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Representing Local Power over Border Regions: A Case Study of The Boundaries of Malang-Kediri Regencies

Reza Hudiyanto¹, Ari Sapto² and Ardyanto Tanjung³

Abstract

Since the government was decentralized in 2000, the role of local governments has become more important. Autonomy in financial matter encourages local governments to increase their income. They have attempted to exploit all of their natural resources in order to make a profit. Certainly the most valuable such resource is land. As such, the position of borders between two regencies can become sources of conflict. In such cases, cartographical archives play an important role. This article is intended to show the contribution of cartographical archives to solving cases of conflict, as well as to show such archives' function in reconstructing the growth of territorial borders. In this analysis, we use the historical method and combine it with geographical information system, as the retrieval of data from cartographical archives was difficult. We determine factors which contribute to the stunted development of the case study area, the border between Malang and Kediri. Although road systems and settlements were constructed during the colonial periods as infrastructures for coffee plantations, the people in the border area are relatively neglected, as there is no economic and political center to inspire people to invest in the border region. Furthermore, the Decentralization Law of 2004 enabled local politic leaders to use this boundary area as a means of political communication.

Keywords: Cartographic archives, border territories, local politics, Malang Regency, Kediri Regency.

An important issue which arose after the beginning of Indonesia's reformation era is conflict over territories. After the implementation of the law on Local Autonomy Rights in, the powers of local governments – in this case, regencies – over their territories became stronger, as populations continued to grow rapidly. This led to competition over land; it is not uncommon for two neighboring areas to come to conflict over the issue of land, such as between the Special Territory of Jakarta and Banten Province over the Berhala Islands. Another source of administrative conflict is Mount Kelud, located between Kediri and Blitar. The local government of Kediri has claimed that the mountain belongs to them, but Blitar has refused to recognize it. For many years, Kediri has used Kelud as an iconic tourist destination, whereas Blitar treats Kelud as part of their ancient history, because many Hindu temples in the regency used this

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mountain as a center of their beliefs. This situation has continued to worsen, as neither side has legal documentation to support their claims.

This article attempts to reveal the importance of cartographical archives in reconstructing border areas, such as how they were developed through settlement and plantation. Secondly, this article also attempts to show the interests of both local governments in border territories. As such, it can be categorized as a landscape history. According to Barber, landscape history is concerned with historical interpretations of the physical structures and spaces which make up the environment: roads, field systems, settlement patterns, buildings, and the various semi-natural habitats such as woods and hedges. It seeks to explain their character, both now and at various points in the past, in terms of social, economic and ideological processes and influences (Williamson; 2009, 137). Here, we have combined history and geography to explore the problem of border territories. We used cartographical archives as primary sources; so that archived maps could be accessible and readable, we used a geographical information system, including the overlay method. In this method, we used old maps as basic sources, then adapted them in accordance with modern standards. We utilized a multidimensional approach, focusing on history in particular, to support our analysis. The research method used depended on the type of sources. In this case, most of primary sources were archival cartographical works, which were collected from the National Land Bureau, the National Archives, the National Library, and local government archives. Not much information was obtained from local governments, only a few monographs with information about land use, occupations, education facilities, etc. Such data was not available from before 2009, particularly in the areas along border.

From Frontier to Border Territories

The concept of borders can be understood in three ways: as the border between two different countries, as the border between two provinces, or as the border between two regencies. This article focuses on the last one. Many villages located along the Malang–Kediri borders. The border between the two is shorter than those between neighboring regencies. The shaping of this border cannot be separated from the economic policy of the Dutch colonial government in the nineteenth century, when the Dutch were in control of all of Java. To make this land profitable, the colonial government cleared the jungle so that foreign investors could invest their money in various cultivation industries. In order to ensure the clear legal status of land ownership, the

colonial government established the Bureau for Land Registry, or Kantor *Kadaster*. This meant that detailed land surveys were urgently required, because the public demanded clear legal status over their activities. On the other hand, most land – particularly the most fertile inland land – was held by the Javanese kingdoms. The Dipanegara War was thus, in some ways, beneficial to the Dutch colonial government, as the Kingdoms of Surakarta and Yogyakarta had to surrender much of their territory as war compensation. This led the colonial government to divide Java into many residencies, each of which consisted of four or five Regencies and was supported by borders to ensure its legal status. The first maps of Kediri and Malang Residencies were published in 1854 and 1855, respectively. A 1905 map of Ngantang Regency clearly exemplifies that the border area consisted of hilly terrain which was dominated by trees and dry fields (*tegalan*). There were coffee plantations scattered in the southern and northern parts of this region. Streets were used to transport crops from the fields to the depot in Ngantang. Natural barriers (trees, rivers, and hills) were used to mark the boundaries. In 1930, milestones were established to mark the boundary between villages. According to historical reports, there is no information about territorial conflicts between Malang and Kediri up to 2013. This is unlike Blitar and Kediri, which have fought for the possession of Kelud. This indicates that cultural and economic resources sometimes invite conflict, particularly in border areas.

The map of territorial conflicts clearly reveals that border disputes mainly occur in areas with natural resources. After the New Order came to power, the issue of inter-regency territorial disputes appeared to disappear. It is widely known that economic development was a central tenet of the New Order government. One crucial element of that economic development was strong and heavy reliance on the state's control and exploitation of natural resources. It has been observed that the rapid economic development under New Order led to conflict between state-led resources extraction activities and local communities. This period was highly centralized, with a very hegemonic state; what little autonomy to be had was limited to provinces, not regencies.

Since the end of the New Order in 1998, complaints about economic equality, balancing the power between central and local governments, and renegotiation of natural resource has surfaced. For example, in January 1999 a group of Acehnese demanded that revenue sharing for that province's resources should be 80 percent for Aceh and 20 percent for the central government (Rizal Sukma; 2010, 16-18) As the centralized state weakened its control over the economy, local governments' demand for more financial autonomy increased. The option of

federalism was put forth based on the ethnic, religious and secessionist conflict which arose. However, the fear of disintegration, as well as historical concerns, has aborted such an idea. Finally, a broad regional/local autonomy program was introduced as a means to pacify regional relations with the central government. These new laws brought about significant changes, both in nature of the Indonesian state and its style of governance. They gave broad autonomy to the regions to manage their own affairs, except for foreign policy, defense, finances, religious affairs, jurisprudence, and political capital. The first one, Law Number 22 of 1999, contained at least three important provisions on regional government. One was that executives at the regency level would be accountable only to the local parliaments that put them in office, not to the central and provincial government (as before). Second, local parliaments at the regency level (*DPRD Kabupaten*) would have much greater power and authority than the provincial parliament. The second law, Law Number 25 of 2000, contained important provisions, including one which stipulated that each region would receive 25 percent of revenue from oil exploitation carried out within its borders, and 30 percent of the revenue from natural gas exploitation. In places with economic potential, border territories are the proverbial “ticking time-bomb”.

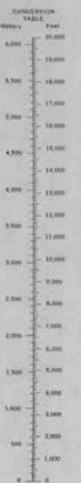
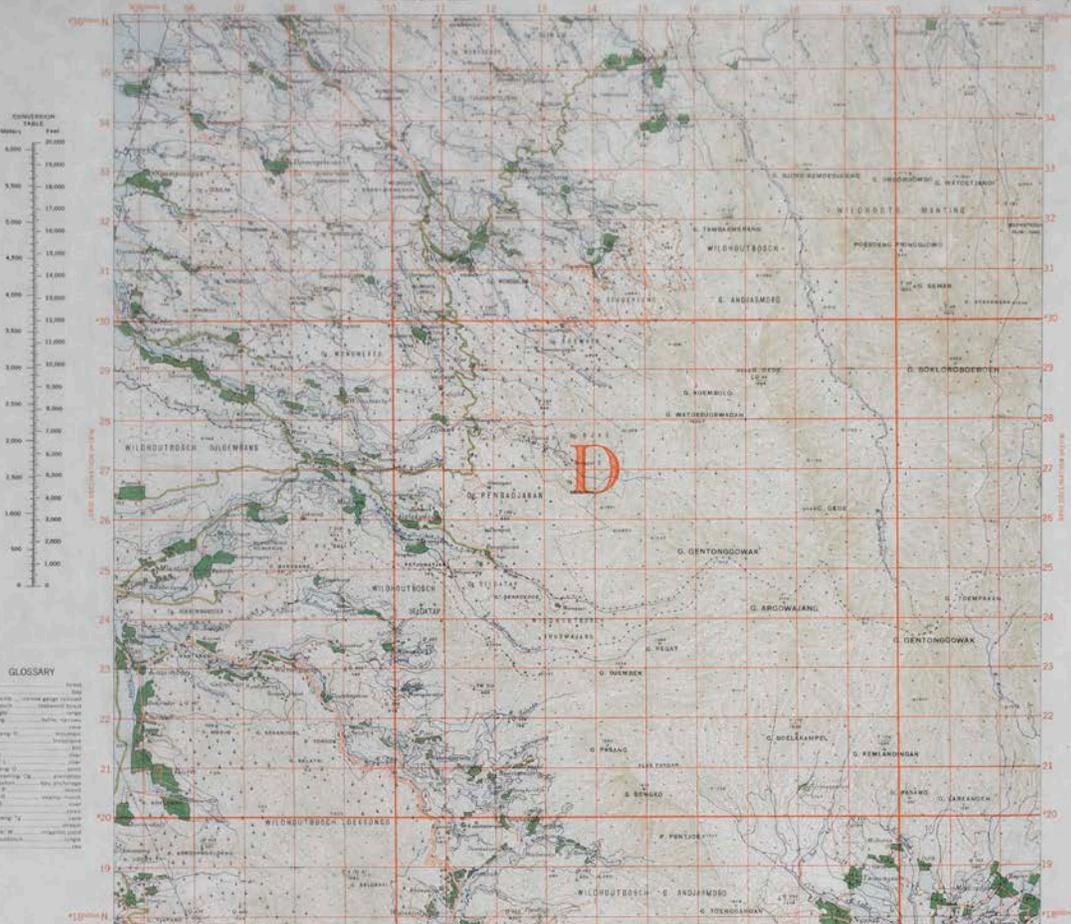
Frontier Society at the Border of Malang and Kediri Regencies

The border Malang and Kediri is shorter than others, containing only three *kecamatan* (sub-regencies): Kasembon, Kandangan and Kepung. Kasembon was mentioned in the *Encyclopadie van Nederlandsch Indie 1911*, but Kandangan and Kepung did not exist at the time. According to this encyclopedia, the borderline between Pasuruan and Kediri residencies was located between the districts of Pare and Ngantang, the latter long having been recognized in VOC documents as the place where Trunajaya and Karaeng Galesong built fortifications against VOC in 1679.

According to Elson’s dissertation of “Javanese Peasant and Colonial Sugar Industry 1830–1930”, after the VOC conquered this area, it was little exploited. Even into the early nineteenth century, Ngantang was uninhabited. It consisted of thick jungles where tigers and bandits roamed. The year 1826 was the turning point. Governor General Burgraff du Gesignies thought that the stimulus for greater production should be led by European example and capital. In 1827, he recommended the large-scale reallocation of uninhabited land to private European planters, thus turning waste land to productive land. He worked with village chiefs to ensure that

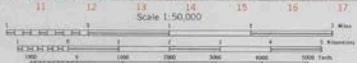
workers were available to clear this land (Elson; 1984, 12-4). In maps of Pare Regency, one can find many coffee and sugar cane plantations scattered throughout the area, the latter evidenced by the *decauvillebaan* (narrow-gauge rail tracts for the transportation of sugar cane) in this map. According to Reza (2011), Kasembon was district of Ngantang, which was dominated by coffee plantations. Up to 1900, coffee was a profitable product for the colonial economy because of its high price in the world market. In Kasembon district, roads were constructed throughout the district, connecting villages in the hinterlands with the main roads between Malang and Kediri; these roads appear to have been constructed for the coffee plantations. After the end of Dutch coffee plantations, there were no further stimuli to improve the economic conditions in the border area (Monografi Desa Kasembon 2009).

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GLOSSARY table listing symbols and their meanings.

Produced G. S. G. S. 4302 First Edition 1943. Prepared under the direction of the Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, 1943. Based on a Dutch map dated 1940.



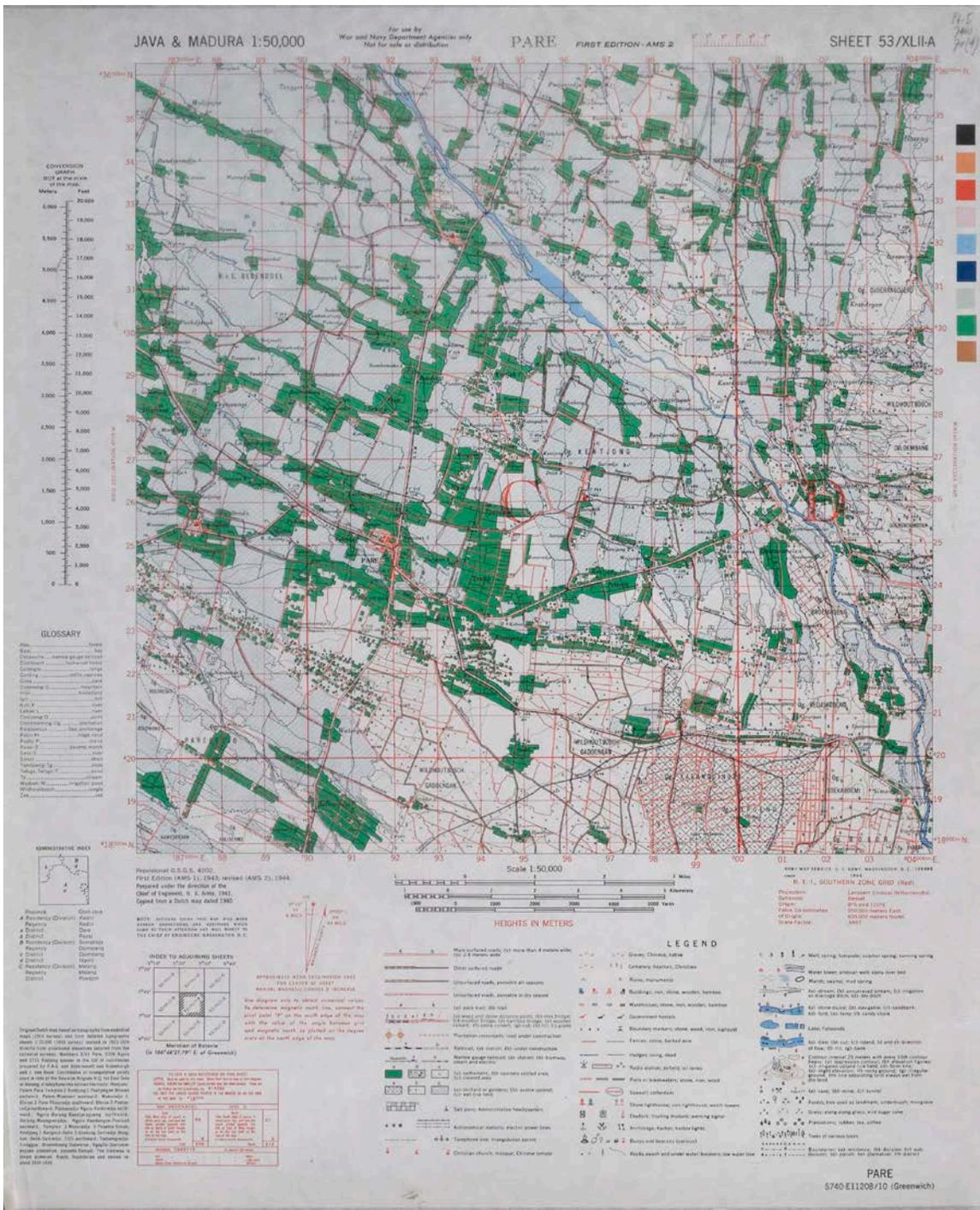
UNIT AND SERVICE OF MAP ACQUISITION & CONTROL UNIT No. 1, U. S. SOUTHERN SINE DRIV UNIT. Produced by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hydrographic and Geographical Branch, 1943. Original map by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hydrographic and Geographical Branch, 1943. Based on a Dutch map dated 1940.



Table with technical specifications and notes.

LEGEND section containing various symbols and their descriptions for terrain, roads, and structures.

LEGEND section containing symbols for water features, vegetation, and other geographical elements.



The same situation can also be found in maps of the Pare District, a predominantly lowland area. Many sugar plantations were located there, indicated by the *decauvillebaan*, a narrow-gauge rail tract used specifically for small carts to transport sugar cane from the fields to the factory.

Representing Economic Policy

There are five villages along the border between Malang and Kediri: Damarwulan, Kasembon, Besowo, Mlancu, dan Siman. The only tourist destination used to increase the income of the local government is the Kasembon Rafting site. An archaeological site in Brumbung hamlet consists of statues, sarcophagi, and an unexcavated temple. In the past ten years, people in this territory have made a profit from the Kediri–Malang intercity road, providing culinary, transportation, and repair services. However, most people rely on agriculture and raising livestock to earn their living. They spend most of their time farming. The most important obstacle to boosting the economic growth is the system in which most crops are sold to *tengkulak* (wholesalers), meaning that the prices are lower than if the farmers sold their crops directly to the market. A high product price is necessary to enhance the local farmers' ability to compete, but this is not supported by processing facilities (machines and pick-up trucks) or capital. For example, most stock farmers do not have a truck that can be used to transport their milk to the central milk storage facility, located 20 miles east of the villages. This is the main reason why their products make little profit (Profil Desa Medowo; 2011, 6). It is recommended that the local government establish a facility for the gathering and processing of locally-produced goods nearby, through which the local government can increase farm production and boost the domestic downstream industry.

The occupational structure of this region has a strong influence on social cohesion. More than 90 percent of the population in Kandangan and Kasembon work in the agriculture and farming sector; only 5 percent are in trade. This homogenous occupational pattern is deeply influenced by the ecological factor of the surrounding border territories. The only work associations are *Kelompok Kerja*. In one, *Kelompok Kerja Marga Mulya*, farmers try to improve their technical work by implementing new product processing technology to maximize their potential. In the other, *Kelompok Kerja Kertajaya*, farmers deal with the processing of livestock waste. If the local government supported such *Kelompok Kerja*, it would enhance farmers' ability to compete in the marketplace.

Kuningisasi: Representing Local Political Affiliations

Passing the border between Malang and Kediri, one notices a dominance of yellows on bridges, border gates, schools, public health centers, and district offices. This is found only in Malang Regency; on the western side of the border, in Kediri, other colors dominate. This phenomenon is based in local politics. As is well-known, the dominant political parties in Indonesia are the Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (PDIP), Party of Functional Groups (Golkar), and Islamic People’s Party. All three are recognized by their colors; red for PDIP, yellow for Golkar, and green for the Islamic Party. This politics of color began during the New Order (1967–1998), when all public facilities were painted yellow because Golkar was the ruling party. This was termed *Kuningisasi* (“Yellowization”). Local leaders were instructed to paint everything exposed to the public yellow. When PDIP came to power, walls, bridges, and government offices were painted red, as were the command posts established by PDIP in many parts of these regencies. Again, the color represented the ruling party.



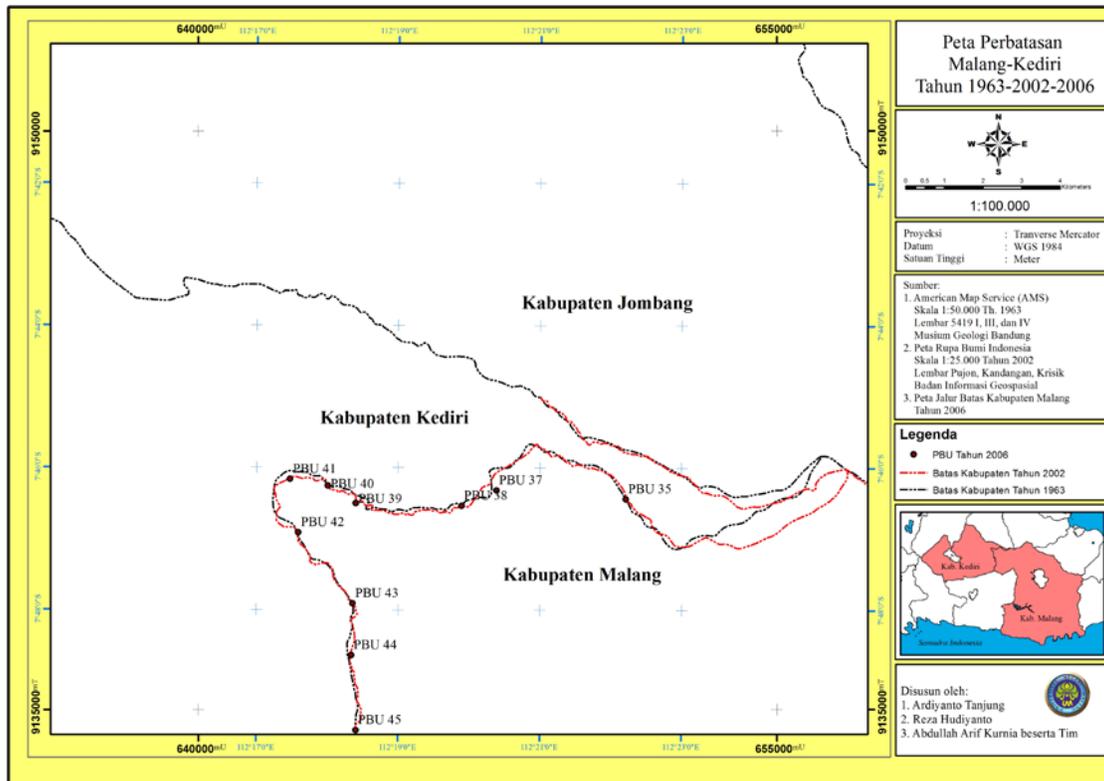
Looking at these two pictures, the difference is clear. Both photographs were taken in 2014. The first photo, from Malang, shows a yellow bridge (the color of Golkar), whereas the second, from Kasembon, shows a light green roundabout (the color of the National Awakening Party and NU). Rendra Krisna, who was elected Regent of Malang in 2005, came from Golkar Party, and one of the many sign of his power is the dominance of yellow in every corner of Malang Regency, including along the borders. Meanwhile, the Regent of Kediri, Haryati Sutrisno came from PDIP, and thus the party’s power had an effect on color preference, although it did not become as dominant as yellow in Malang. The construction of power through color also occurred in Malang City: one year after he was elected mayor, Anton of the National Awakening Party showed his party’s power by painting public works light green. This can be

seen along the city's many main roads. In this case, it can be concluded that color can serve as a representation of local political domination.

The Dispute over Borders: Representation in Local Maps

A major stumbling block in the relations between local governments is the issue of boundaries. Since 1999, Kediri and Malang have been unable to agree on their boundaries. Although the Army's topographic bureau has made list of boundary markers, confirmed with coordinates and approved by village chiefs (*lurah*) from both sides, the regional secretariat of Kediri has not signed this document, nor has it given information regarding its refusal. It is apparent that the dispute over Mount Kelud, which lies between Blitar and Kediri, has influenced the relations between Kediri and Malang. Kediri has long invested in Kelud, promoting it as a tourist destination; it has provided infrastructure, including buildings and roads the crater. As such, the government will not allow Mount Kelud to be administratively controlled by Blitar, even if it is territorially part of Blitar Regency. Kediri has been accused of manipulating maps, moving borders to keep Kelud in its territory; this case has been brought to the Supreme Court.

Kelud's position is disputable. This mount is at the intersection of three regencies: Blitar, Kediri and Malang. Its topography is characterized by a precipitous cliff on the eastern ridge, but a slope on the west. When the mount erupts, the pyroclastic flows and lahar impact Blitar; this has led the people of Blitar to say that Kediri exploits the mountain, whereas Blitar is always damaged by its eruptions. What can be said of this based on cartographical archives? Four maps from different years (1855, 1963, 2009 and 2011), including three different versions, provide information on the boundary. Using the overlay method, it is apparent that the borders of Malang and Kediri have mover eastward, into Malang territory. The below map shows the border's migration eastward. However, this does not answer the question of Kelud.



No information was available from the Kediri regional government, which has stated that border issues are sensitive because of their problems with Blitar. Is this a manifestation of Kediri attempting to expand its territories using maps the basis of its claim? According to the government of Malang, the two regencies have yet to reach an agreement about their border. As such, the decree of the Minister of Interior cannot be issued.

Concluding Remarks

The relation between regencies is very interesting because it is associated with many issues, including local politics, economics, and (stunted) growth. The post-New Order state politics, giving greater power to regional governments, has had many consequences. First, it has reminded local governments of the importance of preserving their documents and archives. Archives have been proved to provide important evidence for their territory claims. However, regional governments continue to pay no heed to the management of their archives, particularly static archives.

Second, local governments must give greater attention to border areas. Stunted development and economic and growth can be alleviated if both local governments collaborate to

build infrastructure, thus allowing farmers to increase their production. Through the construction of senior high schools or local campuses of universities, this can also lessen the gap between rural and urban areas. Third, the predominance of yellow in Kasembon district reflects the importance of border territories in image creation. One will know which party won the local election by seeing the dominant color. As Ernst Cassirer wrote, humans express themselves through symbols, and color serves as a symbol of power because it identifies the ruling power.

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