

## PREFACE

The choice of the topic 'Dutch medicine in the Malay Archipelago', in honor of Daniel de Moulin's retirement, is based on his love of that country. He was born in 1919 in Buitenzorg on Java and there spent his youth. While he was in the Netherlands pursuing his medical studies, the Second World War broke out, which was to bring about a great change in perspective in the Dutch Indies. In 1943, De Moulin enlisted in the Royal Dutch East-Indian Army and set out for New Guinea. He had, no doubt, envisaged his return to the Malay Archipelago in quite different terms. After his demobilization, in 1946, he returned to the Netherlands where he settled permanently. He never returned to Indonesia again.

Daniel de Moulin has always been a hard worker. His diverse qualities as doctor, professor, scholar, and above all, as an amiable man of integrity, have been honored in the Festschrift *De novis inventis* which was presented to him by his friends on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday.<sup>1</sup> Thumbing through this collection, one will note the absence of any article dealing with the Dutch Indies. To be sure, the purpose of the Festschrift was to offer a collection of 'discoveries whose real value had not been immediately appreciated but which later received recognition', nonetheless, such discoveries were most certainly made in the Dutch Indies as well. Could it possibly be that, five years ago, in the Dutch medical historical world no one except De Moulin was actually engaged in studying the subject in the Malay Archipelago?

The study of the history of medicine in the former Dutch Indies forms part of the research undertaken at the institute for the history of medicine at Nijmegen, which is the brain-child of De Moulin and, thanks to his efforts, has developed into a flourishing university institution. Several publications in this area emerged under his supervision or from his own hand<sup>2</sup>, but his major study was to come after the completion of his *A history of surgery with emphasis on the Netherlands*.<sup>3</sup> All along, he had been collecting materials, photographs and slides, which were otherwise in danger of being lost. Unfortunately, due to the ill-fated accident which befell him, De Moulin will not have the chance to complete his undertakings. And so, there is all the more reason to hope that others will take up the study of the history of medicine in the Malay Archipelago.

The symposium which is being held on the occasion of De Moulin's seventieth birthday, is consequently concerned with drawing attention to this topic. Bringing together different academic disciplines will, we hope, stimulate scholarly study of the history of medicine in the former Dutch Indies, the birth place of Daniel de Moulin.

A. de Knecht-van Eekelen

#### NOTES

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3. D. de Moulin, *A history of surgery with emphasis on the Netherlands*. Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff, 1988.