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REGIONALISM AND DUTCH POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BESUKI RESIDENCY, 1947-1949

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Abstract
This study discusses the relationship between a series of local events that occurred in the Besuki Residency and the establishment of the State of East Java, which threatened Indonesia's independence. The series of events around the Besuki Residency that led to the formation of the State of East Java had the political potential to endanger the unity of the Republic of Indonesia during the war of independence. This study begins with findings from *Indische Courant* regarding collaboration between Dutch military officials and several counter-revolutionary local political elites in forming the State of East Java. This study re-examines the factual situation before and after the formation of the State of East Java by analyzing historical sources from a regionalist perspective. This research uses historical research methods including heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography. This research concludes that the formation of the State of East Java was the result of not only the intense Dutch political repression in East Java, but also the growth of local nationalism stemming from the uncertainty experienced by residents amid political and economic instability.

Keywords: Besuki Residency, counter-revolutionary, regionalism, the State of East Java

Introduction

This research was inspired by a collaborative book by Bambang Purwanto and his colleagues titled *Revolutionary Worlds: Local Perspectives and Dynamics During the Indonesian Independence War, 1945-1949* (Purwanto et al., 2023). Gerry van Klinken and Maarten van der Bent, two of the authors, state that East Java was an arena of power struggle between the Dutch Military Government and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia (van Klinken & van der Bent, 2023). While East Java was indeed an arena of power struggle, a Dutch newspaper *Indische Courant* reported on the collaboration between counter-revolutionary local political elites in East Java and the Dutch Military Government in the process of establishing the State of East Java ("Djawa Timoer negara", 1948).

The historiography of the Indonesian Revolution, particularly regarding counter-revolutionary forces, has rarely been studied. Nevertheless, some historians such as David Charles Anderson and Hersri Setiawan have examined this historiography, focusing on the 1948 Madiun PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*

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or Indonesian Communist Party) uprising. Anderson (2003) notes that the 1948 PKI Madiun incident serves as an example of a civil war that occurred during Indonesia's War of Independence, stemming from tensions over the restructuring and rationalization of the military, a historical process in which no win-win solution was found between the FDR-PKI and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. Meanwhile, Setiawan interprets the 1948 Madiun PKI incident from the perspective of Soemarsono, who was known as the operational commander during the incident. Soemarsono told Setiawan that he was not the one responsible for the bloody incident, but rather his superiors in the Politbiro (Setiawan, 2002). In the context of this study, the counter-revolutionaries had causes for their actions, which created tension due to ideological differences. Nevertheless, every event inevitably involves intellectual actors and the agents who carried it out. Lucas (2004) states that tensions arose when social revolutions happened in local areas, such as when pro-revolutionary groups rejected the existence of local political elites who were politically aligned with the Dutch or Japanese.

Few studies have discussed counter-revolutionary historiography as described above. Even when they do exist, their narratives merely argue that the counter-revolutionary groups were undoubtedly in the wrong, without examining the causes and reasons behind those events from other perspectives. Historical sources on counter-revolutionary groups during the revolution do indeed face limitations that have influenced their development. Therefore, this study seeks to supplement the narrative of counter-revolutionary groups as the implementing agents in the formation of the State of East Java, 1947-1949.

Counter-revolutionary historiography complements the narrative and provides a deeper historical understanding of the Indonesian revolutionary period. Writing the history of the Indonesian Revolution is not merely about recounting heroic events to foster historical patriotism, but rather about creating a historiography that teaches historical values and insights from various perspectives. This counter-revolutionary historiography can offer new perspectives and approaches to the Indonesian Revolution, as well as a reinterpretation of Indonesian nationalism. Purwanto (2006) elaborates that history is a reflection of humanity that brings humanistic values to the context of contemporary society, which should serve as a guiding principle in historical writing to minimize bias and historical patriotism. Therefore, failing to present a narrative because it is deemed unimportant and thereby excluding it from the public's historical consciousness constitutes a violation of humanity.

The study employs several concepts, including regionalism, counter-revolution, and political violence. Kahin (1959) explains that ideological orientation played a significant role in shaping nationalist orientations during the Indonesian Revolution, particularly among local political elites with political influence who sought to retain their positions. Furthermore, Henley (1992) introduces the term "regionalism", also known as local nationalism, which arises from the interests of influential local political elites who shape the political orientation of their respective regions. Regionalism frequently occurred during the Indonesian Revolution. This contradictory nationalist orientation arises from differing perspectives. Roosa and Ratih (2008) explain that the greatest challenge in writing history lies in truth-claims. Consequently, the phenomenon of truth-claims, each considered valid from its own perspective, has led to the emergence

of two opposing groups: those in favor and those opposed. Counter-revolutionaries emerged as a reaction to dissatisfaction with the new government, which represented only the bourgeoisie. Bello (2021) states that the emergence of pro- and counter-revolutionary groups is not only caused by politically motivated implementing agencies and bureaucratic system uncertainties, but also by conflicting perspectives that further exacerbate the relationship between the two. Furthermore, Marcuse (1972) asserts that counter-revolutionary groups emerge as a reaction to the phenomenon of bourgeois democracy, which leads to violence, brutality, uncertainty, and disharmony. This disharmony catalyzed the formation of a federal state, such as the State of East Java during the Indonesian Revolution.

Residents of East Java experienced political violence in pursuit of establishing a federal state. The State of East Java is one example of Dutch political violence in its efforts to recolonize Indonesia. Hoek (2023) explains that writing history about the revolution becomes more complex when political violence is used as a perspective because the results of the analysis connect what happened in the daily lives of the people, as a result of the policies establishing a federal state, with an understanding of the chronology of military and political events. Political violence is defined as acts of violence committed to achieve political goals, in which political interest influences political orientations, leading to differences in nationalism (Wintermute et al., 2025). It is carried out through propaganda stemming from patronage democracy. In the case of East Java, high-ranking Dutch military officials collaborated with several local political elites to disseminate propaganda, ultimately establishing the State of East Java (Tennøy, 2022; Hendrawan et al., 2021). These findings indicate a counter-revolutionary phenomenon among several Bumiputra who collaborated with the Dutch Military Government in forming the State of East Java. Based on these findings, two research questions were raised: (1) Why did the discourse on the State of East Java emerge? (2) How did counter-revolutionary groups play a role in the narrative of the formation of the State of East Java?

Method

This study utilised historical research methods, including heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography (Gottschalk, 1985). The locus of this research is limited to Jember and Bondowoso, as these two regions were part of the Besuki Residency, which played a significant role and was a target of the Dutch. The temporal scope is limited to approximately 1947-1949, a crucial period for Indonesia following the Linggarjati Agreement. One of the provisions in the Linggarjati Agreement led to political intrigues, conflicts, and violence that threatened the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia. Pro- and counter-revolutionary forces were particularly pronounced during this period, making it crucial to examine this era in greater historical depth. Therefore, this research focuses on the interrelated sequence of events involving Dutch political violence and counter-revolutionary actions during the formation of the State of East Java.

The author searched for and found several historical sources related to the counter-revolutionary role in the formation of the State of East Java, mainly Indonesian, Chinese, and Dutch newspapers. Using newspapers from these three groups was intended to obtain valid information about the factual situation that occurred during 1947-1949. In addition, the author used photographs from several

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Dutch newspapers, such as *Nieuwe Courant* and *De Locomotief,* which provided an overview of the attitudes of several Indonesian counter-revolutionary natives in the formation of the State of East Java. These photographs indirectly provided an overview of the factual situation and reasons for the regionalism and political violence in Besuki Residency during the Indonesian revolution.

Source verification was conducted on historical sources consisting of the newspapers *Hariwarta*, *Merdeka*, *Api Rakjat*, *Kedaulatan Rakjat*, *Soeara Kalimantan*, *Hidajat* magazine, the newspaper of *Min Pao*, *Keng Po*, *De Locomotief*, *Het Dagblad*, *Nieuwe Courant*, *De Indische Courant*, *De Vrije Pers*, *Zwolsche Courant*, *Nieuwe Apeldoornse*, and *De Maasbode*. Criticism of these sources has led to the interpretation that the formation of the State of East Java was not solely brought about by the Dutch. There are indications of interference by local political elites who had a political interest in maintaining and obtaining higher positions.

The author interprets the formation of the State of East Java as an important event in the Indonesian Independence War. Local events that occurred around Besuki Residency were a common thread in the formation of the State of East Java, which threatened the Republic of Indonesia's independence. The historical explanation of this research's results is divided into three, namely Regionalism: Tendencies of Local Political Elite in Besuki Residency; Counter-revolutionaries: East Java Conference in Bondowoso; and Actual Situation of the State of East Java in Post-War. Regionalism was one of the local phenomena that the Dutch exploited as a political intrigue to carry out their tactics of political violence.

Result and Discussion

Regionalism: Tendencies of the local political elite in Besuki Residency

Robinson (1972) states that collaboration with influential political elites was crucial to successfully gaining control of the region (Owen & Sutliffe, 1972). The Dutch had previously used such tactics in their attempt to recolonize the Besuki Residency and secure their colonial legacy in the vicinity, such as the 60 plantation factories in Bondowoso and Jember ("*Twee weken na het begin van de politiële actie*", 1947). These recolonization efforts left residents trapped in antagonism. It is not impossible that counter-revolutionary groups emerged in this antagonistic situation, as historical evidence from *Api Rakjat* revealed that Mr. Liana and his gang in the Besuki area frequently smuggled rice supplies for the Dutch military, but were successfully apprehended by local residents ("*Komplotan kaki tangan Nica dibekoek batang lehernja*", 1946). This smuggling serves as historical evidence, proving that counter-revolutionaries were a reality during the Indonesian Revolution.

Nevertheless, the antithesis to these counter-revolutionaries also existed as an integral part of the anatomy of the Indonesian Revolution, as seen in Bondowoso and Jember, two regions within the Besuki Residency that continued to support Indonesian independence. The Dutch Military Government once isolated Jember and Bondowoso in an effort to paralyze their economic and political activities. Several Dutch newspapers reported that Dutch troops strictly guarded the Jember border area, as evidenced by the inevitable fighting on the Jember-Lumajang border after Dutch troops discovered a secret Indonesian military base ("*Nog steeds inbreuken der TNI op staken der vijandelijkheden*",

1947; "*Zuiveringsacties op Java*", 1947). In addition, the movement of local residents in and out of the area was restricted by a mandatory reporting requirement to the Dutch Military Government, with a maximum permit duration of two days ("*Djawa Timur bertempur*", 1948).

The security of Jember and Bondowoso against extremist groups was cited as the reason, but Dutch political violence as a historical reality cannot be denied. A series of factors, such as rising unemployment, famine, and rampant crime, had shaken local residents' political leanings. This was evident in the case of Surjadi, the Resident of Besuki, who admitted that he could not free his people from economic hardship and did not forbid them from working for the Dutch if they were forced to do so ("Residen Surjadi menetapkan sumpahnja kepada Republik", 1947). In fact, Surjadi resigned from his position as Resident of Besuki on 22 August 1947, and chose instead to sell cincau ice ("*Podjok*", 1947; "*Residen Besuki djualan tjao*", 1947). Nevertheless, Surjadi's actions were undoubtedly based on his socio-political considerations; if he prohibited the residents of his district from working for the Dutch while Bondowoso was experiencing an economic downturn, he had preserved his nationalist loyalty but compromised his sense of regionalism. This is inseparable from what is known as "total political control", in this case the political control by the Dutch Military Government (van Baalen & Ha, 2025).

Meanwhile, in Jember, the Dutch Military Government succeeded in establishing ties with several local bandit groups, with the exception of the Rohami bandit group, which opposed the Dutch presence ("*Weerlegging beweerde wreedheden in Djember*", 13 May 1949, p. 2). Some counter-revolutionary bandits were used to kidnap and kill key pro-revolutionary Indonesian officials. Soedarman, the Regent of Jember, was kidnapped and tortured to death in Sidoarjo on 14 October 1947. Afterward, the Dutch Military Government replaced him with Roekmoroto, who was loyal to the Dutch ("*Serba-serbi dari daerah Besoeki*", 1947; "*Onrust en onzekerheid onder de bestuurs-ambtenaren*", 1947). This was not merely structured military violence, but political violence aimed at severing the chain of command to eliminate legitimate leaders and crush the spirit of popular resistance. Indeed, other key officials in the Jember administration were also among the victims. Among them were Safioedin Soerjoadidarmo, commissioner of the PNI (*Partai Nasional Indonesia* or Indonesian National Party) in East Java; Latief Pane, Chief Judge of the District Court and Chairman of the Jember Socialist Party; Nazaroeddin, a judge and executive member of the Jember Masyumi; Siahaan, a high school principal and Chairman of the Jember PBI (*Partai Buruh Indonesia* or Indonesian Labor Party); Barabar, Head of the Besuki BIN (*Badan Intelijen Negara* or State Intellijence Agency) and member of the Executive Board of the Residency Representative Council ("*Anggota2 Badan Executief Djember ditangkap*", 1947). In fact, the Chairman of Masyumi Jember failed to go into hiding because of these counter-revolutionaries ("*Optreden tegen benden enz.*", 1947; "*Nederlands actie communique*", 1947). The Dutch political violence suppressed the movement and drove the independence fighters back into the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. The fact that pro-revolutionary Indonesian fighters were evacuated from Dutch's territory to the territory of the Republic of Indonesia by train serves as historical evidence of the republican fighters' retreat ("*Evacuatie zal Zoveel*

Mogelijk per Spoor Plaats Hebben", 1948). Approximately 690 members of the TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia or Indonesian National Army) in Jember were gathered in one location with other Indonesian soldiers, bringing a total 2.555 soldiers evacuated to the territory of the Republic of Indonesia in West Java ("*Dari Oosthoek*", 1948). The isolation and reduction in the number of these guerrilla fighters made it easier for the Dutch to organize the East Java Conference.

Counter-revolutionaries: East Java Conference in Bondowoso

The Dutch Military Government chose Bondowoso as the venue for the East Java Conference in November 1948 after successfully overthrowing the Resident of Besuki ("*Konperensi Djawa Timur tidak perlu membentuk negara*", 1948). Some counter-revolutionaries certainly supported this conference. Evidence of this is that the *Persatoean Rakjat Djawa Timoer* rejected East Java's status as part of the Republic of Indonesia and urged the immediate implementation of the Linggarjati Agreement so that East Java could exercise sovereign rights as a federal state ("*PRDT seint aan Veiligheidsraad*", 1947). Regarding this event, Reid (1981) states that the terms "social revolution" and "bourgeois revolution" are not definitions based on historical facts. He therefore suggested the term "Indonesian national revolution" because, historically speaking, it defines Indonesia as a united nation. This shows that the collaboration between the Dutch and certain counter-revolutionary Bumiputra was a more complex issue.

The term "Indonesian national revolution" is not factually incorrect, but it is important to understand that historical facts do not necessarily reflect the reality of the past itself. There were indications that the Dutch, who collaborated with several counter-revolutionaries as part of the historical process of the Indonesian Revolution, disguised themselves as the colonized to defend their political interests. This opened the possibility of a bourgeois revolution, as exemplified by three key figures from East Java who attended the Dutch-initiated Federal Conference.



Figure 1. East Java delegation at the Federal Conference in Bandung, June 1948, from left to right: Raden Soekarno Hardjodipoero, Raden Tumenggung Ario Achmad Saleh, and Notohadyanto
(Source: "*De Federale Conferentie te Bandoeng in beeld*", 1948, p. 3)

Smidt et al.'s (2024) study explains that a policy is not necessarily orchestrated by relevant local officials but by intellectual actors who devise the scenario, while those local officials serve merely as implementing agents. This was evident when Charles van der Plas was impressed by the stance os several counter-revolutionary officials who supported the resolution to establish the State of East Java that he had drafted ("*Naar een Negara Djawa Timoer*", 1948). Meanwhile, Raden Soekarno Hardjodipoero, acting as an implementing agent, led the motion to establish the State of East Java and coordinated efforts to ensure that all members of the *Regentschapsraden* (Regency Council) in East Java adopted the resolution and reported it to the central government ("*Naar en negara Djawa-Timoer*", 1948). In addition, the Surabaya DPR (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat or People's Representative Council), consisting of representatives from the Besuki Residency, the Surabaya Residency, and the Malang Residency, also approved the resolution ("*De Resolutie van Soerabaja*", 1948). It cannot be ruled out that political manipulation occurred due to Dutch intervention in the decision-making process.

It was evident that the motion regarding the formation of the State of East Java met with resistance from several indigenous people during the follow-up session in Banyuwangi, but the opinions of the four who opposed it were ignored ("*Meminta Negara Djawa Timur? Siapa dibelakang lajar?*", 1948). Dradjat, a pro-revolutionary, stated that social unrest could not be used as a justification for seceding from the Republic of Indonesia, and therefore there was no clear reason to establish the State of East Java. Meanwhile, Indrakoesoema, the Mayor of Surabaya, called for the establishment of a dominant state that is politically and economically independent in order to gain the trust of the people of East Java, and emphasized that the formation of this federal state would not undermine the validity of a general solution to the political conflict between the Republic of Indonesia and the Netherlands ("*De Oost-Java Conferentie*", 1948; "*Motie op Oost-Java Conferentie*", 1948). Interestingly, many attendees at the conference agreed with Dradjat, but Charles van der Plas, the representative of the Dutch Military Government, sided more with Indrakoesoema ("*Konperensi Djawa Timur tidak perlu membentuk negara*", 1948). Charles van der Plas's behavior at the follow-up conference in Banyuwangi revealed a Dutch historical mindset carried over from the past. It was a manifestation of old-school political tactics, adapted from paternalism and division, aimed at maintaining Dutch colonial influence in Indonesia. This political tactic was all too evident at the follow-up conference, as Charles van der Plas, in his decision-making, displayed a mindset of colonial superiority by siding with Indrakoesoema, a move that also benefited the Dutch. The formation of this federal state was achieved by exploiting polarization to strengthen the Dutch strategic position. Nevertheless, Daroessoekoer and Djoewito, as fellow Bumiputra, strongly supported the formation of the State of East Java and the parliamentary-style United States of Indonesia ("*Bondowoso, conferentie bouwt aan Staatsbeginselen*", 1948; "*De Oost-Java Conferentie*", 1948).

The East Java Conference took place in Bondowoso in mid-November 1948 with approximately 75 participants, and Achmad Koesoemonegoro, the Regent of Banyuwangi, was elected as Chairman ("*Djawa Timoer negara*", 1948; "*Telor van der Plas mulai menetas di Bondowoso*", 1948). The results of this decision

were forwarded to the Provisional Federal Government to establish East Java's status as a state on 26 November 1948. The East Java Conference was recognized as the provisional representative of the people, and funds were allocated for the administration of the East Java State ("*Federal Belanda mengakui Djawa Timur*", 1948; "*Negara Djawa Timoer*", 1948). Afterward, news of the establishment of the State of East Java became a hot topic of conversation among the people of East Java in their daily lives.

Situation development in East Java post-war of independence war

Palmos (2016) explains that the process of forming the State of East Java was a hot topic of discussion during the War of Independence in Surabaya, because the struggle to establish that federal state ran counter to the struggle for independence in Surabaya, even though the revolutionary fighters had not yet been able to defend the city. News reports alleging that the Regent of Banyuwangi lacked Indonesian nationalism due to his involvement in the process of establishing the State of East Java were widely circulated at the time. These reports originated from several journalists covering the preparations for the East Java Conference in Bondowoso. Interestingly, the then-Governor of East Java defended the Banyuwangi Regent through a rebuttal. Furthermore, the Besuki Regional Defense Council also affirmed that the Banyuwangi Regent remained a nationalist-republican. However, this was somewhat puzzling, as the Banyuwangi Regent was not stationed in Banyuwangi during the preparatory process for the East Java Conference ("*Sangkalan Gubernur Djawa Timur*", 1947).

Nevertheless, the East Java Conference continued to draft the constitutional regulations of the State of East Java. The Constitutional Drafting Committee, whose status was recognized as that of a provisional parliament, deliberated on the Provisional Constitution of the State of East Java. The result was the designation of Surabaya as the provisional capital, and the State of East Java was founded on the principles proposed in a motion by Darso and Soekoer: belief in God, democracy, and nationalism. Interestingly, these three ideological foundations appeared to serve as normative markers of a departure from Pancasila, even though the State of East Java remained substantively part of the Republic of Indonesia. Both Indonesian and Dutch newspapers had reported that this federal state could not separate itself from the Indonesian language, as it was the language of daily interaction ("*Peraturan tata negara sementara*", 1948; "*Bondowoso, conferentie bouwt aan Staatsbeginselen*", 1948).

Furthermore, the subsequent event is historically correlated with the involvement of the Regent of Banyuwangi in the East Java Conference, since both *De Locomotief* and *Hariwarta* had previously reported on the inauguration of Achmad Koesoemonegoro as Governor of the State of East Java after the provisional parliament established the ideological foundation of the State of East Java, as shown figure 2 ("*Djawa Timoer koos Wali Negara: R.T Achmad Kusumonegoro Regent van Banjoewangi*", 1948; "*Parlemen Djawa Timur akan memilih Wali Negara*", 1948).

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De Regent van Banjoewangi, R.T. Achmad Koesoemonegoro is gisteren te Bondowoso gekozen tot Wali Negara van de Negara Djawa Timoer. Bovenstaande foto werd genomen tijdens de conferentie te Bondowoso. Men ziet hier de heer Koesoemonegoro (rechts) in zijn functie van voorzitter van de conferentie bij het overhandigen van de voorzittershamer aan de vice-voorzitter mr. Noto Hadyanto.

Figure 2. Inauguration of Achmad Koesoemonegoro as governor of East Java (Source: "*Djawa Timoer koos Wali Negara: R.T Achmad Kusumonegoro Regent van Banjoewangi*", 1948, p. 1)

The event marking Achmad Koesoemonegoro's inauguration as regent must be viewed from two different perspectives. First, the journalist who reported that Achmad Koesoemonegoro lacked Indonesian nationalism certainly had specific reasons and motives. On the other hand, Achmad Koesoemonegoro undoubtedly had his own reasons and motives for his actions. While they may not have aligned with the principles of Indonesian nationalism, it is possible that he acted out of a sense of regionalism and a desire to protect his people from Dutch political violence. Several Dutch and Indonesian newspapers reported the same historical fact regarding Achmad Koesoemoenegoro's statement during his speech: that he did not actually desire that position, but rather saw this action as a way to take a stand in protecting the people ("*Dr. Beel sprak te Bondowoso*", 1948; "*Achmad Kusumonegoro Wali Negara Djawa Timur*", 1948).

Gonggong (2000) explains that the continued existence of the Indonesian nation-state today is inextricably linked to the structure of the Indonesian government established at the dawn of independence, which was built by separating political power from moral values, giving rise to a centralistic-authoritarian government. Achmad Koesoemonegoro's actions represent a form of local nationalism that does not separate moral values from political power. If Achmad Koesoemonegoro had insisted on upholding his idealism of loyalty to the Republic of Indonesia without considering the moral imperative to protect his citizens, it is entirely possible that all local governments in East Java would have suffered the same fate as the local governments of Bondowoso and Jember. Gan et al.'s (2025) study explains that uncertainties influenced nationalist orientation due to cultural differences and collective identity, thereby strengthening the development of local nationalism to defend the region. If this strengthening of

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local nationalism had aligned with the Dutch goal of recolonization, separatism would literally have been more likely to occur. Thus, Achmad Koesoemonegoro's decision to accept the motion to establish the State of East Java and his willingness to serve as its regent indirectly prevented separatism from taking root. The Dutch's cunning approach to initiating a federal state has had indirect repercussions to this day, as the concept of a federal state is still equated with separatism.

Charles van der Plas initiated the inauguration of Achmad Koesoemonegoro in Bondowoso in early December 1948. However, an anomaly arose in the inauguration was attended by numerous high-ranking Dutch military officials, including Charles van der Plas as Chairman of Recomba East Java, Mayor General Terr as the Dutch Military Commander in Java, Mayor General Baay as the Dutch Military Commander of East Java, and Achmad Koesoemonegoro as the Governor of East Java ("*Malem berkenalan dengen Wali Negara Djawa Timoer*", 1948). In addition, the reception celebrating the Governor of East Java was attended by several guests, such as Dr. Beel, the official representative of the Dutch Government; Prof. Hoessein Djajadiningrat, advisor on internal affairs under Recomba; Dr. Koets; Hamelink, Minister of Finance of East Indonesia; and Kaliamsjah, Governor of East Sumatra ("*Dr. Beel sprak te Bondowoso*", 1948). The inconsistency became even more apparent when Dr. Beel, who certified the inauguration, delivered a speech stating that the successful establishment of the State of East Java was not due to coercion from the Dutch. The Dutch's duplicity was very evident because, indirectly, they were washing their hands of the matter and scapegoating Achmad Koesoemonegoro. Nevertheless, Achmad Koesoemonegoro simply concluded his inauguration by stating that he would visit Bondowoso and Sidoarjo ("*Malem berkenalan dengen Wali Negara Djawa Timoer*", 1948).

The establishment of the State of East Java had an impact on the daily lives of local residents. The government of the State of East Java implemented a policy of importing rice from Siam to meet the needs of local residents, as their purchasing power had temporarily declined due to rising rice prices. It then returned to normal when the price of rice dropped to 85 cents ("*Keadaan beras di Djawa Timoer baek*", 1949). Meanwhile, *ambtenaren* (civil servants) faced structural uncertainty in their employment due to the dual political tendencies between the Dutch and Indonesia. However, the Dutch ultimately replaced pro-revolutionary Bumiputra *ambtenaren* with counter-revolutionary Bumiputra *ambtenaren* ("*Positie ambtenaren Djawa Timoer*", 1949; "*Benoemingen bij de Negara*", 1949). This event was caused by the influence of the vertical hierarchy policy aimed at achieving specific objectives (Wang & Mei, 2024). It is possible that the situation in East Java returned to normal because the Dutch military was preoccupied with civilian affairs. As evidence, Achmad Koesoemonegoro gradually lifted the curfew policy in the East Java region by the end of June 1949, similar to the earlier lifting of the curfew in Jember on 8 July 1948, which was intended to immediately stimulate the local economy ("*Pidato radio Wali Negara Djawa Timur*", 1949; "*Djam malem di Djember dihapoesken*", 1948). Meanwhile, the curfew in the Malang and Surabaya Residencies remained in effect from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. due to ongoing fighting ("*Djam malem di Djawa Timoer*", 1949). The lifting of the curfew indirectly freed the local residents of Jember and

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Bondowoso from the isolation previously imposed by the Dutch Military Government. The author initially believed that the formation of this federal state was based solely on the interests of the local political elite, but this assumption changed after discovering the photograph in Figure 3.


NIEUWE COURANT

HERDENKING 17 AUGUSTUS: Z. E. de Wali Negara van Djawa Timoer tijdens zijn toespraak.

Figure 3. The 17th August celebration in the State of East Java
(Source: "*17 Augustus herdenking*", 1949, p. 2)

Several Chinese and Dutch newspapers reported the August 17 celebrations in the State of East Java. *Keng Po* reported that the Parliament of the State of East Java had previously held a meeting on 9 August 1949 to discuss the August 17 celebrations. A motion passed at that meeting designated August 17 as National Day, the Red and White flag as the flag of the State of East Java, and "Indonesia Raya" as the national anthem of the State of East Java. The motion was accepted and approved by the assembly, and the parliament even requested that Achmad Koesoemonegoro appropriately celebrate August 17 and send representatives to the Round Table Conference ("*Negara Djawa Timur aken rajaken 17 Augustus*", 10 August 1949, p. 2). In addition, *Nieuwe Courant* reported on the August 17 celebration at Achmad Koesoemonegoro's residence on 17 August 1949. Achmad Koesoemonegoro opened his speech by expressing gratitude for the establishment of the State of East Java and expressing the hope that the Roem-Royen Agreement would serve as the best resolution for the Republic of Indonesia. During his speech, the invited guests were presented with a symbolic display: the Red and White flag on the left and the Dutch flag on the right. The placement of these two flags signified the Governor of East Java's support for the establishment of the United States of Indonesia ("*17 Augustus herdenking*", 19492).

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Conclusion

The discourse on the "State of East Java" emerged as a tool for the local political elite to survive and provide for their people after the Dutch Military Government took control of the Besuki Residency area in August 1947. The situation in East Java, rife with political intrigues orchestrated by the Dutch Military Government, led to economic decline and increasing polarization. Meanwhile, Jember and Bondowoso were caught in uncertainty and social chaos due to the isolation and exploitation of polarization by the Dutch. This social chaos fostered local nationalism as a means of survival against Dutch political violence. Local political elites utilized regionalism to gain the Dutch's trust in order to maintain the continuity of daily life. The Dutch Military Government overlooked one thing at the time regarding its outdated strategy of exploiting polarization. This is because the historical process of political violence was not aligned with the goal of recolonizing and maintaining its influence in Indonesia. Rather, this emotional ambition was exploited by the local political elite as local nationalism grew. The label "counter-revolutionary" was used as a survival tactic against Dutch political violence during the war. Conversely, the Dutch also felt they had successfully collaborated with local political elites in carrying out their recolonization through the formation of a federal state. Interestingly, although the war has ended and Indonesia's independence is now recognized, the historical process of establishing a federal state in the past has left an intellectual heritage for current and future generations. The discourse on a federal state is equated with separatism.

The author recognizes that the historiography, methodology, depth of source materials, and analysis of this study can still be improved. Therefore, it is hoped that this study can serve as a foundation for further research on counter-revolutionary historiography, particularly during the Indonesian Revolution, as this period is rarely studied. Finally, the author urges readers not to view history from only one perspective, as this will only foster hatred toward the past itself and serve as a trigger for the outbreak of war in the present. Instead, history needs to be viewed from two perspectives to uncover the fascinating realities of the past, serving as a valuable intellectual heritage for current and future generations.

Generative AI Statement

The author declares that no Generative AI was used to generate content of this article.

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