In 1893, a group of colonial officials from thirteen countries abandoned their imperial rivalry and established the International Colonial Institute (ICI), which became the world’s most important colonial think tank of the twentieth century. Through the lens of the ICI, Florian Wagner argues that this international cooperation reshaped colonialism as a transimperial and governmental policy. The book demonstrates that the ICI’s strategy of using indigenous institutions and customary laws to encourage colonial development served to maintain colonial rule even beyond the official end of empires. By selectively choosing loyalists among the colonized to participate in the ICI, it increased their autonomy while equally delegitimizing more radical claims for independence. The book presents a detailed study of the ICI’s creation, the transcolonial activities of its prominent members, its interactions with the League of Nations and fascist governments, and its role in laying the groundwork for the structural and discursive dependence of the Global South after 1945.

FLORIAN WAGNER is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Erfurt.
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CONTENTS

List of Figures viii
Acknowledgments ix
List of Abbreviations xi

Introduction 1
1 “More Beautiful than the Nationalist Thought”? Colonialist Fraternization and the Birth of Transnational Cooperation 24
2 A Transcolonial Governmentality Sui Generis: The Invention of Emulative Development 64
3 Politics of Comparison: The Dutch Model and the Reform of Colonial Training Schools 110
4 Cultivating the Myth of Transcolonial Progress: The ICI and the Global Career of Buitenzorg’s Agronomic Laboratory 149
5 The Adatization of Islamic Law and Muslim Codes of Development 173
6 Creating an “Anti-Geneva Bloc” and the Question of Representivity 209
7 Inventing Fascist Eurafrica at the Volta Congress 257
8 False Authenticity: The Fokon’olona and the Cooperative World Commonwealth 281
9 “That Has Been Our Program for Fifty Years”: Sustained Development and Loyal Emancipation after 1945 315

Conclusion 349

Bibliography 357
Index 409
FIGURES

1.1 Meeting of the INCIDI (former ICI) at Lisbon in 1957 62
3.1 German colonial officer and Dutch telegraph operator playing chess in Yap (Caroline Islands) 121
4.1 French Governor-General of Indochina Pierre Pasquier visits Java, dinner in the garden, around 1929 171
7.1 Italian fascists visiting the Nazi-Reichskolonialbund around 1938 265
9.1 Opening meeting of the INCIDI’s session in Palermo in 1963 345
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ABBREVIATIONS

AA Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin (German Foreign Ministry)
AGRB Archives Générales du Royaume Belge, Brussels (Belgian National Archives)
AMAEB Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Belges/Archives Africaines, Brussels (Archives of the Belgian Foreign Ministry/African Archives)
AMEAF Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, La Corneuve, Paris (Archives of the French Foreign Ministry)
ANOM Archives Nationales D’Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence (National Overseas Archives, France)
AOF Afrique Occidentale Française (French West Africa)
BArch Bundesarchiv, Berlin (German Federal Archives)
BNF Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (French National Library)
CFS État Indépendant du Congo (Congo Free State)
CGTT Confédération générale des travailleurs tunisiens (General Confederation of Tunisian Workers)
CO Colonial Office Archives, in National Archives, Kew
ECOSOC United Nations Economic and Social Council
HZA Hohenlohe Zentralarchiv, Neuenstein (Hohenlohe Central Archives)
ICI Institut Colonial International (International Colonial Institute)
IIfL Archives Institut für Länderkunde, Leipzig (Archives of the Institute for Regional Geography)
ILO International Labour Organization
INCIDI Institut International des Civilisations Différentes (International Institute of Differing Civilizations)
IVVR Internationale Vereinigung für Vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft und Volkswirtschaftslehre (International Association for Comparative Law and Political Economy)
KNPA Kilimanjaro Native Planters’ Association
List of Abbreviations

LoN Archives League of Nations, Palais des Nations, Geneva
PMCE Permanent Mandates Commission, League of Nations
RAI Reale Accademia d’Italia
RKA Reichskolonialamt (German Colonial Ministry)
StaHa Staatsarchiv Hamburg (Hamburg State Archives)
UCL Archives de l'Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve (Archives of the Catholic University of Leuven)
ULCSH Universiteitsarchieven, Leiden (Leiden University Archives), Collection Snouck Hurgronje
UN United Nations
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization