

## Introduction: Colonial Dreams, National Awakenings, and Cosmopolitan Aspirations

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On 20 May 2008, I stood outside Jakarta's Museum of National Awakening, located at the premises of the former Batavia Medical College, about to attend a symposium commemorating the centenary of Indonesia's 'National Awakening'. A large banner reading 'Indonesia Can' [*Indonesia Bisa*] featured two historical figures, the physicians Soetomo and Wahidin Soedirohoesodo, with the colonial medical college in the background (Figure 0.1).<sup>1</sup> Adjacent were pictures of Indonesia's then president and vice president waving Indonesian flags. Other images depicted the country's proud embrace of modernity: skyscrapers, highways, fighter jets, an electric train, a navy ship, an airport, a large harbour, and students working at computers. Smaller images portrayed people wearing traditional attire and sportsmen holding an impressive trophy. The event celebrated the founding of Boedi Oetomo [Noble Endeavour] in the medical college's main lecture hall by a group of medical students led by Soetomo and Wahidin.<sup>2</sup> Boedi Oetomo advocated access to modern education for all Javanese

<sup>1</sup> The suffix *-hoesodo* indicates 'healer' in Javanese. The slogan 'Indonesia Bisa!' appears to have been inspired by Barack Obama's slogan for the 2008 American presidential election: 'Yes, we can!'

<sup>2</sup> The leading role of physicians and medical students in the Indonesian nationalist movement has been observed in passing by several historians. M. C. Ricklefs mentions that the STOVIA was 'one of the most important institutions producing the lesser *priyayi* [clerks and lower functionaries in the colonial administration]' and discusses the leading role of medical students in the Indonesian youth movement and the political activities of a number of Indonesian physicians. Colin Brown, in his *Short History of Indonesia*, attributes the involvement of medical students in the founding of Boedi Oetomo to their commitment to education: 'These students represented the new emerging Indonesian professional elite, people making their way in the world not through reliance on birth or family connections but through their own efforts, and particularly through education.' George McTurnan Kahin, in his path-breaking study on the Indonesian revolution, commented that a 'surprising number of Indonesian nationalist leaders ... have been and are doctors' but does not explore why this might be the case. Bruce Grant, in his introductory *Indonesia*, states that 'physicians had an unusual influence in the nationalist movement [and] the number of medical doctors in responsible political positions shortly after independence was noticeable.' The authors of the standard *National History of Indonesia*, used in most Indonesian high schools, stated that the 'spirit of nationalism started blooming' at the Batavia Medical College. See M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia: c. 1200 to the Present*, 3rd edn (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 197; Colin Brown, *A Short History of Indonesia: The Unlikely Nation?* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2003), 118; George McTurnan

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Figure 0.1 Banner outside the Museum of National Awakening, Jakarta, on the occasion of the symposium commemorating 100 years of national awakening on 20 May 2008. Figure by author

and is widely viewed as Indonesia's first nationalist organisation.<sup>3</sup> Wahidin has been called the 'spiritual father of the entire Indies movement' and 'the figure who separate[d] our past from our future'.<sup>4</sup> Many Indonesians view the former medical college as a place where a new form of political awareness emerged which, eventually, led to today's Indonesia. In March 2014, Joko Widodo, later Indonesia's seventh president, launched his election campaign in the same building.<sup>5</sup> 'This is the place where Indonesia's ... national awakening began',

Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952), 58; Bruce Grant, *Indonesia*, 3rd edn (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996), 21; Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro and Nugroho Notokusanto, *Zaman Kebangkitan Nasional dan Masa Hindia Belanda [The Era of National Awakening and Dutch Colonial Times]*, 6 vols., vol. 5, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008), 113.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Goenawan Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi Soeryaningrat in Sosro Kartono, Noto Soeroto, and Soewardi Soeryaningrat, eds., *Soembangsih: Gedenkboek Boedi Oetomo, 1908–1918* (Amsterdam: Tijdschrift Nederlandsch Indië Oud & Nieuw, 1918); Soewardi Soeryaningrat, *Levensschets van Wahidin Soedirohoesodo* (The Hague: Hadi Poestaka, 1922), 5, 7, 9. This honour was bestowed upon Boedi Oetomo for many reasons. It was a Javanese movement, it embraced education and other ideas of the Ethical Policy, and it was silent on the role of Islam, to mention a few. The Sarekat Islam [Islamic Association, founded in 1912] has been proposed as alternative first nationalist movement in the Indies; see, for example, Achmad Mansur Suryanegara, *Api Sejarah: Buku yang Akan Mengubah Drastis Pandangan Anda tentang Sejarah Indonesia* (Bandung: Salamadani Pustaka Semesta, 2009). For the history of Boedi Oetomo, see Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism: The Early Years of the Budi Utomo, 1908–1918* (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1972); and Bambang Eryudhawan, ed. *100 Tahun Kebangkitan Nasional: Jejak Boedi Oetomo, Peristiwa, Tokoh dan Tempat* (Jakarta: Badan Pelestarian Pusaka Indonesia, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Soeryaningrat, *Levensschets Wahidin*, 4, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Bachelard, 'Red-Hot Favourite Joko Widodo Launches Presidential Campaign in Indonesia', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 March 2014, [www.smh.com.au/world/redhot-favourite-joko-widodo-launches-presidential-campaign-in-indonesia-20140316-hvjdc.html](http://www.smh.com.au/world/redhot-favourite-joko-widodo-launches-presidential-campaign-in-indonesia-20140316-hvjdc.html), accessed on 17 March 2014.

the cradle of Indonesian nationalism, and therefore, he declared, the most suitable place to announce Indonesia's next mental revolution: 'We hope that with a new national awakening, [the era] of [a] Great Indonesia will begin.'<sup>6</sup>

The metaphor of Indonesia's national awakening originated in colonial times with the founding of Boedi Oetomo. It was first articulated by Conrad Theodor van Deventer, a lawyer, Member of Parliament, prolific writer of opinion pieces, and one of the leading advocates of the so-called Ethical Policy – the Dutch equivalent of the British 'white man's burden' and the French *mission civilatrice* – which was inaugurated as the official colonial policy of the Netherlands in 1901. Rather than viewing the colonies purely as opportunities for profit, advocates of the Ethical Policy urged the citizens of the Netherlands to accept their God-given guardianship over the Indies. Colonial profits were to be reinvested in the colony itself, with a view to elevate the indigenous population through modern education, technological innovation, agricultural reform, and economic development. As with the imperial discourses of England and France, however, there was an element of darkness within the Ethical Policy. Historian Elsbeth Locher-Scholten has analysed the enmeshment of Dutch imperialism, colonial expansion, and the subjugation of the indigenous population with its ideals, which amounted to 'acquiring *de facto* political control of the entire archipelago and the development of both country and people under Dutch leadership and after Western example'.<sup>7</sup> The Ethical Policy, then, entailed extensive military campaigns, the subordination or displacement of local rulers, and the forceful suppression of opposition. Those who promoted the Policy had faith that modern civilisation would supplant primitive and tribal communities following the full subjugation of the archipelago.

Dutch politicians gave admirable motives for their colonial initiatives. The *Pax Neerlandica*, they argued, 'liberated' the indigenous population from pointless tribal warfare, headhunting, barbarism, and exploitation by warlords and power-hungry sultans. Direct intervention in the economy and in society through irrigation projects, new agricultural methods, modern infrastructure, a banking system providing small credits, subsidies for indigenous industry and

<sup>6</sup> From the speech Joko Widodo held at the Museum Kebangkitan Nasional, as quoted in 'Indonesian Political Parties Mark Start of Campaign Season', *Jakarta Globe*, 16 March 2014, [www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/indonesia-political-parties-mark-start-campaign-season/](http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/indonesia-political-parties-mark-start-campaign-season/), accessed on 17 March 2014. On Joko Widodo's promise of a mental revolution, see also Hans Nicholas Jong, 'Jokowi Wants to Start "Mental Revolution"', *Jakarta Post*, 12 May 2014, [www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/05/12/jokowi-wants-start-mental-revolution.html](http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/05/12/jokowi-wants-start-mental-revolution.html), accessed on 3 March 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten: Vijf Studies over Koloniaal Denken en Doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische Archipel, 1877–1942* (Utrecht: H&S, 1981), 212–13. Other important sources on the Dutch Ethical Policy are Suzanne Moon, *Technology and Technical Idealism: A History of Development in the Netherlands East Indies* (Leiden: CNWS, 2007) and Robert Cribb, 'Development Policy in the Early 20th Century', in *Development and Social Welfare: Indonesia's Experiences under the New Order*, ed. Jan-Paul Dirkse, Frans Hüsken, and Mario Rutten (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1993).

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arts, transmigration programs, and expanded educational opportunities would result in previously unknown levels of prosperity. In 1904, lieutenant-general J. B. van Heutsz – nicknamed the butcher of Aceh – claimed victory in the brutal warfare against the Acehnese that had lasted more than forty years. This is the symbolic marker of the subjugation of all rebellious groups in the archipelago.<sup>8</sup> That same year, van Heutsz was appointed Governor-General, and became widely known for his ‘Ethical’ initiatives, particularly in the field of education. With military control established, such initiatives sought to produce a mental transformation among the indigenous population, instilling true affection for and genuine allegiance to the Dutch queen. After establishing military control, the Dutch wanted to colonise the Indonesian mind.<sup>9</sup>

The Dutch considered education the most suitable method for transforming supposedly ignorant, primitive, and restive indigenous ‘natives’ into obedient, civilised, and productive colonial subjects.<sup>10</sup> At the founding of Boedi Oetomo, van Deventer waxed poetic, evoking Plato’s allegory of the cave and a well-known European fairy tale:

The miracle has happened. Insulinde, sleeping beauty, has awoken. Half dreaming still she raises herself from her resting place ... and moves her hand to cover her eyes to avoid the bright sunlight. She directs her gaze to the West, as if she expects to find there the answer to the question of what is going to happen to her.<sup>11</sup>

How had this miracle come to pass? Was it a loving kiss from a fair Western prince, or had the long-term burden of economic exploitation become unbearable? Did her awakening echo Japan’s victory over Russia in 1905, or had the wind conveyed the sounds of other Asian voices to her? Perhaps it was simply time to wake.<sup>12</sup> All these factors had played a role, suggested van Deventer. Something had changed in the Indies, and new aspirations, new ways of life, and new ways of feeling, thinking, and behaving were emerging – the many

<sup>8</sup> For the way the brutality of the Aceh war registered, or failed to register in Dutch national memory, see Paul Bijl, *Emerging Memory: Photographs of Colonial Atrocity in Dutch Cultural Remembrance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> The terms ‘Indonesia’ and ‘Indonesian’ were not commonly used until around 1925. When they were introduced, they carried a distinct political loading. In this chapter, I use these phrases to describe the indigenous population of the Dutch East Indies. In the remainder of this book, I follow the usage common at the time.

<sup>10</sup> In this book, I use the word ‘native’ despite its current derogatory meaning. My reasons for this are twofold: first, I do not want to ‘clean up’ the discourse of colonial Europeans; second, in the Dutch East Indies, the term ‘native’ referred to a legal category to which all individuals indigenous to the Indies belonged. The two other legal categories were ‘foreign Orientals’ (for Chinese-Indonesians and Arab-Indonesians) and Europeans.

<sup>11</sup> Conrad Theodor van Deventer, ‘Insulinde’s Toekomst’, *De Gids* 72, no. 3 (July 1908), 69. Van Deventer’s 1899 article ‘Een Eereschuld [A Debt of Honour]’ is generally considered the founding document of the Ethical Policy. See Conrad Theodor van Deventer, ‘Een Eereschuld’, *De Gids* 63 (1899), 205–57.

<sup>12</sup> Van Deventer, ‘Insulinde’s Toekomst’, 69, paraphrased.

promises of modernity. The medical students who founded Boedi Oetomo, recipients of the most advanced form of education available in the Indies, had banded together to bring education, progress, and the fruits of modern science, technology, and medicine to Java and then to the archipelago as a whole. It was a colonial dream come true for van Deventer: Indonesians had embraced the ideals of the Ethical Policy and made them their own.

In this book, I explore the relationship between medicine, colonial modernity, and decolonisation in the Dutch East Indies. I investigate why a number of outspoken Indonesian medical students and physicians embraced Western ideals of science and progress, and how this inspired them to participate in the nationalist movement. I look at the roles they played in the various associations, unions, and political parties that, together, formed the Indonesian nationalist movement. I analyse how they imagined the future of the Indies, why many of them came to support independence, and how they participated in building the Indonesian nation after independence had been achieved.<sup>13</sup> I investigate how the multiple and at times conflicting commitments of Indies physicians and medical students to the colonial state, Western modernity, the cosmopolitan medical profession, and their ethnic traditions and cultural heritage inspired them to articulate new personal and professional identities, to formulate new scientific ideals, to shape social and political associations, and eventually to push for independence. Finally, I examine how Indonesia's physicians viewed their changing relationship with the state as their identity shifted from *nationalist* physicians in a colonial state to *national* physicians in an independent one.

In the past three decades it has become commonplace to portray medicine as a tool of empire.<sup>14</sup> This book instead investigates the role of medicine in the process of decolonisation. Medicine inspired Indonesian physicians to criticise the colonial administration for the high prevalence of disease among the indigenous population and the colony's inadequate health care provisions. It offered methods, styles of thinking, and biological and physiological metaphors, for evaluating colonial society and diagnosing its ills. Indonesian physicians were ideally placed to diagnose the colonial social body, to prescribe therapeutic interventions, and to determine how colonial realities impeded the

<sup>13</sup> For a different analysis of the role of science, Western-style education, and modernity in the Indonesian nationalist movement, see Andrew Goss, *The Floracrats: State-Sponsored Science and the Failure of the Enlightenment in Indonesia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), 96–116.

<sup>14</sup> For historians who analysed medicine as a tool of empire, see Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Roy MacLeod, 'Introduction', in *Disease, Medicine, and Empire: Perspectives on Western Medicine and the Experience of European Expansion*, ed. Roy MacLeod and Milton Lewis (London: Routledge, 1988), 1–18.

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natural process of social evolution. It was their commitment to medicine that inspired several of these young men to imagine a new, independent, and healthy nation. Individually and through their professional association, these physicians actively articulated their scientific identity, which included views on the potential and actual roles of medicine in colonial society, and ideas on the nature of that society itself. This motivated them first to criticise colonial health provisions and then to formulate medical policies that would serve all Indonesians. Throughout the first part of the twentieth century, Indonesian physicians retained their dedication to science and medicine as well as to progress and development but became increasingly disenchanted with the strictures of colonial society and its Dutch rulers who continued to portray themselves as benefactors. After independence, they found themselves in a very different political context, where these strictures no longer pertained. Unfortunately, Indonesian physicians were not able to realise their medical ideals fully in an independent Indonesia.

### Medicine and the Ethical Policy

Until the late nineteenth century, Dutch military offices, merchants, and soldiers feared the East Indies as one of the unhealthiest places in the world. There were periods when all soldiers of new regiments perished within three years of arrival; it was not unusual for a third of the European population to die each year. Batavia was widely known as the Europeans' graveyard.<sup>15</sup> The colonies were rife with diseases hardly known in Europe, and Dutch physicians did not know how to treat them. Malaria was endemic in coastal settlements, near swamps, and on recently established plantations; dysentery and various other intestinal ailments were common as were dengue fever and typhoid. Cholera, influenza, tuberculosis, and nutritional deficiencies such as beriberi also caused problems for Europeans. Before the 1870s, physicians attributed the high mortality rate of Europeans in the tropics to a mismatch between race and climate, and argued that whites could never flourish there. Medical investigation focused on the process of acclimatisation, and the factors that accelerated or impeded it.<sup>16</sup> European physicians were not particularly concerned about

<sup>15</sup> Hans Pols, 'Notes from Batavia, the Europeans' Graveyard: The 19th Century Debate on Acclimatization in the Dutch East Indies', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 67, no. 1 (2012), 120–48.

<sup>16</sup> For medical theories on acclimatisation, see Philip D. Curtin, "'The White Man's Grave': Image and Reality, 1780–1850', *Journal of British Studies* 1, no. 1 (1961), 94–110; Dane Kennedy, 'The Perils of the Midday Sun: Climatic Anxieties in the Colonial Tropics', in *Imperialism and the Natural World*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 118–40; Mark Harrison, *Climates and Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600–1850* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999); Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the*

the health of indigenous people who were, by the same logic, ideally adjusted to the tropical environment and, by definition, in good health. Early in the nineteenth century, the colonial administration established a medical service to provide care to soldiers, officers, and administrative officials. Although keeping these officials in good health was necessary to maintain colonial rule, the medical service was chronically underfunded and had a poor reputation. The indigenous population came to its attention only when epidemics that might threaten Europeans broke out, providing the rationale for extensive smallpox vaccination campaigns.

In the 1880s, European and North American physicians who saw the significance of the recent discoveries of Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch on the role of microbes in disease transmission advocated broad sanitary measures to improve health. These included establishing sewers, supplying fresh drinking water, improving food production, institutionalising building codes, and making health care available to all.<sup>17</sup> Individual behaviour was also targeted: washing hands and cooking food were encouraged, and spitting in public discouraged.<sup>18</sup> Around the turn of the twentieth century, medical research in parasitology inspired new ways of framing tropical disease by relating ailments to parasites, other microorganisms, and disease vectors, rather than to a mismatch between climate and constitution.<sup>19</sup> European physicians working in the colonies advocated environmental measures to promote health, such as clearing swamps to deprive mosquito larvae of places to grow, and supplementary changes in individual behaviour, including the use of mosquito nets and personal hygiene. Despite profound changes in medical theory, European physicians continued to see the Indies as an essentially unhealthy place, but they had acquired some optimism that Europeans could adopt strategies to circumvent, manage, and alleviate tropical diseases. The once reassuring idea that indigenous people were more or less healthy was shattered as it became clear that they in fact suffered from the conditions which affected Europeans, and in greater numbers,

*Philippines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); and David N. Livingstone, 'Tropical Climate and Moral Hygiene: The Anatomy of a Victorian Debate', *British Journal for the History of Science* 32, no. 1 (1999), 93–110.

<sup>17</sup> See Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) and Michael Worboys, *Spreading Germs: Disease Theories, and Medical Practice in Britain, 1865–1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs*.

<sup>19</sup> Laurence Monnais and Hans Pols, 'Health and Disease in the Colonies: Medicine in the Age of Empire', in *The Routledge History of Western Empires*, ed. Robert Aldrich and Kirsten McKenzie (New York: Routledge, 2014), 270–84. For the notion of framing disease, see Charles E. Rosenberg and Janet Golden, eds., *Framing Disease: Studies in Cultural History, Health and Medicine in American Society* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

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and also from yaws, infestations with hookworm and other parasitic intestinal worms, trachoma, and smallpox. The colonists had simply not noticed.

Inspired by these recent developments in medical science, pioneering physician W. T. de Vogel, future director of the Indies Civil Medical Service, introduced measures of urban sanitation and *kampong* [indigenous neighbourhood] improvement in Semarang around the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> He successfully guided the expanding city away from the malarious coast to the salubrious hills. At the same time, German physician and future professor of tropical medicine at the University of Amsterdam W. A. P. Schüffner was implementing a systematic public health program in the Deli plantation area around Medan, on the east coast of Sumatra, which led to a significant reduction in illness and premature death among indentured plantation workers.<sup>21</sup> Schüffner's initiatives were the medical counterpart of the 'Deli miracle', the development of vast and immensely profitable plantations in Deli. In this sparsely populated area, 'coolies' (indentured labourers) were recruited in China and Java, and a premium was placed on their productivity – and therefore on their health. Schüffner's initiatives were so successful that the plantation owners who had employed him became convinced that the Indies needed more, and more affordable, physicians. In 1899, three wealthy plantation owners who were known as 'welfare capitalists' in the Netherlands donated funds for a new building for the Batavia Medical School (Figure 0.2). They believed that modern medical science could make the Indies safe for European habitation and transform natives into energetic workers for Dutch mines and plantations. Western medicine could also convince natives of the superiority of European civilisation and instil gratitude towards the colonisers. Moreover, they expected that locally trained and modestly waged indigenous physicians would be eager to provide the needed services. The enormous growth of the privately run plantation economy in the Indies was therefore the main driver of medical education.

In the 1880s, Indonesian intellectuals began to identify progress and development as ways to realise modern conditions in the colonies. Modernist idealism was highly appealing to Indies physicians (the degree conferred by the Batavia Medical Colleges was Indies Physician [*Indisch Arts*]), who were convinced that medical science was of tremendous potential benefit to Indonesians. Modern medicine, which they believed had powerful tools to

<sup>20</sup> De Vogel was assisted by pharmacist-turned millionaire H. F. Tillema. For a biography of the latter, including the public health initiatives both undertook, see Ewald Vanvugt, *Een Propagandist van het Zuiverste Water: H. F. Tillema (1870–1952) en de Fotografie van Tempo Doeloe* (Amsterdam: Jan Mets, 1993).

<sup>21</sup> See Jan Peter Verhave, *The Moses of Malaria: Nicolaas H. Swellengrebel (1885–1970) Abroad and at Home* (Rotterdam: Erasmus Publishing, 2011).



Figure 0.2 The Dokter Djawa School around the turn of the twentieth century, just after the new building had been completed. In 1902 it was renamed as the School for the Education of Native Physicians [School ter Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen] (STOVIA). Figure: University of Leiden library, KITLV collection (35810)

eradicate disease, appeared far superior to the age-old medical traditions of the Indies. It constituted a novel site of authority which enabled young educated men to question traditional medicine and, subsequently, tradition in general and traditional hierarchies. Their dedication to science and medicine became part of a broader social program – a political commitment to emancipation, equality, and progress. ‘Progress’ and ‘modernity’ may imply science, learning, and education, but also, as Henk Schulte Nordholt has argued, a modern lifestyle characterised by consumption, fashion, hygiene, and the conveniences of new technologies, including modern transport and communications.<sup>22</sup> The

<sup>22</sup> Henk Schulte Nordholt, ‘Modernity and Cultural Citizenship in the Netherlands Indies: An Illustrated Hypothesis’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 42, no. 3 (2011) 435–57. See also Henk Schulte Nordholt, ‘Modernity and Middle Classes in the Netherlands Indies: Cultivating Cultural Citizenship’, in *Photography, Modernity and the Governed in Late-Colonial*

protagonists of modernity were the middle classes, who came to distinguish themselves through their education, new skills, and new knowledge. The small group of educated Indonesians slowly grew after the turn of the twentieth century. Its members articulated their distinct, modern identity through their educational accomplishments and their belief in the powers of science, medicine, and technology. In the words of David Scott, they were conscripts of modernity: their adherence to these ideals was neither voluntary nor accidental, but the foundation of their modern identities.<sup>23</sup>

Advocates of modernity worldwide questioned tradition, religion, and hierarchies; they renounced the past and embraced the future.<sup>24</sup> They promoted personal liberation, freedom, and equality, all to be achieved through the elevation of reason. Some applied evolutionary models to human societies, and came to hold an intense faith in social development. It was driven by economic rationalisation, agricultural reform, industrialisation, urbanisation, secularisation, and human migration, and its markers were scientific, technological, and economic progress. Others viewed modernity politically, and saw its realisation in democracy, educational institutions, and efficient state bureaucracies. The foundational idea of modernism is that human society is open to human intervention, and may be moulded to suit the needs of humankind. The pursuit of modernity led to the rise of cosmopolitanism – the discounting of racial, ethnic, and cultural distinctions, and the heralding of a global community transcending national boundaries. For cosmopolitans, all peoples were members of the same human family, and all were striving towards the common good.<sup>25</sup> The scientific and medical communities exemplified cosmopolitanism: they were inherently egalitarian, and dedicated to the common good, to progress and to social evolution through the application of scientific findings. To Indies physicians, the egalitarian nature of the imagined cosmopolitan medical profession provided a distinct contrast to the realities of colonial life, where racial and ethnic distinctions were paramount and educational accomplishment signified little, despite repeated promises to the contrary.

*Indonesia*, ed. Susie Protschky (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 223–54; and Tom Hoogervorst and Henk Schulte Nordholt, ‘Urban Middle Classes in Colonial Java (1900–1942): Images and Language’, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 173 (2017), 442–74.

<sup>23</sup> David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982), in particular the introduction, as most of the rest of the book applies more to Europe and North America than the rest of the world.

<sup>25</sup> Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: Penguin, 2007), 10–18.