From Colonial Communications Hub to Republican Asset: The PTT Headquarters in Bandung, 1920–1945

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Abstract

This article reconstructs the institutional history of the Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Service (*Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoondienst*, PTT) headquarters in Bandung between the beginning of construction in 1920 and its seizure by Indonesian employees in September 1945. It argues that the headquarters was more than a colonial office building: it was a material and administrative node through which communications, technical expertise, personnel, and regulatory authority were coordinated across the archipelago. Drawing on colonial administrative almanacs, a 1924 PTT service guide, contemporary newspapers, institutional histories, and scholarship on Bandung's urban development and the Indonesian Revolution, the article follows four connected transformations. First, the headquarters materialized the late-colonial effort to relocate selected central agencies from Batavia to Bandung. Second, the completed complex enabled increasingly differentiated bureaucratic coordination; the 1928 Regeerings-Almanak contains the earliest explicit heading *Hoofdbestuur te Bandoeng* found in the volumes examined *and* documents Bandung as the seat of central administration without proving the precise date of first occupancy. Third, Japanese rule territorially rescaled and militarized rather than simply abolished the inherited organization, while retaining Bandung as the coordinating center for Java and Madura. Finally, organizational continuity, technical competence, and collective action allowed Indonesian PTT personnel to convert the colonial headquarters into a Republican institution on 27 September 1945. The article's contribution lies in integrating architectural history, administrative practice, and revolutionary agency within a single chronology. This longue institutional view qualifies narratives of abrupt regime change: the claim to Republican authority acquired an institutional basis through inherited infrastructure, routines, and skilled personnel, without establishing immediate control of the entire network.

Keywords: Bandung; colonial bureaucracy; communications infrastructure; Japanese occupation; PTT; Indonesian Revolution

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Introduction

On 27 September 1945, Indonesian employees and trainees of the Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Service (*Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoondienst*, PTT) took control of the service's headquarters in Bandung. The accounts cited describe the action as bloodless, but its institutional significance was considerable. Postal routes, telegraph lines, telephone exchanges, radio facilities, regulations, records, workshops, and trained personnel made the PTT a strategic apparatus of rule. To occupy its headquarters was therefore not merely to replace a flag on a colonial building. It was to claim an administrative center capable of carrying orders, information, money, and political authority across a newly proclaimed republic. Retrospective histories and biographical accounts present the action as a decisive episode in the early Revolution.[1]

The revolutionary moment, however, requires attention to the longer history of the institution that was seized. The Bandung headquarters emerged from a late-colonial project to redistribute government departments away from Batavia. For centuries, Batavia had been the political and commercial center of Dutch power in the archipelago, yet recurrent disease, poor drainage, and the unhealthy reputation of its lower quarters prompted repeated schemes of urban and administrative relocation. The move to Weltevreden represented an earlier response, but by the opening decades of the twentieth century Bandung's highland environment, rail connection, and expanding municipal infrastructure made it a compelling alternative for selected central services.[2]

Bandung's transformation was inseparable from colonial planning. Roads, railways, public buildings, European residential districts, and technical education reconfigured a regency capital into a city of administrative and technological importance. The establishment of the *Technische Hoogeschool te Bandoeng* in 1920 and the construction of the *Gouvernements Bedrijven* complex belonged to the same broader effort to equip the city for state functions. Yet that development did not amount to a complete transfer of the colonial capital. Fiscal constraints and the Depression interrupted larger ambitions, while some offices and functions remained in Batavia or Weltevreden. Bandung should therefore be understood not as Batavia's wholesale replacement but as a second administrative pole within an uneven geography of colonial rule.[3]

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[1] Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 67–70; Djen Amar, *Bandung Lautan Api* (Bandung: Dhiwantara, 1963), 67–73; Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Tokoh-Tokoh Sejarah Perjuangan dan Pembangunan Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, 1985), 332, 675–76.

[2] Iwan Hermawan, "Bencana di Batavia dan Pemindahan Pusat Pemerintahan pada Masa Kolonial Belanda," in *Prosiding Balai Arkeologi Jawa Barat* (Bandung: Balai Arkeologi Jawa Barat, 2021), 149–57; Iwan Hermawan and Octaviadi Abrianto, "Pola Tata Ruang Weltevreden dan Fungsi Ruang Kota," *Panalungtik* 3, no. 1 (2020): 1–13; Wilhelm Johan van Gorkom, *Ongezond Batavia, Vroeger en Nu: Noodzakelijkheid van een Organieken Stedelijken Gezondheidsdienst* (Batavia: Batavia Javasche Boekhandel & Drukkerij, 1913), 95.

[3] Sudarsono Katam, *Gedung Sate Bandung*, 1st ed. (Bandung: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2009), 2–8; Muhammad Gibran Humam Fadlurrahman, "Pendirian Technische Hoogeschool te Bandoeng: Sekolah Tinggi Teknik untuk Hindia Belanda," *Mozaik: Kajian Ilmu Sejarah* 14, no. 2 (2023): 154–74,

The studies reviewed illuminate different aspects of the headquarters' history. Studies of Bandung's colonial urbanism and architecture explain the city's planned expansion, the construction of the *Gouvernements Bedrijven*, and the work of architects and contractors who fashioned its monumental landscape.[4] Research on the PTT has examined employee education, the development of postal services, and the Angkatan Muda Pos, Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) during the Revolution.[5] Other scholarship treats the Japanese occupation, wartime mobilization, or the transfer of authority in 1945 at a national scale.[6] Their differing scales and subjects provide a basis for examining construction, colonial administration, Japanese reorganization, and Republican appropriation within a connected history of the Bandung headquarters.

This article addresses that gap by asking how the Bandung PTT headquarters acquired its administrative significance between 1920 and 1945, how successive regimes reorganized its functions, and why Indonesian personnel could convert it into a Republican asset so quickly. It argues that the headquarters condensed three forms of power: a purpose-built environment, a differentiated bureaucracy, and a community of technical labor. Their combination helped sustain institutional capacities through changes of regime. Dutch rule constructed and rationalized the center; Japanese occupation rescaled and militarized its network while retaining much of its organization and Indonesian workforce; and the Revolution redirected those inherited capacities toward a new sovereign claimant.

The contribution of this reconstruction is partly chronological and partly evidentiary. Chronologically, it treats 1920–45 as a connected sequence rather than isolating the September 1945 action. Evidentially, it distinguishes the completion of the building in 1924 from the explicit location heading *Hoofdbestuur te Bandoeng* in the 1928 *Regeerings-Almanak*, the earliest occurrence found in the volumes examined. This distinction matters. Katam's account suggests that relocation began in 1922–23 and that the headquarters was occupied soon after construction, but the almanac does not establish a precise opening date. Its 1928 wording offers secure evidence that Bandung

https://doi.org/10.21831/mozaik.v14i2.64737; John Sydenham Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 442–43.

[4] Dina Amelia, Umasih, and Nur'aeni Marta, "Arsitektur Koloniaal Tropis di Bandoeng: Sebuah Interaksi Multikultur (1906–1925)," *Periode: Jurnal Sejarah dan Pendidikan Sejarah* 3, no. 1 (2021): 42–63; Dewi Ratih, "Kota Kolonial Hindia Belanda 1800–1942: Ditinjau dari Permasalahan Sejarah Perkotaan," *Jurnal Artefak* 9, no. 1 (2022): 49–60, https://doi.org/10.25157/ja.v9i1.4197; Husna Izzati, Andiyan, and Wowo Adizar Darwin, "Filosofi Sunda dalam Konsep Lanskap Bangunan Kolonial di Kota Bandung," *Arsitektura* 21, no. 1 (2023): 107–16.

[5] Shidqiyyah Rakdiati Ediana, "Commies Cursus Bandung 1926–1938: Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pelatihan untuk Pegawai Jawatan Pos, Telegrap, dan Telepon di Hindia Belanda" (Universitas Sebelas Maret, 2023), 38–43; Kurnia Pangrena, "Perkembangan PT Pos di Kota Bandung Tahun 1945–2007" (Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, 2014); Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 14–16.

[6] Tim Nasional Penulisan Sejarah Indonesia, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia VI: Zaman Jepang dan Zaman Republik*, updated ed. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008), 2–14, 120–48; Ken'ichi Goto, "Caught in the Middle: Japanese Attitudes toward Indonesian Independence in 1945," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27, special issue 1 (March 1996): 37–48, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463400010663.

had become the named site of central administration by that year, not proof that no headquarters function existed there earlier.[7]

Conceptually, the analysis uses bureaucracy and social conflict as limited interpretive tools rather than as substitutes for historical explanation. Weberian features—hierarchy, specialized office, written rules, training, and impersonal competence—help identify how the headquarters organized communication over distance. They do not render that organization neutral: administrative rationalization served a coercive colonial state and distributed authority unequally.[8] Lewis Coser's account of conflict and group cohesion is useful for considering the AMPTT's mobilization, provided that the September takeover is not reduced to confrontation alone. The takeover accounts describe a sequence of association, deliberation, negotiation, disciplined deployment, and finally coercive entry—an exercise in institutional capture shaped as much by occupational expertise as by militant solidarity.[9]

Method

The study follows four operations of historical research: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Heuristics involved identifying and assembling primary and secondary evidence relevant to the headquarters rather than collecting material on postal history in general. The primary corpus includes the 1924 *Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoongids voor Nederlandsch-Indië*; selected volumes of the government's annual *Regeerings-Almanak*; wartime reports and announcements in *Asia Raja*; a 1914 notice in the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*; the National Archives of Indonesia's PTT inventory; and the United States directive concerning the surrender of Japanese forces in August 1945. Secondary works supply urban, architectural, institutional, and biographical context.[10]

External criticism examined provenance, date, institutional authorship, edition, and the legibility and completeness of the available reproductions. Official almanacs were treated as annual administrative snapshots produced by the colonial state; newspapers as time-specific publications whose factual claims must be read alongside their political conditions; and retrospective institutional histories as valuable but commemorative accounts. Visible headings, pagination, and publication metadata were used to assess digital facsimiles; these checks do not independently authenticate every claim in the documents. Particular caution was applied to popular claims about

[7] Sudarsono Katam, *Gedung Sate Bandung*, 1st ed. (Bandung: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2009), 53–55, 102; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1900, Tweede Gedeelte* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1900), 487; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1925, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1925), 590; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1928, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1928), 710.

[8] Ngadisah, "Birokrasi Indonesia," in *Pengertian dan Teori-teori Klasik Birokrasi* (Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka, 2015), 7–16.

[9] Lewis A. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1956), 38–48.

[10] Nina Herlina, *Metode Sejarah: Edisi Revisi 2020* (Bandung: Satya Historika, 2020), 31–32; Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, *Inventaris Arsip Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoondienst, 1817–1950* (Jakarta: Direktorat Pengolahan Arsip, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2018), 1–9.

the headquarters' inauguration, because several dates circulate without a cited deed, occupancy record, or contemporary announcement.

Internal criticism assessed what each source could reasonably demonstrate. The appearance of *Hoofdbestuur te Bandoeng* in 1928 documents Bandung as the central administration's stated location by that year. It cannot, by itself, determine the first day on which personnel entered the building. Similarly, organization charts and lists of officials disclose formal hierarchy but not necessarily daily practice; wartime propaganda shows intended mobilization rather than uniform public compliance; and later recollections of the 1945 takeover require comparison across institutional histories and biographies. The Allied directive supplies the political context of surrender, not a direct account of the Bandung takeover. These distinctions prevent an administrative document from being made to answer a question for which it was not produced.

Interpretation proceeded through chronology, comparison, and causal analysis. Changes in office names and jurisdiction were compared across almanac years, while rules in the 1924 guide were read as evidence of the headquarters' prescribed powers and service procedures. The Japanese period was examined for both rupture and continuity: territorial division, military control, personnel training, savings campaigns, and employee mobilization changed the orientation of the service, yet Bandung's coordinating role and much of its skilled labor survived. The final historiographical operation organizes these findings into an argument about infrastructure and state transition. The resulting narrative does not treat the building as a passive backdrop. It reconstructs the reciprocal relationship among place, bureaucratic procedure, communications technology, and human agency.[11]

Results

Constructing an Administrative Node, 1920–1924

The headquarters originated in the colonial government's attempt to equip Bandung with a concentration of central technical departments. By 1919 the government had assigned the municipal building enterprise (*Gemeentelijk Bouwbedrijf*), under V. L. Slors, a leading role in preparing the new complex. J. Gerber, working within the colonial building service, was central to its architectural design. The selected tract covered approximately twenty-seven hectares northeast of the established city. Its principal axis faced toward Tangkuban Perahu, making the mountain landscape part of the ensemble's visual order. Katam's account lists fourteen planned departments or institutions, although the full scheme was never realized.[12]

Construction began in 1920. The cornerstone ceremony on 27 July marked the opening phase of the government-building program, which included the building

[11] Nina Herlina, *Metode Sejarah: Edisi Revisi 2020* (Bandung: Satya Historika, 2020), 8, 24, 46–48, 55.

[12] Sudarsono Katam, *Gedung Sate Bandung*, 1st ed. (Bandung: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2009), 4–8, 17–21; Husna Izzati, Andiyan, and Wowo Adizar Darwin, "Filosofi Sunda dalam Konsep Lanskap Bangunan Kolonial di Kota Bandung," *Arsitektura* 21, no. 1 (2023): 113.

later known as Gedung Sate and the PTT headquarters. It does not establish that work on every component began on the same day. The architecture joined European engineering and monumental planning to locally inflected forms and climatic adaptation. This was not simply an aesthetic gesture. Deep verandas, circulation, light, orientation, and the organization of offices responded to the administrative and environmental demands of the site. H. P. Berlage, whose observations of Bandung were often critical, nevertheless praised the wider complex as an important architectural achievement.[13]

The contractor for the PTT building was Lim A Goh. According to Katam, he was born in Konghu in 1890, came to Batavia in 1906, later received engineering training in Bandung, and established his firm in 1914. His earlier work included the HBS, an extension to Societeit Concordia, and Sukamiskin prison. His appointment indicates that the state project depended upon mobile Asian technical expertise and local contracting capacity, not European professionals alone. The broader complex reportedly employed about 2,000 workers and was associated with a total budget of roughly six million guilders; these figures pertain to the government-building program and should not be mistaken for a separate PTT construction account. Skilled laborers from Konghu worked alongside local laborers, some of whom had experience on the *Technische Hoogeschool* project.[14]

The aerial view reproduced as Figure 1 distinguishes the chief's office (2a), the postal building identified with the museum (2b), and the telegraph and telephone section (2c), beside the Public Works building (1). This arrangement helps locate the related components of the complex. The date of the photograph and the chronology of the uses assigned to each component are not established in the reproduction, however. The labels cannot by themselves demonstrate that all these functions formed part of the original architectural program or operated simultaneously during construction.

[13] Sudarsono Katam, *Gedung Sate Bandung*, 1st ed. (Bandung: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2009), 17–21, 53–55; Muhammad Gibran Humam Fadlurrahman, "'Kota Schoemaker': Kota Bandung di Mata Maestro Arsitek H. P. Berlage (1915–1923)," *Purbawidya* 13, no. 1 (2024): 123–42, https://doi.org/10.55981/purbawidya.2024.3098.

[14] Sudarsono Katam, *Gedung Sate Bandung*, 1st ed. (Bandung: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2009), 20, 53–55.

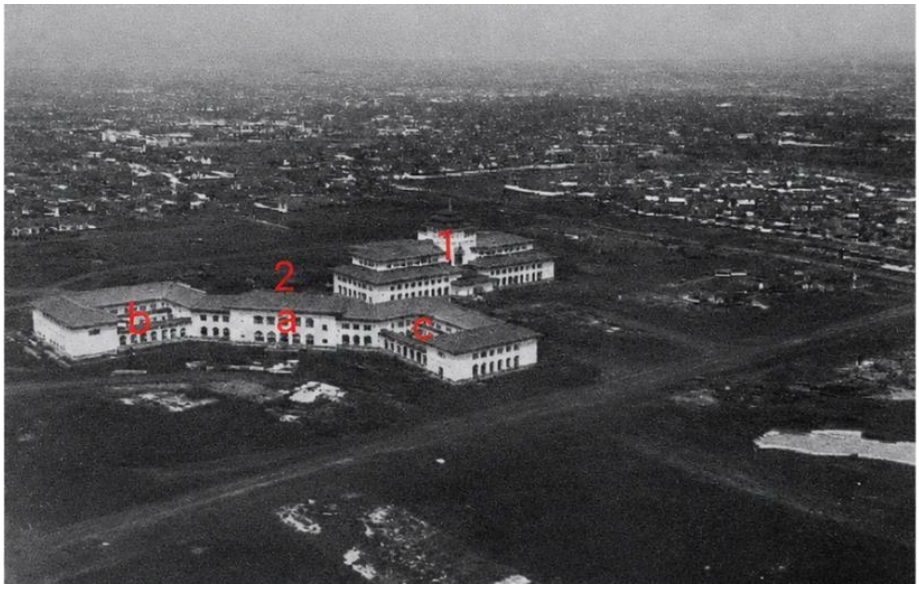


Figure 1 Aerial view of the Gouvernements Bedrijven complex, with functions identified in the reproduced source: (1) Public Works building; (2a) PTT chief's office; (2b) post office and postal museum; and (2c) telegraph and telephone department.

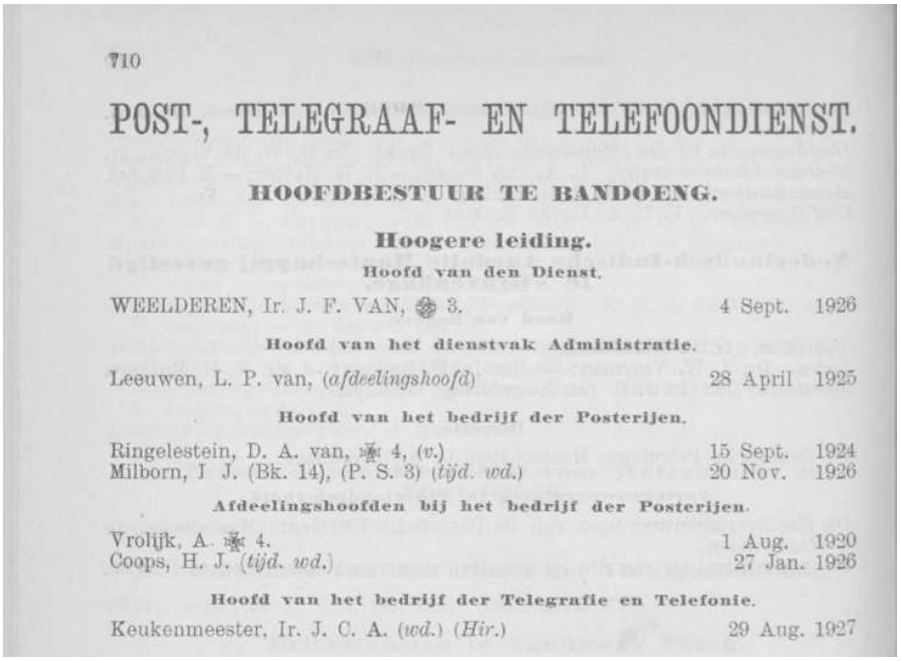
Katam dates the completion of construction to 1924. The finished building gave the PTT a physical center appropriate to a service whose operations crossed media and territory. Yet completion did not automatically settle the chronology of institutional transfer. A building can be finished before all personnel, records, and decision-making authority have arrived; conversely, particular units can begin occupying a site before an official publication names it as headquarters. That distinction becomes decisive when the architectural record is compared with the administrative record.[15]

From Completion to Administrative Confirmation, 1924–1928

Katam's account places the movement of PTT functions toward Bandung in 1922–23 and suggests occupation soon after the building's completion. Such claims fit the sequence of construction and the wider transfer of technical departments, but they do not identify a single conclusive instrument of inauguration. The annual almanacs permit a narrower, more defensible claim. In 1900 the PTT entry used *Hoofdbureau*; by 1925 it used *Hoofdbestuur*, indicating a central board or administration, but without naming Bandung in the heading. The 1928 volume explicitly printed *HOOFDBESTUUR TE BANDOENG*.[16]

[15] Sudarsono Katam, *Gedung Sate Bandung*, 1st ed. (Bandung: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2009), 53–55, 102.

[16] Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1900, Tweede Gedeelte* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1900), 487; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1925, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1925), 590; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1928, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1928), 710.



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POST-, TELEGRAAF- EN TELEFOONDIENST.

HOOFDBESTUUR TE BANDOENG.

Hoogere leiding.

Hoofd van den Dienst.

WEELDEREN, Ir. J. F. VAN, ✠ 3. 4 Sept. 1926

Hoofd van het dienstvak Administratie.

Leeuwen, L. P. van, (*afdeelingshoofd*) 28 April 1925

Hoofd van het bedrijf der Posterijen.

Ringelestein, D. A. van, ✠ 4, (*v.*) 15 Sept. 1924
Milborn, J. J. (Bk. 14), (P. S. 3) (*tijd. wd.*) 20 Nov. 1926

Afdeelingshoofden bij het bedrijf der Posterijen.

Vrolijk, A. ✠ 4. 1 Aug. 1920
Coops, H. J. (*tijd. wd.*) 27 Jan. 1926

Hoofd van het bedrijf der Telegrafie en Telefonie.

Keukenmeester, Ir. J. C. A. (*wd.*) (*Hfr.*) 29 Aug. 1927

Figure 2 The heading Hoofdbestuur te Bandoeng in the 1928 colonial administrative almanac.

Figure 2 supplies an unusually precise piece of evidence: by the publication of the 1928 almanac, Bandung was formally represented as the seat of the PTT central administration. The wording also appears in subsequent volumes examined. Its evidentiary value lies in an official administrative listing rather than architectural description. The record does not establish an inauguration date or show that the appearance of this heading marked a new administrative decision. Physical completion, the reported transfer of units, and their representation in the almanac describe related developments whose dates need not coincide.

The 1924 *Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoongids* nevertheless demonstrates that the *Hoofdbestuur* issued rules and information for an archipelago-wide service. The guide set out institutional responsibilities, operating provisions, tariffs, categories of service, and procedures for postal, telegraphic, and telephone transactions. It reveals the substantive work hidden behind the abstract label "headquarters": the translation of policy into standardized documents and procedures intended for use at dispersed offices. It documents the central administration's authority, but does not locate the exercise of that authority in Bandung in 1924 or establish compliance at every office.[17]

Bureaucratic Consolidation and Network Coordination, 1928–1942

The selected almanacs, from 1928 through 1940, document Bandung as the seat of the *Hoofdbestuur* and permit a reconstruction of the service's formal organization before the end of Dutch rule. At its apex stood the *Hoofd van den Dienst*, the head of service. Below this office were administrative, postal, telegraphic, telephonic, and technical branches. Their designations and subordinate units changed from year to

[17] Hoofdbestuur PTT, *Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoongids voor Nederlandsch-Indië: Acht-en-Twintigste Jaargang* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1924), iii–iv, 5.

year, but three clusters remained recognizable: internal administration, postal operations, and telecommunications.[18]

The *Dienstvak der Administratie* handled the institutional means by which the service reproduced itself: personnel, training and examinations, finance, archives, and the expedition of official correspondence. It transformed labor into a categorized civil-service establishment and transactions into accountable records. Some general-affairs functions remained associated with Weltevreden, a reminder that transfer to Bandung was neither instantaneous nor absolute. The geography of the PTT was thus centralized but not spatially pure. Headquarters authority could be located in Bandung while particular operations, files, or officials remained elsewhere.[19]

The *Bedrijf der Posterijen* coordinated ordinary and special postal affairs, transportation, money orders, statistical returns, stamp administration, and financial accountability. These categories joined the circulation of letters to the movement of parcels and funds. A postal network could function at scale only if headquarters made locally diverse transactions legible in standardized forms: weights, tariffs, authorized payment methods, accounting categories, and reporting intervals. The postal branch was therefore both a transport system and an information system about that transport.

The telegraph and telephone branches joined technical maintenance to the management of traffic. Formal units dealt with telegraphy, telephony, radiotechnology, materials, workshops or warehouses, and the measurement or allocation of traffic. Later almanacs altered the names and grouping of these offices, yet the core division between administrative regulation, operational traffic, and technical plant persisted.[20] The regular rearrangement of units should not be read as administrative disorder. It shows changes in formal organization; identifying the causes or operational effects of each rearrangement would require additional evidence.

The 1924 guide renders this authority concrete. The head of service could regulate the use of official envelopes and the transmission of currency; determine free parcel-delivery zones; define or amend local telephone areas; authorize perforated postage stamps; issue notices and exemptions; establish quarterly charges; prescribe address cards and customs declarations; set rules for calculating telegram words and tariffs; and determine conditions for maintaining or terminating telephone

[18] Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1928, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1928), 710–19; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1929, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1929), 682–91; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1930, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1930), PTT section. Exact pages for entries cited only as "PTT section" require confirmation in the relevant editions.

[19] Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1931, Tweede Gedeelte* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1931), PTT section; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1936, Tweede Gedeelte* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936), PTT section. Exact pages for entries cited only as "PTT section" require confirmation in the relevant editions.

[20] Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1937, Tweede Gedeelte* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1937), PTT section; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1938, Tweede Gedeelte* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1938), PTT section; Landsdrukkerij, *Regeerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1940, Tweede Gedeelte* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1940), PTT section. Exact pages for entries cited only as "PTT section" require confirmation in the relevant editions.

connections.[21] These were not incidental clerical details. They were mechanisms by which a central office rendered heterogeneous places commensurable and governable. A letter, payment, parcel, telegram, or call entered a regulated sequence whose terms were prescribed by the central administration.

Several features of a modern bureaucracy are visible in this arrangement. Offices were ordered hierarchically; jurisdiction was divided by function; rules were recorded in writing; careers depended partly on technical competence and training; and archives made transactions reviewable. Such features correspond to the classic analytical model of rational-legal administration.[22] These features do not, by themselves, establish operational efficiency. Standardization concentrated the authority to define fees, access, classifications, and service areas. The headquarters' capacity to coordinate was simultaneously a capacity to rank users, distribute resources, monitor offices, and extend colonial government into everyday communication.

Personnel education was indispensable to this system. An August 1914 notice announced the planned opening of the *Leidsche Postschool* on 1 October, with a thirty-three-month course and an allowance of seventy-five guilders. In Bandung, the *Commies Cursus* later provided a fifteen-month course for PTT personnel seeking advancement. Training converted specialized knowledge into an institutional credential and supplied the service with employees able to apply written rules across offices.[23] Such training supported skills that could remain useful under a different regime, although the course descriptions do not establish the experiences of every participant. The same concentration of competence that supported colonial administration later gave Indonesian employees leverage over the institution's physical and operational assets.

The administrative evidence from 1928–40 therefore depicts the headquarters not as a finished monument but as an active coordinating institution. The spatial arrangement can be read alongside documented divisions of jurisdiction; published rules connected the center to local offices; and training linked individual careers to an impersonal administrative hierarchy. The system remained unequal and colonial, but its routines acquired a durability that exceeded the state that had created them.

Territorial Reorganization and Wartime Repurposing, 1942–1945

The German occupation of the Netherlands in May 1940 destabilized imperial command, while Japan's advance across Southeast Asia brought the colonial regime to military collapse. After the Dutch surrender at Kalijati on 8 March 1942, the

[21] Hoofdbestuur PTT, *Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoongids voor Nederlandsch-Indië: Acht-en-Twintigste Jaargang* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1924), 5, 8, 29–30, 37, 70, 79, 166–67, 196, 203.

[22] Ngadisah, "Birokrasi Indonesia," in *Pengertian dan Teori-teori Klasik Birokrasi* (Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka, 2015), 9–16.

[23] "Opleiding voor den Post- en Telegraafdienst," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, August 1, 1914, 16, https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&identifier=ddd%3A011036762%3Ampeg21%3Ap016; Shidqiyyah Rakdiati Ediana, "Commies Cursus Bandung 1926–1938: Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pelatihan untuk Pegawai Jawatan Pos, Telegrap, dan Telepon di Hindia Belanda" (Universitas Sebelas Maret, 2023), 38–43.

Japanese authorities divided the former colony among separate military jurisdictions: Java and Madura under the Sixteenth Army, Sumatra under the Twenty-Fifth Army, and the eastern islands under naval administration.[24] This territorial arrangement broke the premise of a single Netherlands Indies-wide civil service. The institutional history describes a corresponding division of PTT administration, associating Sumatra with Shōnan/Singapore, Java and Madura with Bandung, and Sulawesi with Makassar. These locations should not be read as a complete or unchanging map of wartime communications jurisdiction.[25]

Bandung retained its centrality, but the scale and purpose of that centrality changed. Under Dutch rule the headquarters had coordinated a colony-wide civil communications service. Under the Sixteenth Army it became the principal administrative center for Java and Madura, a smaller territorial unit embedded in a wartime command economy. Administrative work that had remained in Jakarta and Surabaya was progressively concentrated in Bandung, a process reportedly completed by early 1944.[26] Japanese rule thus produced territorial rescaling rather than simple institutional destruction: it severed the old imperial network, recombined its parts, and intensified centralized control within the new jurisdiction.

Communications facilities were assigned to military priorities. The radio transmitting station at Dayeuhkolot, for example, came under the *Kokusai Denki Tsushinkyoku*, with Japanese officers supervising Indonesian staff. [27] Postal, telegraphic, telephonic, and radio infrastructure now served military administration, logistics, surveillance, and mobilization under conditions of war. This altered the service's political orientation, but not every routine was discontinued. Postal savings continued and were recast as instruments of wartime resource mobilization. An *Asia Raja* item of 11 May 1943 reported a Taman Siswa teachers' council requirement that pupils deposit savings at the post office. It documents a school initiative within the occupation's wider savings campaign, rather than a direct order from the Japanese authorities to all pupils.[28]

Training likewise continued in altered form. *Asia Raja* published *Gunseikan* Announcement No. 12 on 2 March 1944 concerning the *Djawa Toesin Gakko*, a school

[24] Tim Nasional Penulisan Sejarah Indonesia, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia VI: Zaman Jepang dan Zaman Republik*, updated ed. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008), 2–14.

[25] Departemen Perhubungan, Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Sejarah Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia: Jilid I, Masa Pra Republik* (Jakarta: CV Cahaya Makmur, 1980), 139–40; Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 14–22.

[26] Departemen Perhubungan, Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Sejarah Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia: Jilid I, Masa Pra Republik* (Jakarta: CV Cahaya Makmur, 1980), 140; Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 21–22.

[27] Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 21.

[28] *Asia Raja*, "Moerid-Moerid Haroes Menaboeng," May 11, 1943; Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Menabung Membangun Bangsa* (Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2019), 149; Mufidha Brilian Irianti, "Menabur Kebiasaan: Propaganda Gerakan Menabung Jepang (1941–1945)," *Lembaran Sejarah* 11, no. 1 (2014): 71–82, https://doi.org/10.22146/lembaran-sejarah.23784.

for postal and communications affairs.[29] The school extended the institutional necessity already evident in the Dutch period: a complex network required employees with specialized knowledge. Yet wartime training also served Japanese manpower needs. Continuity in pedagogical form was coupled to a change in political purpose.

Wartime mobilization also involved PTT employees. On 31 January 1945 *Asia Raja* reported the formation of a *Barisan Pelopor* among employees under thirty-five at the Jakarta PTT office, who were receiving military instruction. The institutional history separately describes formations at the Bandung headquarters known as *Tsusin Tai* and *Tsusin Tokubetsu Tai*.[30] These accounts indicate that occupational training coexisted with military mobilization in particular PTT settings. The organizational experience described helps explain the capacity for collective action in 1945, but does not establish a uniform program across the service or make Republican mobilization an inevitable result of Japanese training.

Continuity therefore operated at several levels. Bandung remained a central site; inherited buildings and technical systems continued to be used; organizational hierarchy survived in revised form; and Indonesian employees retained or acquired specialized skills. Rupture was equally real: the territorial field contracted, Japanese military offices assumed command, services were subordinated to war, and employees were politically mobilized. The headquarters embodied both processes at once. It was an inherited colonial apparatus whose strategic value encouraged the occupying regime to preserve, reorganize, and intensify it.

Institutional Seizure, September 1945

Japan's acceptance of surrender on 15 August 1945 and the Indonesian proclamation two days later created a gap between declared sovereignty and control of administrative assets. The Allied directive dated 15 August 1945 set out arrangements for surrender to designated Allied commanders and the preservation of order and military assets. The Bandung takeover accounts report that Japanese officials invoked a status quo that conflicted with Indonesian demands for immediate transfer.[31] The PTT headquarters became one arena in which this contradiction was resolved from below.

Indonesian PTT youth had organized under Soetoko during the occupation. Soetoko had entered the service in 1934 as an assistant clerk in Semarang and later helped initiate a special formation among employees at headquarters. The name Angkatan Muda Pos, Telegrap dan Telepon appears to have crystallized during the

[29] *Asia Raja*, "Maklumat Gunseikan No. 12: Djawa Toesin Gakko (Sekolah Oeroesan Pos)," March 2, 1944.

[30] *Asia Raja*, "Pegawai Pos, Telegrap, dan Telepon Membentoek Barisan Pelopor," January 31, 1945; Departemen Perhubungan, Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Sejarah Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia: Jilid I, Masa Pra Republik* (Jakarta: CV Cahaya Makmur, 1980), 150–51.

[31] United States Department of State, "Directive by President Truman to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan (MacArthur)," Washington, August 15, 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945, The Far East, China*, vol. 7, doc. 390, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v07/d390; Ken'ichi Goto, "Caught in the Middle: Japanese Attitudes toward Indonesian Independence in 1945," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27, special issue 1 (March 1996): 39–40, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463400010663.

revolutionary transition; the surviving accounts do not establish its exact first use. What is clear is that the organization rested upon relationships already formed within the service.[32]

The seizure was preceded by repeated attempts at negotiation. Indonesian personnel raised the issue with Japanese authorities in August 1945, again on 24 September, and finally on the morning of 27 September. A meeting on 23 September had resolved that Mas Soeharto and R. Dijar should demand a peaceful transfer while preparations were made to take the institution if the demand failed. On 24 September the Japanese conceded only that the Indonesian flag might be raised in the rear yard. On 26 September Soewarno and Nawawi Alif were assigned to organize the removal of barriers around the compound; the takeover accounts describe this work continuing on the following morning.[33]

On 27 September Indonesian employees, PTT students, members of the public, and other groups assembled around the headquarters. At approximately 10:00 a.m. organizers assigned positions and moved to secure rooms, equipment, and communications facilities against removal or destruction. A final discussion with the Japanese chief, Osada, did not produce an agreed transfer. The bell signaled the failure of the final negotiations, after which AMPTT members moved into rooms still occupied by Japanese personnel. Japanese personnel surrendered swords and pistols; the cited accounts describe the headquarters as having been taken without bloodshed.[34]

At about 11:00 a.m. Soetoko announced a new leadership: Mas Soeharto as head and R. Dijar as deputy head of the PTT of the Republic of Indonesia. These appointments combined revolutionary authorization with institutional seniority. Mas Soeharto had served in the PTT since 1919, pursued advanced internal training, and headed the materials and warehousing unit; he was among the most senior Indonesian officials in the service. His appointment made him the first head of the Republican PTT. He disappeared after being taken by the Dutch military intelligence service in 1949. R. Dijar, whose biographical account records entry into the service in 1920 after clerk tra*ining*, became deputy head and continued in service until his retirement in 1956.[35]

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[32] Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Tokoh-Tokoh Sejarah Perjuangan dan Pembangunan Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, 1985), 332; Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 28–31, 34–40.

[33] Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 68–71; Djen Amar, *Bandung Lautan Api* (Bandung: Dhiwantara, 1963), 67–72.

[34] Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 71–74; Djen Amar, *Bandung Lautan Api* (Bandung: Dhiwantara, 1963), 71–72.

[35] Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Tokoh-Tokoh Sejarah Perjuangan dan Pembangunan Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, 1985), 675–76; Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 73–74.

The choice of these figures shows that the takeover did not discard bureaucratic competence in favor of youth militancy. It joined them. Soetoko and the AMPTT supplied organization and pressure; Mas Soeharto and R. Dijar supplied seniority, administrative credibility, and detailed knowledge of the institution. Messages announcing the successful seizure were sent to PTT offices elsewhere, urging other offices to follow. The announcement demonstrates a claim to wider leadership, not simultaneous control of all PTT offices. The communications network thereby became both the object of revolutionary action and a means of circulating the call for transfer beyond Bandung.[36]

Discussion

Infrastructure, Rationalization, and Colonial State Space

The findings reposition the Bandung headquarters within the history of colonial state formation. Architectural histories usually approach the *Gouvernements Bedrijven* through style, planning, or the unrealized ambition to relocate the capital. These perspectives are indispensable, but the PTT building also needs to be read as infrastructure. It was not infrastructure in the narrow sense of a line, wire, or road. It was the coordinating place from which networks were classified, priced, maintained, and documented. Its offices made movement across those networks administratively intelligible.

The compound's differentiated spaces can be compared with the administrative divisions recorded in the almanacs. The photograph helps identify the relationship among the chief's office, postal building, and telecommunications section, while the almanacs describe formal jurisdiction. Neither source alone proves that the original design anticipated every subsequent use. The 1924 guide supplies a further perspective by documenting procedures intended to connect central authority with transactions at local offices. Taken together, these sources support an interpretation of the headquarters as a place where buildings, personnel, records, and regulatory powers converged; they do not establish the implementation of every procedure at every location.

The Weberian features identified in the PTT should not be confused with political impartiality. Hierarchy, written rules, career training, and specialization could make service delivery more predictable, but they also made colonial authority reproducible. Headquarters decided which places counted as local telephone areas, where free parcel delivery applied, what documents users must submit, how a telegram would be charged, and under what circumstances a connection could be terminated. Such decisions distributed opportunity and inconvenience. They

[36] Departemen Perhubungan, Direktorat Jenderal Pos dan Telekomunikasi, *Sejarah Pos dan Telekomunikasi di Indonesia: Jilid I, Masa Pra Republik* (Jakarta: CV Cahaya Makmur, 1980), 150–51; Herman Effendy, "Angkatan Muda Pos Telegrap dan Telepon (AMPTT) Bandung pada Awal Masa Revolusi 1945–1946" (Universitas Indonesia, 1993), 73–74.

converted technical and fiscal choices into apparently impersonal administrative facts.[37]

Bandung's rise must likewise be understood as a reconfiguration of colonial space rather than a completed change of capital. The old center did not vanish. Evidence that some general-affairs work remained in Weltevreden demonstrates that centralization could coexist with distributed functions. This helps resolve an apparent contradiction in the sources. The headquarters building could be complete in 1924, the transfer of units could be underway, and the 1928 almanac could document Bandung's location without dating the completion of that transfer. Administrative relocation was a process composed of construction, movement of personnel, redistribution of files and jurisdiction, and changes in official representation—not a single ceremonial date.

The distinction between occupancy and an administrative listing clarifies the chronology of relocation. The 1928 heading establishes that Bandung was listed as the headquarters' location by that year; it does not identify the beginning of occupancy or the date of a formal relocation decision. Katam's account of movement in 1922–23 and completion in 1924 provides a related sequence, but the available evidence does not establish the dates on which particular units, personnel, or files arrived. The earliest heading *found* in the selected almanacs is therefore a limit of the surviving evidence examined, rather than proof that headquarters functions began in 1928.

Occupation as Territorial Rescaling, Not Institutional Erasure

The Japanese occupation is often narrated as a decisive break—and in sovereignty, coercion, and political orientation it was. Yet the PTT case demonstrates why rupture should not be equated with complete institutional replacement. The occupation authorities required functioning communications from the first days of rule. The cited institutional histories describe their appropriation of buildings, lines, transmitters, records, and skilled personnel that had been assembled under the Dutch. The Bandung headquarters' persistence followed from its utility.

What changed most clearly was jurisdiction. The Netherlands Indies-wide framework fragmented among army and naval administrations. For Java and Madura, Bandung became the center of a territorially reduced but more intensely militarized service. The concentration of work formerly divided among Bandung, Jakarta, and Surabaya by early 1944 suggests that Japanese administration did not merely inherit Dutch decentralization. It recomposed it to meet the requirements of the Sixteenth Army. Centrality was preserved through rescaling.

This formulation makes continuity and change analytically compatible. Postal savings, employee education, administrative hierarchy, and technical supervision continued, but their purposes and rhetoric were redirected. Savings became a means of mobilizing material resources and inculcating wartime discipline. Training supplied communications workers for the occupation's jurisdiction. Radio and

[37] Hoofdbestuur PTT, *Post-, Telegraaf- en Telefoongids voor Nederlandsch-Indië: Acht-en-Twintigste Jaargang* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1924), 29, 70, 79, 166–67, 196, 203; Ngadisah, "Birokrasi Indonesia," in *Pengertian dan Teori-teori Klasik Birokrasi* (Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka, 2015), 11–15.

telegraph facilities entered a military command structure. The accounts describe military training among particular groups of younger employees, including the Jakarta formation reported in Asia Raja and the Bandung units recalled in institutional history. An institution can therefore preserve its routines while changing the political project those routines serve.

The PTT also reveals the limits of occupiers' control over institutional consequences. Japanese authorities sought disciplined workers, not cadres for an Indonesian seizure. Yet the accounts suggest that wartime formations supported associations among Indonesian employees, familiarized them with organized deployment, and increased their practical responsibility as Dutch personnel were removed from authority. Their subsequent mobilization shows that skills acquired within the occupation service could be used for purposes different from those of the Japanese authorities. In August and September 1945, employees applied their knowledge of personnel, rooms, equipment, and communications to a different political end.

This pattern qualifies a simple succession model in which one state disappears and another takes its place. Between 15 August and 27 September, the headquarters existed in a field of competing commands: the Japanese obligation to maintain the status quo, the Allied claim to receive surrender, and the Republic's claim to exercise sovereignty. Authority was not transferred automatically by the proclamation. It had to be made operative at specific institutions. The Bandung action was one such conversion point, where an abstract claim was joined to offices, equipment, personnel, and a chain of communication.

Expertise, Collective Agency, and the Transfer of Sovereignty

Coser's proposition that conflict can consolidate group boundaries helps explain part of the AMPTT's mobilization. The reported refusal of Japanese officials supplied a common target for the Indonesian employees' demands and can be interpreted as reinforcing solidarity; the accounts do not independently measure that effect. The collective occupation of a strategically important workplace also transformed professional association into political agency. Yet a conflict-centered reading is insufficient if it treats violence as the measure of revolutionary seriousness.[38] The PTT employees first pursued discussion and negotiated transfer. They prepared coercive action while attempting to avoid damage to the service. Their final entry was forceful, but the surrender of weapons occurred without bloodshed.

This sequence reveals a distinctive repertoire of institutional revolution. The participants were not attacking an alien apparatus from outside; they were employees claiming the institution in which they worked. Their expertise shaped the plan. Rooms and equipment were assigned protection, barriers were removed, leadership had been discussed, and a replacement hierarchy was announced immediately. The aim was not to disable communications but to preserve and redirect them. The reported sequence suggests that efforts to protect the institution and establish a replacement hierarchy contributed to the takeover's administrative significance.

[38] Lewis A. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1956), 38–48.

The respective roles of Soetoko, Mas Soeharto, and R. Dijar further demonstrate the relationship between revolutionary agency and bureaucratic continuity. Soetoko's organizational initiative and younger employees' solidarity created the momentum for seizure. Mas Soeharto's and R. Dijar's seniority connected that momentum to recognized competence. Their appointments gave the claim to Republican PTT leadership an institutional form, while the extent of effective authority beyond Bandung remained a separate question. This alliance crossed age, rank, and occupational position within the Indonesian workforce. The new institution was revolutionary in allegiance while deliberately continuous in operational form.

There is also a longer causal link between colonial professionalization and Republican capacity. Training programs such as the *Commies Cursus* had been designed to produce reliable employees for the colonial service. Hierarchy limited Indonesian advancement, yet it could not prevent the accumulation of knowledge among Indonesian staff. By 1945, senior officials understood materials, warehousing, personnel, accounting, and operational procedure; younger workers understood the physical site and had experience in organized formations. Colonial bureaucratic rationalization thereby created agents capable of appropriating the organization. This was not an inevitable outcome of training, but it was a historical possibility made real by the collapse of Japanese authority and the Republic's proclamation.

The PTT case thus complicates a heroic narrative centered only on the seizure itself. The 27 September action deserves recognition, but its effectiveness lay in preserving what decades of institutional development had assembled. The building completed in 1924, the central administration named in 1928, the specialized branches recorded across the 1930s, and the wartime concentration of command all formed the infrastructure of the revolutionary event. The takeover accounts indicate that these inherited capacities gave control of the site significance beyond the symbolic act of occupation.

At the same time, institutional continuity should not be mistaken for ideological continuity. The Dutch PTT was an instrument of colonial sovereignty; the Japanese service was subordinated to military occupation; the Republican PTT claimed national authority. Similar forms—offices, records, ranks, training, and networks—served different political orders. The historical question is therefore not whether continuity or rupture "won," but how inherited capacities were reauthorized. In Bandung, reauthorization occurred through the agency of people who were simultaneously bureaucratic insiders and political subjects of a new republic.

Historiographically, this integrated view brings three bodies of scholarship into conversation. Urban and architectural history explains why Bandung possessed a purpose-built government complex; administrative history explains how rules, divisions, and trained careers made the building operational; revolutionary history explains how Indonesian actors converted organizational location into political leverage. Studied separately, each field captures only one dimension of the headquarters. Studied together, they show that communications infrastructure was an arena in which territory, labor, and sovereignty were continually assembled.

Conclusion

Between 1920 and 1945, the PTT headquarters in Bandung developed from a component of a late-colonial building program into a decisive administrative asset of the Indonesian Republic. Its construction in 1920–24 materialized the selective relocation of technical government functions from Batavia to Bandung. The official wording *Hoofdbestuur te Bandoeng* in the 1928 *Regeerings-Almanak* confirms Bandung as the named seat of central PTT administration by that year, while leaving the precise first date of occupancy open. Completion, occupancy, and appearance in an official listing describe different developments and cannot be assigned a single date from the evidence examined.

During the late colonial period, the headquarters coordinated a specialized hierarchy of administrative, postal, telegraphic, telephonic, and technical units. Its authority operated through rules, tariffs, records, training, and the allocation of service areas. Japanese occupation then fragmented the former colony's communications geography, but retained Bandung as the center for Java and Madura. The service was militarized and redirected toward wartime needs, while inherited buildings, technical systems, organizational routines, and Indonesian personnel remained important to the reorganized service.

Those continuities helped make the events of 27 September 1945 possible. The takeover accounts suggest that its success was supported by the way collective mobilization was combined with negotiation, detailed occupational knowledge, protection of equipment, and the immediate appointment of experienced Indonesian leaders. The headquarters was neither destroyed nor improvised anew; it was politically reauthorized. The case shows how control of a strategic institution helped translate a claim to Republican sovereignty into administrative action in Bandung; it does not establish immediate Republican control of the entire communications network.

The article contributes to the historiography by linking Bandung's colonial urban development, PTT bureaucratic practice, Japanese wartime reorganization, and Republican agency in one institutional chronology. This approach treats the headquarters as both a material site and a coordinating infrastructure, using the 1928 almanac to define what can—and cannot—be claimed about the chronology of relocation. The resulting history replaces a simple narrative of successive regimes with a more precise account of continuity, rescaling, and appropriation. Political rupture was rapid; administrative capacity had been built over decades.

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