

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

In this introductory chapter I will explain the importance of this research topic for the field of education and the objective that I wanted to achieve. Then I will elaborate on the reasons why I chose this particular case study to achieve that objective, which will be followed by the research questions. What will follow next is the theoretical framework I used to illuminate the methodology adopted for this research topic. After that, the significance of this thesis will be laid out, followed by its composition and a brief description of the Kedungombo controversy, the main speakers in the debate, and the characteristics of the media that covered that debate.

Rationale For This Thesis

This thesis was born out of three theoretical and two practical concerns. My first theoretical concern was the limited attention given by educationists to the educative role of institutions outside the school, despite the fact that most of the educative transactions in modern society occur outside the school. There have been very few educational studies about the media, which shows, as stated by Lawrence Cremin fifteen years ago, the endurance of the Deweyan legacy of polarizing *incidental* and *intentional* education, focusing on schooling as the most important form of intentional education (Cremin, 1976: 4-8). Hence, based on that realization, this thesis is an attempt to make up for that deficiency by focusing on the printed news media in Indonesia to explore to what extent these institutions have educated -- or miseducated -- the public at large about major development issues in this country.

My second theoretical concern was about the education of the news media readers about various aspects of economic development in Indonesia,

pcCdes, programs and projects. An extensive body

°* -.has r»esi generated in the United States about what here is

Ci--e P—pohcy educatiol*¹ However, most of that work is part of a

* — y ipecmc secrmg, the network of cooperative extension agents related to
grazit ccEeges, and emphasizes the role of these agents as mediators

TOT ddzen groups in face-to-face communicative settings. How public

aooepianoe of varioos development projects is created through what people

read in the local and national news media is not covered much by this

tradition- In this thesis, I want to explore the way public acceptance of certain

development projects, namely large dams, is mediated by the printed news

media in Indonesia.

In educadonal transactions brought about by the news media, there is

no face-to-face communication between co-learners to make sense out of the

curriculum material. Communication between those co-learners is medi

ated by a certain type of language. This is not oral language, where, theoreti-

cally, the communication partners are able to raise their validity claims, in-

stantly on the spot. Communication between the colearners is mediated by

printed language, which is selected and presented by the media workers,

who in turn are controlled or influenced by economic and political interests.

The nature and effects of this language have rarely been studied by educa-

tors, and this was my third theoretical concern. I believe it is important to

understand the nature of this language, since its effects may be more subtle

and profound.

11 What I mean in particular is the work of Alan J. Hahn *cum suis* in the context of the cooperative extension network of the land grant colleges in the U. S. A.

In other words, language, especially printed language which exercises a one-way communication mode, has very strong ideological dimensions. And the larger the circulation of a newspaper or magazine, the wider its influence may be. Consequently, the influence of the ideologies embedded in the media's language in the decision-making process will also be stronger. If the aim of public education is to create a better informed and more critical citizenry, as Dewey has put it, by linking education with democracy, then the ideological dimensions of the printed news media language deserve more serious attention.

In addition to those theoretical reasons, I also believe that it is very important for social activists and other actors in the public arena to understand the ideological dimensions of the language of scientists, engineers, and economists, for two practical reasons. The first is that debating strictly based on scientific and technical terms will often end in defeat, since those who oppose certain development projects usually have less access to the plans and theories on which the projects are based. The second is that the language used by scientists, engineers and economists, when they deal with the public at large, is not always as purely "scientific" or "neutral" as is commonly believed, because to generate popular support for projects they defend, they have to mix popular idioms with "scientific" jargon.

By applying these public communication tactics, scientists, engineers, and economists, who are usually not regarded as politicians, actually practice "politics" in the strictest sense, excluding large segments of the population from the decision-making process while still appealing for massive support for the decisions that have been made. For this practical purpose it is also extremely important for social movement activists to understand the language

of the technocrats, or the language of mainstream engineers and economists, in order to be able to reach a wider audience and thereby increase their own convincing power.

Bearing those arguments in mind, this thesis is a case study about the nature of discourse in the media coverage of large development projects in Indonesia. It focuses on the linguistic tools used to justify decisions that affect large segments of the population, and on the ideological dimensions embedded in that language.

Objective of This Thesis

The objective of this study is to obtain an understanding of the nature of public discourse about the social consequences of large development projects as mediated by the mass media, especially in conveying adverse social consequences of those projects.

Reasons For Choosing This Case Study

Six reasons lead me to choose this case study. First, the resistance to the government's policy in relocating the local population from the Kedungombo reservoir region was one of the most well publicized and long lasting controversies in Indonesia in the last decade.

Second, this particular case could control my personal bias as a social *cum* environmental activist, because I was not present at the scene when the controversy over this dam began.

Third, as a former mainstream media journalist and social activist, I had some familiarity with similar cases in Indonesia.

Fourth, this case study would enable me to benefit from the courses in irrigation sociology and social impact assessment which I had taken at Cornell University.

Fifth, many student activists at my field work base, namely the Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Central Java, were involved in defending the rights of the displaced villagers. Through them I was able to get acquainted with other activists whom I had not known before.

Sixth, I chose Kedungombo and consequently focused on an understudied aspect, the "green belt" debate so that my thesis research could also be of practical use to the activists.

The Research Questions

The research questions were:

- (a) . What was the nature of the language used in the media in debating the virtues and vices of the mass displacement of the local villagers from this large dam site?
- (b) . What economic and political interests were embedded in the green belt concept, which were advocated so vigorously around the Kedungombo reservoir?
- (c) . Whose interests were mainly served through the media coverage of the Kedungombo dam controversy, in general?
- (d) . What educational role did the media play in informing the public about the various aspects of the Kedungombo controversy?

The Theoretical Framework

To answer these research questions, I have employed the following theoretical framework. Since this study focused on the role of the mass media, I have been informed by a host of literature about the role of the media in capitalist States, in covering political as well as technological news.

From Daniel Hallin I adopted an observation about the paradoxical nature of the media in capitalist Systems. According to Hallin, all forms of

human communication, however asymmetrical the social relations may be are essentially derived from the basic form of dialogue and must be seen as relationships between active human subjects. Therefore, there may be limits beyond which the process of communication may not be stretched without destroying the legitimacy of the communicator. This point is important in understanding the relation of the mass media to the structure of social power. So, one can conclude this perspective with a paradox: the ability of the media to support the structure of social power ideologically is limited by their need to maintain the integrity of the process of communication on which their own legitimacy depends (Hallin, 1985: 123-124).

Generalizing from his analysis on the role of the Western news media in portraying Islam as "the Other," Edward Said concluded that the media coverage of a certain subject is strongly colored by the "orthodox knowledge" that is influenced by the interests of the media's "communities of interpretation" and not by the dynamics of the news objects and how these people see themselves (Said, 1981: 9, 33-64).

Said, however, observed the emergence of people who are quite consciously writing in opposition to the prevailing orthodox, yet popular, knowledge about Islam. He called the knowledge generated by these people, "antithetical knowledge." These people are included in three groups: young scholars, who tend to be academically more sophisticated and politically more honest than their elders in the field; older scholars whose own work runs counter to the orthodox scholarship dominating the field; and writers, activists, and intellectuals who are not accredited experts on Islam but whose role in society is determined by their overall oppositional stance — these are the antiwar and anti-imperialist militants, the dissenting clergy, the radical

intellectuals and teachers, and so on. What is most important about these three groups, according to Said, is that for them knowledge is essentially an actively sought out and contested entity, not merely a passive recitation of facts and "accepted" views (Said, 1981: 149-152).

Edward Herman's and Noam Chomsky's propaganda model informed me about the five filters that may have influenced the media coverage of Kedungombo. Those five "news filters" are, according to them:

- (1) . the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms;
- (2) . advertising as the primary income source of the mass media;
- (3) . the reliance of the media on Information provided by government, business, and "experts" funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power;
- (4) . "flak" as a means of disciplining the media; and
- (5) . "anti-communism" as a national religion and control mechanism.

These elements interact with and reinforce one another. The raw material of news must pass through successive filters, leaving only the cleansed residue fit to print. They fix the premises of discourse and interpretation, and the definition of what is newsworthy in the first place, and they explain the basis and operations of what amount to propaganda campaigns (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 2).

Michael Parenti sensitized me to the "methods of misrepresentation" of the media. One of those methods, according to Parenti, is the way the media "frame" their news stories. According to Parenti,

The most effective propaganda is that which relies on framing rather than on falsehood. By bending the truth rather than breaking it, using emphasis, nuance, innuendo, and peripheral embellishments, communicators can create a desired impression without resorting to explicit advocacy and without departing too far from the appearance of objectivity. Framing is achieved in the way the news is packaged, the amount of exposure, the placement (front page or back, lead story or last), the tone of presentation (sympathetic or slighting), the accompanying headlines and visual effects, and the labeling and vocabulary. Just short of lying, the media can mislead us in a variety of ways,

telling us what to think about a story before we have had a chance to think about it ourselves (Parenti, 1986: 220).

Two other authors on the subject of the media, Dorothy Nelkin and Charlotte Ryan, presented less sinister descriptions of the framing of news by the media. According to Nelkin, what is meant by "the framing of public policy" covers the following:

[1] By their selection of newsworthy events, journalists identify pressing issues.

[2] By their focus on controversial issues, they stimulate demands for accountability.

[2] By their use of images ("frontiers," "struggles"), they help to create the judgmental biases that underlie public policy (Nelkin, 1987: 80).

Meanwhile, in her guidebook for social movement activists, Ryan

States that:

Framing is more than a process of interpreting selected events; it is actually the process of *creating* events, of signifying, from the vast pool of daily occurrences, what is important. Struggles over framing decide which of the day's many happenings will be awarded significance. Today, the media have become critical arenas for this struggle, and social movements have increasingly focused on the media since it plays such an influential role in assigning importance to issues facing the public. But gaining attention alone is not what a social movement wants; the real battle is over whose interpretation, whose framing of reality, gets the floor (Ryan, 1991: 52).

Informed by all these perspectives, I understood framing as the phenomena in which the media, as well as the contending parties who want to get their ideas across to the public with the support of the media, are involved. It consisted of conscious and unconscious attempts to select the facts and figures that are highlighted as well as hidden, in order to bolster the ideas that are presented to the public. In particular I supported Ryan's description of the media as a critical arena for the struggle between social

movement activists and supporters of the status quo to convince the public to accept their knowledge claims.

From Ryan and Robert Bellamy, Jr. I adopted the concept of "media strategy" (Ryan, 1991: 215-237). Although neither authors presented a concise definition of what they meant by that term, from their lengthy descriptions about the media strategies for social movement and professional sport organizations, I applied the meaning of a "media strategy" in this thesis as the concerted effort to advance certain knowledge claims to the public, with the support of the mass communication media. This concept proved to be a useful tool to describe the ways in which different actors in the Kedungombo controversy framed their ideas.

In addition to that literature on the mass media, I have been informed by Paul L. Aspelin's division of the direct, indirect, and back-up « effects of large dam projects. According to Aspelin's study on the impact of a large Brazilian dam, those effects constitute the following:

- (a) the direct effects of the physical infringement of the project upon their land base, which include the loss of land to a dam, its reservoir, or in the process of construction;
- (b) the indirect effects upon those, whose land will not be physically infringed upon by the project, but whose life will be economically, socially, or culturally affected,
- (c) the back-up effects of the project on the people who might become the 'host⁴ of the dislocated people from the project site, or other people who might be affected politically by the increased tension generated in the directly-affected areas (Aspelin, 1982: 346).

Significance of this Thesis

Apart from its specific objective, this thesis may contribute to the study of the social impact of large dams and the study of contemporary peasant struggles in Indonesia.

Composition of this Thesis

The composition of this thesis is as follows. After concluding this chapter with a brief description of the Kedungombo controversy, the main actors in the media debate, and the media in which the debate took place, I will present in Chapter Two the setting of the controversy. In Chapter Three, I will present the research methodology. The following four chapters will deal with the media coverage of the Kedungombo controversy, beginning with Chapter Four on two general media strategies applied by the dam advocates, Chapter Five on eight specific media strategies applied by the dam advocates to justify the depopulated green belt concept, Chapter Six on the media strategies applied by the dam critics, while Chapter Seven focuses on two media strategies which were common to the dam advocates as well as the dam critics. After describing in Chapter Four through Chapter Seven how Kedungombo was debated in the media, in Chapter Eight I will describe the underreported information about Kedungombo. Eventually, in Chapter Nine I will present the findings and in Chapter Ten the conclusions. Finally, two appendices will document cases of grass-roots resistance to large dams and other river engineering projects in Indonesia.

A Brief Description of the Kedungombo Controversy

In 1982, the Central Java provincial government in Indonesia started land acquisition to construct a medium-range irrigation dam in that province. More than 10,000 households living in 22 villages in three districts

(see Table 1, p. 12) were told by the authorities to sell their land according to predetermined compensation rates. The Kedungombo dam and reservoir were to be built on that land. Hand in hand with that predetermined compensation process, the authorities also told the villagers to move to a government-sponsored resettlement site, called Mukomuko, in the Bengkulu province on the island of Sumatra.

For seven years, the displaced villagers resisted the government's forced land acquisition and resettlement program, with the support of urban intellectuals in various cities in Java. Many of those who did give up their land received a ridiculously low compensation rate, for which one square meter of land would only be valued as low as three chicken eggs.

In 1989, the resistance of the Serang and Uter valley inhabitants turned from a provincial into a national issue after students from 45 universities in Java and the nearby island, Lombok, took up the issue by holding rallies in the project site, in the Capital of Central Java, and in the Capital of Indonesia. In that year, too, the villagers' resistance to this World Bank-financed dam became an International issue after several International human rights and environmental organizations requested the World Bank to take responsibility for what was happening in Kedungombo.

On May 18, 1991, the dam and its irrigation weirs were inaugurated by President Soeharto. Nevertheless, the resistance of local communities still went on. The main issue, though, had shifted from unfair compensation to the right to inhabit and cultivate the reservoir banks.

The Kedungombo dam, however was actually only one component of a larger irrigation plan to accommodate nearly two billion liters of water running through five rivers -- the Krakah, Tuntang, Serang, Lusi, and Juana

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N?» \ v 4XJ£ vW* Gender

> Female Male

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02.	Geneng				52.8	47.2
03.	Klewor				51.3	48.7
04.	NgUnji	5S.V			51.6	48.4
05.	Ngrak^m	IA®			50.9	49.1
06.	Sarimuh^		13		35.0	65.0
07.	VVicMvobirb		3x0		51.5	48.5
08.	Watugeoe		14.8		48.4	51.6
09.	Bawu		400		51.2	48.8

Sragen disirkt:

10.	Lorog	W1	law		50.0	50.0
11.	Porangan	IS88	78.9		38.5	61.5
12.	Pilangrembes	1334	75.4		49.5	50.4
13.	Gilirejo	U95	472		50.7	49.3
14.	Soko	95 J	29.8		50.3	49.7
15.	Bagor	356	10.1		50.0	50.0
16.	Ngandul	16	05		50.0	50.0
17.	Pendem	310	9.6		48.1	51.9
18.	Ngargotirto	200	6.6		50.5	49.5
19.	Ngargomulyo	1,198	64.2		53.6	46.4
20.	Boyolayar	1,164	100.0		53.2	46.8

Grobogan district

21.	Rambat	176	65		43.7	56.3
22.	Kalangbencar	285	11.3		48.1	51.9
Total		25,184	41.7		50.3	49.7

Source: LPIS/UKSW, 1978. p, 19.

— in the northeastern part of Central Java. This project, known by the abbreviation of those five rivers as the Iratunsluna River Basin Development Project, was initiated in 1969 and was divided in three stages.

The first stage (1969 - 1977), concentrated on rehabilitating the existing infrastructure to irrigate 89,000 Ha of wet rice-fields. This was followed by the second stage (1977-1985), which consisted of the rehabilitation of existing irrigation infrastructure as well as construction of flood control facilities, over an area of 92,000 Ha. Finally, this stage was followed by the third stage, which began in 1985 and was planned to be finished in the year 2000.

Within this third stage, it was planned that 42,242 Ha of new irrigation channels will be built, 92,274 Ha of existing irrigation channels will be rehabilitated, and the upper parts of the five rivers will be dammed to create large reservoirs. The Kedungombo reservoir, which reservoir will accommodate 723 million cubic meters (mcm) of water, was going to be the largest of all those reservoirs.

The Kedungombo dam blocks the Serang river at its confluence with the Uter river, near the borders of Grobogan, Sragen, and Boyolali districts. To fully utilize its reservoir's water, four weirs² were planned to be built further downstreams, namely the Sidorejo, Dumpil, Klambu, and Wedung weirs (see Map 1, p. 15).

The Sidorejo weir on the Lusi River, located in Grobogan district, will use the water of the Kedungombo reservoir to irrigate 5,818 Ha along its right channel and 1,850 Ha along its left channel. The Dumpil weir, also in the district of Grobogan, will utilize Kedungombo's water to irrigate 11,000 Ha of rice fields.. While the Klambu dam will irrigate 21,457 Ha of rice fields

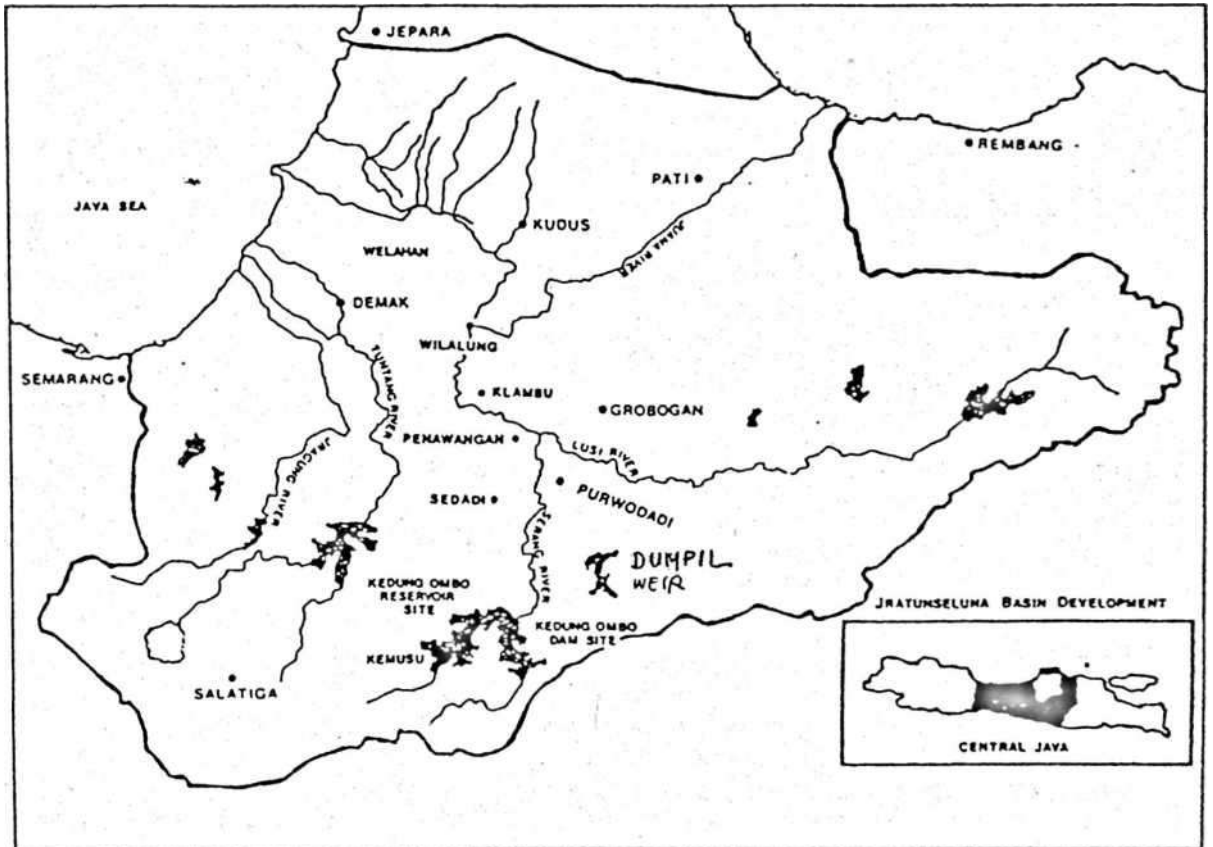
²) Technically, a weir (*bendung*) is a small dam, which is not intended to create a reservoir but only to divert the river's water into primary irrigation channels. While a dam (*bendungan*), is intended to create a reservoir in order to store a large volume of water, to be utilized for irrigation purposes through a set of weirs and channels. Socially, however, weirs as well as dams can displace people, depending on the density of settlements on the banks of the rivers or creeks that are impounded.

along its left channel and 17,288 Ha along its right channel. The function of the Wedung weir on the Kumpul river in the subdistrict of Wedung in the district of Demak, was to prevent salt water intrusion into the Klambu. Kiri irrigation System. This weir is not of the ordinary rock fill type, but an inflatable rubber one. Meanwhile, the fifth weir, Sedadi, which could irrigate 15,000 Ha of wet rice fields, has already been built during the Dutch times and was still functioning. Without all these downstreams irrigation facilities, Kedungombo's designed capacity to irrigate 59,992 Ha — often rounded up as 60,000 Ha -- of wet irrigated rice fields would not be achieved.

In the meantime, the construction of two other Jratunseluna dams and one barrage³ had already been approved by the Central Java governor and the Director General of Water Resources Development. Those are the Banjarejo dam with a reservoir that will accommodate 100 mcm of water on the upper part of the Lusi river in the district of Rembang, the Ngemplak dam which reservoir will accommodate 70 mcm of water in the district of Grobogan, and the Glapan barrage on the Tuntang river, also in the district of Grobogan.

In addition, surveys were already on going during my field work to connect the Tuntang and Jragung rivers by a transbasin tunnel, and consequently to dam not only the Tuntang, but also the Jragung River with a barrage. The barrage on the Tuntang river was planned to be located at the village of Glapan in the subdistrict of Gubug in the district of Grobogan, while

3) A barrage, is a type of dam, which releases all the water passing through its river basin during the rainy season, and holding it back during the dry season. Hence, a barrage's reservoir is practically empty during the rainy season, which enables its drawdown area to be exposed and cultivated for a couple of months, before the barrage's sluices are closed to save water during the dry season.



Map 1. The location of Kedungombo dam and other irrigation facilities of the Jratunseluna River Basin Development Project in Central Java

the Glapan barrage was planned to be located near the village of Candirejo in Klepu subdistrict in the district of Semarang (see Map 2, p. 16).

Several national and multilateral development agencies have been involved in financing this large and complex irrigation plan. Prior to 1985, these Jratunseluna irrigation facilities were financed by the Indonesian government's domestic revenues, the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (US-AID), and the Dutch government. Meanwhile, the ongoing third stage is financed by the World Bank, the European Economic Community (EEC), the Exim Bank of Japan, the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan, and the Indonesian government's domestic revenues. The Kedungombo dam itself was funded by a US\$ 156 million loan from the World Bank, matched by a US\$ 25.2 million from the Export Import Bank of Japan.

The dam advocates and critics

After briefly sketching the outline of the Kedungombo controversy, I will introduce the main actors in the media debate about the social impact of this dam. The main speakers in the debate can be roughly divided into two camps which one can call the "dam advocates" and the "dam critics." The difference between two camps was their stance toward the government's policy in dealing with the social impact of the Kedungombo dam. Hence, the "dam advocates" consisted not only of the government officials which were mostly involved in the debate, namely the governor of Central Java, Ret. Lieutenant General Haji Mohammad Ismail and the general manager of the Jratunseluna Irrigation Project, Ir. [Engineer] Soenarno, but also journalists, academics, and other intellectuals who supported the government's policy.

On the other hand, the "dam critics" of the leaders of the grass roots resistance and their urban intellectual supporters.

Tire media awarded the highest profile among the dam advocates to Governor Ismail, and among the dam critics, to Father Yusuf Bilyarto Mangunwijaya. Ismail was born in Maos, Cilacap (Central Java), on December 31, 1927. During the colonial era, he attended Dutch lower and middle schools. After serving in the independence war, he proceeded his education by attending an Indonesian middle school, and consequently attended the National Military Academy (AMN) in Magelang, Central Java. In his later years, he had also attended an Army officers' training in West Germany, what was called *Generalstab der Fuhrungs Akademie der Bundesweher*. His military career included 18 months as Chief of Staff of the Strategic Army Command (KOSTRAD) in 1976-1977, after which he was appointed as Commander of the Bukit Barisan Army Command in Sumatra. In 1980, he was appointed as Commander of KOSTRAD, and a year later was shifted to become the commander of the Diponegoro Army Command in Central Java. Since 1983, he became the governor of Central Java, and was appointed for the second term by President Soeharto in 1988. Ismail and his wife, E. Soemarsyiah has eight children, one of whom was a businessman who became involved in some controversial business deals in Central Java.

Just as Ismail, Mangunwijaya was born and raised in Central Java. Two years Ismail's junior, he was born on May 6, 1929 in Ambarawa. Just as Ismail, Mangunwijaya had served in the independence war in Central Java, and had attended Dutch middle schools. After the independence war was over, Mangunwijaya decided to become a priest, and attended the St. Paul

seminary in Yogyakarta, from where he graduated in 1959. After graduating from the seminary and became ordained as an independent priest, who did not become a member of any order, he continued his education to the Rhein-Westfalen Technological High School in Aachen, West Germany, from where he graduated in 1966. After returning to the Diocese of Semarang, which includes the twin provinces of Central Java and Yogyakarta, he actively campaigned for the indigenization of the Catholic Church's architecture, for a closer rapport with Islamic scholars, and for a stronger concern among the clergy for human rights issues. He is also a prolific and allround writer, who has produced ten non-fiction books on literature, technology, religiosity, and the threat of the superpowers, and seven novels. Apart from his differences with Ismail, Mangunwijaya shares some common denominators with his adversary, namely both were born and raised in Central Java during the colonial era and both served in the independence war against the Dutch. Their independence struggle experience was strongly reflected in the rhetoric of both men. Both media figures had had some exposure in post-war West Germany. In addition, both men had their Yogyakarta background: Mangunwijaya lives in a Roman Catholic parish house in Yogyakarta, while Ismail's mother, who just recently died, also lived in Yogyakarta.

Apart from Mangunwijaya, the majority of the dam critics consisted of student activists, whom in early 1989 formed an *ad hoc* coalition, which they called the Solidarity Committee for the Development Victims at Kedungombo, or *Komite Solidaritas untuk Kurban Pembangunan di Kedungombo*, abbreviated KSKPKO. Two years later, the Salatiga and Semarang branches of KSKPKO separated themselves from the Yogyakarta

and Solo branches, and called themselves Students Communication Forum for the Kedungombo Community, or *Forum Komunikasi Mahasiswa untuk Masyarakat Kedungombo*, abbreviated FKMMKO. Apart from the student activists, some university professors in Central Java, Father Mangunwijaya, four legal aid organizations, and two environmentalist organizations also kept a critical stance toward the dam project.

Among the university professors who constantly criticized the government's policy on Kedungombo, the most visible press profiles were Lukman Sutrisno, a rural sociology professor of Javanese ethnic background at the the Gadjah Mada State University in Yogyakarta, who received his Ph. D. degree at Cornell University, and Arief Budiman, a sociology professor of Jakarta-Chinese background at the Satya Wacana Christian University in Semarang, who received his degree from Harvard University.

The spectrum of non-student organizational supporters was much more varied. The four legal aid organizations which defended the villagers' rights were the Palamarta Legal Aid Institute of the young Mangkunegaran princes in Solo, the legal aid institute under a Christian community development foundation in Solo, Yayasan *Bimbingan Kesejahteraan Sosial* (YBKS), which in 1990 became institutionalized as a separate foundation, called *Yayasan Pengabdian Hukum Indonesia* (YAPHI), a Jakarta based group of legal aid volunteers, called *Gabungan Pekerja Sukarela* (GPS), and the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI = *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*) which defended the displaced villagers' rights through its branches in Yogyakarta and Semarang, as well as through its headquarters in Jakarta. Finally, the two environmental organizations which posed themselves as critics of Kedungombo were the Indonesian NGO Network for

Forest Conservation, or SKEPHI, and the Indonesian Environmental Forum, or WALHI. Apart from all these secular and Christian critics of Kedungombo, there was also an Islamic undercurrent of critics, which will be discussed separately in Chapter Seven. From all those organizational critics, the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation, or YLBHI, became the most visible one in the media in 1990-1991, due to the press coverage given to their local, national, and International defense for the displaced villagers. YLBHI's international arm was INGI (the International NGO Forum on Indonesia).

There were several other organizations, though, who also worked on those three levels -- local, national, and international. SKEPHI, for instance, was deeply involved in supporting the student activists in Yogyakarta and Surakarta, repeatedly defended the displaced villagers' rights in their hearings with the national parliament, and also campaigned internationally on behalf of the Kedungombo villagers through their international arm, INFIGHT (International Front for the Defense of Human Rights). Similarly, before INGI got involved in Kedungombo, and even before INFIGHT was founded, YBKS lawyers and ministers were already attracting international attention to the Kedungombo case through their Christian partner organizations in Asia and Europe.

Various other groups practiced the same tactic as YBKS. The young Mangkunegaran lawyers associated with the Palamarta Legal Aid Institute, another Solo-based organization, used their connections with humanist groups in the Netherlands to lobby on behalf of the Kedungombo people in The Hague, the Netherlands, which until early 1991 was still the seat of the creditors' group of Indonesia, IGGI (Inter Governmental Group on Indonesia). Meanwhile, Arief Budiman, the Satya Wacana sociology profes-

SOT, campaigned for the Kedungombo people's rights in Japan, through his Socialist contacts in the Japanese parliament.

The international advocacy activities of those organizations and individuals were not widely known in Indonesia, since they preferred to amplify their concern for the Kedungombo people through the press in those industrial nations. Hence, the YLBHI legal aid community became the main organizational target of the domestic press.

The media

After describing the Kedungombo controversy and the main actors in the debate, I will describe the media in which the debate took place. First, I will describe four important trends in the Indonesian press; second, the types of the media that covered Kedungombo and their circulation; third, licenses and flak; fourth, the influence of advertising; fifth, the biases of the two newspaper groups that covered Kedungombo which had the highest circulation; and sixth, the unique Yogyakarta-Semarang competition.

(a). Four important trends in the Indonesian press:

Four important trend characterized the Indonesian press during the late 1980s (Dhakidae, 1991), which were relevant to the media coverage of Kedungombo. First, ideologically speaking, the successive waves of press banning during the New Order had wiped out many newspapers which were more inclined to Socialist ideologies as well as newspapers which represented the aspirations of the Islamic mass political organizations. Second, the press had undergone a rapid process of industrialization and concentration in a small number of media companies, which had diversified their interests in an increasing number of other Industries, ranging from travel bureaux, transportation companies, hotels, to civil engineering contractors.

Third, an increasing "marriage of convenience" between the State and the society have developed in the remaining media conglomerates, indicated by the shares that were distributed among the journalists, the Minister of Information, the Minister of Youth and Sports, units, active members and retirees of the Armed Forces, and members of President Soeharto's family. The fourth trend was that the highest concentration of newspapers, magazines, and publishing activities under a group of companies, the Kompas Gramedia, that was owned by a Catholic press foundation.

As an outcome of those trends, there was a strong feeling of marginalization among publishers, reporters and readers of the Islamic press in Indonesia. In a nation with the largest Islamic population in the world, the Islamic press in Indonesia had only a circulation of about 200,000 copies in 1987 (*Panji Masyarakat*, 11-20 Nov. 1990). That amounted to only 2.6% of the total circulation of newspapers and magazines published during that year, which amounted to 7,637,204 copies (Hikmah Daya Sakti, 1987). This low circulation of religious media reflected more the degree of press control by the media, rather than a withering of religious sentiments in this nation.

While the Islamic press were still able to uphold their religious values through the struggling magazines and tabloids, a second group of media, that still flourished in Indonesia before the massive press bans in the 1970s, were nearly completely pushed out of the picture. These were the press with leftist or socialist ideologies that strongly criticized the capitalistic development route that Indonesia took after the military take-over of 1965-1966.

(b). Types of media that covered Kedungombo and their circulation

In general, two types of media covered Kedungombo during the height of the publicized controversy from 1986 until 1991. Those four types

are First, large commercial newspapers and news magazines, which I will call the mainstream media in this thesis, since with their readership and circulation, they constituted the mainstream of the media that covered Kedungombo. The second type of media I will call the non-mainstream media, since in terms of circulation they might not seem to influence the public opinion widely. However, their role not to be acknowledged, since objectively, they were involved in educating their own specific readerships about the Kedungombo dispute. In addition, their readership were also involved in attempting to improve the lot of the villagers displaced by Kedungombo.

The non-mainstream media can in turn be divided into three groups which I call in this thesis: first, the religious media; second, the anti-capitalist media; and third, the student press. The label religious media is self-evident since they constituted of weekly, biweekly, and monthly magazines issued by full time professional publishers, which had the spread of their religion and upholding of their religious values as their main aims. Obviously, the Islamic press constituted the majority of the religious media. Then, what I term the "anti-capitalist media" are bulletins which published by non-governmental organizations that employed fulltime reporters and editors. These bulletins with circulations of only 500 to 1,000 copies each regularly covered the experiences of the the groups in the Indonesian society who were marginalized or victimized by the capitalistic development strategy, such as laborers, consumers, victims of environmental degradation in urban and rural settings. Finally, the third type of the non-mainstream media, which played an important role in covering Kedungombo, despite their low circulations, was the student press. In terms of their circulations, these student bulletins have as small circulations as the anti-capitalistic media men-

tioned earlier, and in terms of professionalism, they lack the fulltime management and journalism that characterized the publications issued by those professional nongovernmental organizations, since their reporters and editors were still pursuing their university education. However, the student media deserves a special attention in this thesis, since they played an important role in educating their readers about the dispute that was taking place at Kedungombo, and were influential in radicalizing those readers in taking action on behalf of the displaced villagers.

What follows is a brief description of the representatives of each media type. Two newspaper groups that covered Kedungombo most widely were the *Kompas Gramedia* group and the *Suara Merdeka* group. Four members of the *Kompas Gramedia* group that were involved in covering Kedungombo were *Kompas*, *Berita Nasional* or *Bernas*, *Surya*, and *Jakarta-Jakarta*. Meanwhile, from the Semarang-based *Suara Merdeka* group, two newspapers covered Kedungombo most regularly and with the widest circulation in Central Java, *Suara Merdeka* and *Wawasan*. A wide variety of newspapers and magazines were struggling for the remaining market share between the *Kompas Gramedia* and *Suara Merdeka* groups. They may not have had a wide readership in Central Java, but some of them had special connections with the activists, with certain government agencies, with the Armed Forces, or with and with competitors of the *Suara Merdeka*-owned companies. These local and national media (see Table 2, pp. 26-27) widened the media coverage of Kedungombo by focusing their spotlights on various unique aspects of Kedungombo during various points of time.

Table 2.

The circulation of major newspapers and magazines that covered
Kedungombo in the Indonesian and Javanese languages (1987)

Name	Circulation	Periodicity	Language	Place of Publication
(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)
<i>Kompas</i>	500,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Suara Merdeka</i>	150,000	daily	Indonesian	Semarang
<i>Suara Karya</i>	150,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Suara Pembaruan</i>	125,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Pikiran Rakyat</i>	125,000	daily	Indonesian	Bandung
<i>Merdeka</i>	100,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Jawa Pos</i>	100,000	daily	Indonesian	Surabaya
<i>Berita Buana Media</i>	65,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Indonesia</i>	50,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Jayakarta</i>	40,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta*)
<i>Kedaulatan Rakyat</i>	39,000	daily	Indonesian	Yogyakarta
<i>Kartika</i>	35,000	daily	Indonesian	Semarang*)
<i>Angkatan Bersenjata</i>	35,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta*)
<i>Masa Kini</i>	30,000	daily	Indonesian	Yogyakarta**)
<i>Pelita</i>	20,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta***)
<i>Wawasan</i>	10,000	daily	Indonesian	Semarang
<i>Bisnis Indonesia</i>	10,000	daily	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Berita Nasional</i>	8,000	daily	Indonesian	Yogyakarta****)
<i>Surya</i>	5,000	daily	Indonesian	Surabaya****)
<i>Tempo</i>	150,000	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Jakarta-Jakarta</i>	60,000	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Panyebar Semangat Panji</i>	53,000	weekly	Javanese	Surabaya
<i>Masyarakat Amanah</i>	50,000	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta***)
<i>Jayabaya</i>	50,000	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta***)
<i>Jayabaya</i>	42,000	weekly	Javanese	Surabaya
<i>Hidup Detektip & Romantika</i>	35,000	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta*****)
<i>Romantika</i>	32,500	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Bahari</i>	20,000	weekly	Indonesian	Semarang*****)
<i>Dharma</i>	15,000	weekly	Indonesian	Semarang*****)

(continued on next page)

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(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)
<i>Dharma</i>				
<i>Nyata</i>	14,000	weekly	Indonesian	Solo
<i>Bina</i>	10,000	weekly	Indonesian	Semarang*****
<i>Editor</i>	n.d.a.	weekly	Indonesian	Jakarta
<i>Sal ani</i>	n.d.a.	weekly	Indonesian	Bandung***)
<i>Fakta</i>	50,000	biweekly	Indonesian	Surabaya
<i>Peraba</i>	2,500	biweekly	Indonesian	Yogyakarta*****^
<i>lqra</i>	n.d.a.	biweekly	Indonesian	Surabaya***)
<i>Busos</i>	n.d.a.	monthly	Indonesian	Surabaya*****)
<i>Sadhana</i>	n.d.a.	monthly	Indonesian	Semarang*****)
<i>Media</i>				
<i>Dakwah</i>	n.d.a.	monthly	Indonesian	Jakarta***)
<i>Suara Mesjid</i>	n.d.a.	monthly	Indonesian	Jakarta***)
<i>Estafet</i>	n.d.a.	monthly	Indonesian	Jakarta***)
<i>Sapta Marga</i>	n.d.a.	monthly	Indonesian	Jakarta*) ■

n.d.a. = no data available.

*) Media totally or partly owned by Indonesian Army units.

***) This daily which was closely affiliated with the Islamic mass organization Muhammadiyah. In 1989, it joined the *Media Indonesia* group and changed its name into *Yogya Posi*. In early 1992, it went out of business.

****) Islamic media.

*****) Acquired by the *Kompas Gramedia* Group in 1988-1989.

*****) Catholic media.

*****) Weekly indirectly owned by the Central Java's Navy Command.

*****) Weekly indirectly owned by the Central Java's Police.

*◆◆****) Weekly indirectly owned by the Central Java office of the Forestry Department.

Source of circulation numbers: Almanak Media Massa 1987. Jakarta: PT Hikmah Daya Sakti, 1987.

Apart from those newspapers, numerous religious and capitalist media covered Kedungombo extensively. The Islamic media that covered Kedungombo consisted of *Pelita*, *Panji Masyarakat*, *Amanah*, *Media Dakwah*, *Suara Masjid*, *Salam*, *Estafet*, and *Ic\ra*, while the Catholic ones were *Hidup*, *Peraba*, *Busos*, and *Sadhana*. Meanwhile, the anticapitalist ones were YBKS' and YAPHI's bulletins, *Refleksi* and *Suara Keadilan*; three bulletins associated with YLBHI, namely *Rfldar*, *Andal*, and *Pribadi*;

one WALHI bulletin, *Tanah Air* , and three SKEPHI bulletins, *BeritaHutan*, *Suara Petani*, and *Gaung* .

Finally, speaking about the student press, two of the most outstanding bulletins were published by student press activists of the Islamic Indonesian University in Yogya, namely *Keadilan* , published by UII's law students, and *Hiinmah* , a campus-wide student bulletin. *Himniah* itself was a reincarnation of *Muhibbah* , which had had its license revoked by the Department of Information twice in 1978 and 1982 (Thoolen, 1987: 107).

Keadilan , *Muhibbah* , and *Hintmah* deserve special attention in this thesis since these bulletins had had their share in raising the students' consciousness about the adverse impact of large dams, prior to the Kedungombo demonstrations. In February 1982, *Muhibbah* was one of the few Indonesian media that was critical of the Asahan dams in North Sumatra. That *Muhibbah* edition focused on the economic benefits of the Asahan Project, which were claimed to flow more to Japan than to Indonesia. Two years later, an article in *Keadilan* described the opposition of environmental activists in Australia against the Franklin dam project in Tasmania (Anwar, 1984). Then, after an interruption of six years, an UU law student described the conflicts between students and the military in Thailand about the proposed Nam Choan dam in an article in *Hinunah* (Priyambudi, 1988).

(c) . Licenses and flak

After mentioning what had happened to *Hitnmah* 's predecessor, *Muhibbah* , it is the appropriate to talk about the Indonesian state's repressive control over the media. This control was most systematically and legally done through two press licenses, the SIUPP and the *Surat Tanda Terdaftar* (STT). These licenses were the most feared legal tools used by the

government in repressing the emergence of more radical views in the media coverage of Kedungombo. The SIUPP, with its emphasis on the economic viability of business enterprises, was the Information Department's legal lever to trim the mainstream media into a few press-giants which were easy to control by the government (Dhakidae, 1991: 469-474). The STT, on the other hand, provided the department with another legal lever to control the much larger number of nonmainstream media.

The STT required its holders not only to be "noncommercial," but also to be "nonpolitical." It repressed the STT-holders' economic viability, since these publications were not allowed to be sold in public, to place advertisements, or to raise money from subscriptions. By prohibiting these publications from being sold in public or offering subscriptions, the department also repressed these publications' political influence by limiting their potential circulations. And finally, by limiting these publications to "technical knowledge" and prohibiting them from being involved in "practical politics," this licence provided the department with a legal handle to censor their content.

Various forms of "flak" also influenced the media coverage of Kedungombo. This term, adopted from Herman's and Chomsky's propaganda model, refers to negative responses to a media statement or program, which may take the form of letters, telegrams, phone calls, petitions, law suits, and other forms of complaint, threat, and punitive action. It may be organized centrally or locally, or it may consist of the entirely independent actions of individuals (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 26). In the Kedungombo context, the most dreadful "flak" with which media workers had to reckon was to have a high-ranking military official step into their edi

torial meeting room, to tell them what they could and could not publish. For instance, in the last week of March 1991, the Diponegoro Information Chief attended the editorial meeting of *Kartika*, a Semarang daily which was partly owned by the Central Java Diponegoro Army Command, and prohibited the newspaper from continuing to harshly criticise the Kedungombo project.

More common forms of flak were phone calls from military and civilian officials in charge of supervising the media, to prohibit certain potential news stories from being printed. In relation to Kedungombo, two afternoon dailies, *Suara Pembaruan* (Jakarta) and *Wawasan* (Semarang), were late in getting on the market on February 6 and 7, 1989, due to phone calls from the Armed Forces Headquarters, the Department of Information, and the Central Java Army and Police Commands, ordering them to delete any news concerning the student demonstrations (Prasetyo, 1990: 390).

Another form of flak was the press briefings, in which the officials declared certain news events to be "off the record," or prohibited from being printed. During the court case in which Kedungombo villagers sued the governor and Jratunseluna Project general manager, the media were told to censor most of the sessions.

(d) . The influence of advertising

Advertising had a minimal influence on the mainstream media coverage of Kedungombo. As a large civil engineering project, Kedungombo depended mainly on foreign companies and Public Works-owned companies to survey, construct, and supervise the project. The commodity which was most used by the companies that constructed the project was obviously cement. As it turned out, most cement companies did not advertise their

product in the major newspapers and news magazines, but in civil engineering journals. These trade journals obviously never covered the adverse impact of large dams.

(e) . The biases of the two *Kompas* and *Suara Merdeka* groups

As discussed in point (b), two newspaper groups that covered Kedungombo most widely were the *Kompas Gramedia* and *Suara Merdeka* groups. Two members of the *Kompas Gramedia* group were involved in covering Kedungombo, namely the Jakarta daily, *Kompas* , and the Yogyakarta daily, *Berita Nasional or Bernas* . With their Catholic and Yogyakarta background, *Kompas* and *Bernas* gave Mangunwijaya and other Yogyakarta-based critics of Kedungombo, such as Lukman Sutrisno, more coverage than they did dam advocates such as Ismail, the Central Java governor, and Sunarno, the dam's project officer. In contrast to *Kompas* 's and *Bernas* 's coverage, the *Suara Merdeka* group gave Ismail and Sunarno a much higher media profile than it did Mangunwijaya through the morning daily, *Suara Merdeka* , and the afternoon daily, *Wawasan* .

Several factors created the higher media profile of the dam advocates in the *Suara Merdeka* group papers. Ismail's strategy of "Javanizing" Kedungombo fitted nicely with *Suara Merdeka* 's mission to become the "cultural bastion" of Central Java. Besides, *Suara Merdeka* 's holding company, NV *Suara Merdeka Press*, was also involved in three civil engineering companies, *Anugrah Pradita Ltd.*, *Dentraco Perdana Mandiri Ltd.*, and *Arkenshi Ltd* (Dhakidae, 1991: 369). The company's majority shareholder, Budi Santoso, an engineer by training, chaired the provincial Chamber of Commerce as well as the provincial association of civil engineering contractors, *Gapensi* (Gabungan Pemborong Nasional Indonesia).

This combination of the newspapers' editorial strategy to capitalize on its "cultural" and "geographical basis" and the business interests of their Holding company made *Suara Merdeka* and *Wawasan* excellent amplifiers of Ismail's and Sunarno's views on Kedungombo. To balance their reports about the protests of students, who constituted an important group of their consumers, *Suara Merdeka* and *Wawasan* also made extra efforts to please Ismail and Sunarno. The governor was always addressed in the manner he preferred, as the "*Lurah*" or "Village Head" of Central Java. And when the Kedungombo debate shifted from agrarian to ecological issues, the two Semarang newspapers rarely forgot to address Sunarno with his three titles, namely "Dr.", "Ir." [Engineer], and "Dipl. H.E." [Hydraulical Engineering Diploma from the Delft Engineering Institute in the Netherlands], rendering his statements thereby with an increased academic credibility.

Due to its Holding company's involvement in the civil engineering industry *Suara Merdeka* seemed reluctant to expose the poor quality of the downstream irrigation facilities of the Jratunseluna Project. It focused on Jratunseluna's land-appropriation problems in the Grobogan district, and left the news on bad engineering to other newspapers.

(f) . The unigue Yogyakarta-Semarang competition

Kedungombo's media profile was also influenced by a unique competition between Central Java and Yogyakarta newspapers for Central Java subscribers as well as retail buyers. This unique competition is influenced by three factors. The first is that Yogyakarta is a different province, and as a matter of fact, a special territory ruled by the royal houses of Yogyakarta. Hence, newspapers that are published in Yogyakarta are freer from censoring

by Central Java authorities. Second, Yogyakarta has a larger concentration of students and other lecturers in one place, compared with Central Java, where the student population is distributed in four places, namely Semarang, Salatiga, Solo, and Purwokerto. Therefore, the newspapers in Yogyakarta have a larger captive market of students to whom they have to gear their editorial policy. Third, the Diponegoro Military Command, or *Komando Daerah Militer (Kodam)*, has its headquarters in Semarang, the Capital of Central Java. Hence, there are fewer phone calls and other forms of flak from the Yogyakarta military apparatus to the Yogyakarta editors, compared with what their counterparts in Semarang experience.

As a result of this unique competition between Semarang and Yogyakarta, several aspects of Kedungombo which did not appear in the Central Java papers, did appear in the Yogyakarta newspapers.

Summary

I have explained in this chapter the relevance of this research topic for the discipline of education and, subsequently, its objective. I have also elaborated the reasons why I chose this particular case study to achieve that objective. This was followed by the research questions and a description of the theoretical framework I used to illuminate my research methodology.

After that I discussed the significance of this thesis and outlined the overall composition of this thesis. I completed this introductory chapter with a brief description of the Kedungombo dam, the actors in the media debate, and the media in which Kedungombo was debated.