



Uniting the World through Science Pieter Eijkman's World Capital in The Hague

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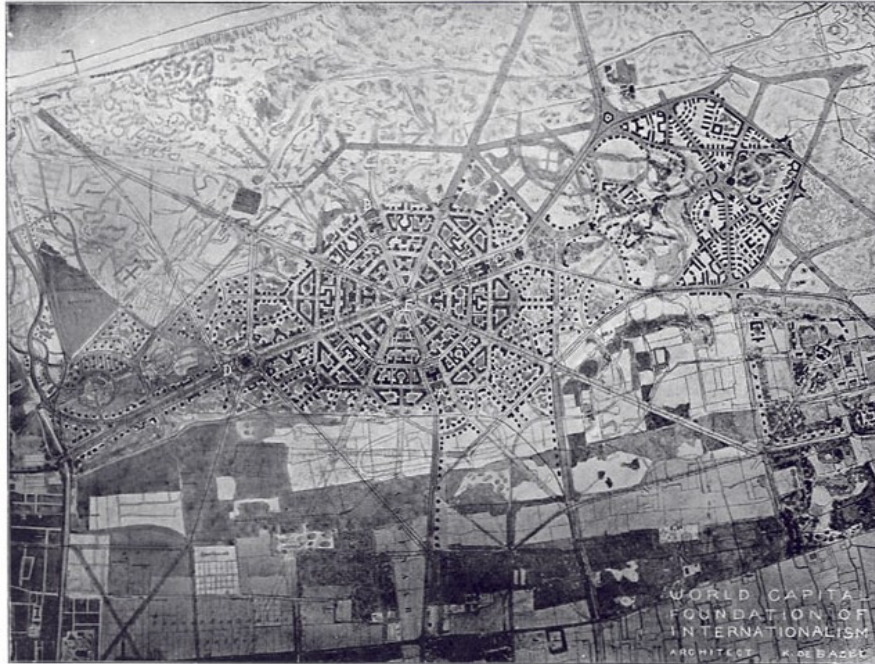
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In 1905 the Dutch physician Pieter Eijkman proposed to build a gigantic World Capital of Science in the dunes near The Hague. This “Intellectual World-Center” or “Athens of the Future” would consist of the headquarters of all major international scientific organizations, of conference centers, and of research facilities – all grouped around the Peace Palace that had already been planned to house the International Court of Arbitration. For almost ten years, Eijkman campaigned for this plan, which, despite the support of prominent scientists and politicians, home and abroad, never materialized. In the process, however, Eijkman built up a large database on international organizations, which he partly published as *L'Internationalisme Médical* (1910) and *L'Internationalisme Scientifique* (1911).

In some respects, Eijkman's vision resembles Otlet's 'City of Intellect' and Mundaneum. Knowledge gathering and world peace were closely intertwined. But there are also significant differences. One was the integral role of the Peace Palace. Eijkman saw great resemblances between science and arbitration. Another is the presence of conference halls and laboratories. The World Capital was also a place for scientific practice. And a final divergence is its location. The Netherlands, unlike Belgium, was not a country with internationalist traditions and aspirations.

In my paper I try to bring these characteristics together, and situate them in the changing Dutch cultural climate of the time. It will appear that the epithet 'Capital' for Eijkman's world city was to be taken quite literally.



A. Pedagogie. B. Hygiëne. C. Economie. D. Vroedspels. E. Monument der Intern. verbroedering.
Dr. Eykman's Stichting voor Internationalisme.