

Chapter 7

Struggle for Agrarian Reform: The Pasundan Peasant's Union of West Java

For Indonesian peasants, an important part of achieving true freedom (*kemerdekaan yang sejati*) is to control land and have the freedom to cultivate it, as we develop ourselves as a civilized community and as complete human beings (*manusia seutuhnya*). Land is the most important source of livelihood for us, the peasantry, who are the majority of the population in Indonesia (Agustiana 2003: 1-2)

The *modus operandi* in forest encroachment and looting conducted by local people was stealing forestry resources, illegal logging, land looting and occupation for agricultural and settlements before asking for legal recognition ...[these actions were] conducted by local people organized by the Serikat Petani Pasundan (Public Relations of Perum Perhutani, 24 June 2008)

'We are looking for Agustiana... It is not necessary to arrest many people, one or two are enough. The first is Agustiana...' (West Java Police Chief, 19 June 2008, *Kompas* 20 June 2008)

'... We ask all components of society in Tasikmalaya, Ciamis and Garut to never be incited again by SPP, led by Agustiana ...' (Paguyuban Masyarakat Ciamis Selatan, 8 May 2006)

Controversy over land occupation actions conducted by local people, some organized in local peasant's organizations including SPP (the Pasundan Peasant's Union) of eastern Priangan, West Java,¹ occurred along with the

¹ The *Priangan* region lies in the southeastern part of West Java. It is a large mountainous area from Sukabumi in the west to Ciamis in the east, which borders on Central Java. Culturally, most local people belong to the Sundanese ethnic group. Originally Sundanese culture referred to the way of life of the people who lived in almost all parts of West Java, except for the coastal regions of Banten, Jakarta, and Cirebon on the west and north coast. The Sundanese people called their cultural territory *Tatar Pasundan* or *Pasunda'an* (Pasundan). In general, the Sundanese people called themselves *Urang Sunda*, while *Urang Sunda* who live in the *Priangan/Parahyangan* region are called *Urang Priangan*. The Dutch colonial administration defined the Priangan area as one Residency or Karesidenan, together with other West Java Karesidenan such as Banten, Batavia, Buitenzorg

increasing numbers of these actions prior to, and particularly after the fall of Soeharto in 1998. The above quotations reflect contentious claims about SPP, especially because this local peasant's organization was actively organising land claim actions in eastern Priangan region. The authorities and supporters of land concentration condemned peasants' collective actions as crimes, land looting (*penjarahan*) or even part of illegal logging activities. Poor, landless and near-to-landless peasants claimed they had the right to control parcel of land particularly State Land. Through support by social movement activists and pro agrarian reform scholar-activists, land occupation actions have become an important strategy in the development of local peasant's organizations in the last two decades.

Local peasant organizations and other rural-based people organizations sprung up like mushrooms in the post-Soeharto era, but had in fact had started much earlier. As we have seen, in 1991 the SPJB was the first created by urban-educated activists, four years later there were five; in 1998 KPA recorded 19 rural-based people organizations as its members.² Currently more than eight local peasant organizations exist in West Java at either district, inter-district or provincial level, including the SPP (Pasundan Peasant's Union), to be discussed in this chapter.³ In East Java, around 12 independent local peasant organizations formed during the post-*reformasi* era were united in a single national peasant's union, the SPI (Serikat Petani Indonesia) (see *Pembaruan Tani* 26, April 2006, p. 12).⁴ Central Sulawesi and North Sumatra are two

(Bogor), Karawang, and Cirebon. After independence Karesidenan Priangan consisted of the districts of Sukabumi, Cianjur, Bandung, Purwakarta, Subang, Sumedang, Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis. The last three areas are known as the Eastern Priangan area.

² See again Chapter V, particularly Table 5.2.

³ These are the Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP, Serikat Petani Pasundan); Pakidulan Peasant and Fisherfolk's Association (HPNP, Himpunan Petani Nelayan Pakidulan); Karawang Peasant's Union (SEPETAK, Serikat Petani Karawang); North Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP-U, Serikat Petani Pasundan-Utara); Sumedang Populist Peasant's Union (STKS, Serikat Tani Kerakyatan Sumedang); Subang Peasant's Struggle Front (PPRTS, Persatuan Perjuangan Rakyat Tani Subang); Banten Peasant's Union (SP-Banten, Serikat Petani Banten); and the West Java Peasant's Union (SPJB). As well there are local peasant groups identified as village, sub-district or district branches of SPI or AGRA.

⁴ About SPI see again Chapter VI.

provinces outside Java where urban-educated activists organized rural villagers and formed more than fifteen rural people's organizations in both provinces (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2008); while in Bengkulu province, the urban-educated activists were successful in consolidating local peasant movements in the Bengkulu Peasant Union (STaB).

The urban-educated activists had a significant role in the formation of these local peasant organizations both before and after *reformasi*. If in the pre-reformasi period these peasant unions were formed in order to rebuild mass politics against New Order authoritarianism, in the post-*reformasi* period local peasant organizations formed as a local attribute of the new period of post-authoritarian political openness. Through the development of these local peasant organizations, the activists' objective to rebuild mass politics in rural area was achieved, but they were faced with the reality that these organizations were not only working for the peasants' interests regarding land. They wanted to maintain organizational consolidation in order to have a voice in local politics, but without sacrificing the economic interests of the peasants.

Not surprisingly then, peasants wanted to use these organizations to further their own interests. But these organizations were not able to force their peasant members to comply with regulations or their ideological views. This limited what they were able to achieve beyond helping peasants in their struggles for land. The basic problem was peasants just weren't motivated to continue the struggle after they had got control of reclaimed land.

This chapter will discuss a case of the peasant movement organizing in a local peasant's organization, namely SPP from West Java that was formally founded in the post-*reformasi* era, together with other another local peasant's organization in Bengkulu province, namely STaB. The local dynamics of these two peasant movements will be discussed in the next two chapters (VIII and IX).

7.1 Serikat Petani Pasundan (SPP) and Land Problems in West Java's Eastern Priangan Region

A decade long struggle for land in a region of West Java traditionally called the eastern Priangan was generated by a rural social movement organisation called the Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP, Serikat Petani Pasundan), which has 'Struggle for Agrarian Reform' (*'Berjuang untuk Pembaruan Agraria'*) on its banners. The symbols, banners and slogans of this organisation were first seen publicly in 24 January 2000 in a mass peasant mobilisation in Garut district town square, in which thousands of peasants from seven local SPP chapters spread across three districts (Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis) participated. Grassroots organising and collective land occupations had already occurred extensively in these areas for some years before this demonstration. Until 2006, SPP had managed land occupations in more than 150 State Land leases that had been allocated for large scale agro-industry (cash crop and timber plantation estates) and on state forestland. More than 20,000 families were involved in these collective actions (Table 7.1. below), and based on a survey conducted in 2003-2004, around 74 per cent of them were originally landless or almost landless.

Table 7.1. Land Claim Actions Organised by SPP up to 2006

District	Formal Land Use	Total Land Occupied (ha)	Total Households (SPP members) Involved	Average Land Holding by Household (ha)
Garut	State-forest Lands	4,428.0	4,730	0.83
	Plantation Lands	1,226.9	1,994	0.77
Total in Garut District		5,654.9	6,724	0.84
Tasikmalaya	State-forest Lands	1,410.0	1,696	0.83
	Plantation Lands	660.0	856	0.77
Total in Tasikmalaya District		2,070.0	2,553	0.81
Ciamis	State-forest Lands	4,377.7	4,764	0.92
	Plantation Lands	4,283.0	5,980	0.72
Total in Ciamis District		8,660.7	10,744	0.81
Total of Three Districts		16,385.6	20,021	0.82

Source: Serikat Petani Pasundan 2006a

The story of post-1965 land struggles and consolidation of the rural poor in these areas of eastern Priangan can be traced back to the Badega case of the 1980's⁵, although the Sagara land conflict was also a significant milestone in grassroots organising activities in the region. It was a Garut student youth group that initiated the formation of the SPP. The Garut Student Action Committee, (KAMAGA, Komite Aksi Mahasiswa Garut)⁶, which subsequently changed its name to the Garut Youth and Student Forum (FPPMG, Forum Pemuda, Pelajar dan Mahasiswa Garut),⁷ had been organising land cases in this area since 1989. They supported people in Sagara, who had occupied around 1,100 ha of land in a coastal area of southern Garut. This area had been formally claimed as a conservation area by the forestry authorities (Perhutani), based on the basic Forestry Law. After a 10-year struggle for land against human rights violations, the people of Sagara were given formal permission to occupy and cultivate some parts of this forestry-controlled land.⁸

The Sagara case inspired confidence in the FPPMG to broaden their activities into other districts to challenge the New Order regime's land policies. Soon after the victory in Sagara, many landless peasant groups who already occupied, or wished to occupy, State Land, wanted to link up with this student group. These included peasants groups from two neighbouring districts of Tasikmalaya and Ciamis. The FPPMG then expanded their network to revitalise two student activist groups in these districts, namely the People's Youth and

⁵ See again Chapter V for the Badega case. For more extensive discussions about this case see YLBHI and JARIM 1990: 45-52, Rianto 1995 and Bachriadi 2002b. The same version of Rianto's (1995) article appeared in two collections of the same articles published by different NGOs (see Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 49-60, which in this book author's name was changed to 'Aktivis SPJB'; and Harman *et al.* 1995b: 139-148, in which the author's name is similar to the original version).

⁶ Aji (2005: 7) calls this group the Garut Students' Committee (KMG, Komite Mahasiswa Garut).

⁷ KAMAGA had ties with Bandung-based student activist groups. These were established during and after a memorable student youth protest march of around 60 km from the city of Bandung to Garut in 1989 against the trial of several peasant leaders of Badega in the Garut district court (see chapter IV for this march).

⁸ The National Land Agency by decree (No. 35-VI/1997) redistributed 580 ha of state land in the villages of Sagara and Karya Mukti to people. For a detailed account of peasant resistance in the Sagara case, see Agustiana 1995 and Lukmanudin 2002. Agustiana 1995 was republished in Harman *et al.* 1995b: 219-224 and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 251-257.

Student Forum (FPMR, Forum Pemuda and Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat) of Tasikmalaya,⁹ and the Ciamis Students' Forum (Farmaci, Forum Aspirasi Rakyat dan Mahasiswa Ciamis). The main function of these three student groups was to support the efforts of peasants to consolidate their movements and to build an inter-regional network of peasant groups that subsequently lead to the establishment of the SPP in 2000.

SPP actions addressed land issues primarily in their membership districts, but also throughout the province.

SPP was born as an organisation that struggled for the poor and suffering peasants' interests [in eastern Priangan]. Poverty and suffering among the peasants in general was caused by landlessness. Big plantation enterprises, private or state owned, and Perhutani, controlled most land in rural areas.¹⁰ SPP is a pioneer organisation. It is a torch in the dark night to provide light for the people to find a way. Only SPP knows the poverty and suffering in rural communities, and the way out is to struggle for agrarian reform. Agrarian reform is the way to give peasants cultivation rights, ecological sustainability and control of land and natural wealth for livelihoods, through land reform, which means land to the tillers, the essence of agrarian reform (Supriadi *et al.* 2005: 36-37).

During colonial times, the Priangan of West Java was developed as a region of colonial exploitation with large export-oriented plantation estates. The Priangan today is still an important region of the 'colonial style' large plantation operations that produces tea, sugarcane, coconuts, cocoa, rubber, cloves, quinine and oil palm. This region was characterised by unequal land distribution structures and prolonged land conflicts.¹¹ The KPA's agrarian

⁹ In fact FPMR was formed during the trial of FPPMG leaders who were suspected of being provocateurs and masterminds behind the Tasikmalaya riot in 1996. For a more detailed story of this urban riot, see LBH Nusantara and Forum Pemuda Pelajar dan Mahasiswa Garut 1997 and Hadad *et al.* 1998.

¹⁰ Perhutani is a state-owned forestry company operating all over Java. Many of its forestry management practices originate in the Dutch colonial period. Now it controls around three million hectares of land claimed as 'state-forest' and managed mainly as timber plantation. See Peluso 1992 for a history of this company and social conflict in some areas controlled by it in Central Java; also Bachriadi and Lucas 2002 for the tug of war over claims to state-forest areas in Wonosobo, Central Java after the 1998 *reformasi*.

¹¹ Peasant resistance has occurred in this area of West Java since the colonial period. For instance, in the late colonial era, two large local peasant rebellions were recorded in the region of Ciamis when the Dutch administration assisted private companies to develop a large plantation that took local

conflict database, which recorded agrarian conflicts in the period 1970-2001, shows that land conflicts on plantation land in West Java Province (484 cases) were the fourth largest number of total land conflicts in this province.¹² In the three districts of eastern Priangan (Garut, Tasikmalaya, and Ciamis), according to this database, land conflicts over state-forest and large plantation lands are the two most common types of agrarian conflicts in this area: 21 conflicts related to state forest and 15 related to development of big plantations.

In West Java today,¹³ large plantation estates comprise around 8.5 per cent (\pm 314,073 ha) of the total land, while in the districts of Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis, the total land allocated for plantation estates is 85,620 ha. Forestry areas formally declared as 'state forest' took around 27.1 per cent (\pm 1,000,735 ha) of the total land of this province. Perhutani, the state-owned Indonesian Forestry Company, controls around 792,467 ha of land in West Java through 14 Forest Supervisory Offices (KPH, Kesatuan Pemangku Hutan) of Unit III. These consist of 552,065 ha of production forest and 240,402 ha of protected forest (www.dephut.go.id/informasi/luas_perum.htm; Bachriadi and Lucas, 2002: 93). In 2000, Perhutani controlled 36,205 ha of 'forest' land through its KPH in the district of Ciamis alone. By 2005 this had fallen to 29,765 ha of which around 24,000 ha were planted with teak. Many forestry areas controlled by this company are not a forest ecosystem because people's fields or hamlets have existed within those areas long before they were designated as 'state forest'.

The limited area available for people's agriculture was reflected in the total amount of land allocated for big plantation estates (10.5 per cent of all land) and 'state forest' (17.2 per cent) in 2004. While at the same times around 40 per cent of the total area of these districts was used by around 845,000

peoples' agricultural land. These rebellions were known by the colonial administration as the 'Langen incident' (1905) and the 'Rawa Lakbok incident' (1930) (Tauchid, 1953: 20-30).

¹² The top three categories are development projects for housing and new towns, urban public facilities, factories and industrial parks (Bachriadi 2002b).

¹³ Including an area of Banten region before being split into a new province in 1999 (Indonesia 2005a: 5; and Perhutani 2001).

peasant households.¹⁴ Of these, around 78-83 per cent was small farmers with small plots of land, ie less than 0.5 ha (calculated from Garut, 2005: 31; Tasikmalaya, 2006: 6 and 15; Ciamis, 2004: 7 and 35; Indonesia, 2005-b: 10-13 and 42-43; and results of the 2003 Agricultural Census). The Gini Ratios of landholding among these peasant households in 2003 were 0.45 (Garut), 0.59 (Tasikmalaya), and 0.46 (Ciamis) reflecting the unequal land distribution structure in this region.¹⁵

The small plots of available land controlled by peasant households in these three districts were reflected in household land use as reported in the 1993 and 2003 Agricultural Census. These were: 0.38 ha (Garut), 0.38 ha (Tasikmalaya) and 0.44 ha (Ciamis) in 1993; and 0.35 ha (Garut), 0.41 ha (Tasikmalaya) and 0.39 ha (Ciamis) in 2003. These household land use averages were much lower than the national land use average in Indonesia, which was 0.81 ha per household (Bachriadi and Wiradi 2009), even lower than the average land used by peasants in three regions of rural Indonesia (Java, North Sumatra, and Bali) in 1938, during the colonial period, which was 0.84 ha per household, as calculated by Tauchid (1953: 176).

For the poor villagers and members of SPP, there were few government efforts to resolve poverty problems and to provide better ways to improve their sustainable livelihood. On the contrary, BPN (the National Land Agency) facilitated plantation expansion in the area claimed as state land for economic growth reasons. Collective land occupation was a ‘rational’ choice to deal with this unfair policy. For instance, at a meeting between Cilawu village SPP members (in Garut district) and local authorities, to ‘resolve’ the problem after they were accused of being ‘land looters’ of plantation estates at the end of the 1990s, a local SPP leader was quoted by said: ‘We have our reasons to occupy this land. The forestry authority grabbed our land in the past and the planters

¹⁴ There were probably more peasant-households that depended on agricultural activities, including landless peasant households, not covered in the official data.

¹⁵ This was calculated without including landless peasant-households because the data was not available.

robbed us of the rest in 1975. We are landless now. So the government should take our side, not the plantation owners' side' (Wargadipura, *n.d.*, p. 28).

In the Cilawu case it was clear that the HGU lease¹⁶ of the state-owned plantation company (Perseroan Terbatas Perkebunan or PTP VIII) expired in 1997. The BAL mentions that land with an expired formal right, in this case a HGU lease must be given back to the people who need it for their livelihood. The SPP local leader of Cilawu, who knew about this regulation, then challenged the District Land Office (Kantor Pertanahan) and local government:

'We are not interesting in buying a car through land occupation, but to feed our families, to provide food twice a day – no more than that! We did it because the state neither provides food nor fulfils our basic needs. All you authorities did not follow the mandate of article 33 of our Constitution. Now the rule is clear, it is also clear also that the HGU has expired. Whose side are you taking now?' (Wargadipura, *n.d.*, p. 28).

On the one hand, land occupation is a rational attempt by people to fulfil their basic needs; politically it also brought back the self-confidence of rural poor who until now had always thought they were 'nothing'. Land and an organisation restored their self-confidence to fight for their political and socio-economic rights. One of the SPP local leaders described the influence of SPP in his village:

'Several years ago, I was nobody in this village – my home village. I am poor, uneducated, have no land and no job. I go to cities around West Java regularly and sell homemade traditional weapons at bus terminals, train stations, street-corners, or wherever I can sell my wares. Collective land occupation led us to join the SPP. Now I can see the results. In addition to having land for cultivation, its impact on 'powerless' people in this village has been felt. I can hold my head up right now, because I organised and led villagers to stand in the front line at community activities such as *gotong royong* (working together in community) and other social and political activities. We can demonstrate that land occupation in the plantation area is right and we made others understand what SPP members did. Moreover, they considered us to be pioneers because we are now relatively well educated about politics compared with other villagers. Today the village head cannot decide any policies for our village without consulting me and

¹⁶ The HGU (Hak Guna Usaha) was a right to use land for commercial purposes, such as a plantation estate or cattle ranch.

other SPP members. For instance, based on my advice, there was a special public hearing with all villagers in order [to get agreement] to build a new village market. The village head also asked for SPP members’ suggestions when the provincial and district governments planned to build high-voltage electricity towers that will cut across some villagers’ agricultural lands. This never happened before! What makes us happy and more confident is that the village head followed what we suggested and asked the government, the electricity corporation, and the contractors for good compensation. And we got it, we won it!’ (*Berjuang untuk Tanah, Penghidupan, dan Kebebasan*, 2003: tape no. 11).

A consciousness about land occupation as the first step to pursuing wider social change made these rural social organisations intensify their efforts to maintain the group’s cohesiveness, and to spread their political network to other villagers. Lessons from past struggles over land, particularly lessons learnt from the decline of SPJB, reminded SPP to strengthen the grassroots members at the post- land occupation stage. This was crucial. One of its leaders says:

Do not ever allow land that is already held by peasants to be lost again. Do not let them be satisfied with just getting land. The next struggle, which is not less important, is to make sure that land is used well and maintains an ecological balance. It should be a good example for everyone that this movement does not loot [sic]¹⁷ but improves peasants’ livelihoods and pushes the government to implement agrarian reforms in a socially just manner (Speech of the SPP general secretary at the opening session of the Political School for Peasant Leaders/SPORA, 5 March 2007).

However calls from peasant leaders to continue protesting usually fell on deaf ears, as shown below. If some improvement of peasant livelihoods occurred after joining the collective land occupation, some local SPP bases lost their enthusiasm to be further involved in the struggle for agrarian reform, because they already had control of the land that they wanted, and the organizers lacked the skills or the creativity to encourage peasants to stay involved in the broader struggle. In some SPP local chapters, land transactions either among the SPP members or between the members and the non-members

¹⁷ After the fall of Suharto in 1998, both national and local newspapers and magazines reported many land occupations as ‘land looting’ (*penjarahan*) activities. See, for instance, *Tempo Interactive* 25 July 1998; *Koran Tempo* 20 January 2002; *Bisnis Indonesia* 29 January 2002; *Pikiran Rakyat* 30 June and 1 July 2008.

started to occur. The existence of SPP strengthened landless and near-to-landless peasants' interests to control land, but the 'struggle for agrarian reform' – the struggle message of SPP banners – really depended on the imagination and creativity of the top leaders of the SPP and its supportive scholar-activists.

To develop relations at the national and international level, SPP joined several national coalitions of pro-agrarian reform social movements such as KPA since 2002, FSPI since 2002, API since its formation in 2003, and PERGERAKAN since its formation in 2004 (see Figure 7.1 below). SPP was also one of the peasant unions involved in discussions that lead to the formation of AGRA.¹⁸ SPP's motive for involvement in these organisations was to influence national agrarian policymaking processes. In fact, Agustiana (the dominant leader and Secretary General of SPP) had relations with key activists of these national coalitions going back to their 1980's student movement days together.¹⁹ Those involved in these national coalitions include other activists appointed as members of the SPP Education Council to support their education system and cadre building.²⁰

In order to maintain its consolidation and to influence local politics as well the SPP pursued collective actions, such as development of community-based agricultural economic and production activities; formulating internal regulations on land distribution and post-occupation activities; conducting political education courses for its cadres and then deploying them into several government and parliamentary institutions from village to district level; organising an association of village heads at district level; developing

¹⁸ See again Chapter VI, subsection 6.3.2, for details of these pro agrarian reform national coalitions.

¹⁹ See again Chapter IV and V about his role in the 80s student movements and development of national coalitions for agrarian reform and peasant movement.

²⁰ Activists such as Boy Fidro (former LPPP member), Noer Fauzi (member of KPA Expert Council and former KPA Chairperson), Dianto Bachriadi (member of KPA Expert Council and former KPA Chairperson), Gunawan Wiradi (member of KPA Expert Council), Yando Zakaria (member of KARSA, Lingkar Belajar untuk Pembaruan Agraria dan Pedesaan or Learning Circles for Agrarian Reform and Rural Reconstruction) and Usep Setiawan (currently Coordinator of the National Board of KPA) have all been members of the SPP Education Council.

approaches to local governments (particularly after the implementation of autonomous regional politics and decentralised government) and in particular political parties which were predicted to win certain elections, using various vehicles for its cadres to enter electoral politics as candidates. The SPP’s relationship today with political parties and politicians, as well as with local government, is increasingly to develop ‘political protection’ of occupied land already held by its members.

In the 2004 general election, two SPP cadres were elected as members of Ciamis District Assembly (DPRD) using the PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan). Based on its internal evaluation in 2003, SPP cadres had more chance of winning votes in Ciamis District than in Garut or Tasikmalaya. The subsequent electoral success of two SPP cadres raised hopes that the local government would recognise land claims by the 22 local chapters (OTL, Organisasi Tingkat Lokal) of SPP, which were involved in 25 land cases.

SPP efforts in Ciamis District gained ground when it convinced the local government to form the Ciamis District Integrated Team for Land Conflict Resolution (Tim Terpadu Penyelesaian Sengketa Tanah Kabupaten Ciamis) in 2005.²¹ But even having two SPP’s cadres in the DPRD and the SPP General Secretary as a member of the District Land Conflict Resolution Team has achieved only limited results. The team has only been able to achieve the resolution of nine land conflict cases and only two of these nine cases are in SPP bases (interview with an organizer of SPP Ciamis, 13 July 2008 [*no.: P-08*]). There is still around 23 conflict cases unresolved, which have left thousands of SPP members with uncertainty in regard to their land occupations.

The District Land Conflict Resolution Team has worked very slowly. During the period 2005-2009 only one of the two land cases in SP local bases was resolved by this Team, one of which was the case against PT Mulya Sari at Banjaranyar village. Based on the Team’s recommendation, in October 2007 the

²¹ Decree of Bupati Ciamis No. 522/Kpts.21-HUK/2005 concerning formation of an integrated team to handle land problems in District of Ciamis (Ciamis 2005).

Ciamis Land Board finally issued 493 certificates of ownership on parcels of land formally held as HGU by PT Mulya Sari that had expired in December 2005.²² The beneficiaries, 368 people – almost all of them members of SPP – had originally leased land from the inactive plantation company. Having applied for land certificates since 2000 without success, they joined SPP in 2002 to fight for legal title and stopped paying their lease rent at the same time. There were no conditions attached to these land ownership certificates, which have private ownership (*hak milik*) title. However it should be noted that these land certificates are very different from those issued during the '60s land reform program, which made clear that redistributed land could not be transferred for at least 15 years and must be cultivated productively during that period by the beneficiaries themselves.²³

Of roughly 8,660 ha of land occupied by SPP members in Ciamis District (4,377 ha of state forest land and 4,283 of plantation land; see again Table 7.1 above), only 57.76 ha of ex-HGU leases from PT Mulya Sari have been allocated to members of SPP. The rest has been allocated not through SBY's National Agrarian Reform Program (PPAN, Program Pembaruan Agraria Nasional),²⁴ but through the old PRONA land-titling program.²⁵ But the SPP General Secretary claimed in the media that PPAN was implemented in the eastern Priangan area of West Java (*Tadjuk* 18-24 February 2008), a similar claim made by the Head of the Garut Land Board when it certified 200 parcels of redistributed land in

²² Surat Keputusan Kepala Kantor Pertanahan Kabupaten Ciamis No. 07/520.1-10.19/PRONA/2007, 25 May 2007.

²³ See Surat Keputusan Kepala Inspeksi Agraria Jawa Barat Tanggal 13 September 1966 No Lr. 326/D/VIII/65/1966

²⁴ About SBY's PPAN see again Chapter III.

²⁵ Clearly the certificates issued by the Ciamis Land Board for beneficiaries in Banjaranyar Village (on land held under the ex- HGU lease of PT Mulya Sari) were part of PRONA (*Proyek Operasi Nasional Agraria*) program, an ongoing land certification project of BPN. PRONA was an accelerated land registration program set up in the early New Order period to speed up the process of land registration: 'Unfortunately while the PRONA program attempted to certify as much as possible, the slow and cumbersome bureaucracy with the high costs in term of illegal levies attached to every step in the registration process, led to lengthy deals and seriously undercut the program' (MacAndrew 1986: 68).

Garut District in 2007.²⁶ SPP as one of the grass roots supporters of SBY’s PPAN, proudly proclaimed through its General Secretary that ‘agrarian reform declared by President SBY, and led by the Head of BPN, Joyo Winoto, was implemented for the first time in Indonesia by the Ciamis district government; this is a new way of resolving land conflicts in Indonesia...’ (*Tadjuk* 18-24 February 2008). However the General Secretary may have forgotten that the legal status of the remaining land occupied by SPP members in Ciamis, Tasikmalaya, and Garut districts is still uncertain, despite claims by the Yudhoyono administration to have tackled the land problem with a massive redistribution program under PPAN.

7.2 The SPP Movement’s Mass Bases

Members of SPP although spread over four kabupaten, namely Bandung, Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis, are consolidated into three SPP district branches.²⁷ Even though it has tried to formalize its structure by operating local chapters called OTL (*Organisasi Tingkat Lokal*) at sub-district and district levels, it is quite difficult to calculate precisely how many members are involved in this movement. Its leaders have frequently claimed SPP’s consolidated membership is more than 200,000 peasants, even as many as 700,000 peasants (Wargadipura 2005: 10; SKEPO 2002: ii; Aji 2005: 42)²⁸, while some scholars writing about SPP mention 30,000 to 200,000 members (Antlöv 2003: 82; Peluso, Afiff and Rachman 2008: 389). However, because the SPP membership unit is the household, each household member will be

²⁶ The land transfer document of the residents of Padaawas Village, Pasirwangi sub-district, Garut District states that the certificates were issued ‘as part of PPAN’s land reform program for the 2007 fiscal year’. See Kantor Pertanahan Kabupaten Garut 2007.

²⁷ There is a new local chapter on the border between of Garut and Bandung, namely the Kaledong Local Chapter, which joined the SPP in 2007. Formally residency of this local chapter’s members was part of the District of Bandung, but in the SPP organizational structure it is attached to the SPP administration in Garut District.

²⁸ Agustiana (SPP General Secretary), Ibang Lukmanudin (SPP Deputy General Secretary) or Nissa Wargadipura (Coordinator of Yapemas, the Community Development Foundation, a group of SPP organizers in Garut District) frequently claim the total membership of SPP is around 200,000 – 300,000 peasants.

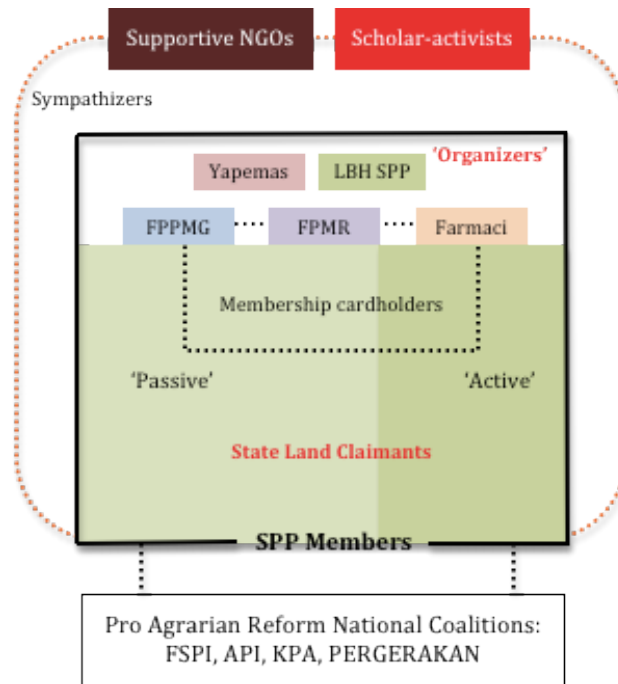
included as part of the 'SPP big family', the total number of SPP members claimed by its leaders seems exaggerated. Based on SPP data on numbers of land claimants in 64 cases recorded until 2006, there were 20,021 households involved in these cases (Serikat Petani Pasundan 2006a). Based on this data, perhaps the total membership of SPP is around 60,000 – 100,000 people spread around 58 OTL.²⁹

Figure 7.1 below gives an overview of the SPP movement, with a core composed of two groups: 'organizers' and 'village land claimants'. The organizers are mainly students and ex-student activists of Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis districts, whether originally from communities with land cases or not. Some are part of land claimant communities, including children of families who reclaimed lands; others are not attached to the communities that claimed land. Besides these two groups, there are also people who sympathise with the SPP movement, either neighbours of members or people living in Priangan urban areas. Sometimes these sympathizers participate in SPP protests and/or demonstrations, but it is clear they did not identify themselves as part of the SPP movement.

The students and youth SPP organizers are consolidated in four organizations: three student and youth organizations mentioned above (the FPPMG, FPMR and Farmaci) plus the Community Development Foundation (Yapemas, Yayasan Pengembangan Masyarakat) that was funded to cover SPP cooperation with NGOs and local governments. In Ciamis District, the SPP also funded its own legal aid institute (LBH SPP, Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Serikat Petani Pasundan), to provide legal assistance for SPP members in that district. In fact, Yapemas and LBH SPP were also formed to accommodate ex-student activists involved in organizing SPP community bases in Garut and Ciamis, who were previously consolidated in the FPPMG and Farmaci student and youth groups.

²⁹ This assumes each SPP household-member has 3 – 5 people involved in the movement.

Figure 7.1 SPP Movement Groups (until 2007)



Almost all SPP members are 'village land claimants' of land conflict cases organized in 58 OTL of the three SPP Districts: 33 OTL in Garut, 3 OTL in Tasikmalaya and 22 OTL in Ciamis. Based on 2003-2004 surveys, around 83% of heads of land claimant households, live in villages where they were born. The others, around 17%, are people who reside in their current village because of marriages and job opportunities. They moved to their current villages before becoming involved in SPP land claim actions. In other words, they are not moving to their current villages because of these land claims actions. Table 7.2 below shows the original residence of heads of land claimant households organized by SPP before they were involved in land claims actions.

Table 7.2 Distributions of SPP Household-Members as Land Claimants by Local Chapter (OTL)

District	Total OTL	SPP Household-members as Land Claimants		
		Total Household-members	Original Place of Residence of Heads of Households*) [%]	Heads of Households that Came from Other Villages (before involvement in land claim actions)*) [%]
Garut	33	6,724	90.8	9.2
Tasikmalaya	3	2,553	92.7	7.3
Ciamis	22	10,744	80.1	19.9
Total in Three Districts	58	20,021	83.3	16.7

Source: Serikat Petani Pasundan 2006a and own survey of SPP members, 2003-2004

Note: *) Based on my own survey in 2003-2004 of 1,272 households in Garut District; 1,025 households in Tasikmalaya District; and 6,290 households in Ciamis District. OTL are local SPP chapters (Organisasi Tingkat Lokal)

Some SPP household-members had more than one person as a land claimant or people involved in land claim actions, households can have 3-5 people (as family members) who are categorized as 'land claimants. SPP has an internal policy to allow mature family members (already married or over 18 years old), to be involved in land claim actions and/or hold land in claimed areas. This regulation is implemented without gender preference, men and women have similar opportunities. Ideally SPP organizers want to redistribute the claimed land on an equal basis to each eligible OTL member. But implementation of the land redistribution depends on a consensus among members of OTL, based on the level of involvement of each eligible person in the collective land claim action as well as the availability of land. Priority will also be given to persons who have been involved in the actions since the beginning. Community members who did not join the struggle until after the land occupations began were still eligible to control occupied land, as long as the OTL held enough land categorized by each local group as 'collective land'.

‘Collective land’ in SPP movement terms means plots of land within the claimed area controlled by the OTL. This land can be redistributed to OTL members whether they already held land within the claimed area or not, as long they make a reasonable request to OTL leaders and organizers, who will conduct an OTL meeting to make a decision on requests for land.³⁰ Usually OTL use ‘collective land’ for nursery plots, processing plants, or for animal husbandry. Another way for SPP to keep control over occupied land is through the ‘replacement of cultivator’ (*ganti garap*) mechanism, which means transfer of land control among members with or without compensation.³¹

If we look again at Table 7.2 above, percentages of the head of household-members of SPP who are not original residents of the village are bigger in Ciamis than in the two other districts; the 2003-2004 survey of SPP members indicated that only around 50% of these non-origin residents were involved in the land struggle since the beginning. SPP occupations of State Land or State Forest were always built on the argument of ‘original rights’ (*hak asal usul*) over the land. This meant claiming the land because of original rights to that land. These were lost because of land alienation to the Forestry Department during the colonial period, which as we have seen, continued until the New Order period (see Serikat Petani Pasundan 2002, Surpiadi *et al.* 2005: 14-33, and Aji 2005: 144-160). So many land claimants in Ciamis District currently organized by the SPP, were not pioneers of the land struggles since the beginning, because they didn’t have these ‘original rights’ over the land; they became involved in the struggle later following the success of the pioneers of the actions.

³⁰ Requests usually come from OTL members with small plots of land, which are less than the number of family members, particularly the number of mature age family members.

³¹ There are no standards of compensation or mechanism for ‘*ganti garap*’. Compensation is mostly based on agreement between the two parties involved. The most important thing in this informal ‘*ganti garap*’ mechanism is that new landholders must be part of the OTL (SPP members), and both parties have to report to OTL leaders about this replacement.

Based on the 2003-2004 survey,³² most household-members of SPP are people involved in land claim actions since the beginning of the struggle. Table 7.3 below shows around 76% of individual land claimants organized in SPP are person who have been involved in land struggles since the beginning; only around 24% of them controlled occupied land after their community (the OTL) succeeded in claiming the land through mechanisms such as redistribution and replacement of cultivators. This table also shows the percentage of individual land claimants who were not involved in land struggles since the beginning, i.e. came from outside the areas where land was reclaimed. In Ciamis District this is higher (around 28%) than the other two districts (Garut 18% and Tasikmalaya 7%). This phenomenon occurred in Ciamis because the ratio of claimed land and people involved in occupation actions from the first time are higher than in the two other districts. This means occupied lands in Ciamis District are available for redistribution to other persons who came into the district and joined the movement later on.

Table 7.3 Members Involvement in Collective Land Claim Actions

District	Involved since the Beginning of Land Actions [%]	Involved Later On [%]	<i>n</i> survey sample
Garut	82.0	18.0	3,096
Tasikmalaya	93.2	6.8	2,382
Ciamis	72.3	27.7	14,153
Total	76.4	23.7	19,631

Source: own survey of SPP members, 2003-2004

To organise its members, SPP provide membership cards even though not all members and organizers held these cards for administrative reasons,

³² As already explained in Chapter I, this survey covered 19,631 individual land claimants who are members of around 8,590 SPP households (or around 43% of total household-members of the SPP). If we assume a household-member of the SPP on average has 4 people as individual land claimants, this survey covers roughly 24% of the possible total land claimants organized by SPP.

because of limited funds available to produce the cards. More importantly, not all members and/or land claimants registered as SPP household-members are active members. Today all 58 OTL have *de facto* control of land obtain in actions from the mid 80s to the early 2000s, even though not all have had these rights formally recognized by government. Ironically their success has been the main cause of their unwillingness to be involved any further in SPP activities (interview with an organizer of SPP Ciamis, 13 July 2008 [no.: P-08]).

After fighting for land for many years, only 40 of 58 SPP OTLs can be categorized as ‘active OTL’. Active OTL means firstly, the leaders and members still wish to be involved in SPP activities especially in campaigns and/or protests against land policies that have no direct impact of their occupied land; secondly, the leaders are capable of organizing their OTL to struggle for SPP’s general objectives. Of the 58 OTLs claimed as SPP bases in three districts, based on the 2003-2004 survey, there are 14 active OTLs in Garut District (14 of the 33 origin OTLs); 3 active OTLs in Tasikmalaya District (all 3 original OTLs), and 23 active OTLs in Ciamis District (an increase of one OTL from the 22 original OTLs because of the splitting up of Pasawahan OTL into Pasawahan I and II). A decline in SPP’s community organizing activities, which relied heavily on student and ex-student activists of FPPMG and Yapemas, is the main cause of a significant decrease in the number of OTLs in Garut District.

Based on the 2003-2004 survey, approximately 74% of the total land claimants who joined SPP are landless. Only around 26% of the members were landholders when they were involved in the collective land struggles, mostly small landholders controlling less than 0.25 ha. Table 7.4 below shows landholdings of SPP members before they were involved in land actions.

Table 7.4 Percentages of SPP Members as Landholders Before Being Involved in Collective Land Claim Actions

Size of Landholding	District			Average in Three Districts [%]
	Garut [%]	Tasikmalaya [%]	Ciamis [%]	
Landless	84.4	49.8	76.1	74.2
< 0.25 ha	10.3	22.0	11.9	12.9
0.25 - 0.5 ha	5.2	19.2	4.7	6.5
0.5 - 1 ha	0.1	8.5	7.1	6.1
1 - 2 ha	-	0.2	0.2	0.2
2 - 3 ha	-	0.2	0	0.0
> 3 ha	-	-	-	-
Total	100 (n = 3,096)	100 (n = 2,382)	100 (n = 14,153)	100 (n = 19,631)

Source: Own survey of SPP members, 2003-2004

Based on SPP data, of the 16,385.6 ha claimed by SPP members, on average household-members controlled around 0.82 ha (see Table 7.1 above). The 2003-2004 Survey tried to find more detail about the amount of land controlled by SPP members. Table 7.5 below shows the structure of land holdings on the claimed land areas in the three districts.

Table 7.5 Structure of Landholdings by SPP Members on Claimed Land Areas

Size of Landholding	District			Average of Three Districts [%]
	Garut [%]	Tasikmalaya [%]	Ciamis [%]	
< 0.25 ha	39.5	13.2	6.0	12.1
0.25 - 0.5 ha	42.3	27.8	25.9	28.7
0.5 - 1 ha	18.2	57.5	67.8	58.7
1 - 2 ha	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.4
2 - 3 ha	-	0.6	-	0.1
> 3 ha	-	-	-	-
Total	100 (n = 3,096)	100 (n = 2,382)	100 (n = 14,153)	100 (n = 19,631)

Source: Own survey of SPP members, 2003-2004

Table 7.5 indicates a different general picture of landholdings compared with Table 7.1 above. In the two districts of Tasikmalaya and Ciamis the percentage of claimants controlling more than 0.5 ha is higher than the percentage of claimants controlling less than 0.5 ha; while in Garut District the majority of land claimants controlled less than 0.5 ha of land in the claimed areas. Table 7.1 above indicates that average land controlled in the claimed areas in these three districts was around 0.8 ha per household. It should be kept in mind that the 2003-2004 survey only covered active SPP local chapters (OTL), while SPP records on land claimed (as indicated in Table 7.1) covers all land cases organized in ‘all SPP local chapters’, without take into account whether they were active local chapters or not. Actually one of the objectives of the 2003-2004 survey, that relied on the involvement of SPP organizers to collect the data,³³ was to record the most recent SPP consolidation.³⁴

Several years after the collective land claim actions, the 2003-2004 survey found that around 11% of total land claimants organized by SPP in the three districts had increased their control over land outside the claimed areas, through purchase, rent, mortgage, and inheritance. In Tasikmalaya the figure was around 24%, in Ciamis the figure was around 9%, and in Garut the figure was 11% of total land claimants in each districts. Table 7.6 below shows the ability of a small number of SPP members to hold land outside the claimed areas, after they were involved in collective land actions.

³³ See again Chapter I about this survey’s methodology.

³⁴ This means at the time the survey was conducted in 2003-2004 3-4 years after SPP began to be funded in 2000. Besides collecting data about the socio-economic background of SPP members, another purpose to conduct the 2003-2004 survey was to find out about organizational cohesiveness among SPP local chapters and between the SPP local chapters and the SPP organizers at that time. As already noted above, the survey showed that in Garut District SPP had lost control over more than half the original OTLs that had been consolidated since SPP had been formed.

Table 7.6 SPP Members' Land Holdings Outside Claimed Areas after Collective Land Actions

Size of Landholding	District			Total of Three Districts [%]
	Garut [%]	Tasikmalaya [%]	Ciamis [%]	
< 0.25 ha	79.0	25.3	43.7	49.4
0.25 - 0.5 ha	18.0	45.0	22.9	30.5
0.5 - 1 ha	2.1	27.1	29.2	17.8
1 - 2 ha	0.9	2.6	4.2	2.3
2 - 3 ha	0	0	0	0
> 3 ha	0	0	0	0
% of total members	11%	24%	9%	11%

Source: own survey of SPP members, 2003-2004

Table 7.6 shows that the proportion of SPP members controlling land of 0.5 ha or less outside the claimed areas is approximately 80%, while the proportion of land members controlled between 0.5 – 1 ha is around 18%. So the total amount of land of one ha or less controlled by SPP members is around 98%. In Garut District 79% of SPP members controlled land less than 0.25 ha, while in Ciamis District the group that controlled land in this category is around 44% and in Tasikmalaya District is around 25%. Although they were only able to control small plots of land outside collectively claimed areas, these figures indicate an improvement of economic capacity to access more land through rural land market mechanisms, such as renting land as shown in Table 7.7 below.

Improvement of income and livelihood after involvement in collective land claim actions, on one hand, and relatively small plots of land controlled in the claimed areas on the other, stimulated around 62% of SPP members to access land outside the claimed areas through rural land market mechanisms (purchase, rent or mortgaging [*menerima gadai*]). Around 38% of controlled land outside the claimed areas was obtained through family inheritance. The biggest percentage of SPP members who control land outside the claimed areas through inheritance is 44% in Tasikmalaya District; while in Garut and Ciamis District the figures are around 37% and 27% (see Table 7.7 below).

Around 73% of SPP members in Ciamis District control lands outside the claimed areas through renting land, while for Garut and Tasikmalaya Districts the figures are around 63% and 56% respectively. In Ciamis District, SPP members accessed extra land through renting (around 50%). In Garut and Tasikmalaya, a smaller number of SPP members accessed extra land through renting (around 6% and 15%). The capacity of these members to access land through purchasing is quite high as well: 47% in Garut District, 38% in Tasikmalaya District, and 23% in Ciamis District. In Garut District a majority of SPP members controlled land outside claimed areas through purchasing extra land.

Table 7.7 Mechanisms to Access Land Outside Claimed Areas by SPP Members after Collective Land Actions

Mechanism	District			Total in Three Districts [%]
	Garut [%]	Tasikmalaya [%]	Ciamis [%]	
Purchase	47.0	37.8	22.9	38.6
Renting	6.0	15.3	50.0	18.1
Mortgaging	10.0	2.7	-	5.0
Inheritance	37.0	44.1	27.1	38.2

Source: own survey of SPP members, 2003-2004

Behind the optimism of SPP organizers and supporters about the improvement of household income and livelihood of members, there is anxiety that land gained through land claim actions will ultimately be lost. A salutary example was the outcome of the Sagara case in Garut, West Java, where Perhutani land was found by BPN to be subject to land reform, as a result of which villagers were able to obtain private tenure.³⁵ But within three years of the hard fought settlement, activists were disillusioned to find that most of the 580 ha, redistributed to villagers in one of the few successful land occupation

³⁵ The Sagara collective land claim action case was one of SPP's success stories, which encouraged many peasant groups in the District of Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis to join the union. See Agustiana 1995 and Lukmanudin 2002 for a detailed account of the Sagara land reclaiming action.

campaigns to gain formal legal recognition, had been sold (Afiff *et al.* 2005: 4; Peluso *et al.* 2008:30).

The political interests of top SPP leaders and the ideological gap between organizers and members at the local level was important background to the rising phenomena of land transactions among members in claimed areas. This seems to indicate that SPP failed to implement the principle of equal land distribution and control among members over the claimed areas. However according to other individual SPP informants, the increasing number of land transactions reflected the ongoing 'exchange of interests' between movement activists and the peasants in order to maintain the internal dynamics of SPP consolidation. The following story from Cieceng OTL in Tasikmalaya District explains more about the phenomena of land transactions.

7.3 Distribution over Claimed Land: the Cieceng Case

In the Cieceng OTL of Tasikmalaya District,³⁶ around 600 ha of occupied plantation estate land was divided among 800 occupying landholders, including eventually several plantation overseers (*mandor*) who had changed sides in the course of the dispute. SPP then attempted to improve landholders' farming sustainability by setting up cooperative-based production and distribution units, agricultural extension support for mixed farming of cash and food crops. In collaboration with KPA, SPP was able to turn uncertain short-term gains achieved through land occupations into political actions with potential long term outcomes. A local land occupation leader was elected as hamlet and eventually village head. SPP then promoted Cieceng as a 'model' village because of its community involvement in regional development programs, and for the high level of public commitment of villagers, whose economic position has

³⁶ Further details about the Cieceng land occupation can be found in Mismuri and Supriadi 2002, '*Berjuang untuk Tanah*' 2003: *tape* 27-28, Afiff *et al.* 2005: 19-26, and Mismuri and Prasetyohadi 2008.

improved as a result of their collective action, of which they are justifiably proud (Affif *et al.* 2005: 23).

With SPP involvement, efforts were made in Cieceng to confront the distributive dilemmas that plagued so many other land occupations, where distributions were based on personal assertiveness and capacity to clear the land. Unfortunately the Cieceng OTL failed to enact the principle of equality in land distribution.

In the first stage of SPP involvement, Agustiana, the General Secretary (and top leader) of SPP, introduced land allocation procedures and a landholding ceiling that granted between 0.25 to 0.5 ha to everyone over 15 years of age (Affif *et al.* 2005: 20). But this consensus was not long established when local leaders claimed that community members had their own consensus allowing SPP leaders to control up to 1-1.5 ha of land (interview with organizers of SPP Tasikmalaya, in Batang 29 March 2008 [*no.*: P-06]). Surprisingly, they succeeded in getting the SPP General Secretary’s approval of this revised consensus.³⁷ From Agustiana’s viewpoint, it was necessary for SPP to maintain the loyalty of the Cieceng chapter leaders in order to keep peasants involved in the organization for as long as possible after the land occupations had ended. But others felt that as ‘social movement politicians’, SPP leaders needed to maintain their relationship with Cieceng local leaders because of their direct links to the masses.

Although each local SPP chapter had their own regulations on how to distribute occupied land, one general rule found in all chapters is that local chapter leaders will get more land than ordinary members. Their view was that ‘the leaders and those who have made the biggest contribution should have

³⁷ In the SPP organizational structure, the district level leadership has responsibility for the organizational dynamics within their area. The General Secretary’s responsibility is more to consolidate the three district SPP branches, and for the external relations. But in SPP’s political culture, Agustiana as General Secretary holds near absolute power within the organization. Many decisions even in local chapters must have his approval, and he can veto any decisions at any level whenever he likes without consultation with others.

rights to more land than ordinary members'³⁸ (interview with Deputy General Secretary of SPP, Garut 20 July 2008 [No.: P-10]). This was not a negotiated position, but the in-principle decision of the SPP membership. This suggests the 'egalitarian principles' of land distribution for which they had frequently campaigned was just rhetoric.

Whatever the reason, in practice SPP implemented land distribution according to leadership positions held during the occupation actions. If for any reason members wanted to transfer their land to other SPP members, this was tolerated as well.³⁹ Even though this has led to a concentration of land controlled by some SPP members, the central SPP leadership has turned a blind eye to this practice in order to retain peasant support. These land transfers highlight the difficulty of implementing both 'collective rights' in terms of land control and ownership, and 'collective production' which SPP later tried to implement unsuccessfully in several bases.

Without a clear organizational ceiling (maximum land holding) regulation and strong discipline to implement it equitably to all member communities, SPP as an organization cannot prevent the transfer of occupied land if members prefer to hold it on an individual property rights basis.⁴⁰ The organization can

³⁸ '*Pemimpin dan yang lebih berjasa berhak atas tanah yang lebih luas/banyak dibandingkan anggota biasa*'.

³⁹ Common reasons for SPP members to transfer their occupied land to other members include moving to other locations because of marriages and/or seeking jobs, raising emergency funds for health care and payment of school fees, as well raising capital to improve farming productivity.

⁴⁰ There is an unwritten regulation about the maximum ceiling of occupied land implemented in some SPP local chapters, namely members cannot hold more than 5 ha of occupied land, as stated in the maximum land ceiling regulation (Law No. 56/1960). But this is a misinterpretation, because the formal regulation of maximum land ceiling for densely populated areas as stated in this law means one family can hold a maximum of 5 ha of land regardless of its location. According to SPP's interpretation, the 5 ha maximum were implemented on occupied land only, excluding land held by members before they became involved in occupation actions. So in the end there is a possibility that members can control more than 5 ha. In Cieceng for instance, some members reached this 5 ha limit after being involved in land transfers among members; one member actually controls around 10 ha because he holds another 5 ha outside the occupation area. SPP did nothing about this case, because the member did not break the internal organization's land ceiling regulation on occupied land and the organization's interpretation of the 1960 maximum land ceiling regulation.

limit but not stop these land transfers occurring within local communities⁴¹. The only general principle maintained across SPP’s bases is the restriction to transfer occupied land to the non-members. If non-member families wish to control SPP member’s occupied land, they are required to become SPP members before gaining access to the land.⁴²

In 2009, seven years after the occupation actions took place, around 63 ha of occupied land had been transferred from more than 120 previous land holders to only 14 SPP members, mostly local middlemen (*bandar*), some of whom are also leaders of the local Cieceng OTL. In other words, this land concentration among members has revived the traditional peasant’s economy centered in the middlemen (*bandar*) (Mintz 1956; Paige 1975; Hayami *et al.* 1987; Hayami, Kikuchi and Marciano 1999), despite SPP and other NGOs providing technical assistance to improve productive work to members of this SPP local chapter. The did this by setting up cooperative-based production and distribution units, agricultural extension support, and training on mixed farming of cash crops and food crops to increase their livelihood sustainability (see also Afiff 2005: 22-24⁴³ and Sorana Tani June 2007, p.2). However results have not been as expected, because of the failure to build a collective economic spirit among SPP members. In Cieceng (and possibly in other SPP local chapters as well), members (including leaders) have been able to manage their economic

⁴¹ In Cieceng SPP members didn’t use the term ‘land transfer’ but ‘safekeeping land’ (*‘nitip lahan garapan’*), which meant that the names of previous landholders were still recorded in SPP’s list of landholders, while in practice the land was being cultivated by new cultivation rights holders. This change is not recorded in SPP’s formal list of landholders. So while in theory original cultivators were still registered with the SPP Cieceng local chapter, in practice use rights had changed hands. The term ‘safekeeping land’ was used because buying and selling occupied land was technically forbidden by SPP. Peasant farmers also understood that they did not have legal ownership rights to occupied land and could only transfer informal ‘cultivation rights’. The term ‘safekeeping land’ was also useful to SPP as it gave outsiders the impression that occupied land was not being bought and sold.

⁴² Potential new landholders had to pay for cultivation rights (*uang ganti garap*) to previous landholders directly through SPP, in some cases a fee is charged, the amount depending on agreement between the three parties. There is no regulation specifying what the amount should be. In Cieceng, the SPP local chapter holds no formal records of the price or the rate of cultivation rights payments paid by the new holders to the previous holders, or the size of fees paid to the local chapter.

⁴³ Actually this kind of technical assistance was provided not specifically to the Cieceng community, it was implemented in many other SPP local chapters in Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis as well.

interests as *bandar*, to compete with cooperative units, to eventually gain control of local farming activities, particularly in the distribution of harvested produce.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

SPP which was founded two years after the fall of Soeharto reflected its organizer-activists' political 'prudence' in perceiving that political changes taking place in the period of transition to democracy at the time, could also be related to a possible revival of a repressive regime. However, its main leaders, Agustiana, to whom many activists in Garut, Tasikmalaya and Ciamis 'henpecked' about his direction was very careful to perceive the post-1998 political changes. He wouldn't let the political achievements of many years of rural community organizing in these three districts during the New Order period, be swept aside by uncertain political changes just after the fall of Soeharto. He wouldn't let SPP be used by social movement activists who became pragmatic politicians at that time (interview with General Secretary of SPP, Tasikmalaya 7 January 2007 [No.: P-01]). He waited until after the first democratic national election in 1999 at which time many activists had jumped into electoral politics and had tried to use their influence gained during pre-*reformasi* rural organizing activities to gain votes.

On one hand, rural organizers of Tasikmalaya, Garut and Ciamis in Agustiana's political circle wanted to keep SPP, founded in part because of their reflections on the failure of SPJB as a political vehicle for poor peasants, the rural landless and the near-to-landless, to access land to improve their livelihoods. On the other hand, these activists wanted to maintain the peasants' need for political support and legal protection in order to maintain control of State Land. This is not easy to do because they were dealing with reality of peasants' 'limitation' on their involvement in the movement. SPP peasants have their own calculation about their involvement in the movement organization. If their main material interest to gain control on land was fulfilled, or they felt

'quite safe', peasants tended to gradually withdraw from the movement. This increased when the organization did not succeed in developing its capacity to maintain its members' new interest in improvement of production and in other economic activities in the post land occupation period.

Rural-urban coalitions, as reflected in various movement organizations, such as local peasant's organizations and national coalitions of peasant movements for agrarian reform, which emerged from the 80s until now, were developed and maintained with different ways of organizing, because activists can maintain the process of exchange of interests with peasant groups. Through this coalition, the ideological and political interests of the activists were exchanged for the material interests of the peasants for land, better livelihoods or improved rural infrastructure. The peasants will follow the activists' direction as long as their interests are articulated, but their enthusiastic involvement in the movement will be reduced once they get what they struggled for. Activists will lose their grassroots bases if they cannot discover new formulation of common struggle agendas that can bind again the different interests between them and the peasants.