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# Political Opportunities in the Samin Movement Against the Establishment of a Cement Factory in Pati

## Abstract

The struggle against the hegemony of rulers and extractive companies is still being carried out by indigenous people around the world. Samin is one of the indigenous populations that is still struggling to defend their territory from the establishment of a cement factory. Through the ideological strength and support from several parties, Samin was able to see a political opportunity to build a resistance movement. This study uses a social movement paradigm, by looking at political opportunities in the resistance movement. This study aims to determine the problems behind the birth of the Samin movement. The research methodology is carried out by in-depth interviews and participatory observation with informants and uses secondary data in the form of information made available in articles or books. The findings show that the active and open resistance carried out by the Samin community was caused by the influence of political opportunities in the reform era. Some actors can mobilize the masses, form organizations, and network broadly so that it is possible for resistance to occur. Actors are also good at raising issues around the destruction of nature, shifts in the social order, inappropriate laws, and threats to livelihood. There is influence from the ideology of past movements in the form of covert resistance which later transformed into modern movements.

## Keywords:

Samin movement; political opportunities; cement factory; governance.

## Introduction

The local community movement against corporations has become a classic problem, as it has been around for a long time. The Zapatista movement in Mexico has long fought for farmers' rights against

government and corporate oppression (Arce, 2017). A similar movement has also taken place in Brazil through the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais sem Terra (MST), which is against industry land control (Fernandes, 2021). The coca

farmer movement in La Paz, Bolivia, has been struggling for a long time but still has not found justice (Xie, 2011). These movements have shown that this resistance movement leads to the defense of the land as its source of life. Most of them are indigenous people and work as farmers.

In Indonesia, the resistance of indigenous people and farmers against the mining industry has also continued. The study of the resistance of the Amungme indigenous people against Freeport in Papua was caused by the environmental disaster that occurred and the loss of land access for local communities (Hermawan, 2018). A similar case also occurred with the Samawa indigenous people against PT. Newmont Nusa Tenggara in Sumbawa whose resistance was not only caused by environmental damage but also forced the sociocultural sector to be sidelined (Salim & Abdullah, 2012). In other cases, for example, farmers in Cipari, Cilacap fought against the Rumpun Sari Antam company, which fought with all their might because they lost their rights as citizens to access natural resources that belonged to them (Santoso, 2016). These studies are the same problems being faced by the Samin community.

The Samin community in Pati, Central Java is still struggling to defend their land from the establishment of a cement factory. The Samin movement against the plan to establish a cement factory began in 2006 when there was a discourse on the construction of a cement factory in the Sukolilo Pati Regency. The movement was spearheaded by the Samin elite who received positive support from the community, especially the farmers. The location that the Samin community is fighting for is the Kendeng Mountains. This location is the area where the cement factory of PT Semen Gresik is planned to be built in 2006, located in Sukolilo Pati. In 2013, PT Semen Gresik changed its name to PT Semen Indonesia and moved the plan to build a factory in the Rembang area. However, in 2014, Indocement's subsidiary, PT Sahabat Mulia Sakti, entered Pati, this time targeting Kayen and Tambakromo sub-districts as areas planned for the construction of a cement factory.

The plan to build a cement factory is no longer located in Sukolilo, but the Samin community continues to reject the cement factory because Kayen, Tambakromo, and Rembang are still in the Kendeng Mountains. The Samin community or often referred to as Sedulur Sikep is a group of indigenous people who work as farmers. They cannot leave this profession because farming is a traditional Samin tradition, so this profession is their identity. It is feared that the plan to build a cement factory will shift the position of the Samin community as farmers. They reflect the condition of the people living around mining companies in other places, where the position of farmers is displaced into factory workers or even decide to migrate to other places. The presence of a cement factory is feared to damage the ecosystem to damage natural

resources, which results in a threat to the Samin community in the future, thus raising fears of a subsistence crisis zone.

The resistance movement that was carried out was not based on ideology alone, but a momentum that felt right. This momentum was during the era of the fall of the Soeharto regime (the reform era) when the Samin community began to open themselves up to all forms of resistance against injustice. Through actors such as "Gunretno," he can mobilize the masses against the cement factory (Asrawijaya & Hudayana, 2021). His strength is now not only in the strength of his community, but extends from the Kendeng farmers in Pati to Rembang, to civil society who sympathize with the struggle.

Many studies on the Samin community oppose the establishment of a cement factory. Among them is the study of Aziz (2012), which discusses the position of the Samin community as a marginalized group in the contestation of the pros and cons of cement factories. Suharko (2016) once discussed the Samin movement in its judicial aspects. In the results of her research, Putri (2017) discusses Samin's position as a farmer who guards the identity of the guardian of natural resources. Setiadi et al., (2017) examined divisions in the cement factory resistance camp. Novianto (2018) discusses the articulation of Saminism in the movement against the cement factory. Asrawijaya (2020a) sees that the Samin movement leads to the concept of eco-populism. And the study of Asrawijaya & Hudayana (2021) focuses more on the ability of actors to mobilize the Samin movement. This study aims to explain the forms and factors that create political opportunities in encouraging social movements in the Samin community. This discussion is important as a basic bridge to see the dynamics of the wider Samin movement. Therefore, it is important to discuss this idea as knowledge to enrich the social movement theory of today's era.

In explaining the political opportunities of a social movement, according to Tarrow (2008), one

approach that can be used to determine the political opportunities that trigger social movements is the proximate opportunity structure. The closest opportunity structure approach emphasizes the signs/signals received from policies in the community or from changes that occur in community resources and capacities (Davis et al., 2005; McAdam et al., 2012; Tarrow, 2008). Movement activists do not choose their goals at random, but the political context emphasizes certain grievances around the movements they organize (Meyer, 2004). A political opportunity has two concepts: namely (1) alignment between groups with the larger political environment and (2) adaptation to social and political changes in society. This concept explains that the greater a group can unite and adapt in the political arena, the more likely it is to be able to make changes in a political system (Asrawijaya, 2019; McAdam et al., 2012; Sukmana, 2016).

In particular, this approach argues that political opportunities or opportunities for the birth of social movements can arise due to government policies that are not to the aspirations of the people or are not implemented by the government properly (Tarrow, 2008). This approach also looks at the opportunity structure that focuses on changes that occur or are experienced by certain groups (McAdam et al., 2012). The cause of this change can be caused by various factors, such as economy, ideology, culture, war, etc (McCharty & Zald, 2011). Indicators of social movement political opportunities are (1) The character of the political institutional system in a regime or country, whether it is open or closed. If the character is open, it will be easy to see this political opportunity, for example, the reform era in Indonesia has opened up information and freedom of opinion, so this will make it easier for activists to protest. If the character is closed, then when the people are fed up with various kinds of acts of injustice, resistance will appear, starting covertly until in the end, they can build great power to bring

down the regime when political opportunities arise, even this condition can lead to acts of treason (Asrawijaya & Hudayana, 2021). (2) Relations between groups in power; if the relationship is unstable it will facilitate disharmony, which creates political opportunities (McAdam et al., 2012; Schock, 2013; Tarrow, 2008). (3) The capacity of actors in forming elite forces in society (Asrawijaya & Hudayana, 2021; Karp, 1986; Sewell, 2013) and (4) state capacity and tendency to take repressive measures (Asrawijaya, 2019; Robinson, 2016; Tarrow, 1994, 2008).

## **Methods**

The life of indigenous peoples in the current era is still interesting to study. But the problem is becoming more complex. Ethnographic research is still the most appropriate research method to understand the conditions of the indigenous peoples being studied. Likewise, with the case of the Samin community (Sedulur Sikep) against a cement company, it must be carried out with an ethnographic approach. The importance of this research using an ethnographic approach rather than other approaches, because not only does this research have strong characteristics related to indigenous peoples and their culture but the phenomenon needs to be examined more from the side of participatory observation to be able to feel the actual conditions on the ground (Windiani & R, 2016). Through this approach, it is possible to know and understand human behaviors related to their political activities in certain cultural and social settings (Spradley, 1997).

In this study, the author explores everything from the root of the problem to the biggest action, not just with in-depth interviews, but there are observations, directly involved in every action movement and strategy of resistance in field action, and living in the Samin community to understand the culture, which is the basis of resistance. Field research was conducted between June 2018 and the end of 2020.

Data were obtained through direct and in-depth interviews with informants and participatory observation. The informants were resistance actors from the Samin community in Bombong Hamlet such as Gunretno, Gunarti, Gunarto, and others, as well as community members outside the Samin community such as Mbah Sriyono, Bambang, and others who were involved in the resistance to the establishment of a cement factory. And including the village government and those who are pro-cement factory establishments. All data is recorded in field notes, then analyzed qualitatively to produce a thick description. Data validity is used with Triangulation. And data analysis is done thematically, textually, contextually, and in interpretation.

## **Results and Discussion**

Based on the research results, it can be identified that two things have become the focus of the discussion of political opportunities in this movement against cement factories. First, factors that opened up political opportunities for the Samin social movement. Second, what political opportunities are available in the social movement of Science in Pati?

### **Factors that opened up political opportunities for the samin social movement in Pati**

Tarrow's (2008) of the view is that political opportunities for the birth of a social movement can arise due to a government policy that is not by the aspirations of the people or is not properly implemented by the government. Such government policies can provide opportunities for the presence of a social movement. Political opportunities can also arise as a result of state legitimacy.

Samin's movement against the cement factory is a reaction against the state and capitalist practices that marginalize indigenous peoples. The two major powers synergize with each other, namely investors and the government

which support each other to become 'substantial central' forces. This strength is the reason for the resistance of civil society in various countries, especially third countries which are often targeted by capitalist objects. Most of this resistance was carried out by local communities consisting of farmers and indigenous peoples (Peluso, 2017; Prause & Billon, 2020; Putri, 2017). They fight because there is deprivation, both in terms of economy and tradition. The Samin movement is a symbol of resistance to a new style of indigenous peoples in the contemporary era.

This new style of resistance for the Samin community is in the form of a transformation from a covert movement to an active and open movement. The Samin movement in the past (colonialism) was known as a closed resistance, which carried the Ratu Adil movement (Kroef, 1952) and covert resistance (Korver, 1976). The current era of resistance shows more of a new social movement style with open resistance, non-homogeneous struggles, protests, networking, organizational formation, raising environmental issues, the role of women, and resistance in litigation (Asrawijaya & Hudayana, 2021). This feature of active resistance is proof of the transformation of the Samin movement.

The active and open resistance carried out by the Samin community was due to the influence of political opportunities in the reform era. When the New Order regime fell, many new forces emerged that had previously been in hiding. One of them is the strength of indigenous peoples who dare to show their strength by demonstrating the existence of various alliances of indigenous peoples. The openness of information and freedom in networking has made many indigenous communities touched by NGOs that are concerned with the movements of marginalized groups so that activists from indigenous communities were born. (Tamma & Duile, 2020).

In the Samin community, a figure has appeared who, since the New Order government

came to power, has dared position himself as an activist for his traditional community. This Samin activist opened himself up to various elements of society. This Samin activist opened himself up to various elements of society. The network experience gained from the political opportunity factor in the reform era is what has made the Samin community dare to put up an active and open resistance (Asrawijaya & Hudayana, 2021).

The profile of the Samin community, which is synonymous with farmers, has led to the movement they are carrying out against the cement factory becoming a peasant movement. The Samin community has a strong tradition of agriculture. Soil, water, and all the resources of the Kendeng Forest are the center of his life. If there are parties who want to seize their wealth, then resistance is a non-negotiable option (Asrawijaya, 2020), like what the Samin community did in the past. The strengths built are the same as those of the global peasant movement; namely, there are actors, organizations, strategies, and networks. This is because there are figures who are open-minded so their thoughts are no longer orthodox but modern.

Actors can become the center of power of the movement through the utilization of various resources and social capital they have (Woolcock & Naraya, 2017). The conflicts that arise are also rational because power and authority are not distributed fairly among the people, making the ruling authority described by movement actors only as a tool for entrepreneurs (financiers) to get the maximum profit. This ideology is built on the concept of eco-populism as part of a new social movement against the practice of neoliberalism (Asrawijaya, 2020).

This movement, which was initiated by the Samin community, initially occurred spontaneously. Gunretno explained that:

"... actually what has been done has been flowing, such as the existence

of movement organizations such as JMPPK (Network Community Care for the Kendeng Mountains) and Simbar Wareh (women's organization against the cement factory), and demonstrations. it was all done because circumstances forced the sake of it.<sup>1</sup>

There are two organizations that were formed on the initiative of actors from the Samin community, namely JMPPK and Simbar Wareh. JMPPK is an organization of farmers against the establishment of cement factories that are dominated by men. Due to a condition that is ecofeminism, the women initiated by Gunarti formed an organization for women as a place to express their rejection of the establishment of a cement factory. This organization is named 'Simbar Wareh' whose name comes from two springs in the Kendeng Mountains, namely Simbar Joyo Dodo and Goa Wareh. However, structurally, Simbar Wareh is the responsibility of JMPPK, and his movement actions are always carried out together.

Both of these organizations are tools to get a lot of supporters for the movement. Through this organization, Kendeng farmers can easily provide an understanding of the dangers of establishing a cement factory for the ecosystem in the Kendeng mountains. because this organization has the most members from non-Samin kendeng farmers. This is because the majority of kendeng farmers are ordinary people. Thus, the support and participation of the farming community were obtained in the movement to reject the cement factory.

Support can also be easily obtained from Kendeng farmers who have long had social networks with the Samin community. Through this social network, communication is made easy, both for providing an understanding of the goals of the movement, gathering masses, and forming movement organizations. Kendeng farmers in responding to the actor's invitation were not only

passive and took the information presented for granted, but actively participated in finding out the truth of the information, one of which was conducting a comparative study to Tuban to see the condition of the people after the cement factory was built which turned out to be very concerning.

The effect of delivering messages interactively with interpersonal communication patterns with Kendeng farmers gave birth to an interest in joining the resistance against cement. This interest is caused by the meaning of the words created by actors who are very important in explaining the roles, rules, and cultural values that are at work. In the process of communicating with Kendeng farmers, actors use thinking based on socio-cultural traditions, namely the experience of reality (social construction) that takes place continuously.

The social construction in question is an action based on a system of knowledge and experience that can no longer be compared with the legal norms of the authorities. Based on life experiences so far, there are many inequalities, injustices, and disappointments that construct themselves as marginalized communities.<sup>2</sup> With such feelings, actors can easily carry out communication based on tradition and reality.<sup>3</sup>

This communication then gave birth to a high sense of solidarity from the Kendeng farmers

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<sup>2</sup> The chaos in the agricultural sector has indeed not been handled properly by the government many times, in the New Order era, for example, many farmers had to lose their land because it was given to foreigners, the green revolution which turned out to destroy farmers, and in the current era, the same thing will also happen plus crop yields farmers who find it difficult to cover production costs so that farmers experience continuous losses. Another disappointment of the Samin community is its traditions such as religious status, marriage, and education which are often not in line with the government.

<sup>3</sup> This tradition is farming as a livelihood for the local community, and in reality, there is a threat of natural damage that threatens the existence of Kendeng farmers.

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<sup>1</sup> the interview was conducted on 12 July 2018

toward the movement of the Samin community in saving the earth from damage. The sense of solidarity that emerges is shown in good faith in facing crises together, as explained by Scott (2019), that to do for a subsistence economic life, farmers unite in their social and political life.

This good intention is a form of solidarity among farmers by giving sincerity to protect mother earth from the hands of nature destroyers as a form of maturity in their thinking, after so many decades of living relying on the universe. The maturity of farmers makes them political protagonists and actuators through a sense of solidarity for the pressures they experience, to defend rural areas so they don't lose their population (farmers) from structural pressures so that in the future they will provide better conditions.

Structural pressures that existed by the Samin community were used to motivate the struggle in building communication with fellow Kendeng farmers to create a sense of solidarity among Kendeng farmers in building awareness of strengthening resistance to the construction of a cement factory. This is done by raising awareness of the importance of fighting for the competitive value of farmers who are currently increasingly complex so that the creativity of farmers is needed to win self-esteem.

The intended competitive value means not just being a vocal farmer for no reason, but because there are challenges faced. The challenge is in the form of efforts to defend themselves as subsistence farmers who are always faced with problems that always threaten them. This problem was developed to provide an understanding of the importance of Kendeng farmers' critical awareness of this case. The aim is to create a sense of fighting for hope and future orientation so that humans as microcosms can be in harmony with the universe (macrocosm). Created harmony that gave birth to the happiness of life. Namely, A hope of what is possible in the future, which begins with present awareness.

The expectations and orientation of Kendeng farmers make it easier for Samin actors to incorporate social issues that are relevant in the context of destroying nature, the local economy, and forest management by cement companies, which is ultimately linked to public policy issues. If you don't fight for it, over time it will become a problem that has a broad impact. The impacts that will arise can be in the form of environmental damage, loss of artifacts that affect the cultural history of the community, to social problems.

Actors provide understanding to their members that there has been a context of changes in public policy that did not take place properly and must be resisted because the regional and provincial governments are in fact siding with cement manufacturing companies. The assumption that is trying to be raised is that the government in power is no different from the foreign rulers who have been in power before (colonialism era). This fact creates the impression of foreign domination (capitalist), and is an impression that easily creates social jealousy and stimulates discontent.

These impressions are then processed in forums for discussions and lectures conducted in informal spaces. At this point, they realized that a dialectical process was needed to lead to the struggle for peasant rights. Understanding that is getting sharper and deeper about this reality, makes them have product awareness which is all manifested through discussion and processing of creative ideas as an important action that marks a fundamental change in the realm of thought and experience of the Kendeng farmers.

This thought process is influenced by historical and cultural conditions so it creates actors who are free from intervention. Many of the distinctive beliefs of the driving actors are rooted in Samin Soerosentiko's thoughts, which are believed to be independent values, brought by the movement's leading actors who come from the Samin community. This belief brings

the struggle to the arena of contestation which is conditional, proper, and civilized. Therefore the conceptualization of the movement which is different from the peasant movement of the past (colonial era) is not then understood as a deviation. This dynamic gave rise to a new type of Samin movement by cooperating with non-Samin kendeng farmers, by creating a new way of Samin resistance strategy, even though this strategy was heavily influenced by the values of colonial-era cultural resistance which were adapted to the conditions of the present era.

The initial strategy undertaken was by forming a coalition with Kendeng farmers, who generally came from the lower middle class. This implies that the meaningful interaction has awakened the participants; so far, their group (the farmers) has lived in incompetence against the political and economic structure and as victims of post-industrial life. This interaction was able to provoke sensitivity in the political arena of Kendeng farmers, thus gaining sympathy, support, and even membership status. Communication is carried out by showing positive symbols, namely by raising issues around the economy, environment, and socio-culture, which then gets a positive response from the Kendeng farmers, who in turn participate in this movement.

The participation of Kendeng farmers has proven that the definition of farmers is not only from an economic perspective. Economically, farmers are usually seen only as actors in agricultural production, in the form of planting agricultural commodities and then selling them to the market. There is another perspective that is more than that, namely on the social side of justice, which is manifested in the welfare and sovereignty of farmers (norms of subsistence and reciprocity).

The conception of the right of reciprocity and subsistence is practiced by looking at the political economy and post-colonial history. Historically, the resistance of the Kendeng farmers has been carried out long ago by their ancestors,

represented by the Samin farmer group. Gunretno explained that:

"During the Dutch colonial era, Mbah Samin did not want to pay taxes and rejected all government policies, which in the end were followed by many people including the Samin community di Pati.<sup>4</sup>"

Previously, the resistance of the peasants carried out by their ancestors was shown in a passive form, such as disobedience to the rules, but this time the resistance of the peasants was shown differently, namely, it showed more as an active proletariat group. This movement is a conservative movement that is local by prioritizing group interests (eco-populism).

The eco-populist movement carried out is a form of critical action by the Kendeng community against rigid bureaucratic practices, which cannot properly observe complexity, especially in social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. This action is carried out in a more communitarian way, in the form of a relationship between fellow farmers (concrete interaction) with equal fate in defending land rights and realizing their rights as farmers. The interactions that took place were assisted by local elites (respected farmers, religious leaders, and others).

Local elites were successful in using their connections to broaden the scope of Kendeng farmers as well as assisting in the awareness process of the resistance movement through discussions and lectures making it more responsive and more socially embedded. The scope of this movement is not only based on the class awareness and ideology held by the peasants but also on their awareness and concern for the social problems faced by the community. These concerns include access to welfare, social security, and minority rights in their capacity as citizens, whose aspirations are contained in a movement.

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<sup>4</sup> the interview was conducted on 12 July 2018

This movement comes by cooperating with Kendeng farmers. This method functions as a political connection in boosting and strengthening peasant resistance against capital owners and the state which explicitly wants to practice class struggle. With social contacts, informal personal networks that are usually carried out between Kendeng farmers can strengthen relations within certain layers (farmer organizations) which are growing, and the fanaticism of the resistance movement as a result of the explosion of pent-up disappointment against the government.

This resistance movement is a form of struggle with a modern concept that does not only prioritize safety but also dares to make direct contact as a weapon of resistance. Even though they were initially faced with a lack of resources, they did not give up. Based on their knowledge and quality of interaction with their social networks, they had strong connections to fight back. This connection is based on the agency's ability to communicate, especially with Kendeng farmers to create a social identity as the right of special representation whose political presence is starting to be recognized through the Kendeng farmer community organization (JM-PPK), which in realizing their rights are often called on behalf of the Kendeng farmers.

Communication built by the actors creates a sense of solidarity for Kendeng farmers in their resistance to the construction of a cement factory. This solidarity is then manifested through emancipation and participation in various activities and collective actions of the resistance movement. The Samin community together with the Kendeng farmers are determined to maximize opportunities in maintaining access to local economic livelihoods within the framework of the concept of ecopopulism as a step against depoliticization.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that the factors for political opportunities in the Samin movement in Pati are as follows: the rise of indigenous peoples in the reformation era,

the presence of driving actors, past history of Saminism, social networks, the birth of a sense of injustice and farmers' disappointment with the government, and solidarity among fellow farmers.

### **What Political opportunities are available in the social movement of Samin in Pati**

According to Tarrow (2008), the changes that occur or are experienced by certain groups are caused by reactions to government policies themselves. These changes can also trigger the emergence of action. The causes of these changes can be caused by various factors, such as environment, economy, ideology, culture, war, and others. In this case, the fear of environmental damage and loss of socio-cultural order became the basis for the emergence of social movements in the Samin community.

Environmental damage is one of the problems that worry the Samin community because of the existence of a cement factory in the Kendeng Mountains region. This concern arises because companies are sometimes only concerned with business profits, compared to environmental issues (Davies et al., 2019), for example, clean water pollution or loss of clean springs. For adherents of neoliberalism, water functions as a commodity material, so water management can be commercialized and privatized (Shiva, 2016). For the Samin community, the Kendeng Mountains are their identity because water and soil are their sources of life. Water is the basis of life, without water it is impossible to produce food for their daily life, so it is feared that it will interfere with their subsistence needs.

The Kendeng Mountains store millions of cubic karts and other mining materials which function to store water, absorb rainwater, and become a home for flora and fauna. There are 45 species of birds found around the Sukolilo Karst Mountains, including the endemic Javanese sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*). With the many caves found within the mountains, it is also a sanctuary

for bats, which produce phosphate fertilizer through bat droppings on the cave floor, which is a food source for other animals. (Putri, 2017).

Environmental damage does not only occur during mining activities but also after mining (Haddaway et al., 2019). Environmental impacts are closely related to the technology and mining techniques used. Several environmental problems that occur as a result of mining activities include tailings problems, loss of biodiversity due to land clearing for mining purposes, and the presence of acid mine drainage. This is what prompted the birth of the environmental movement as a social movement against policies that favor liberal capitalism (Giugni & Grasso, 2015).

Their livelihood as farmers causes land and water to be urgently needed. For their life cycle as farmers, they maintain agrarian resources through organic farming. Protecting agrarian resources through organic farming is not enough, but in this case, it is also necessary to take action against industrial businesses that destroy nature. A refusal is a form of responsibility for decades of living by relying on natural resources in the Kendeng Mountains. As Gunarti explained:

"Water that is so clear is used for the lives of Kendeng residents, therefore don't be surprised if residents refuse to build a cement factory, because it has the potential to cause natural damage in the form of water pollution and loss of soil fertility. Kendeng residents protested directly to President Joko Widodo.<sup>5</sup>"

Gunretno further explained that "If the cement factory operates, there will be other mining projects that support the cement factory operations."<sup>6</sup>

According to Sub & Shi (2013), farmers have an important role in social change and historical development in a society. In many

cases in Indonesia, farmers become wheels of resistance that can bring about change. The story of the resistance of the Samin farmers adds to the list of stories about the wheel of resistance of a group of village farmers. The majority of Kendeng residents also feel the same way because their lives still depend on the agricultural sector. If left unchecked, there will be deforestation which has implications for ecological damage and has an impact on increasing the poverty rate.

The abundance of materials in the Kendeng Mountains has become a big asset in the capitalist economic development agenda. In developing countries like Indonesia, there are still many traditional societies that are oppressed by capitalism and run by foreign corporations and the government. The reason is that people's access to the agricultural sector (land tenure) is closed because this access is given more to investors and owners of capital (Singh, 2021). If not resisted, the Samin community and other Kendeng farmers will become victims of capitalism.

The life of the Samin community in the current era of modernization still maintains a traditional lifestyle. The Samin community has long lived in the agricultural sector, so they regard land as the most valuable thing and part of the economic resource. Gunarti said:

"If the process of building a cement factory is carried out, farmers will lose their relationship with mother (Earth) which has given life to humans. If we don't fight, we will become victims."<sup>7</sup>

Land for the life of the Samin community is a very important need. Hudayana, (2018) explains that the substantive meaning of "very important needs" means that humans depend on nature. Without water and land, it is impossible to produce food for daily life, so it is feared that it will be the cause of disruption to the necessities of life.

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<sup>5</sup> the interview was conducted on 22 July 2018

<sup>6</sup> the interview was conducted on 26 July 2018

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<sup>7</sup> interview was conducted on 8 July 2018

The Minister of Environment and Forestry, Siti Nurbaya in Arisaputra (2015), invited all communities to take advantage of forest management opportunities. The participation of the Samin community will be beneficial in controlling forest lands so that they are no longer used commercially. Mining has proven to be not the only panacea for alleviating poverty and unemployment but instead has a strong potential to create unemployment and new pockets of poverty.

What the Samin community does is a critical practice, as a form of persistence in defending social, environmental, and necessities of life values. The concern that arises is that the social order that has been built together cannot be repeated or even recycled. One of the reasons is that there will be many immigrants from outside the area with various characters and living habits (Dedek & Harini, 2012). This change shifts the existing order or even replaces it, thus leading to certain social changes.

The human relationship with the land is cosmic-magical-religious (Endraswara, 2018). The community's fear of the construction of a cement factory from a social perspective will damage the social values and morality of the local community. This raises awareness and attention to shifts that seem to imply important issues in social phenomena in the future. However, the philosophical foundation of the people's values has begun to be eroded by the influx of foreign capital into Indonesia.

The Samin community has shown themselves to be true Javanese who can maintain their traditions in the globalization era. Gunretno in an interview with the author emphasized that the Samin people do not reject development but fight against the exploitation of nature so that the direction of development is in favor of the people.<sup>8</sup> Their struggle is based on ethics and

cultural values and social justice. They reject the existence of a cement factory, actually to keep the spirit of development going without destroying nature. Their understanding comes from the inner insight of the Samin community (a simple attitude to life). There are symbols of life that are full of meaning, which invite us to have a deeper understanding of life. '*Aja drengki* (Don't be jealous), *srei* (greedy), *tukar padu* (argue harshly), *dahpen* (accuse), and *kemeren* (envy). *Aja jumput* (Don't shoplift), *mbedog* (rob), and *colong* (steal),' which is then implemented in teachings to mother earth with *ngajeni* (respect), *ngopeni* (caring for), and *demunung* (take enough).

The hope is that the Samin community can participate with the government in assessing, proposing, and agreeing to be involved in making policies for licensing the establishment of cement factories and other mines in the Kendeng Mountains. This participation is a form of creating real democracy through a reflection of a balanced pattern of citizen-government relations. President Joko Widodo has given directions on the prohibition and temporary suspension of mining in the Kendeng Mountains until the final decision on the Strategic Environmental Study (KLHS). However, Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo has issued a new mining permit for PT Sahabat Mulia Sakti. Thus, there is overlap and regulatory turbulence applied by the central and provincial governments (Asrawijaya, 2020).

The legality aspect that was used as a weapon in the Samin community rejection was Regional Regulation Number 06 of 2010 concerning the Regional Spatial Plan (RTRW) for Central Java Province, and the Strategic Environmental Study (KLHS). The policy of the Governor of Central Java to grant mining permits when the results of the KLHS team's study recommended halting plans to build a cement factory, made the situation even more heated. The Samin community considers the Governor's policies to be full of interests and practical politics. The political dimension that

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<sup>8</sup> interview was conducted on 26 July 2018

emerged from the rejection of the cement factory was the need for reform in the implementation of regulations. The substance of the problem is the existence of a relationship of interest which is then forced by the procedurally flawed cement factory construction plan. According to the Samin community and other Kendeng residents, the regional government and the cement company have never carried out socialization properly so it seems to be deceiving the people.

## Conclusion

The Samin community's active and open resistance was motivated by the influence of political opportunities during the reform era. When the New Order regime fell, many previously hidden forces resurfaced. One of them is the strength of indigenous peoples who dare to demonstrate their strength by demonstrating the existence of various indigenous peoples' alliances. Because of the openness of information and freedom in networking, many indigenous communities have been touched by NGOs concerned with the movements of marginalized groups, resulting in the birth of activists from indigenous communities.

In the Samin community, there are actors who, since the New Order government came to power, have dared to position themselves as activists for their traditional community. As an activist, he makes himself open to various elements of society. The network experience gained from the political opportunity factor in the reform era is what has made the Samin community dare to put up an active and open resistance.

The Samin community's profile, which is synonymous with farmers, has transformed the protest against the cement factory into a peasant movement. The Samin has a long agricultural tradition, which revolves around soil, water, and the resources of the Kendeng Forest. Resistance is a non-negotiable option if parties want to seize their wealth. The strengths developed are similar

to those of the global peasant movement, in that they include actors, organizations, strategies, and networks. This is because there are figures who are open-minded to the point where their ideas are no longer orthodox but modern.

Four things influence the occurrence of political opportunities in this Samin movement, namely (1) openness of information and ease of networking in the post-industrial era has allied with indigenous peoples and transnational farmers able to transfer knowledge of the anti-globalization movement to remote areas. This knowledge is used as insight for the Samin community to fight openly. (2) The ideology of the peasant movement is generally based on two views, namely environmental damage and livelihood threats. Both are interrelated with the pattern of life of the Samin community which relies on the norms of subsistence and reciprocity. (3) Actors have a very important role in seeing political opportunities in social movements. (4) Dialectics is important in building strength and seeing political opportunities. The selected arguments are related to human interest so they will build solidarity and framing.

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