informant, time-periods and location (the same item appearing often under each heading). While writing I have used the index to find material relevant to the sections I have been working on. Whenever possible I have checked narratives against documents, referring to the latter in notes.

II. SUMARAH DOCUMENTS

There are very few published sources on Sumarah and these take the form of brief mention within general discussion of Javanese mysticism (in

Epton, Geertz, Hadiwijono, Subagya, Kertorahardjo, Lee). Even within Indonesia there are no publications on Sumarah available to the general public.

However internal Sumarah publications and documentary records are extensive. There have been several Sumarah publications, short pamphlets, which have circulated beyond the organisation. Other internal publications have included extensive collections of teachings, transcripts of lectures given by leaders, and several histories. In addition to publications, which have usually been stenciled, there are archives of organisational documents (either typed or stenciled). Over the past fifteen years most major meetings have been recorded and many of the tapes have been transcribed and circulated throughout the organisation.

Archives within Sumarah have been relatively disorganised. In the past many of them have been kept with organisational secretaries, often remaining with individuals when they no longer continue in that function. Many collections, especially in Jakarta, Yogya, Ponorogo, Madiun and Surabaya are very extensive, though they are not systematically organised. My access to archives has been restricted. I did not push to gain entry and only made full use of the collections in Ponorogo and Solo (thanks to Karyono and Sri Sampoerno). The most comprehensive source I have used, however, is virtually an archive in itself.

Mrs. Wondo, then living in Ngawi allowed me to borrow and photocopy the material kept by her husband, who had been a secretary within Sumarah from the late forties until the early sixties. Throughout that period he personally retyped not only the material he collected, but also all circulars and organisational reports. He then bound them into six volumes running to 1900 pages and this has been my most important source for the period from 1949 to 1962. I am extremely grateful to Mrs. Wondo for her trust in making these available.

I am also very much indebted to Arymurthy, Sutardjo and Ali Umar in Jakarta, all of whom have made a tremendous quantity of documentary material from the late sixties and seventies available. These have included conference and congress reports, collections of transcribed meditation talks, organisational directives, published histories and booklets (altogether perhaps 1500 pages). Sukardji in Surabaya provided copies of a number of publications from that area. Sri Sampoerno provided access to Sutadi's collected papers, including his correspondence. Karyono provided both access and help (typing) in my use of the Ponorogo archive. A great many other individuals generously gave me copies of reports, letters, or publications and I am indebted and grateful to all of them.

A. Periodicals

Beginning with the first congress in 1950 there were hopes of establishing a regular Sumarah newsletter or magazine. These hopes were not met by realities during the fifties or sixties.

In 1971 the youth section of the Surabaya regional centre began producing *Guyub*, a bi-monthly stenciled magazine. This continued until at least early 1974; I have eight of the thirteen issues which had been completed by the end of 1973. The contents are not very interesting, mainly drawing on excerpts from earlier talks by leaders--most of which are available in many forms. Some articles by youth members do provide insight into their relation to the practice.

In 1972 the adult members of the Jakarta branch began issuing *Esti Rasa Tunggal*. Though published by a branch, this was still not recognised as an official Sumarah organ. The contents again include republication of earlier talks, but also more current organisational news and notes. I have ten issues, half of those put out during 1972 and 1973.

In June 1976 the Secretariate of the DPP began publishing an official *Bulletin Sumarah*. This replaced and grew out of the above, drawing on some of the same editorial energy. This has become a regular and serious source for information about recent developments. Issues include current spiritual talks and organisational notes, including relatively detailed reports on conferences and notes on changes in local membership and leadership. I have only four issues of this, three from 1976 and one of October 1979.

B. Correspondence

Letters between Sumarah leaders have usually dealt with serious business of the association. Some, although addressed from individual to individual, have been widely circulated and much noted. The letters I have had access to can be divided clearly into four groups: my own correspondence with Sumarah, Sukino's letters, Sutadi's letters, and an assortment of letters included within Suwondo's *Himpunan Wewarah*. My own correspondence has provided material for the thesis, especially through exchanges with Arymurthy, Warsito, Sri Sampoerno, and Mrs. Sardjono. I have fourteen lengthy letters written by Sukino during the period from the late forties to the late sixties. The most important among them are addressed to Kyai Abdulhamid, Sutadi, Sri Sampoerno and Sujadi. Other letters by Sukino, numbering about a dozen, are scattered through Suwondo's compilation. Sutadi's letters, at least the ones in my possession, are mainly concerned with practical administrative matters. I have three dozen letters, all from the late forties. The most important among them are responses to queries from East Java about the process of organising, others detail instructions for practice. Suwondo's collection, in *Himpunan Wewarah*, includes a wide variety of letters not only by Sukino, but also from Surono. Some of the latter, such as the letter in which he "pensioned" Sukino in 1957, are of great significance.

C. Conferences

Materials prepared for and resulting from organisational conferences and congresses are naturally a substantial source of information. These include membership lists, detailing of leadership functions, local organisational activities, and discussions of national issues. In some cases the information I have is in the form of a final report, including only specification of decisions made. But in most cases material is far more detailed, many reports included not only verbatim transcripts of important guidance by the leadership, but also summaries or transcripts of discussion and debates. Here I am listing only manuscript reports which I have as separate items. Many of them either complement or duplicate material which is also within Suwondo's Himpunan Wewarah or the DPP histories. Both of those collections also include a wide variety of conference material I am not listing here. Altogether I have documents covering all major Sumarah conferences, including both national and regional (especially East Javanese) meetings. I am listing this material by date, rather than source, since all of it is in the form of official organisational documents. I am also including reference to the most substantial membership lists (in my possession) and to separate, but related, organisational directives and constitutions.

1947

Antjer-Antjer Toemindakipoen Paguejoeban Soemarah (8p) Sutadi's first comprehensive guidelines for the organisation, this became a source for later formulations of constitutions and statutes.

1948

Perselah pendek Komperensi Pagujuban Soemarah Indonesia (4p) Sutadi's detailed summary, including exchanges and discussion of motions, of the conference held at his home on the evening of January 22/23.

Daftar Keluarga Pagujuban Sumarah Indonesia daerah Karesidenan Madiun (5p) A listing, as of February 21st, of the 205 kasepuhan members, their ages, addresses, occupations, party affiliations, and dates of initiation (& by whom).

Tjataan dari adanja peraturan2 dan kedjadian2 seharihari selama dalam Asrama di Wonogiri (3p) Detailed notes by Sastrohandojo on the programme of the regional retreat held for Solo members from the 13th to 19th of June.

Anggaran Dasar Pemuda Sumarah Indonesia (3p) The constitution of the Sumarah youth organisation, resulting from the youth conference in Yogyakarta on June 27th.

1948

Anggaran Dasar Pagujuban Sumarah Indonesia (2p) The constitution drafted by elder members in Yogyakarta on July 21st.

1950

Programa Kongres Ke Satu (7p) The preliminary programme sent out by Sardjono, Surono's secretary, in preparation for the first formal congress in 1950. The programme was sent on December 20th, only a few days before the congress began. It included a draft of the constitution. My copy of Sutadi's copy includes his handwritten comments on the draft.

1956

Tjataan Konperensi Pagujuban Sumarah pada tanggal 14 dan 15 Oktober 1956 di Pudjokusuman Jogjakarta (12p) Notes, compiled by Sardjono, on the conference which officially opened the third phase. The notes include talks and papers by the leadership. In conjunction I have copies of Martosuwignio's letter to the PB of June 22nd and of Sukino's response on August 3rd.

1966

Anggaran Dasar dan Anggaran Rumah Tangga (32p) The constitution and statutes officially published by the DPP after it was invested with authority by the congress of September 24th and 25th.

1967

Instruksi Tentang Pemberantasan Klenik #26/Jatim/8-67. (2p) Instructions, from Sujadi as head of the East Javanese Sumarah organisation, as to the elimination of magic from within the organisation.

1968

Pedoman Pokok Sudjud Sumarah (8p) Guidelines issued on February 3rd by the Ponorogo leadership of the East Javanese groups. Instructions as to the basis and procedures for Sumarah meditation.

Petundjuk tentang Beatan (3p) Instructions, issued on March 15th by the Ponorogo leadership, detailing guidelines for initiations.

1970

Laporan dan Pertanggungjawaban Djawab DPD Pagujuban Sumarah Djawa Timur Selama Masa Djabatantahun: 1967-1969. (16p) A report compiled by Karyono on the membership, activities, and developments within the East Javanese Sumarah branches between 1967 and 1969. The report was presented to the conference of regional branches in Ponorogo on March 27th and 28th.

Laporan Konperensi Daerah Djawa Timur (20p) A full report to the DPP on the results of the above conference. Submitted on April 9th by Karyono. This included not only summaries of local development, but also proposals for restructuring.

1972

Daftar Alamat Pimpinan Paguyuban Sumarah (4p) A list, detailing functions and addresses, of local Sumarah leadership, national leaders, and past leaders. Compiled by Sutardjo on May 25th.

Keputusan Konperensi DPP Pleno Paguyuban Sumarah di Bandung (with supporting documents c 100 pages) Report on the annual conference held in Bandung from September 15th to 17th. Background materials include: lists of local leaders, membership lists, reports by regional and sectional leaders, and transcripts of meditation guidance.

1973

Selayang Pandang mengenai Perjalanan DPP Paguyuban Sumarah ke daerah Jatim dan Jateng (8p) A report by Sutardjo detailing the leadership tour of branches between April 7th and 16th. At each branch large gatherings of the membership took place.

Keputusan Musyawarah DPP Pleno Paguyuban Sumarah di Surakarta (with supporting documents c 100 pages) Documentation on the annual conference held in Solo on September 14th through 16th. Material as described for the 1972 conference.

1974

Anggaran Dasar dan Anggaran Rumah Tangga (30p) The 1974 congress version of the constitution and rules.

Keputusan Kongres Ke-VII Paguyuban Sumarah (9p) Summary of the results and major address within the national congress in Surabaya of September 13th to 15th. In addition I have transcripts of Arymurthy's talks and Solo reports (not others).

1975

Keputusan DPP Pleno Paguyuban Sumarah di Yogyakarta (10p) Summary of the results of and talks within the annual conference of October 24th and 25th -held at the "Pendopo Sumarah" for the first time.

1978

Daftar adanya Warga Asing (20p) a listing, by the Solo branch, of the 350 foreigners who have had at least some contact with Sumarah (by August 16th).

1979

Hasil Konperensi DPP Pleno Paguyuban Sumarah (12p) report on the conference in Yogya on September 7th and 8th. Includes selected transcripts of talks.

D. Publications

Arymurthy. "Latihan Pamong", Jakarta, February 1972, DPD III, 5 pages.

"Berjamaah Para Pamong", Jakarta, July 1972, DPP, 8 pages.

"Berjamaah Kerohanian", Bandung, September 1972, DPP, 7 pages.

"Berjamaah Sujud Pembangunan", Bandung, September, 1972, DPP, 5 pages.

"Berjamaah Kerohanian", Surakarta, September, 1973, DPP, 3 pages.

"Berjamaah dengan para tamu2 warga Negara Asing", Surakarta, September 1973, DPP, 14 pages.

"Meeting with Foreigners", my translation of the above, DPP, 1973, 12 pages. An improved translation is in my Selected Sumarah Teachings.

DPP. Perkembangan Panguden Ilmu Sumarah dalam Paguyuban Sumarah. Volume I: Berdirinya Paguyuban Sumarah (74p) Volume II: Perkembangan Fase Ke-III (133p). DPP, Jakarta, June 1971. A compilation of documents and commentary on the development of Sumarah practice within the development of the organisation. The collection, mainly done by Pranyoto, includes Indonesian translations of talks by Sukino and Arymurthy and many important organisational documents.

Sejarah Perkembangan Paguyuban Sumarah, Jakarta, 1974 (126p). The official Sumarah history, mainly compiled by Pranyoto, but based on committee work involving Sutjipto, Suhardo, Arymurthy, and Martosuwignio as well. Covers 1935 to 1970.

Informasi Untuk Umum Tentang Sumarah, Jakarta, October 1975, 10 pages. A booklet intended to introduce Sumarah to the public.

Tuntunan Sumarah selama 43 tahun, Jakarta, 1978, 16 pages. A capsul summary of Sumarah history presented by the DPP to the congress of 1978. A very dense and useful summary, especially of the '70's.

Pranyoto. "Tjeramah tentang asas dan tudjuan Pagujuban Sumarah, Praktek Sudjud dan Sedjarah Pertumbuhannja", Jakarta, April, 1966, 10 pages. A talk delivered at a forum organised by Pakem in Jakarta. (stenciled)

"Identitas Pagujuban Sumarah", Jakarta, March 1972, 27 pages. A talk summarising the history, aims and practice of Sumarah--expanding and improving on the above. (stenciled)

Puguh. "Perkembangan Pagujuban Sumarah dalam bidang Hubungan Internasional", Bandung, June 1970, 2 pages. A report on the likelihood that Sumarah would develop internationally. (typed)

Sampoerno, Sri. "Tjeramah Ke-II Pagujuban Sumarah Tjabang Sala", Surakarta, September 1969, 13 pages. A talk introducing Sumarah to the Pakem forum in Solo.

Pagujuban Sumarah, Surakarta, December 1969, 28 pages. A lengthy explanation of Sumarah at a celebration of Sawalan in Solo. (stenciled booklet)

"Usul-usul dalam bentuk uraian pada Konggres Pagujuban Sumarah", Surakarta, September 1970, 6 pages. Proposals put to the national congress of 1970. (stenciled booklet)

"Riwayat Hidup Bapak Hirlan Soetadi", Surakarta, January 1973, 3 pages. A dense (c 1800 word) description of Sutadi's life--prepared for the Sumarah history. (typed)

"Laporan dari DPD IX", Surakarta, September 1973, 15 pages. A report to the national conference held in Solo in 1973. (stenciled booklet)

"Usul, Saran dan Laporan DPD IX Surakarta", Surakarta, September 1974, 13 pages. A report, with suggestions, to the seventh national congress in Surabaya of September 1974. (stenciled booklet)

"Memperkenalkan Paguyuban Sumarah", Surakarta, May 1975, 19 pages. A talk introducing Sumarah to the Pakem forum of kebatinan groups in Solo. (stenciled)

Soebagyo, Ismoe. Rentjana Tjataan Konggres Pagujuban Sumarah, n.p. (Yogya?), n.d. (1951), 53 pages, stenciled booklet. This is an extremely important and detailed source on the first formal congress. Soebagyo was an observer who took notes on his own initiative, then published a booklet summarising them. He makes clear which points he was unable to record, but does include great detail on debates and discussion. As a result this is a perfect complement to official records, which provide formal lists of decisions and transcripts of major talks. This was found among Sutadi's papers.

Suhardo. "Sejarah Riwayat Hidup Bapak Soehardo", Yogyakarta, August 17, 1973, 19 pages of typescript. Suhardo's autobiography in Javanese--prepared to assist the committee working on the official history.

Ceramah Bapak Soehardo Panakawan Paguyuban Sumarah, Surakarta, December 1974, 26 pages, (stenciled booklet). A transcript taken by Sri Sampoerno, in Javanese, of a five and one half hour continuous talk by Suhardo. This is an extremely rich source for his perspective into both the history and present nature of Sumarah practice.

Sujadi. Penjelasan Tentang Fase KeIII dan Pelaksanaannya, Ponorogo, December 1957; printed (offset) in booklet form by the Ngawi branch in March 1970, 22 pages. One of the most important statements about the nature of the third phase.

"Sejarah Pagujuban Sumarah", Ponorogo, March 1958, 13 pages, typescript, Javanese. A dense, detailed and useful history of Sumarah's first two decades. The perspective is distinctly East Javanese, many details and matters of emphasis differ from other versions.

"Penjelasan Tentang Sumarah", Ponorogo, April 1965, 7 pages, stenciled. A public explanation of Sumarah practice, emphasising the relationship between practice and completion of the national revolution.

Sukinohartono. "Sedjarah tjekakan bibit wontenipun pagujuban Sumarah", n.d., n.p., manuscript copy by Sayogyo in Madiun in 1973. The Javanese version of Sukino's history of Sumarah up to 1950. This is also available in Suwondo's Himpunan Wewarah and, in Indonesian translation, in Perkembangan Panguden. (27p)

Wawarah No.12, Yogyakarta, 1952, 42 pages, offset booklet. Selected teachings, part of a series of 13 booklets, but this is the only one I have in original form.

"Sarasehan Dewan Permusjawaratan Pusat ing Wirobradjan", Yogyakarta, April 1961, stenciled, 16 pages. Proceedings, both discussion and meditation guidance, during a meeting at Sukino's home.

Wahju Awas Eling tuwin Wahju Alam, Ngawi, 1972, 44 pages, offset booklet. A republication of Sukino's guidance of June 1968, one of the last very important statements he contributed to the clarification of Sumarah practice. This was also published by the Ponorogo branch in 1972, in stenciled form. The first half of it is translated in my Selected Sumarah Teachings.

Kumpulan Wewarah Paguyuban Sumarah: 1-13, Surabaya, September 1974, 164 pages stenciled. A republication of the thirteen booklets printed in the early fifties, this time in one volume.

Wewarah pada Latihan Sudjud Sumarah Bagian A di ZYogyakarta, Jakarta, 1975, 24 pages, offset booklet. An Indonesian translation of one of Sukino's talks during the early fifties.

Surono Prodjohusodo. "Soal Hidup dan Mati", n.p. (Yogya), n.d. (?). A booklet in which Surono outlines the basics of his psychological image, 20 pages.

Pagujuban Sumarah, Yogyakarta, 1965, 48 pages, offset booklet. Surono's description of Sumarah history and the basic requirements of practice. This is an extremely useful source, especially in its coverage of the process of organising during the revolution.

Sutadi, Hirlan. Warisan Adi, volumes I & II, Surakarta, n.d. (1961), 227 pages, stenciled volumes. A commemorative collection, by Sri Sampoerno, of Sutadi's radio talks during the period from 1950 to 1958. The talks focused on spiritual topics, but did not often refer to Sumarah. The volumes include some useful biographical material in the preface.

Suwondo, ed. Himpunan Wewarah Pagujuban Sumarah, Ngawi, 1949-1962, typescript bound into six volumes totalling 1900 pages. Literally an archive itself, the most important single source for the thesis.

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