

EDUCATION FOR THIS LIFE OR FOR THE LIFE TO COME:
OBSERVATIONS ON THE JAVANESE VILLAGE MADRASAH*

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I. Muslim Educational Institutions

Many who wrote of Indonesian education in the first decade or so of independence described its present and adumbrated its future almost entirely in terms of the supervision of the Ministries of Basic Education and Culture and of Higher Education. Muslim schools in general tended to be given a somewhat apologetic side-reference as manifestations of a tradition which had lost its power for all but a few benighted conservatives.

This view is no longer tenable. Schools under the general supervision of the Ministry of Religion are variously estimated as enrolling somewhere between 17 percent and 37 percent of the total school-going population of the country. The distribution of these is as follows:¹

	<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Students</u>
<i>Madrasah</i> ² at all levels, excluding <i>madrasah diniyah</i>	25,000	2,980,000
<i>Madrasah diniyah</i>	23,000	3,520,000
<i>Pesantren</i>	11,000	2,240,000

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¹These figures are based on some fairly detailed analysis of the 1971 census figures, and have been checked for two sources. Some of them are comparable with figures quoted for 1965 (*Al-Djami'ah*, 5-6 [September-November 1965], p. 46), cited in B. J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971), p. 117 n. 72; others are comparable with figures quoted privately to one of the authors in 1975. Varying degrees of confidentiality appear to apply to the sources, though the data are readily available. Of the categories listed in this table, those for *pesantren* and *madrasah diniyah* are likely to be the least clear-cut. There is also the likelihood that a substantial proportion of those who attend the latter are also enrolled in a *sekolah dasar* or other Ministry of Education school. In estimating proportions, therefore, we have included these two categories only in the higher figure (i.e., 37 percent).

²These terms are defined and placed in context in the discussion which immediately follows.

Governmental statistics are notoriously variable, and the tendency for numbers to increase is greater when growth is a much approved index of policies of social responsibility.³ However, even after all appropriate discounting has been completed, the observer is left with firm evidence of a very sizeable group of institutions maintaining an alternative to the secular system.

There are also signs that this state of affairs is recognized by the Suharto government. For all the asperity of its relationship with Islamic political groups over recent years, the government appears to be paying increasing attention to policies for the extension of this sector of educational enterprise. One index of this is the rapid growth in the number of government-funded tertiary IAIN (Institut Agama Islam Negeri). Another is the encouragement given to attempts by the Ministry of Religion to seek assistance from international aid agencies for plans to upgrade teacher training and to extend vocational training in Islamic schools.

The present study focuses on the operation of the Muslim school as an alternative form of primary education in two villages in Central Java. The details of this picture will be clearer from a brief description of the kinds of schools being considered and of their origins in Javanese tradition.

There appears to be a direct line of descent, traceable from the monastic schools (*mandala*) of the Hindu-Buddhist period, which, as their *guru* were converted to Islam, altered the content but not the style of their teaching.⁴ A mosque was built to replace the shrine, and the Kuran assumed a place of increasing importance in the content of the daily lectures given to students. The most devout of the graduates of these schools moved back to their own districts and, if their material and spiritual resources were sufficient, founded similar institutions. Such men (*kiyayi*) pursued their study of both the mystical tradition of the pre-Islamic period and of the Kuran and Hadith, and taught adolescent boys and young men who formed a bachelor community and who lived a spartan existence in dormitory buildings on the compound.⁵ These students, known as *santri* (scholars), gave their name to the institution (*pesantren*). But the fact that it was always a residential school, and that the domestic ethos of the dormitory was not only distinct from but often also as potently influential as the formal teaching of the *kiyayi*, led to the common use of an alternative term, *pondok* (literally, to stay the night). These institutions still exist. Within them, teaching is still given by didactic lectures, either to groups or individuals. Emphasis is placed on rote learning, on correct-

³This applies not only to government officers being interviewed by foreign visitors, but equally to parents being interviewed by census officers, village officials reporting to district heads, and so on. Since the same pressures apply when it comes to reporting the number of children in schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Culture, it is likely that the proportions quoted above may be a more accurate indicator.

⁴S. Soebardi, "The Place of Islam in Indonesia," in Elaine McKay (ed.), *Studies in Indonesian History* (Melbourne: Pitman Australia, 1976), pp. 43-44.

⁵C. Geertz describes these places as they were in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, II (1959-60), pp. 228-49.

ness of verbal reproduction and even of intonation. Progress is highly individual, and little attempt is made to standardize speed in learning or to formalize or record achievement. When the santri loses his inclination to study, he goes back to his village or perhaps tries another pesantren elsewhere.

As a means of mediating a religious tradition so centrally dependent on knowledge of and loyalty to a Book, these institutions played a crucial role in the maintenance and expansion of Islam. As such, they were obvious targets for those who wished to see new ways and new ideas take root among the faithful in Indonesia. So it was that in the years following the founding of Muhammadiyah in 1912, its members concentrated much of their energy on devising a new institution, modeled in style and form much more closely on the Dutch *school*. Since their intention was not only to instruct pupils in science and contemporary affairs, but also to mediate a purified doctrine of Islam, they adopted a name for their schools which emphasized Arabic antecedents--*madrasah*.⁶ In such schools, the Dutch (and later the Indonesian) language was taught, and a large proportion (from 60 to 80 percent) of class hours were devoted to secular subjects. This deliberate choice of new bottles to hold the new wine of a knowledge of the world of the twentieth century was not to prevent others from using the institution for more conservative purposes, and in many places (especially in rural Java) *madrasah* were set up by men who themselves had been educated in *pesantren*. Indeed, in some places a *madrasah* was set up beside a *pesantren*, so that local village children might be taught; in such cases some of the older santri became teachers in the institution. Differences in organization and ostensible curriculum between the two there might be; but such an arrangement insured that the new institution inherited much of the content and manner of instruction of the old.

The genealogical tree of the institution might then be pictured as that of a Hindu great-grandfather who was converted to Islam. Grandfather grew up to be much more orthodoxly devout, but to his chagrin his son married a European and produced a divergent family, all genetically hybrid and variant. Three of these, briefly, are as follows:

1. *Madrasah diniyah*, a primary school with progressive classes and a set syllabus which concentrates on providing elementary instruction in subjects basic to Kuranic study, notably Arabic language. In some of these schools, there is one class teacher for all subjects at that standard; in others, the teachers rotate, teaching their own specialties at a number of levels. It is common to find a *madrasah diniyah* next to a *pesantren*, with some of the more competent senior students at the *pesantren* taking morning classes at the *madrasah*.

2. *Madrasah ibtidaiyah* is a six-year primary school,⁷ which in its basic structure closely parallels the *sekolah dasar*,⁸ the primary

⁶S. Soebardi, "The Place of Islam," p. 50; C. Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (London: Free Press, 1960), p. 194.

⁷In the section of Central Java where this research was conducted, it is also commonly called a *madrasah wajib belajar* (a school of the obligation to study).

⁸Throughout this paper, we have retained the Indonesian term for this institution, since to translate it into "primary school" would carry the misleading implication that in some sense the *madrasah* is not a primary school.

school run by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Like the sekolah dasar, the madrasah has six standards, with students entering Class I at about six years of age. Each class is normally taught entirely by the one teacher, unless the numbers become excessive (say, sixty or more), in which case it is split and a second teacher engaged; this happens more frequently with Classes I and II than with more senior years, by which time class size has been decreased by the number of students who have dropped out. Hours and days of attendance are clearly set down and, within the normal limits of village usage, adhered to. Records of attendance are kept, and there is a set timetable of study. Indeed, only in the area of curriculum are there marked differences from the sekolah dasar. The madrasah gives substantial emphasis to Islamic religion, allowing it from 50 to 75 percent of class time, allocating the remainder to general education.⁹ This time allotment has two broad effects on the general education of madrasah pupils. It reduces drastically the amount of time spent on such subjects as arithmetic, geography, history (except for history of Islam), and science. It also substantially alters the language experience of the children as compared to that of children in the sekolah dasar. Indonesian government policy for the sekolah dasar is the enlightened one of emphasizing literacy in the regional language (which is nearly always the mother tongue) and learning Indonesian as a second language until the beginning of Class IV, at which time Indonesian becomes the medium of instruction. This means that those children who remain at the sekolah dasar until the end of Class VI have fair fluency in the national language. The situation is very different in the madrasah, where the time available for studying Indonesian is too limited to allow its ever being the medium of instruction; so the madrasah pupils continue their learning in the regional language (for the schools discussed here, Javanese).

3. *Madrasah ibtidaiyah negeri* are primary schools founded or (much more commonly) recognized and accepted by the government. These nationalized schools increase the use of Indonesian language and reduce the proportion of Arabic and religious teaching to not more than 40 percent.¹⁰ Teachers continue to be paid by the Ministry of Religion, and there is a subvention from the same source for running costs. Rarely, there may be money for a new building. But in the great majority of cases, previously existing buildings are used.

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With respect to school buildings, all kinds of madrasah are in a situation similar to that of the sekolah dasar. Their buildings are the result of village enterprise and have been completed without governmental aid. The government of Indonesia has never had sufficient funds for building the enormous number of schools which have been set up since independence. Enterprising villagers have often raised money for materials and provided labor for erecting schools. The story of the efforts of two village communities to build themselves madrasah

⁹In the villages included in this study, the figure varied from 70 percent for Classes I, IV, and V to 75 percent for Class III.

¹⁰There are a variety of figures given, most of them between 25 and 40 percent. We have been unable to confirm which percentage can be regarded as authoritative.

provides a wealth of information on the place these schools occupy in the thinking of Javanese villagers, and we shall now turn our attention to such an account.

II. The Story of Development

Salatiga is a merium-sized town in Central Java, about halfway between Solo and Semarang. It is a market town and educational and administrative center within the *kabupatèn* of Semarang. Except for the colder areas higher up the slopes of Mount Merbabu, the district is intensively cultivated and densely populated. Though there are schools in every village, the proportion of the school-age population enrolled appears by national standards to be low.¹¹

Desa Banyurejo is about two hours walking distance from Salatiga, through the paddy fields. Access by village roads is circuitous and involves a journey of some twenty kilometers. The desa residents live in some nine *dukuhan*, coherent clusters of houses with small-holding gardens around them which are separated from other *dukuhan* in most cases by paddy-field. Two of the *dukuhan*, Banyuayam and Banyulelo, are more zealously Muslim than other parts of the village, and a great deal of support for the madrasah comes from them. The term commonly used for devout people of this kind is the term which formerly was applied to students at the pondok, santri, and it is one which they sometimes use themselves. Their differences with the syncretist *abangan* are now widely understood among those who know something of Javanese society. What needs perhaps to be said again is that all Javanese are more or less syncretist; so an accurate conception of village cultural identity is one of a continuum between extreme santri orthodoxy at one end and extreme *abangan* distaste for Islam (even to the point of rejection) at the other, with most villagers closer to the center of the continuum than to either end of it.¹²

The other dimension of some importance is that of social conservatism. The villagers themselves recognize some of their number--those

¹¹Daroesman offers a series of maps which categorize each *kabupatèn* in the country into five levels of enrollment ratio, from 15.0 percent or over enrolled in the *sekolah dasar*, down to less than 9.0 percent. *Kabupatèn* Semarang is in the second lowest category (9-10.9 percent), along with isolated areas such as parts of Kalimantan. Ruth Daroesman, "An Analysis of the 1971 School Statistics of Indonesia" (Canberra: Duplicated, 1975), appendix. In villages like the first of those described below, this characteristic could well be a function of the number of children who attend madrasah instead of *sekolah dasar*. There are, however, indications that there may be a low rate of school attendance as such, since literacy rates for the Province of Central Java are among the lowest for the whole country (along with East Java, Bali, West Nusatenggara, South Sulawesi, and West Kalimantan). Within Java, the districts of Banyumas, Yogyakarta, and Salatiga, however, have higher literacy rates than some of the north coastal areas. Gavin W. Jones, "Religion and Education in Indonesia" (paper given at a conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, Melbourne, May 1975, duplicated), p. 35. [A revised version of Gavin W. Jones's paper was published in *Indonesia*, 22 (1976), pp. 19-56.--Ed.]

¹²For the purposes of this study, all potential informants were rated on some ten observable behaviors as indicators of degree of orthodoxy (for example, praying five times a day, personal reading of the Kuran, manner of conducting a *slametan*, and so on) and then charted horizontally on a graph.

with more education, with wider experience of traveling or working in other parts of the country, with a penchant for urban life style--as *moderèn*. In contrast, they view those whose education has been limited (commonly to three years in a village school), who can speak only Javanese, who never read newspapers, whose lives are much more bound by the physical and mental boundaries of the village, as *kolot*. Again, there is no clear dividing line: most villagers are somewhere along the continuum between these two extremes.¹³ There is no evident geographical grouping of *kolot* or *moderèn* in Banyurejo, as there is of *santri* and *abangan*.

* * *

Formal religious education in Dukuhan Banyuayam began in 1937, when one of the devout *santri*, Muhaemi,¹⁴ gathered some of the children together in the front yard of the mosque for regular religious instruction. They sat cross-legged on mats and wrote on low tables. Much of their time was spent in learning to enunciate Arabic and in chanting the ritual prayers from the Kuran. There were soon a hundred children attending each afternoon except Friday, and several *santri* leaders shared the tasks of teaching on an honorary basis. In 1950, the school

¹³In a similar manner, we rated all potential informants on relevant behavioral indicators, and charted them on the vertical dimension of the same graph. This resulted in a graph having four quarters--*santri-moderèn*, *santri-kolot*, *abangan-kolot*, and *abangan-moderèn*. By this means we were easily able to assure not only that our informants exemplified a wide diversity of village opinion, but also to check a sufficient balance of sources for crucial information.

¹⁴All names used in this paper, including those of the villages, are pseudonyms. To facilitate identification, all persons classified as nearer to the *abangan* side of the chart have names with the prefix "Su" and those nearer to the *santri* side the prefix "Mu." The list of major identities is as follows:

Muhadi	Young graduate of IAIN, resident in Banyurejo.
Muhaemi	Founder and first teacher of the Banyuayam madrasah.
Muhidin	One-time headmaster, later chairman of board of managers, Banyuayam madrasah.
Muhikwan	Teacher on the staff and contender for leadership of the Donolenggi madrasah.
Muhjik	Haji and one-time lurah of Donolenggi, who gave some of his land as <i>wakaf</i> for the building of a madrasah.
Muhlasi	Teacher and latterly headmaster of the Donolenggi madrasah.
Muhtari	Teacher and, since 1969, headmaster of Banyuayam madrasah.
Muhtarto	Part-time teacher and for a period in the early days manager of the Banyuayam madrasah. A senior village leader of some standing.
Muhyi	From the early 1960s one of the most active younger <i>santri</i> in Banyurejo. He initiated the short-lived madrasah <i>tsanawiyah</i> , was manager for some years, and acted as lurah of the village during an interregnum.
Munawar	Teacher at sekolah dasar, Donolenggi. A devout <i>santri</i> , he was one of the initiators of the madrasah in the village.
Sukaji	Lurah of Desa Banyurejo since 1967. Before that date teacher in the sekolah dasar there and part-time honorary teacher in the madrasah <i>tsanawiyah</i> .
Sutirto	Lurah of Donolenggi since the revolution.
Suyatno	Headmaster of Banyurejo sekolah dasar.

moved to the *pendopo* of an adjoining home. Although several of the children were attending the *sekolah dasar* in the mornings, many were not. It was therefore decided to include general subjects along with the instruction in religion, and the children learned some elementary arithmetic, geography, health, and Indonesian language. When the revolution began, some teachers and other key supporters joined the Republican forces, and other young men served outside of the army.¹⁵ An effort was made to continue at least the religious teaching in the evenings; but eventually even that could not be continued, and the school closed.¹⁶

As 1949 drew to a close, the revolution came to an end, many of the young men returned to the village, and the madrasah was reopened. Among these was Muhtarto, who returned to his voluntary work of supplementing the religious teaching with some general education. He also became school manager, and under his energetic leadership money was raised for a simple building, into which the madrasah, now grown to the full six classes, moved in 1955.

The land was donated as *tanah wakaf* (land given for religious purposes) by two of the wealthier *santri*, and a third gave a segment of paddy-field, the income from which helped to maintain a supply of essential equipment. The move into a building of its own was the occasion for a further important development. The madrasah began morning classes, thus forcing parents to make a choice between sending their children to the *sekolah dasar* and the madrasah. In so doing, the school was clearly declaring itself to be an alternative form of primary education vis-à-vis the *sekolah dasar*, thus bringing into the open an incipient rivalry between the two institutions--of which more later. As is customary in Java, the madrasah marked its change of role by adopting a new name, that of *Sekolah Rakjat Islam* (literally, People's Islamic School).¹⁷

The period of the first eight years of independence was one of rapidly increasing political awareness throughout the country. This was very evident in *Desa Banyurejo*. The *santri* aligned themselves almost to a man with the *Nahdatul Ulama* (NU), the traditionalist Javanese Muslim party, while the *abangan* moved rather less decisively towards the National Party (PNI) and, in greater numbers, the Communist Party (PKI). The madrasah was declared an affiliate of the educational section of NU, and applications were made for government assistance. Success in this effort was first achieved in 1957, when a graduate of the secondary teachers training school¹⁸ was appointed on a salary paid by the Department of Religion. Muhaemi, the founder, and Muhtarto continued their partnership on the board of management and as honorary teachers. The number of pupils continued to grow, even though a very

¹⁵Including some who left in order to quell the communist rebellion of 1948 at Madiun.

¹⁶All historical material included in this and the following pages is based upon data which has been checked with at least two informants, except for (a) matters of opinion which we ascribe to the holder; (b) a few points on which confirmation could not be obtained, which are indicated as such in the text or footnotes.

¹⁷This was not to be the last change of name. We shall refer to it throughout this paper as the madrasah.

¹⁸*Pendidikan Guru Agama*, customarily abbreviated to its initials PGA.

modest monthly fee was charged to help with purchase of chalk and other essential supplies.

But, as the years went by, younger men felt the need to assert themselves, and in 1963 one of these managed to take Muhaemi's place as chairman of the board of managers. Muhyi was twenty-five years of age. He came from another *desa* to Banyurejo when he married the daughter of one of the santri families there. He had spent several years in a pondok and was keenly interested in the madrasah. One of his first moves was to set up continuation classes for those who had graduated from Class VI and wished to study further. The effort (rather prematurely) was given the full title of an Islamic junior high school (*madrasah tsanawiyah*), and some twenty pupils were enrolled for afternoon classes with voluntary teachers. The lack of sufficiently qualified teachers who were willing to serve in an honorary capacity seems to have been a crucial disability. For whatever reasons, the venture did not last more than a few months.

But, as was soon to become evident, Muhyi's ambitions were more political than educational. His assumption of managerial responsibility caused considerable unhappiness among some of the older leaders. Both Muhaemi and Muhtarto gave up teaching, though the latter continued as a member of the board of managers. Muhyi, undeterred, appointed a newly arrived teacher, Muhidin, to the headmastership. Muhidin was twenty-seven years of age and had been away from the village for some eight years of his youth studying in a number of pondok in the Solo region and East Java. He was an active member of NU and assumed chairmanship of the Banyurejo branch of the party at about this time. The partnership was not a happy one and, within two years, Muhidin was expressing his misgivings about Muhyi's leadership. The situation was exacerbated in 1965, when the *lurah* of the village died and Muhyi was appointed to the position on a caretaker basis. The *lurah* is the head of government and administration within the village, a position of considerable influence and potential power. For the next two years, Muhyi's energies were directed to establishing santri hegemony in the *desa*, an effort which culminated in his candidacy in the election for the permanent position as *lurah* in 1967. He was defeated in the second round of voting by Sukaji, a political moderate with PNI background. It might have been hoped that this result would release Muhyi to concentrate on his responsibilities to the madrasah. But disaffection with his leadership grew, and later that year at a meeting of the management committee he was roundly criticized as being inefficient and incompetent in managing funds. Some of the supporters had given newly harvested rice to the building fund. When money was subsequently needed for repairs, it was found that Muhyi had lent the rice to some families who had already eaten it. There was no suggestion of misappropriation, as the borrowers recognized their obligation to repay; but they could not do so at that particular time. Muhyi was replaced as chairman by Muhidin, who thus became both chairman of the board of managers and head of the school. He does not appear to have enjoyed the experience, and within two years he had handed over the headmastership to the most senior of his male teachers, Muhtari, who still holds the post. This choice is indicative of one of the constant and pressing problems of the madrasah--the supply of qualified and competent teachers.

Muhtari had completed six years primary education in both the madrasah and the *sekolah dasar*, and later had joined the staff of the

former as a volunteer teacher. In 1967 the Department of Religion had sponsored a three month training course for such teachers and, along with the remainder of his unqualified colleagues, Muhtari had attended and graduated. There seen to have been no failures. Virtually all those who had full-time positions and graduated from this course were accredited by the Department of Religion and entered on its payroll. Muhtari could therefore--in this limited but correct sense--be classified as a qualified teacher. But these qualifications bear negligible comparison with those of some of his colleagues who had spent four years in a secondary teacher training school (PGA) and graduated successfully. Why then were these not considered by the board of managers when Muhidin vacated the headmastership? Because they were women. Had it been the sekolah dasar, a woman might have been promoted, for there are a number of female principals in the villages. However, the santri would not entertain such a notion.

Nor is the capacity of the principal the only problem being called into question. Muhtari appears to be a cautious man who has learned to live with his peers in the santri community without drawing undue criticism upon himself. One of our better-educated santri informants was critical of the first few years of his headmastership, denoting it a period of declining enthusiasm, and citing the very poor record of attendance and personal discipline of two of the honorary teachers as evidence of the decline. Again, it was about this time that one of Muhtarto's sons failed his Class VI exam and, in spite of his long-standing support for and involvement in the school, Muhtarto moved his children to the sekolah dasar. Whether there has actually been a decline from the earlier days, or whether the Banyurejo community are raising their expectations, is hard to determine. It is an issue to which we shall return.¹⁹

Whether or not they are entirely satisfied with the quality of the teaching, the santri have continued to show considerable loyalty to the institution of the madrasah. In 1967, a madrasah diniyah (giving only religious teaching) was begun in Dukuhan Banyulelo, and those Banyulelo children who had been attending the madrasah in Banyuayam became the nucleus of the new institution. Classes were conducted only in the afternoon, with voluntary teachers whose attendance was erratic. This irregularity in turn diminished the diligence of the pupils. It was the kind of situation which might well have occurred in the early days of the madrasah at Banyuayam. But by now the leaders of that community had higher expectations or were more sensitive to possible criticism from their abangan neighbors. So they consulted with the local authorities of the Department of Religion in Salatiga and found, happily, that there was a regulation prohibiting two madrasah in one village. The prospect of losing their new institution did not occasion delight among the Banyulelo community; so there was much discussion,

¹⁹There is thus little of the cultivated urbanity which Castles found at the *pondok* at Gontor (Lance Castles, "Notes on the Islamic School at Gontor," *Indonesia*, 1 [April 1966], pp. 30-45). But then, this is a primary school, based only in the village, and there are no leaders of the quality and devotion of Zakarsji and his fellow kiyayi. Were one of the graduates of Gontor to come and live in Banyurejo, he would doubtless accept uncomfortable responsibility of membership of the madrasah board of managers as part of his vocation to struggle for santri hegemony. But he would be tempted to despair the lack of vision among his peers and the lack of scholarship among the teachers.

both official and unofficial, leading to a compromise. The madrasah at Banyulelo became madrasah ibtidaiyah (i.e., its curriculum was modified to the pattern of the madrasah in Banyuayam), and its teachers came under the direction of the one board of management. These children who proceeded beyond Standard III transferred at that point to the Banyuayam school. In return for this surrender of their pride of ownership, the Banyulelo community have the right to nominate an assistant manager who is responsible for raising funds for a permanent building and for equipment.

By 1970 the old building in Banyuayam was falling apart from age and from internal pressure of mounting enrollments. It was therefore demolished, and the classes moved in ones and twos into the *pendopo* of nearby homes pending the construction of a new building. It was decided that the time had come for a building of better quality than that of the past, and so plans were drawn for cement-block walls in place of the plaited bamboo or timber which is usual for village buildings. There was an appeal for donations in cash or kind, and the wealthier *santri* showed their customary willingness to set an example for the poorer villagers by allocating set percentages of their rice harvest and by donations of timber. Some paddy-field was made over to the madrasah as *wakaf*, and the foundations of the new building were down within a few months. But the walls did not follow, in spite of continued exhortations in the Friday sermon and at weekly prayer meetings.

By 1972 it was apparent that new ways of raising funds would have to be found. Some vague hopes of government assistance were entertained. The *lurah*, though himself a former teacher in the *sekolah dasar*, with only a very limited commitment to orthodoxy, was a more immediate and hopeful possibility. He initiated three contributions: two years' harvest from a section of the village's paddy-field, a cash donation from the village's own Development Fund, and (until the completion of the building) the produce from a segment of the paddy-field which is owned by the village and is harvested by the *lurah* in his own right. Even so, there was still a considerable gap, with no banks or housing societies standing by with offers of help. The Banyuayam community therefore decided to make a sacrifice related to one of the most valued of village institutions, the *khol slametan*.²⁰

This *slametan* is performed at set intervals after the death of a relative as an act of commemoration and to restore morale. Since 1972, every time that one of the Banyurejo *santri* has occasion to hold a *khol slametan*, he sends out his invitations not for the following evening in his home, as is customary, but for the following Friday morning at the mosque. There, either a little before or immediately after the midday worship, the *slametan* ceremonial is performed; at the time that the meal would normally begin, the host presents to one of the managers of the madrasah the money which he would have spent on food. This practice had resulted in the accumulation within twelve months of Rp. 150,000, by village standards a considerable sum.

²⁰This ritual meal, eaten on all occasions of personal or social import, is for most Javanese both a source and a seal of social harmony. Among the more orthodox, it is true, the prayers and invocations which precede the consumption of food have much less reference to ancestors and local spirits and much more to Allah and his Word; but the *slametan* itself continues.

Another religious usage of considerable sanctity has also, it seems, been displaced in the cause of the madrasah building fund.²¹ This is the great Muslim obligation of all who can afford to do so to make the *haj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca. During the late 1960s, a number of the more well-to-do Banyuwai citizens were putting aside an amount from each paddy harvest towards the cost of making the haj and depositing it in Salatiga with an NU foundation for encouraging pilgrimages.²² When, after several years of financial prudence, they inquired how soon they could plan to make the haj, they were told that there was still a very considerable sum to be paid. They were highly indignant, and privately accused the officials concerned of milking their funds. Whether this was in fact the case or whether the rapid inflation of those years ate up the increase in their deposits, it is impossible to say. But the net effect was to convince the would-be pilgrims that they would do as well to devote their savings to a godly purpose which was closer to home and more apparently capable of early fulfillment. So the building fund has again benefited, and progress during 1973 was sufficient to allow for the completion of the walls. At a *gotong royong* gathering which occurred during our stay in the village, the roof trusses were laid and, with an appropriate amount of accompanying speech-making and communal eating, the madrasah building was brought a clear stage nearer completion.

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So much for the development of the madrasah in Desa Banyurejo. Not all village communities are wealthy enough or orthodox enough to have reached such a level of achievement. In order to widen and balance perspectives, we offer a second account which is less of a success story.

Desa Donolenggi is substantially farther from Salatiga than is Banyurejo, and farther from the main road which connects it with the cities of Central Java. It is a much smaller village than Banyurejo, both in land area and in number of inhabitants. Its general level of wealth appears to be somewhat below that of Banyurejo, though we have no precise indicators to support this impressionistic assessment. The village itself consists of only three dukuhan, two of them contiguous and forming one center of population, and the third only a short distance away across a small stream--this means a much more geographically coherent village than Banyurejo, though not, as this account will show, without its social cleavages.

The madrasah in Donolenggi has been operating only for a decade. It was on the Muslim festival of Idul Fitri in 1964 that devout villagers gathering in one of the village mosques decided, with high hopes and a common mind, that the time had come to found a madrasah in Donolenggi. The main supporter of the proposition was Munawar, a diligent and deeply religious teacher from the sekolah dasar. He was elected chairman of a committee of six, and it was decided to call

²¹We have this account from one of our abangan informants and we have not been successful in getting confirmation from santri sources. But the story has an inherent plausibility and is therefore included.

²²This foundation was called Yamu'alim, or in full, Yayasan Mu'awanah lil Muslimin.

the new school Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Bintang Sembilan (Primary Madrasah of the Nine Stars²³). Munawar sought out four members of the congregation who had attended an Islamic lower secondary school, and urged on them the obligation to share the knowledge they had gained by offering their service as voluntary teachers. A number of children were gathered, and the school began operations in the afternoon hours. Its emphasis on religion and associated language study led to its being known in the village as "Sekolah Arab." It was in effect a madrasah diniyah.

With luck, the school might have become an established institution, drawn substantial santri support, and, with the extension of government aid in 1967, have rapidly reached a standard comparable with that of the Banyurejo madrasah--had other factors not upset the hopes of the founders. As it was, the madrasah fell prey to that bane of so many voluntary associations, the clash of ambitious and frustrated personalities. Two men in particular have played a central role. Muhlasi became a teacher in a madrasah in Sumberejo, a neighboring village, and while there divorced his wife. Though the right of a husband to divorce is stoutly supported by orthodox Muslims and is very common in Javanese society, divorce is nevertheless nearly always received with social regret. And Muhlasi's wife belonged to a Sumberejo family. So he moved to Donolengi, where he took a room in the home of one of the santri families and did some volunteer teaching of the Kuran to some of the children. But his relations with his host rapidly worsened, due, it was said, to his taking the daughter of the house to bed. For a year or two he moved in and out of the village. He was present at the meeting in 1964 which decided to found the madrasah and was elected to the committee of management--he could, after all, claim to have been the founder of a predecessor to the madrasah. However, Munawar appears to have deliberately avoided inviting Muhlasi to join the teaching staff in 1964. But in the succeeding years, Munawar was less successful. Muhlasi did not have the general respect accorded to Munawar, but other factors worked in his favor. He had taught religion before, he was not otherwise engaged, and he was determined.

Muhlasi was not, however, the only contender. Muhikwan also wanted to teach in the madrasah. His educational attainments were even less than those of Muhlasi. He appears to have attended the Idul Fitri meeting which inaugurated the madrasah, but he was not invited to become one of the voluntary teachers. The next few years were to see him very actively maneuvering to get a place for himself. From the confused and utterly contradictory accounts we have had of those years, it is impossible to be sure exactly what happened except that there was continual infighting within the circle of santri supporters. It reached a crucial level in 1967, when the UGA course made it possible for even the minimally lettered to obtain accreditation as a teacher. Thereafter, Munawar gave up the unequal struggle, and concentrated on his work in the sekolah dasar. Muhlasi and Muhikwan have continued to run the madrasah in an uneasily tense partnership, each claiming exclusive credit for every minor achievement. Muhlasi is recognized as principal.²⁴ They are assisted by two comparably qualified but less assertive younger men.

²³The nine stars are a distinctive part of the symbol of the NU party.

²⁴This probably has nothing to do with his competence. He is a strange and rather frightening man. His reputation among the santri is for a considerable

Besides staff, the other necessity of the madrasah has been a building. For the time being, the owners of the houses used by the sekolah dasar agreed to make the same rooms available in afternoon hours for the use of madrasah classes. The santri set about to found a permanent building. First of all, there was a gift of land. Haji Muhjik, one-time lurah of the village but now retired for many years and not far from death, announced in 1968 that as part of his wakaf (religious benefaction) he was deeding over a piece of vacant land close to the houses then being shared by the two schools for daily classes. It looked like the answer to everyone's prayers. But there were problems. The site, apparently so conveniently situated, was contiguous to a cemetery. What of the possible influence of the spirits of the departed on the young? It was not a matter which should have bothered an orthodox Muslim; but belief in the effective power of spirits is pervasive in most Javanese villages, and even the strictest santri must have pondered the question. He might himself scorn such evidences of abangan thought among the devout; but he could not doubt that its existence could reduce madrasah enrollments. Sutirto, the lurah, has suggested one solution to the problem. There are presently two mosques in the village; they serve factional differences within Islam rather than geographical necessity. There would be no need to hesitate about building a mosque next to the cemetery. Why not build a new mosque at this central site on the donated land and use one of the other sites for a madrasah? This seemingly logical solution appears merely to have increased division among the santri, many of whom are in any case averse to taking advice on a matter of such religious import from a very abangan lurah.

Nor was the proximity of the cemetery the only problem associated with the piece of land. Its title was also in dispute. The background of this matter dates from the early 1930s, when Haji Muhjik was lurah of Donolengi. He borrowed a large sum from a bank against a mortgage on his land and home. For reasons which appear hazily disreputable, he was unable to repay, and his securities were sold at public auction by order of the bank. He was saved the further public humiliation of dispossession by the action of his younger brother (an officer of police in a town near Semarang), who secured the purchase and left Muhjik to occupy and use the property. Just why, some thirty or more years later, the aged *haji* should declare that the spot next to the cemetery was being given to the madrasah is difficult to understand; his brother has since challenged the action and claimed ownership. Muhjik himself is no longer alive to explain his action.

It was not surprising that some of the santri had moved to acquire other land for the madrasah. Negotiations had been initiated for a piece of suitable land near one of the mosques. It was reputed to be worth Rp. 30,000 but available for purchase for a madrasah building at Rp. 20,000. That was still a considerable sum to be raised in a small village, and it was clear that the santri were divided and rather confused about their next move.

In the meantime, the appearance of parity between the sekolah dasar and the madrasah was about to be further dispelled. The Indone-

determination of will, personal cruelty (verging at times on sadism), and the occasional use of black magic. We found ourselves consistently uneasy in his presence.

sian government, as part of Repelita I, had given a grant for the erection of a sekolah dasar building. The foundations were being laid, and by late 1974 the building should have been complete and in use. Sutirto, the lurah, had foreseen the chagrin which this would cause among the santri, and had, as indicated above, tried to find a means to reduce their sense of frustrated bitterness. But there was no doubt that his own educational preferences were for the more secular sekolah dasar, which he saw as having a wide social aim rather than supporting factionalism.

Nor can one realistically hope for a marked growth of support for the madrasah while the quality of the education it gives is clearly inferior.²⁵ Most of the teachers have had minimal education themselves--to Class III primary and in one case a few more years in a madrasah. They try to teach all material by oral repetition, in unison and pupil by pupil. The latter is sometimes assessed, but there is no attempt to assist an individual whose performance is markedly inferior. They attempt to retain control by sharp command, and, when this is ineffective, by shouting and occasionally by slapping. But most seem to have accepted a bare modicum of order as the best they can hope for--children leave the room largely at will, they play with one another, and they are erratically absent. Nor do the teachers themselves exemplify better standards--they neglect their records, fail to assign homework, arrive late, leave early, stay at home, even snooze in class. There are frequent unscheduled holidays. None of the out-of-school activities which are conducted for sekolah dasar pupils (scouting, handicrafts, community service) are ever promoted by the madrasah. Pupil achievement is not high, but all are promoted at the end of every year. There are dropouts, as at all village schools; but no one knows how many, since records are not kept. A number have been withdrawn by their parents and sent to the madrasah at Boyosari, some three to four kilometers away, where there is a madrasah tsanawiyah which takes children up to Class IX. The headmaster of the latter institution rates the level of achievement of students who come to his school from the madrasah at Donolenggi as very poor in general subjects and extremely poor in religious subjects.

Since many children attend both schools, comparisons are inevitable and are widely known. Some of the teachers on the staff of the sekolah dasar (especially Munawar and his wife) have attempted to offer advice; but neither evident santri identification or Javanese discretion have served to make such offers acceptable, presumably because the potential recipients are too conscious of their own inferiority to be able to receive it with dignity. Meantime, sekolah dasar teachers have had to face the problems which this situation poses for their own programs. Many of their pupils face a daily routine of sekolah dasar in the morning, madrasah in the afternoon, and Kuran-reading in the mosque in the evening. These children suffer from a confusion of standards

²⁵Our opportunities for direct observation during our stay in the village were limited, and we were specifically warned that there were some special efforts being made to impress the visitors. (We did indeed pay a brief call one day, as a matter of courtesy. All blackboards carried extensive exercises in Arabic, most of it written in script too small for any except perhaps Class V to read without strain.) So the assessment which follows is based upon the comments of a number of our informants, especially on the things said (and on occasion left unsaid) by teachers and pupils of the madrasah.

and from day-long pressure. So the sekolah dasar teachers have decided that children in Class VI must concentrate their energies and for that year may not attend the madrasah.

Even so, a sense of injustice rankles. Why should the madrasah teachers be receiving the same salary as their sekolah dasar counterparts for such manifestly inferior work? Why in fact should such men be recognized as teachers? The source of their qualification is indeed one of the crucial points of weakness in any attempt to claim parity of status for madrasah schooling. As mentioned above, it was in 1967 that the Department of Religion sponsored a series of special training courses for teachers of religion (the *Urusan Guru Agama*). These were attended by teachers and potential teachers of religion in sekolah dasar and all madrasah staff who did not already qualify as teachers. At the end of the three month course, a certificate of graduation was issued, and the recipient was considered to be a trained teacher. This seems to have been literally the case, regardless of diligence or proven competence. Indeed, according to widely held opinion, the necessary condition of graduation was the payment of a suitably substantial sum to the appropriate official. Farmers even sold a precious cow to raise the requisite cash. Thence derives the title with which UGA graduates have been irreverently dubbed among village people: *guru lembu* (literally, cow teacher). Is it any wonder that sekolah dasar teachers, most of them with ten to twelve years of education-plus-training behind them, feel irritated?²⁶ Why, they ask, should an institution staffed by such ill-equipped persons receive government recognition and support? Why should it be regarded as an alternative source of education for village children? These, indeed, are questions to be pondered by more than the staff of the sekolah dasar. They are questions to which we now propose some tentative answers by suggesting some of the motivations which have led the santri in those villages to devote so much time and energy to the madrasah.

III. The Madrasah as an Educational Arm of the Santri

We shall delineate the role of the madrasah, as it is conceived by its sponsors and supporters, in terms of three goals: religious renewal, political support, and cultural struggle.

The Goal of Religious Renewal

It is a platitude of the devotees of all religions that the young of today's generation lack the conviction of their fathers in the faith. And, one is tempted to add, it always has been so, most notably in times of social change. The diligence in worship, enthusiasm for reading the scriptures, and willingness to give time and material wealth to

²⁶From our observations over two periods in these villages, the sekolah dasar teachers were strict in matters of attendance and punctuality. It is sometimes helpful to remember that observations made in one place may not be true for another. Tarwotjo conducted a study in a more isolated area of Central Java. None of the teachers appointed to the sekolah dasar at Harapan lived in the village. They were very erratic in attendance and punctuality. Tarwotjo, "The Case of the Village of Harapan: A Preliminary Study of a Village in Central Java, Indonesia, for Educational Planning and Village Development" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1971).

building a synagogue, church, or mosque which characterizes the established fifty-year-old seems much less evident in the questing and questioning fifteen-year-old. If the young are not to be totally lost, they must be instructed in the truth as it was revealed of old. If only they apply themselves to the study of Torah, Bible, or Kuran, and to its interpretation by the great leaders of earlier ages, these restless young persons may see for themselves that there is a sound basis for right behavior. Other religions, new or old, will be shunned, and secularism kept at bay.

There is no doubt that such concern motivates a sizeable number of santri parents. We were repeatedly told that the distinction between the two primary schools was that the sekolah dasar prepares children for this life while the madrasah prepares them for the life to come. When we tried to get them to spell out the content of that cliché, they tended to offer a list of moral and religious obligations ranging from a preference for work rather than play to a devotion to the Prophet, his family, and his teachings. Muhadi, who lives in Banyurejo and is a recent graduate of a tertiary IAIN, criticized this tendency to see the object of religious education in terms of a collection of obligations, the fulfillment of which would at best bring a reward and at worst avoidance of sinning. For him, the aim of Islamic education is "to shape men who are learned, who have vocational skills, and who possess a faith which is strong and is obedient in the fulfillment of its religious duties." In his opinion, neither the parents nor the present teachers of the Banyurejo madrasah see their goals in such terms.

It is important to keep in mind that the alternative to a religious education in the madrasah is not an entirely secular education in the sekolah dasar. By law, the latter is required to provide for religious teaching, normally by a teacher who specializes in the religion of the child's home and who is certified and paid by the Department of Religion. In larger population centers the department employs Christian and Buddhist (and in Bali, Hindu) teachers. But in the villages of Java, the teaching is virtually always Islamic, with the proviso that non-Muslim parents have the right to withdraw their children from the class at these times. Suyatno, the headmaster of the sekolah dasar at Banyurejo, who is Christian, has even reminded the Christian and Buddhist pupils in his school of their right; but up to the present none have availed themselves of it. Like their counterparts from nominally Muslim homes, they have a program of from two thirty-minute periods per week in Classes I and II to four forty-minute periods per week in Classes IV, V, and VI, which deals with general moral obligations, the faith of Islam (both historical and contemporary), and the teaching of the Kuran. Most Westerners probably regard this as a very adequate ration of religious teaching. Yet the santri consistently criticize it as inadequate.

Children who attend only the sekolah dasar, the santri consistently assert, are less concerned about religion and are less aware of their moral and religious obligations. Since on the whole those who do not attend the madrasah are those whose parents are more abangan in outlook, whose domestic upbringing is less impregnated with Islamic fervor, it is impossible to say that the difference can be attributed to the school attended. Looking for some independent confirmation, we asked for an opinion from Muhtarto, who was at one period a very active

supporter of the Banyurejo madrasah but has in recent years sent the younger members of his family to the sekolah dasar. He said that he did not consider the amount of instruction in religion at the sekolah dasar to be sufficient, for it did not include any instruction in Kuran reading. For this reason, he has his children attend evening sessions in the mosque,²⁷ and he gives them additional home instruction.

One wonders whether santri allegations of inadequacy would continue if the teaching were of better quality. In the case of Donolengi, most of the deficiencies attributed to madrasah teachers were also alleged against the religion teacher in the sekolah dasar--he was lazy, careless, and ineffective. One year the marks he allocated to Class VI students were so discrepant from those they gained in other subjects that the class teacher (herself a devout santri) took the matter to the headmaster on the grounds that several children would fail if their marks for religion class were not reassessed. It was, the headmaster himself told us, a clear case of letting the pupils take the blame for the teacher's incompetence. This particular matter has now been placed under the headmaster's jurisdiction. However, neither a subsequent period of study at a secondary training school (from which, it appears, he failed to graduate), nor a rather cursory visit from an inspector of the Department of Religion have helped improve this teacher's performance. The situation at Banyurejo is not as extreme. But Suyatno, the headmaster, does not consider that religion is well taught in his school.

There is, however, evidence that the santri are concerned with more than religious education as such--that political and cultural issues sometimes arise.

The Goal of Political Hegemony

When the small group of santri gathered in the mosque in Donolengi on Idrul Fitri in 1964, they decided that the madrasah which they were founding would be named the Madrasah of the Nine Stars. In so doing, they were explicitly declaring what they hoped would become an implicit reality, a close connection between their embryo school and Nahdatul Ulama.

The NU has always professed special interest in education. For many years, the post of Minister of Religion, with responsibility for the whole system of madrasah institutions throughout the country, was given to a member of NU.²⁸ Party structure appears to reflect this interest. There are four major divisions: Tanfidiyah, for political activity; Syuriah, to extend the influence of Islamic law in Indonesia; Mabarar, for social reform and the administration of almsgiving; and Ma'arif, for the promotion of education. In practice, nearly all effort tends to be concentrated on the first two. Many of the members of the political and legal committees double up on membership for those on social issues and education, but very little energy is given to these latter at regional or district levels of party organization.

²⁷This activity, known in Indonesian as *mengaji*, means to learn to read aloud from the Arabic script in which the Kuran is taught.

²⁸The present minister, who is a member of the Muhamadiyah, is an exception.

Indeed, in some places there has been a tendency for the party to claim patronage of a madrasah in a village solely because it has been initiated and supported by NU members, when hopeful santri might have expected it to have offered its services through Ma'arif in the first place and thereafter to have roused local party members to support it.

We certainly found little evidence of tangible support in these villages. Muhtari, the present head of the Banyurejo madrasah, said that he had a donation of readers and administrative materials from Ma'arif some years ago, but that it did not prove to be a continuing source of support. None was ever received by the Donolengi madrasah.

Yet many villagers in their thinking link NU with the madrasah. This identification may in part be a tendency to see the santri in terms of a cluster of associated behavior--politically as members of the NU, religiously as devout practicing Muslims, culturally as eschewing *wayang* and other Javanese usages, and educationally as insisting on schooling their youngsters at the madrasah. Occasionally, it is said, abangan parents send their children to the madrasah as insurance against possible accusations of their having been connected with the PKI. This must surely have been true in 1966 and 1967. We saw some signs of such pressure in another village, Leles, in 1970, where the santri opened a branch of the madrasah in the most remote hamlet among a population acknowledged to have been entirely PKI. Accepting this offer of schooling on their doorstep, they were led to understand, might be taken as a sign of political repentance.

Whatever may have been the situation in the 'sixties, present governmental policies give little opportunity for political payoff. More than one of our santri informants mentioned the removal of political parties from the village scene and their replacement by monopoly--with the polite implication that since the NU had done little to forward the work of the madrasah in past years, its removal would in no way constitute a setback to present programs. Indeed, one sensed, the true role of the madrasah would seem to be in its influence on cultural norms rather than on political choices.

The Goal of Cultural Struggle

In these villages, as in most of those in the area, two primary schools exist, each claiming to give an elementary education to children in the age range six to twelve years. These schools compete for accommodations, financial support, and pupils. They have differing curricula, thereby mediating different cultural ideals. Unlike most Western peoples, the Javanese do not commend competitiveness for its own sake--indeed they are often loath to admit that it exists; so the evidence for rivalry is not always clear, though it is real enough.

Accommodation is the first area in which competing claims are evident. In very few villages have central government funds been available for buildings--if the village community wanted a school, it had to find a place for it to operate. Donolengi has never felt itself able to raise the funds for a building. But there are a few homes with large pendopo suitable for use as classrooms, and these have been made available for use by the sekolah dasar in the mornings and by the

madrasah in the afternoon.²⁹ In a village which is not wealthy enough to afford separate accommodations, this would seem to be a sensible rationalization of scarce resources. But it has also been a source of irritation from time to time, especially to sekolah dasar teachers. Calendars hung on the wall have been torn, attendance lists defaced, sporting equipment damaged, and desk tops gouged with pen-knives. The matter has been referred with all courtesy to the headmaster of the madrasah, and assurances of innocence returned. The acts of minor vandalism have continued, and the sekolah dasar staff have no doubt that they have been perpetrated during the afternoon hours of occupancy by madrasah classes, when lack of the most elementary pedagogical skill on the part of madrasah teachers has both created the atmosphere of boredom which breeds such behavior and has failed to take any effective subsequent action to discourage repetition. Our own inquiries confirm this.

That situation is about to come to an end. As noted above, a subvention from the central government has made it possible to begin building a new school for the sekolah dasar, and it should have been finished before the end of 1974. This will have left the madrasah with the possibility of opening as a morning school, and forcing the parents to make a choice between sending their children to one school or the other. That watershed in the educational life of the village took place in 1956 at Banyurejo, when the madrasah moved into a building of its own for the first time. As a consequence a substantial number of children who had previously attended the sekolah dasar in the morning and the madrasah in the afternoon shifted to exclusive attendance at the latter--especially children from santri families in Banyayam. Some pressure appears to have been exerted to prevent this decline in sekolah dasar enrollment, to the extent--according to one of our informants--that the matter had to be taken outside the village to the *kecamatan* for resolution. Thereafter, Banyurejo parents came to accept the necessity for a choice. For many parents, their identification as santri or non-santri has been marked enough to make the decision an easy and obvious one. For a few (like Muhtarto) a wider-ranging awareness of the implications of primary education for their children's future life has made the choice a difficult one. We shall return to their dilemma and its implications.

There are other reasons for doubting if Muhlasi and his fellow teachers at the Donolengi madrasah will commit themselves to such a trial of strength. They cannot be unaware of the low regard which most villagers hold for their classes, even those villagers whose only criterion of educational quality is regularity of teacher attendance and punctuality of beginning class. Ibu Munawar's orthodoxy and religious zeal are unquestioned, and she supported her husband completely when the madrasah was founded. But as teacher of Class VI in the sekolah dasar she has supported the headmaster's insistence that children in the final year of primary education should concentrate their energies and should not attend madrasah classes in the afternoon. Muhlasi has had to accept this, and there is consequently no Class VI in the madrasah. The few pupils who have been enrolled only in the madrasah and wish to continue have transferred to the well-respected madrasah in neighboring Boyosari.

²⁹About half of the madrasah's enrollment also attends the sekolah dasar, where they constitute about one-third of the total.

In such situations, the lurah is necessarily involved in the tension. As the governmental head of the community, he fulfills a role which is still seen by many as having constant pastoral responsibility for the well-being of all the people. Though himself having attended a Dutch-language secondary school in the 1930s, Sutirto of Donolengi does not appear to rate education high on the list of development goals for his village. He has been called in from time to time to mediate in the disagreements which madrasah building projects have raised and is presently the nonactive patron (*pelindung*) of the building committee. For the rest, he concentrates on other issues. Sukaji, the lurah of Banyurejo, was a teacher at the village sekolah dasar prior to his election, and his concern for education has been a constant one. Though several members of his family would be considered santri, the devout of Banyuwangi do not regard Sukaji as one of them and therefore unlikely to concern himself very much with the well-being of the madrasah--he is after all a PNI man and a former sekolah dasar teacher. There is no doubt that Sukaji has been much concerned about the quality of teaching in the madrasah, and he has on occasion been approached confidentially by some of the more perceptive villagers asking him as a leader with professional experience to do something to improve the situation. His only actions to date have been donations to the building fund mentioned above and occasional private advice to parents who seek it, recommending that they send their children to the sekolah dasar. He is in a difficult position, for several of the santri leaders were candidates in the election which gave him the position of lurah seven years ago--notably Muhyi who led on the first count of votes and still seems less than fully resigned to his defeat. Any intervention in the day-to-day running of the madrasah would be seen as a considerable personal threat by Muhtari, whose lack of professional status based on either qualification or competence renders him notably insecure. He would be very likely to accuse Sukaji of trying to undermine the religious objectives of the madrasah; and for all Sukaji's political moderation and disciplined acumen of recent years, the accusation would likely appeal to the frustrated santri.

It does indeed seem that many of the santri are prepared to tolerate lower standards of teaching and other educational disadvantages for the sake of the substantial amount of time and attention given to Islam in the madrasah. We shall discuss some of the educational implications of this allocation later. For the present, it is sufficient to note what might be called its symbolic and associational value for many santri parents. Their children cannot of course make any sense of the Kuran for themselves, nor can they understand more than the occasional word or two of written or spoken Arabic. But they are engaged in writing the sacred script in which Allah revealed his truth to the Prophet, and in learning to read a little of it for themselves. Surely this close association with the tools of sacred revelation could only be beneficial. In so doing, they are being kept away from the temptations of wayang and the whole range of idolatrous and immoral stories and songs which it sustains and purveys. Teachers in the sekolah dasar seem to have a deplorable taste for these and frequently teach them to the children in their classes. In the madrasah, such unsavory influences are kept at bay, and the young have their feet set in the way of piety. If they persist, they may in time deserve to be called santri, students of true religion. The struggle is to be waged as much in terms of cultural norms as of religious doctrines, and in this respect the sekolah dasar with its tolerant pluralism is a place to be shunned.

This, however, is not the limit of the sekolah dasar's cultural pluralism. It has also been the willing mediator of Indonesian nationalism, democratic socialism, economic development, and a whole syndrome of contemporary values which are part of a cosmopolitan extranational world view. These have come to the children in differing degrees according to the political emphases of constitutional democrats, Sukarnists, or politicians of the New Order. They have come through the many filters of *aliran* loyalty and personalities of individual headmasters and class teachers. They have come more readily because of the fluency of sekolah dasar teachers in Indonesian, which makes them more open to a variety of extraregional influences. The teachers have had more general education, so they are less exclusively rooted to the village as a total cultural environment. This has in its turn given the student who has completed six years in the sekolah dasar a greater taste for urban ways of life, for the cinema, pop songs, and Western clothing styles. Against these intrusions, the madrasah stands as a mediator of the old and proven ways of life, Javanese but not abangan, religious but not idolatrous.

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Reference has been made earlier to our use of two continua for the selection of informants--santri-abangan and kolot-moderèn. Identification of the two primary schools with the dimensions of the former is constantly apparent. There are, however, signs that they also tend to be differentiated from one another in terms of their social conservatism, that the madrasah is (for all the comparative recentness of its growth) a kolot institution, while the sekolah dasar mediates a more moderèn view of life and society. This is hardly surprising. The wider curriculum of the sekolah dasar includes a great deal more about the modern world, much of it mediated in the language of contemporary nationalism taught by people who have had at least a few years of their training in a larger urban center. The curriculum of the madrasah centers itself on a religious tradition, not as it is presently struggling with those same contemporary realities, but as it was mediated years ago by kiyayi of an older generation; and those who presently teach in the madrasah do not have the equipment nor in most cases the personal security to deal with the challenges of social change.

IV. Tensions

But the tensions which beset those who support the madrasah are not confined to their awareness of a continuing struggle--religious, political, and cultural--against the inheritors of abangan syncretism. The most sharply felt tensions are those within the santri community itself, i.e., conflicts over the nature and purposes of the madrasah. These relate to three aspects of its identity--the sources of its financial support, the program of training offered to its pupils, and the goal of its distinctive curriculum. In dealing with each of these aspects there are signs of strain and of an unwillingness on the part of a few of the orthodox to continue to support the institution merely because it is there. We shall look first at the most external of these aspects, the sources of financial support.

Nationalization or Independence

The Ministry of Religion has a section concerned with religious education. It has been the goal of this section for several years to improve the quality of madrasah. Its funds for this purpose have been limited. A part of these funds has been set aside for the full support of a few select madrasah which thereby qualify for the title "national madrasah" (*madrasah negeri*). In order to be accepted, the institution has to meet certain building specifications and to be entirely staffed by qualified teachers. Since such adoption means a generous allocation of funds, and therefore the end of penny-pinching for the managers of the madrasah concerned, there is keen competition.

While we were gathering data in Desa Banyurejo in February 1974, the long-delayed construction of the new madrasah there reached the point where the roof was ready to be pitched, and a special Saturday morning gathering combined gotong-royong with speech-making and a communal meal. The official from the district branch of the Department of Religion's Education Secretariat was among those invited to speak. After the customary introductory comments, he went on to congratulate the local community on their diligence and farsightedness in constructing a building of exceptional durability. It was, he said, good enough to become a madrasah negeri, and he would make a recommendation to his superiors accordingly. Immediate reaction from those present was muted, as is proper among well-mannered Javanese. We attempted during the next few days to learn the reactions of some of our informants and were left with an impression of hesitant noncommitment. There had, it seems, been no firm intention to seek such a status for the madrasah; so the offer had caught the santri community unprepared. The most specific point of caution was raised by Muhidin, the chairman of the management committee, and again by Muhtari, the headmaster. If the government took over the appointment of teachers, Muhidin argued, there was the possibility that political partisanship would become a criterion, and a teacher from a party not currently in favor would find himself excluded. Muhtari went even further and indicated that he was not against the application of political criteria, but what he feared was the appointment of a teacher whose political affiliation was not the same as that of the local santri community. Behind these and other comments, we sensed considerable caution concerning the further intrusion of governmental officials into the affairs of the madrasah. In the long run, the situation might be much less comfortable.

For until now, the madrasah seems to have been left largely to its own devices. There have, it is true, been inspections. They have been rare--an average of one in two or three years. The initiative has always come from the madrasah, which has invited the district office to conduct an inspection. The inspectors have been reimbursed for their travel and their trouble by the board of managers. They appear to have stayed for only an hour or two and to have confined their attention largely to administrative procedures; there has been no checking of teaching equipment nor any attempt to assess the quality of teaching. Such reports as they have made seem to have been designed not to offend anyone, and consequently nothing has changed. Reports from Donolengi were similar; but we were allowed to read one of the inspection reports there and observed a number of admonitions concerning manner of ruling margins, handwriting, accuracy, and diligence. These all concerned teachers' records. There was no inspection of pupils' work.

This should not be taken to imply that the quality of education given in the madrasah is good. The regimen of the Donolengi madrasah is marked by lack of punctuality (the hour of commencement being late and that of conclusion often early), the casual declaration of unscheduled holidays, erratic and often unchecked attendance. Disorder is common in the classroom. There is constant switching from one subject to another, regardless of the official timetable. Homework is never assigned. The regimen of the Banyurejo madrasah is not quite as pedagogically ineffectual as that. But all those of our informants who could be expected to have some critical perception of standards of teaching agreed that, though it was better than in the madrasah of neighboring villages, it was still far below that of the sekolah dasar. There is, indeed, an acceptance of the sekolah dasar as the standard of reference, never the pondok. And this is, as has been indicated earlier, in harmony with the organizational norms adopted for the madrasah (set classes, regular promotions, and so on).³⁰ It is also another reason why the teachers achieve so little--the major models most of them can recall were their kiyayi in the pondok. They are (viewed pedagogically) marginal men, with all the concomitant discomforts of insecurity.

Among both the better-educated and the more critically thoughtful village people, whether santri or not, there remains a concern that standards of teaching in the madrasah should be raised. Only one or two very conservative abangan farmers went so far as to suggest that an improvement in the standard of teaching in the madrasah would drain more children away from the sekolah dasar, and that therefore they would prefer the present evident lack of quality! The major group which is likely to feel threatened by the prospect of serious and well-conducted supervision is the teachers. With the exception of two women on the staff at Banyurejo, all of those presently employed in the madrasah of the two villages have minimal qualifications. Most have had a few years of primary schooling, a few as far as Class VI. Several have spent periods of a few months (one or two a longer time) in pondok, either nearby or elsewhere in Java. Their only training as teachers was the locally conducted UGA course in 1967, a qualification which has become a village joke.

The santri community must confront the issue which faces educators in independent schools all over the world: is it better to have greater government recognition and assistance, supervision and restriction, or to remain free of political and administrative constraint at the cost of continuing economic constraint? The distinctive features of the general dilemma which characterize its manifestation for the Indonesian madrasah movement relate to the pressures of national politics without, and the need for qualitative improvement within, the school.

³⁰C. Geertz in *The Religion of Java* delineates a continuum of schools from pondok which are very kolot to sekolah dasar which are very moderèn. The style of teaching we have observed appears to be closest to that which he implies was probably to be found in some of the NU schools in the area. It certainly fits with his account of the teacher at the NU *maulimin* who took a botany lesson by writing sections from a textbook verbatim onto the blackboard for the students to copy word for word (p. 190). The kind of lively pedagogical modernity which he ascribes to the madrasah movement seems to be of a different order altogether. See C. Geertz, "Modernization in a Muslim Society: The Indonesian Case," in R. N. Bellah (ed.), *Religion and Progress in Modern Asia* (New York: Free Press, 1965), p. 102.

The political dimension has been largely covered above. Those who have worked for the madrasah in each of these villages, as in the great majority throughout the whole region, are solidly NU in their loyalties. They see that the Department of Religion appears to be coming under a measure of Muhamadiyah influence, and they feel as uneasy about this as a Roman Catholic school principal in the Boston or Ballarat of fifty years ago would have been had he learned that state aid was available to his school provided that it was administered by a board of Presbyterians. We also had occasion to wonder if the current pressures do not come from another direction. Since Golkar's overwhelming victory in the 1971 election, it has taken increasingly severe measures to lessen the freedom of movement of the other political parties, of which NU was almost the only one to demonstrate any noteworthy opposition. Generous grants to madrasah might be interpreted by the villagers of Central Java in any one of several ways.

The need for qualitative improvement within these schools is widely acknowledged, and it seems unlikely that improvement will occur without a considerable extension of inspectorial supervision. This is a paradox when one compares the situation with that in many Western societies, where any improvement in the quality of education seems at this stage to depend upon the lessening of such supervision, even its complete abolition. Beeby has offered a paradigm of the evolution of school systems which helps to explain the discrepancy. Stage I he calls the Dame School Stage, and he describes it as one in which ill-educated teachers of minimal or low training follow a somewhat vague and skimpy syllabus, for the most part falling back on mechanical repetition of bits of their own half-remembered schooling. The program for the students is therefore one of slow accumulation of almost meaningless symbols. In Stage II, teachers are still only slightly educated, but they are trained. They still lack the security of a superior knowledge of subject matter which would allow them to encourage children to question. So there is considerable emphasis on approved routine, on working and teaching according to rule, on rigorous definition of textbooks and examinations, and on inspection. This last is indeed the crucial means by which the manifold confusion and disorder of the Dame School Stage is overcome. A small group of competent educators design syllabuses, write textbooks, prescribe appropriate teaching methods in minute detail, and maintain a system of supervision, so that, even though the teachers do not usually understand why something is taught, their lack of knowledge does not prevent some learning from taking place. Stages III and IV are much more typical of education in Western societies, where the raising of the standard of education of the teacher has permitted the evolution of classroom procedures towards flexibility and self-direction by pupils and the recognition of meaning in every activity. For this to happen, schools within systems and classrooms within schools need better internal resources (both of personnel and equipment) and less external supervision.³¹

In Beeby's terms, the madrasah are presently at Stage I. If they are to move to Stage II, there will need to be a considerable increase in the degree of supervision over the teaching process, and the rigor with which this supervision is exercised--as has largely been the case for the sekolah dasar. The loss of this kind of freedom is a price

³¹C. E. Beeby, *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), chap. IV.

which it seems must be paid if the quality of teaching by a poorly educated and largely untrained staff is to improve. There are probably few members of the santri community who fully realize this (except perhaps Munawar and his wife, who have experienced such supervision as teachers on the staff of the Donolenggi sekolah dasar).

Whether or not they realize these implications, there are a few santri who are demanding better teaching, for reasons which constitute the second of the tensions presently facing the madrasah.

This Life or the World to Come

We have already mentioned the slogan constantly offered to us when we discussed the madrasah among the santri, "The sekolah dasar prepares the children for life here and now, the madrasah prepares them for the hereafter." There seems to be little doubt that, for many of the devout, the thought of the Judgment to come looms large, and they wish their children to be fully conscious of the obligations which the eschatological teaching of the Kuran places on Muslims. For those who are themselves minimally educated, this seems to be sufficient. To send your child to the madrasah is the proper Muslim thing to do. But this schooling has no necessary bearing on what work he will do after he leaves school, or indeed on any aspects of his adult life but the religious and the moral. It is in such homes that most dropouts are found. By about Class II or III, girls are becoming useful enough to stay home and help look after their younger siblings. By about Class V or VI, the boys are able to help in the paddy-field, especially during the planting and harvesting seasons. Indeed, only about 50 percent of those who enroll in Class I are still at school by the end of Class VI. Some of the boys, it is true, may later go off to a pondok for a few months or even years.

There are, however, a number of santri parents who want more for their children, and we surmise that their number is growing. Certainly, the number of Class VI children from the Banyurejo madrasah who sit for an examination at the end of their schooling is greater than it was ten years ago. They have two possibilities--the concluding examination of the sekolah dasar, which gives right of entry to the academic SMP (Sekolah Menengah Pertama, junior high school) or the ST (Sekolah Teknik, technical school), and the MIN (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri) examination set by the Department of Religion for madrasah students, which is the prerequisite for entry to the academic Tsanawiyah (Islamic junior high school) or PGA (Pendidikan Guru Agama, religious teacher training school). The former calls for special coaching and must be a formidable hurdle, since it is an examination conducted in Indonesian, which madrasah pupils learn only as a second language. The latter is a more reasonable expectation, though the number of Islamic secondary schools which successful students might hope to enter is fewer than in the secular course, and competition is therefore greater.

But those who do gain entry into one of these institutions have a very limited field of vocational choice before them. The Tsanawiyah leads to an Aliyah (Islamic senior high school) and thence, for those who still succeed and persevere, to an Institut Agama Islam Negeri, a tertiary institute devoted to Arabic language and literature, Muslim law, Hadith, the history of Islam, and other Islamic subjects. They

graduate from that institute with a degree in Islamic studies comparable to an Arts degree.

There are only two Tsanawiyah within traveling distance of Banyurejo; but PGA are more numerous, and one is only four kilometers walking distance away. These offer a four-year course of training to teach religion at the primary level. A number of Banyurejo boys have successfully completed that course and returned to the village--to work as farmhands.

It is not therefore surprising to learn that some five or six santri families have taken their children out of the madrasah and sent them to the sekolah dasar. Some of these instances have occurred when the children have reached Class IV or V; others have involved transferring all the school-age children in one family.³² In so doing, they are indicating that, barring an improvement in teaching in the madrasah or clearer prospects for employment at the end of formal education, they no longer accept the either/or choice posited by the santri slogan. As devout Muslims, they want their children to be brought up knowing what it means to belong to the Muslim community; but they are not prepared to accept this in itself as sufficient preparation for life or work in contemporary Indonesia. The paradox of this implicit charge is that the madrasah has claimed to be doing both things, to be giving a sound grounding in religion as well as an adequate general education. This handful of santri parents are giving notice that they do not consider that the secular half of the program is sufficient. But it may also be asked whether even an education in Islam can be achieved, and to this final issue we now turn.

Arabic and Other Subjects

The goal of the curriculum of the madrasah has been to combine religion and general education in proportions which give to its students both a sound grasp of Islam and a sufficient basis for life in today's world. The general subjects covered therefore have much less time given to them than in the sekolah dasar: local and world geography, health, Indonesian history, and Indonesian language. Indonesian language is probably the most crucial casualty. As mentioned above, the theory followed in the sekolah dasar is to teach Indonesian as a foreign language while instructing the pupil in his mother tongue, and to transfer to Indonesian as a medium of instruction after three years. In practice, in these villages this results in an admixture of Indonesian words and phrases in the teacher's language in increasing quantities from Class II on, until by Class VI virtually no Javanese is used. There is a period or two a week nominally given to Indonesian language in the madrasah; but all teaching is done in Javanese. Javanese is of

³²Pearse found that in the rural areas included in his survey it was the parents of larger families and the poorer parents who tended to have a stronger desire for madrasah education. Richard Pearse, "The Prediction of Private Demand for Education: An Indonesian Case Study" (paper given at Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, Melbourne, 1976, duplicated), p. 25. It may be surmised that poorer parents, who neither know of birth control nor of differences in standards of teaching, will also be more conservative in their social thinking--which, we have suggested, fits well with the ethos of the madrasah.

course not an easy language to master, and it has a literary tradition behind it much longer and richer than Indonesian. This, however, receives no attention in the madrasah. Javanese is used not on the idealistic grounds of its linguistic superiority but on the pragmatic grounds of its *lingua franca* availability.

The madrasah is, of course, more concerned with the teaching of another language, Arabic. This is the language in which Allah revealed the teaching of the Kuran to the Prophet and is therefore the gateway to a deep understanding of that revelation. Nor is it only a means to a godly end. It is regarded as being sanctified in itself, purer and holier than other languages. True enough, any man who learns the words of the formula of faith ("There is no God but God . . ."), and recites them with sincerity, becomes a Muslim. But to be earnest in one's profession implies recognition that Muslims are the people of a Book and acceptance of the obligation to ponder the message of that Book for oneself. Up to this point, the parallel with the Protestant tradition's attitude toward the Bible is close. But while Protestants, no matter how vigorous a doctrine of Scriptural inspiration they may hold, accept and promote reading the Bible in translation, Muslims, with very few exceptions, do not. The logic of their position rests upon the doctrine that the words of the Kuran are not those of Mohammed, or of his associates and secretaries who later wrote down the *sura*, but of God himself. What God hath spoken, let not man presume to translate.

Yet Muslims of other nations and tongues must ponder the words of the Book for themselves. So in practice a number of quasi-translation services have grown up within the Islamic community, whereby those with a sufficient understanding of Arabic read passages from the Kuran and offer a gloss on both the meanings of words and phrases and the implications of the teaching they convey.³³ Constant attendance at these classes gives many of the devout a store of Kuranic phrases on which they may draw in their daily lives. It increases the desire to be able to read the Arabic for themselves. The result is the growth of pondok and other residential institutions where young men may devote themselves to the rigors of the study of Arabic for a period of time and thereby hopefully attain a personal mastery with which they in their turn may teach the devout when they return to the villages. Should their intelligence match their diligence on a sufficient scale and for a sufficient period, they may be considered skilled enough to be called *kiyayi*, which is a title of honor and respect.

Even so, Islam has always had a distaste for anything resembling a priestly caste, or indeed for any institutionalized full-time ministry. The ideal is that every believer should ponder the sacred writings for himself. This ideal is one of the directing motivations of the madrasah curriculum. If while they are still young the children in the madrasah can acquire a familiarity with the script and the intonation of Arabic, and even a rudimentary acquaintance with its complex syntax, it may be hoped that subsequent study will lead them to that measure of easy Kuranic literacy which is so much desired.

Even at its most optimistic, this process takes many years of hard study. Those who complete their studies through the Alijah level still are not competent to recite the inflection of Arabic phrases with

³³The Indonesian term for this activity is *menafsir*.

sufficient subtlety or interpret them with confidence. Perhaps, if they proceed to an IAIN, and certainly if they choose while there to concentrate on Arabic language, they will be near to achieving this goal. For the disciplined and intelligent individual boy, the prospect is not unreasonably daunting. But as a goal for a whole segment of the juvenile village population, it is of course utterly unrealistic. Of the thousands of youngsters who have passed through the Banyurejo madrasah, even in the last decade, only one has so far reached an IAIN.³⁴

Yet it is for this reason that Indonesian language, the social studies, and the rest are pushed to the fringes of the madrasah timetable, that arithmetic receives substantially less time than in the sekolah dasar and science virtually none. Were it not for the value placed on the study of Arabic, it is hard to see the grounds for objecting that, given competent teaching, the program of religious teaching offered by the sekolah dasar would not suffice. If, on the other hand, a mastery of Arabic is essential, then the present madrasah is not a very efficient way of achieving it, since the 30 or 40 percent of school time devoted to general subjects considerably slows the pupils' rate of mastery. The madrasah diniyah, which eliminates the general curriculum, gives its students a sound base from which to proceed to a pondok for advanced Kuranic teaching. The madrasah ibtidaiyah, by trying to combine study in a very demanding foreign language with a smattering of general education, may in fact be serving the students poorly in both fields.

The other tensions to which we have referred may, given a sufficiently creative response, lead to fruitful resolutions. Those madrasah management committees whose leadership is flexible and responds with sufficient acumen may be able to draw on increased government aid to raise the standard of buildings and equipment and to use fuller inspectorial supervision to raise the standard of the teaching given in the classroom. The pressures of the moderèn santri whose heavenly-mindedness is qualified by an awareness of the contemporary social order and its demands may lead to a pruning of religious excesses from the curriculum, and a reduction in casual pedagogical slackness. But it is hard to see how, in the nature of the subject matter itself, any modification of the curriculum can provide for concentration on Arabic script, syntax, and vocabulary to a sufficient extent for the student to reach a desired level of competence within his school life, and at the same time gain a general primary education worthy of the name.

³⁴And he has studied not Arabic but education.