

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's Intellectual Contribution to the Development of Modern Historiography in Indonesia (1911-1935)

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Abstract

This article examines Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's intellectual contribution to the development of modern historiography in Indonesia between 1911 and 1935. It focuses on the formation of his thought, especially the historical methods that emerged through his works and that contributed to Indonesian historical scholarship. Using historical method—heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography—this study analyzes Hoesein's writings, scholarly speeches, and relevant secondary literature. The main primary sources include Hoesein's works from 1911 to 1935, especially *Critische Beschouwing van de Sadjarah Banten*. The study shows that Hoesein's thought was shaped by social and intellectual factors, including the influence of Snouck Hurgronje and the Western orientalist tradition. However, Hoesein did not merely reproduce orientalist discourse; as a colonial subject, he reinterpreted historical knowledge through a local perspective. His works therefore mark an important moment in the emergence of modern Indonesian historiography based on source criticism, philological rigor, and historical method.

Keywords

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat; Indonesian historiography; intellectual history; modern historiography; source criticism

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Introduction

The emergence of colonialism generated collective responses among Indigenous communities in the Dutch East Indies, shaped by the spirit of resisting colonial domination. Before the twentieth century, primordial sentiments influenced Indigenous social movements that were closely connected to economic, social, cultural, and political tensions and that eventually culminated in local resistance. At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the struggle against colonialism entered a new phase through the involvement of intellectual groups. A decisive moment was the establishment of Boedi Oetomo in 1908. This organization was driven by Western-educated intellectual elites and functioned as a forum for articulating critical attitudes toward the colonial system of oppression ([Shah Jahan, 2024](#)). The emergence of modern organizations was also closely related to the influence of the Ethical Policy. This program, presented by the Dutch colonial government as a form of moral responsibility, focused on education, irrigation, and transmigration. In education, the Dutch colonial government established schools and opened opportunities for Western-style schooling. Indirectly, these policies contributed to the formation of a new awareness of nationalism and national consciousness ([Wahyuni & Mursal, 2022](#)).

The colonial government embedded its interests in the Dutch East Indies while legitimizing its power through Eurocentric historical writing. In this form of historiography, history served colonial interests and positioned European perspectives at the center, while Indigenous people were represented as passive objects rather than historical actors. Indonesian historiography therefore underwent a long transformation through three phases: traditional historiography, colonial historiography, and modern historiography. Amid European domination in historical writing, Hoesein Djadjaningrat emerged as an intellectual elite who critically examined the history of his own people. As an intellectual from Serang, Banten, Hoesein grew within a local cultural environment ([Ar Razy, 2025](#)). Yet, within the context of colonial domination and Western education, a relationship of power was also visible between Hoesein and colonial officials. In colonial discourse, such political interests influenced Hoesein Djadjaningrat's way of thinking ([Imadudin, 2015](#)). As the son of a Banten menak, Hoesein had relatively easy access to education. He first learned Dutch with Ruselar in Menes, then entered the Europeesche Lagere School (ELS) in Serang, and later continued his studies at Kok en Van Diggelen in Batavia.

His period of education in the Netherlands became a crucial moment in the formation of his intellectual outlook and scholarly method. This formation was shaped by social factors within the academic environment, especially the influence of Snouck Hurgronje, a controversial orientalist ([Pijper, 1961](#)). In the context of colonial politics, Achmad Djadjaningrat and Hoesein Djadjaningrat have even been viewed as products of the success of Hurgronje's association policy ([Imadudin, 2015](#)), which aimed to introduce Western culture through education modeled on the Dutch system ([Karels, 2008](#)). Through this education, Hoesein employed Western scholarly traditions to write,

interpret, and analyze local sources. This is clearly visible in his dissertation, “*Critische Beschouwing van de Sadjarah Banten*” (1913), through which he graduated cum laude and became the first doctoral graduate from the Dutch East Indies in the field of Nusantara languages and literature ([Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1993](#)). In this work, Hoesein demonstrated the use of rigorous source criticism and philological methods in reading the *Sadjarah Banten* historically. Although his academic background was not formally in the discipline of history, Hoesein devoted serious attention to historical and cultural questions.

The scholarly works produced within this Western academic framework were very likely influenced by his promoter, Hurgronje. Hurgronje, known as an orientalist, was highly active in writing scholarly studies on Eastern cultures. The method regarded as “orientalist” was rooted in the study of sources or texts and in direct research among Eastern societies as its point of reference. This orientalist paradigm has also been associated with Hoesein Djadjadiningrat, who has often been described as an “Oriental from the East,” namely an Indigenous intellectual who tended to employ Western scholarly frameworks ([Ar Razy et al., 2022](#)).

In the early twentieth century, Indigenous people who pursued Western education were shaped by three aspects: the assimilation of colonial culture, the reinterpretation of colonial society, and the conflictual phase of colonization. In other words, the main objective of colonization was to transform the culture and landscape of the colony according to colonial perspectives. The concepts of ambivalence and mimicry introduced by Bhabha help describe Hoesein’s ambiguous position as a colonial intellectual: he was neither fully subject to colonial epistemology nor entirely autonomous from it. These concepts therefore serve as an interpretive framework for understanding Hoesein’s relationship with colonial structures of knowledge. Hoesein Djadjadiningrat thus developed a particular articulation as an Eastern intellectual who used the language and epistemic codes of colonial power ([Ar Razy, 2025](#)).

This background provides the basis for examining Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s thought in the field of historical scholarship by tracing his intellectual tradition. Sartono Kartodirjo ([1982:10](#)) argues that history must be reviewed from the standpoint of historical thought, because the direction and tendency of thinking about the past reveal patterns of development ([Kartodirjo, 1982](#)). Accordingly, this article addresses the following research questions: (1) What was the background of Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s thought? (2) What were the main tendencies and themes in Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s works? (3) How did Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s thought develop between 1911 and 1935? and (4) What was Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s methodological contribution to Indonesian historiography?

Method

Historical reconstruction is a staged process. Historical method is therefore a technique for reconstructing past events through four stages of work: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. In this study, historical method is used to

analyze primary and secondary sources through an intellectual history approach in order to examine Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's methodological thought and his contribution to the development of modern historiography between 1911 and 1935.

Heuristics is the initial stage of research after the topic and title have been determined. The process of collecting relevant sources and historical evidence makes it possible to reconstruct how events occurred in the past. In this study, heuristics involved searching for and collecting sources and facts related to Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's intellectual contribution to the development of modern historiography in Indonesia from 1911 to 1935. The primary sources examined include *Critisch overzicht van de in Maleische Werken vervatte Gegevens over de geschiedenis van Het Soeltanaat van Atjeh* (1911), *Critische Beschouwing van den Sejarah Banten* (1913), *Iets Over Banten en de Bantener* (1921), *De Namen Prangwadono En Mangkoenagoro* (1924), Prof. Dr. R.A Hoesein – *Openingsrede op het Congres van het Java-Instiut 1924*, *De Mohamedaansche Wet En Het Geestesleven Der Indoneschie Mohammedanen* (1925), Prof. Dr. R.A Hoesein – *Openingsrede op het Congres van het Java-Instiut, gehouden te Soerabaja 23–27 September 1926*, *Wetgelerd Oordeel Over De Javaansche Ganagini-Adat*, Prof. Dr. R.A Hoesein – *Openingsrede op het Congres van het Java-Instiut 1929*, *De Magische achtergrond van de Maleische pantone* (1933), and *Atjeh-Nederlandsch Wordenboek* (1934). Secondary sources concerning Hoesein Djadjadiningrat remain limited, but include G. F. Pijper's "Professor Dr. Pangeran Ario Hoesein Djadjadiningrat: 8 December 1886–12 November 1960" (1961), Achmad Djadjadiningrat's *Kenang-kenangan Pangeran Aria Achmad Djadjadiningrat*, Sutopo Sutanto's *Prof. Dr. Husen Jayadiningrat: Hasil Karya dan Pengabdiannya*, Muhammad Refi Omar Ar-Razy's *Visi Orientalisme Hoesein Djadjadiningrat terhadap Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Pemajuan Kebudayaan 1911–1960* (2023), and Agus Nuralim's *Historiografi Banten dalam Pandangan Hoesein Djadjadiningrat* (2019).

Source verification was conducted to obtain factual data and assess source validity. Source criticism consists of two stages: external criticism and internal criticism. External criticism emphasizes the physical aspects of historical sources, both written materials and artifacts. Internal criticism focuses on the reliability and credibility of source content. In this study, the collected primary sources were verified by examining their printed characteristics and years of publication. Their contents were also compared with secondary sources in order to process and interpret the material.

In historical writing, interpretation aims to present a reflective account based on the research problem. In this study, source data concerning Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's thought are reconstructed to produce a coherent account of his intellectual formation and methodological orientation.

Historiography refers to the method of writing, presenting, or producing the results of historical research. This process requires historical facts to be written chronologically or diachronically and systematically so that the resulting text can function as historical scholarship. The sources obtained from the research process are then presented in the form of historical writing under the title "Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's

Intellectual Contribution to the Development of Modern Historiography in Indonesia (1911–1935).”

Results and Discussion

The Background of Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s Thought

Before the arrival of Western powers in the Dutch East Indies, village communities had already known forms of education through both family and local environments. Parents played an important role in shaping the character of their children (Afandi et al., 2020). Hoesein Djadjadiningrat was known as a professor of history and Islamic studies who had genealogical ties to the Banten Sultanate. According to his genealogy, he descended from Pangeran Raden Wirasoeta, the son of Puoen Cibeo, who requested permission to serve Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Wirasoeta was later appointed as a prince and married to the Sultan’s daughter.

Hoesein was born on 8 December 1886 in Kramatwatu, Serang. His father was R. Bagus Djadjawinata, who served as Wedana of Kramatwatu and Regent of Serang, while his mother was Ratu Salehah. Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s father was a devout Muslim, and Hoesein was therefore accustomed to Qur’anic recitation from an early age. According to Achmad Djadjadiningrat, Hoesein’s family received intensive Islamic education. For this reason, Hoesein witnessed the development of Islam in Banten from childhood to adulthood (Ar Razy et al., 2023). His parents also upheld the history of the Sultanate. Hoesein had become familiar with the *Sadjarah Banten* because his mother used stories from the chronicle in educating her children; this chronicle later became a reference in the preparation of Hoesein’s dissertation ([Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1993](#)).

In addition, the lineage of R. Bagus Djadjawinata, which was connected to Badui origins, indicates that the family continued to practice customary traditions. Values transmitted from generation to generation constitute a crystallization of thought within paradigms of thinking and action that correspond to present needs ([Wibowo et al., 2021](#)). Hoesein’s family believed that success for Javanese people with noble aspirations required knowledge of various fields, including Western civilization and thought. Learning Dutch was therefore regarded as a key that could open the door to knowledge, thought, and civilization. It is not surprising that Hoesein, often called Atje, learned Dutch before entering a Western school. His intelligence became apparent while he studied with Ruselar, a police commander in Menes who held an assistant-teacher diploma (*hoofd acte*) ([Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1993](#)).

For formal schooling, Hoesein requested permission to study at *Kok en van Diggelen* in Batavia. During his stay in the *Kok en van Diggelen* boarding house, he became acquainted with Snouck Hurgronje. Hurgronje’s acquaintance with R. Djadjawinata influenced Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s intellectual development. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Snouck was an orientalist, a scholar of Islamic anthropology, a scientist, an adviser and planner for the Dutch government, and an educator of Indigenous elites. His profession was controversial and was considered

hypocritical by some observers because he was seen as involved in colonial espionage, including his conversion to Islam, his successful entry into Mecca, his marriage to a Sundanese woman, and his involvement in the Aceh War ([Rohmana, 2024](#)).

Snouck was in a powerful position and expected his students to succeed, in part to demonstrate that Indigenous youths were as capable as Dutch youths in higher education ([Pijper, 1961](#)). When Hoesein Djadjadiningrat became a student in Leiden, his intellectual formation was influenced by the social environment and the knowledge contributed by prominent lecturers such as Ch. A. van Ophuysen, J. C. G. Jonker, A. W. Nieuwenhuis, Vreede, and Snouck Hurgronje ([Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1993](#)). Among these scholars, however, Hurgronje exerted the strongest influence on him, and the scientific guidance Hoesein received from his promoter was accompanied by a kind of paternal affection ([Pijper, 1961](#)). In reconstructing Hoesein's works, the influence of his environment is therefore significant. One important element was the positivist outlook that developed in the West and shaped Hoesein's thought ([Ar Razy, et al., 2022](#)).

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's Intellectual Ideas

Hoesein's thinking in the field of historical method was influenced by socio-intellectual factors produced through interaction with his academic environment and with colonial political power relations. Historiography, however, transforms in accordance with its time. In Indonesia, the methodological concept of historiography has continued to change and develop as a result of developments in history and in knowledge more broadly. New forms of thought encouraged new approaches and generated new forms of historical writing ([Husna, 2024](#)). Throughout the development of historiography in Indonesia, historical writing has often been connected to political authority. Traditional historiography emphasized magical and mythical elements used to legitimize royal power as divine descent. Colonial historiography was produced extensively to serve the needs of colonial officials, while the central role of Europeans was transmitted through symbolic representations of Western superiority over the East. Modern historiography, by contrast, was marked by the strengthening of nationalist movements in the early twentieth century and by the writing of history from an Indonesia-centric perspective.

As a pioneer of modern historiography in Indonesia, Hoesein Djadjadiningrat emphasized source criticism and scientific method. His ideas were formed through the encounter between Western scholarly traditions and Indigenous historical consciousness. Hoesein's success in critically examining SB (Sadjarah Banten) opened a new path in historical studies. Intellectual thought must always be situated within time and within its actual relationship to what came before and after it; thought is dynamic and responds to concrete problems and changing circumstances (Levine, 2005). The influence of the intellectual environment in which Hoesein studied produced works that represented a complex colonial discourse. Orientalism in relation to Hoesein can be seen in his position as an Eastern thinker who adopted Western ideas as tools for reflecting on Islam ([Ar Razy, 2025](#)). Hoesein Djadjadiningrat regarded babad as historical sources with value. In his view, the method used by babad writers remained largely unchanged up to the generation

of Ranggawarsita. First, chronological numbers were arranged imaginatively and placed alongside kingdoms and lists of kings. Then stories drawn from Javanese written traditions and oral traditions were inserted, producing broad forms of historical literature ([Ekajati, 2000](#)).

In the classic essay “The Burden of History” (1965), Hayden White argued that modernist change in historiography was possible if historians sought to make their works relevant to contemporary readers ([Mali, 2003](#)). In this sense, historiography is not merely a record of the past, but an intellectual reconstruction that develops within scholarly traditions and socio-political contexts. Hoesein’s methodological thought began when he studied in the Netherlands and encountered a strong discourse of modern historiography, especially the positivist understanding that had developed in the West ([Ar Razy et al., 2022](#)). In 1913, his monumental dissertation, *Critische Beschouwing van Sadjarah Banten*, received the distinction of cum laude. According to E. B. Kielstra, an honorary doctor, Hoesein’s dissertation demonstrated breadth of literature, intelligence in comparison and classification, and high scholarly value. It showed the capacity of an Indigenous person from the Dutch East Indies within the European scholarly world; if anyone still doubted Indigenous intellectual ability, the dissertation itself could serve as evidence. H. Kern, an eighty-year-old professor and leading Dutch philologist, also praised Hoesein’s work in the monthly magazine *De Gids*. Kern was impressed by Hoesein’s skill in writing the history of Banten and hoped that further works would follow ([Burhanudin, 2023](#)).

Although many praised the scholarly character of Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s work in 1913, criticism from other historians also appeared. A key issue in examining Hoesein’s thought is the relationship between historical method and historical explanation. Hoesein followed the method of Snouck Hurgronje, his promoter, in completing his scholarly works. Snouck relied on the study of Eastern texts and direct observation of the societies from which those texts originated. During his assignment in Aceh, for instance, Hurgronje studied the Acehnese language and interviewed a number of figures, some of whom had cooperated with and surrendered to the Dutch government. His method was therefore based on an ethnological approach intended to understand Acehnese society, social structure, and local government ([Fahmi, 2021](#)). In this context, Hoesein was oriented toward textual criticism and the rigorous use of auxiliary historical sciences and was later called the “Father of Indonesian Historical Research Methodology”. Source criticism involving philological expertise was especially necessary. A deep understanding of the cultural background of the society that produced historical literature was therefore required. Such knowledge made it possible to clarify facts through comparison with external sources such as Dutch and Chinese records ([Abdullah, 2024](#); [Yusuf, 1998](#)). In evaluating foreign records, it is also important to understand Islamic terminology in Indonesia ([Djadjadingrat, 2007](#)).

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s works are distinctive because they rely on philological and orientalist approaches. Sartono Kartodirjo positioned Hoesein’s dissertation as a milestone in modern historiography. Its most important contribution lay in source

criticism, both external and internal, and in the cultural analysis of traditional historiography ([Kartodirjo, 1982](#)). Historical source criticism had to confront traditional historiography, which often contained tales and mythological elements; therefore, strong analysis was needed to select facts that could be considered reliable (Yusuf, 1988).

The Dynamics of Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's Thought in Historical Scholarship

Historiography in Indonesia has continued to develop dynamically in every period. This is closely related to each era's need to write its own history, producing diverse writings about Indonesian society. Studies of historiographical patterns among historians reveal the conceptual frameworks and historical theories used by their authors. The effect is the refinement of historical method for further reconstructing the past. In his practice of historical method, Hoesein Djadjadiningrat maintained a relationship with Snouck Hurgronje within the sphere of Dutch power relations. As a teacher, Hurgronje directed Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's education carefully. Some scholars have even argued that Hoesein Djadjadiningrat was the pupil who demonstrated Hurgronje's success in achieving his mission, and that these political interests shaped Hoesein's way of thinking ([Imadudin, 2015](#)). Here, overlapping zones and shifting domains of difference began to emerge, where intersubjective, experiential, and collective interests of community, as well as cultural values concerning the formation of the subject, were negotiated ([Bhabha, 2003](#)).

On this basis, Hoesein became known as an Oriental from the East who worked within the Western framework he had acquired. This orientalist mode of thought centered its objects of study on Western scholarly traditions and used them to explain its subjects ([Ar Razy et al., 2023](#)). In this context, Hoesein's scholarly works represented a colonial discourse that is not easily classified within a simple dichotomy of domination or resistance ([Laffan, 2003](#)). Interestingly, Hoesein's works can be used to identify the development of colonial intellectual identity at the intersection of Western and Eastern cultural frameworks. This perspective positions Hoesein as a colonial subject who internalized orientalist discourse while still relying on a local viewpoint to reinterpret that discourse ([Mustofa et al., 2023](#)). When Hoesein's historical studies are considered, a question arises: was the historical interpretation he used to investigate knowledge of the past shaped by other influences? If so, this ambivalent position gave him access to Western knowledge.

From a postcolonial perspective, Hoesein's historical method can be understood through mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity. According to Homi K. Bhabha, colonial mimicry may be understood as the colonial desire to form colonized subjects who are "like" the colonizer but never entirely the same. This condition produces slippage, difference, and excess. In its ambivalent position, mimicry creates a resemblance that appears to demonstrate the success of colonialism in educating and modernizing an Indigenous person who is oriented toward Westernization and beneficial to colonial power ([Ar Razy, 2025](#)). As a strategy of power, the concept functions as an instrument of reform, including through bureaucracy, language, and education, which sought to

assimilate colonized societies into the colonial system. This process made colonial power appear rational because Indigenous people seemed to “develop” according to standards defined by the colonizer ([Bhabha, 2003](#)).

By pursuing education in the Netherlands, Hoesein Djadjadiningrat employed European scientific methods, especially source criticism and philological analysis. Works such as *Critisch overzicht van de in Maleische Werken vervatte Gegevens over de geschiedenis van Het Soeltanaat van Atjeh* (1911) and *Critische Beschouwing van den Sejarah Banten* (1913) demonstrate methodological instruments derived from European academic tradition while focusing their objects of study on local sources. Hoesein’s hybridity is visible here: he used Western scientific methods to interpret local sources. Thus, mimicry and ambivalence were not only instruments of control, but also contained the possibility of resistance. Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s historical method itself emerged from the intersection between Western scholarly traditions and a deep engagement with local sources.

Sartono Kartodirjo commented on the use of traditional historiography in historical writing and noted that Hoesein was the first Indigenous scholar recorded as using the principles of historical criticism, namely external and internal criticism, as well as the analysis of cultural elements within traditional historiography in order to reveal its forms of subjectivity. C. C. Berg, however, questioned the value of local sources as historical records, arguing that *Babad Tanah Djawi* should not be overvalued as a historical account because it contains narratives of royal power and greatness. A. Teeuw also challenged Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s position on the use of historical literature, arguing that historians are often attracted to *babad*, *hikayat*, and other forms of historical literature but are ultimately disappointed by their factuality, or by the historical elements they contain.

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s Intellectual Contribution

Scientific Method

In Indonesia, Hoesein Djadjadiningrat’s dissertation has been regarded as marking the end of traditional historiography and he has been called the “father of Javanese historiography as an academic discipline,” continuing the work of Dr. Jan Laurens Andries Brandes, a philologist and archaeologist involved in reconstructing the Javanese past ([Ras, 1987](#)). Although his works cannot all be categorized as historical writing and do not appear to have been intended by their author as history writing, his philological and textual approaches were later used by other scholars to examine chronicles and *hikayat* ([Kartodirjo, 1982](#)).

As Hoesein Djadjadiningrat stated in relation to Snouck Hurgronje’s *Critisch overzicht van de in Maleische Werken vervatte Gegevens over de geschiedenis van Het Soeltanaat Van Atjeh* (1911), earlier accounts of the Acehnese sultans contained many doubtful elements. There had not yet been a specific and careful comparison between fragmentary European sources and legendary local sources. This situation led to errors in calculation and writing ([Djadjadiningrat, 1983](#)).

Based on this view, Hoesein believed that local sources such as the Cirebon babad contained legendary elements mixed with factual data of historical value. Criticizing, distinguishing, and evaluating these elements was difficult. Nevertheless, legendary elements were not entirely without value and should not simply be discarded. At the same time, historical information had to be verified against available Western records ([Ambarly, 1983](#)). It is therefore understandable that Sartono Kartodirjo placed Hoesein and his historiography as a milestone in modern Indonesian historiography. His most important contribution lay in method, especially internal and external source criticism and the cultural analysis of traditional historiography ([Puguh, 2024](#)).

Auxiliary Sciences in Historical Writing

History is connected to a number of other disciplines and requires their assistance, just as history is also useful for many other fields. A historian must make use of the achievements of specialists in other areas of human knowledge. These disciplines are called auxiliary disciplines or auxiliary sciences, including philosophy, chronology, paleography, graphology, sigillography, diplomatics, epigraphy, numismatics, and archaeology. Auxiliary sciences are independent fields of knowledge that history uses; for this reason, they become allies of history ([Deepthi, 2019](#)). These disciplines may also influence historiographical thought by expanding the boundaries in the search for realities that shape and condition the past. This process of expansion pushes historians toward the borders of history across space and time ([Beard & Vagts, 1937](#)).

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat used manuscript sources to reconstruct the past. In the Nusantara context, manuscripts in various languages were found in abundance and became a valuable resource for Western and European scholars during the colonial period. While printing technology became increasingly widespread in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, manuscript culture in the Nusantara reached its height up to the nineteenth century ([Arifin, 2023](#)). Western sources served as comparative materials. In the study entitled “Hubungan Sejarah dan Filologi: Pandangan Hoesein Djadjadiningrat,” Hoesein’s work is shown to focus on historical-philological inquiry and to emphasize the contribution of the humanities. Studying old manuscripts, especially babad, was a way to understand history and cultural information from the past. In colonial countries, however, historiography was introduced by colonizers in connection with the history of colonization. In the era of decolonization, newly independent states then created their own historiographies ([Liakos, 2017](#)). After independence, the need emerged to write Indonesian history as national history ([Yasin & Bakaruddin, 2020](#)).

Historical Rationality

Colonial historiography contributed methods that strengthened the process of naturalizing traditional historiography, which was often marked by magical-religious elements, into a more rational domain. Primary sources such as archival documents, journal records, and other contemporary sources were used to interpret and describe events and policies during the colonial period ([Wibowo & Djono, 2024](#)). Hoesein’s

dissertation, *Tinjauan Kritis Banten*, had significant importance for scholarship, especially for theories concerning Javanese history and monographic writing on Javanese *babad*. The method he used pioneered efforts to separate *Dichtung* and *Wahrheit*, producing both the local history of Banten and the ancient history of the transitional period of religion in Java.

Hoesein Djadjadiningrat's methodology in reconstructing historical records contributed to research methods by emphasizing critical inquiry. Internal and external criticism, applied to foreign and local sources, rationalized the study by adjusting evidence to the time and place of events in order to avoid speculation and move toward empirical data. According to Sartono Kartodirjo, historians must conduct textual criticism in order to obtain the oldest type of manuscript used. Hoesein had already done this in his dissertation, *Critische Beschouwingen van de Sadjarah Banten*; since then, some historians have recognized that traditional historiography can be used as a historical source after undergoing textual criticism. Historians have used traditional Javanese historiography to reconstruct history. The main task lies in identifying factual elements by separating legend, myth, and fact. Hoesein was one of the pioneers in this field. Through deep criticism and a philological approach, Hoesein Djadjadiningrat was able to produce historical works (Puguh, 2024). This shows an Indigenous intellectual's ability to combine Western scientific tradition with local tradition. In this way, Hoesein helped lay the foundations for modern historical studies (Ismunandar et al., 2025).

Conclusion

The condition of the Dutch East Indies under Dutch colonial domination placed Indigenous people in a lower social position. Within this social hierarchy, desires for independence emerged alongside the effects of the Ethical Policy implemented by the Dutch government. Intellectuals began to appear and sought to improve the condition of their people. At the same time, the colonial power continued to strengthen its authority through various means, including the legitimization of power through historical writing, or historiography. The emergence of Eurocentric historiography demonstrates how colonial power was perpetuated. As a product of colonial education, Hoesein nevertheless displayed an intellectual identity rooted in local origins. The development of Islam in Banten and the social, political, and cultural conditions of the region were embedded in Hoesein's upbringing within his family. At this time, the Djadjadiningrat family was an educated family that prioritized the education of its children. This educational openness enabled Hoesein to study at Leiden University. Socially, politically, and intellectually, Hoesein's thought developed through encounters with Western scholarly frameworks.

In the methodological field, Hoesein contributed methods that became an introduction for subsequent research. Source verification was carried out carefully by relying on philology, reflecting the awareness that history is not a single discipline and that auxiliary sciences are needed to reconstruct sources. Although its development involved dynamics marked by an orientalist-philological tendency, Indonesian historiography in the early twentieth century was dominated by and oriented toward

modern Western historiography. Before independence, Indonesian historians struggled to direct historiography toward the philosophy of the nation. The emergence of Indonesia-centric historiography was inseparable from a new paradigm in historical writing.

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