GEO 620: Master Thesis in Geographies of Global Change

Land Conflict: Clashing Interests in Large-Scale Land Deals

The Case of Rajabasa Geothermal Power Plant Project in Indonesia

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Summary

Land conflicts are an increasing global phenomenon. They can occur at any time or place and take many forms (Wehrmann, 2008:1). Contemporary land conflicts are frequently related to renewable energy projects. While there are ambitious targets to increase the share of renewable energy in many countries in response to climate change, fierce land conflict frequently occurs between local communities, developers and the government. Renewable energy offers the opportunity to shift industry and public energy consumption away from burning fossil fuels and combats the impacts of climate change, but one concern regarding renewable energy projects is their potentially significant land use. It is common to have large-scale investment in land for a renewable energy project. Thus, it is not surprising that many of these projects encounter challenges, especially from local communities, and that geothermal projects, in particular, are prone to controversy. Firstly, geothermal projects have not been widely exploited resulting in limited public information and experiences concerning them. Secondly, these developments are usually located in protected areas, such as national parks, national monuments, protected forest, recreation and scenic areas (EIA, 1995: 79). Thirdly, although it is considered 'clean energy' and less environmentally disastrous than fossil fuel, research shows that geothermal projects may have negative impacts on the environment, such as impacts from drilling, or impacts on both water quality and consumption (Glassley, 2014: 345).

This master thesis addresses the dynamics of land conflicts and controversies surrounding geothermal projects in Indonesia. The Indonesian government's strategy for mitigating climate change issues and ensuring energy security is to increase geothermal energy capacity. However, it is increasingly recognized that conflicts over land may be a constraining factor in achieving this target. While many scholars believe that dispossession, forced eviction and unfair land deals are the main causes of resistance in large-scale land acquisition, my analysis shows that these are not necessarily the main causes of the conflict. The different interests of various actors, linked with the wider problems of politics, social discrimination, economic marginalization and environmental concerns are factors that also need to be taken into consideration.

The empirical data for this thesis was collected during six weeks of research in Mount Rajabasa, Indonesia between July and August 2016. The research comprised fieldwork, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Using the case study of Mount Rajabasa, I found that violent conflict has occurred due to the lack of information and a perception that peaceful action can no longer be used for negotiation. I also found that legal strategies have been used as a political tool with the intention of delaying the project and gaining group interest.

This master thesis offers recommendations for further development of geothermal energy in Indonesia. Within the qualitative analysis undertaken, the results indicate the importance of social mapping, transparency, support from local government and that early information on both negative and positive impacts of projects are needed.

List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAPPENAS	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Development Planning Agency)
BAU	Business As Usual
BOE	Barrel Of Equivalent
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People's Representative Assembly)
ESDM	Energi dan Sumber Daya Mineral (Energy and Mineral Resources)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GW	Gigawatt*
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILC	International Land Coalition
IPP	Independent Power Producer
IPPKH	Izin Pinjam Pakai Kawasan Hutan (Forrest-Area-Borrow-Use Permit)
KEN	Kebijakan Energi Nasional (National Energy Policy)
MPR	Majelis Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)
MW	Megawatt*
NEC	National Energy Council
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PLN	Perusahaan Listrik Negara (State Owned Electricity Company)

PPA	Power Purchase Agreement
PT	Perseroan Terbatas (Limited Liability Company)
PR	Public Relation
Rp	Rupiah
UUD 1945	Undang Undang Dasar 1945 (Indonesia's Constitution)
UNCTAD	The United Nations Conference on Trade and Developmen
VCD	Video Compact Disc

Notes:

*unit of power for electricity

Glossary

Adat	customary norms and rules. It also includes the set of local and traditional laws
District	a subdivision of regencies and cities
Lord	(*pangeran)* the leader of Marga. In Rajabasa, the position is inherited based on male primogeniture
Marga	Lampung social and territorial unit. Comprised of villages based on genealogy
New Order	term coined by the second Indonesian President Suharto to characterize his regime as he came to power in 1966
Pak	abbreviated form of Bapak, used to address an adult male
Province	the highest tier of the local government divisions of Indonesia. Further divided into regencies and cities
Regency	a second level administrative subdivision in Indonesia, immediately below the provinces and above the districts
Regent	Head of regency
Village	the lowest level of government administration in Indonesia

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1. Introduction

... Yet the clear and present danger of climate change means we cannot burn our way to prosperity. We already rely too heavily on fossil fuels. We need to find a new, sustainable path to the future we want. We need a clean industrial revolution…

... I am calling for action around three objectives, all to be achieved by 2030: first, to ensure universal access to modern energy services; second, to double the rate of improvement of energy efficiency; third, to double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon at Durban, 6 December 2011

In recent years, increasing the production of energy from renewable resources has been the focus of many national and international policies. Although renewable energy provides vast advantages, such as ensuring energy security, decreasing the current levels of greenhouse gas emissions and preventing stronger climate change impact (see Mathiesen et al., 2011; Garcia-Gusano et al., 2017) it does not come without drawbacks. One of the concerns regarding renewable energy projects is its potentially significant land use. Land itself is a limited resource. Thus, the link between renewable energy projects and land conflicts may seem obvious. Many scholars believe that the increasing number of renewable energy projects in many countries have stimulated the demand for land and contributed as one of the factors to the emergence of a global land rush (Borras & Franco, 2013: 1723; Zoomers & Kaag, 2014: 2-3; Wehrmann, 2008: 6). This phenomenon is often described as the 'global land grab' in the media and in critical literature.

A literature review in the field of global land grab (e.g., Zoomers, 2010; Benjaminsen et al., 2011; Li, 2011; Cotula, 2012; White et al., 2012) allows us to define land grab in a broad sense as large-scale land acquisitions by investors for various uses. Peluso and Lund (2011: 669) define it as "a series of changing contexts, emergent processes and forces, and contestations that are producing new conditions and facilitating shifts in both *de jure* and *de facto* land control". The phenomenon has generated a global debate as to whether large-scale land investment can promote pro-poor economic growth and sustainable development or is instead a threat to people's livelihoods (see Cotula et al., 2009 ; Zoomers, 2010).

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on political and socio-economic impacts of large-scale land deals, and many studies have also focused on the resistance and conflicts resulting from land grabs. However, these studies on resistance and conflicts suffer from over-simplification. It is often assumed that conflict and resistance happen due to expulsion from and dispossession of the land (Borras & Franco, 2013: 1723; Mamonova, 2012:1). Farmers and 'local communities' are expected to respond negatively because large-scale land deals are assumed to be always unfair, and to result in evictions, leaving people homeless and jobless. Much evidence shows, however, that such acquisitions affect different communities in different ways. Hence, the reaction and the nature of the response may vary. These over-simplifications often mean that policy recommendations cannot be precise. When settlements of land deals are fair and poor people are not being excluded economically, yet land conflict still exists, it suggests that there are still unexplained factors, and that land conflict is far more complicated and dynamic than it is often assumed to be.

In this master thesis, I attempt to offer a deeper analysis of land conflict, especially in relation to renewable energy projects. While renewable energies are important, this does not mean that these projects are free from controversy. It is increasingly recognized that conflicts over land may be a constraining factor in many renewable energy projects. It is important for policy makers to understand the nature of the conflict in order to provide a better policy and framework for such projects. Without an adequate understanding, any attempt to prevent and resolve the conflict will be in vain and may even increase the level of conflict.

Indonesia provides an effective case study for analysis. It is the biggest, resource-rich country in South East Asia. Its current National Energy Policy is to explore its potential for renewable energy sources, especially in geothermal projects. Located on the Asia Pacific 'Ring of Fire', Indonesia has 40% of the world's proven geothermal energy reserves. However, this potential has remained largely untapped. Projects have been suspended due to land conflicts and controversies. I am aiming to understand the nature of, and the different nuances surrounding, the conflicts, and this is the main topic of this thesis. I carried out an in-depth qualitative study in Rajabasa Geothermal Project in South Lampung, Indonesia.

This master thesis begins with a short overview of the contextual background in chapter two. A detailed introduction to Indonesia's current energy situation and energy policy are given. This chapter also illustrates the political culture of Rajabasa, the complex relationships between local people, and previous conflicts that relate to contemporary conflicts.

Chapter three introduces the theoretical framework, mainly describing the concept of land conflict and resistance as a response in the context of land grabbing. It also explores the concept of political reaction 'from below' put forward by Borras and Franco (2013) as a framework that explains the variety of reactions to large-scale land acquisitions. Based on this theoretical and conceptual background I formulate my research questions in this chapter. Chapter four describes the method used in the fieldwork: how data was collected and analyzed. It also highlights my strategy in gaining access to undertake fieldwork, as well as the challenges and limitations of the study.

Chapter five introduces the case study. It describes the Rajabasa Geothermal Project, the seven villages that were the focus of the research as well as the villager's way of life. It also illustrates the detailed history of the conflict. Chapter six analyzes the findings of the research. It examines the land deal process. It also explores factors contributing to the conflict and provides initial analysis for the main discussion. Chapter seven contains the main discussion and analysis. It examines the main actors in the conflict, their arguments and strategies under the framework of political reaction 'from below' described in chapter two. This chapter also discusses other factors contributing to the dynamic of the conflict in Rajabasa, including the role of

local government. Chapter eight provides the conclusion of the thesis and policy recommendation for further development.

2. Contextual Background

2.1 The Current Energy Situation in Indonesia

The contemporary energy challenge is to manage and meet growing demand for energy, and at the same time to address climate change and other environmental and social issues. While fossil fuels are believed to contribute to global warming through the greenhouse effect, renewable energies are considered a solution for the energy challenge in many countries, including Indonesia.

Indonesia, an archipelago comprising approximately 17,508 islands, is the largest country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). With a population of over 260 million people and US$ 937 billion gross domestic product (GDP) in 2016, it is one of the major emerging market economies of the world. In the energy sector, Indonesia has significant energy resources. It is endowed with some of the world's largest reserves of fossil fuels, which account for 96% of the energy supply for domestic consumption.

However, high population and economic growth rates have led to a rapid increase in Indonesia's energy consumption. According to *Indonesia Energy Outlook* (2016), there has been a dramatic rise in Indonesia's domestic energy demand over the last 15 years. Energy consumption has increased from an average of 3.99% per year from 555.88 million barrel of equivalent (BOE) in 2000 to 961.39 million BOE in 2015. At the same time, the country's fossil fuel production is declining. In 2015, oil production fell to its lowest level since 1969. Assuming there is no discovery of new reserves, based on the Reserve/Production ratio in 2015, oil will run out in 12 years time, natural gas in 37 years and coal in 70 years. This situation poses a serious

challenge to Indonesia's energy security.

Meanwhile, the impact of greenhouse gas emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels has become a global concern. Along with other countries, Indonesia expressed its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Paris Agreement (2016). With these challenges, the Indonesian government is attempting several energy sector reforms in order to meet the country's growing domestic consumption and also to keep the country's commitment to mitigate climate change. In short, renewable energy is expected to play a larger role in Indonesia's energy transformation.

2.1.1 The New Energy Policy in Indonesia

In 2007, the government of Indonesia established a specific legal basis for national energy management: Energy Law No. 30/2007. The law stresses the importance of sustainable development, environmental preservation and energy resilience in national energy management. According to the law, what is meant by 'renewable energy source' is an energy source produced from sustainable energy resources if managed well. This includes geothermal energy, wind, bioenergy, solar, water flow and waterfall, as well as fluctuations and sea surface temperature alterations (Poernomo et al., 2015: 6).

In the wake of global concern about climate change, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono expressed Indonesia's commitment to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases at the conference in Copenhagen held on 17 December 2009. The country promised to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from 41% to 26% by 2020 (Stern, 2009: 4). Following this commitment, the government of Indonesia enacted several energy policies, aiming to decrease the country's reliance on fossil fuel and to accelerate renewable energy development.

In 2010, the government of Indonesia established the Second Fast Track of 10,000 MW Power Generation Program in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 4/2010, aimed at accelerating the development of new power plants to meet the increasing demand for electricity. Unlike the First Fast Track Power Generation Program, which concentrated mostly on coal-based power plants, the programmer's list in the Second Fast Track Power Program includes more projects that tap renewable energy sources (Juniarto, 2015: 2). In 2011, the government also adopted a National Action Plan for

Greenhouse Gases that aims to reduce CO_2 emissions by 26% under a Business as Usual (BAU) scenario (Presidential Decree No. 61/2011).

In order to enhance its institutional environment, Indonesia established a Policy and Planning Unit within the National Energy Council (NEC). The NEC was created to determine the National Energy Policy and the National Energy Master Plan; to declare measures for energy crisis and emergency, and to provide guidance and management on the implementation of cross-sectorial policies on energy. The NEC has 15 members and consists of seven members from the government and eight members from other stakeholders. It is chaired by the President and Vice-President with the Energy Minister as Executive Chairman. The new Policy and Planning Unit has strengthened the NEC's capacity for planning the energy policy while coordinating with all the institutions involved. "This has helped focus Indonesia's national energy planning, including the introduction of ambitious targets for renewable energy" (IEA, 2015: 10).

From this basis, The National Energy Policy (Kebijakan Energi Nasional or KEN), which outlined the government's overall strategy for its energy sector, was then revised in 2014, setting a new target energy mix of oil (25%), gas (22%), coal (30%), and renewable energy (NRE) (23%) by 2025. These KEN targets have become the "government's point of reference" for planning and modeling the energy policy (Tharakan, 2015: 8).

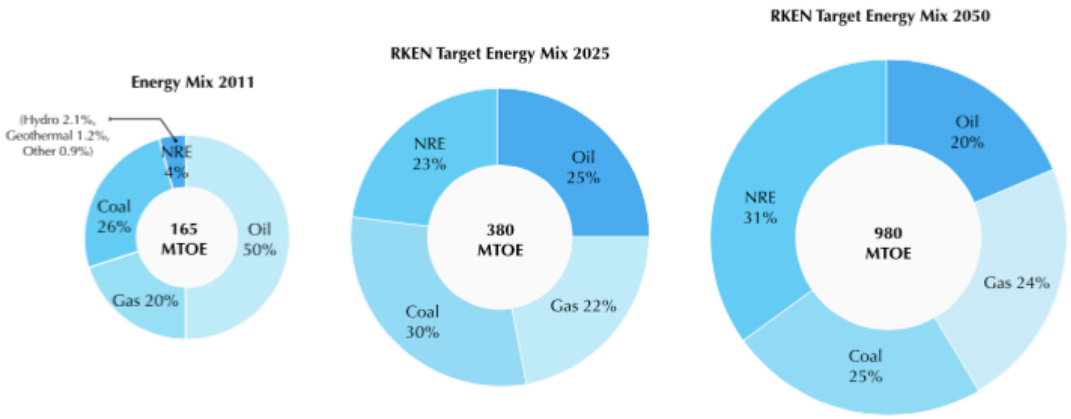

Figure 1: National Energy Policy targets. (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (Bappenas), 2012)

2.2 Geothermal Development in Indonesia

Indonesia's position in the Pacific 'Ring of Fire', a string of volcanic regions, gives an enormous prospect for geothermal energy. Approximately 276 locations with geothermal energy potential have been identified and estimated to have resources sufficient to generate 29 GW of electricity, which equates to 40% of the world's geothermal reserve. Therefore, geothermal energy represents one of the key options for Indonesia in achieving a comprehensive approach to national energy development.

The government of Indonesia initiated exploration of geothermal resources for electricity production in 1974 and the first geothermal power plant was commissioned in Kamojang, West Java (Darma et al., 2010: 1). However, more than 40 years later, in 2014, only 1.340 megawatts of geothermal energy have been utilized, or only 4.5% of the expected potential geothermal reserves in the country (Bertani, 2015: 8).

In order to stimulate the development of geothermal energy in Indonesia, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources established a geothermal development road map for the period of 2006–2025. The main objective is to develop 10.000 MW of geothermal energy in total by 2025, and it was later stipulated, in the 2014 National Energy Policy, that by 2025, 5% of the total primary energy supply should be from geothermal sources.

Nevertheless the expected results for developing geothermal energy have not been realized. Many factors obstructing geothermal business investment are related to the regulations or policies associated with permits and economical electricity tariffs.

2.3 The Dynamics of Geothermal Policy in Indonesia

The development of geothermal energy in Indonesia has been erratic due to the lack of consistency in the legal context. It is worth noting that political and structural changes in Indonesia have played an important role in the development of the industry.

From 1965 to 1999, under Suharto's "new order" regime, Indonesia had a very centralized government. The regime objective was to ensure central domination in a unitary state. In the aftermath of the New Order government, Suharto's successor

President Habibie enacted Law No. 22/1999 on Regional Autonomy that envisages decentralization. In 2001, the law became effective and Indonesia embarked on a rapid and extensive programme of decentralization. Authority was transferred from central government to the local governments.

The Regional Autonomy law gives broad autonomy and greater authority to the regions, including regulation of resources. As a result, many local officials try to gain benefit from the power they have. Under this new law, local governments became the owners of the country's geothermal resources and regulated the tendering process for geothermal exploitation. However, instead of giving encouragement for geothermal energy development, many studies have suggested that this decentralization regulation has led to project delays and rent seeking (Winters & Cawvey, 2015: 35).

Another issue that has been a major hindrance for the development of geothermal energy in Indonesia is the overlapping area of forestry law. According to Indonesia's Basic Forestry Law, forestry land is divided into four categories: 'Production Forest'; 'Protection Forest'; 'Nature Conservation Forest'; and 'Recreation Forest' (Barr, 1998: 23). The Law does not allow any mining operations to be conducted in protected and conservation forest areas. Meanwhile, around 60% of Indonesia's geothermal resources lie in conservation forests (Hasan & Wahjosoedibjo, 2015: 3), and under the 2003 Geothermal Law, geothermal activities are regarded as 'mining activities'.

The government of Indonesia is fully aware of this situation. Hence, in 2014 the Indonesian government passed the new Geothermal Law (No. 21/2014), replacing the 2003 Geothermal Law. The 2014 Geothermal Law was introduced to reduce existing barriers and to provide a stronger legal basis for the geothermal industry. The New Law relaxes the old legal and regulatory framework. The main changes introduced by the New Law include the declassification of geothermal activities as 'mining activities' and the centralization of the tender process for geothermal projects.

While these policies are seen to be beneficial and crucial for the country to avoid an energy crisis, many of the implementations have created social conflicts. Indonesia holds the second largest tract of tropical forest on the planet, and many forest areas have long been home to indigenous groups, which gain their livelihoods from forest

farming, hunting, and gathering. Thus, it is not surprising that forests have become the battlefield for violence and conflict between local communities on the one hand, and the state and geothermal development companies on the other.

2.4 The Political Culture of Rajabasa

While there are many cases of conflicts and controversies surrounding geothermal projects in Indonesia, my research focuses on the geothermal project in Mount Rajabasa. This is partly due to the recent violent conflict that occurred at the project site, and the fact that the locals used a legal strategy to stop the project, which is uncommon in Indonesia. Another reason is because I found an indication that the case is actually not as simple as it might be imagined to be, where locals have a strong anonymous stance to oppose the power plant project and the oppositions occurred as a result of land dispossession and eviction of people. There is a fascinating range of differing opinions among local people regarding their stance towards the geothermal project.

In order to understand the nature of the land conflict in Rajabasa and the different nuances of arguments between local people, it is important to analyze the culture and political structure in the region, especially their origin and custom. It is also important to unravel previous conflicts that may be related to current conflicts.

2.4.1 *Marga* in Rajabasa

Mount Rajabasa is a conical volcano located at Lampung, the southernmost province of Sumatra Island, Indonesia. It lies within the district of Kalianda, South Lampung Regency. The Regency is well known as an important business hub and a gateway to inter-island transportation from Java to Sumatra. It is also one of the most populated areas in Sumatra, inhabited by a great diversity of ethnic groups such as Lampungese, Javanese, Sundanese, Minangs, Chinese and other ethnic groups. This ethnic heterogeneity is a result of a long history of migration. Within this diversity of people there is a variety of customs and habits according to their differing regions of origin.

The Lampungese are the native populations of Lampung, consisting of three ethnic sub-groups namely Abungs, Pubians and Pesisir. In South Lampung the native population are Pesisirs (Safitri, 2010: 138-139). In its customary sense there are two

groups of Lampungese: Saibatin and Pepadun. The main differences between the Saibatin and Pepadun are in their traditional leadership systems. While the Saibatin have an aristocracy and leadership is therefore inherited, the Pepadun are more democratic and their leadership can be acquired through a ceremony and meeting instead. Based on their geographical territory, the Saibatin are those who live in coastal areas, such as the Pesisirs in South Lampung, and the Pepadun are those who live in the mainland area.

The social structure of the Lampungese was originally based on genealogical-territorial structures. *Marga* is a term that was used to describe the genealogically connected villages. It emphasized territoriality. *Marga* had territorial claims on every land in Lampung, including village land, land situated between village, and unoccupied land or forestland. This principle led to a common understanding among the Lampungese that "all land belonged to the *marga"* (Safitri, 2010: 142).

The Lampungese perceived the *marga* as the highest social organization. "The *marga* leaders were responsible for maintaining and applying traditional (*adat*) norms within their territories" (Utomo, 1975:51). Each *marga* is ruled by a lord (*pangeran*) and has several villages under its control. In South Lampung, within the Saibatin culture, the inheritance of *pangeran*, property and authority are based on male primogeniture. In Mount Rajabasa, there are 29 villages and four *marga*, namely *marga* Rajabasa, *marga* Keratuan, *marga* Dantaran, and *marga* Legun. However, it is very difficult to find historical evidence or a valid written source concerning the establishment of these four *marga*. Much of the story is told by word of mouth inside *marga* family circles from generation to generation. What is known is that these four *marga* were in existence before the colonial era.

In the colonial era, the Dutch did not recognize the *marga* structure until 1928, but modified many of its principles according to the government's need (Kusworo, 2014: 23). The colonial government registered all *marga* in Lampung and mapped their territorial borders into 62 *marga* (Hadikusuma 1989: 189-194). They also obliged the *marga* leaders, with the assistance of their village heads, to maintain order and security within their territories and to collect *marga* and government taxes. Until the end of the colonial period, and after independence, the *marga* continued to exist and to be recognized as the lowest form of autonomous government. However, in 1952

marga were abolished through decree number 153/D/1952. With the removal of *marga,* leadership was transferred to the state, including the *marga's* territorial claims for land.

In 1999, after the fall of Soeharto or the New Order regime, the decentralization law was enacted. Local administration in Lampung was then divided into districts (*kabupaten*). Districts were further divided into sub-districts (*kecamatan*), urban quarters (*kelurahan*) and villages (*desa*), which were the lowest units of regional government. These districts were headed by regents (*bupati*), and the sub-districts by a sub-district head (*camat*). The urban quarters were led by an urban quarter head (*lurah*) and villages were led by village heads (*kepala desa*). Village heads were elected by villagers and obliged to provide reports of village administration to the district head.

Under this reform era, the traditional law (*adat*), including *marga,* was recognized once more. The country's constitution, UUD 1945, was revised, and it is stipulated in Article 18 that,

> The Indonesian state acknowledges and respects the unity of *adat* communities and their customary law as long as those are still alive and in line with the evolution of the people and the principles of the Unitary State of Indonesia, as regulated in its laws.

This law was intended to strengthen democracy, rediscover local traditions, identities, political structures and traditional local mechanisms of integration (Wiber & Woodman, 2011: 8). However, many scholars and researchers such as Bach (2003) and Davidson and Henley (2007) argue that the recognition of traditional law in Indonesia did not lead to more democracy. Instead, it led to the "decentralisation of corruption and the instrumentalisation of traditional leadership for the benefit of small elites" (Bräuchler, 2010: 9). It could also foster conflict, exclusion and re-emergence of authoritarian local elites. However, where traditional leaders exist in the community, it is often these leaders who can facilitate and mediate between local people and the government.

Since the revision of Article 18 of the constitution, *adat* community in Indonesia is starting to spring back in communities, including the *marga* in Lampung. However, it

is difficult for member of *marga* to be recognized and respected in contemporary society, in accordance with their previous status, especially when many people are not aware of the history of the *marga*. Interestingly, in Rajabasa, this was the case until two events occurred that led to the *marga*'s revival, where the member of *marga* started to claim their position back in society and started to be recognized and respected by the community again.

2.4.2 Previous Conflicts and the Revival of *Marga*

As mentioned earlier, the South Lampung Regency has a great diversity of ethnic groups due to the government's previous migration programme. This presents a complex community in which ethnicity, kinship and *adat* are the main bases for conflict in the region.

Historically, armed uprisings and violent protests are common in South Lampung as local people's way of expressing their anger and dismay. Research shows that there is a significant level of violent conflict in Lampung (Barron & Madden, 2004: 6). For example, in 2010 violence broke out between shrimp farmers, shrimp companies and the local government. Mass protests turned into a riot where three people were killed; thousands of farmers were evicted and several were imprisoned (*Lampung Post*, 2011). Another violent protest also occurred in 2011 where thousands of people who were not satisfied with political conditions in their region burnt down the Regent's (*bupati*) office in Mesuji, Lampung (Yasland, 2011). Communal conflicts and vigilantism are also common. Hundreds of thieves are caught and burnt alive or beaten to death each year. Long-standing tensions between Lampungese and trans-migrants are also responsible for triggering violence. Small issues between individuals often escalate very quickly and can spark violent confrontations between groups or villages or even between people belonging to different ethnic groups.

A long history of violence and conflict in the past can greatly influence present conflict. Previous cases of violent confrontation may appear to have been settled, but may leave resentment in the community. I found two major conflicts in 2012 that are having significant impact on contemporary conflicts.

The first conflict occurred on 30 April 2012, where thousands of people gathered in Kalianda protesting over a statue of former Lampung governor, Zainal Abidin Pagar

Alam. The protesters demanded that the giant statue worth 1.7 billion IDR (US$ 200,000) should be demolished. Later that day, they managed to pull down and decapitate the statue. They regarded the statue as unimportant and a waste of regency budget funds.

Locals claimed that there had been months of fruitless discussion over the construction of the statue. The violent act was an accumulation of local people's disappointment in the government who has not listened to their views. Dialogue between traditional leaders, activists from Non Governmental Organization (NGO) s and student activists with the Regent and South Lampung Regency representatives (DPRD) had taken place on several occasions. Yet, ultimately, the local government insisted on building the monument.

There are four issues that sparked people's deep hatred for the monument. First, Zainal Abidin Pagar Alam was not a South Lampung hero, although he was its first regent. Many local people believed that there were other figures that were far more important and worthy of being commemorated with a statue. Second, the residents viewed the statue as a symbol of nepotism, as the current governor of Lampung is the son of Zainal Abidin Pagar Alam. Furthermore, the Regent of Kalianda in South Lampung is the grandson of Zainal Abidin Pagar Alam. Third, they felt that it was a waste of public money and the 1.7 billion IDR would have been better used to alleviate poverty rather than glorify a dynasty. Lastly, the statue's position in relation to the prayer direction of Kalianda Grand Mosque disturbed the congregation.

What is interesting about this conflict is not only that it shows people's resentment towards the local government, but it has also stimulated the revival of the *marga* in Rajabasa communities. As mentioned before, *marga* in Lampung were abolished in 1952, and were recognized again by the state in 1999 after the amendment of the country's constitution. However, in Rajabasa, it was not until this conflict that the influence of the member of *marga* in the community started to return.

> *Marga* were starting to emerge again in the midst of the statue conflict. A lot of people started to claim that they had kinship relationships with *marga*, and, thus, also the right to represent the *marga*. I had never heard of any of these people before the conflict. (Andi, 28 July 2016)

When the issue occurred, these *marga* representatives suddenly came to public attention, referring to themselves as the representatives of the community and opposed strongly to the government's plan. They initiated the discussion with the government to stop the project. They also led the protest that ended in the decapitation of the statue.

In the media, the attorney-in-fact of *marga* in Rajabasa claimed that the statue had offended all members of *marga* in South Lampung. He said firmly that the government of South Lampung should hear the community's desires to remove the statue and replace the public funds that were used to build it. He also argued that the government should involve *marga* in making their decision. He declared that the violent act was the result of neglecting *marga*. Yahudin Haikal, 'Karya Niti Jaman', attorney-in-fact of *marga*, stated that,

> The government of South Lampung should involve all *marga* in South Lampung before making their decisions. Up to this point, *marga* leaders have not been treated with respect. We never receive any information regarding any of the initiatives and policies that affect our people. If we are not being heard then this is the result! (Armandhanu, 2012)

The statement suggests that it is due to the *marga*'s influence and the fact that the government is disrespectful towards the *marga* that the violent protest happened. This act seemed to appeal to the local people, who regarded it as an heroic act and they started to respect the *marga* representatives and recognize them as their leaders. "If there is anyone that we have to commemorate by a statue, it should be Raden Intan, our highly respected hero or perhaps the leaders of *marga*" (Ridho, 25 July 2016). This event was the beginning of local resentment towards the current local government and also marked the beginning of the *marga*'s influence in the community.

The second conflict also happened in 2012, not long after the demolition of the statue. It was an inter-ethnic conflict between Balinese and Lampungese in one of the villages in the Kalianda district. At least 14 people were killed during the conflict, while hundreds of houses were destroyed and looted (*Jakarta Post*, 2012). The violent clash ended with a peace agreement signed by *marga* leaders and Balinese

community leaders. Once again, *marga* leaders demonstrated their influence in the community. This event also sharpened local people's distrust of the current government. Many local people perceived the clash as an indication of inability to anticipate conflict on the part of the Regent and the local government.

In the midst of these conflicts, Supreme Energy, a geothermal energy developer won a tender award of the Rajabasa concession and signed a contract with government of the Republic of Indonesia to develop a geothermal project in Rajabasa. The local government then introduced Supreme Energy and promoted the geothermal project with a lot of positivity and promises to the public. With much of the hatred and distrust of the local government still in the air, it is not surprising that this project then sparked considerable tension and opposition especially from the *marga* community.

3. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This chapter presents the conceptual framework and discusses theoretical issues related to land conflict, resistance, dispossession and reactions 'from below' as outlined by Borras & Franco (2013). The first section provides an overview of geothermal energy, including how the power plant works, the environmental impact and how it is related with land and conflict. The following section introduces the concept of land conflict, and discusses the global land grab phenomenon, including the concept of dispossession and resistance as a response in the context of land grab. The last section explores Borras and Franco's theory of political reaction 'from below' (2013) as a framework that explains the variety of reactions to large-scale land acquisitions.

3.1 Geothermal Energy

The word geothermal comes from the Greek words *geo* (earth) and *therme* (heat). Thus, what scientists mean by geothermal energy is energy derived from the heat of the earth (Bagher et al., 2014:146). Heat is continually produced within the magma layer, which is mostly generated by the decay of naturally radioactive materials such as uranium and potassium. This is classified as a clean and renewable source of energy among various types of energy. It is claimed to be cost-effective, reliable, sustainable and environmental friendly. "Thermal energy…could reasonably be extracted at costs competitive with other forms of energy at some specified future time" (Muffler & Cataldi, 1978: 53).

Geothermal resources are steady, unlike many other renewable resources such as wind and solar which are intermittent, and they are available 24 hours and seven days a week. They also have a huge capacity that is comparable with those of coal and

nuclear power. With the combination of both this capacity and its consistency, geothermal energy can play a crucial role in a cleaner, more sustainable power system. However, although the resource for this heat is abundant and available indefinitely, it is unevenly distributed, often located very deep in the Earth's crust (Barbier, 2002: 6), and in areas where it is "topographically remote from potential markets" (Armstead, 1977: 183).

Geothermal energy was first harnessed on a large scale for electricity and industry at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1904, Prince Piero Ginori Conti, an Italian scientist, invented the first electric power generation with geothermal steam at Larderello, Tuscany (Fridleifsson, 2003: 382). He built a small dynamo that successfully delivered enough energy to light five light bulbs (Barbier, 1984: 389). By 1942, the geothermal power plant's capacity at Larderello had reached 128 MWe. The success of this experiment was then followed in other countries and this marked the beginning of geothermal energy exploitation.

The utilization of geothermal energy has increased rapidly during the last four decades. Today, 24 countries are producing geothermal power with a capacity of 13,8 GW. Recent projects underway will add another 1,5 GW and represent a significant increase in the rate of growth. If this rate of growth continues, world geothermal capacity will grow to over 23 GW in 2021 (GEA, 2016: 8).

3.1.1 Geothermal Power Plants

A typical geothermal power plant requires wells and drilling. The technology for drilling geothermal energy is adapted from oil and gas drilling processes. However, they usually have a very different production pressure and temperature. For geothermal reservoirs, pressures are very low, and the topography formations are often hard and abrasive (Augustine, 2016).

There are three basic types of geothermal power plant technologies: dry steam plants, flash steam plants and binary cycle power plants (figure 2). The dry steam plants use steam directly from a geothermal reservoir to drive generator turbines. The flash steam plants convert hot water, extracted from inside the earth, into steam to drive generator turbines. When the steam cools, it condenses to water and is injected back into the ground to be used again. Most geothermal power plants are flash steam

plants. Binary cycle power plants transfer the heat from geothermal hot water to another liquid. The second liquid then turns to steam, which is used to drive a generator turbine. Thus, a geothermal resource requires fluid, heat and permeability in order to generate electricity (EIA, 2016).

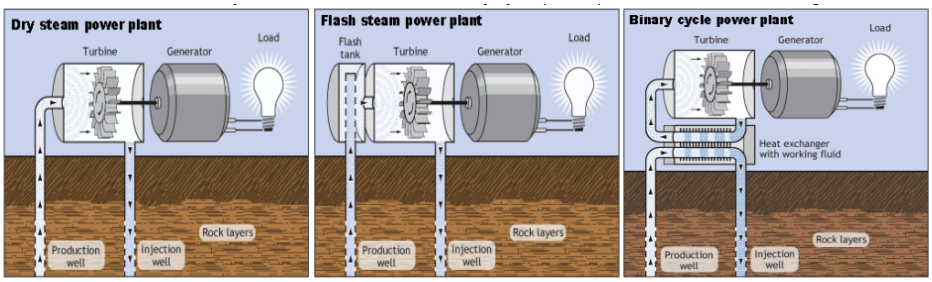

Figure 2: Types of geothermal power plants. (US Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy)

3.1.2 Environmental Impact

Geothermal energy is considered to be a clean energy, but this does not mean that it is free of environmental impacts. There are a number of environmental issues that geothermal industry can cause as a result of drilling, or the depletion of groundwater resources. Depletion occurs where more steam is extracted than is naturally recharged (Bradley, 1997: 18).

Geothermal fluids contain a variable quantity of gas, large proportions of nitrogen and carbon dioxide with hydrogen sulfide, and smaller proportions of ammonia, mercury, radon and boron (Fridleifsson et al., 2008: 19). Geothermal projects may emit some pollutants although at very low levels, about 5% of the carbon dioxide, 1% of the sulfur dioxide and less than 1% of the nitrous oxide emitted by a coal-fired plant of equal size (GEA, 2012: 2). Hydrogen sulfide is also a potential air pollutant; however, it could be processed and removed for use in industry (Bradley, 1997: 18).

Due to the different technologies of each geothermal power plant, the environmental impacts will also differ. The binary cycle power plants, for example, have virtually no emissions because the geothermal fluid is never exposed to the atmosphere (Oreijah, 2014: 12).

Other potential environmental problems caused by geothermal power plants are water shortages, waste effluent disposal, corrosive acids that could destroy equipment near

the facility, and noise. Location also often becomes an issue for geothermal energy projects. Geothermal sites are often located in protected areas, such as national parks, national monuments, wilderness areas, recreation and scenic areas that environmentalists do not want disturbed (EIA, 1995: 79).

Although many research studies have shown that the benefit of geothermal energy is far greater than the environmental impact, these impacts do need to be taken into consideration nevertheless.

3.1.3 Geothermal Projects, Land and Conflict

The relationship between renewable energy and land is quite straightforward. As concern over climate change increases, there are more policies initiated to support renewable energy projects as a way of reducing carbon emissions. These policies drive the need to construct new power plants to utilize renewable resources. Many of these plants need a significant amount of land. While land is a central part of renewable energy development, it is also a central part of many people's livelihood. Land itself is limited. Thus, issues and disputes related to land are common in renewable energy projects. A geothermal power plant is no different from other renewables in this regard. The amount of land required by a geothermal power plant varies depending on the resources. The construction phase would require 100 to 350 acres, depending on the geometry. Although the land use of geothermal energy generation projects is considerably smaller compared to other renewable projects such as biofuel and solar power, it can still trigger conflict when it is managed irresponsibly.

In his paper '*Renewable Energy and the Public'* (1995), Gordon Walker examined public attitudes towards renewable energy and found a strong foundation of public goodwill towards renewable projects. However attitudes towards specific projects can be more negative. This negative response can be found especially in relation to hydroelectric power, tidal, wind and geothermal power. Geothermal energy, in particular, is prone to conflict. First, it has not been widely exploited, making public information and experiences concerning it very limited. Second, developments are usually in protected areas (EIA, 1995:79). And third, although it is considered to be 'clean energy' and less environmentally disastrous than fossil fuel projects, research

shows that it may have negative impacts on the environment, such as impact from drilling activities, discharge of harmful chemicals (Kristmannsdóttir, 2003: 451) and impacts on both water quality and consumption (Glassley, 2014: 345).

Scholars in the fields of geography, political science, sociology and anthropology have conducted research on the possible links between renewable resources and violent conflict. However, no consensus on the issue has so far been found (Ide, 2015: 61). Some authors suggest scarcity as a cause of violent conflict in certain cases (see Homer-Dixon, 1994; Kahl, 2006; Schilling et al., 2012). Some others reject such a link (Adano et al., 2012; Selby & Hoffmann, 2014), and some provide mixed results (Benjaminsen & Ba, 2009; de Chatel, 2014). According to Mansson (2015: 3), there are at least three issues that could cause violent conflict in renewable energy projects. These are: (i) geographically asymmetric distribution of resource, that is, resources are locally abundant but globally scarce, so that the resource is perceived as strategic and something worth fighting for; (ii) low entry barriers that make it easy to extract the resource, so that a large set of actors can utilize the resource right away; and (iii) the resource has a high environmental impact that causes ecological conflicts.

Although many studies have argued that very large projects in renewable energy can cause grievances and livelihood insecurities (see Barnett, 2000; Yenneti et al., 2016; Detges, 2014), we hardly know when, how and why the projects escalate into land conflict and open violence (Ide, 2015: 62), or why it occurs in certain areas and not in others. For this reason, a thorough analysis with a case study needs to be conducted. But before discussing the case study in the next chapter, I will give a more detailed explanation of the concept of land conflict as the main theoretical framework for this thesis.

3.2 Understanding Land Conflict

To understand land conflict, it is necessary to contemplate the term and the concept. While many social studies disciplines such as geography, sociology, political science, anthropology and economics deal with conflict situations, only a few of these actually define this term. The first approach to understanding the concept of conflict can be made through its etymology. The word ‘conflict’ derives from the Latin word ‘conflictus’ meaning ‘to strike together’. Deutsch (1973: 10) observes that a conflict

occurs when different actors with incompatible goals interact and interfere with each other's achievement of those goals. This incompatibility causes different interests. When parties have different interests or aspirations that cannot be satisfied at the same time then a conflict exists (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986: 4).

Land is a valuable resource, an economic asset and a source of livelihood for many people. It is also closely linked with culture, history and local identity. Therefore, land often becomes the central element of a conflict. A land dispute involves two or more parties that have conflicting claims to rights over a land, which can be addressed within the existing legal framework (Bruce, 2011: 14). While land conflict, in contrast, has complex issues and deeper competing interests over land, often in relation to large areas of land, and are not easily resolved within existing law (Bruce, 2011: 15). Accordingly, land conflict can be understood as a complex disagreement between actors that have conflicting interests over large areas of land. It is so complex that it can only be understood if a "wider socio-political context" is explored and if "several different levels of confrontation" are integrated into the analysis (Lund, 2014: 68).

Land conflicts often have disastrous and significant negative effects on economic and social contexts and the livelihoods of communities. Thus, the impact of land conflicts should not be underestimated. There are many factors that could lead to land conflict, and this conflict may involve open violence. Hence, it is important to understand the cause and the drivers in order to mediate and resolve the conflicts. To broaden the understanding of the complexity of causes that lead to land conflicts, and to analyze the wider social political context of land, the next section discusses the land grab phenomenon that is often closely linked with land conflicts.

3.2.1 Global Land Grab

Over the last decade, 'global land grab' has become the new phenomenon that people associate with privatization, dispossession, and resistance, which often leads to land conflict (Borras & Franco, 2012: 34; Cotula, 2012: 649). In 2011, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) commissioned an empirical research study on land grab in 17 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and defined land grab as large-scale land acquisition by foreign governments that have

negative impact on the food security of the recipient country. This is regarded as a narrow definition because it excludes private and domestic investors and only considers land acquisitions with impacts on food security while there are some land acquisitions that have no impact on food security but might have impact on other issues such as local people's livelihoods (Borras & Franco, 2011: 4; Holmes, 2014: 548). Another definition of 'land grab' from the International Land Coalition emphasizes negative impacts on local people. They define land grabs as land acquisitions that are:

> (i) in violation of human rights, particularly the equal rights of women; (ii) not based on free, prior and informed consent of the affected land-users; (iii) not based on a thorough assessment, or are in disregard of social, economic and environmental impacts, including the way they are gendered; (iv) not based on transparent contracts that specify clear and binding commitments about activities, employment and benefits sharing, and; (v) not based on effective democratic planning, independent oversight and meaningful participation. (ILC, 2011: 2)

However, this definition excludes land deals that are caused by economic reasons or poverty, which are "consensual yet not voluntary" (Holmes, 2014: 548). Zoomers, on the other hand, defines land grab by focusing on its international features. According to her, land grabs are:

> large-scale, cross-border land deals or transactions that are carried out by transnational corporations or initiated by foreign governments. They concern the lease (often for 30–99 years), concession or outright purchase of large areas of land in other countries for various purposes. (2010: 429)

In later research, however, many authors explicitly include domestic investors as one of the actors in land grab (Hall, 2013: 1584). These various definitions raise the question of to what extent a land deal can be called a 'land grab'. It is still not clear what should be included or excluded from the definition. There are still many contested details such as the size of the deal, the purpose of the acquisition, the locations, the process of acquisition and the formal rights of the land (Hall, 2013: 1584).

Another issue in land grab is the debate over the drivers and whether it is ultimately driven by global forces. Patnaik et al. (2011: 11) describe it as a global capital attempt to acquire control over peasants' land. While Corson and MacDonald (2012: 268) argue that the international policy of global environmental governance has produced a continual process of over-accumulated capital that constitutes spatial enclosure. Some authors also believe in the theory of global multiple crises, namely finance, food, energy and climate, as the fundamental driver for land grab. Earlier research stressed food price spikes in 2008 as the primary driver (see Borras et al., 2011; De Schutter, 2011; and Hall, 2011). Knickel (2012: 4-6) summarizes that the commercialization of all types of food, bioenergy and industrial crop; the increasing global population; and the pressure of climate change issues, are the reasons behind the increasing demand for land. While Carmody and Taylor (2016: 100) identify 'ecological scarcity' as the driver of land grab in Africa. They argued that land grab is a process of 'ecolonization', or domination of ecological space for climate change mitigation and food and energy security.

However, many scholars have contested the argument that land grab is fundamentally driven by external forces. Instead, it is seen as a combination of internal and external process. Zoomers (2010), for instance, identifies seven processes that drive current global land grab: i) offshore farming especially by countries that rely on food imports to feed their population, ii) global demand in non-food agricultural commodities and biofuels, iii) nature conservation and eco-tourism, iv) the creation of Special Economic Zones in Asian countries or large-scale infrastructure works to achieve economic growth, v) investment in large-scale tourist complexes, vi) increase in retirement migration vii) land purchases by migrants in their country of origins. Some scholars also paid more attention to the roles of recipient countries and domestic political economy in the process of land deals. Levien (2012: 936) argues that land grabs in India, rather than a strategy of global capital, are primarily derived from the Indian political economy and developed and financed by domestic capital. Lavers (2012: 816), too, concludes: "in Ethiopia, commercial pressures resulting from international drivers are filtered through the state as it attempts to promote its own developmental objectives and manage the competing interests of dominant groups in

society". In resonance with this, Fairbairn (2011: 1) highlights not only the increase in foreign demand for land as the cause of land grab but also the crucial role of the host country's government, and reveals the importance of domestic institutions and actors in shaping the land acquisition process from his case study in Mozambique. With these various arguments around land grab, it is not surprising that the phenomenon remains an interesting topic to explore.

Scanning the literature on land grab also informs us that there are different views regarding the impact of the phenomenon. Although many scholars perceive land grab as a threat especially to the poor and have raised their concern, there are also many that see the potential benefits and consider large-scale acquisition as an opportunity. On the one hand, such investments can create a significant number of jobs, development of rural infrastructure, as well as increased production of local food crops, energy crops, fuel and electricity to support local and national consumers (Von Braun & Meinzen-Dick, 2009: 2). On the other hand, such acquisitions could be a threat to people's livelihood and ecological sustainability, including the displacement of local populations, violation of land rights and political instability (Zoomers, 2010: 443). These disadvantages especially occur when there are power issues or inequalities in bargaining power, which lies on the side of the investors (Von Braun & Meinzen-Dick, 2009: 2).

There have been discussions on how to rebalance these power issues and how to make large-scale land acquisition more sustainable. Developing a code of conduct to ensure that sustainable practices are employed is one of the many suggestions that have been put forward (Von Braun & Meinzen-Dick, 2009: 3; see also Cotula et al., 2009). Codes of conduct often come with key principles such as:

1. Transparency in negotiations, where local landholders must be informed and involved in the land deal process.
2. Respect for existing land rights, including customary and common property rights by compensating and rehabilitating the landholders to an equivalent livelihood.
3. Sharing of benefits, where local community should benefit, not lose, from the land deals.
4. Environmental sustainability with careful environmental impact

assessment and monitoring.

5. Adherence to national trade policies or guarantees on local food and energy security (Von Braun & Meinzen-Dick 2009, 3–4).

As noted by Von Braun and Meinzen-Dick (2009), these principles could only be effective with international arrangements and laws that apply everywhere. A code of conduct would also need to be strengthened with domestic policies that give more incentives to local smallholders. In 2010, FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development – IFAD, The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – UNCTAD and the World Bank group proposed seven principles as a response to land grab and to promote responsible land investments in agriculture:

1. Respecting local land and resource rights. This includes clear and transparent mechanisms to transfer land rights
2. Ensuring and strengthening food security
3. Ensuring transparency, monitoring, and accountability by all stakeholders, within a proper business, legal and regulatory environment
4. Consulting all of those that are materially affected, and recording and enforcing all agreements through consultations
5. Ensuring that projects respect the rule of law, reflect industry best practice, and are viable economically
6. Ensuring that investments generate desirable social and distributional impacts and do not increase vulnerability
7. Ensuring that environmental impacts due to a project are quantified and measures taken to encourage sustainable resource use while minimizing the risk/magnitude of negative impacts and mitigating them. (World Bank et.al, 2010)

In response to this code of conduct, many investors and governments advocate "good land governance" and promote responsible investment in large-scale land acquisition. Cases of successful land acquisitions have been found in many states in India, such as Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and Bihar (see Naithani, 2012; Sahoo & Soni, 2015; Gathak et al., 2014). In Ghana, Boamah (2011a, 2011b) found that the Biofuel Africa Project in the Yendi district of Northern Ghana has improved local livelihoods and increased local food production through employment creation and a 'Food First

Policy', a policy adopted by the company where they are committed to increase food crop productions in their projected areas. In Africa, the United Nations, African Development Bank and Economic Commission for Africa are working together with governments to ensure issues and challenges of large-scale land acquisition are properly addressed, and to strengthen the commitment for land policy implementation. Their goal is to protect vulnerable groups and to achieve socio-economic development, peace and security, and environmental sustainability (see LPI, 2012).

However, despite these many success stories, there is a widespread belief among scholars that although an international code of conduct seems like a good idea in principle, it is not necessarily effective in practice (Borras & Franco, 2014: 4; see GRAIN, 2012). Olivia de Schutter (2011: 264-267) argues that there are three major obstacles preventing the World Bank's principles from being successfully implemented. The first obstacle is that there is a tendency to lower the level of requirements imposed on investors because host countries are competing with each other for direct investments. Second, host countries tend to have a weak capacity to manage land investments and to regulate impact from such investments. And third, the agreements between investors and host countries are usually not negotiated in a vacuum, and this may prohibit host countries from seeking investments that serve their development goals. Thus, according to de Schutter, it may be unrealistic to assume that host countries will have the capacity to manage land investments effectively and in the interest of local communities. Boras and Franco (2010) also criticize the World Bank's code of conduct for land acquisitions by arguing that it is not essentially 'pro-poor' and driven by the need to protect vulnerable communities, instead it is driven by the vision of "successful national capitalist economic development". In their view, land grab is not inevitable, thus, efforts should be taken to stop it. Meanwhile, the proposed code of conduct is likely to facilitate further land grabbing, and its adoption should be reconsidered.

This pessimism concerning the global public policy and code of conduct relating to large-scale land acquisition is an indication of the need for a more critical analytical approach from local people's points of view. How do large-scale land deals actually affect people, and how do people respond towards them? Does all land

grabbing result in people's expulsion from their land and do people always respond in the same way? The next sub-chapter will try to shed some light on this question by exploring the literature concerning the reactions and responses of local people towards land grab.

3.2.2 Resistance as a Response to Land Grab

A dominant feature in the debate of land grab is the assumption that land deals always result in unfair dispossession and forced eviction of people from their land. 'Resistance' is therefore preordained as the only response towards land deals. Before coming to this discussion, in this sub-chapter I would like to briefly explore the concept of resistance, especially in the context of large-scale land acquisition.

Much of the debate about resistance relates to its definition and to which actions qualify as resistance (see Scott, 1985, 1990; Kerkvliet, 2005, 2009; Isaacman, 1990; Moore, 1997). Different types of actions may count as resistance depending on the definition of power (Vinthagen, 2007: 1). While there are many concepts and definitions from scholars, one of the definitions that stands out comes from Kervkliet (2009: 233) where he refers to resistance as, "what people do that shows disgust, anger, indignation, or opposition to what they regard as unjust, unfair, illegal claims on them by people in higher, more powerful class and status positions or institutions". The main feature of this definition is his emphasis on the intention of contesting claims and upward orientations. He also categorized resistance into three types of politics: official, advocacy and everyday politics (Kerkvliet, 2009: 231-233).

The first two types of politics are commonly discussed in conventional political studies. Official politics involves people who have authoritative positions in the state or in an organization as primary actors. It examines "authorities that construct, implement, alter, discuss and avoid policies regarding the allocation of resources" (Schneider, 2011: 6). Advocacy politics, on the other hand, involves people who are not occupying authoritative positions. It involves,

> direct and concerted efforts to support, criticize, and oppose authorities, their policies and programs, or the entire way in which resources are produced and distributed within an organization or a system of organizations...(and may

include) openly advocating alternative programs, procedures, and political systems. (Kerkvliet, 2009: 232)

It is organized and has takes explicit forms of collective action such as strikes, protests and lobbying, and is often considered as a key component in progressive social change.

In contrast to advocacy politics is everyday politics, where few or no organizations are involved. One of the most influential studies about resistance in everyday politics is research by Scott (1985) on a village in Malaysia, where he found that subordinate classes have few opportunities and face a big risk in undertaking forms of organized and open resistance. Therefore they use every other possible method of resistance, such as spreading malicious rumors, arson and other less direct forms of confrontation, to counter the action of the elites. Typically, the person or institutions targeted by this resistance usually do not know about it. It is often covert, hidden, muted and disguised. He called this framework of resistance 'everyday resistance'. It is also recognized as the 'weapon of the weak' where the intent is more important than the outcome (Scott, 1985: 290).

In the context of land grab, many scholars adopt Scott's (1985) concept of everyday resistance. The main idea is that peasant resistance usually takes the form of hidden strategies and subtle actions such as 'foot-dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on' (Scott, 1985: 29) is rarely expressed in an open form or in collective organized actions.

Disrespectful things or jokes peasants say about their landlord, companies or government officials behind their backs for example, qualify as acts of resistance (Kerkvliet, 2009: 233). Therefore, when it seems that there is a sign of peasants' acceptance of exploitation, it cannot be taken for granted. Borras and Franco argue that when protests over land grab are not reported, it does not always mean that there is no resistance, but rather that it is overlooked because of how everyday resistance is expressed (2009: 1725).

Yet, many scholars have contested Scott's resistance framework. O'Brien (2013: 1051) has argued that "rightful resistance" does not need to be "quiet, disguised and

anonymous" but can be "noisy, public and open". "While Walker (2008: 463) has openly criticized Scott's theory as reducing peasants to "disempowered agents" who are not capable of "transforming new historical conditions". Bernstein (2009: 253) also argued that resistances in land grabs are more likely to represent "uneasy and erratic, contradictory and shifting alliances of different class elements and tendencies than to express the interests of some unambiguous and unitary class subject".

In order to better understand the resistance against Rajabasa's geothermal project, I follow Kervkliet's argument, where he concludes that everyday resistances are actually "important precursors of open, confrontational, advocacy forms of resistance" (2009: 234). The concept of everyday resistance helps us to better understand the emergence of peasants' movements and rebellions. However, in order for everyday resistance to feed into open, organized and collective resistance, it needs transformation conditions. First, it needs change in political circumstances that help peasants to "cross the threshold of fear and insecurity" (Adnan, 2007: 204-214). Second, it needs the emergence of individual leaders and groups (social organizations) who are able to 'frame' resistance in ways that brings villagers together and confront powerful entities collectively (Kerkvliet, 2009: 235).

3.2.3 Political Reactions 'From Below'

As I briefly mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, it is often assumed that resistance is the only response to large-scale land deals. While some responses may involve resistance, empirical evidence suggests that there is a diversity of reactions and responses from those who are affected by the deals depending on their economic, political, social and cultural background. Some scholars refer to this as 'political reaction from below' (see Boras & Franco, 2013; Hall et al., 2015; Mamonova, 2015; Alonso-Fradejas, 2015; Kandel, 2015; Moreda, 2015).

Another common assumption in this debate is that the local communities are homogenous, and have identical interests, identities and future aspirations (Boras & Franco, 2013: 1724). Meanwhile, scholars have shown that the impact of large-scale land deals will affect each individual differently. More importantly, different people will interpret and perceive the experience differently, based on various backgrounds and variables. In interviews with rural dwellers in Kenya, Smalley and Corbera (2012:

1050) found a variety of attitudes within the communities and revealed that heterogeneity in respondent's livelihoods and education levels affect the dynamics of opposition and support towards the acquisition.

While the 'win-win' scenario of the World Bank is heavily criticized due to the highly unequal power relations, different studies show that peasants manage to find advantages even in unfavorable conditions. Mamanova (2015), from her case study in Ukraine, found that peasants are able to adapt and even gain advantage from large-scale land deals, which leads to their acceptance of such acquisitions. Rural dwellers in Kazakhstan, according to Petrick, Wandel, and Karsten (2013: 164) from their case study, also supported recent large-scale agricultural developments due to the benefits they received by taking the jobs they created.

A considerable amount of evidence has shown that resistance is not the only response to large-scale land deals. But when resistance does occur, it also occurs in various ways. Likewise, the strategy, the actor and the nature of the resistance will be varied. Borras and Franco (2013) have suggested that understanding political reactions to land deals requires analysis of the main axis of political conflict. "Looking at the intersections of conflict and terrain of contestations will help us understand how poor people who engage in contentious politics understand their issue, identify their adversary, frame their demands, and choose the forms of their collective action" (1730). According to Borras and Franco, there are three intersections of political contestations around land deals, namely:

1. Poor people versus corporate actors

2. Poor people versus the state

3. Poor people versus poor people (Borras & Franco, 2013: 1730).

The first two intersections are the most common in many scenarios of land grab that are described in many research studies. They are especially common in struggles against exclusion, expulsion and environmental issues. While the last intersection, although not common in the literature, is actually seen in many cases of land grab. Borras and Franco have underlined that these three intersections "are more usefully examined in a relational way, rather than in isolation from each other" (2013: 1730).

This configuration of actors and the intersections with various political, social and economic backgrounds are more complex and diverse than many discussions about land grab assume.

This framework facilitates a critical examination of class, politics and the nature of opposition or support for land deals that are relevant to the analysis of this thesis. Even within this framework, the effects and responses of land grab vary greatly. In some cases there are people who lose access to their land, while in some others there are none. Sometimes there are also people who have no direct link to the land but get involved and start to mobilize against a deal.

This suggests that reactions to land grabs are contextual, based on various backgrounds and complex past experiences, actors or individuals and the relationships among them. Therefore, value remains in conducting research within this framework to better understand the varied political reactions within this issue.

3.3 Research Questions

My aim is to understand the land conflict that occurred in the Rajabasa Geothermal Project. Based on the contextual background and the conceptual framework that have been discussed, my research questions are as follows:

- What are the different responses of local communities to the large-scale land acquisition in the Rajabasa Geothermal Project?
- Who are the people involved in the conflict? What are their strategies and why did they choose those specific strategies?
- What are the factors causing the dynamics of the conflict surrounding the Rajabasa Geothermal Project?
- What can this conflict in Rajabasa tell us about similar projects in Indonesia that involve large-scale land acquisition? And what are the recommendations for further development?

4. Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological approach used in the field research. It gives insight into why a certain method and a certain research area were chosen. I explain how I gained access to this research field, and discuss the different methods used to collect the data in the field, and to analyze the data.

4.1 Selection of the Method

Since I intended to explore the different nuances of the arguments and to gain a better understanding of the nature of the land conflict, it was important to analyze the issue with an approach that would yield significant insights into the people, places, interactions and meanings that are constructed in the site. It was also important to have an assumption that social actions are greatly influenced and shaped by place. Qualitative methods allow researchers to address these issues (Delyser, et al, 2010: 24). While human experience is varied, complex and forever changing, qualitative methods are optimum for capturing these complexities (Herbert, 2010: 79). In qualitative research, what is important is not the number of interviews conducted or the number of communities observed; instead it is the quality of who or what we involve in the research and how we conduct the research (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2010: 69).

I sought to develop an in-depth understanding of how my case study demonstrated the various responses and reasons behind a land conflict. For this reason, my research strategy was to combine semi-structured in-depth interviews with focus group discussions.

4.2 Selection of the Research Area

There are two main reasons why I decided to do my fieldwork with the Rajabasa geothermal project. Firstly, based on the news articles regarding the conflict in Rajabasa, there are various reactions coming from people, especially from those who are claiming to be the leaders and the voice of the community, which are often contradictory. This implies that the conflict is also occurring between the local communities themselves. Secondly, it is not common in Indonesia for poorer people to take legal action as a strategy in a conflict against government and developers, making the case in Rajabasa not only extremely interesting, but also ideal for studying the various reactions of local people towards land grab and for testing common assumptions, in the wider academic and political debates on this subject.

There are five villages; Sukaraja, Canggu, Kunjir, Waymuli and Rajabasa that are directly affected by the geothermal project due to their location. Supreme Energy refers to these five villages as 'Ring 1'. Almost all of the land for the concession area belongs to the villagers from these five villages. Initially, my intention was to only include these five villages in my fieldwork. However, as I began the fieldwork, based on my interviews and conversations with villagers, I found that those who are opposed to the projects are actually coming from other villages outside 'Ring 1'. For that reason, I extended my fieldwork to two other villages: Canti and Banding.

4.3 Fieldwork

The empirical data for this study was collected during a six-week period (July–August 2016) in Mount Rajabasa. Prior to my fieldwork, I contacted a local university: University of Lampung, in order to review my plan with academics there who have similar research interests. I was fortunate to meet a lecturer in sociology at the University of Lampung: Drs. Ikram, M.Si. He helped me to obtain the permission letters that were needed to conduct research in the region. He also came with me on the first day of the site visit and introduced me to two local students who, later, played a crucial role in my fieldwork, not only as local guides and in helping me gain access to potential actors, but also in giving me insights about the conflict.

Being able to make personal contacts with local people made it easier to adjust in the new surroundings, including dealing with logistical issues such as accommodation and transport. I spent most of my time going to villages, introducing myself to as many people as possible and trying out the process of interviewing subjects in the field. In the beginning of my fieldwork, I managed to conduct three focus group discussions with 22 people from different villages, backgrounds and genders. Such discussion provides an opportunity to explore different points of view and helps interviewees to engage in discussions and to formulate and reconsider their own ideas and understanding (Cameron, 2010: 154).

Based on the result of the focus group discussions, I conducted in-depth interviews with some of the participants, villagers, heads of the villages, traditional leaders, the Regent, local government representatives and Supreme Energy representatives. I also conducted expert interviews with NGOs and representatives from the state's geothermal company. In total, 36 semi-structured qualitative interviews, and three group discussions with 22 participants, were carried out.

During the fieldwork, I also learned the importance of the local guide's influence and stance, especially within a small community. Interestingly, my two local guides had different perspectives and views towards the geothermal project, and both were quite vocal and active in voicing their opinions in the community events and meetings. When I wanted to meet the traditional local leaders (the *marga*), the local guides helped me to contact them and introduced me before I conducted the interview. It was important that the local guide was known to them and had the same view about the project, so that they felt they could be more open and relaxed in the interview. Otherwise, these leaders would not have been keen to be interviewed.

During my visit to the University of Lampung, I was able to conduct a focus group discussion with academics from the university to discuss and assess academic views and insights regarding my project. There were ten lecturers from the Sociology, Anthropology and Political Science Department who participated in the discussion. I received several inputs and insights that helped me to better prepare for the fieldwork.

4.3.1 Focus Group Discussions

One of the qualities of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as a research methodology is that it brings participants together to discuss a mutual interest topic that is introduced by a researcher (Bosco & Herman, 2010: 193).

The aim of the focus group discussion was to provide an understanding of the different arguments and views within the local community towards the geothermal project. The participants were selected based on their residence (village), profession, age and gender. Each group discussion consisted of seven to eight people from varying backgrounds. This allowed the participants to have a dynamic discussion within the different opinions and arguments, and to also bring forward topics that I was not initially aware of.

The discussions were conducted through semi-structured and open-ended questions. They were recorded using phone recorders placed on several tables. I began the discussion by asking about the participants' first impressions upon hearing that a geothermal project would be conducted in their region. I also asked about their current view regarding the project, whether it was different from their first impression and if it was, what was it that made the difference? The discussion was lively and interesting as everyone gave their opinions and arguments, although sometimes there were two and three participants who dominated the discussion.

What was interesting during the focus group discussion was the fact that each of the participants was very eager and enthusiastic in expressing their opinions. Although I tried to have a balanced composition of participants, it was quite difficult to find women who were willing to participate. Out of 22 participants, only four of them were women.

4.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews combine a pre-determined set of open questions with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore and respond further. The purpose of the interview was to better understand the interviewee's positions and view towards the project and the conflict.

Before I began the fieldwork, I planned my interviews based on a legal record of the lawsuit from villagers in Rajabasa against the Ministry of Forestry and Supreme Energy. The record contained a list of names of villagers who had signed the lawsuit. Out of eight villagers whose name was on the list, I managed to conduct an in-depth interview with five of them.

I also based my interview on the result of the group discussions. I interviewed some of the participants and then continued with snowball sampling. I visited people from seven villages and conducted the interviews in their houses. This enabled the interviewee to feel more comfortable and open, and it also gave me an opportunity to observe their daily activities.

Open questions worked well when I interviewed the actors who were directly involved in the conflict, especially the leaders of the protest including *marga* leaders and young activists. They did not show reluctance in answering questions, especially after I had convinced them that I was not a government official and did not work with the geothermal company. When I carried out the interviews, I tried to show empathy and to view the issue from the interviewee's point of view. I tried not to talk too much, and to let the interviewee continue with their stories. This strategy worked well in achieving openness and honesty. However, this strategy did not work well with other villagers who were not directly involved in the conflict. They tended to give short answers and would not continue with their story.

I was fortunate in that I managed to conduct an interview with the Regent of South Lampung. Although the interview was short, the purpose of the interview was achieved. I also managed to conduct interviews with NGOs and representatives from the state's geothermal company as expert interviews. The aim was to learn more about the issues and challenges facing the geothermal project.

All of the interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the interviewees. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian, although there were parts of the interviews where the villagers were talking in Lampung traditional language, and this was translated by my guide into Indonesian.

4.4 Data Analysis

For this thesis, a combination of both primary and secondary data was used. The primary data consisted of information gathered from interviews, group discussions and observations in the seven villages. The secondary data was information collected from government and company reports, news articles and legal reports.

In order to analyze the data, my first step was to transcribe all of the recorded interviews word by word. The next step was to analyze the transcriptions by using a coding approach as described by Cope (2010: 281-293). I constructed themes and relations between topics and variables using content analysis. MAXQDA software was used to code important fragments into meaningful categories and into follow-up sections. The purposes of coding are partly to reduce data, to organize data and to do exploration, analysis and theory building (Cope, 2010: 281-282).

I developed the coding structure based on four types of themes reviewed by Cope (2010), which are: conditions, interaction among actors, strategies and tactics and consequences. I also added land as an additional theme, and then clustered all the themes into more specific content. With this structure, various topics and ideas emerged and connections became visible.

4.5 Challenges and Limitations

As an Indonesian, conducting fieldwork in Indonesia, it was not as complicated for me as it would have been for a foreigner conducting fieldwork in a foreign country. For instance, I did not have any difficulties in terms of language, since all of the interviewees spoke the national language. However, I still had a few concerns, namely access to the field, and making contacts especially with the right actors who were involved directly in the conflicts. As a woman researcher, I also had safety concerns. Although I am Indonesian, the people in Rajabasa considered me as non-local, especially because I did not speak the traditional language. I also had to continually convince the villagers during the interview that I am a student and not a government official and did not work with Supreme Energy. One of the interviews was conducted at night at the house of the interviewee and lasted until around midnight. That night the interviewee had a celebration in his house, thus it was full with guests, especially

men. As I came to his house in the middle of the celebration, he invited the entire guests to listen to the interview. There were around 30 men in total who listened and contributed to the interview, although it was neither a focus group discussion nor a group interview. I was forced to restrict some of the questions, which were too private to be asked in front of other people. Before I finished the interview, one of the guests asked me whether I would write the research in favour of the poor or the company. In his words, he said that I had better be writing it in favour of the local people (they claimed themselves as representatives of the local people, although many of the local people had different opinions towards the project), and if I did not, they could not guarantee my safety. The conversation was held in a casual way, as if he was joking. As a woman who had come to an unfamiliar area alone in the middle of the night, I was rather frightened by the 'threat' nevertheless. Apart from this experience, I did not encounter any other uncomfortable situations.

Despite all of these challenges, I really enjoyed my time doing the fieldwork in Rajabasa. The villagers were helpful and friendly towards me. However, I realized that my research also had some limitations. Thinking about limitations meant to reflect on the quality of the research. This case study does not claim to discover new theories or universal truths. Nevertheless, I wanted to contribute and fill the gaps in existing research around land conflict and the variety of political responses in the context of land grabbing.

5. Introducing the Case Study at Mount Rajabasa

The Rajabasa Geothermal Project is located at Gunung Rajabasa (Mount Rajabasa), approximately 70 km from Bandar Lampung (the capital of Lampung Province) in the southern part of Sumatera Island. Administratively, the geothermal exploration area spreads over former plantations and farms in the South Lampung Regency. The area is situated at an altitude of 1,280 metres above sea level and with an area of approximately 19,520 ha. It is delimited by the seacoast in the western and southern parts of the area. The Mount Rajabasa geothermal working area has the approximate geographical coordinates of 105°34'37.41" E to 105°42'31.15" E and 5°42'51.25" to 5°51'5.62" S. The area is easily reached from Bakauheni, via the Tanjungkarang Harbour highroad using two- or four-wheeled motor vehicles, but the geothermal area can only be accessed by walking from the main road.

Figure 3: Map of Mount Rajabasa (Global Volcanism Program, 2012)

5.1 The Villages

The seven villages that were the focus of my research fall within the administrative district of Rajabasa. They are Sukaraja, Canggu, Kunjir, Waymuli, Rajabasa, Canti and Banding villages. The first five villages are located around the area of the geothermal concession, which is often called the 'Ring 1' area by the Supreme Energy company. All the land included in the land deals are located within these five villages. The last two villages are located 6 km away from the concession area.

The number of Rajabasa District residents has increased each year. In 2014 the number of inhabitants was 21,100 inhabitants, while in 2015 the population reached 21,900, an increase of 800 people. Increasing numbers of people are impacting on the region, creating more densely populated areas. In 2015 densities in the Rajabasa District reached 219 people per km2. Aspects of population are an essential foundation to consider in development projects, and residents are both actors and audience development targets for these projects. Of the total population in the Rajabasa District who are aged 15 years and over, more than 50% are working in the agricultural sector.

In the Rajabasa district, there are as many as 23 primary schools and 70% of highest level of education is high school. While most of the elders and adults have only received primary education, it is more common for the younger generation to continue on to junior and high school.

The percentage of the population that has the ability to read and write in the Rajabasa District has tended to increase from year to year. The current literacy rate is 96.04%, which means that there are still 3.96% of the populations who cannot read and write. In comparing the literacy rate (AMH) for males and females, there are fewer men who cannot read and write. Improved literacy and increased average years of schooling is closely related to the availability of educational facilities. In Rajabasa district the number of elementary schools was the highest compared to secondary levels.

Sukaraja is a village with the largest population density at 426.97 people per km2. While many of the villagers living in Canggu, Rajabasa, Canti and Banding are Lampungese and represent themselves as a Pesisir community, the majority of villagers living in Sukaraja, Waymuli and Kunjir originally came from West Java.

They came to Rajabasa during the transmigration era in the 1960s and 1980s. When people from outside Sumatra, mostly from Java island, migrated to Lampung during the Transmigration Program, they often lived closely to each other and formed their own villages. These villages are called 'desa migran' and usually the name of the village represents the language of where the villagers came from. Although many of them can still speak Javanese traditional language, they have all assimilated with the Lampungese and can speak the local Lampungese language.

5.2 The Villagers' Way of Life

Although there is a considerable amount of tension and there have been a number of violent conflicts in the South Lampung region, the local people live their everyday lives according to five principles. These principles for daily life demonstrate a typical pattern of social relations between communities in Lampung and can be summarized as follows:

1. *Piil Pesenggiri*

'Piil' literally means behaviour, while 'pesenggiri' means high standard of morals. The Lampung people use this principle as a source of motivation in an effort to live life with positive values, and to be honoured and appreciated in society. As a consequence, Lampung people are obliged to control their actions, maintain their good name, and avoid any misconduct in their behaviour. However, this principle also emphasises personal dignity and forbids retreat. Lampung people are not afraid to risk death in order to maintain their self-esteem and dignity. Ironically, this has often become a catalyst for civil disobedience and social unrest. Lampung people, particularly those with Pepadun customs and traditional leaders, see themselves as high-ranking people, taking precedence over other citizens.

2. *Sakai Sambaiyan*

'Sakai' means to give something to a person or a group of people in the form of goods and services that have economic value, which in practice tends to require an exchange. 'Sambaiyan', on the other hand, means to give something to a person, a group of people or for the public interest and for social service, without expecting anything in return.

‘Sakai sambaiyan’ means mutual help and mutual cooperation, to understand the meaning of togetherness or *guyub*. ‘Sakai sambaiyan’ intrinsically shows a sense of participation and solidarity with various personal and social activities.

A Lampungese person is considered to be less respected if he or she is not able to participate in a social activity. This behaviour illustrates the tolerance of togetherness, so that someone would give anything voluntarily if it has a benefit for people in need.

3. Nemui Nyimah

‘Nemui nyimah’ is an expression meaning to create an attitude of intimacy, harmony and friendship. It means being generous and warm-hearted towards all parties, both to people inside a clan or outside the clan. It can also be interpreted as welcoming guests graciously, by presenting them with gifts. In addition, it could also mean to forgive the faults of others.

4. Nengah Nyappur

This can literally be interpreted as a friendly gesture and tolerance of others. It describes how Lampung community members put high value on togetherness, and this is supported by their attitude of liking to make friends with everyone, without distinction of race, religion, status, origin or class. Based on this philosophy, the Lampungese are famous as a people for their fondness of cooperation.

5. Bejuluk Beadek

‘Bejuluk beadek’ or ‘juluk adek’ is the principle that all Lampung people should have a special title. ‘Juluk’ is the new name referring to someone’s goal, while ‘Adek’ is the new name received when the goal has been reached. Giving a traditional title commonly occurs during a traditional wedding ceremony. It is one of the attitudes of the Lampungese that shows their humility and mutual respect for each other with the provision of titles. These titles should reflect the person’s behaviour and his role in society.

5.3 The History of the Conflict

In 2008, through the Ministerial Decree No. 0131K/30/MEM/2008, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM) granted a permit to Supreme Energy, a local geothermal company, enabling it to conduct preliminary surveys in Gunung Rajabasa to estimate the possible geothermal reserves and establish the concession area based on geological, geophysical, geochemical data and prior wells. This assignment was completed in 2009 within the time specified in the decrees (Supreme Energy, 2017; ESDM, 2008).

After the announcement of the Second Fast Track of 10,000 MW Power Generation Program in 2010 with the Presidential Decree No. 4/2010, the government of Indonesia appointed the Indonesian state-owned electricity generation company, Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN) to accelerate the development of power plants utilizing renewable energy, in particular. The PLN was to undertake this development on it own and in cooperation with independent power producers (IPPs) with whom PLN would buy electricity through the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). This regulation also stipulated the capacity and location of the power plants, including the guarantee from the government of Indonesia for PLN's business viability. With this programme the government sought greater private sector involvement in the energy projects.

On 27 January 2010, Ministerial Regulation No. 2/2010 set out the details of the location and capacity of each power plant to be implemented under the Second Fast Track Program, including the Rajabasa Geothermal Working Area. Following this list, the government opened a tender process, which was administered by a tender committee established for each of the working areas. Bids were subject to evaluation based on the lowest electricity price and the financial capacity of the bidder (ESDM, Ministerial Decree No. 11/ 2009). The winner of the tender process was to be granted a mining license (an Izin Usaha Pertambangan or IUP).

In April 2010, PT Supreme Energy won the tender award of the Rajabasa Geothermal Working Area, and was granted a mining license for the project. This project is part of a number of national projects aiming to contribute to the Second Fast Track of 10,000 MW Power Generation Program. Two years after the award, on 2 March 2012, PT

Supreme Energy signed a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with PLN. On the same day, the Ministry of Finance for the Republic of Indonesia issued the Government Guarantee Letter for the project.

The aim of the project was to produce electricity by directly using the steam and hot water extracted from wells drilled deep in the ground where a fault is located. The mixture of steam and water is separated in a flash unit. The steam is then used to drive a turbine connected to a generator, while the water is injected back into the ground through injection wells (CDM, 2011). The technology implemented has already been used worldwide for geothermal resources. This project is planned to have the installed capacity of 2x110 MW, which will be transmitted to the Sumatra grid owned by PLN.

At the beginning of June 2012, PT Supreme Energy began their campaign to inform local communities about the geothermal project. As described in chapter 2 (p. 13-16), there was a lot of tension coming from the *marga* community at the beginning of this campaign. When Supreme Energy invited community leaders, heads of villages and representatives of villagers from 15 districts in Rajabasa for a field trip to see examples of geothermal exploration activities, all the *marga* leaders decided to decline the invitation, confirming their negative attitudes towards the project.

As previously mentioned, most of the geothermal areas in Indonesia are located in protected and conservation forest areas, including the Rajabasa Working Area. Before the new geothermal law introduced in 2014 that declassified geothermal projects as mining activities, geothermal projects in this area were prohibited due to the Forestry Law No. 41/1999 that forbids any mining projects in the protected forest area, unless the company is granted a Forest-Area Borrow-Use Permit (IPPKH) by the Ministry of Forestry. This permit usually takes years to be granted, and therefore this law acts as a hindrance for many geothermal projects in Indonesia.

One year after Supreme Energy began their campaign, they still had not received the IPPKH permit to conduct project exploration in the forest area. Aware of this fact, several *marga* leaders sent a letter in early May 2013 to the Forestry Minister, Zulkifli Hasan, to oppose the planned exploration. One of their concerns was the detrimental effect of the project, especially the impact on water resources. However, according to *marga* representatives, there was no reply from the Forestry Minister. In response, in

July 2013, thousands of villagers, mainly members of *marga* communities residing on the slope of Mount Rajabasa, held a protest demanding that PT Supreme Energy should stop its project. According to the national media, the attorney in fact of *marga* and community figures in the Rajabasa district, Yahudin Haikal 'Karya Niti Zaman', said his group would continue to protest until PT Supreme Energy called off its plan (*Jakarta Post*, 2013a). He claimed that every resident on the mountain slope depended on the mountain for water.

> Mount Rajabasa is not only a source of life for us, but it also unites residents in preserving the local wisdom. The exploration would disunite us and eventually wipe out the local wisdom, which we have long preserved. The traditional residents are not only from the Lampung ethnic group, but also from the Sundanese, Javanese and Banten ethnic groups. (Yahudin Haikal, quoted in the *Jakarta Post*, 2013)

As a result of this protest, the project was suspended. The Forestry Minister, Zulkifli Hasan, sided with the local community saying that PT Supreme Energy would need to convince the local villagers of the safety of the project. He stated that he would not sign the IPPKH permit for Supreme Energy while there was still opposition from the local community. "I know exactly the condition of people around the mountain because I come from a village near Mount Rajabasa. I'm not afraid of anyone, but I'm afraid of the residents" (Zulkifli Hasan, Forestry Minister, quoted in the *Jakarta Post*, 2013).

In response, Supreme Energy continued with their campaign to promote the geothermal project to the local community. They tried to convince the community that the project is a national project that aims to promote the sustainability of the long-term electricity supply to the Sumatra grid. Furthermore, they claimed that the project is clean, harmless to the environment and would not affect the water supply from the mountain. Once again they invited local leaders, village heads and the representatives of villagers to visit the Kamojang Geothermal Power Plant in order to show them an example of a successful geothermal project. The main purpose of the visit was to enable the villagers to see and confirm what they had been told by Supreme Energy concerning a geothermal power plant's harmlessness for the environment.

> We want the public to know the truth, not just the rumour. That is our purpose here. The public can see directly how geothermal exploration is safe and environmentally friendly. It could even improve the local economy and the area will be green and sustainable. (Achyar Karim, Operational Manager, quoted in the *Lampung Post*, 2013)

There were 400 villagers in total. On this second visit, Supreme Energy managed to invite one of the *marga* leaders from *marga* Dantaran. My interview with *pangeran* Dantaran gave me insight into his reasons for 'betraying' the other *marga* leaders and accepting the invitation from Supreme Energy. According to him, as a leader, it is important to know the true facts and to try to have an open mind before deciding to support or to oppose an important project. He argued that to oppose such a project without knowing about any benefits it could offer would be as bad as supporting the project without knowing the negative impacts it could cause.

After this second visit, the participants and members of *marga* instantly expressed their approval of the plan, in the form of a letter of support. This letter of support was delivered the day after the site visit, on Friday 21 June 2013 and was accepted by the Deputy Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM), Susilo Siswoutomo, and was witnessed by the Director General of Forestry Planning, Bambang Soepijanto, representing the Minister of Forestry and PT Supreme Energy in Rajabasa, with the hope that the mega project would soon receive its permit from the Minister of Forestry.

Deputy Minister, Susilo Siswoutomo, provided reassurance, in a meeting with the community leaders, that the construction project of the Geothermal Power Plant in Rajabasa would be safe and environmentally friendly. "The development of geothermal power plant is guaranteed to be safe and secure. There will not be events such as those that happened in Lapindo in Sidoarjo, East Java" (Susilo Siswoutomo, quoted in the *Antara Lampung*, 2013).

Following this letter of support, on 5 August 2013, all of the *pangeran* of four *marga* signed a 'Petition of Adat Community Saibatin' (Petisi Masyarakat Adat Saibatin) to show their support for the project.

On 25 April 2014, the Minister of Forestry under the Forestry Ministerial Decree No. 422/MENHUT-II/2014 finally issued the Forest-Area Borrow-Use Permit (IPPKH) to PT Supreme Energy. This permit was the final requirement for the commencement of construction works in the area of the protection forest.

After the issuance of the permit, violent conflicts emerged. On 24 June 2014, thousands of villagers, mainly members of Rajabasa's traditional clan residing on the slope of Mount Rajabasa, marched and resorted to violent protest by burning facilities owned by PT Supreme Energy, in Sukaraja village, South Lampung.

The protesters who proclaimed themselves to be "Pejuang Rakyat Peduli Gunung Rajabasa" (Warriors of the People to Protect Mount Rajabasa), vandalized the facilities and set a security post and 15 containers on fire (Lampung News, 2014; *Jakarta Post*, 2014). Two security officers had to be rescued by the police, but there were no casualties as a consequence of the event. The protest coordinator, Suheri said that on 16 June the group sent a warning letter to the company and the local government. He stated that 25 resident representatives demanded that Supreme Energy stop their drilling activities and their project by 23 June at the latest. "However, as of June 24, Supreme Energy is still carrying out drilling, so we are forced to stop it" (Suheri in the *Jakarta Post*, 2014).

A few of the perpetrators were arrested after the riot. Suheri, the coordinator of the protest, became a fugitive for 14 months before he finally surrendered himself to the police and was released immediately with three months of parole after 15 days imprisonment. Much to my surprise, I found later in the interview that Suheri had changed his view about the project and that he is one of the community leaders that signed the peaceful agreement with Supreme Energy later in December 2015. I will discuss this further in the next chapter.

Meanwhile, after the riot, eight villagers who claimed themselves as *marga*'s representative filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Forestry and PT Supreme Energy with the intention of claiming back their land and stopping the geothermal power plant project on Mount Rajabasa. Although it was decided that PT Supreme Energy had won the case (*Lampung Post*, 2015), the *marga*'s representative did not surrender easily and filed another appeal.

In June 2015, the court once again decided that PT Supreme Energy had won the appeal. Following this decision, in December 2015, several community leaders from Rajabasa initiated a meeting with Supreme Energy representatives and announced to the media that they had agreed to support the geothermal project in Mount Rajabasa. They also initiated a peaceful agreement between villagers and the company that was signed in front of the Regent, the chief police officer of South Lampung and a few local government officials (*Jakarta Post*, 2015). However, this was not the end of the conflict. Another appeal from *marga*'s representative was sent to the Supreme Court at the beginning of 2016. Although the legal decisions have not yet been made, PT Supreme Energy has decided to postpone their project until the case is clear to avoid more conflict (*Radar Lamsel*, 2016). Up to this date, the geothermal project in Rajabasa has not been continued.

The case history of the geothermal project on Mount Rajabasa clearly shows that there is a fascinating range of differing opinions among local people towards the geothermal project. Even *marga* leaders, the lords, claiming to be representatives of the local community in Rajabasa have different stances. As previously discussed, in relation to the framework put forward by Boras and Franco (see p. 31-32 above; 2013), this conflict has not only occurred between local communities against the state and the geothermal company, but it has also occurred between and within the local communities.

The next chapter will elaborate on the findings of the research, especially on the land deals, including the procedures and the opinions of the displaced landowners, as an initial discussion of the land conflict.

6. Case Study Findings: Beyond Land Deals

This chapter describes the findings of the case study. It gives an examination of the land deals, including the process and the opinions of the displaced landowners. It analyzes the different responses of local community toward the geothermal project. It shows how resistance do not occur amongst landowners and people living close to the project site, but it does occur in other group of people that do not have legal claim over the land.

The chapter also provides a background for the discussion in chapter 7, highlighting non-economic considerations that might be perceived as threats to the villagers, and that may give insight into the factors contributing to the conflict. The case study included three focus group discussions with 22 participants and 36 semi-structured interviews carried out from 22 July 2016 to 28 August 2016.

6.1 The Land Deals

In Indonesia, there are two different procedures for land acquisition based on the purpose of the acquisition. Both procedures have the same principles that land may only be acquired through direct negotiation with landowners and that the landowner has to be compensated (Law 2/2012 Art. 9 para. 2; Ministry of Agriculture Regulation No. 5/2015 Art. 12 para. 1). The first procedure occurs through a Land Procurement Permit, which is regulated in law No. 2 of 2012 on 'Land Procurement for Public Interest'. This law governs the process of land acquisition for development in the public interest, which applies to the projects undertaken and initiated by governmental institutions or entities that receive special delegation from the government. Public Interest means the interest of the nation, state and society that must be realized by the

government and used for the benefit of the greatest prosperity of the people. The land acquisition under this law is conducted by the government and that land subsequently is owned by the state or local government (Law 2/2012 Art 11).

The second procedure is through a site permit, which is the procedure by which Supreme Energy acquired the land for its geothermal project in Rajabasa. The legal basis for this procedure is stipulated in the Ministry of Agriculture Regulation No. 15/2015 replacing the previous regulation No. 2/1999. The regulation defines a site permit as a permit allowing private investors to acquire land, to transfer title and to allow land use for investment purposes (Art. 1, para. 1). A key feature of this permit is that the private investors hold no right to expropriate landowners from their lands. This permit not only facilitates land acquisition for large-scale development projects, but also attaches conditions to those projects. It prevents abusive practices of large-scale land deals by determining the maximum amount of land per permit and giving a time limit of a maximum of three years. It also encourages contact between developers and government officials at an early stage and enables officials to monitor the process (Ferguson & Hoffman, 1993: 57).

In this thesis, I collected data about the process of the land deals mainly from interviews and focus group discussions with villagers, village heads and representatives of Supreme Energy.

When I first came to the site, I visited one household located next to Supreme Energy's office in Sukaraja village. I met with Pak Anton who owned a small piece of land in the area of the protection forest. He used to work on his land on his own, but now that he is old, he lets others cultivate his land and make rent payments to him. Recently he sold his land to Supreme Energy, and said that he is very happy with the deal, which enabled him to open a small store in front of his house, so that he does not have to depend on other people renting his land. The second household that I visited was also in Sukaraja village. Pak Asep owned land that he sold to Supreme Energy and felt that he had received a fair compensation from the deal.

These initial interviews with the villagers suggested that there were no disagreements or discontent felt by villagers in regard to the land deals. Emphasizing this, Supreme Energy's representative stated that land acquisition was based on negotiation and

agreed prices with landowners; thus, it has not resulted in any unfair agreements or impacts of physical displacements.

Before the land acquisitions, the company held several meetings with villagers to disclose information about the project and inform the community that Supreme Energy would like to acquire the land. In the meetings, they also disclosed information about the acquisition mechanism and payment methods including the price negotiation process. The offers were made at the meetings so that the process was transparent. These meetings were supported with photographs and documents.

I was initially sceptical concerning this finding but this information was confirmed again with other villagers and heads of the villages. They confirmed that there was no problem with the land deals. They also stated that the compensation they received was above market price and therefore they were very pleased about it. Some villagers stated that the money provided had enabled them to invest in new land or other investments. For example, Shinta (aged 43), a villager from Kunjir, said:

> I bought a small place and turned it into a small restaurant, just right there in the coastal area in my village (Kunjir). I had a lot of customers at the time when Supreme Energy was still carrying out their activities. It was really busy every lunchtime. But now my customer numbers are declining (because Supreme recently stopped their activities). So I always wonder when they will start their project again. (1 August 2016)

Most of the villagers that I met expressed the same opinion as Shinta. The head of Kunjir village claimed that the price for the land deals was higher than the market price.

> Yes it was very fair. The price went up higher than the market price when we made the deal with Supreme. Before Supreme came, the price for land that is located on the roadside like this will be around Rp 50,000 per metre, but with Supreme we managed to sell the land that is located back there for around Rp 80,000 to 100,000 per metre. It was a good deal for us. (head of Kunjir Village, 1 August 2016)

However, Kholil, a villager from Rajabasa indicated that he wished he had received a higher profit from selling his land, although he admitted that the deal was fair and he did not see any problem with the agreement. When I asked further whether he regretted selling his land to the company, he said, on the contrary, that he was happy he could sell a piece of his land because he can still work his parents' land, but he said he could see there would have been an opportunity to sell it for an even higher price and Supreme would still have agreed to it.

> They need the land! I know that if we had asked for a higher price (for the land) they would still buy our land. But it was agreed upon by too many people. They were easily satisfied (with the price) and they did not think further as I did. (4 August 2016)

Supreme Energy claim that in their Corporate Social Responsibility Program (CSR) they are going to implement a new programme called the Integrated Social Development Program, which aims to monitor the livelihood impacts for displaced villagers. Through this programme they also plan to gather information on what percentage of the income generated from productive land by each household was affected when the lands were acquired, how the landowners used their compensation and whether they have invested the money for income generating assets or businesses to regain incomes.

Supreme Energy's public relations officer, stated during an interview that in recent weeks, he and two other staff from public relations have been actively conducting a door-to-door survey every week with the villagers living near the geothermal power plant area or in Ring 1 villages, to collect information about their complaints, concerns and issues regarding displacement or anything related with the geothermal project. "There are no complaints or issues so far, but usually they are asking about when Supreme Energy will restart their project and whether they can be involved as a worker in the project" (27 July 2016).

These findings suggest that there have been no forced evictions and expropriations in the process of land acquisition. The fact that there have been no disagreements between landowners and Supreme Energy, and that most of the landowners were happy and even expressed their support for the project indicates that there is a

mismatch between the violent protests, the legal actions, and what actually happened in the land deal. It is still necessary to seek an explanation for why there is still conflict if the land deals were fair and no landowner was forcefully evicted or excluded. I argue that placing forced eviction and unfair settlement in the centre of land conflict may make us reach the wrong conclusion, and consequently to the wrong policies and programmes for development. In the next sub-chapter, I attempt to look beyond common assumptions about land conflict and try to seek other factors that might lead to the conflict.

6.2 Beyond the Dispossession and Forced Eviction of Land Deals

The interviews demonstrated that almost all of the landowners I met during the site visit were happy with the deals and wished for the project to continue. These landowners mostly live in Sukaraja village, where Supreme Energy's facility, which was the target of the violent protest, is located. When I asked the landowners about the conflict, they claimed that there were no villagers from Sukaraja involved in the violent protest.

> In my opinion, all of the villagers in Sukaraja are supporting the project. Even though the protest happened here, the fact is, there are no villagers from our village that joined the protest. (Kholidi, Sukaraja villager, 31 July 2016)

> It should be our villagers that are opposing the project! Since it's our farm that the project is using, moreover we are the ones who live the closest. If something happened, it would be us who would first receive the impact. But I wonder why is it that those who live far from here are the ones opposing the project? Perhaps it's because many of the members of *marga* are opposing the project. I also don't understand about that. (Ningsih, Sukaraja villager, 23 July 2016)

Ningsih also claimed that there are people who are basically supporting the project, but they are afraid to express their opinion because there are too many people opposing the project. "I guess those that support the project, are too afraid to say it out loud in public, because they don't want to be accused of receiving something from the company."

The findings above suggest that the people who mobilized the movement to oppose the project and started the conflict were not the ones who were directly involved with the land deals. To understand this, I followed Borras and Franco's argument that, "At times when non-economic considerations, such as their identity, culture or tradition, are threatened or, indeed, if there is a perceived threat to what is considered 'public goods' (water source, landscape, community forest) poor people may also engage in political contention" (2013: 1733). In this sub-chapter, I aim to assess whether such a perceived threat exists in Rajabasa.

6.2.1 Mount Rajabasa: The Land of our Ancestors, our Source of Life

Land has been essential to human activities and societies in many forms and dimensions, whether in economic, social, cultural and also political dimensions. Land means different things to different people. In this sub-chapter I highlight the meaning of Mount Rajabasa to the villagers as an attempt to understand their sense of belonging to their land and to the mountain.

In Rajabasa, most of the villagers are smallholding farmers. Thus, it is not surprising they have a great attachment to the mountain. One of the farmers that I met when I was on my way to visit the paddy field for the first time was Pak Kuswadi (aged 64). It was two o'clock in the afternoon and Pak Kuswadi told me he had not eaten his lunch yet; a box of rice with vegetables and fish that his wife cooked for him. I offered him my Lindt chocolate that I brought from Switzerland, and he was very pleased when I gave him the chocolate. He said he would give it to his daughter later that night.

As I was talking with Pak Kuswadi, I asked him about his thoughts on Mount Rajabasa. He gave a deep sigh before he finally answered my question.

> It is perhaps not the home of my ancestors, but this mountain is a home to me now. If it had not been for the land in the mountain, I don't know how my family would have survived back then when we first came here. (Kuswadi, 2 August 2016)

From the interview I found that Pak Kuswadi is one of the transmigrants from Java Island who came to Rajabasa in the 1980s. He told me how his life had been very hard on Java Island. Thus, he was very thankful for the Transmigration Program from the government that enabled him to live well in Rajabasa. He told me that the mountain has provided him with land, food and water as provisions for his family.

Most farmers have a similar opinion to Pak Kuswadi. They perceive the mountain as their source of life. Not only does it provide land for farming, but it also provides water for villagers. Especially for Lampungese farmers, the mountain is a symbol of the greatness of the kingdom back in the time of their ancestors. "It is the land of our ancestors, the symbol of the greatness of the kingdom of *Paksi Pakslakabrak*" (Zunaedin, 8 August 2016).

A slightly different opinion came from younger villagers, especially those who are active in local organizations. Ridwansyah, for example, a young villager from Kalianda, the capital of South Lampung, 30 minutes drive from the geothermal site, claimed that Mount Rajabasa is the community treasure and prestige. He then briefly gave examples of youth activities that are often held in the mountain. "Every year we hold a 'cross-region race' where the route is up to the peak of the mountain. Every youngster who loves nature will join this event. This is one of the reasons we consider the mountain to be our treasure and prestige." (19 August 2016). In a similar tone, Ridho, a young activist from Rajabasa village, claimed that the mountain is the main source of people's livelihood. Thus, according to him, if something happened with the mountain, for example: drought and barren land, then the entire populations of the villages are in great peril.

An interesting view came from Nasrul, an activist who is very involved in the local environmental NGO. He considered the mountain as a mother, while the villagers of Rajabasa are its children.

> It is this mountain that raised our grandparents, parents, us and our children. She gives us food and water. If someone wants to destroy our mother, we will not stay still and will move forward to protect her. But if someone wants to harness the mountain and intends to bring more benefit to us than what we have got now, we will welcome them graciously. Let me give an example, if

> for now the mountain could only give us water and bananas, but later due to the investor then she can give us bread and other things. (Nasrul, 1 August 2016).

The interviews indicate that the villagers have a strong sense of belonging to the mountain, and claimed it as their identity. Hence, it is logical to assume that if there is a perceived threat to the mountain, it might trigger the villagers to engage in political contestation.

6.2.2 The Ecological and Environmental Concerns

When Supreme Energy first came to the region, not many of the villagers knew anything about geothermal resources and technology, or, moreover, about the negative impacts that it could cause. However, not long after Supreme Energy held their first campaign, there was a video circulating among the villagers showing the impact of geothermal power plants on people living near the project area in East Nusa Tenggara province. It contained interviews and footage from the area. The main issue in the video was the fact that there have been hot gases and mud craters with a strong displeasing odour of sulphur near the villagers' houses ever since the geothermal project started. In the video, villagers also complained about the decreasing water supply, and claimed that this problem never happened before the project began. The video was distributed to the villagers in Rajabasa in VCD format.

Most of the villagers' concerns were greatly influenced by this documentary video. This video also brings back the memory of the Lapindo mudflow tragedy. The Lapindo mudflow was the eruption of hot volcanic mud into the densely populated area of Sidoarjo, East Java in 2006. It was triggered by the drilling activities of the oil and gas company, Lapindo Brantas. It is one of the most controversial disasters in Indonesia. Hence, till this day, many people still associate any exploration and drilling activities with that tragedy, including the villagers in Mount Rajabasa.

Almost all of the interviewees mentioned their concern about the possibility of 'Lapindo mudflow' happening in Mount Rajabasa if the drilling activity of the geothermal project continues, despite their position or opinion towards the project. Interviewees also admitted that this concern occurred after they had watched the

documentary video and had seen the mud craters made near the project area in East Nusa Tenggara. “When I first heard about geothermal in Kalianda, my first thought was ‘what if it ends up like the Lapindo tragedy?’” (Ali Hamid, resident of Penengahan village, 12 August 2016).

Landowners who sold their land to the company admitted that, even though they wanted the project to continue, they still had concerns about the environmental impacts that could happen, especially anything resembling the Lapindo tragedy. This is also due to the fact that they live very close to the project site.

> Although I’m positive with the project, I’m also quite worried with the possibilities that there could be a Lapindo tragedy happening in our village. I am always wondering about it, how great is the possibility that it could happen? (Dodik, Rajabasa villager, 21 August 2016)

Other villagers who live outside the Ring 1 villages also voiced the same concern. “I remember how the Lapindo tragedy destroyed all of the Sidoarjo area. I cannot imagine if the same thing happened here in Rajabasa” (Ilham, Canti villager, 15 August 2016).

The second argument that was mentioned by the villagers as a concern regarding the project was the power plant impacts on water resources. The residents on the mountain slope are very dependent on the mountain for water, especially because their main occupation is farming. Thus, they are very concerned about whether the project will lead to a decrease in the water supply.

> As a farmer who lives right on the mountain slope of Rajabasa in Waymuli village, I’m really concerned about the impact that the project could bring to our water sources. Even now we already have difficulties with water. I cannot think how it would be if the project starts. We won’t have any water left! (Yusuf, 5 August 2016)

> All activities must have their own consequences, but how serious are the consequences? That’s what we don’t know yet. As far as I am concerned, the

> impact for our water is one of the things that I'm most worried about in relation to the project. (Ali, 5 August 2016)

These ecological and environmental concerns indicate that a majority of the villagers do perceive the project as a possible threat to the resources and livelihood of the people. These findings serve as an initial discussion to why local communities in Rajabasa engage in the resistance despite not being directly involved in the land deal.

7. The Reaction 'From Below': The Dynamic Politics of the Conflict

The analysis and discussion in this chapter looks at the different arguments from various people, at their strategies, and the reasons behind each action through the framework of political reactions 'from below', a concept previously introduced in chapter 2. It will become apparent that the different strategies and the land conflict itself are not the outcomes of expulsion and dispossession from land. Rather, they are the results of the disparate interests of the various people involved.

7.1 Key Actors and Motivations in the Conflict

As Borras and Franco (2013: 1733) have suggested, understanding political reactions to land deals requires analysis of the main axis of political conflict, whether it involves the intersection of poor people versus corporate actors, poor people versus the state or poor people versus poor people. It is important to examine these intersections in a relational way and not in isolation from one another. It is also important to realize that different people will interpret and perceive experiences differently, based on dissimilar backgrounds and other variables. The findings in chapter 6 suggest that the main actors in the violent protest and legal resistance are people who are not directly involved with the land deals. In this section I will discuss who these people are, what their arguments are and why they choose specific types of strategy in their struggles.

7.1.1 The Marginalized Youth Group

Social exclusion and marginalization could provoke people to engage in political contestation. This argument can partly explain how poor people who do not have any relation to the land property or who have no claim over the land are the ones who

mobilize the struggle. In this sub-chapter I will illustrate how the youth group in Rajabasa, because of their feelings of being socially excluded and marginalized, are provoked into opposing the project and engaging in the conflict, in order to show that they do have power and influence and in order to gain benefits for the interest of their group.

Much of the information about the conflict and controversies surrounding the geothermal project in Rajabasa can be found through national and local news, as well as through various social media, namely blogs, Facebook and Twitter. The youth of Rajabasa are the ones responsible for this type of information. They come from various organizations, but their aims in engaging in the struggle are the same: to stop the project and to protect their villages from negative environmental impact. For the purpose of the analysis of this thesis, I have categorized them into one group based on their purpose, strategy and reasons for the struggle: the youth group.

Most of the youth lives around Kalianda city. They are relatively highly educated. Some of them have diploma degrees and bachelor degrees. However, many of them do not have a stable job, or are still looking for one. Due to their education and their networks they have access to information regarding environmental policy and geothermal technology. They also have connections in local organizations (local NGOs, local political parties) and the media. As mentioned above, the reasons for their activism is to protect their villages from negative environmental impact. In particular, this was their primary focus at the beginning of events, when Supreme Energy first came to the region. It was the youth group, together with the *marga* community, who made the video described in chapter 6 (p. 57) and who distributed it to the villagers. “When we first heard about the geothermal project, we wanted the villagers to know about the impact from such projects. That is why we compiled videos that we found on YouTube and distributed them to villagers” (Ridho, 11 August 2016).

The youth strategy of opposing the project was voiced in their opposition through local media, various social media and by distributing video about the negative impacts of geothermal projects to the villagers. They also actively joined public meetings and often gave their opinion and shared their concerns about the project. In regard to the violent conflict that occurred in 2014, many of the youths were involved in the

protest. Although they were not the ones who initiated the attack, they admitted that they provoked other people to join the march and to bring weapons to the protest.

> I received the text message in the morning before I joined the march to Sukaraja. Our purpose is to give warning to Supreme to stop their activity before everything is clear to us. We wanted to know, not only about the benefits but also about the negative consequences, and their plan to mitigate them. (Ridho, 25 July 2016)

> From the beginning we all know that it is not only a protest, but an attack to warn them. We all bring our weapons from home. I called all of my friends and even my neighbour to join the attack. (Wanda, 9 August 2016)

However, despite their great concerns about the negative consequences of the project and the company's strategy to mitigate them, the youth group is also pragmatic. And it became obvious in the interviews that although they expressed their concern about the environmental impact, many of their arguments were focused on the benefits that the company could give to society and to the youth group of South Lampung.

> (…) We wanted to know clearly, what is their program in the future, what are the consequences, what are the compensations and how is their concern for society manifested? Especially for us, the youth group. What are their plans? (…) Our hope is to meet directly with Supreme Energy's representative. Yes, all of us the youth group of South Lampung. We wanted them to know that we are really concerned with the youth's livelihood here. (Al Azis, FGD 1, 26 July 2016)

Some interviewees even clearly stated that in order for them to give support for the project their main interest was in the benefits that the company could provide. Some interviewees indicated that receiving benefits from the company is their right, as residents of South Lampung, who live surrounding Mount Rajabasa, and thus, such benefits should not be limited only to landowners living around the project area.

> To me personally, there will always be negative consequences in every project. But this is not only within our power. Of course it depends on the technology and the expertise of the company, but it also depends on God's

> will if we are talking about natural disaster. So in my opinion, it's all down to what benefits this project and the company could give us, if they wanted us to support them. (Rizwan, FGD 1, 26 July 2016)

> If you asked me whether I'm pro or contra the project, let's see first what are the benefits that Supreme Energy has given to people? I'm not talking about the future benefit, but today's benefit that we could see the result directly. In this case, people living directly around the site in Mount Rajabasa probably have received such benefits from land compensation and maybe employment. But people in the urban area (Kalianda), including me, haven't received any benefits from Supreme Energy. The mountain also belongs to us, not only to people living under it. That's why if they want to continue with their project, I will ask 'what are the practical benefits for us?' (Ridwansyah, FGD 2, 26 July 2016)

One interesting insight that I gained from the interviews is how the youth group acknowledged that there are multiple interests that play out in the project. According to them, rich and powerful people are the ones who benefit most from the project. It became apparent that knowing this fact made the youth group feel economically and politically marginalized. As a consequence, they choose to oppose the project as their strategy, not only to gain benefits for their own interest but also to gain recognition from the company that they also have power and thus cannot be ignored.

> As far as I can see, this project is surrounded by people who wanted to get benefits from it. Businessmen and also government. Although many of the youth here are involved in the construction business, including me, we never get any offers or contracts from the company. I even went there and asked them myself directly, but they only work with people who have money, power and connections, usually people from the government or rich businessmen. They should give their priority to us; otherwise we will not support the project fully. What is there in it for us to support them? They need to know that. (Alif, FGD 1, 26 July 2016)

> They only favour the rich and the powerful. If they want us to support them they should also give us opportunities and benefits as consequences of the

project. (Syamsul, FGD 2, 26 July 2016)

> The company should give priority to us, the young people of Rajabasa. We have a lot of voices in the community and local organizations. If they can bring the young people onto their side, I believe more and more people would support the project, and there would be less conflict. But the question is 'what can they offer for us?' (Alamsyah, FGD 1, 26 July 2016)

They also criticized Supreme Energy's strategy of approaching the villagers by only involving certain groups of people, or what they called 'the elites', and making others socially marginalized when it comes to receiving direct information from the company regarding the project.

> They only called the same people over and over again to give information about their project. So they never really touched the people at the bottom. We never knew anything about the program and the project. (Al Azis, FGD 1, 26 July 2016)

> Especially in the beginning of the project, they only invited the elites, even for the trip to Kamojang. We also wanted to go there, since the people who went there do not really tell us anything about it. (Nanang, FGD 2, 26 July 2016)

One of the interesting aspects revealed in my discussions with the youth group is that they all agreed that although they respect *marga* tradition, they do not think highly of the authority of the elites that claim themselves to be the leaders of the community, whether they are coming from the *marga* community or not.

> The culture of the people here in South Lampung, according to my observation, is that we cannot be controlled by our elites. It doesn't work in here. Because whether we eat or not today is not based on the elite's decisions. Our food and our money are not coming from them, so why would we have to be submissive and follow everything they said? (Ridho, FGD 1, 26 July 2016)

> We, especially the young people cannot be ruled by those elites. We have our own opinions. We wanted to be heard too! We want everyone to be involved. Not only the elites! (Dadang, FGD 2, 26 July 2016)

7.1.2 Leading the Violent Protest

When villagers collectively perceive that there is a threat to their community landscape or ecology, as well as to their identity, culture and tradition, it can often trigger the coalescing of different groups of people in opposition to a land deal (Borras & Franco, 2013: 1733). In addition to this, the availability of influential elites also plays an important role in organizing resistance into an open, collective and effective opposition. The findings summarized in chapter 6 demonstrate that there is a collective concern among the villagers in Rajabasa regarding the potential negative impacts of the geothermal project. The previous chapter also showed how Rajabasa villagers see the mountain as a source of their livelihood and part of their identity and culture. When there is an influential leader in the community, it is easy for the leader to bring people together and organize them in open resistance, especially when they all share the same values and concerns.

In this section, I explore the perspective of the coordinator of the violent protest to give insight on who the people involved in the violent conflict are, and to consider how and why land conflict in Rajabasa escalated into open violence.

One of the significant features of the land conflict in Rajabasa was the violent protest that happened in June 2014. To understand the nature of this violence I met Pak Suheri (aged 47), who was the coordinator of the rally. I visited him in his humble house to conduct an in-depth interview about the riot.

He began his story with his first impressions of the geothermal project. When Supreme Energy first came to Rajabasa, he and a few people from the *marga* and local organizations sent a rejection letter to the local government, asking them not to start any project before they had explained to the community: 'What is geothermal? What kind of drilling activities will the company do? And what will be the consequences of the project?' He said: "We didn't know anything about geothermal. What we knew was that every drilling activity might cause a disaster like Lapindo. We didn't know what the difference was between drilling techniques for oil and gas, and, moreover, for geothermal" (Suheri, 3August 2016)

He told me that these letters were sent at the same time as the incident with the Zainal Abidin's statue (described in chapter 3, p. 13-15), but they never received any

response from the local government. This is what he underlines as a crucial part of the problem. He described how the company only gave information to the villagers about the benefits of the programme and all of the good things that would come out of it without informing people about possible negative consequences. Instead, the villagers were informed about the potential negative impacts of geothermal projects from the video that was distributed by the youth group and the *marga* community (see chapter 3, p. 57). He claimed that all they wanted was to confirm with the company, whether such things could happen in Rajabasa or not, and what the company would do to prevent such things from happening.

He described an event where the company held a big campaign in the main hall of Rajabasa village, but it turned into chaos because villagers were disappointed with the company's explanations that were still not transparent concerning possible negative impacts. Since then, he claimed, Supreme Energy never did any other big campaign in the main hall. Instead they came to every village and spoke with the head of the village and several villagers. As a result, many other villagers still did not receive any information about the plans.

He asserted that this is the reason why the villagers marched to attack Supreme Energy's site after the company received its permit. Supreme Energy only gave information about their project to a few people who they claimed to be representatives of the villagers, but the fact is that these representatives never reported anything back to the villagers about the project. As a result, many villagers, including Suheri himself, were still very concerned about the negative effects that could impact on the mountain and their villages, which were never discussed with Supreme Energy. He claimed that he and a few local organizations had been voicing this concern to both local government and Supreme Energy, but they never received any reply. Thus, the rally in 2014 was an attack, as a response from villagers to being ignored by local government and the company, when they realized that peaceful action was no longer a viable strategy for negotiation.

> We tried to reach the local government and even the company by these letters. But once the IPPKH was issued we all knew that there are no other way but to attack and to warn them. (Suheri, 3 August 2016).

Suheri also explained how he and a few villagers who are active in the same local organization planned the attack. He claimed that in Rajabasa districts is not difficult to plan such attack, as many villagers will deliberately join the attack especially when the purpose is to protect their village and mountain for harm. Moreover, the Lampungese's principle of *piil pesenggiri* usually used as an excuse when they feel that their pride and dignity are threatened (see chapter 5, p. 41)

> On that day, when Supreme still continues with their activities after our ultimatum, I met with several villagers and members of *marga* community. We agreed to do some action and to give warning to the company. I sent text messages to some villagers, maybe 10, but I knew at least 100 would come. This is how it works in here, especially when it involves with our villages, our people, our mountain or our pride. We really lives up our principle, *piil pesenggiri* . (Suheri, 3 August 2016)

After the attack, Suheri became a fugitive for 14 months. He surrendered on 10 September 2015. After 15 days of imprisonment, his family made a request for the suspension of his detention. This request was granted by the Chief Police Officer of South Lampung, with the condition of three months parole. One week after he had been released from prison, Supreme Energy began to make contact with Suheri. He claimed that the company was afraid that he would lead another protest, thus they wanted to reach a peaceful agreement. Suheri refused at first, but he finally agreed to meet and discuss the matter. After the meeting, Suheri claimed that he, finally, fully understood the positive and negative impacts of geothermal energy. He also now knew the differences between oil and gas drilling and geothermal drilling and how this drilling would not have the same impact as the Lapindo tragedy, especially since Rajabasa and Sidoarjo have different topographies.

Suheri then agreed to make a peaceful agreement between the villagers of Rajabasa with Supreme Energy. He drafted the agreement together with Supreme Energy's representative and two other villagers. In December 2015, Suheri and other community leaders signed this peace agreement with Supreme Energy, and it was witnessed by the Regent, the chief police officer of South Lampung and a few other local government officials.

7.1.3 Legal Strategy as a Political Tool

> *Even if at the end they will continue the project and harm the mountain, I will stay loyal to my position! Like in war, I'd choose to lose honorably. This is our principle, piil pesenggiri. In South Lampung here it is like a small fire that is smoldering. And this small fire is everywhere. Once I bang the hammer, then 99.99% of these small fires will become one and will become bigger. We are ready to die! If the company wants to continue their project, it means that they want the physical contact to happen, and I guarantee it will happen! If it happens, we will see that the first target would be those villagers who support the project for the sake of a little money!!* Husein, *marga* representative (9 August 2016)

As previously discussed in chapter 6, a month after the violent protest, several *marga* and village representatives filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Forestry and Supreme Energy over the issuance of the IPPKH to Supreme Energy. The plaintiffs claimed that the issuance of the permit was against the law, because the project would take place in a protected forest when mining activities are prohibited in protected forests.

There were eight villagers from the *marga* community who signed the lawsuit. Among them there is only one *pangeran*, which is from *marga* Keratuan, and the others are *marga* representatives from *marga* Keratuan, Rajabasa and Dantaran. Their argument was that Mount Rajabasa and its forest not only belong to the people living in the Rajabasa district but according to them it is *adat* land, and thus belongs to the *marga* community, who are the indigenous people living around and surrounding Mount Rajabasa. They argued that *marga* is protected by the constitution of the country and, thus, their claim cannot be ruled out. The plaintiffs claimed that they represented all of the *marga* in Rajabasa, thus, if there was any legal interests from these communities, the plaintiffs were entitled and had rights to represent them and to file a lawsuit in this matter.

In the lawsuit, they also claimed that the information Supreme Energy had shared with the public was only concerned with the positive impacts and benefits of the project, but the company never elaborated on any potential negative impacts or the

mitigation management for addressing those impacts, or any other technical impacts that could occur during the development of the project. The villagers, therefore, the lawsuit, asserted, could not have insight and fully understand both the benefits and the risks of the project.

One of the most interesting points in the lawsuit is that the plaintiffs included a compensation amount of Rp 100,000,000,000 or around 10 billion USD for damages that they assumed would happen if Supreme Energy continued with their project.

However, the lawsuit was rejected because, according to the court, the claim in the lawsuit had no legal basis and, thus, it could not be justified. The defendants claimed that they had the right to receive the IPPHK permit because they had already fulfilled the entire administrative requirement stipulated in the Ministry of Forest Decree on the Guidelines for IPPHK permits. The defendants also rejected the claim that the plaintiffs had the right to represent the *marga* in Rajabasa, because, under local regulations, only a *marga*'s lord (*pangeran*) has the right to represent a *marga*. Meanwhile, the defendant already had consent from the four *pangeran* on a petition that was signed on 5 August 2013.

It is quite apparent that there is a mismatch between the lawsuit that aimed to stop the project from those who claimed to be the *marga* representatives and the fact that *marga* leaders, the four *pangeran*, had already signed a petition to support the project. The following discussion attempts to gain some insight into this problem by interviewing the proclaimed *marga* representatives who signed and filed the lawsuit.

Although there are eight villagers in total who signed the lawsuit, the interviews reveal that only three of them actually understood the details and the real purpose of the lawsuit. Pak Oyos (aged 69), one of the respectable figures from *marga* Rajabasa, for example, admitted that he did not really understand the detail of the lawsuit and only knew that the main point was to revoke the IPPKH permit from the Ministry of Forestry.

> Our demand at that time was only to revoke Supreme Energy's permit from the Ministry of Forestry, that is what I know. The detail of the legal points in the lawsuit is not my business. It was the lawyer's business. (Oyos, 28 July 2016)

I interviewed Pak Oyos in his modest house in Canti village. When I asked him about the compensation money that the lawsuit demanded, he seemed rather confused and even asked me to repeat who was the one asking for compensation? I explained to him that it was mentioned in the lawsuit. He seemed surprised and did not answer my question for a while. "It's the lawyer's business," he said. "Maybe they have reason for that. But I heard that we did this to slow down their activity because the permit had already been given." (Oyos, 28 July 2016)

This interview indicates that there were other interests at play around the lawsuit and that even some of the people who signed the lawsuit did not know or plays a part in this interest. I tried to confirm this argument with another *marga* representative who had signed the lawsuit.

Anshori (aged 59) from *marga* Rajabasa, lives in a nice house with his wife and three children. It was one of the nicest houses that I had visited so far in the region. He argued that the lawsuit was a wise strategy taken by the *marga* to avoid any violent acts.

> The villagers here tend to get provoked easily. Last time they burned things, next time they could kill people! And the people hurt could be your own neighbour or brother who works for the company. That's why our Panglima Karya Niti Zaman decided to take legal action through the Administrative Court. I'd say that this was a wise decision. No violence and no casualties. (Anshori, 28 July 2016)

Anshori said that the legal suit was the initiative of one of the *marga* representatives who works as a lawyer. Through the lawyer's connection they have seven other lawyers in total who helped the villagers with the lawsuit, free of charge. However, when I asked him about the compensation claim, Anshori reacted rather awkwardly and refused to explain further. But he admitted that there was a compensation demand in the lawsuit.

In this interview, Anshori mentioned that it was Panglima Karya Niti Zaman who had the initial idea of taking legal action. He is the one that spoke to the media in the event concerning the decapitation of Zainal Abidin's statue in 2012 and referred to himself as attorney in fact for the *marga* (see chapter 3, p.15). However, during my

site visit I did not manage to meet this attorney because he was out of town, and his neighbour claimed that it has been three months since he was last seen at his home.

However, when I met Pak Husein, another *marga* representative who had signed the lawsuit, he claimed that the lawsuit was initiated by all of the *marga* representatives. And when I asked who the *marga* had consulted to advise on the idea, especially since it is related to a complicated matter such as a legal claim, he told me that it was a secret and I should not need to know. His act in concealing this information makes it more apparent that there were other interests behind the legal action besides the interest of the *marga* and the villagers, which were stated in the lawsuit.

> It is our secret, and I think you should not need to know. But what is important is that this legal action only aimed to slow down the activities of the company. Their (the company's) permit is only valid for two years, so we wanted to delay their activities until the permit had expired. We know that the permit cannot be extended until the legal suit has ended, and we are not planning to end it. (Husein, 9 August 2016)

Responding to this statement, I asked him how the *marga* representatives could afford to go back and forth to Jakarta to attend the court process? He explained that they used to ask for money from villagers as a means of support, but it was not a lot. The money from the villagers would not be sufficient and that is why they sometimes used their own money. But to my surprise, he claimed that they also had support from a political leader in Jakarta who sponsored them every time they went to the court. I was curious about who this political leader was and the reason why he supported them, but Pak Husein did not want to give any further information. However, this claim confirmed my proposition that there were also political and economic interests behind the complexity of the conflict in Rajabasa, and that the legal action served as a political tool to delay the project in the interest of a certain group.

7.1.4 Divided Elites: Different Opinions Among *Marga* Leaders

Borras and Franco suggest that not only do large-scale land acquisitions affect different people differently, but that "different people will perceive and interpret the experience differently" (2013: 1724). In Rajabasa, even the leaders of the community have divergent opinions and views concerning the project. This also suggests that

there is political contestation between and among the villagers. The next part of this discussion explores the diverse arguments and opinions among *marga* leaders and analyzes what role these had in the conflict surrounding the geothermal project in Rajabasa.

Pangeran Keratuan (aged 82) is the only *pangeran* who signed the lawsuit together with the proclaimed *marga*'s representative, even though he had previously signed the petition in support of the project. However, in an interview he did not give any specific reason why he had done so. During the interview, I had to repeat my questions several times because *Pangeran* Keratuan has difficulties hearing due to his age. In my opinion, *Pangeran* Keratuan has an honest and sincere character. He is the kind of person who does something because he believes that it is the right thing to do. Although he sometimes did not really understand my questions, and thus, could not give a proper answer, I could tell that he was very genuine in what he said. As I spoke with him, I understood that his focus was on protecting the mountain and his people. He stated that the geothermal project needed to be stop because "it's bad" and it would harm the mountain and the villagers. However, when I asked further, he could not elaborate on what he meant by 'bad'. He simply believes that he did the right thing in signing the lawsuit, even though he, perhaps, neither understood all of the points stated in the lawsuit nor the interests behind it.

Ironically, an honest person like him can be easily used to gain another group's interest, especially due to his position as *Pangeran* Keratuan. The fact that *Pangeran* Keratuan signed both documents that contradict one another shows that there is a possibility that he was being used for someone else's agenda, in the midst of this conflict.

The leader of *Marga* Rajabasa, *Pangeran* Davit (aged 37) expressed his neutral position regarding the project. He argued that he did not oppose nor support the project, and does not want to side with anyone. He only sides with his people, and for as long as there is no consensus between his people, then he does not want to give any comment about the situation.

About the legal suit that was filed by people representing the *marga*, *Pangeran* Davit commented that they were not the representatives of *marga*, because he said that only

he and the other three *pangeran* can represent *marga*, or at least they need to be informed about that. However he knows that these villagers are from the *marga* community. "They are perhaps not the representatives of the *marga*, but they are coming from our community," he said (*Pangeran* Rajabasa, 1 August 2016)

According to *Pangeran* Rajabasa, his position as a *pangeran* restrained him from giving an assertive opinion because his own people, the villagers living in his region, have different opinions about it. He does not want to appear to take sides with only one side. Thus, he said that silence is better, and it has worked well so far for him.

The leaders of *Marga* Legun and *Marga* Dantaran are both lords who have supported the project in public. *Pangeran* Legun, Azhar Marzuki (aged 46) said that he is supporting the project because he sees that there are more likely benefits from the project rather than potential harm for the mountain.

> So far we supported the project. If there's a bad consequence from this project of course we will oppose it, but as time goes by we could see that there are more positive benefits than the possible negative impacts of the project. For that reason, we will try to encourage our people and ask for their support. (*Pangeran* Legun, 2 August 2016)

Pangeran Dantaran (aged 62) also had the same opinion. He believed that the company would not want to have any disaster happen in their site, especially after they had invested a lot of money in the project.

When I asked him about people who claimed to be *marga* representatives who had filed the lawsuit against the Ministry of Forestry and Supreme Energy, he replied in an argumentative tone, "Which *marga* representative? We are the *marga* representatives, the *pangeran*, and it is clear that they have already lost in the court" (*Pangeran* Dantaran, 2 August 2016)

Pangeran Dantaran is forceful regarding his opinion, and he clearly stated how he assumed that the opposing group is using one of the lords in order for them to gain their own group's interest.

> It's a shame that they have used their own lord just to legitimize their claim for being the representatives of *marga*. *Pangeran* Keratuan is a nice person, but it is clear that he doesn't understand if he is being used by the wrong people. (*Pangeran* Dantaran, 2 August 2016)

He said if he had not gone to Kamojang on the second site visit held by Supreme Energy, he would not have known all the information about the geothermal project. That was why he said that after the visit he gave a mission to the other people who were invited that they should give this information to the public.

> In my opinion if we don't like something about the company and people trying to harness our mountain, it's fine. There will always be a contra opinion. But, we also need to be smart, and seek for the truth. Don't be a close-minded person who doesn't want to hear others' opinions or suggestions. If a project is beneficial and regarded as a clean energy project, then there is no reason to oppose it, especially when it can help the development of our region. (Pangeran Dantaran, 2 August 2016)

7.2 Summary of Attitudes, Strategies and Reasons

The discussion above demonstrates the complex dynamics of land conflict in Rajabasa. Table 1 summarizes the arguments presented in this thesis about the different actors' attitudes to the geothermal project, their different response strategies and the reasons why they chose such strategies.

Table 1: Summary of Key Actor's Atitudes, Strategies and Response surrounding the conflicts and controversies in Rajabasa Geothermal Power Plant Project

Actors	Attitude to Geothermal Project	Response Strategies	Reason
Local communities around Rajabasa Mountain (landowner)	Positive	Deliberately selling their land to the company.	Economic benefit (land price offered by the company is higher than the market price).
Youth Group	Negative	Distributing video of the negative impacts. Voicing their opposition through local media, social media and public meetings.	Politically, socially and economically marginalized.

Actors	Attitude to Geothermal Project	Response Strategies	Reason
Suheri	Negative	Attack Supreme Energy's site with violent protest.	Lack of information, peaceful action no longer a viable strategy for negotiation.
Legal Action Initiators	Negative	Filed a lawsuit against Ministry of Forestry and Supreme Energy.	Political tool to delay Supreme Energy's activities until their permit expires.
Marga's Leaders: 1. *Pangeran* Dantaran 2. *Pangeran* Legun 3. *Pangeran* Rajabasa 4. *Pangeran* Keratuan	1. Positive 2. Positive 3. Neutral 4. Negative	1. Showing support in public 2. Showing support in public 3. Silence 4. Signed the lawsuit	1. Development for the region 2. Development for the region 3. As a leader of the people, difficult to take a position 4. To protect the mountain

Based on these findings, it is apparent that the conflict surrounding the geothermal project in Rajabasa is more complex and dynamic than might be assumed. Resistance is not automatically occurring as a response to a land deal, and findings suggest that the land agreements are fair and give economic benefits to the landowners. However, resistance does occur, and it occurs with the people who are not directly involved with the land deals and who do not have legal claims on the property of the land.

Borras and Franco (2013: 1733) argue that when non-economic factors such as identity, community landscape or ecology are perceived to be threatened, this can trigger poor people to engage in resistance. In Rajabasa, the villagers have a strong sense of belonging toward the mountain as their symbol of identity and also their source of life. When the villagers perceived that there was a threat to the mountain from the geothermal project it triggered their resistance and their will to engage in political contestation.

James Scott's argument that "the choice of which strategies of resistance to use tends to vary depending largely on the specific social structures, strengths and defensive capacities of the resisters" (1987: 422), is an accurate description of what happened in Rajabasa. Each actor had their own strategies and reasons based on their situation, background, power, and interests. It is apparent that political interests played a big

part in the dynamic of the conflict. The next sub-chapters present other factors that contributed to the dynamic of the conflict in Rajabasa.

7.3 Potential Negative impacts: Incomplete Information and Transparency

Based on the findings from the interviews and the focus group discussions, all of the interviewees agreed that there is a lack of communication and information from Supreme Energy regarding their project, especially in relation to the potential negative impacts. Many of the villagers were not satisfied and said they did not receive adequate information about the project, especially at the beginning when the company first came to the villages. What they wanted to hear was a direct explanation from the company about the possible negative impacts and an assurance concerning how the company planned to prevent any negative impacts from happening.

Fauzi, one of the youth activists from Penengahan village, tried to summarize the villagers' concerns and thoughts in regard to this,

> Usually, if there's any discussion forum about any project, there's always discussions regarding positive and negative impacts of the project. But what Supreme Energy did was only to disclose the positive impacts to the villagers. That later there will be this and that. They said later there will be free electricity, there will be a lot of employment opportunities, there will be more people and investors coming to the region, and so on. But remember, these are only what will happen in the future. For now, we don't need those empty promises. What we wanted to hear was clear information from Supreme about the negative impacts and a clear explanation on the company's strategy to prevent such impacts. (FGD 3, 27 July 2016)

From the company's side, they stated in the media that public information about geothermal energy is limited and has tended to assume that it is harmful for the environment and ecology. The fact is, they claimed, this information is wrong, especially the information about how geothermal technology could trigger a mud eruption such as occurred in Lapindo. Supramu Santosa, Founder, President and CEO of Supreme Energy said, "We will try to straighten out this information, and gain the public's trust. The technology is very safe. Even the Green Peace NGO, that is the strictest environmental NGO, claimed that geothermal technology is a green

technology.” Supramu further asserted that geothermal energy will bring beneficial change for the people of Lampung, especially people in the South Lampung Regency. "Geothermal energy is good for people, and good for Lampung. With our activities in South Lampung we will ensure better road access, economic growth, and more benefits for the community," said Supramu (quoted in *Radar Lamsel*, 2013).

Evidence of a miscommunication between the company and the villagers has emerged in my research. There is a mismatch between what the company wanted to tell the villagers and what the villagers wanted to hear from the company. There is a need for information from the villagers because they believed that the project must have a negative impact, while the company insisted that there would be no negative impacts from the project. My interview with Supreme Energy’s representative confirmed this argument. The Public Relations Officer of the company claimed that there was nothing that the company could tell, because there are no negative impacts in their project.

> We don’t know what else to tell the public, it seems like we already tried everything and explained everything to them, but they keep asking us the same questions over and over again. We explained how we will not have problems with water resources because our project will use the water from the sea instead of the water from the mountain. We also explained how Rajabasa has a different topography with Sidoarjo, so the villagers don’t have to worry about the possibility of a mud eruption such as occurred at Lapindo. Moreover, the drilling technique and technology also won’t let that from happening. So really there are no negative impacts from our project. (Supreme Energy’s PR, 27 July 2016)

Meanwhile Pak Husein, the leader of the legal action movement has a different experience in regard to the company’s explanation. According to him, it is not possible that the project does not have any negative consequences. I asked him whether the villagers ever had a discussion with Supreme Energy and met with their geothermal expert. He said it had been done, but the result was not satisfying. According to Pak Husein, Supreme Energy’s geothermal expert explained that the technical drilling that they will do in Rajabasa would be the same as the gas drilling in Sidoarjo. Husein reported that he had asked Supreme Energy,

> In Rajabasa, with the third highest potential of geothermal resources in Indonesia, especially because it's connected with Krakatau Mountain, if then you drilled the mountain, wouldn't the pressure be very high, even higher than in Sidoarjo? If something like that occurred would your technology be able to accommodate it?. (Husein, 9 August 2016)

He claimed that the company's only response was that "If such a thing happened then it is a natural disaster". Husein considered this an inappropriate and disappointing reply.

> Is it appropriate for the company's expert to reply to us in such manner? This is why I told them no. If a disaster happened then who's the one going to take all the risk? It's us! Not them. They can go back to their home on Java island if the disaster happened. (Husein, 9 August 2016)

However, Pak Suheri, the coordinator of the violent conflict, revealed contradictory information.

> When I had a meeting with the company's representative, they explained to me the detail of their project and technology. It turns out all of my assumptions and information that I had heard were wrong. So I told Pak Frangky (Supreme's representative) that information the villagers had received was all provocative information, given by provocateurs. Of course I'm fair. I told them fairly that I was wrong, but I also told them that they are wrong for not giving all of this detailed information to all of the villagers. (Suheri, 3 August 2016)

Meanwhile, *marga* leaders stated that this conflict happened because the company began their project with the wrong strategy. *Pangeran* Davit of Rajabasa claimed that he felt offended when Supreme Energy first came to the area and did not visit any of the *marga* to initiate discussion first with the *marga*. Their strategy of only giving the information to the village heads and a few of the villagers' representatives was not effective and left out information for many other villagers.

> Their campaign was not effective and did not reach to the lowest group in the society. Many of the villagers don't really know anything exactly about the project and thus people who know about this make use of this situation by spreading false facts that trigger the opposition and conflict. They only started to approach us, *marga* leaders, when conflict had already happened. To me, this action is too late. There's already too much tension going on and it will be difficult to gain the villagers' trust. (*Pangeran* Rajabasa, 1 August 2016)

Another interesting fact that I discovered in the FGDs is that the villagers do not even know how big the project site will be. Many of them thought that the geothermal project would occupy the whole surrounding area of Mount Rajabasa. Many of them also have not even seen a picture of a geothermal power plant and could not imagine what such a power plant might look like. "From what I know, all of the forest surrounding the mountain will be part of the geothermal project," said Eka, (FGD 1, 26 July 2016).

> I heard that almost all of the land surrounding the mountain was sold to Supreme. So I always imagine what will happen next if we are looking to the direction of our mountain. Will all of the forest be gone and there are no green plants but big machines in there? (Dewi, FGD 3, 27 July 2016)

Based on my findings, I conclude that the company's strategy on how to approach and give information to the villagers played a big role in gaining public trust. The company's strategy of only approaching the elites to give information about the project is clearly not working in Rajabasa. Lack of information and transparency concerning the negative impacts is also fuelling many of the heated arguments between villagers and contributed to the factors that caused the conflict.

7.4 Mistrust Between Actors

One of the most significant aspects contributing to the complexity of the conflict is that there is a great deal of mistrust between the actors. Each of the sides tends to accuse the other that they have economic interests behind their claims.

During my interview with him, Suheri expressed his disappointment at the violent conflict. He claimed that he had felt as if he was being used to provoke other villagers

to commit a violent act, as he admitted to having an aggressive character, easily provoked. He found out from an internal source that the group that opposed the project actually had an economic motive behind their claim.

> There I was disappointed, I mean all of the sacrifice that I made, it turned out I'm being used by them to make chaos and conflict, to make things worse. And what hurtful is that I know them very well. We are in the same organizations, and fight together. I cannot believe they did everything for money. (Suheri, 3 August 2016)

Suheri claimed that he had no other motives except to protect the mountain and the villages from disaster.

> I have climbed this mountain until the top of it and down to the crater seven times, while no other villagers are brave enough to do it. I really love my homeland, my mountain, it's the home of my ancestors. If it's tampered with and there are no benefits from it, then I will be the first one to come forward and fight, but if there's a greater benefit, then come and explain to me about it. (Suheri, 3 August 2016)

When I asked him about the lawsuit, he replied that he knew perfectly well who were the actors behind the lawsuit.

> I know really well all about it. That's the group who asked for money to Supreme because they haven't got any benefits out of the project. When I was still a fugitive, instead of helping me they sent a lawsuit against the Ministry of Forestry with all of the lawyers that they have and asked for 100 million Rupiah as compensation. There's no such thing as compensation in the administrative court! (Suheri, 3 August 2016)

On the other hand, Pak Anshori expressed his disgust with the politics in Indonesia, where 'small people' could never win against the 'high and rich people', and according to him that was the reason why their lawsuit was rejected, even though they had a legitimate claim. He also argued that *pangeran* of *marga* who signed the petition to support Supreme Energy in August 2013, must have received money from the company.

> *Pangeran* in here are economically poor. So it is understandable if the company invited them and gave them some small amount of money to sign some petition and they would accept it happily. This is the politics game. But those *pangeran*, they cannot be lords if they don't have villagers and *marga* communities. They cannot decide things on their own, they need to consult with their people and act according to what people want! (Anshori, 28 July 2016)

These claims and accusations against each other show implicitly that the strategy of each side was to gain support from other villagers by claiming that they were sincere and acting according to the benefit of villagers and the sake of the mountain while the other side was the one that was corrupt and could not be trusted.

7.5 The Role of Local Government

The role of the local government is to support the national programme that the state imposes in their region. However, in Rajabasa, the local government does not seem to make much of a contribution in supporting the geothermal project, even though it is a national programme. My interviews with the head of villages in Sukaraja, Waymuli, Rajabasa and Kunjir led me to the conclusion that none of the heads of villages considered that they needed to do more to embrace their people in supporting the project.

> We don't have any role in this regard. It is not our task to be involved in this project. But of course if the company is asking for our help, we will gladly help them and facilitate their needs. (Head of Kunjir village, 1 August 2016)

> Our hope is for the project to continue because the company has been very generous in helping us to build our new village hall. (…) In relation to the role of village head, I don't think we have any specific role, because this is a company project and not our project. (Head of Sukaraja village, 4 August 2016)

Attempting to gain further information, I made an appointment for a short interview

with the Regent of South Lampung. When I asked him about the role of local government in supporting the programme since it is a national programme, the newly elected Regent corrected me, stating that in his view it is not a programme from the state.

> It is not a government programme. It is a private investor project that wants to invest in this area. And from what I see, they don't seem to have a clear investment programme. Ever since I've been elected as the new regent, their boards of directors never come here directly; it is only their subordinates that came. This is rather inappropriate. Who is the owner? He's the one that should come and introduce himself to me. Perhaps they don't take villagers and people here seriously. Maybe they thought that they could just give money to the government and a few elites in the region and everything would go smoothly. They should know that they couldn't act that way here. (Regent of South Lampung, 10 August 2016)

He also stated that if there is still resistance in the local community toward the project, then it must be because there are things that the company has not provided yet. The Regent also claimed that the root cause of the conflict is due to the erroneous initial process when Supreme Energy first comes to the region. They approached the wrong people, and did not give adequate information to all the villagers. According to the Regent, if the input is wrong then of course the output is also wrong.

> The only solution is for Supreme to restart from the beginning. To start their campaign again, and this time I hope they can do it together with us and with the *marga* for all the villagers, so everything will be clear and there is no more wrong information and wrong assumptions. (Regent of South Lampung, 10 August 2016)

The analysis of my interviews indicates that the local government did not consider the geothermal project as a national project that needed to be fully supported. Therefore, there were never initiatives from local government to help the company to overcome the resistance from the villagers. This has added more complexities in the already complex conflict in Rajabasa Geothermal Power Plant Project.

8. Conclusions

The overarching aim of this thesis was to contribute to an analysis of land conflict in relation to renewable energy projects, especially geothermal energy projects. This was undertaken through a detailed analysis of the history of one specific project and conflict at Mount Rajabasa, and the land deal processes, local people's perceptions and arguments and strategies involved in the struggle over that project.

8. 1 Research Findings

Four research questions were formulated in chapter 3.3 of this thesis (p. 32). In answer to the first question, the different responses of local communities toward the large-scale land acquisition in the geothermal project in Rajabasa have been presented. These responses demonstrate that the landowners who were involved directly with the land deals sold their land willingly and supported the project enthusiastically. Their response was mostly based on economic reasons due to the high offer on the price of the land, which was higher than the market price. Resistance did not occur in this group of people due to the effectiveness of government regulations regarding land deals and the energy company's commitment to follow good governance procedures in dealing with large-scale land acquisitions.

However, different responses came from the communities that were not directly involved in the land deals and did not have a legal claim on the property of the land. This behaviour has been assessed using the argument laid out by Borras and Franco. They argue that when non-economic factors such as identity, community landscape and environment are perceived to be threatened, then poor people can be triggered into a resistant response. In Rajabasa, the geothermal project was generally perceived

as having negative consequences for the mountain and the environment. These negative consequences were, specifically, concerns over possible mud eruptions and earthquakes caused by drilling processes and concerns over the impact on the water resource. In addition, the villagers felt strongly associated with the mountain, seeing it as their symbol of identity and their source of livelihood. These combined factors resulted in a group of people willing to engage in political contestation.

For the second research question concerning the actors involved in the conflict, the empirical data gathered and presented in this thesis suggests that there were four different groups of actors engaging in the conflict. The first actor was the youth group. The reason for their resistance was a feeling of being socially excluded and politically marginalized from the project. Their strategy was to contest the project through the media and social media and also through the distribution of a video presenting the negative impacts of a geothermal project in East Nusa Tenggara. The second actor was the leader of the violent protest. The demand was to stop the project until information regarding the potential negative impacts of the project had been disclosed. The reason that the protest escalated to open violence was because the leader perceived that peaceful action was not a viable option for negotiation. The third actor group was the *marga* representatives who filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Forestry and Supreme Energy. They used the legal action as a political tool to delay the project in order to gain their group's interest. The last actor group was the *pangeran* of the *marga*, where each of the *pangeran* had a different opinion and different stance toward the project. These findings answered the third research question, that the dynamic of the conflict in Rajabasa was caused by the different interests of various actors, linked with the wider problems of politics, social discrimination, economic marginalization and environmental concerns.

In regards to the fourth research question the case study shows that it is not useful to place forced evictions and unfair settlements at the centre of land conflict as this may result in the wrong conclusion and consequently to wrong policies and programmes for development. While conducting good governance in land settlement is important, it does not guarantee the success of the project since there are a lot of other factors that companies and government need to pay attention to. This thesis shows that focusing only on the land deal obstructs a deeper view of other more complicated

issues surrounding land conflict.

8.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to government and developers involved in further projects for geothermal energy in Indonesia:

1. Social mapping

   It is quite apparent, and is frequently mentioned in the interviews, that the company's strategies to approach the local communities were considered to be one of the crucial problems that led to social tensions and conflicts. Many villagers, leaders of *marga* and the regent of South Lampung considered that the company acted inappropriately in disregarding the 'right' people and reaching toward the 'wrong' people. One of the *pangeran* for example, felt offended by the fact that the company did not try to introduce themselves appropriately to the *pangeran* when they first came to Rajabasa. Thus, I would recommend that social mapping should be prerequisite before conducting a large-scale land acquisition. Social mapping is the mapping of an area to identify households, landowners, land users and the whole community based on socio-economic indicators. It is especially needed to identify leaders of communities, influential groups, and relationships between them and the villagers. With information provided through social mapping, the company would benefit from being aware of what is expected from them when they first come to a region. Thus, it is a crucial tool in determining the company's strategy for approaching a local community. Social mapping is also important for an analysis of the history of social and political events that may be having continuing impacts in contemporary society, so that the company would be aware of what they should and should not do in order to avoid unnecessary conflict with the local communities.

2. Transparency

   In Rajabasa, most of the villagers complained that they did not receive adequate information especially about the negative effects of the project. What the villagers demanded was a direct explanation from the company about the possible negative impacts and an assurance concerning how the company planned to prevent any negative impacts from happening. For this reason, I

recommend that transparency is necessary, not only in land deals, but also in giving the public information regarding a project, including potential positive and negative impacts, as well as the risk management strategy of the company.

3. Information

   While reaching out and working together with the leaders of the community could be a good strategy to approach local communities, it is also important to be careful in doing so, not to exclude other villagers from receiving information regarding the project. As is demonstrated in this master thesis, feelings of exclusion are likely to trigger villagers to engage in acts of contestation. Therefore, providing information to the entire community without favouring any elites is crucial. By providing complete information to the whole community, local people can be prevented from feeling socially excluded or marginalized.

4. Support from local government

   While central governments do not usually have expertise on a variety of local conditions, needs and priorities, local governments are likely to have much better access to specific local knowledge. Local governments may improve the efficiency of a project by providing better information on local needs and preferences, supporting social inclusion, as well as mediating conflicts when there is disagreement with and within the local community. Thus, full support from local government is essential in order for a project to be successful. This can be reached by better integration and coordination between central and local government. Central government should provide clear information about such projects and enable a clear role, responsibilities and capabilities for local government.

This thesis has provided new insights into arguments and response strategies from poor people faced with large-scale land acquisitions, especially in a renewable energy project. Future research questions might focus on policy recommendations for such projects. Further research on different areas and case studies is needed to enrich this knowledge with a variety of responses from different people in the context of large-scale land acquisitions.

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ANNEX 1

List of Interviews

This appendix contains list of all of the interviews conducted during the field research:

Semi-Structured Interviews		
Date	**Name**	**Description**
22 July 2016	Pak Asep	Villager of Sukaraja
	Pak Anton	Villager of Sukaraja
23 July 2016	Ningsih	Villager of Sukaraja
25 July 2016	Ridho	Villager of Rajabasa
27 July 2016	PR of Supreme Energy 1	
	PR of Supreme Energy 2	
28 July 2016	Andi	Villager of Kalianda
	Oyos	Villager of Canti
	Anshori	Villager of Canti
29 July 2016	Head of Canti Village	
1 August 2016	Shinta	Villager of Kunjir
	Nasrul	Villager of Kunjir
	Head of Kunjir Village	
	Pangeran Keratuan	
	Pangeran Rajabasa	
2 August 2016	Kuswadi	Villager of Waymuli
	Pangeran Legun	Leader of Marga Legun
	Pangeran Dantaran	Leader of Marga Dantaran
3 August 2016	Suheri	Villager of Panangahan
4 August 2016	Kholil	Villager of Rajabasa
	Head of Sukaraja Village	
5 August 2016	Yusuf	Villager of Waymuli
	Ali	Villager of Waymuli
	Head of Waymuli Village	
8 August 2016	Zunaedin	Villager of Canti
9 August 2016	Wanda	Villager of Kalianda
	Husein	Villager of Penengahan
10 August 2016	Dr. H. Zainudin Hasan SH,MH	Regent of South Lampung
11 August 2016	Ridho	Villager of Rajabasa
12 August 2016	Ali Hamid	Villager of Panangahan
15 August 2016	Ilham	Villager of Canti
	Romi	Villager of Rajabasa
19 August 2016	Ridwansyah	Villager of Kalianda
22 August 2016	Pak Rudi	Villager of Banding
	Pak Cahya	Villager of Banding
24 August 2016	Hendra	Local NGO – Walhi Lampung

FGD 1		
Date	**Name**	**Description**
26 July 2016	Al Azis	Villager of Kalianda
	Rizwan	Villager of Kalianda
	Alif	Villager of Canti
	Alamsyah	Villager of Kalianda
	Ridho	Villager of Rajabasa
	Eka	Villager of Kalianda
	Roy	Villager of Kunjir
	Furhan	Villager of Sukaraja

FGD 2		
Date	**Name**	**Description**
26 July 2016	Ridwansyah	Villager of Banding
	Syamsul	Villager of Panangahan
	Nanang	Villager of Kalianda
	Dadang	Villager of Kalianda
	Citra	Villager of Canti
	Dina	Villager of Kalianda
	Ahmad	Villager of Canggu

FGD 3		
Date	**Name**	**Description**
27 July 2016	Nurul	Villager of Panangahan
	Ami	Villager of Kunjir
	Nanang	Villager of Waymuli
	Dadang	Villager of Kalianda
	Citra	Villager of Canti
	Dina	Villager of Kalianda
	Fauzi	Villager of Penengahan

ANNEX 2

FIGURES

Figure 4: Paddy field in Rajabasa district (author, 2016)

Figure 5: Paddy field in Rajabasa district 2 (author, 2016)

Figure 6: Pangeran Keratuan in his humble house (author, 2016)

Figure 7: Supreme Energy's facility at Sukaraja Village (author, 2016)

Figure 8: Supreme Energy's jetty at Sukaraja village (author, 2016)

Figure 9: Children at Rajabasa village (author, 2016)

Figure 10: Protest at 2013 -1 (Antara Lampung, 2013)

Figure 11: Protest at 2013 -2 (Tempo, 2013)

Figure 12: The violent riot at Sukaraja (Saibumi, 2014)

Figure 13: Protesters burn Supreme Energy's facilities (Saibumi, 2014)

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ANNEX 3

Personal declaration

I hereby declare that the submitted thesis is the result of my own, independent work. All external sources are explicitly acknowledged in the thesis.

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Aldilla Noor Rahiemah, __ / __ / 2017