

Asian Studies Review

by T C

Submission date: 10-Dec-2020 11:04AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1470553722

File name: ine_and_decolonisation_in_the_Dutch_East_Indies_by_Hans_Pols.pdf (480.32K)

Word count: 1322

Character count: 7472



Nurturing Indonesia: medicine and decolonisation in the Dutch East Indies, by Hans Pols

Theresia Citraningtyas

To cite this article: Theresia Citraningtyas (2019) Nurturing Indonesia: medicine and decolonisation in the Dutch East Indies, by Hans Pols, Asian Studies Review, 43:3, 575-576, DOI: [10.1080/10357823.2019.1632778](https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1632778)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1632778>



2 Published online: 03 Jul 2019.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 49



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)

6

Nurturing Indonesia: medicine and decolonisation in the Dutch East Indies, by Hans Pols, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2018, 285 pp., A\$136.95 (hard-back), US\$80.00 (eBook)

1

This book is relevant for anyone interested in world struggles of identity politics. Through a detailed recount of the historical influence of medical students and physicians in politics in the Indonesian archipelago throughout the 20th century, the book gives insights into people's attempts to break racial and class caste systems through professional and political endeavours. It portrays the dynamics of rejecting versus taking pride in one's cultural heritage and foreign influence, and how this plays out in the creation of new personal and political identities, groups, movements and even nation states.

The author frames medical students and doctors as taking a curative approach to recognising and battling the archipelago's ills – using medical symbolisms more in reference to political pursuits than to the impacts of clinical work. The metaphor equates with an exploration of how Sukarno and other engineers built the nation through political activity. By emphasising the political role of one's field, Pols takes the nurture side of the debate, as in the book's title.

Positioned as the narrator of the journey, he examines the politicisation of medicine in the process of nation-building and highlights the role of education in social transformation. He begins by presenting Abdul Rivai, and then briefly others who were also the first to pursue medical degrees in the Netherlands, in their failing attempts to overcome racism from Dutch occupiers (and even self-racism). For Rivai, this meant trying to become as Europeanised as possible, to the extent of being disowned by his own family. These pioneers strived to advocate for Dutch education and recognition, breaking down barriers and setting the stage for further political movements. Pols then paints a picture of the lives of medical students in Batavia Medical School (STOVIA) and Surabaya Medical College (NIAS), isolated from their families and building a new urban medicalised culture beyond defined ethnic traditions. Paradoxically, this place incubated the leaders of ethnic group associations (Jong Java, Jong Sumatera, Jong Batak Bond, Studeerenden-Vereeniging Minahassa) who strived to enhance a nationalistic sense of pride in and responsibility for their respective cultures.

The next two chapters illustrate the tension between colonial Dutch physicians' racist stance towards "natives" as mentally inferior subjects of subordination and Indonesians' opposing efforts for social justice. In contrast, the Rockefeller Foundation's hygiene-education campaigns relied on alignment with the local culture and support from Indonesian physicians, propelling some into the international arena. Pols argues that these campaigns, which were heavily criticised as being pro-exploitation in other places, encouraged physicians such as Abdul Rasjid, who viewed communities as organisms whose internal dynamics are to be understood and respected, to further medical nationalism that extols tradition (*adat*).

During the Japanese occupation, medical education became nationalised, with more instruction by Indonesians in Bahasa Indonesia. At the same time, people's health had rapidly deteriorated and political confrontation with the Japanese had become increasingly physical. Pols questions the deletion of historical explanations of the true nature of medical elitist support for the Japanese, and comparatively, the subsequent national leadership roles taken by medical students who had resisted. The revolution created new roles, and forced medical players to dangerously take sides. At the end, the various health policies during the Sukarno and Suharto administrations are outlined, concluding with the continued reliance on international resources.

The book's tendency for overlapping accounts across sections suggests an iterative rather than chronological development, which while it does lead to some repetitiveness also creates the potential for independent engagement with each chapter. The first few chapters can be viewed as a collection of colonial stories of a similar tone but from slightly different angles.

The challenges of building a national health system following independence, however, are only briefly touched upon at the end, as this could be the subject of a book in its own right.

Overall, this book is a useful historical reference for academics and general readers, rich in content and gentle in prose. It may help students gain perspective on the interplay between politics and profession. History may provide clues to examine medical professionals' roles in current versions of Indonesian identity politics. Beyond Indonesia, it can add pointers to research on medical education infrastructures and inquiries on nationalistic protectionism of the profession. Most importantly, this investigation provides insights into the tensions and struggles of individuals and groups in challenging social hierarchies and achieving equity across cultural and political divides, an issue that is just as pertinent today as it was in the last century.

Theresia Citraningtyas

Universitas Kristen Krida Wacana, Indonesia

✉ Theresia.Citraningtyas@ukrida.ac.id

© 2019 Theresia Citraningtyas

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1632778>



Urban development in the margins of a World Heritage site: in the shadows of Angkor, by Adèle Esposito, 2018, 340 pp., €99.00 (hardback)

Cultural heritage recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has become the gold standard for the heritage industry. Many nations strive to have tangible, intangible and natural heritage inscribed on UNESCO's various heritage lists. One of the most important UNESCO heritage sites situated in Southeast Asia is Angkor Wat in Cambodia, an extensive site comprising around 400 km² of land housing countless magnificent remains of the Khmer empire. Its exploitation as a heritage site *avant la lettre* can be traced back to colonial times. After the fall of the Khmer Rouge in 1979, Angkor Wat started to attract international attention, funds and interest, which turned it into a site that played a large role in helping UNESCO to define its heritage definition and practices.

Although much has been critically written about the heritagisation of Angkor Wat, the impact of the construction of the site for the space and people around it has been addressed insufficiently. Esposito fills this gap by looking at how the status of Angkor Wat as a heritage site affects the non-heritage site of Siem Reap as a political and social arena with a tremendous amount of detail and information. Siem Reap is a secondary tourist city located 6 km from Angkor where most tourists stay and vacation when visiting the temples. The book shows how Siem Reap was largely shaped by attitudes and actions in the field of tourism and urban development, often led by people alien to the local context.

The first two chapters show how Siem Reap was constructed and subsequently planned as a non-heritage space from colonial times to the present. Chapter 1 shows how Siem Reap as a non-heritage space was historically established in relation to the institutional practice of heritage that was rooted in Cambodia. This practice can be traced back to the European notion of the historic monument emerging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The monuments/temples, the park and the boundaries defined Angkor Wat as the fundamental heritage space, excluding Siem Reap as the non-heritage space. Chapter 2 subsequently focuses on how Siem Reap then turned into an arena for urban planning. It shows how definitions and visions for the city were dominated by foreign-sponsored ideas, mainly French and Japanese, that penetrated Cambodia's political and professional circles.

Asian Studies Review

ORIGINALITY REPORT

15%	12%	8%	6%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	www.cambridge.org Internet Source	4%
2	dro.deakin.edu.au Internet Source	3%
3	Adèle Esposito, Adèle Esposito. "Urban Development in the Margins of a World Heritage Site", Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2018 Publication	3%
4	www.journaltoocs.hw.ac.uk Internet Source	2%
5	Submitted to Technische Universiteit Delft Student Paper	2%
6	Joseph F. Spillane. "The age of addiction: How bad habits became big business" David T. Courtwright Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press. 2019. p. 336 \$18.29 (hardcover). ISBN: 978-0674737372.", Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, 2020 Publication	1%

Exclude quotes On

Exclude matches < 15 words

Exclude bibliography On

Asian Studies Review

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

/0

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3
