

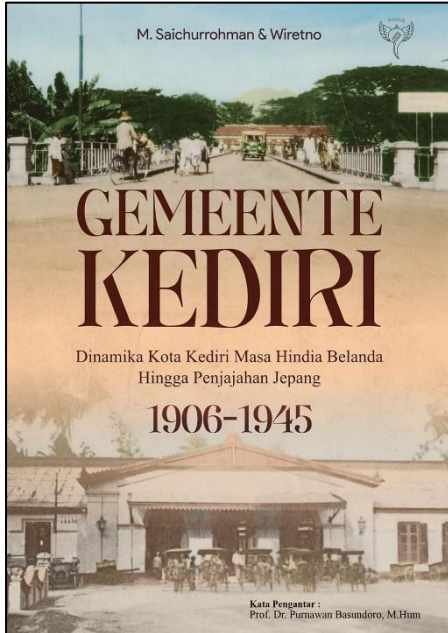
# Sejarah dan Budaya:

## Jurnal Sejarah, Budaya, dan Pengajarannya

jsb | jurnal  
sejarah dan budaya

Book Review

Journal homepage: <http://journal2.um.ac.id/index.php/sejarah-dan-budaya/index>



Saichurrohman, M. & Wiretno. (2023). *Gemeente Kediri: Dinamika Kota Kediri Masa Hindia Belanda Hingga Penjajahan Jepang 1906-1945*. 362 pages. 18 tables. 13 pictures. ISBN 9786239629090. IDR 120.000.

**Imam Basthomi**

*imambasthomi@mail.ugm.ac.id*

Mahasiswa Magister Sejarah, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta

Both in ancient and colonial history, Kediri is a place that cannot be forgotten in Indonesia's national history. Kediri once served as the center of a great kingdom in East Java, and during the colonial era, it also held a strategic role as an administrative and

economic region. The book by M. Saichurrohman and Wiretno further discusses the history of Kediri during the colonial period. The manuscript of this book originated from two separate undergraduate theses written by the authors while studying in the History Program at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya.

This book consists of eight chapters. Although not explicitly stated in the table of contents, the book divides its discussion into two periods of rule: Dutch colonial administration and Japanese colonial administration (Saichurrohman & Wiretno, 2023). Chapters 1–5 focus on Dutch colonialism, while chapters 6–8 address Japanese colonialism. Initially, Saichurrohman and Wiretno explain the formation of the Gemeente system in the Dutch East Indies. This was marked by the enactment of the Agrarian Law (Agrarische Wet) and the Sugar Law (Suiker Wet) at the end of the 19th century. These laws stimulated economic growth and encouraged the influx of Europeans into the Dutch East Indies.

The growing European population in the Indies eventually led to demands for changes in governance. Initially, colonial administration in the Dutch East Indies was centralized. However, it shifted to a decentralized system in the early 20th century with the enactment of the 1903 law De Wet Houdende Decentralisatie Van Het Bestuur in Nederlands-Indië. From then on, autonomous municipal governments, known as "gemeente," were established. Saichurrohman and Wiretno note that cities granted gemeente status were formerly residency capitals. Kediri itself was officially designated



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) license.

a gemeente on April 1, 1906. This designation can be understood through three reasons: Kediri was the capital of a residency, its European population was increasing, and the residency was home to 20 factories and 128 plantation companies.

The book explains that although Kediri received gemeente status, governance was not directly held by the municipal government. At that time, administration was still overseen by an assistant resident. Kediri only gained full autonomous status after being elevated to Stadgemeente in 1928, led by a burgemeester (mayor). The Stadgemeente Kediri had a representative council and several administrative subdivisions. In general, its finances were derived from central government funds, tax revenues, and other income generated from managing government enterprises.

As an autonomous city, Kediri paid attention to the development of public facilities. The municipal government allocated funds for education by building schools. It also addressed health issues, particularly the spread of plague, malaria, and cholera. In the economic sector, the government-built markets and improved and regulated existing market systems. Markets were supported by the construction of shopping districts, most of which were run by Chinese and European merchants. Industrial development was also notable, with many sugar, oil, and tanning factories established. To support these industries, the government built numerous roads for tram and bus transportation.

In reality, the policies in Kediri only provided comfort for Europeans. Segregation occurred in all aspects, marginalizing the indigenous population (especially those outside the aristocracy). The comfort of Europeans ended when Japan took control of the Dutch East Indies, including Kediri. The Japanese changed administrative terminology into Japanese, reactivated the residency system, and seized Dutch offices and buildings, turning them into bases for defense, weapons storage, and logistics.

Saichurrohman and Wiretno describe the Japanese occupation as a time of crisis and uncertainty. The Japanese military regime acted arbitrarily and was considered harsher than Dutch colonial rule. Although Japan introduced reforms in urban planning and administration, these were solely for Japan's interests in the Pacific War. Many civilians were forced to work in construction and agriculture for Japan's needs. As in other regions, Japan also organized military movements in Kediri involving students, adults, and women. The book successfully shows that modernity and suffering were two opposing realities that coexisted under colonial rule. Both the Dutch and the Japanese inflicted wounds and hardship on the people of the Indies. Nevertheless, these experiences of colonization fostered nationalism and unity among the people of Kediri.

Urban history can be defined as the study of the origins, physical evolution, and socio-political dynamics of urban settlements over time (Basundoro, 2012). The presence of this book can serve as a foundation for further research on Kediri's history from various perspectives, including politics, economy, and culture. However, several crucial aspects are missing from the book. First, methodology. The book's preface mentions that it originated from two theses combined into one, but unfortunately, it does not explain the distinction between the book and the theses. The sequence of historical methods is also not presented, even though this is important for understanding how research was

conducted systematically, from source collection and data verification to interpretation and historical writing. Without such an explanation, readers will struggle to grasp the methodological foundation used and will be unable to assess the validity of the study.

Second, there is a lack of explanation about Kediri in ancient or pre-colonial times. While it is true that the book focuses on the period 1906–1945, to gain a comprehensive understanding of Kediri’s formation as a city, it would be helpful to provide a general overview of Kediri before it was designated a *gemeente*. Such an account would enable readers to see the continuity of Kediri’s history, from its role as a classical Javanese kingdom to its significance in the colonial economic network, and ultimately to its development into a modern city with its own administrative structure.

#### **DAFTAR RUJUKAN**

Basundoro, P. (2012). *Pengantar sejarah kota*. Ombak.

Saichurrohman, M., & Wiretno. (2023). *Gemeente Kediri: Dinamika Kota Kediri masa Hindia Belanda hingga Penjajahan Jepang 1906—1945*. PASAK.