



# THE PACIFIC CIRCLE



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## CONTENTS

<b>PACIFIC CIRCLE NEWS and NOTES</b> .....	2
<b>HONORING THE LIFE and WORK OF DR. JOHN E. RANDALL</b> .....	3
<b>FUTURE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, and CALLS FOR PAPERS</b> .....	5
<b>BOOK, JOURNAL, EXHIBITION and RESEARCH NEWS</b> .....	6
<b>PACIFIC BIBLIOGRAPHY:</b>	
<b>SELECT RECENT and FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS</b> .....	6
Books and Book Chapters.....	6
Articles and Essays .....	7
<b>BOOK REVIEWS</b> .....	24
Hans Pols, <i>Nurturing Indonesia: Medicine and Decolonisation in the Dutch East Indies</i> Reviewed by Deepak Kumar, Formerly JNU, New Delhi.....	24
Antony Adler, <i>Neptune's Laboratory: Fantasy, Fear, and Science at Sea</i> Reviewed by Vera Schwach, Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education.....	28
<b>SUBSCRIPTION and STAFF INFORMATION</b> .....	30



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## PACIFIC CIRCLE NEWS and NOTES

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### Business Matters

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### Congratulations to...

**Professor Zuoyue Wang**, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, was elected a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in 2019 for his historical studies of "Chinese and Chinese-American science and scientists." He spent his sabbatical leave in fall 2019 in Beijing at Tsinghua University's new History of Science Department, where he conducted historical research on Chinese American scientists and delivered a nine-part lecture series on "Sino-US Scientific and Technological Exchanges."

Prof Wang's book, in Chinese and titled *Keji geming yu meiguo xiandaihua* (scientific-technological revolutions and American modernization), was published by Shandong Education Press in Jinan, China, in 2019 (but for some technical reason it carries a copyright date of 2017). He also saw the publication of several papers: "Transnational Mathematics and Movements: Shiing-shen Chern, Hua Luogeng, and the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study from World War II to the Cold War," *Chinese Annals of History of Science and Technology* 3, no. 2 (2019): 118-

165 (co-authored by Jinhai Guo and as part of a special issue on “The Transnational Dimensions of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Modern China” edited by Danian Hu with open access); “From Modern Physics to the Cold War and Beyond,” *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 50, nos. 1-2 (2020): 25-30 (part of the journal’s 50th anniversary issue); “Entangled Worldlines: Four Physicists Whose Transnational Trajectories Reshaped Physics and Diplomacy in China and the United States,” *Forum on International Physics Newsletter* (American Physical Society), August 2020.

Prof. Wang has also been interviewed for the following media reports on U.S.-China tension, Chinese American scientists, and COVID-19 vaccines: Scott Tong, “Theft of Farming Secrets Is Backdrop for U.S.-China Trade Deal,” *Marketplace Morning Report*, American Public Media, January 15, 2020; Mara Hvistendahl, “The FBI’s China Obsession” (on the US surveillance of Chinese American scientists during the Cold War), *The Intercept*, February 2, 2020; Andrea Widener, “70 Years of US Suspicion toward Chinese Scientists – and What Those Caught in the Middle Should Do Now,” *Chemical and Engineering News* 98, no. 11 (March 22, 2020); John Ruwitch, “China Leads the Worldwide Race to Develop a COVID-19 Vaccine,” *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio, May 19, 2020; Carlos Rydlewski and José Eduardo Barella, “A Corrida Pela Vida” [a race for life], *Exame* (Brazilian business magazine), June 2020; and Yasmin Tayag, “Deteriorating U.S.-China Relations Don’t Bode Well for the Pandemic,” *Medium*, July 24, 2020.



## Honoring the Life and Work of Dr. John E. Randall

The following obituary for John E. Randall was written by Jeff Leis, University of Tasmania, Hobart, and Australian Museum Research Institute, Sydney, and originally published in *The Australian Society for Fish Biology Newsletter*, June 2020.

“Vale John E. Randall – Ichthyologist Extraordinaire”

Dr. John E. Randall, universally known as Jack, one of the world’s outstanding ichthyologists, passed away peacefully on 26 April 2020 at age 95. He was one of the first scuba diving fish scientists and focused his research on fishes living on coral reefs in both the Atlantic and Indo-Pacific.

Shortly after being discharged from the U.S. Army in California at the end of World War II, Jack purchased at a military surplus store “a steel tank wrapped in wire with an odd contraption at one end, terminating in a mouthpiece,” and then

fashioned a backpack for it. Although told he should fill the tank with compressed air, Jack reasoned that he could remain submerged longer if he used pure oxygen! Somehow, Jack managed to survive this experiment. He found Californian waters rather chilly, but couldn't afford a wet suit, so he made one by dipping his long johns into a basin of latex and hanging it on the clothesline to dry. After completing his Bachelors' degree at UCLA, he sailed his 30-foot ketch to Hawai'i – taking 28 days – to begin his PhD studies. Jack participated in a 1951 fish collecting trip to the Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati), beginning the taxonomic aspect that would become the core of his research career, but the University of Hawai'i Zoology Department would not allow him to do a purely systematic PhD thesis. The solution was a thesis combining a revision of the Surgeonfish (Acanthuridae, about 85 species) combined with an in-depth study of all aspects of the biology and ecology of the most widespread species – *Acanthurus triostegus*, the Convict Surgeonfish. By the time the PhD was completed in 1955, Jack had finished a revision of four genera of surgeonfish (published in 1955-56), a report on 396 species of fishes of the Gilbert Islands, including a list of Gilbertese fish names (published in 1955), and his study of the Convict Surgeonfish (published in 1961).

All this indicates the innovative, daring nature of Jack's approach to life and research, and his amazing productivity. Jack's core interest remained systematics, but he also made major contributions in other areas of ichthyology including feeding habits, sex change, spawning behavior, mimicry, hybridization and coral-reef ecology generally, not to mention constant efforts to better photographically portray the fishes he studied in their live colors, and later in situ.

Jack was always happy to help people, ranging from local fishers to professors, to identify fish – no matter how poor their photos or their verbal descriptions were – but especially so if a specimen could be provided. Along the way, he mentored many students. Jack was the recipient of many awards, including the Darwin Medal for major contributions to coral-reef science from the International Coral Reef Society, and the Bleeker Award for distinguished contributions in ichthyology from the Indo Pacific Fish Conference. Only eight Bleeker Awards have been presented, and Jack or his former students have received three of them: an unrivalled achievement.

Jack Randall's diving stamina was legendary: on field trips, he usually left much younger colleagues exhausted, while he labored long into the night taking photos of specimens he had collected during the day's multiple dives. If you corresponded with Jack, you would receive a long, detailed reply within days (before email), or hours (with email): in return, he would expect the same from you!

Jack Randall produced several major regional books and over 900 journal papers on all aspects of reef-fish biology, with more in press at his death. To date Jack is responsible for naming (often with co-authors) 30 genera and 834 species of fishes new to science, most of which live on coral reefs. This prodigious output made Jack the most prolific describer of coral-reef fishes in history. Given his uncompleted collaborations, it is likely another 20-25 species will eventually have been described

by Jack Randall and his collaborators. This is all the more remarkable since Jack discovered and collected such a high proportion of these new species himself while diving in coral-reef waters around the world. Of the fishes found in Australian waters, Jack (often with co-authors) described 194 species across 34 families. These range from tiny gobies to large moray eels to bonefish. The wrasses alone (family Labridae) constitute 45 Australian species. Worldwide, at least 56 species of fishes and two genera are named for Jack Randall already, as are as at least 6 crustaceans.

Jack is survived by his wife of almost 70 years, Helen, who frequently collaborated with him on his research, two children, and grandchildren. A memorial website has been established at <http://marineexploration.org/jack/>. Additions from those who knew him are welcome. Jack truly was one of a kind, a legend of an ichthyologist. His departure leaves a big gap. We will not see his like again.

More about Jack Randall and his adventurous career can be found at the following:

<http://marineexploration.org/jack/>

<https://repository.si.edu/handle/10088/7769>

“Historical Perspectives: John E. Randall,” by **David W. Greenfield**, *Copeia* 2001 (3) August 2001, 872–877. Online at [https://doi.org/10.1643/0045-8511\(2001\)001\[0872:JER\]2.0.CO;2](https://doi.org/10.1643/0045-8511(2001)001[0872:JER]2.0.CO;2)

With thanks to Rich Pyle, Bishop Museum for information on Jack Randall’s publications, and Doug Hoese, Australian Museum for information on Australian species.

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## FUTURE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES and CALLS FOR PAPERS

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9-14 November 2020. 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Australasian Mining Association, Inc., to be held in Bathurst, N.S.W. This year’s theme is: “Diversity – Dig into Mining History.” For further information, please visit <http://www.mininghistory.asn.au>.

1-4 December 2020. Pacific History Association Biennial Conference, to be held in Suva, Fiji. The conference theme is: “In Their Own Words.” Please contact [phasuva2020@gmail.com](mailto:phasuva2020@gmail.com).

2021. Early notification for the 5<sup>th</sup> Marianas History Conference, to be held in 2021, in conjunction with global commemorations of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magellan’s circumnavigation. More information forthcoming from the University of Guam.

2022. The Pacific Historical Association is organizing its 2022 Biennial as a seven-day cruise on board *P & O Pacific Dawn*, visiting a series of islands during the last week of November. Please contact the Association for further information.

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## BOOK, JOURNAL, EXHIBITION and RESEARCH NEWS

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*Environmental Chemistry* 17:303 (2020) is a special issue devoted to “Antimony in the Environment: A Chinese Perspective,” edited by Montserrat Filella (University of Geneva) and Mengchang He (Beijing Normal University).

*East Asian Science, Technology and Society* 14:2 (2020) includes a series of “Research Notes” on Joseph Needham and his scholarship in East Asia. Please see Pingyi Chu, “Needham in Taiwan: Translating *Science and Civilization in China* as Politics of Modernity and Identity” (379-392); Jongtae Lim, “Joseph Needham in Korea, and Korea’s Position in the History of East Asian Science (393-401)” and Togo Tsukahara and Jianjun Mei, “Putting Joseph Needham in the East Asian Context: Commentaries on Papers about the Reception of Needham’s Works in Korea and Taiwan” (403-410).

*The Cambridge History of Science*, volume 8, was published in May 2020. This collection of essays focuses on “Modern Science in National, Transnational, and Global Context,” and includes contributions from Circle members, including:

John Stenhouse, “Missionary Science,” pp. 90-107;  
 Richard J. Sorrenson, “Expeditionary Science,” pp. 137-148;  
 Deepak Kumar, “India,” pp. 455-475;  
 Michael A. Osborne, “Maghreb and North Africa,” pp. 476-494;  
 Shellen Xiao Wu and Fa-Ti Fan, “China,” pp. 521-554;  
 James R. Bartholomew, “Japan,” pp. 555-576;  
 Geun Bae Kim and Yung Sik Kim, “Korea,” pp. 577-592;  
 Warwick Anderson, “Philippines,” pp. 609-625;  
 R.W. Home, “Australia, New Zealand, and Oceania,” pp.712-735;  
 and  
 Marcos Cueto, “Spanish South America,” pp. 763-781.

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*Coastal Plants: A Guide to the Identification and Restoration of Plants of the Greater Perth Coast*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by **Kingsley Dixon**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*Field Guide to California Insects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by **Kip Will, Joyce Gross, Daniel Rubinoff, and Jerry A. Powell**, University of California Press, 2020.

*Field Guide to the Frogs of Australia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by **Michael Tyler and Frank Knight**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*Gariwerd: An Environmental History of the Grampians*, by **Benjamin Wilkie**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*Hawkmoths of Australia, Identification, Biology and Distribution, Volume 13*, by **Maxwell Moulds, James Tuttle, and David Lane**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*A History of Plants in 50 Fossils*, by **Paul Kenrick**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*The Indies of the Setting Sun: How Early Modern Spain Mapped the Far East as the Transpacific West*, by **Ricardo Padrón**, University of Chicago Press, 2020.

*Let There Be Light: Engineering, Entrepreneurship and Electricity in Colonial Bengal, 1880-1945*, by **Suvobrata Sarkar**, Cambridge University Press, 2020.

*Ladybird Beetles of the Australo-Pacific Region: Coleoptera: Coccinellidae: Coccinellini*, by **Adam Slipinski, Jiahui Li, and Hong Pang**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*A Lifetime in Galápagos*, by **Tui De Roy**, Princeton University Press, 2020.

*The Making of Modern Physics in Colonial India*, by **Somaditya Banerjee**, Routledge, 2020.

*New Guinea: Nature and Culture of Earth's Grandest Island*, by **Bruce M. Beehler and Tim Laman**, Princeton University Press, 2020.

*Ocean Animals: The Weirdest, Smartest and Sneakiest Sea Creatures*, by **Blake Chapman and Astred Hicks**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*Plant Names: A Guide to Botanical Nomenclature*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, by **Roger Spencer and Rob Cross**, CSIRO Publishing, 2020.

*Reptiles and Amphibians of New Zealand*, by **Dylan van Winkel, Marleen Baling, and Rod Hitchmough**, Princeton University Press, 2020.

*Seeds of Control: Japan's Empire of Forestry on Colonial Korea*, by **David Fedman**, University of Washington Press, Weyerhaeuser Environmental Book Series, 2020.

*The Warrior, the Voyager, and the Artist: Three Lives in the Age of Empire*, by **Kate Fullagar**, Yale University Press, 2020.

## ARTICLES and ESSAYS

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“A Review of Australia’s Mesozoic Fishes,” by **Rodney W. Berrell, Catherine Boisvert, Kate Trinajstic, Mikael Siverson, Jesús Alvarado-Ortega, Lionel Cavin, Steven W. Salisbury, and Anne Kemp**, *Alcheringa: An Australasian Journal of Palaeontology* 44:2 (2020), 286-311.

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“A Revision of the Endemic Australian Robber Fly Genus *Daptolestes* Hull (Diptera: Asilidae) and Description of *Humorolethalis* Gen. Nov.,” by **Isabella J. Robinson, Xuankun Li, and David K. Yeates**, *Austral Entomology* 59:3 (2020), 487-504.

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“Talking About Brushfires: Difference and Division in Australia’s Environmental Crisis,” by **Adrian Peace**, *Anthropology Today* 36:4 (2020), 3-7.

“Taxonomic Analysis of *Jania* (Corallinaceae, Rhodophyta) in South-Eastern Australia,” by **A.S. Harvey**, **W.J. Woelkerling**, and **B. de Reviere**, *Australian Systematic Botany* 33:3 (2020), 221-277.

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“Translational Research in Agriculture. Can We Do It Better?” by **John B. Passioura**, *Crop & Pasture Science* 71:6 (2020), 517-528.

“A Treasure from the Past: Former Sperm Whale Distribution in Indonesian Waters Unveiled using Distribution Models and Historical Whaling Data,” by **Achmad Sari, Mochamad I.H. Putra, Putu L.K. Mustika, and Albertinka J. Murk**, *Journal of Biogeography* (2020), online at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>.

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“Two New Pontocyprididae (Ostracoda) Species from Korea,” by **Ivana Karanovic**, *Journal of Natural History* 53:45-46 (2020), 2801-2815.

“Two New Species and a New Record of *Crepidotus* (Agaricomycetes) from India,” by **A. Manoj Kumar, M. Catherine Aime, K.B. Virinda, and C.K. Pradeep**, *Australian Systematic Botany* 33:4 (2020), 380-391.

“Two Years of Impairment: Plastic Packing Strap on a Bull Shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*) in Fiji,” by **Juerg M. Brunnschweiler and Natasha D. Marosi**, *Pacific Conservation Biology* 26:2 (2020), 208-209.

“Unwelcome Guests: A Selective History of Weed Introductions to Arid and Semi-Arid Australia,” by **M.H. Friedel**, *Australian Journal of Botany* 68:2 (2020), 75-99.

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“Using Network Analysis to Identify Keystone Species in the Food Web of Haizhou Bay, China,” by **Jiaying Wu, Yang Liu, Haozhi Sui, Binduo Xu, Chongliang Zhang, Yiping Ren, and Ying Xue**, *Marine & Freshwater Research* 71:4 (2020), 469-481.

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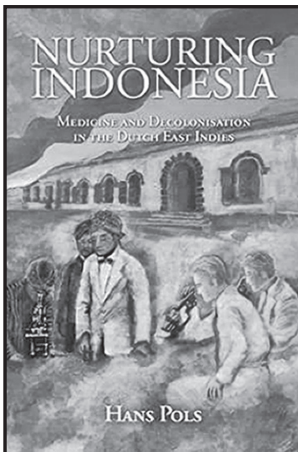
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## BOOK REVIEWS

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Hans Pols, *Nurturing Indonesia: Medicine and Decolonisation in the Dutch East Indies*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, xx + 285, Maps. Figures. Biblio. Index. ISBN 1108424570 and 978-1108424578.



Set in a major outpost of the *Pax Neerlandica*, this book looks at the contours of colonial dreams and national awakening from the perspective of medicine and modernity. The dream was to ‘nurture’ the East Indies, which gradually aroused new aspirations, some inner-conflicts, and ushered in modernity. This may be true more of the first half of the twentieth century than the earlier decades of brute colonization, and the author rightly concentrates on the years after 1900. The nuances of the encounter remind me of *The Tempest*. In the last chapter, the author refers to a Dutch novel *Oeroeg* published when the Indonesians were about to win independence. It is a story of two childhood buddies, one Dutch, the other ‘native.’ Both studied together in a Dutch school. Years later when they met again, friendship was gone. Caliban was calling shots, and Prospero was non-plussed!



*Nurturing Indonesia* has nine well-drafted and heavily referenced chapters. The first three chapters deal with what the author calls 'Enticement of Modernity.' The next three are devoted to the colonial ambivalence, psychological damages, and the impact of the Great Depression. The third set of three chapters outline the revival of the medical spirit and the inevitable decolonization. All through the book, the focus remains on the Indies physicians who were trained in modern medicine, and it is this unwavering focus that makes this work different and noteworthy. The sources are impeccable and the narration lucid.

The book begins with a nice introduction to the theme. In 1901, a Dutch lawyer van Deventer called for an Ethical Policy geared to foster improvements in agriculture, spread of education, and the introduction of new technologies leading to economic development. Deventer compared this to the awakening of 'a sleeping beauty.' The time was ripe. Even van Heutsz – nicknamed the butcher of Aceh – supported these initiatives. How did this happen? Was it a 'loving kiss from a fair Western prince,' the author asks? Medical education, however deficient it might have been, had produced a new medical elite which had new aspirations, new ways of life, and promises of modernity. In 1908 two young and committed physicians Soetomo and Wahidin, established an institution called *Boedi Oetomo* (Noble Endeavour). They advocated access to modern education for all Javanese. As in Malaysia and the Philippines, medicine inspired the Indonesian elite to question the colonial administration and start the process of decolonization. They reflected Virchow's description of physicians as 'the natural attorney of the poor.'

Chapter 1 discusses the status of the 'native' physicians straddling two worlds, one of European medicine, the other indigenous herbal and animistic. The author presents a case study of Abdul Rivai who had graduated from the Doktor Djawa School in 1895 and later led the post-War generation of the Indies physicians. Rivai believed in the transformative power of science, technology and medicine. Also discussed is the role of the vernacular press in propelling desire for *kemajuan* (progress). Like Rivai, doctors like Wahidin and Soewarmo supported *kaum muda* (young generation). There were about twenty such physicians, and they wanted to replace the traditional aristocracy by some kind of an intellectual aristocracy. No wonder Rivai was criticized by some of his colleagues like Md. Amir as 'a Malay soul hypnotized by the West.'

Chapter 2 is a little unusual; it has very interesting observations on the student life. Hybridity comes out so well. Medical education was not easy. The course was very long, three years preparatory followed by seven years of medical education. Language was a major problem; it was very difficult to find the Malay equivalents for scientific terms. But there is no discussion on pedagogy or curriculum. Chapter 3 discusses the significant role played by Soetomo and Wahidin, and their institutions like *Jong Java – Jong Sumatra*, in the new awakening. Other activists like Radjiman and Tjipto also appear, and their differences and inner tensions are laid bare. In

chapter 4 the focus shifts to professionalization as reflected in the works of the Association of Indies Physicians. It had to fight both the conservative colonial Dutch physicians (who had their own Union of European Physicians) as well as the traditional aristocracy. Dutch critics like Kohlbrugge argued that new education had created a rootless group of urban quasi-intellectuals. He called them 'scientific proletariat; impatient and dangerous.'

The author accepts that racial discrimination was fundamental to European colonialism, and elaborates upon it while discussing colonial psychiatry in chapter 5. Social Darwinism held the sway. A Dutch psychiatrist in Batavia van Loon considered the natives 'childish' and 'infantile.' The myth of the 'Lazy Native' was so common. A highly conservative Political-Economic Association (a syndicate of sugar factories) launched racial attacks. The 'natives' had no means to defend themselves; there was no level field, much less level pegging.<sup>1</sup> But physicians like Soetomo and Md. Hatta vigorously opposed such notions. They organized institutions like study clubs, banks, and labour unions, etc. Periodicals were started and in 1925 the first 'native' medical journal was 'published by ourselves and for ourselves.' It was no doubt a political act.

Soon was to appear a calamity: the Great Depression. It devastated the plantation economy. This is discussed in chapter 6. Also discussed here is the role of an international philanthropic organization, the Rockefeller Foundation. This Foundation focused on hookworm and malaria, especially in plantation economies. In 1924, J. Hydrick was sent to the Indies.<sup>2</sup> He produced a number of health films which impressed the Indonesian physicians but the European physicians considered it an intrusion in their domain. For the first time public health came centre stage, that too, in the midst of severe financial constraints. This Foundation did inspire the local physicians to look at rural areas. But before any recovery could take place, Japan took over Java in the wake of the Second World War. The new rulers talked about a new Asian path to modernity. Many Indonesians like Dr. Soekarno (future President) collaborated with the Japanese. But during 1943-45 there were food shortages, medicines became scarce, and people were dying in large numbers. Soon student dormitories (*asramas*) established by the Japanese became sites of anti-Japanese movement. In August 1945 independence was declared by the nationalist forces. But a fight broke out which continued for almost four years. In between the Dutch took control again. All this is discussed in great detail in chapters 7 and 8.

Dutch neo-colonialism had no chance of success. Real independence finally came in 1949. This sets the tone for chapter 9 which explains how the 'nationalist' physician had now become 'national' physician. But the new country faced internal conflict, external pressures and hyper-inflation. In 1950 Indonesia had one physician per 75,000 and the rural areas had no access. The greatest health concern was malaria. DDT worked for few years but then it became resistant. Development was

slow. In 1968 an impatient General Suharto replaced the far-too-left Soekarno. The author seems to be in awe of this military dictator. He writes, with the American help and military dictatorship, per capita income increased from \$50 in 1968 to \$1,125 in 1996 and life expectancy rose from 48.7 to 66.6 years. Remarkable, no doubt, but the author does not discuss what a turmoil the monetary/financial crisis of the late nineties had caused and what were the health consequences. With the end of the twentieth century, the story ends.

The book has a very comprehensive bibliography and useful illustrations. The real significance of this book lies in its constant focus on the physicians of the Indies. He could have made some theoretical or conjectural transgressions. For example, the discourse of empire was not singular. The European imperial powers had differences of their own and they created different politico-economic structures in different empires guided by their distinct topography and resources, etc. Even the response they elicited from the local populations differed greatly.

I wish the scholar had given a little comparative perspective; South Asia, for example. He does mention that Soetomo and Md. Amir were influenced by theosophical ideas. Rabindranath Tagore is quoted by Soewardi complaining about the ‘emptiness in our mind.’ Not many know that Soetomo in his writings and speeches, never referred to western ideologues; rather he would quote from Gandhi, Tagore and Vivekanand. He visited India in 1936 and was greatly disappointed ‘because of conditions in North India with its poverty and slovenliness.’ He also failed to meet his idol, Mahatma Gandhi, and was upset by a ‘somewhat rude reception and the neglected and dirty conditions of Gandhi’s quarters.’ ‘Better see the peak of a mountain from a distance,’ he quipped.<sup>3</sup>

A serious shortcoming is the absence of any discussion on female health or training of female doctors. To quote Raden Kartini, daughter of a Javanese regent who pioneered women’s emancipation and education, ‘The Hollanders laugh and make fun of our stupidity, but if we strive for enlightenment, then they assume a defiant attitude toward us.’<sup>4</sup> Poor Kartini does not figure! Moreover, there must have been articles, tracts, and pamphlets, etc. written in the local language *Bhasa*. I wonder if the scholar has seen them. Yet I remain grateful to him for bringing to fore the difficulties, courage and fortitude of our Indonesian brethren.

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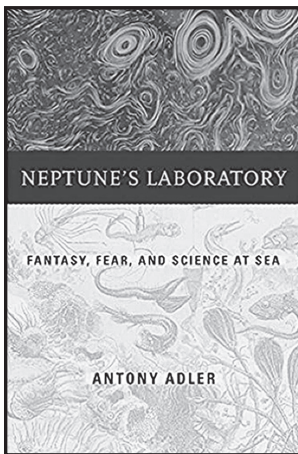
<sup>1</sup> Deepak Kumar, ‘Unequal Contenders, Uneven Ground: Medical Encounters in British India’, in A. Cunningham and B. Andrews (eds.), *Western Medicine as Contested Knowledge*, Manchester, 1997, pp.172-90.

<sup>2</sup> Earlier in 1916 an American doctor Darlin had arrived in Java to study malaria work. The Dutch doctors were apprehensive and did not like the intrusion. Darlin described the Dutch as ‘extremely rude’ and ‘fat.’ Han Mesters, J.L.Hydrick in the Netherlands Indies: An American view of the Dutch Public

Health policies,” in Peter Boomgaard, et al (eds), *Health Care in Java: Past and Present*, KTLV Press, Leiden, 1996, pp. 51-62.

<sup>3</sup> Paul van der Veur, *Toward a Glorious Indonesia: Reminiscences and Observations of Dr. Soetomo*, Southeast Asia series 81, Ohio Univ. Press, Ohio, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> L.H. Palmier, *Indonesia and the Dutch*, OUP, London, 1962, pp. 6-7.



Antony Adler, *Neptune's Laboratory: Fantasy, Fear, and Science at Sea*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019. 256 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. ISBN 9780674972018 Cloth US\$39.95.

Antony Adler examines how humans have interacted with the sea and conquered oceans since 1850. *Neptune's Laboratory* has an emphasis on science, but incorporates cultural and political values, social attitudes and circulation of knowledge, hence the subtitle: *fantasy, fear and science at sea*. The book has a focal point in marine biology, a significant discipline within the multidisciplinary field of marine science/ocean studies. Adler concentrates on

environmental concerns and conservation, whereas marine science and technologies as bases for marine and maritime industries gain much less attention.

Adler analyses in chronological order five topics from the history of marine science. Chapters 1 and 2 narrate the emerging field in a formative period, from 1850 to 1914. In doing this Adler deals with facilities that enabled and framed conditions for building knowledge such as scientific discoveries, expeditions, instruments and marine biological (zoological) stations (p. 13-73). He portrays the emerging marine science in Great Britain, USA as well in France and Italy. His attention to Southern Europe is most welcome, as up to now narratives about developments in United Kingdom and the USA have dominated this field of study. Alas, marine research carried out in Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia is omitted consciously from the historiography (p. 176, n.14). By keeping North-Western Europe *mare incognito*, Adler loses a chance to come to grasp with underlying structures and fundamentals to current scientific communities, institutions and theories and schools of thought. In addition, the early movement of scientific internationalism in ocean studies could have

formed a worthwhile backdrop to the Scientific Internationalism in the Pacific World.

Moving from Europe, chapters 3 to 5 have a focal point on the USA, especially the American Pacific. Chapter 3 should be of particular interest to *Bulletin* readers. To quote Adler: “We are going to become Pacific-minded instead of Atlantic minded” (p.78). The all-American concept of frontier pervades this story of the Pacific. Adler’s shows how the promise of a new frontier for scientific discovery in the Pacific basin seized the imagination of scientists and helped reshape Americans’ perception of their place in the world after World War I (p. 74). He reflects excellently about the ways in which the Pacific was a new terrain for discovery, and how combined scientific and strategic efforts gave opportunities for national prestige with an overtone of internationalism (p.74-100). Across the book, including in this chapter, Adler elucidates the multiple ways scientists have reached out and connected to a broad public and infused the American popular culture. Adler’s exploration on circulation of knowledge and public outreach is an exciting take on how historians can combine history of science with cultural history.

World War II represented a watershed in the USA; in the decades to come, marine science was to a large extent shaped by the requirements of naval warfare. The book’s 4th chapter is a case from the Cold War era: Project Sea Use from 1960 to 1975. Adler examines attempts to develop technologies that would enable divers to extend the time they could stay and live under water. In this case study he analyses the manifold, combined collaborative, national strategic effort across academics, state government, military and private industrial interests (p. 101-134).

The 5th chapter deals with efforts to save the dying sea and marine environment in the Anthropocene epoch. Adler goes back to 1970 and the many efforts to save the ocean by regulating human activities. He argues for the importance of Law of the Sea and Ocean governance and shows how fears more than fantasy stand in the foreground in recent debates on the fate of the planet and human shortcomings (p. 135-165).

Adler’s introduction has a great value for any scholar in need of an up-to-date analysis of main historiographical trends in the field (p. 1-12). He summarizes various concepts on what historiography of marine science is about and makes clear that the end of The Cold War in 1990 has influenced historical writing heavily. The last decade’s and Adler’s ambition to integrate offshore, marine environments into the, till now, onshore dominated environmental history clearly needs to be taken seriously and followed up.

A very few critical comments aside, Adler’s history on how scientists have approached and imagined ocean environments, is nothing but impressive. The book displays outstandingly, with the point of departure in scientifically gained knowledge, the manifold and changing perceptions of the sea. It offers new valuable insight into ocean studies as well as the field’s multiple and intriguing communications with the

public and politics. *Neptune's Laboratory* triggers for further explorations of the past and present visions – fantasies, hopes and fears for the sea and oceans. The book contributes substantially to the understanding of the history of marine and ocean studies and contemporary environmental challenges; it should reach a wide audience with thirst for knowledge about, and commitment for, our blue planet.

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