

# Community Resistance Against Development (A Case Study of Community Against Jatigede Water Reservoir Construction)

Rina Hermawati, and Opan S Suwartapradja

**Abstract**—The delay of construction of Jatigede Water Reservoir obtained the answer on August 2015 when government decided to start inundate Jatigede Water Reservoir. The resistance against construction Jatigede Water Reservoir had no result. In fact, these actions took various ways to overcome the problems, such as audience with legislative and executive institutions, demonstration, advocacy, and sending letter to the President. By using social movement concept, this article attempted to describe how the community established their identity, framed the issue, and built consolidation. The Research used qualitative method with the data collecting technique of in-depth interview. The result of the research has shown that the failure of the resistance was due to their failure to build internal strengths and framed the issue. However, this failure did not meant that the movement of the community has died because it is possible that issue has transformed or has changed in to a latent movement

**Keywords**—Resistance, Social Movement, Framing, Consolidation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Jatigede Water Reservoir is located in East Sumedang Regency, West Java Province about 30 miles from the capitol of Sumedang regency. The water Reservoir area coverage is 4.877 acres in elevation of 265 meters under the sea level, which includes 4 sub-district and 27 villages. The Development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction had been planned since 1964 to hold the flow of rushing water from river Cimanuk in Cijeungjing Cadas Ngampar. The government has estimated that the construction of the Jatigede Water Reservoir will produce power electricity about 170 megawatt and will irrigate 130,000 hectare rice fields in district Indramayu, Majalengka and Cirebon. No wonder that the government try to realize the development of the Jatigede Water Reservoir construction.

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Fig. 1 Jaigede Water Reservoir  
Source: <http://www.properti.kompas.com>

However, the development of the Jatigede Water Reservoir construction will certainly have consequences for the people around the location. Physically, Jatigede project will drown 6.738 acres of the land that includes: rice fields, forest, people settlement, farm fields, garden, the village road, school, religious place and others in 35 villages in five sub districts which is: Wado, Darmaraja, Situraja, Cadasngampar and Tomo. While the number of people who will be moved based on the census by PPSDAL in the year 2000, there are approximately 6.642 families or about 19.542 residents.

To minimize the impact of this construction, the government provides a sum of money compensation and donations to the people that affected by the development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction. However, the matters of compensation still leaves a number of issues such as differences in the size of land and buildings, the data of affected population and the amount of compensation and benefits. Furthermore, it is not the simple thing for communities that located near Jatigede to move from their place. The Loss that they felt is not merely loss of the physical matter such as loss their house and job but also the loss of non-physical matter which is cannot be replaced by a sum of money. The loss of non-physical matter such as, the loss of the bond between them and the places which they inhabit. It could be the memories of their child hood, years of schooling, play, the atmosphere of their neighborhood and others also missing. Thus, this migration is not only impact the economy but also impact the social and cultural impact.

This condition is what causes the community rejected the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction. The compensation problems that are assumed not fare as well as the impact of social and economic that cause the loss of their settlement encouraged community to perform the resistances to the policy of the development of Jatigede Water Reservoir

construction. Nevertheless, the community resistances have failed because the development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction still held on 31 august 2015. This article will illustrate how the community resistances were conducted and why they were failed.

## II. THE COMMUNITY RESISTANCES AS A PART OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Scott (2000) explains that the resistance is any act(s) by member(s) of the class that is (are) intended either to mitigate or to deny claims (e.g. rents, taxes, deference) made on that class by superordinate class (e.g. landlords, the state, owner of machinery, moneylenders) or to advance its own claims (e.g. to work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis these superordinate classes.

The style of resistance in question is perhaps best described by contrasting paired forms of resistance, each aimed at much the same goal, the first of which is 'everyday' resistance in our meaning and the second the more open, direct confrontations that typically dominate the study of resistance. In one sphere lies the quiet, piecemeal process by which peasant 'squatters' have often encroached on plantation and state forest lands; in the other a public invasion of property that openly challenges property relations. In one sphere lies a process of gradual military desertion; in the other an open mutiny aiming at eliminating or replacing officers. In one sphere lies the pilfering of public or private grain stores; in the other an open attack on markets or granaries aiming at the redistribution of the food supply. At the beginning, the concept of this resistance by Scott (2000) emerged because of the concept of social movement as a resistance cannot accommodate the most important part of the resistance of the marginal expressed everyday life.

However, the concept of resistance development is an important part of the concept of social movements. It can be seen from the characteristics of social movements proposed by Tarrow (1998: 5-7) as follows:

### 1. Collective Challenge

Collective challenge is the resistance action using disruption, obstruction or make an uncertainty condition against activities that are done by the elite, the holder of authority, other group, or to specific cultural rules. The challenges of this whole collective is the most common characteristic of social movement because it usually have less stable resources (fund, organization, access to the nation)

### 2. Common purpose

The common purpose is a convention to oppose the counterparty, holder authority or the elite. This purposes include the policy changes, or social change structure and political institutions changes.

### 3. Solidarity or collective identity

Solidarity or collective identity is a bond that led them to take a collective action. The bond can be derived from variety of factors such as the feeling kinship and camaraderie

### 4. Sustaining Contentious Politics

Sustaining Contentious Politics means that the social movements will continue to take disturbance collective action to

oppose the enemy. A common goal, solidarity or collective identity and the identified collective challenges are the factors that can help to maintain a political resistance movement.

In this social movement, there are two important stages, namely framing and consolidation. Framing is efforts to mobilize their group to establish the identity and issues. In this framing, the social movement actors formulated and made Jatigede Water Reservoir construction issue as a social problem, constructing feelings and identification of the affected population Jatigede as individuals to act collectively and formulated what is collective action has to do. To build this collective action is needed at least by three elements namely, the undertaken of justify collective action, establish who is the opponent and friend as well as clarify the element that "we" are different from them.

While the consolidation was an attempt to join forces that carried out both internally and externally. Internal consolidation is done by bringing together the people power in the paguyuban / organization. While external consolidation is done by mobilizing the sympathy / support of various party and build the networks with the government, the legislature, NGOs and other parties to help their cause.

## III. THE JATIGEDE COMMUNITY'S ORGANIZATION

The resistance of Jatigede community that is affected by the development of Jatigede Water Reservoirs construction have been through a long journey since it planned in 1964. But, the resistance was not organized in a formal organization. The Reformation era made the people of Jatigede braver to express their inspiration over the sustainability of the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction. The Local circumstances in Jatigede, relatively change more progressive. Some of the people from five sub districts and villages in Jatigede has formed a formal organization namely, forum communication of Jatigede people (FKRJ) headed by Kusnadi Tjandrawiguna. The establishment of formal organization, made the resistance or the rejection to the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction become much more organized. By using FKRJ, Jatigede community held the resistances in Jatigede and to the competent institutions. The Figures of Jatigede people has also merge with West Java Farmers Union (SPJB) - the alternative organization of farmers that has formed and led by West Java farmers. Unfortunately, FKRJ has fell apart in the middle of the resistance. The dissolution of FKRJ is caused probably because of activity vacuum at the development Jatigede Water Reservoir Construction.

Besides FJKR, there are also various other organizations based on the resistance of the community Jatigede origins that can be categorized into three namely:

1. The organization that was formed by the surrounding community that the resistance based on Sundanese values and myths that joined as a trident organization i.e.
  - a. Paguyuban Keuyep Bodas, the Jatigede citizen that fight and refuse the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction to maintain Sundanese noble values, especially in the area Jatigede Water Reservoir,
  - b. Nonoman Keluarga Sumedang Larang (NKSL), the citizen association of the generations of sumedang

kingdom that purpose is to maintain the ancestor relics, sustain one generation ( *seuweu siwi* ) to the next generation, and

- c. Pangauban *Seuweu Siwi Cimanuk*, is a union of the *seuweu siwi* that is joined in Cimanuk (watershed /DAS) unit protection area (*pangauban*) who viewed the importance of Jatigede area as a Centre of area protection. The Loss of this protection can cause the dysfunctional of upstream (*girang*) and downstream area. Soon Pangauban *seuweu siwi cimanuk* were joined in (*baresan*) *seuweu siwi nusa Jawa Union*.
2. The organization that was formed by the community outside Jatigede, which is Jatigede resistance is one of the resistances issue, for example AGRA (alliance of agrarian movement reform), LBH Bandung, WALHI, DPKLTS (council of Sundanese observers forestry and environment), Cadas NGO and Sunda Sadulur, they all joined in the Alliances of Jatigede People (ARJ). The Resistances of ARJ is focused according to the characteristic of organization that joined in ARJ. DPKLTS engaged on issues related to loss of forestry forest due to the Development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction. DPKLTS trying to convince the government that Jatigede Project is eventually destroy the ecosystem of Cimanuk watershed. Therefore, DPKLTS have an idea to revitalize the cimanuk watershed appropriate to the *karuhun* guidance that the water have to flow, not to hold. AGRA focused to the agriculture problems such as land problems, the production problems and others. Furthermore AGRA together with LBH Bandung give advocacy assistance for residents. Structural Law aid is provided by accompanying them to solve the case or issue. In the LBH perspective, the Jatigede problems is not merely the problem of development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction but it is more like the social problem in Indonesia, particularly on overseeing the effects of social development in Indonesia. Therefore, advocacy problems is also consist the meaning that community empowerment is to understand their rights and their obligation facing the gap relationship with government. The number of Jatigede cases is handled by ARJ reached 1200 cases since 1986 until 2000, The administration complain such as KTP, KK and the heir right, compensation cases, miss measuring, and so on.
3. Organization that does not consistently fight for OTD for example GMBI (Indonesia lower class people movement), Angkatan Muda siliwangi, Pemuda Pancasila, Forum Sumedang Bersatu and others

#### IV. THE FORMS OF RESISTANCES

Culturally, the potential of the community to maintain their land is very strong. The community of sub district in Jatigede project have attached a cultural belief that no matter how it is the project will never happen. They belief in "*keuyeup bodas* (white crab)" Saga, that it will gnawing the project.

The Resident resistance that is affected by a Jatigede project is done in many different forms, namely, refused the relocation, refused the compensation, negotiate with the

government and demonstration action. The refusing of land compensation is very dominant in Cibogo, they refused to sell the land for the price that not appropriate with their desire. While the demonstration act is carried especially since reformation era, namely:

1. The delegation action to DPRD on July 1, 1998
2. The Village community Action demanding to sew Padajayat village Chief on September 13, 1998
3. The community action to West Java DPRD I and West Java Government on 23 September 1998 and as wellas to commemorate the Farmer days
4. The Delegation Action to the Directorate of Geology and Environment Governance on Oktober 8, 1998.
5. The Delegation Action to Jakarta Bappenas on October, 13 1998
6. The Delegation Action Sumedang DPRD II on march 1, 1999
7. Throwing rotten eg. action to the World Bank Representative in the front of Akatiga Bandung NGO on February, 18 2000
8. Fighting to demanding electricty instalation on October 199 and this action was succeeded on December 15, 2000
9. Community Action to Jakarta Bappenas to commemorate the world of anti Water Reservoir days, on March 14, 2001.
10. Community action to West Java DPRD I, on July 17, 2002.
11. Community action to West Java DPRD I, on September 24, 2003.
12. Demonstration Action on July 21, 2015.

The Demonstration on July 21, 2015, led by the demonstration of Jatigede People Communication Forum (FKRJ), AGRA West Java and Banten activist that is supported by hundreds of employees of PT Dirgantara Indonesia (DI), as well as artists and nationwide entrepreneurs, Setiawan Djodi, which is essentially rejected the continuation of the Development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction. Thousands of citizens combined with various elements of organization of farmers, students, and workers from various regions in West Java and Banten regions launched rallies to the Office of Sumedang Regency.

The demonstration action is filled with oration and illustration about the oppression form through happening art from the STSI students' performance. The national businessman and also an artist, Setiawan Djodi, had presented an oration as a moral support to the community struggle that expressed their sense of justice.



Fig. 2 Demonstration against Jatigede Water Reservoir  
Source: <http://www.kabarkampus.com>

#### V. THE FAILURE OF RESISTANCE OF JATIGEDE COMMUNITY

It seems The Resistance of Jatigede community doesn't provide anything. The Government remains realizing the development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction. This failure is caused due to the failure of society in framing the issues and unify the forces between them. This is caused by the absence of a leader who can unify all of them. The diversity of the organizations that fight for the resistance of the development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction, respectively, are not uncommon among them have certain interests and motives. The most common motif is gain the material benefit through their involvement in the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction or get a "silent money". As a result some organizations stopped fighting after they getting expected material benefits. For example, one organization namely "X" which will conducting a demonstration activities to reject the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction. To stop or prevent the demonstration activities that is conducted by the X organization, Governments usually give them some money as "silent money". This is what caused the "X" Organization "eager" to continued their fight for the Jatigede issues.

Among the activists itself, there is a difference attitude in facing the development of Jatigede water Reservoir construction that is marked with a rejection to the development and rejection on the condition for decent compensation and provided for the resettlement. The issues is very diverse, such as economic issues (a problem compensation), the environment (the environmental water Reservoir age), and the culture issue (loss of historic sites). This case demonstrates the absence of unity issues among the activist

Their failure to formulate this issue caused them unable to build an internal consolidation, that if we examine further the issues apparently because of the absence of the recognized leader. Competition for the leader position is pretty prominent among them. It is not surprising that in one village, the villages split into some group. The first group admitted the "X" as their leaders, while the other group admitted the "Y" as their leaders.

In The disunity atmosphere that mention above, they is concerned that they also has failed to build an external

consolidation. If there are supported from outside Jatigede, it seems this support is not strong and intense enough. The support usually temporary and was united by a certain issues, usually environmental issues.

The Failure of Jatigede community resistances created the question whether the resistance of Jatigede community was dead? The answer is no. Some society organizations is still continue to fight for the community faith that is affected by Jatigede project. For example Paguyuban Keuyeup Bodas are still active build the issue that the development of Jatigede Water Reservoir construction is incompatible to Sundanese value and myths. The other organization change their issues, at the first they refuse to the development of the Jatigede Water Reservoir construction and know they concern about how to manage the economic and cultural impact that is caused by the Jatigede project, for example how to do the resettlement of population and community empowerment in Jatigede. Whereas part of the community choose be resistance covert to the policy. Change this issue shows that resistance the community is dynamic depends on government policy and the power possessed by the community.

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