

Surapati

Surapati rebelled against the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Java in the 17th century. Both the Javanese and Europeans wrote about him. He inspired many to great deeds and filled others with fear.

Originally from Bali, Surapati fled enslavement in Batavia (Jakarta) and became the leader of a group of other Balinese runaways. Initially he fought in the service of the VOC. However, later the VOC declared Surapati an enemy. Surapati succeeded in establishing his own court in East Java where, as a sovereign, he surrounded himself with allies. He died in 1707 from wounds he sustained in a battle with the VOC.

To this day he is still praised in Indonesia for his struggle against the Dutch. In 1975 he was proclaimed *Pahlawan Nasional Indonesia* (National Hero of Indonesia), the highest distinction an Indonesian can receive.

"Surapati babad" from West Java, handwriting on dried palm leaf, c. 1750.

Masks representing Surapati and François Tack. Such masks are used in classical Javanese *wayang topéng* dance and theatre performances, before 1947.

Surapati and an enslaved female servant with the Cnoll Family, Jacob Coeman, 1665

Glass Painting with the Fight between Surapati and François Tack, c. 1900-1950.

Surapati, Abdoel Moeis, 1965 edition.