

niod

institute for war,
holocaust and
genocide studies

Review and highlights

NIOD in 2021





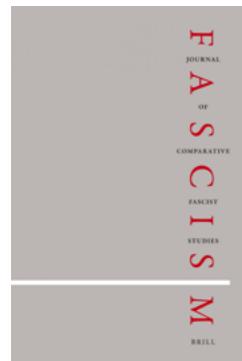
NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies is a centre of expertise for research on the history of world wars, large-scale violence and genocides, and their effects on society. In addition, NIOD collects, stores and provides access to archives and collections about the Second World War and other conflicts. The centre also provides public institutions and individuals with information about the Second World War.

NIOD was established in 1945 to document the history of the Second World War in the Netherlands and the Indonesian archipelago. This is still one of the institute's aims, but it has significantly broadened its scope over the years. For example, on 9 April 2021, NIOD organised the symposium *Looking Backward, Moving Forward*, to mark the 20th anniversary of the Holocaust and Genocide studies domain. At this symposium, experts further consolidated research on war, genocide and the Holocaust, and brought together the academic and social communities who work on these topics.

In the academic field, NIOD presents itself as a centre of international, comparative and multi-disciplinary research. NIOD researchers study perpetrators, experiences, memory and trauma, transitional justice, restoration of rights, and regime change. In short: themes that shed light on mass violence in the 20th and 21st centuries as a global phenomenon.

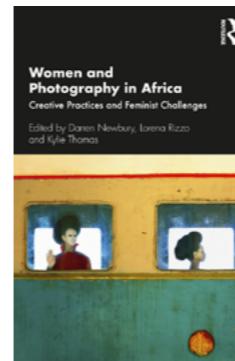
Photo: Frank van Vree en Martijn Eickhoff tijdens directeurswissel, photographer Joke Schut

Publicaties uitgelicht



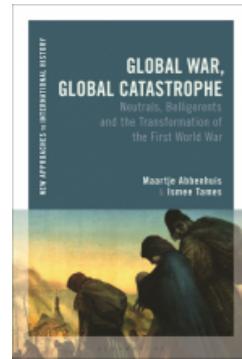
Fascism Journal
Brill en NIOD, 2021

The NIOD journal *Fascism. Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* published its 10th volume in 2021. The first issue includes a debate about former US president Donald Trump. The second issue contains articles about fascism in the First Slovak Republic (1939-1945) and about decolonising fascism studies.



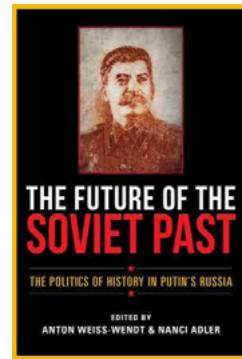
Women and Photography in Africa: Creative Practices and Feminist Challenges

In this multi-author collection, Kylie Thomas explores the involvement of women in African photography, past and present. She presents the life and work of African female photographers, both known and unknown, in a theme-based fashion. The book raises critical questions about race and gender, and makes the reader think about the history of photography in a new way.



Global War, Global Catastrophe
Bloomsbury, 2021

This book offers an innovative history of the First World War (WWI). It is an accessible and readable alternative to existing studies. *Global War* presents WWI as an all-consuming industrial war, which affected the future of all the world's population. Authors Maartje Abbenhuis and Ismee Tames conclude that we can only truly understand the impact of this war if we investigate the history of neutral communities.



The Future of the Soviet Past. The Politics of History in Putin's Russia
(Indiana University Press, 2021)

President Putin's regime is trying to reframe Russian national historiography in order to improve its own image. In the volume *The Future of the Soviet Past*, Anton Weiss-Wendt and Nanci Adler show that Russia's inability to completely rewrite its Soviet past plays an important role in the current political agenda of those in power.





Synagogue Zwolle (1997), RCE, Gerard Dekker



Bersiap (Java, 1945), Beeldbank WO2, 48870, NIOD



Signpost Maly Trostenets (2017), A. Bobeldijk



Merapi Merbabu (Midden-Java, 2019), P. Keppy

Ongoing research highlighted

Legal rehabilitation of Jewish inhabitants of Zwolle

Commissioned by the municipality of Zwolle, NIOD is conducting research into the deprivation and restoration of rights of Jewish inhabitants of Zwolle during and after the German occupation. The city's Jewish community was severely affected by measures imposed by the German occupying authorities – and the Dutch government agencies that were involved. In this project (2021-2025), PhD student Meta Huijsmans studies the systematic disenfranchisement during the occupation and the way it was dealt with after the war, which was often experienced as cold and inadequate. The study consists of an analysis of the formal administrative and legal processes – and the extent of the municipality's involvement in them – and a study of the experiences of Zwolle citizens who survived the war. This provides insight into how the local society dealt with its history of occupation.

Independence, decolonisation, violence and war in Indonesia

This study deals with the violence used by the Dutch armed forces during the war in Indonesia (1945-1949). The study aims to answer questions about the nature, causes and impact of Dutch violence in that period. How should we regard the official government position of 1969, which is that there was no question of 'systematic cruelty' by the Dutch army? The researchers consider the military, political and legal aspects of the violence, as well as the consequences for various population groups. They also examine the political and social aftermath in the Netherlands. This research is a collaborative program of the NIOD, the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) and the Netherlands Institute for Military History (NIMH). The research group also collaborated with researchers from Indonesia and other countries on a number of subsidiary projects. The group will present its findings in a public event on 17 February 2022.



The history of Maly Trostenets (1939-2010s)

The former kolkhoz Maly Trostenets, near Minsk, was used by the Nazis as a forced-labour camp between 1942 and 1944. They murdered large groups of people in the forests near the former Soviet collective farm. In this study, NIOD investigates the history of Maly Trostenets and the culture of remembrance that has arisen around this site. What exactly happened at Maly Trostenets? And how has the history of this site been written? PhD student Anne-Lise Bobeldijk analyses broad historical developments and personal stories. She does this by bringing together contemporary sources, ego-documents and post-war sources.



Indonesia in transition

This project by Peter Keppy (NIOD), Bart Luttkhuis (KITLV, until 2020), Roel Frakking (Utrecht University) and Abdul Wahid (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia), which is funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO), studies the relationship between society and the state in early independent Indonesia through the phenomenon of vigilantism. In 1952, state-facilitated 'people's defence groups' emerged in Central Java. These vigilantes took justice into their own hands, which they did with impunity, and they were sometimes prompted by state institutions in military actions against rebels and criminals. The early 1950s proved to be an important formative period for Indonesia, in which the young state developed an illegitimate but effective internal security system by outsourcing violence to civilian militias. The presence of vigilantism and civilian militias is not always or necessarily a sign of a weak or 'failing' state. The conclusions of the study will be published in a monograph by Peter Keppy and Abdul Wahid.





Protest Lages committee (1952), NA, Wim Consenhein



Anti-apartheid activist Debora Marakalala (Durban, 1985),
Gille de Vlieg

Emotional Imprints: A Computer-assisted Analysis of War-related Emotions in Dutch Parliamentary Debates, 1945–1989

A computer-assisted approach is used in this project to investigate the role of emotions in dealing with the consequences of World War II in the Netherlands between 1945 and 1989. By ‘emotion mining’ hundreds of digitised historical documents, Milan van Lange investigated emotions in the political engagement with the people who experienced the long-term effects of the war, such as former collaborators and war criminals, the anti-Nazi resistance, and various groups of war victims. The resulting dissertation, *Emotional Imprints*, offers a creative and innovative perspective on ‘things we think we know’, such as the presumed ‘silence’ that was followed by a period of ‘emotionalisation’ in Dutch post-war history. Furthermore, it shows how historical research can be fruitfully enhanced by methods from various academic fields.

Van Lange carried out his PhD research (2016–2021) at the NIOD and obtained his PhD from Utrecht University in December 2021.

Women, Photography and Resistance in Trans-national Perspective

In the NIOD project *Women, Photography and Resistance in Transnational Perspective*, Kylie Thomas studies female photographers who were part of resistance movements and used their work to expose repressive regimes. The study presents photography as a medium that not only makes painful events from the past visible, but can also encourage action and resistance. This project is funded by the European Commission.



Projects and programmes

NIOD Rewind

In the English *NIOD Rewind: Podcast on War & Violence*, NIOD researchers Anne van Mourik and Thijs Bouknegt interview academics about the causes, course and consequences of war and violence. What are these researchers working on? What are the main debates and insights in the field? And how does history relate to debates, events and phenomena in the present?

The NIOD Rewind podcast is about innovative research, interesting methods and new publications, and regularly highlights the work of NIOD researchers. The second season of the podcast appeared in 2021, with a total of seven episodes. They dealt with topics such as coping with hunger under German Occupation, what we can learn from games about the Second World War, and enforced disappearances during the Apartheid era in South Africa.



Dutch Network of War Collections (NOB)

Early November, the renewed website, Oorlogsbronnen.nl launched, which is the digital platform for anyone who wants to know more about the Second World War. NIOD is one of the 87 participants of the network, and sources from the NIOD-collection are part of the search engine..

The history of the war is hidden in millions of photographs, objects, letters, records, diaries, posters, newspaper reports and film footage. These ‘silent witnesses’ come from the collections of hundreds of archives, museums and other institutions in and outside the Netherlands. The website Oorlogsbronnen.nl links the heritage of more than 250 organisations. The program team and the participating organisations spent six years building a digital infrastructure. The participants turned sources into data, which they then processed into information. In this way, the Dutch Network of War Collections guides people more effectively through the war history of their family or of the place where they live.

In the coming years, the Dutch Network of War Collections will continue in a different form. With new objectives, but based on the same question: how do we make analogue heritage digitally available, so that new generations can easily acquire knowledge about the Second World War?

Adopt a diary

Diaries from the Second World War are a unique historical source. As fewer and fewer people who lived through the war are still alive, the information in such diaries is becoming increasingly valuable. In the project 'Adopt a Diary', NIOD has been working with volunteers since 2018 on transcribing the diary collection. Through this work, every word of the more than 2,100 war diaries that NIOD manages will become searchable.

The volunteers look at life during the occupation through the eyes of the diary authors. When transcribing, they copy literally what the authors wrote down – including spelling mistakes, abbreviations and old-fashioned language. This preserves the authenticity of the source in the best way possible. An editorial team checks whether the transcriptions comply with a number of basic guidelines. The team of over 120 volunteers has already transcribed nearly 300 diaries. The digitised diaries enable NIOD to apply new research methods such as text mining, which is the analysis of large amounts of text using software.



Beeldbank WO2 - NIOD

ImageLab: the 'darkroom' of history

The way people look at war and mass violence is constantly changing, partly due to rapid developments in image technology and digital archiving. The NIOD research programme *ImageLab* analyses the historical meaning and emotional power of images created in the 'darkroom of history' and adjusted in the digital era.

In the project, researchers Kylie Thomas, Kees Ribbens and collection specialist Harco Gijbers critically examine images from the Image Bank WW2. For example, they examine how new technology relates to the visual memory of wars and genocides in the 20th and 21st centuries. Part of the project is a case study of photographs of the Yellow Star badge in the online memory of the Holocaust. Thanks to *ImageLab*, the NIOD can find new research themes and develop new ways of working with image collections.



First-Hand Accounts of War

A valuable – and often neglected – part of NIOD's archive is the collection of personal letters from the period, just before, during and after the German occupation. The collection includes letters from persecuted Jews, political prisoners, resistance fighters, refugees, Eastern Front volunteers and forced labourers. The letters tell poignant stories of wartime interactions between people.

In the project *First-Hand Accounts of War* NIOD is digitising this collection of war letters. Staff members scan, transcribe and annotate the letters to make them more accessible in the reading room, on the NIOD website and via Oorlogsbronnen.nl. And the researchers are going one step further: in the project, they are creating an annotated scholarly dataset that can be used for quantitative text analysis.

The *First-Hand Accounts of War* project runs until 2023 and has been made possible by grants from the Mondriaan Fund and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in the context of '75 Years of Freedom'.



Paper witnesses to robbery and disenfranchisement

The archives of the German cultural appropriation taskforce *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* (ERR) record in detail how the Nazis stole tens of thousands of household effects from Jewish Dutch citizens. With the help of crowdsourcing, NIOD is making this archive more accessible.

The ERR was closely involved in making inventories and taking away the household goods of Jewish residents. Almost every Jewish individual suffering persecution was affected, and many bystanders were witnesses. The emptying of houses became popularly known in the Netherlands as 'pulsing', named after the Amsterdam removal firm Puls, which cleared out houses on behalf of the occupying forces. The ERR's archives contain lists of emptied properties and thousands of forms with information on the contents and evictions.

NIOD and the Dutch Network of War Collections are collaborating on this project.



Collection NIOD - Beeldbank WO2, nummer 96828

Pressing Matter: research on colonial museum collections

How, in 2021, do we look at museum collections that were created during the colonial past of the Netherlands? To whom do valuable pieces belong, and what should we do with this cultural legacy? To answer these questions, the National Museum of World Cultures (NMVW) and VU University Amsterdam (VU) started a four-year research programme this year, called *Pressing Matter: Ownership, Value and the Question of Colonial Heritage in Museums*.

Researchers from five academic institutions, five Dutch museums and international partners from several continents are part of this project. Nanci Adler, Kelly Breemen, Adieyatna Fajri, Ellen Grabowsky and Martijn Eickhoff are participating in the research on behalf of NIOD. *Pressing Matter* is part of the National Research Agenda. A total of around 11 research positions will become available for this project.



Crown Sultan Banten, about 1700

EHRI: the future of Holocaust research

How do we ensure that the Holocaust is properly researched, remembered and taught in the 21st century? That is the question facing the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI), a community of historians, archivists and specialists in digital humanities research. EHRI's main challenge is the wide dispersal of sources and expertise across many institutions. EHRI overcomes such fragmentation by connecting sources, institutions and people. This will enable further integration of Holocaust archives and research projects. The EHRI portal, which currently gives access to over 300,000 archival descriptions in 790 institutions, is expanding and digital tools for linking sources are being developed. Researchers and archivists can attend training courses and the EHRI Conny Kristel Fellowship Programme will continue.

EHRI is currently supported by two project consortia of 27 partners from Europe, Israel and the United States. It is in the process of being transformed into a permanent organisation. This new legal entity should be fully operational by the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, in January 2025.

NIOD coordinates the EHRI projects. They are funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme.



NIOD departments in 2021

Research

NIOD researchers study all aspects of war and mass violence in the recent past. They collaborate with NIOD's Collections & Services department and with numerous domestic and foreign partners.

In 2021, the coronavirus crisis restricted employees in their work. Conferences were cancelled and archives were closed or access was limited. Nevertheless, 2021 was a productive year. Staff members trained in online communication and organised virtual events, including book presentations. They also acquired new projects, obtained research grants and cooperated intensively with foreign academics.

In cooperation with the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS-KNAW), NIOD invited four international experts to collaborate online on a research agenda for the core team War and Society. This collaboration was successful and is currently being continued. Among other things, this will result in a follow-up conference in June 2022. There was a mid-term evaluation of the department in September, which was very positive.



Holocaust and Genocide Studies

The core team Holocaust and Genocide Studies (HGS) conducts research on modern genocides. The team members also teach at universities and build networks abroad. In September, the team organises the NIOD Annual Lecture for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, where prominent scholars share their research with a wide audience. By organising public lectures, film symposiums and other events concerning the Holocaust, the core team stimulates public debate in the Netherlands and globally.

In 2021, the HGS team's work included research on Jewish councils in Europe, the Holocaust in Belarus and perpetrators in contemporary mass violence in Syria and Iraq. Publications also appeared on mass violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, Vietnam and the Soviet Union.



Centre of Expertise for Restitution

The Centre of Expertise for Restitution (ECR) is the knowledge centre for issues concerning art theft and restitution. The centre provides information, carries out independent investigations into individual applications for restitution at the request of the Restitutions Committee and conducts academic research into theft and restitution. That research focuses on the loss of cultural property as a result of the Nazi regime, such as paintings, books, musical instruments and other valuable goods.

In 2021, the Centre of Expertise had around 15 restitution cases under investigation. The ECR was also involved in the research projects *Pilot Project Provenance Research on Objects of the Colonial Era* (PPROCE) and Pressing Matter, which investigate the provenance of objects from the colonial era. In addition, it contributed to the project *Paper witnesses to robbery and disenfranchisement*. Together with the Amsterdam Museum, among others, the ECR organised the symposium *The future of the Dutch Colonial Past*.



Collections and services

The Collections & Services Department manages NIOD's collections and its services to interested parties. Anyone can use the collections for study and research. This can be done in our reading room and part of the collection can be viewed digitally.

Public interest was again strong in 2021. The reading room was closed during the lockdown until mid-2021, after which visitors were able to reserve seats. We answered questions and supported researchers online throughout the year. The supply of images from the Image Bank WW2 for publications continued unabated.

In 2021, together with the Humanities cluster of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), we launched the *sustainable digital repository* pilot. This involves building sustainable storage for digitised files, so that they can be kept for the long term. Next year, we want to set up this storage facility on a permanent basis.



Collection NIOD, Beeldbank WO2, nummer 5222



Exhibition Researching the War – 75 years of NIOD

Exhibition Researching the War – 75 years of NIOD

Seventy-five years after liberation, NIOD is still interpreting war history in its own way, which sometimes prompts heated discussions. The exhibition 75 years of NIOD provides a glimpse into the history of the institute.

On 8 May 1945, only three days after liberation, the State Institute for War Documentation [Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie] (RIOD, later NIOD) began its work. The first task was to collect source material on the occupation. The result is a rich collection of government documents, diaries, cards, newspapers, photos, letters and books about the Second World War in the Netherlands, Europe and the former Dutch East Indies/Indonesia. The Dutch history of the Second World War was written under the leadership of historian Loe de Jong. This culminated in the 14-volume standard work, *The Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Second World War* – a popular publication with colourful bindings that could be found in many a post-war household. In 2010, NIOD merged with the Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies under the new name NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Since that time, its field of research has widened to include flashpoints such as Srebrenica and Syria.

The exhibition *Researching the War - 75 years of NIOD* can be seen at NIOD in Amsterdam; it was curated by René van Heijningen, René Kok and Erik Somers. With thanks to Maria Somers.



Nanci Adler



Uğur Ümit Üngör



Ralf Futselaar



Milan van Lange

Personal news

Martijn Eickhoff succeeded Frank van Vree as Director of NIOD on 1 September 2021.

Nanci Adler has been appointed chair of the *Academic Working Group of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)*. Her term as chair runs from March 2022 to March 2023.

On 23 September, Uğur Ümit Üngör gave his inaugural lecture, *Organised Destruction: The Logic of Mass Violence in Genocide*. His inaugural lecture was also the 2021 NIOD lecture for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. On 1 February 2020, Üngör was appointed senior researcher at NIOD and endowed professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Amsterdam, holding a chair established by the KNAW.

On 5 November Ralf Futselaar gave his inaugural lecture, *Born under a Bad Sign. The indelible Marks of Total War on Twentieth Century Lives*. Employed by NIOD, Futselaar has been appointed endowed professor at the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication. His field of study is the social history of war, mass violence and genocide.

On 10 December, Milan van Lange obtained his PhD from Utrecht University with a thesis on the role of emotions in the way post-war politics (1945-1989) has dealt with the consequences of the Second World War.

Support NIOD: become a Friend!

Would you like to contribute to the work of NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies? Become a Friend of NIOD!

The NIOD Fund is the independent foundation for the support of NIOD. The fund supports young academics in their research on mass violence, genocide and the Second World War. It also supports exceptional and innovative projects for NIOD that could not otherwise be carried out. In addition, the fund contributes to the complete digitisation of NIOD's archive collection.

The NIOD Fund was set up in 2020 to ensure that NIOD will be able to continue its research in the future. Individuals, organisations, funds and companies can support NIOD through the fund. From 50 euros per year, you can become a Friend of NIOD. Would you like to know more? Visit www.niod.nl/nl/over-niod/niod-fonds.

Contributions to the NIOD Fund can be made to bank account NL48 INGB 0000 7575 99, in the name of Vrienden NIOD. The RSIN number of the NIOD Fund is 816777263. The NIOD Fund is an ANBI institution; this means that donations are fully or partially deductible from your taxable income.



Facts and figures

Visitors to reading room

1.016

2.167 in 2019

Questions answered about collections

2.818

3.199 in 2019

Visitors to niod.nl

192.624

282.647 in 2019

Image archive requests responded to

1.434

2.461 in 2019

Beeldbankwo2.nl (image bank on WW2)

79.703

84.169 in 2019

Employees

88

93 in 2020

About half of the funding for NIOD (45 per cent) comes from regular government funds, allocated through the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). The other half (55 per cent) comes from project contributions, which have come from a large number of organisations in 2021: European funds, government agencies (ministries and local authorities), research, archive and heritage funding bodies, and clients in the public-private sphere.

NIOD

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NIOD is an institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.