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## **Courtrooms of conflict. Criminal law, local elites and legal pluralities in colonial Java**

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### **Citation**

Ravensbergen, S. (2018, February 27). *Courtrooms of conflict. Criminal law, local elites and legal pluralities in colonial Java*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/61039>

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**Issue Date:** 2018-02-27

## Propositions

1. The segregated legal system in colonial Java was unequal, unjust and uncertain.
2. Colonial law courts in nineteenth-century Java experienced a decrease in the plurality of laws applied, but deliberately maintained their plurality of actors.
3. Jurisdictional, political and personal conflicts in the pluralistic courtrooms of Java were central to criminal law practice and the formation of the colonial state.
4. Although local judges and advisors—such as the penghulus and jaksas—were marginalised in the colonial space of the pluralistic courtroom, they continuously exercised their agency and were instrumental to colonial criminal legal practice.
5. The arrival of liberal jurists in the pluralistic courtrooms in colonial Java did not create a rule of law, but a rule of lawyers.
6. Cultural historians should be actively involved in socio-legal research projects to offer their perspectives on long-term developments in (post)colonial legal cultures.
7. Understanding the local context of colonial spaces, and their actors as a focal point, is crucial to studying the process of colonial state formation.
8. The colonial residency archives kept in the ANRI in Jakarta are rich and understudied archives for illuminating local colonial contexts.
9. One should fiercely disagree with the death penalty, but never from a sense of superiority. Pointing a finger at the assumed ‘barbaric’ imposition of the death penalty in contemporary Indonesia, reflects a lack of historical awareness, since the assumed ‘enlightened and civilised’ Netherlands never abolished the death penalty in colonial Indonesia.
10. Research on the history of colonial Indonesia would benefit from more direct collaboration and conversation between Dutch and Indonesian historians.
11. Reading the convictions of men of power of over a hundred years ago, simultaneously discourages and gives hope that change is possible.
12. If a Dutch official failed in colonial Java, the system was blamed and changed. If an Indonesian official did not function well, his or her culture, religion or race was blamed and the system remained in place. We still find this prejudiced way of reasoning manifested against minorities in the Netherlands today.