

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT AND MENTAL DISTURBANCE:  
THREE MINANGKABAU CASE HISTORIES<sup>1</sup>

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In the course of one year, 10.14% of the new cases treated in the Psychiatric Polyclinic of Djakarta's Central Hospital were members of the Minangkabau ethnic group. This percentage seems rather high since the Minangkabau comprise, roughly, only 2% of Djakarta's total population, and it suggests that the Minangkabau of Djakarta live in an environment of particularly high stress and tension. While it is true that mental illness is an individual problem, at the same time, the mentally ill person is also a product of his own society; it has determined the way he was reared and educated and thus influenced his psychological development and the formation of his personal values. Society has offered him a choice of social roles and goals and indicated the approved methods of working toward them.

Research conducted by psychiatrists, sociologists and anthropologists in the field of Culture and Personality indicates that various forms of mental disturbance are unequally distributed among the various societies studied. Some societies and groups are more prone to particular types of mental disturbances than others. There are even some types of mental disorders which apparently only occur in a few societies. For example, *latah*, characterized by echolalia--repeating the words of other people--and echopraxia--mechanical repetition of the actions of others--is a form of psycho-pathological disturbance found commonly only in Malaya, Indonesia and the Philippines.<sup>2</sup> Specific classes within the same society may also

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  2. John J. Honigmann, *Culture and Personality* (New York: Harper, 1954), p. 378.

demonstrate a tendency to specific forms of mental disturbance. For example, schizophrenia is more common among the middle or upper classes.<sup>3</sup> The unequal distribution of mental disturbances or, more precisely, the form and frequency of mental illness in a particular group or a particular society stems from differences in psychological development resulting from different social and cultural environments.<sup>4</sup> Thus, variations and conflicts in the roles and values provided cause social stresses to arise at different points in different societies.

In addition to such social-structural factors, psychological stresses can be created by contingent influences from outside a society, often in the form of an alien culture or religion, or, as in Indonesia, colonization. Such outside influences may result in the existence of two opposed value systems within the society, so that the individual is faced with two mutually contradictory standards of behavior each having its own group of adherents.

War and economic crisis too may create psychological tensions by undermining the basis of a society's value-system. For West Sumatra, home of the Minangkabau, the PRRI rebellion of 1958, and the subsequent war and military occupation, caused a profound disruption of local society, deeply affecting many Minangkabau.

The Minangkabau individual today is not only confronted by the conflict between old and new values and cultural systems within West Sumatran society. The nature of contemporary Indonesia is such that Minangkabau are often drawn to areas outside West Sumatra in their search for education or employment. There they must come to terms with new value systems in an unfamiliar environment and with people who do not share with them a common tradition of social and cultural values.

While Minangkabau cultural and social patterns have continued to exercise a strong hold on most West Sumatran villages and towns up to the present and to be regarded by large numbers, especially of older people, as the ideal norms, the often wide divergence between these norms and those acceptable to the contemporary urban culture of Indonesia intensifies the stress and tension a young Minangkabau experiences when he leaves his home for Djakarta.

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3. Clyde Kluckhohn, Mirror for Man (New York: Whittlesey House, 1949), p. 201.

4. We assume that mental disorders due to deficiencies in biological constitution will appear with equal frequency in all societies and cultures.

### Traditional Minangkabau Society

The historical political units for Minangkabau have been independent and self-supporting villages called *negari*. Each had its own laws and leaders and acknowledged no superior political authority beyond its borders. The presence of a Radja at Pagarrujung did not change this situation; he served as the symbol of the inherent cultural unity of all the autonomous *negari* and mediated their frequent disputes. A *negari* chief was chosen from among the chiefs of the lineage groups living in the *negari*. He organized the administration according to the *adat* (customary law) and with the consensus of a *negari* council composed of the other lineage chiefs.<sup>5</sup>

The Minangkabau commonly lived in large family houses, known as *rumah gedang*, which were collectively owned and occupied by a matrilineal extended family unit called the *kaum*. Several *kaum* related to one another through a common female ancestor formed the larger lineage unit, the *suku*.<sup>6</sup>

Each house was divided, along one side, into separate rooms, one for each female member of the family. The rooms were separated from one another by wooden or, more often, bamboo partitions, often with only a curtain over each entrance. The largest room, usually at one end of the building, was for the woman most recently married and was the best room in the house. The newly married woman would continue to occupy the room until her younger sister married and took it over; the older woman then moved into the room next door.

The Minangkabau family unit consisted of all the relatives who were members of the matrilineal *kaum*--one's brothers and sisters, sister's children, mother's brothers and sisters and one's maternal grandmothers. Fathers and husbands were not considered members. They belonged to their own mother's *kaum* and remained members of it even after they married. After marriage, the wife continued to live in her mother's house. The husband's status in the household where his wife and children lived was that of a regular guest of the family, called *sumando*. He usually came in the evenings and left again in the morning.

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5. On the position of the radja and the organization of the *negari*: see P.E. de Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau and Negri Sembilan: Socio-Political Structure in Indonesia (Djakarta: Bhratara, 1960), chapters 5, 6; Harsja W. Bachtjar, "Negeri Taram: A Minangkabau Village Community," in Koentjaraningrat, ed., Villages in Indonesia (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1967), pp. 344-385; and L.C. Westenenk, De Minangkabausche Nagari (Weltevreden: Visser, 1918).

6. There are different names in different regions for this unit of the matrilineal extended family due to the independence of the *negari* from each other in former times.

Because of his status as a permanent guest, a husband was expected to behave like a guest. He did not necessarily have to provide a living for his wife and children, or send his children to school, or participate in decisions in their home. Usually he would contribute towards the food, if he was sleeping there. But he could not act as he pleased in his wife's house. Unless he was asked, he did not need and was not allowed to repair any damage to the house.<sup>7</sup> The household problems of his wife, together with those of her sisters, were the responsibility of the *mamak rumah* (the head of the wife's kaum); he would be her brother or uncle and usually the oldest male in the family. The husband had responsibilities to his own mother's family and was himself *mamak* to his sisters' children.

The role of the *mamak* in the traditional household was important. Apart from supervising the affairs of his sisters and their children, he enforced household regulations which were determined in consultation with other members of the family. The *mamak* was also responsible for taking care of the inherited properties of the kaum, usually land, wet-rice fields, the *rumah gedang* and other objects. The *mamak* did not have any personal rights over communal property. In the affairs of the lineage, the head of the *suku*, or *penghulu suku*, had similar duties related to the properties of the lineage.

Inherited property could not be sold, only mortgaged and even then preferably to close relatives. Land could only be mortgaged for purposes closely defined by the *adat*, such as financing the marriages of women in the family, arranging funerals, improving the house, or the installation of a family *penghulu*.<sup>8</sup> Only women could bequeath the property to their children; men merely had the right of usufruct and were also supposed to add to the capital if possible. A man's own children would not inherit his property, although Islamic influence has more recently modified this to allow a grant (*hibah*) to the children.

Marriage was arranged by representatives of the families concerned, usually the *mamak* plus some other members. The initiative came from the woman's family. According to tradition, the ideal marriage for a man was with the daughter of his

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7. On the other hand, people tended to look down on the husband who did such work. This is also true in a modern type of arrangement, if the husband and wife share the house with other relatives, usually the wife's. However, it does not seem to be the case if only the couple occupy the house.

8. B. Schrieke, "The Causes and Effects of Communism on the West Coast of Sumatra," in Indonesian Sociological Studies (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1955), I, p. 107.

mamak (his mother's brother's daughter), matrilineal cross-cousin marriage.

### Implications of the Traditions for Married Life

There were many possibilities for marital discord and domestic upheaval resulting from the presence of a large number of men, women and children living under one roof. Sometimes there was fighting among children which drew in their mothers, sometimes there was rivalry among the various husbands for prestige. For example, because each wife prepared her own husband's meals, she tried to enhance his prestige by serving a dish which would demonstrate to everyone else how prosperous he was.

The woman's formal position in the family was unchanged after her marriage, in the sense that she remained in the same house and her property rights were unchanged. The strong matrilineal family ties gave her a guaranteed source of protection and support which would not be disturbed by such events as divorce. If a situation arose where there was conflict between the interests of her husband and her family, she should always consider her family's interests first.

There was no privacy in the rumah gedang; any disagreement between man and wife immediately became public property. The wife remained strongly influenced by the opinions of her sisters and, especially, her mother; thus the position of a husband who earned the disapproval of his mother-in-law could be uncomfortable. Dissatisfaction with a son-in-law would not be expressed openly, but by hints and allusions--all the more irritating because they could not be faced openly. As a result, husbands might easily become overly sensitive to everything happening in the household; a mother who wanted to avoid upsetting her son-in-law had to be very cautious whenever he was in the house--neither slamming the door nor shooing the hen out too loudly--lest her son-in-law feel he was being shooed out in a polite fashion.

When a man married, he acquired certain responsibilities as a husband and father, without losing any of the responsibilities to his sisters and their children which arose from his continuing membership in his matrilineal kaum. There was a conflict of loyalties, his wife and children demanding love and attention on the one hand, while, on the other, his mother's family continued to feel it had rights over him and his services. He had to divide his working hours between his wife's rice fields and his own, and maintain a balance between the time he spent solving his wife's problems and the time spent on the problems of his sisters and their children. If he appeared to be devoting too much attention to his wife, his own family would conclude he had been affected by some magic spell she must be using.

Custom limited the freedom of husband and wife to display their affection for one another openly. In areas where tradition was strong, a man who spent too much of his time on his wife's rice fields, working around her house or otherwise remaining there the whole day, would find himself scoffed at as a man tied to his wife's apron strings--"worn out by one woman." Because of his position as a regular guest, the husband could not fully integrate himself into the family life of his wife and children. The nuclear family rarely assembled as the father came only in the evenings or at mealtimes. Reportedly a child sometimes did not recognize its own father on the street.<sup>9</sup>

The lack of strong ties with his nuclear family and the absence of an explicit obligation to provide for them economically made it easy for a husband to take a second wife.<sup>10</sup> This was allowed by both local tradition and the prevailing Islamic religion. To maintain the prescribed limit of four wives at any one time, the man merely divorced an old wife to allow for a new one. Among some groups and in some localities, this practice increased a man's prestige; because it was usual for the woman's family to make the proposal, a large number of wives indicated that a man was much desired as a son-in-law.

A husband was not necessarily a permanent mate; he might leave his wife over the most minor matter: "Like ash on a tree trunk, even a soft wind and it will fly away." Directly or indirectly, this tended to strengthen the solidarity of a woman with her matrilineal family. But at the same time there was a feeling of insecurity on the part of the wife about her husband's loyalty and love, and women frequently resorted to magic to ensure their husband's fidelity.<sup>11</sup>

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9. Hamka, Adat Minangkabau Menghadapi Revolusi (Djakarta: Tekad, 1963), pp. 56-57.
10. Polygyny was and still is a favorite theme in Minangkabau novels.
11. The writer was told about the case of a man who divorced his wife and returned to his mother as a result of the magic used by his mother. She and her relatives had decided that he must have fallen victim to his wife's magic because he did not come home often from Medan, where he worked as a merchant. But the magic proved too strong for the young man and--so the people said--had "eaten" him. He stayed at the village, but from time to time made demands which were difficult for his mother to fulfill, and he would run amok, threatening to kill her or himself if she would not do as he wished. In this way he punished her for what she had done to him.

### Life Cycle

Until the age of 7 there was no great difference between the education of a boy and girl. Children grew up in a warm and intimate environment in the rumah gedang, in close relationship with their mother, sisters and younger brothers, and often with their grandmother and other relatives of their mother. From her earliest years, a girl was prepared for life as a wife and mother, with skill in woman's tasks, especially cooking and sewing, seen as among the principal attributes of the ideal woman. Folk stories held up gentleness, faithfulness, wisdom and good manners as the characteristics of the ideal woman.<sup>12</sup>

As a girl and a young woman, a Minangkabau female found her behavior restricted by both adat and Islamic customs, and also by her surroundings. The etiquette and taboos which women had to observe were directed toward producing faithful, religious women who would not be aggressive or demonstrative towards men, nor acquire a bad name. Strict supervision by those around them helped to ensure that the taboos were not broken. Even in present-day Padang, a large coastal city and the capital of West Sumatra, where other traditional patterns of living have been largely abandoned, neighbors and family continue to exercise effective supervision over a girl's activities. The girl is made to fear that if she does not look after herself and her reputation, men with evil intentions will quickly take advantage of her carelessness.

On the other hand, the formal regulations of society acknowledged a woman's rights, for instance, to house, land and rice fields. After she married, and more obviously in middle age, the Minangkabau woman usually ran her household and everything connected with the house and land, both independently and efficiently. The adat did not allow her husband to interfere in such matters.

When she was old, a woman usually lived with her daughters and continued to do part of the housework, or at least look after her grandchildren. Although respected because of her age, she was clearly only a background figure; her daughter now played the key role in the household.

The experience of young Minangkabau men was very different. At about the age of 7, a boy in Minangkabau no longer lived at home, but instead slept at the *surau*. This building was situated near the mosque, and there he learned to recite

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12. Bundo Kandueng, Rantjak Dilabueh and Sabai Nan Aluih, are the most well-known of these folk tales.

the Quran and other aspects of religion. He would be most embarrassed, and would be scoffed at if he remained at home. In the surau he lived with his peer-group, and from the stories of the older boys, he was prepared for adult life.<sup>13</sup> Because visitors from other villages and bachelors returning home after *merantau* also slept at the surau, young boys would hear stories about life outside the village, and the wider world outside West Sumatra.

From childhood, the desire to see the outside world which seemed to hold out such prospects of success and prestige was stimulated. Merantau, leaving one's native village and beloved relatives, was well-rooted in the traditions of Minangkabau, as illustrated by the saying "If you love your children, beat them; if you love your village, leave it." When boys reached adolescence and became self-supporting, many of them left their villages to go merantau, in search of an education or way of earning a living which offered possibilities of advancement. They were prepared for a long struggle to achieve success, for without such success they would be ashamed to show their faces again to their fellow villagers. Apart from elevating their prestige, success was of great importance when it came to getting married. Before a man had proved himself capable of supporting a family, he was unlikely to receive a marriage proposal.

#### The Impact of the Dutch Era

The period of Dutch colonization brought changes and new sources of stress with the organization of a new, centralized administration, the forced cultivation of cash crops and the introduction of the prejudices and values of European culture. By the mid-twentieth century, Minangkabau tradition was already being questioned in some areas and disregarded in others.

Attitudes toward inherited family property began to change, and, contrary to adat regulations, property was sometimes sold to obtain capital. Associated with this, there was a decline in the influence and prestige of the lineage heads and a concomitant growth of individualism. The new individualism weakened the extended matrilineal family and, with the strengthening of the position of the money-earning husband and father, the nuclear family acquired a new importance. The role and responsibility of the father in relation to his children increased; the role of the *mamak* decreased. Marriage was now often arranged by the couple concerned rather than by their

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13. On life in the surau see: M. Radjab, Semasa Ketjil Dikampung (Djakarta: Balai Poestaka, 1950), pp. 21-27, 79-108; and Nur St. Iskandar, Pengalaman Masa Ketjil (Djakarta: Balai Poestaka, 1960), pp. 11-18.

parents; marriage outside the village, or even outside the Minangkabau ethnic group, ceased to be a matter of great contention.

The availability of a Western education during the Dutch Colonial Period and after Independence was an important factor in spreading new ways of thinking. In addition, intermingling with educated people from other Indonesian cultures also influenced Minangkabau views of their own society.

Yet these developments have not proceeded simultaneously or uniformly in all areas of West Sumatra. Signs of rapid social change were already reported a half a century ago, yet the changes are still in progress and in some places traditional society is fairly well-preserved. This situation has presented many Minangkabau with a choice between opposing values and has not always allowed them to take a middle path.

In some instances, the changes of the last half century have served to strengthen already existing tendencies in Minangkabau society. As a result of the need to finance the requirements to which the new era and the advent of trade have given rise, the desire to accumulate wealth or professional prestige has become an increasing psychological burden on Minangkabau men.

More important, rising social expectations have not been proportionately paralleled by new channels being created for realizing these aspirations. Exceptionally strong emphasis upon specific goals tends to produce a tendency to choose the most effective means of achieving them, whether the means are culturally acceptable or not.<sup>14</sup> But since no individual can completely escape from the ideal values inculcated in childhood, we can expect some kind of tension in the individual who transgresses his cultural norms. Merton points out that the effects of an exceptionally strong emphasis on goals,

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14. One informant, a student, said that the reason one cannot find a Minangkabau betjak (pedi-cab) driver in Djakarta although one can find many Minangkabau pickpockets, was because the Minangkabau look down upon betjak-driving whereas pickpocketing though morally bad is "understandable" because the nature of the work is independent. However, it should not be practiced on fellow Minangkabau. One might point out that in Medan where the betjaks usually have motors, there are a considerable number of Minangkabau drivers.

Felix M. Keesing, in his study, Culture Change: An Analysis and Bibliography of Anthropological Sources to 1952 (Stanford: University Press, 1953), points out that a dual code of conduct is one of several effects of culture change. It would be interesting to investigate how far culture change has effected the various strata of Minangkabau society, both abroad and in their homeland.

without corresponding emphasis on institutionally prescribed avenues of realizing these goals, are unrelieved tensions, guilt feelings, a sense of sin, pangs of conscience and symbolic adherence to the nominally repudiated values, or rationalizations for the rejection of these values.<sup>15</sup>

Besides the strong emphasis upon success, traditional sanctions for failure have been heavily felt. Most important is embarrassment at returning home if a man's trip abroad has not been successful, especially if the capital for trading or the expenses for his studies had been provided collectively by his relatives. Fear of what people think of him if he has failed to realize their expectations can bring about a loss of self-respect and feelings of anxiety, which may express themselves in hypochondriasis and psycho-neurotic or psychosomatic reactions.

For women, the results of social change have been somewhat different. They deeply feel the conflict between the strict and inflexible demands of Islam and adat on the one hand and the relatively free and flexible norms inculcated by Western education on the other. Conflict is thus mostly found in the field of social relations. In school it is normal for a girl to play with a boy, but they are not supposed to be seen together on the public streets; though nowadays this is enforced only in the villages. Some older people and parents still consider Western dress indecent; they feel it shows too much of a woman's body.

Young Minangkabau in Djakarta, then, understandably experience extreme tension when they try to resolve the inherent conflict between the values of the adat system inculcated since earliest childhood, and the individualistic urban culture in which they now live. In the Minangkabau adat system, power lies with the older people, who exercise rather authoritarian control over the affairs of the young. Maternal aunts, and most especially maternal uncles (mamak), are held responsible by the system for socializing the children. In addition, there is no accepted mechanism for escaping from this supervision, either by virtue of age or geographic distance. Because a Minangkabau has left West Sumatra, it does not make him any less an object of strict control.

The tension is aggravated, as in the case histories cited, when the young people involved stay with relatives who, although living in the urban environment, have been exposed to it only after adulthood and are less inclined to accept its norms. The two girls discussed below deeply resent the fact that their relatives, in one case a maternal aunt, in another an elder

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15. R. K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), p. 136.

brother, are constantly trying to discipline them and impose old-fashioned values on them. From the standpoint of the aunt or the elder brother, such discipline is part of their duty, required by adat, to maintain the values of Minangkabau and the traditions which identify them. The conflict is exacerbated because the urban culture espouses a new value system which explicitly denies the ethnic group as a valid unit of social organization. In a real sense there can be no satisfactory resolution of the conflict between the two systems because their initial premises are so different.

### Case History I

A., female, aged 20, student and teacher of religion in junior highschool. Diagnosis: epilepsy. She says that her illness began at the time of the PRRI revolt in 1958. One night there was fighting near her home; she was forcibly awakened, and so suffered a shock. From that point on she was easily startled, often trembled, foamed at the mouth, and got up in her sleep without gaining consciousness. She often has terrifying dreams, to the point that she is afraid to go to sleep.

From childhood, she felt herself under heavy psychological pressure because of her parents' conservatism. Her father and mother are still alive, both of them teachers of religion. At school her parents never allowed her to wear Western dress, which made her a laughing-stock among her friends. Now that she has become a student, she insists on wearing a Western dress all the time. This caused scandal in her village when it was reported back. From her early school days she was always forbidden to mix with her Tapanuli [Batak] schoolmates--her family had moved to Padang Sidempuan in South Tapanuli when she was still a child--on the grounds that "they aren't religious" (i.e., too emancipated), although actually they were Moslems too. She was not allowed to go on picnics with her school friends. She was often scolded by her father if he passed by the schoolyard and saw her chatting with male schoolmates.

In Djakarta she lives with her *mak tua* (mother's elder sister), a teacher of religion, aged about 49. This woman has no children, was once married but was divorced. She complains if A doesn't wear the traditional *badju kurung*, or if she gets on the bus with a male friend. Since A attends meetings of her organization, she often has to come home late at night, and therefore is escorted by a male friend. Her eldest brother used to live with the *mak tua* as well, but would not put up with her scolding and eventually left. If A and her brother (a student) studied together or read the newspaper together, her *mak tua* would get angry and say that it was improper. Her

mak tua also objected if her brother escorted her anywhere. A now feels under enormous pressure, especially as her mak tua dislikes her and flies into a rage at every least thing she does. Her mak tua can go on being angry and grumbling for hours and hours. With her own mother, at the very least when she is sick, she feels that she is loved.

Within A's family there is a clear conflict of views between parents and children, although very recently the father has begun to side with the children.

### Case History II

B., female, aged 17, senior highschool student. Came complaining of continuous headaches for two years now, making it impossible to study. When she is asleep the headache goes, but the minute she wakes up, she feels it again. During the PRRI rebellion her house was struck by mortar-fire. She has heart trouble, with palpitations if she is startled. Diagnosis: neurasthenia, possibly with conversion reaction.

She is the youngest of six children, and was very spoiled. Her mother gave her anything she wanted. Her father, a religious teacher and a *hadji*, died when B was still a child. Three of her elder siblings were educated at a religious school. Another, now a certified civil engineer, is paying for her education and supporting her mother. In Djakarta she is living with her elder sister, who married a religious teacher. Her brother-in-law is now in business with capital provided by her elder brother.

She does not get along with her brother-in-law. Ever since they were all still in West Sumatra, her brother-in-law always prevented her doing what she wanted, especially with regard to the company she kept. She has many friends; her brother-in-law is very upset if any of her male friends come to the house. His way of making things difficult for her is by making insinuations, using other people as examples. B finds this very unpleasant. Her own five elder siblings can not stop her making her own friends; she always resists them and contradicts their advice, saying that "one needs a lot of friends nowadays." The only one she is afraid of is the brother-in-law she is living with, because he can be very biting. Her own mother always lets her do what she wants.

Up to now her brother-in-law is still very strict about whom she goes around with. He doesn't let B go to the movies with her friends, if there is a boy amongst them. When her reports from school were bad, he thought she was going steady with a male schoolmate who used to walk her home from school rather late, because of afternoon classes. Her brother-in-law

also makes a fuss if she chats with her female friends in the neighborhood, and thinks that all they are talking about is men. He also objects if she sits in front of the house "to rest, because her head is splitting from her lessons." Because of all this, she often quarrels with her elder sister. The elder sister reports everything about her to her elder brother, since he is the one who is paying for B's education and providing the sister's husband with his working capital. Actually, if she didn't feel under great pressure, she wouldn't order B around, mainly because she dislikes being argued with. On the one hand B dislikes her sister's unwillingness to take charge, but on the other hand she always argues if she is told to do anything. B in fact helps out in the kitchen or in her elder sister's coffee-shop, but only because she feels embarrassed not to.

### Case History III

C., male, aged 30, clerk in a state enterprise in Pekanbaru. He came complaining of headaches when faced with any serious problem. When he squats on his heels, he feels as if his eyes are about to pop out. After sexual intercourse with his wife, he feels unsatisfied and sometimes his head feels very heavy. Diagnosis: anxiety neurosis. He is the seventh of eight children. When his father, a chinaware salesman, died (C was then 9 years old), his mother took over the saleswork, and has continued with this ever since. All his elder siblings are in business, and have gone off to the cities or to other provinces. Only C and his younger sister stayed at home with his mother. By his own admission, C was extremely spoiled by his mother.

After graduating from technical high school, he enrolled in the SMEA (Senior High School for Economics), while working on the side. He got involved in organizations, became a reporter in West Sumatra, and often had his articles and poems printed in the newspapers, winning prizes on several occasions. He says that his headaches began during his final examinations at the SMEA. The teacher announced that the examinations would end in another five minutes. Suddenly he began trembling, had a seminal emission, broke out in a sweat and all kinds of sexual images came into his mind. He felt sick and could not go on with his examinations. Not long afterwards, in 1957, the PRRI rebellion broke out. The newspaper he worked for was accused of agitation, and its offices were moved out of town; there C lived constantly on the run and in great fear. By pure luck he was the only one of his friends to survive--all the others were killed. After the end of the rebellion he moved to Pekanbaru and took a job there. In 1959 he fell sick again, and took treatment from various doctors, including *dukun*, but with no result.

More recently he began contributing articles to a particular newspaper again. But finally, in 1965, this newspaper was accused of supporting a banned political movement, and although it continued to publish, C became very nervous again. He is easily startled and frightened, for instance when there is an air-raid defense drill. His doctor finally told him to go for treatment to the Psychiatric Polyclinic. During the interview, he was obviously still tense and suspicious.

He feels that he has been discriminated against in his work; since he left Pakanbaru he has never been promoted. He liked his boss in Pakanbaru, but he disliked his Padang boss, who was from a different ethnic group, because, he says, the man was rude to his subordinates. Finally he resigned as head of the technical division because of personal conflicts with this boss. After this quarrel he fell sick again.

He always wanted to marry his childhood sweetheart--and both of their parents agreed. But his hopes were destroyed when the girl, who had moved to Djakarta, broke off the relationship on the grounds that he never communicated with her (at that time he was hiding in the jungle). The whole affair broke his heart. The girl is now married, and he himself has a wife of his own and three children. He gets on well with his wife, but he is continually haunted by images of his former sweetheart too.

### Notes

In Cases I and II we can see conflicts between old values and new, between the older generation and the younger, between strict religious principle and inflexible adat on the one hand and the secular urban outlook on the other. Traditional values are represented by the parents of these two female patients. Although A's parents have moved out of their home province, they keep to the adat to which they were born; and this has created tensions with the adat in their area of residence and caused severe psychological frustrations for their children. It is clear that these frustrations have not eased A's illness, but have in fact accentuated it.

While A is rather introverted, B is quite aggressive. She very much wants to be independent and active, in addition to the fact that she is physically very mature, almost like her elder sister, has a very attractive manner and is highly intelligent. These traits do not make for harmony with her elder sister and her brother-in-law, who were brought up in a heavily religious atmosphere and who want to make her like themselves. In their eyes, B's behavior is more or less "immoral." Her rejection of family values is also manifested in her refusal to go to a religious school like her elder siblings; she forced

her way into junior and senior high school, and then tried to get into the Medical Faculty, just so long as she could do well in her studies as before. Her situation is made more difficult by her own immaturity; she enjoys arguing with her elder sister to the point where their relationship is constantly tense.

The attitude of patient A's mak tua, objecting to A's chatting with or going out alone with her elder brother, can be explained by reference to the adat. According to Minangkabau adat, it is thought improper for a girl to go out alone with any male, including her elder brothers and her father, or to be seen chatting intimately with elder brother or father in a public place (e.g., on the front porch of the home). Minangkabau adat puts this kind of behavior in the category of *sumbang* (to be avoided). This taboo may possibly be caused by the fear of incest. But the existence of this taboo should not lead us to conclude that relationships between brother and sister are formal and awkward. On the contrary, their relationship may be extremely warm and intimate. Brothers are usually very quick to take a protective attitude towards their sisters. A brother will usually get very angry if his sister is not properly treated by her husband.

Another factor which emerges from these case histories is that wartime conditions, the PRRI rebellion, have played an important role in the illnesses of all three patients. The two female patients (A and B) both stated that their illnesses began while the war was going on. The fighting had an even greater influence in the case of C: the war separated him from his sweetheart, took the lives of his comrades, and made him fearful and suspicious of everything around him.