

NIAS: A BIT OF HISTORY

- An Institute for Advanced Study
- NIAS and the Course of Time

By Jos Hooghuis

The account below originates from short presentations that I gave, mainly at the occasion of the opening of a research year or a semester. These were presentations about the history of the NIAS location, about the founding of NIAS, and about commemorative art works given as presents by the NIAS Fellows Association to the Institute. After my retirement in 2013 I worked out my notes and did some additional research and added a very brief overview of developments at NIAS in the past 45 years. The brief account on the history of the buildings and surrounding area was published separately as *From Rijksdorp Estate to NIAS Residence. A Bit of NIAS History* (Hooghuis, 2016). The rest of the account is what follows below.

Recently, several former fellows have expressed their wish that a history of NIAS should be written. I think this would be a very useful undertaking indeed. At the same time, one should realise that much of NIAS' history already has been recorded in NIAS Newsletters, Annual Reports and special publications. Many of these are available in digitized form at the NIAS website. Nevertheless, I do hope that this article can be a small contribution to information about the Institute's history.

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An Institute for Advanced Study

The concept of institute for advanced study originates from the United States. As Henk Wesseling has pointed out: three factors were crucial in this: the wealth and generosity of the Bamberger family, the ingenuity of Abraham Flexner who developed the idea, and the anti-Semitism of Adolf Hitler¹. The Bambergers – Louis Bamberger and his sister Caroline Fuld (*née* Bamberger) sold their retail stores just in time before the Wall Street crash in 1929, and wished to use the revenues for the benefit of American society. It was Flexner (ill. 1) who came up with the idea to establish an institute for higher learning and advanced research. An “institution devoted to unrestricted research at the frontiers of knowledge”². Originally, Flexner, who became founding director, considered teaching as necessarily being connected to conducting research. In developing the idea he decided that the level of research at the institute should be higher than teaching would require, and so teaching would only be a waste of time. It was Flexner who chose the location of the institute: in Princeton, New Jersey (ill. 2). The Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton was founded in 1930, but the first scholars arrived only in 1933. That very year Hitler had come to power which led to mass emigration of Jewish scholars from Germany to the United States. The first fellow hired by Flexner was Albert Einstein. The Institute has permanent Faculty as well as visiting fellows. Flexner’s two maxims were: “no duties, only opportunities” and “Teach best by not teaching at all”. Famous ‘permanent fellows’ other than Einstein were Kurt Gödel, Robert Oppenheimer, George Kennan and Clifford Geertz. In the early years, the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton did not include the social and behavioural sciences.

This lacuna was overcome by the establishment of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, near Stanford University, California, in 1954 (ill. 3). It was funded by the Ford Foundation which in 1947 had asked a committee chaired by lawyer H. Rowan Gaither to advise how the Foundation could best use their funds for the welfare of mankind. This committee identified four general areas. As a fifth area the committee advised to embellish basic research in and development of the social and behavioural sciences in order to address the problems the world was facing in the post-war period. An essential element had to be that the research would be truly interdisciplinary. The original plan included senior fellows and junior fellows, and permanent and temporary fellows. In the end there would only be ‘fellows’ and the period of residence just one year. Founding Director Ralph Tyler developed the idea further into what it came to be: a community of advanced scholars who were free in the choosing of their research and yet were expected to interact and benefit from each other’s expertise. An informal style of intellectual exchange would be characteristic.³

In the summer of 1961 Bob Uhlenbeck, Professor of Linguistics and Javanese Language and Literature at Leiden University, visited the Center for the first time to meet with one of its fellows.

¹ Wesseling, Henk, *The Idea of an Institute for Advanced Study. Some Reflections on Education, Science and Art*, Uhlenbeck Lecture 20, NIAS Wassenaar 2002, p. 4. See also Antzenius, Linda G., *Images of America. Institute for Advanced Study*, Charleston, South Carolina 2011, p. 7

² Arntzenius, p. 19

³ Tyler, Ralph W., “Study Center for Behavioral Scientists” in: *Science*, March 9, 1956, Vol. 123, No. 3193, pp. 405-408; Robert A. Scott, “History of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University”, <http://www.casbs.org/history>

He immediately was struck by this “scholar’s paradise”. Then in 1965/66 he was a fellow of the Center himself. In retrospect he wrote: “The academic year 1965-66 spent at the Center had so great an impact on me that I decided after my return to Leiden to do everything in my power to establish exactly the same sort of institute in my own country”⁴.

This idea was not new to the Netherlands. In 1959 there had already been discussions about setting up a European institute for advanced research among the Dutch members of the European Interim Committee. This was a committee established by the Foreign Ministers of the European Economic Community and EURATOM to work out various aspects of the Treaties of Rome (1957). According to the EURATOM Treaty an institute for nuclear research had to be established. This idea soon was replaced by plans for a European University. The Dutch government and Dutch academia were not supportive to this idea. The Board of Leiden University, for instance, had many objections and held the opinion that a European University would only have a symbolic function. In contrast, they favoured setting up a European institute for advanced studies. The topics to be studied could be nuclear research and chemistry but also specific European issues. The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, in a letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences of 17 June 1960, formulated strict conditions for establishing a European University; at the same time the Royal Academy declared that a “meeting place for international scholarly interaction” with senior and junior scholars would be much more desirable. “Princeton” was mentioned as a model for the first time. The Minister replied that this Dutch idea would not be effectuated⁵.

Three Key Figures

The fact that ten years later a Dutch institute for advanced study would be established was the result of efforts and perseverance of three key figures.

The first one was Professor C.H.F. (Carel) Polak (1909-1981), Professor of Administrative and Agricultural Law at Leiden University from 1951 to 1967 (ill. 4). He now is better known as the Minister of Justice from 1967 to 1971. As Minister of Justice he was responsible for many progressive laws on ethical issues, such as the free availability of contraceptives, modernization of divorce acts and abolishment of discriminative laws regarding homosexuals. Earlier, he was secretary-treasurer of the European Institute in Leiden, established in 1957, for the study of European law.

The second key figure no doubt was Dr. A.J. (Arie) Piekaar (1910-1990) (ill. 5). Bob Uhlenbeck frequently stated that without the support of Arie Piekaar there would have been no NIAS. Piekaar’s background was in ‘Indology’, a special discipline at Leiden University to train administrators for government service in Indonesia. He further held a LL.D. degree. Piekaar began his administrative career in the Government of the Dutch East Indies to continue at the Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences in The Hague from 1953. His last position at the Ministry was Director-General of Science

⁴ Uhlenbeck, E.M., “The Birth of NIAS” in: W.R. Hugenholtz, ed., *22½ Years of NIAS*, NIAS, Wassenaar 1994, pp. 15-24, p. 19

⁵ Archief Nederlandse Permanente Vertegenwoordiging bij de Europese Economische Gemeenschap (EEG) en de Europese Gemeenschap voor Atoomenergie (EURATOM): Stukken betreffende de Europese Universiteit 1958-1960, Nationaal Archief, The Hague; Archief van Curatoren en College van Bestuur 1952-1989, AC4 858, Leiden University

Policy from 1960 until his retirement in 1975. After his retirement he became a member of the Council of State ('in special service') until 1980.

The late 1950s and especially the 1960s were marked by an enormous expansion of the government budget for Education and Science. In 1965 the total budget of the Ministry Education, Arts and Sciences was 3.631 billion guilders, and in 1970 it had increased to 7.781 billion⁶. This was largely due to demographical factors. The generation born after the Second World War entered secondary schools and universities. The budgets for research increased as well: from 287 million in 1966 to 490 million in 1970⁷. Originally, the general opinion was that it was up to scholars and scientists to determine the fields of research. After all, they would know best. This changed in the 1960s. This was an issue that internationally was put on the agenda by OECD. As a result, the Dutch Ministry installed a Council for Advice on Science Policy (*Raad voor Advies voor het Wetenschapsbeleid, RAWB*) in 1966. Piekaar played an important role in setting up this Council. Its aim was to advise about the most efficient way in which public research funds could be spent. It is general knowledge to what extent in later years this trend has led to restricting guidelines and financial frameworks for research. Given this context it is remarkable that Piekaar supported the idea to set up a place where unconditional research could be carried out, even so much so, that he created essential conditions for establishing NIAS.

Both Carel Polak and Arie Piekaar were Dutch members of the European Interim Committee who came up with the idea for an institute for advanced study⁸.

The third key figure, of course, was Professor Eugenius Marius 'Bob' Uhlenbeck (1913-2003). Originally, Uhlenbeck – like Arie Piekaar – was an 'Indologist' by training, and he also held a degree in Indonesian Law. He developed an expertise in Javanese language as Government Linguist in the Bureau for Popular Literature in the Dutch East Indies. After World War II he became Assistant Professor of General Linguistics and Javanese Language at the University of Indonesia. After having earned his Ph.D. degree with a dissertation on the morpheme in Javanese in 1949, he was appointed Professor of Javanese Language at Leiden University, and from 1958 to 1979 also as Professor of General Linguistics in Leiden. He not only was a very prominent linguist but also a very influential figure in Dutch academia by the important administrative and advisory positions he held. He was a member of the Council for Advice on Science Policy (RAWB) from 1967 to 1971 and of the Council of ZWO, the predecessor of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, NWO, from 1967 to 1982. Uhlenbeck was given the title 'Founder of NIAS' on a plaque below his bust created by Nel van Lith at the occasion of NIAS' 25th anniversary in 1996. Although this title seems a bit strange given the Dutch context, it is certainly well deserved. Uhlenbeck was a strong promotor of establishing the institute from the beginning, and he even went to private companies for financial support when he was given to understand that there would be no chances for public financing. Bob Uhlenbeck was Chairman of the Board until his retirement in 1983 and also member of the

⁶ Miljoenennota 1965; Miljoenennota 1970 www.rijksbegroting.nl

⁷ Leibbrandt, G.J., "De periode-Piekaar" in: *Niet bij wetenschap alleen. Liber amicorum aangeboden aan dr. A.J. Piekaar bij zijn afscheid als directeur-generaal van het Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen op 27 februari 1975*, p. 112

⁸ The Dutch members of the Interim Committee were: Professor J.F. Koksma (secretary-general of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences), Dr. J. Linthorst Homan, permanent representative of the Netherlands to the EEC and EURATOM, Dr. A.J. Piekaar, Professor C.H.F. Polak, Dr. H.J. Reinink, chair of the Dutch delegation, and A.H.W. Wijffels

Selection Committee. The yearly Uhlenbeck Lecture was established in his honour, and he delivered the first lecture entitled *Linguistics: Neither Psychology nor Sociology*⁹.

In a Dutch Context

Professor Carel Polak, presented the idea for an institute for advanced study in a Dutch setting in a speech given at the occasion of the 77th lustrum of Leiden University in 1960. This speech was published by the daily *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant* on 15 June 1960. Polak argued that the enormous expansion of universities since 1939, the increasing scholarly specialisations, and the growing demand on scholars for professional advice in matters of public policy had created the need for a place where the most talented scholars would have time to reflect on their research and meet with top scholars from other disciplines. The institutes for advanced study in Princeton and Stanford were his examples. Such an institute would promote European scholarly cooperation. According to Polak, Leiden would be the best place for such a European institution, which would complement the European University in Florence¹⁰. His ideas were supported by the Rector Magnificus of Leiden University, Professor J.E. Jonkers, and by the Board ('Presidium') of the university, of which Bob Uhlenbeck was the President. Polak was appointed chair of a committee that was asked to work out the ideas. The other committee members were Egbert Havinga, Professor of Organic Chemistry, and Ivo Samkalden, Professor of Law of International Organisations (and later better known as Minister of Justice and Mayor of Amsterdam). The committee recommended setting up a European institute comparable to the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study. It would have 40 to 80 fellows doing research in the natural sciences, humanities and social sciences. They had to be exceptionally qualified scholars who would spend a research period of six months to five years at the institute. Bob Uhlenbeck discussed this plan with the President of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Professor B.A. (Bernhard) van Groningen, (who also was Professor of Greek Language and Literature and Greek Antiquities at Leiden University)¹¹. Van Groningen considered the plan to be of national importance. This was also the opinion of the Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences, Dr. Jo Cals.

The Piekaar Plan

A new committee chaired by Arie Piekaar, Director-General at the Ministry, took up the idea and worked out a similar plan. Among the committee members were Carel Polak, Bernhard van Groningen and also Professor J. de Boer (University of Amsterdam). The latter one had – together with Professor L. van Hove of Utrecht University – promoted the idea for an institute for advanced study in the fields of theoretical and experimental physics. The committee presented its plan to the Board of the Royal Academy in January 1962. With the help of the Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C. the committee had collected documentation about the institutes in Princeton and

⁹ Uhlenbeck, E.M., *Linguistics: Neither Psychology nor Sociology*, NIAS Wassenaar 1983

¹⁰ *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, 15 June 1960

¹¹ Uhlenbeck in his article "The Birth of NIAS" mentions Van Groningen as "President" of the Royal Academy. In fact he was Chair of the Humanities Division of the Royal Academy. He also mentions that Van Groningen 'acted' as President. The same later applies to Sem Dresden. Formally, the position of President of the Royal Academy as a full time job was created by Royal Decree in 1970 (see Berkel, Klaas van, *De stem van de wetenschap. Geschiedenis van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen. Deel 2: 1914-2008*, Amsterdam 2011, pp. 384-387)

Stanford. The committee argued that there was an urgent need for an institute where top scholars could concentrate on their research while released from their teaching and administrative duties. The plan was to set up a European Institute located in the western part of the Netherlands, with up to 50 scholars from all disciplines. The main purpose of the institute would be “the advancement of our present understanding of the foundations of science, and the study of the relations between the various disciplines”. Special attention had to be given to new developments which required the study of several disciplines. The committee stressed the importance of having a European institute to foster collaborative research by European scholars as the institutes in Princeton and Stanford had no places for European scholars. In the year 1960, for example, Stanford had a waiting list of 5000 qualified scholars. The European institute would also be different from the American ones. While Princeton had a focus on theoretical physics and mathematics, history and archaeology, and Stanford one on behavioural studies, the European institute would include the humanities, behavioural sciences as well as the natural sciences. General themes would have to be chosen for periods of one to three years, culminating in large conferences. The humanities and natural sciences would have to be equally represented. All researchers and main members of staff would live on the institute’s campus. The location in the Netherlands would be ideal given its position with respect to the Scandinavian countries and the European Community. The best location in the Netherlands would be an estate of 5 to 10 acres in the west of the country, close to universities, institutes for higher education, and the Royal Library. It was estimated that an investment of 3.5 million guilders would be required and a yearly budget of 0.5 million guilders, to be paid by the Dutch government¹².

The plan was met with critical reactions from the Academy members, many of whom wondered how this plan would relate to other international plans to set up new research institutes. The members of the Natural Sciences Division of the Academy were the most critical ones.

The Wagenvoort Committee

Meanwhile, Bob Uhlenbeck had been appointed a member of a committee to advise the Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences about the future of the Humanities. This committee was a joint initiative of the Humanities Division of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and ZWO¹³. This initiative was driven by a concern about the position of the humanities, but also a reaction to three recent reports which stressed the importance of the natural sciences. The Committee used a wide definition of ‘humanities’ including also economic sciences and the social and behavioural sciences. According to the Committee, society was dominated by an emphasis on economic development and by the application of innovations based on research in the technological and natural sciences. For a good understanding of the changes in society and public policy the humanities were indispensable. Yet too often research and teaching in the humanities was too traditional. To remedy this, the Committee offered 22 recommendations in the report they

¹² Rapport Werkcommissie-Piekaar van de KNAW ter bestudering van de oprichting van een Europees instituut voor hogere wetenschapsbeoefening 22.01.1962, NIAS Archive

¹³ The composition of the Committee was as follows: H. Wagenvoort, Chair, J. Donner, S. Dresden, E.W. Hofstee, L.J. Rogier, F.L.R. Sassen, A. Teeuw, H.W. Lambers. Additional members at the Committee’s request: C.W. Mönnich, J.Th. Snijders. E.M. Uhlenbeck had been appointed to replace A. Teeuw temporarily, but later became a permanent Committee member.

presented to the Minister in 1964. One of the recommendations was to set up an institute for advanced study similar to the ones in Princeton and Stanford, but on a smaller scale than promoted in previous plans. This was to be a Dutch institute – not a European one – and would only focus on the humanities and social sciences¹⁴.

The following academic year, Bob Uhlenbeck spent a most fruitful period at the Center for Advanced Study in Stanford. Upon his return he put the idea of setting up a Dutch institute for advanced study on the agenda of the Committee for Discussing the Future of the University at Leiden University, a committee chaired by Carel Polak. Bob Uhlenbeck: “I am convinced that the fact that I was able to present a first-hand account of the Center and its scientific benefits helped to make the rather abstract idea of an institute for advanced study more concrete and therefore easier to pursue. In any case it proved easy to transfer my enthusiasm to the members of the Discussion Group. It is this group which in the following years played an important part in making the University of Leiden a strong proponent of the plan to create an institution like the Stanford Center (...) and no less important: to take action whenever this was considered necessary.”¹⁵ The abstract idea became even more concrete when one of the Committee members, Egbert Havinga, who lived in Rijksdorp, informed the Committee that the building of the Police Training School in Wassenaar was for sale and might be suitable for the institute. The suitability of the building was confirmed by several experts.

Now two problems remained: finances and national academic support. Uhlenbeck recalled Piekaar’s advice to find funding from private companies. He perhaps had in mind the way the Ford Foundation had been willing to finance the institute in Stanford. So Uhlenbeck went to Rotterdam to meet the President of the Board of Unilever. Uhlenbeck: “The visit was a disappointment. I was informed gently but clearly that an institute for the social sciences and the humanities would not be of much interest to Unilever”. He also was given not much hope that the other big Dutch multinational companies would be interested¹⁶.

A Break-through

When the situation really started to look dim – with the purchase option of the building in Rijksdorp running out – it was Piekaar who was responsible for a financial breakthrough. He informed Uhlenbeck in November 1969 that the Ministry was prepared to finance the purchasing of the building in Wassenaar and all further costs to set up the institute. What followed was a meeting at the Ministry on 11 March 1970. Participants were Piekaar and two of his collaborators, the new Rector of Leiden University, Professor Piet Muntendam, Bob Uhlenbeck, and Professor E.W. Hofstee of Wageningen University. One might perhaps say that Evert Willem Hofstee (1909-1987) was the fourth key figure in the history of the establishment of NIAS. He was a social scientist with a very broad scholarly scope being both a prominent sociologist and a demographer with an historic orientation. In his efforts to explain changing social structures he always had an eye for cultural factors. In the 1960s and part of the 1970s he was (the first) Chair of the Social Science Council of

¹⁴ Wagenvoort, H. Jr., *Geesteswetenschappen. Rapport van de Commissie geesteswetenschappen uitgebracht aan de minister van onderwijs en wetenschappen*, 's-Gravenhage 1965

¹⁵ Uhlenbeck, p. 19

¹⁶ Uhlenbeck, p. 20

the Royal Academy. He was considered the 'pope' of the social sciences in the Netherlands. And if Hofstee joined forces with his 'pendant in the humanities', Bob Uhlenbeck, they could work miracles¹⁷. Hofstee had been a member of the Wagenvoort Committee. He later would become a member of the General Board of NIAS and a member of the Selection Committee¹⁸. The fact that Hofstee supported the idea of a Dutch institute for advanced study, not only as Chair of the Social Science Council, but more important, as representative of Wageningen University, created the possibility to establish the new institute as an 'Inter-university Institute'. This was a legal entity based on a Royal Decree of 1965. The Board of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences was supportive to the plans and willing to assist in selecting the fellows. The Board of Leiden University invited the other universities to also join the institute – stressing the fact that the Ministry would bear all the costs. Many of the universities were slow to react, but in June a next step could be taken.

The First Preparatory Meetings

The first 'preparatory' meeting was held in Leiden on 23 June 1970. Participants were, in addition to Bob Uhlenbeck, the Rector of Leiden University, and Professor Sem Dresden, President of the Royal Academy¹⁹, representatives of Utrecht University, VU University Amsterdam, Wageningen University (E.W. Hofstee), Eindhoven University of Technology, University of Twente, the Rotterdam Medical Faculty (one of the predecessors of Erasmus University Rotterdam) and the University of Tilburg. Meanwhile, Leiden University had bought the building in Wassenaar. Some basic questions which would come up repeatedly in the NIAS history were raised. Perhaps the most important one at the time was the question whether a university would allow its professors to take a sabbatical for a year. Dresden was very explicit: it was either permission to be away for a year, or not having the opportunity to do substantive research. Uhlenbeck argued that the absence of a professor would offer opportunities to junior staff. And it was also argued that the indispensability of a professor was a thing of the past.

Other issues raised in this first meeting were the name to be chosen, and appointing the most vital staff: the director who would lead the selection procedure, the deputy-director for the daily management, a librarian, a secretary to the director and a head of household affairs. The institute would have a General Board and a Daily Board, and a Committee appointed by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences to select the year groups. These groups had to be very balanced in terms of disciplines, ages, and the Dutch/non-Dutch ratio. And there had to be places for young talented scholars. The aim was to open the institute officially in September 1971. This would mean that the selection of the first year group had to be completed by January 1971.

Earlier, in May 1970, the Municipal Council of Wassenaar had discussed the future of the house at Meyboomlaan 1. After the departure of the Police Training School the Mayor and Aldermen originally had decided to change the local development plan to restore the residential use of the house. Since Leiden University had shown interest to buy the property the Municipal Government

¹⁷ Kaa, Dirk J. van de, "Eugenius Marius Uhlenbeck: A Life in Full (1913-2013)" in: *NIAS Newsletter* 31, Fall 2003, p. 4

¹⁸ E.W. Hofstee was a member of the General Board of NIAS from 1971 to 1973, and member of the NIAS Selection Committee from 1970 to 1974.

¹⁹ See footnote 11

had decided to give back again the special status for educational, cultural and social use. Some members of the Council feared that the neighbourhood would be flooded by students, but the Mayor and Aldermen could convince the Council that there would be no students, only scholars who would spend a “celibatereal” year there²⁰.

In a second preparatory meeting on 21 September 1970 the name of the institute was chosen: *Nederlands Instituut voor Voortgezet Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek op het gebied van de mens- en maatschappijwetenschappen*. A first draft was presented of the so-called ‘Joint Regulation’ (*Gemeenschappelijke Regeling*), the Institute’s statutes as required by law. The Leiden architect H. Kroneman had begun making reconstruction plans of the building. The building would be ready by Summer 1971. The director of *De Pauwhof* in Wassenaar, a residential institute for scholars and artists²¹, had offered help in finding accommodation for the fellows, and so had the Foreign Office of Leiden University. Meanwhile, a director had been selected. The General Board would be advised to appoint Dr. H.A.F.J. (Henk) Misset, Professor of Theoretical Economics and Economic Policy at the University of Amsterdam in this position²². It would be up to the director to select a deputy-director. Although the institute formally did not exist yet a Selection Committee was appointed since the selection of fellows had to be given high priority. The committee consisted of: S. Dresden (literature), Chair, H.C.J. Duijker (psychology), W. Glasbergen (archaeology), E.W. Hofstee, J.C. Kamerbeek (classics), H.W. Lambers (economics), G.W. Locher (anthropology), A. Teeuw (literature), and G.J. Wiarda (law). It met for the first time the following day, 22 September 1970. One also discussed how to make publicity for the new institute.

Late in 1970 almost all Dutch universities had joined the new Interuniversity Institute and sent a representative to its General Board. The so-called ‘Joint Regulation’ was approved of by the Minister of Education and Sciences on 19 November 1970, which can therefore be considered as the foundation date of the Institute. According to the Joint Regulation, the aim of the Institute was “the advancement of the humanities and social sciences in its broadest sense”. Officially, the institute had a Dutch name, *Nederlands Instituut voor Voortgezet Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek op het gebied van de mens- en maatschappijwetenschappen*, but in practice the English name “Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences” was also used, while the English acronym NIAS was preferred to the Dutch NIVWO. In the 1990s it was decided to officially drop the Dutch name which had fallen out of use. The By-laws required by the Joint Regulation stipulated that there yearly would be 25 fellows from the Netherlands and 15 from abroad.

Constituent Meeting

²⁰ Copy of Minutes of the Wassenaar Municipal Council, 25 May 1970, NIAS Archive

²¹ *De Pauwhof* in Wassenaar was established by J.C. Overvoorde, director of the Leiden Municipal Archives and curator at the Leiden Municipal Museum *De Lakenhal*, and his wife in 1940, and administered by the Overvoorde-Gordon Foundation. Among its guests were prominent Dutch artists such as composer Sem Dresden, authors Anthonie Donker, Ed. Hoornik, J.C. Bloem, Jan Greshoff, Martinus Nijhoff and Mensje van Keulen, and harpist Rosa Spier. It was so well-known that in the early days of NIAS it often was confused with *De Pauwhof*. *De Pauwhof* ceased to exist around 1990. The Overvoorde-Gordon Foundation has used its funds since to support the arts in different ways.

²² Henk Misset (1922-2015); for an obituary, see: <http://www.nias.knaw.nl/news-events/news/in-memoriam-professor-h-a-j-f-misset>. Henk Misset was an active member of the feminist action group Man/vrouw/maatschappij (MVM) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He and Else Barth are the authors of *Feministische mannen* (2010).

The constituent meeting took place on 25 November 1970 in the Administration Building of Leiden University, Stationsweg 46, room 407. The meeting was attended by representatives of the ten participating universities who together would form the General Board, the members of the Selection Committee, and representatives of the Ministry, the Board of Leiden University, ZWO, and the Royal Academy. Director Designatus Misset, his secretary and Uhlenbeck's assistant Mariët Winkel were also present. The official installation of the Institute was done by Pieter Muntendam as President-Curator of Leiden University. He felt the need to react to the first report in the press which qualified the new institute as a luxury project set up by an 'exclusive clan of professors'. Muntendam stressed the arguments as given in the report of the Wagenvoort Committee, and added that while the humanities needed strengthening, the backlog in humanities research only was getting larger due to an enormous influx of students. In other words, the Institute is a necessity, not a luxury²³. Sadly enough, this was not always understood, and the luxury image would stick to NIAS during its entire existence until this very day. This was also the meeting in which Uhlenbeck was chosen Chair of the General Board, and the budgets for 1970 and 1971 were presented.

Henk Misset (ill. 6) was appointed Director in November 1970, Els Glastra van Loon-Boon, a jurist by training, as Deputy-Director in February 1971 (ill. 7). She had been a member of the Municipal Council in Leiden in 1958-1959²⁴. Other staff appointments followed soon thereafter: M.G. Mens Fiers Smeding-van Schouwen as head of the secretariat, Dinny Young as librarian, Pilar van Breda-Burgueño Alvares as secretary, and Henk and Anouschka Fontein as future concierge and caterer. The staff was temporarily housed in the Department of Dutch Language and Literature at Levendaal 150 in Leiden, in the old textile factory building of Van Wijk Brothers & Co. Below, on the ground and first floors, was a supermarket which gave a distinct smell to the entire building, and higher-up, on the top floor was the Academic Art Centre LAK.

The Selection of the First Fellows

Uhlenbeck turned to the Stanford Center for Advanced Study for advice about the selection of fellows. The director of Stanford, O. Meredith Wilson, sent him a memorandum about this as early as July 1969. Useful information could also be found in a *Science* article by Ralph W. Tyler, the first director of the Stanford Center²⁵.

The selection in Stanford was a lengthy process. Scholars who had been nominated or applied themselves for a fellowship provided information about their scholarly career. Information about research plans was less important. Assessment reports were asked from the applicant's own referees and from specialists in the field. From time to time regional selection meetings were held at which applicants were interviewed by the Trustees of the Center. Panels of specialists in different disciplines were consulted regularly. They received lists of candidates whom they rated for the quality of their research or – in case of younger scholars – their promise. The applicant would not be informed about the outcome of the different steps of the procedure. He or she was free, though,

²³ NIAS Archive

²⁴ http://www.parlement.com/id/vg09llg258zi/j_f_jan_glastra_van_loon. As a student at Leiden University Els Boon (1916-2004) was an active member of a resistance group during the Nazi occupation, 1940-1945, see: Kloek, Els (samenst.), *101 Vrouwen en de oorlog*, Nijmegen 2016, pp. 57,58

²⁵ Tyler, Ralph W., "Study Center for Behavioral Scientists" in: *Science*, March 9, 1956, Vol. 123, No. 3193, pp. 405-408

to send in additional information or provide names of extra referees. The procedure resulted in a large pool of eligible candidates. Those who were judged eligible were informed about this and asked to state a year of preference for a fellowship. The director of the Center was responsible for the composition of the year group, in which factors such as discipline, affiliation, age and nationality were taken into account. Tyler called it “a matching process”²⁶. Uhlenbeck had hoped that data of eligible non-American applicants could be shared but due to the confidential character this was problematic. Yet Uhlenbeck was also interested in the file system Stanford used and in the lists of expert panels.

Director Misset and the Selection Committee thought it best if first the 25 Dutch fellows would be selected. This would enable them to find 15 fellows from abroad with whom the Dutchmen could fruitfully cooperate. The Committee members were asked to do a search for potential candidates in their field, in consultation with colleagues outside the Committee. Much more, however, was expected from the letters which were sent to members of the Royal Academy, university boards and university departments in the Netherlands with the request for nominations of scholars both from the Netherlands and abroad. The letter stressed two of the Institute’s goals: a place where one would have the peace and concentration to do research, and the possibility to work together with scholars from other disciplines. The response was rather disappointing. In the second Committee meeting²⁷ in November 1970 the Director presented a list of 57 suggested names. Most of them were a result of Misset’s consultations with individual Committee members. The list contained few non-Dutch scholars and an equal distribution among all relevant fields was absent. It became clear that the composition of a complete year group of qualified scholars had to be given priority over the most desirable division among disciplines. A system of four groups of disciplines was used as a tool for the disciplinary division. Group 1 included: Philosophy, Theology, Pre-history and History, Art History, Language and Literature; group 2: Economics, Law, International Relations and Political Science; group 3: Sociology, Anthropology, Social Geography, and Demography; group 4: Psychology, Psychiatry, Pedagogics, and ‘Andragogics’ (a short-lived discipline at Dutch universities dealing with social and cultural education). The Board indicated that the first year group should consist of four to five scholars from groups 1 and 2 and two to three scholars from groups 3 and 4. It seemed to be wise to select the non-Dutch scholars first. Misset presented a list of 15 eligible non-Dutch candidates and a list of 11 alternates. Although the average age was much higher than aimed at – 50 years old with even one candidate aged 71 – it was decided to invite all 15. Should one of the invited scholars decline someone with the same discipline from the list of alternates would be selected. Otherwise all candidates on the list of alternates would be offered a fellowship in the following year. The 25 Dutch fellows were selected from a list of 40 candidates. It was obvious that the Committee members had much more information about the Dutch scholars and sometimes knew them personally. This sometimes influenced the choice of the fellows. The application by Fred Polak raised severe doubts about his suitability for a fellowship. Polak was an internationally renowned sociologist and ‘futurologist’, director of the Netherlands Central Planning Bureau, and fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford in 1954/55 (its first

²⁶ Stanford Memorandum “For Information of Persons Interested in Fellowships, and Others” July 1969. NIAS Archive; Tyler, Ralph W., p. 406

²⁷ Until 1972 the Committee meetings were held in *Het Trippenhuys*, the office of the Royal Academy in Amsterdam, usually in the Bilderdijk room.

year). He would be the author of the highly successful book *The Image of the Future* (1973). Yet the Committee feared that his dominant character made him less fit to be a member of a group of peers. His application was put on the reserve list. The Committee also had doubts about Gerard de Zeeuw, an 'andragologist' who was trained as a mathematician but who had not earned his Ph.D. degree yet. Board member A.D. de Groot strongly recommended him arguing that his many publications equaled a dissertation. Gerard de Zeeuw was selected as fellow, not only for the year 1971/72, but also a second time in 1977/78. By that time he was a Full Professor at the University of Amsterdam. Personal aspects played a role also in discussions about the application by ethologist Adriaan Kortlandt. His outstanding international reputation was undisputed, yet his rather militant character often made his working relationships quite problematic. Two extra experts were consulted, and the outcome was that Kortlandt was invited to be a fellow in the first year group. In June 1971 the result of the entire procedure was a year group of 32 Fellows²⁸.

One thing became clear, the selection of the future year groups had to be better planned. More time would be needed for the recruiting of applications and for external assessments. Director Misset proposed that selection would begin each year in January for the year group in residence 18 months later. Invitations would be sent before the summer holidays, i.e. about 12 months before the beginning of the research year. To this end, one full meeting day and five to six shorter meetings would be essential. The Committee agreed. It had taken six meetings to complete the composition of the first year group. Misset also suggested that applications would be marked with A (potential candidate), B (additional assessment required) and C (applicant not qualified). Both the time schedule and the rating system would remain in use for several decades.

Fundamental Selection Issues

In the discussions about the first year group some fundamental issues were raised which kept coming up all through the Institute's history. One issue was age. The discriminative aspect made it highly sensitive. Uhlenbeck's opinion was very clear: he favoured talented younger scholars who held a promise for the future. As mentioned above, the average age of the candidates for the first year was rather high. In June 1971 however the Committee agreed that if scholars were over 60 they would be eligible only if they had an outstanding publication record and were still highly productive. This age criterion was applied during NIAS's entire history but never was made public. It was only in 2011 that NIAS officially stated on its website that applications by scholars "at the end of their academic career" would be given "low priority". Another aspect was the possibility of a part-time fellowship. This was never approved of, but Dutch fellows often practiced their fellowship as part-timers. From the early 2000's a fellowship of four days a week was considered acceptable for Dutch scholars.

Another recurring issue was the length or period of the fellowship: two months, three months, from January to January instead of September to August. Although in principle fellowships were awarded for a full academic year – since group formation was considered essential - the Committee and director sometimes were more pragmatic.

²⁸ This and next sections: Archive Selection Committee, NIAS Archive

Earlier, board member A.D. de Groot, psychologist at the University of Amsterdam, had written a memo to his fellow board members criticizing the Institute's approach on more fundamental grounds. He rejected the selection of "scholars" from the traditional disciplines and held a strong plea for the selection of "researchers" who would address interdisciplinary *research questions*. In his view, it was more important to foster the behavioural sciences than the humanities since the behavioural sciences in the Netherlands were still less developed than in the US. The Institute should aim to create groups of researchers as one would wish to have in 1980, he argued, instead of groups doing traditional research based on views from 1930, or at best 1950²⁹. He was supported by the representative of Eindhoven University of Technology, philosopher S.L. Kwee. According to Kwee, the selection of scholars on the basis of their scholarly merits would lead to elitism and the pursuing of scholarly hobbies. He cited S. Zuckerman's *Beyond the Ivory Tower* (London 1970) in which a distinction is made between 'private science' and 'public science'. In the natural sciences it increasingly was common practice to step down from the ivory tower and conduct research that society directly would benefit from. This approach was less common in the humanities, yet Kwee had put his hopes on the social and behavioural sciences. According to Kwee, it would have been much better if the natural sciences had been included in the Institute since this would have opened up possibilities for broad multidisciplinary exchange of methodologies and views. He was very much in favour of large, longitudinal research projects, with researchers from universities, but also from institutes for applied science and public science (ZWO, TNO, governmental and company labs), who would spend one year at the Institute in the course of such a large project³⁰.

The Selection Committee may have felt uncomfortable by this kind of criticism. It argued that it was the intention to take a more thematic approach in the composition of the year groups. Yet if Kwee's suggestion would be followed this would imply that some disciplines would be excluded. And this would influence the character of scholarly practice at the Institute. In the annual report 1971/72 Director Misset wrote that in the year 1971/72 the emphasis had been on the foundations of research in the humanities and social sciences and history³¹. As for Kwee, he stepped down as a member of the Board after one year. Perhaps he was too disappointed by the *modus operandi* of the Institute.

Towards the Official Opening

Meanwhile, other practical things needed to be arranged. Uhlenbeck travelled to Stanford and returned with information about a lot of practical matters³². Misset and Glastra van Loon consulted with the Ministry and agreed that foreign fellows would receive a stipend, not a salary. They would not become an employee of the Institute. The maximum of the stipend would equal the highest salary scale for Dutch professors, i.e. 154 at the time. Yet if the fellow had other sources of income these would be deducted. The minimum stipend would be 25% of the Dutch salary scale that was equal to the fellow's rank at his own university. There would be extra allowances for

²⁹ Memo to the Board, 25 November 1970. NIAS Archive

³⁰ Memo to the Board, 8 October 1971. NIAS Archive

³¹ *Verslag academisch jaar 1971/72*, p. 12

³² Uhlenbeck was also advised to turn to the Ford Foundation for financial support for fellows from the US. The Foundation, however, was not willing to do so. Letter by Peter E. de Janosi, Ford Foundation, to E.M. Uhlenbeck, 29 June 1971, NIAS Archive

accommodation for either the fellow alone or the fellow with family. For Dutch fellows there would be no remuneration or stipend. For them the fellowship was considered as a distinction and an instrument of career planning. Their universities were expected to compensate for the fellow's absence. After all, the fellow would return to his university enriched with new inspiration – much to the university's benefit. And if a university had problems understanding this it would be up to the university's representative in the Board to clarify the Institute's case³³. The total budget of the Institute for the year 1971 would be 771,603 Dutch guilders³⁴ (1,352,602 euros in 2012³⁵).

Arranging proper accommodation for the fellows proved to be very problematic. *De Pauwhof* which so kindly had offered its help turned out not to be fit. The rooms were in a poor state, and the rules of the house required participation of the guests in the social life of the house. Misset and Glastra van Loon set their hopes on houses which the pension fund for government employees, ABP, were building in the Van Polanenpark area. The Municipality was willing to issue the required permits³⁶.

On 10 September 1971 the first meeting of the Board could be held in the reconstructed and renovated main building. Els Glastra van Loon had given a personal touch to the interior decoration of the fellows' offices, using art works of the governmental agency *Rijksdienst voor Verspreide Kunstvoorwerpen*. Everyone was in full anticipation of the official opening of the Institute on 30 September. A staff of 18 members was awaiting the arrival of the first fellows.

Opening Day 30 September 1971

Then finally, the official opening was there. Bob Uhlenbeck (ill. 9) welcomed the mayor of Wassenaar, Mr. W.J. Geertsema, the president of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (ill. 8), rectores magnifici of the universities, the president and the vice-president of the Organization for Pure Scientific Research, ZWO, the chair of the Council for Science Policy, RAWB, the directors of the Royal Library and Leiden University Library, and of course 33 fellows. Unfortunately, Arie Piekaar, who would represent the Minister of Science Policy, Mr. Maurits de Brauw, had fallen ill and was absent. His speech was read by the Head of the Science Policy Division of the ministry³⁷. In his speech, Piekaar stressed the new and great responsibilities for the humanities and social sciences given the importance of economic growth and technological developments, and given the effect of these developments on traditional social structures. Social problems are highly complex and require multi-disciplinary approaches by researchers, particularly those in the humanities, Piekaar pointed out. Unfortunately, in international organisations there was major concern only about technology and science, and no interest in the social sciences. As a result, the original, Dutch, idea to establish a European counterpart to Princeton and Stanford was rejected. So the Institute had become a Dutch institution. Yet, non-

³³ Minutes General Board, 18 March 1971, NIAS Archive

³⁴ Only 538.166 guilders would be spent, mainly because the research year started in September 1971. *Verslag academische jaar 1971/72*, p. 15.

³⁵ Historic currency converter, IISG <http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/calculate.php>

³⁶ See also Glastra van Loon-Boon, J.E., "NIAS in Retrospect", in: W.R. Hugenholtz, ed., *22½ Years of NIAS*, NIAS, Wassenaar 1994, 25-30, p. 27

³⁷ Much later, on 19 October 1982 Piekaar would visit NIAS to present the completed Old Javanese-English Dictionary to its compiler NIAS Fellow Dr. Jan Zoetmulder. As an 'Indologist', having spent many years in Java, it must have been a NIAS project to his heart.

Dutch scholars would be essential to the success of the Institute³⁸. The Center for Advanced Study in Stanford sent its congratulations and a copy of the *International Encyclopedia for the Social Sciences* as a gift³⁹.

Press reports about the opening of the Institute generally were positive. *De Volkskrant*, *Financieele Dagblad*, *Het Parool*, and *Het Vaderland* all published serious stories about the alarming decline of the humanities and social sciences and the way the newly founded institute aimed to redress this situation. The *Haagsche Courant* quoted Uhlenbeck who in his opening speech refuted suggestions that the institute would be an elite institution for elderly scholars⁴⁰.

The following day, 1 October 1971, the first regular working day began in the first institute for advanced study in Europe.

³⁸ NIAS Archive

³⁹ A nice gesture, no doubt, but this encyclopedia originally had been a gift by Macmillan Publishers to former Stanford Fellows. However, former fellows Bob Uhlenbeck and Val Lorwin, NIAS Fellow 1971/72, had offered their encyclopedia to be given to NIAS. NIAS Archive

⁴⁰ *De Volkskrant*, 30 September 1971, 1 October 1971, *Het Vaderland*, 17 September 1971, 1 October 1971, *Financieele Dagblad*, 1 October 1971, *Parool*, 12 November 1971, *Haagsche Courant*, 29 and 30 September 1971

Illustrations “An Institute for Advanced Study”



Ill. 1. Abraham Flexner (1866-1959). Picture from Linda G. Arntzenius, *Images of America. Institute for Advanced Study*



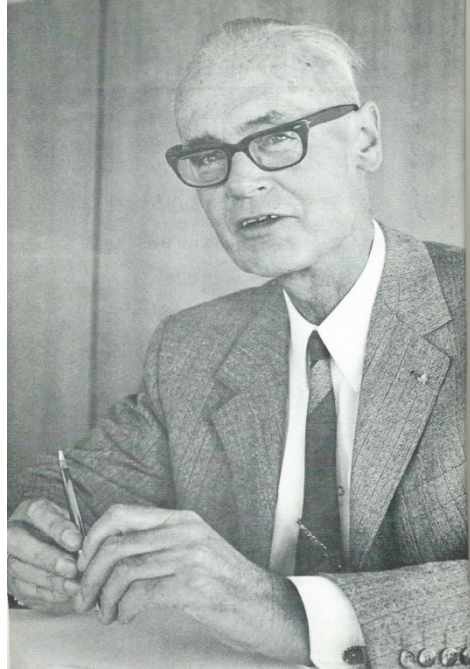
Ill. 2. Fuld Hall (1939), main building of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. Photo: Cliff Moore



Ill. 3. Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford. Photo: Jos Hooghuis



Ill. 4. Professor Carel H.F. Polak as Minister of Justice in the Second Chamber of Parliament, 1969. Photo: Collection Spaarnestad, Nationaal Archief, The Hague



Ill. 5. Dr. A.J. Piekaar. Photo: Ministry of Education & Sciences (1975)



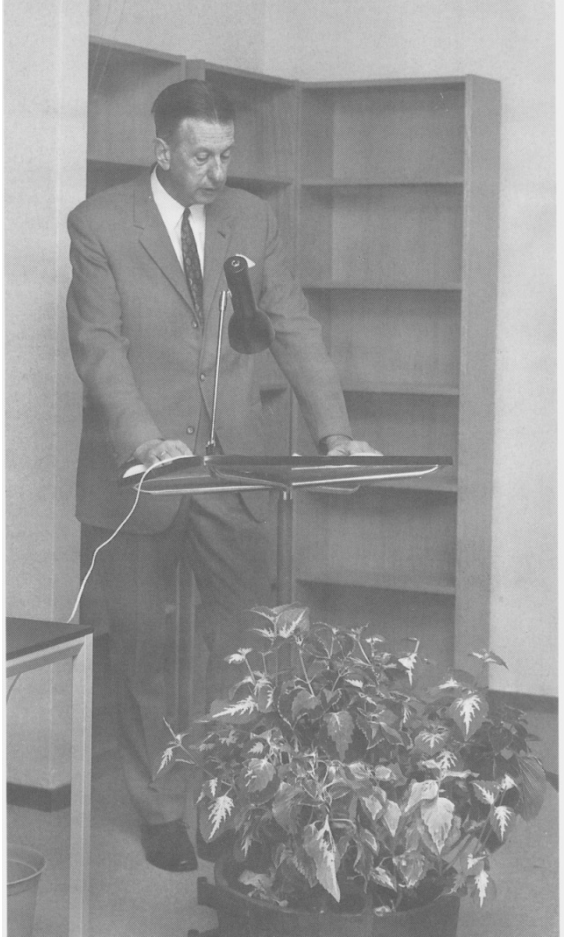
Ill. 6. Professor H.A.J.F. (Henk) Misset, Director of NIAS 1970-1986. Photo: Haagse Beeldbank



Ill. 7. Els Glastra van Loon-Boon, LL.M., Deputy Director of NIAS 1971-1980. Photo: Collection NIAS



Ill. 8. Professor Sem Dresden, President of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and Chair of the NIAS Selection Committee, and his wife arriving for the official Opening Ceremony of NIAS, 30 September 1971. In the background (left) Drs. J. (Hans) Smits of ZWO. Photo: Collection NIAS



Ill. 9. Professor Bob Uhlenbeck delivering the opening speech of NIAS, 30 September 1971. The book shelves are still empty. Photo: Collection NIAS

NIAS and the Course of Time

Through the years, much at NIAS remained the same while many things changed. The basic element, however, was and has always been the individual scholar who - more or less released from his administrative and teaching duties - could concentrate on his own research project. The selection of the type of research was a matter of policy. From the outset the thematic approach was an important aim of the Institute but it took several years before the planning of this was more or less successful. In the early years fellows were selected around loosely defined themes such as "Intercultural Phenomena" in 1974/75⁴¹, and "Comparative Literature" and "Decision Making Processes" in 1977/78⁴². If such an 'area of emphasis' had a coordinator cooperation was more structured - as in the "Stress and Anxiety" group in 1979/80. In other cases cooperation was quite loose but no less inspiring.

From the beginning it was clear that social life was an important element, not only for the fellows' well-being, but also for the stimulation of scholarly interaction. Here too, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford served as an example. At NIAS, Deputy Director, Els Glastra van Loon-Boon (1971-1980) was the central figure in initiating and coordinating the social activities.

The first seemingly carefree years were followed by a difficult period - the mid-1980s - in which the very existence of NIAS was threatened. In the process of severe budget cuts in Dutch academia - the so-called TVC operation in 1983 - all but two universities did not wish to continue their financial contribution to NIAS. The Ministry - in the person of Roel in 't Veld, Secretary-General of Higher Education and Research, and NIAS Fellow 1976/77 - saved the Institute but NIAS was faced with a budget cut of half a million guilders. Fellowships were reduced from eleven to ten months. Dick van de Kaa became the new Director in 1987 and restructured many aspects of NIAS. An important change was the status of the Institute. It ceased to be an interuniversity institute, dependent on thirteen contributing universities, and became an institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences on 1 January 1988 (ill. 13). Given the early (pre)history of NIAS this was a logical step to take. The change in status was accompanied by changes in policy⁴³. One of the innovations was the setting up of research theme groups - not just 'areas of emphasis' as before. Some worried that there would be no room anymore for individual research, but individual research remained as important as before. Yet the framework of research theme groups strengthens the focus of the research and enhances the visibility of the Institute. This is especially so since theme groups usually conclude their activities with a large conference and a publication of its proceedings. The policy in the selection of theme groups has always been to cover a broad scope of the humanities and social sciences, ranging from "Comparative Study of Ritual" in 1987/88 to "Gene x Environment Interactions in the Developing Brain" and "The Construction of Local

⁴¹ *Verslag academische Jaren 1974-1975 en 1975-1976*

⁴² *Verslag academische Jaren 1976-77, 1977-78 en 1978-1979*

⁴³ "NIAS: a New Approach and a New Status", in: *Annual Report NIAS 1987*

Identities through Language Practices” in 2013/14⁴⁴. Although NIAS never had been unsuccessful in attracting scholars of repute, research theme groups sometimes made it more attractive for renowned scholars to commit themselves to a NIAS Fellowship. The same is true, by the way, for the position of ‘Guest of the Rector’, introduced by Rector Henk Wesseling (1995-2002). The list of ‘Guests’ is impressive indeed⁴⁵. Theme groups bring in another aspect: they contribute to the dynamics of social and scholarly interaction, provided that they are not turned inwards and closed to fellows outside the group. Given the importance of the theme groups, one should not forget, though, that most of the prize-winning books written at NIAS were written by individual fellows⁴⁶.

The 1990s were very memorable in the history of NIAS because of the special programmes that were developed for scholars from Central and Eastern Europe as a reaction to the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was an important partner by offering fellowships at NIAS and a number of other designated institutes in Western Europe to scholars from the former East-bloc from 1993/94 onwards⁴⁷. Furthermore, NIAS was successful in acquiring funds for the ‘Trends in Scholarship’ programme (1994-1999) in addition to the Mellon Fellowships and Magyar Fellowships. It offered a special, two-month fellowship programme to scholars from Central and Eastern Europe with not only an intensive seminar and excursion programme but also opportunities to develop networks among ‘western’ scholars⁴⁸. Executive Director Wouter Hugenholtz (1993-2006) played an important role in setting up these programmes. The confrontation of two different traditions of scholarship was fruitful to fellows both from West and East.

The first decade of this century was marked by a further development of a programme of cosponsored fellowships. This development had begun with the early Golestan Fellowship. This fellowship is still unique as it is financed from the estate left to NIAS – through a special foundation - by a former fellow, Kenower W. Bash. NIAS owes not only a fellowship but also the Persian Rose Garden to Bash’s estate (ill. 14). For both rectors Henk Wesseling and Wim Blockmans (2002-2010) the creation of cosponsored fellowships was a way to diversify research at NIAS, and establish strategic alliances with other organisations. Henk Wesseling was instrumental in establishing a special fellowship for monetary economists, the Jelle Zijlstra Professorial Fellowship, later followed up by the Willem F. Duisenberg Fellowship. All major Dutch financial institutions as well as the Dutch National Bank and the Ministry of Finance are partners in this fellowship. Henk Wesseling also created special positions for writers and journalists, and set up the KB Fellowship with the Royal Library – National Library of the Netherlands as partner. Another innovation by Henk Wesseling was the appointment of two Permanent Fellows⁴⁹. They were expected, among other things, to assist the rector in developing a research policy in the social sciences. One way to do this would be to set up theme groups in their fields. Although one of the interesting outcomes was a

⁴⁴ See: <http://www.nias.nl/theme-groups/former-theme-groups>

⁴⁵ See: <http://www.nias.nl/fellowships/individual-fellowships/guest-of-the-rector>

⁴⁶ See the *NIAS Newsletters* and the NIAS website

⁴⁷ Officially the programme ran until 2009/10 and 33 Mellon Fellowships were awarded. However, four additional Mellon Fellowships could be awarded from interest revenues.

⁴⁸ See also: *Advancing Scholarship: The TRIS Programme 1994-1999* (ed. W.R. Hugenholtz and K. van Vliet-Leigh), NIAS Wassenaar 2000

⁴⁹ Psychologist of Law Willem Albert Wagenaar, and demographer Jenny Gierveld

theme group on “Old Adults’ Life Strategies in Preparing for the Future” (2002/03), the experiment as a whole was less successful.

Broadening of the scope

In the year 2000 NIAS was evaluated by an assessment committee appointed by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, chaired by Dik Wolfson⁵⁰. The Institute received good marks: “The committee is impressed by the performance of NIAS in the international scientific community and its contribution to the international recognition of Dutch scholarship in the humanities and social sciences”⁵¹. One of the recommendations of the committee was to broaden the NIAS scope to the biological, medical and natural sciences in an international perspective. To this end, rector Wim Blockmans initiated cooperation with the Lorentz Center in Leiden. This is a workshop centre at Leiden University which hosts workshops in the natural sciences of one week or longer providing personal working space for the participants and ample meeting opportunities. The NIAS-Lorentz cooperation took shape in various ways: individual fellowships – the first in 2006/07 - , the highly successful Distinguished Lorentz Fellowship, and more recently, the NIAS-Lorentz Theme Groups. Diversifying research at NIAS and broadening the scope has been a trend of the past ten years. Another example is the NIAS-L’Oréal-UNESCO Fellowship initiated by Rector Aafke Hulk (2010-2013). A further example is the “Texture Analysis Challenge for The Arts” theme group in 2012/13.

SIAS and NetIAS

While NIAS was the third *institute for advanced study* in the world in 1970, its number increased through the years. In 1991 NIAS Director Dick van de Kaa took the initiative to create a network of several institutes for advanced study. The original members were: the Institute for Advanced study in Princeton (1930), the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford (1954), the National Humanities Center in North Carolina (1978), the *Wissenschaftskolleg* in Berlin (1981), the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in Uppsala (1985) and NIAS. Therefore, SIAS could be read as “Six Institutes for Advanced Study”, but since membership was extended to nine institutes it should be understood as “Some Institutes for Advanced Study”. SIAS is an informal network whose directors meet once a year to discuss matters of mutual interest, such as the general state of affairs at the institutes, planning of research, types of fellowships, facilities for fellows, the position of the humanities and social sciences, and experiences with year groups. In the early 1990s SIAS was committed to promote research in the former East-bloc countries by awarding a yearly prize, the New Europe Prize for Higher Education and Research. The prize was awarded five times to former East-European fellows of the SIAS institutes, beginning in 1993. The prize money, DM 75,000 was used for investment in research, such as the setting up of journals, fellowship programmes, research projects, and even a research institute (the New Europe College in Bucharest). The last

⁵⁰ The Economist Dik Wolfson, Professor Emeritus at Erasmus University Rotterdam, would later be the Chair of the NIAS Scholarship Committee, from 2003 to 2007. The Scholarship Committee replaced the Selection Committee with the change of status of the Institute in 1988.

⁵¹ *Assessment Report NIAS 1995-2000*, December 2000, p. 3

time the prize was awarded the ceremony was organized by NIAS and held in the Houses of Parliament in The Hague⁵².

NetIAS began as an informal network of European institutes for advanced study in 2002 with the aim of applying jointly for research programmes of the European Commission. Its first meeting was held at NIAS. It now has 18 members. The network was successful in acquiring EU co-funding for the EURIAS Fellowship Programme which started in 2011/12.

The NIAS Fellows Network

NIAS offers opportunities for individual scholars, yet of vital importance is the network that fellows can create, not only with fellow-fellows but also with former fellows. To this end, the NIAS Fellows Association, NFA, was set up in 1977. Its principle aim is to promote “the optimum functioning of NIAS for the benefit of past, present, and future Fellows at NIAS”. The yearly NFA Day serves as an opportunity to see fellow-fellows again as well as to meet new people. At several occasions the NFA also served as a forum for alumni’s views. This was the case in the mid-1980s, when the NFA proposed an alternative plan to implement the budget cuts, and also recently in the debate about the plans of the Royal Academy to change the location of NIAS.

At times of celebration the NFA offered commemorative works of art. This tradition was initiated by Professor J.D. (Hans) Speckmann as Chair of the NFA. Hans Speckmann was Professor of Empirical Sociology at Leiden University and NIAS Fellow in 1974/75. He succeeded Bob Uhlenbeck as Chair of the NIAS Board in 1983. In the five years until 1988 when NIAS became an institute of the Royal Academy he had the task to guide the Institute through a very difficult transition process. It was Hans Speckmann who identified Dick van de Kaa as the new Director of NIAS in 1987. Hans Speckmann was Chair of the NFA from 1992 until his death in 1997.

Hans Speckmann first came up with the idea to present NIAS with a work of art on behalf of the NFA and the Golestan Foundation at the occasion of the official opening the Conference Building on 1 November 1993. It was a sculpture by Peter Kattenberg (1954) entitled “Trophy”. It symbolizes the chariot of knowledge reaching for higher aspirations. One wheel is directed towards the skies while the other one – made of stones – is connected to the earth (ill. 15)⁵³.

The official farewell to Dick van de Kaa as Director of NIAS was marked not only by a stylish ceremony in the Wassenaar Municipal Hall *De Paauw* but also by the presentation of Van de Kaa’s painted portrait by Gerard de Wit. Dick van de Kaa is painted seated on the library terrace with the Persian Rose Garden in the background (ill. 16). Gerard de Wit (1931-2010) was a versatile artist whose work includes still life and landscapes as well as portraits. Among the portraits he painted are those of Leiden professors Oort, Daems and Landsmeer⁵⁴.

⁵² Wesseling, H.L., *NIAS, SIAS en het Nieuwe Europa*, NIAS Wassenaar 1996

⁵³ “Presentation by Professor Hans Speckmann, Chairman of the NIAS Fellows Association” in: *Opening Ceremony 1993 at NIAS* (ed. W. R. Hugenholtz), NIAS Wassenaar 1994, pp. 45-46; RKD <http://explore.rkd.nl/nl/explore/artists/Kattenberg%2C%20Peter>

⁵⁴ Ineke Oele-Kap “Geschilderd in Oegstgeest” in: *Over Oegstgeest*, 19^{de} jaargang nummer 1, maart 2007, pp. 27-28

The celebrations of the 25th anniversary of NIAS were held in the Dorpskerk in Wassenaar in September 1996⁵⁵. At this occasion Bob Uhlenbeck, 'Founder of NIAS', was presented with his bust in bronze created by Nel van Lith (1932). It now is in the lecture room in the NIAS main building (ill. 17). Nel van Lith also created a bust of Queen Beatrix for the Municipal Hall in Almere and one for the Amsterdam Medical Centre. Other works by Nel van Lith can be seen in the Rijksmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, in Museum Beelden aan Zee in Scheveningen and Museum Kröller-Müller in Otterloo. Bob Uhlenbeck later fondly remembered the pleasant cooperation with Nel van Lith.

The tradition of commemorative art works was continued after Hans Speckmann's death with a plaque in honour of former Deputy-Director Els Glastra van Loon-Boon. She was Deputy-Director of NIAS from 1971 to 1980. Els van Loon died in 2004, and sculptress Constance Wibaut accepted the difficult task to create a plaque with her image based on a series of photographs. The plaque was attached to the outer wall of the Persian Rose Garden, since Els van Loon had been the first Chair of the Golestan Foundation, and as such was very much involved in establishing the Rose Garden according to Kenower Bash's last will and testament. The plaque was unveiled on NFA Day 2006 (ill. 18). Constance Wibaut (1920-2014), granddaughter of Amsterdam politician Floor Wibaut, started her career as a fashion journalist and illustrator for *Elsevier* in the 1950s and 1960s. Later she created busts of Amsterdam mayor Ed van Thijn, actor Ton Lutz, actress Ellen Vogel and conductor Bernhard Haitink. In 2012 she created a bust of her famous grandfather for the Amsterdam Municipal Hall.

When Wim Blockmans retired as Rector of NIAS in 2010 again the NFA and the Golestan Foundation commissioned a portrait (ill. 19). The choice of the artist, Robert Vanderweeën, was made by Wim Blockmans who knew him from an exhibition near his home town Ghent. Vanderweeën worked very fast, and two sittings by Blockmans were sufficient for him. He painted Wim Blockmans in a leisurely pose, dressed in jeans and sweater. The work of Robert Vanderweeën (1951) – both abstract and figurative – is characterized by bright colours. He has exhibited in Male Castle, Belgium, in 2011 and had an exhibition of landscapes in 'Het Pand', congress centre of Ghent University in 2014.

The fast gift of the NFA to NIAS was the poem @NIAS written by Writer-in-Residence 2009/10 Maria van Daalen. It was painted by Henk Ribot on the west wall of the Conference Building at the occasion of NIAS's 40th anniversary which was celebrated in June 2011. It is a poem about life and work at NIAS and the battles a NIAS Fellow has to fight. The English translation of the text reads as follows⁵⁶:

⁵⁵ A symposium was held at this occasion on "Islam and Europe". The proceedings of this symposium were published as *Islam and Europe in Past and Present* (ed. W.R. Hugenholtz and K. van Vliet-Leigh), NIAS Wassenaar 1997

⁵⁶ Translation by Maria van Daalen and Petry Kievit-Tyson

@NIAS

How the tree-shadows cross the lawn
ambling, encircling, never stopping. Standing
still like a beech among bushes. The will
to grow is a Law: of living, but what

do we know of the birds that nestle between leaves
and branches within us? Is there tender
happiness ready to hatch? It strains
to emerge here where the sun's slanting rays embrace us.

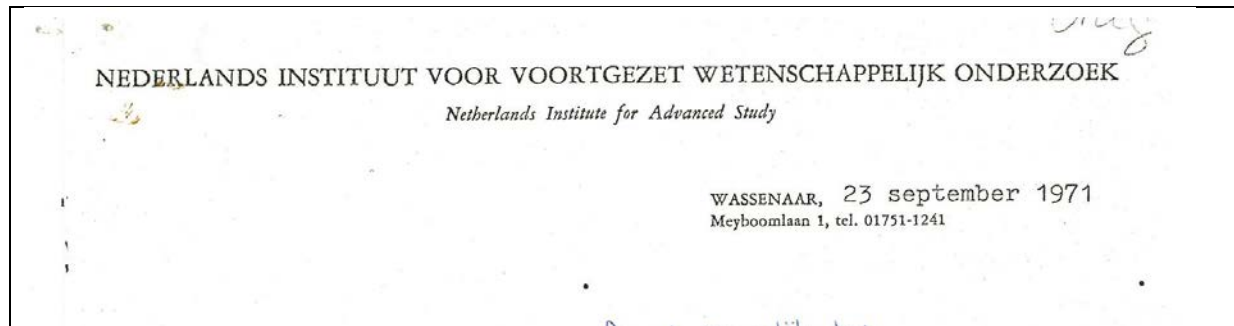
Between us eggshells drop
to the earth. To ken the seasons
is as impossible as bearing the crown:

do you feel our heart flexing with each gust of wind?
Getting used to the renewed every morning.
Endure. A storm is brewing. Do not fail.

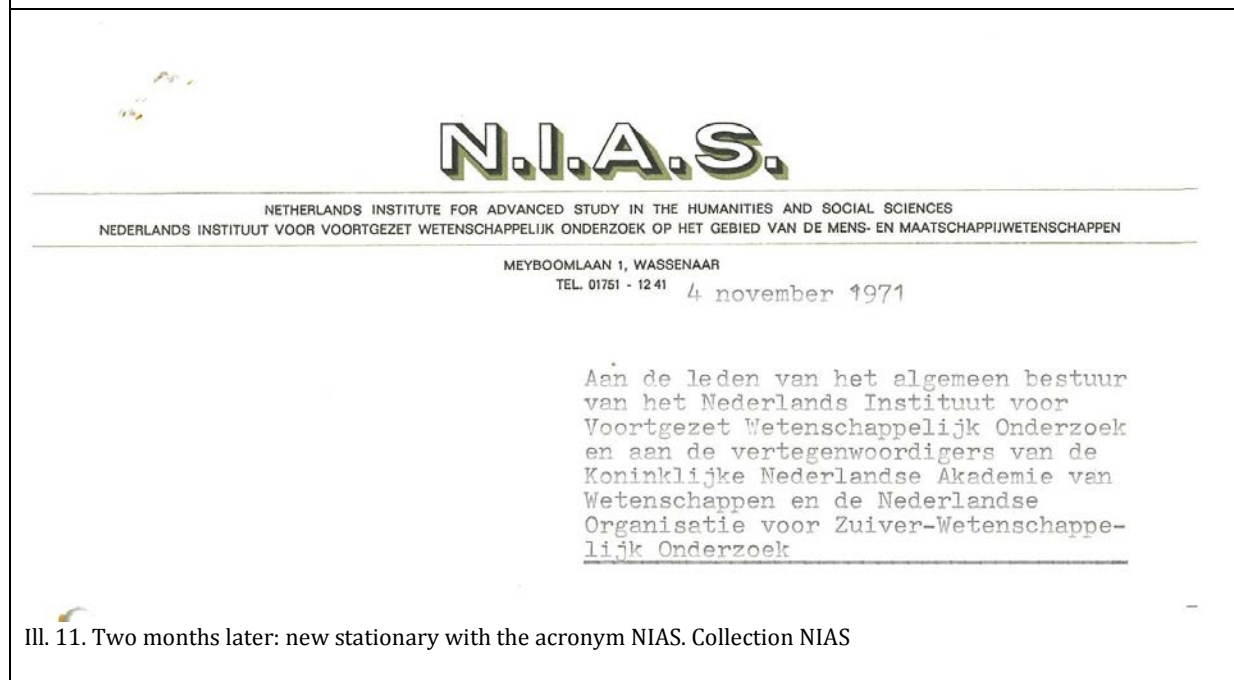
Indeed, a perfect way to characterize life at NIAS in Rijksdorp, Wassenaar, the place NIAS was so
strongly connected to for more than 45 years.

* * * * *

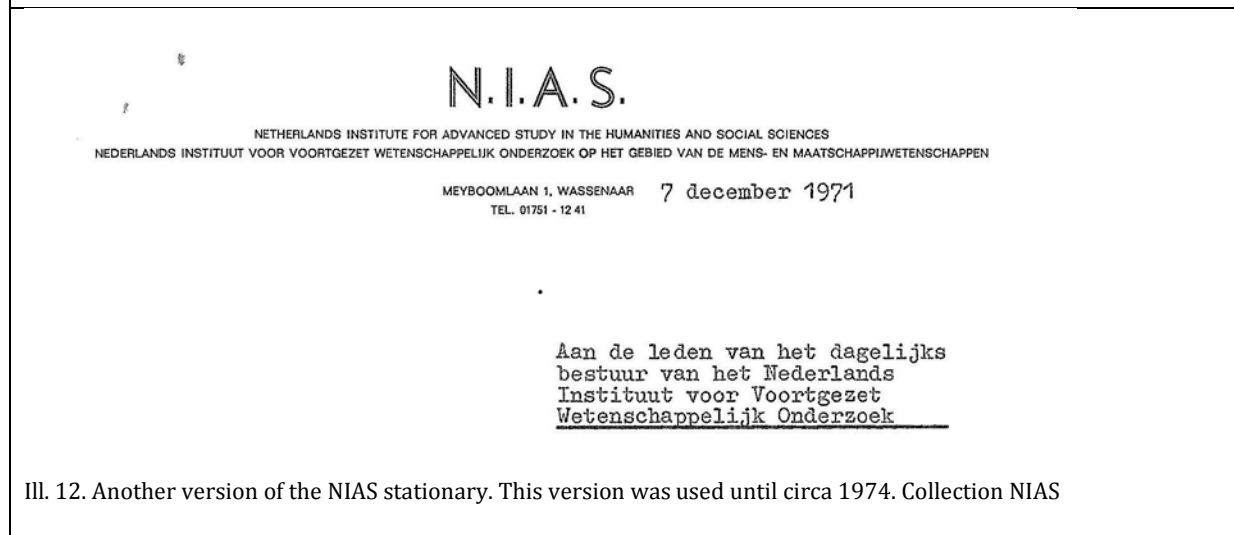
Illustrations “NIAS and the Course of Time”



Ill. 10. First printed stationary of NIAS September 1971. The acronym was not used yet. Collection NIAS



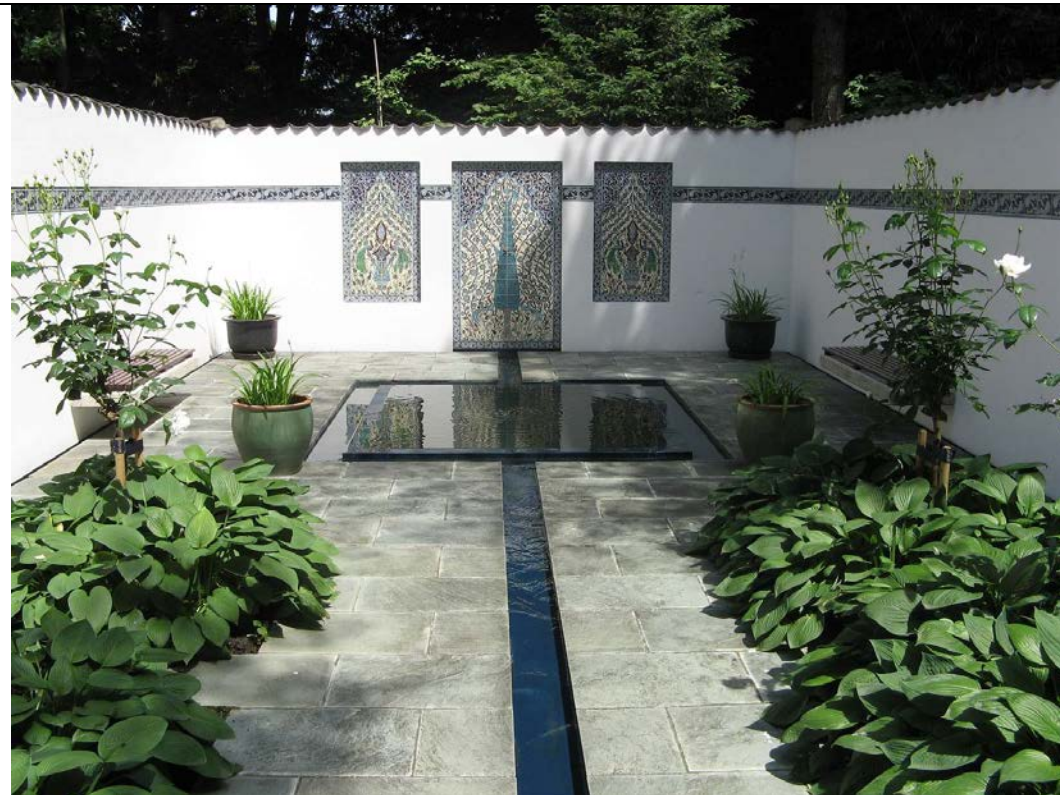
Ill. 11. Two months later: new stationary with the acronym NIAS. Collection NIAS



Ill. 12. Another version of the NIAS stationary. This version was used until circa 1974. Collection NIAS



Ill. 13. NIAS' Change of status signed by (left to right) Professor David de Wied, President of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Dick van de Kaa, Director of NIAS, and Hans Speckmann, Chair of the NIAS Board. NIAS Lecture Room, 17 December 1987. Photo: Collection NIAS



Ill. 14. The Persian Rose Garden designed by Annette Brandes in consultation with Kenower W. Bash, with tile murals by Marie Balian of Armenian Ceramics in Jerusalem. It was constructed in 1994. Photo: Dindy van Maanen



Ill. 15. "Trophy" by Peter Kattenberg, created at the occasion of the official opening of the Conference Building in 1993. Photo: Collection NIAS



Ill. 16. Portrait of Director Dick van de Kaa, Director of NIAS from 1987 to 1995, by Gerard de Wit painted at the occasion of Dick van de Kaa's farewell as Director of NIAS. Oil on canvas. Photo: Collection NIAS.



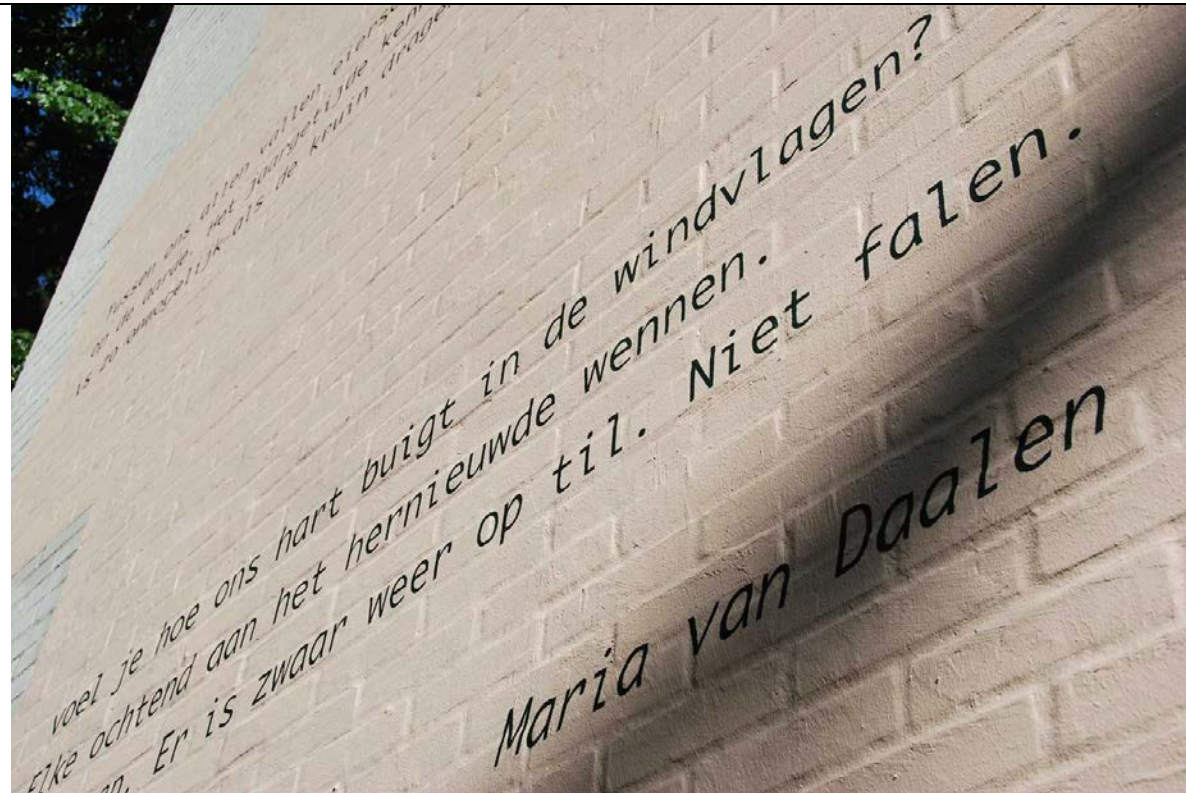
Ill. 17. Bust of Bob Uhlenbeck by Nel van Lith created at the occasion of NIAS' 25th anniversary in 1996. Bob Uhlenbeck died in 2003 at the age of 89. Photo: Johan Kwantes. Collection NIAS



Ill. 18. Plaque of Els Glastra van Loon-Boon, Deputy-Director of NIAS 1971-1980, by Constance Wibaut (2006). Photo: Dindy van Maanen



Ill. 19. Portrait of Wim Blockmans, Rector of NIAS from 2002 to 2010 by Robert Vanderweeën painted at the occasion of Wim Blockmans' farewell as Rector of NIAS. Oil on canvas. Photo: Collection NIAS



Ill. 20. Wall Poem @NIAS written by Writer-in-Residence 2009/10 Maria van Daalen and painted by Henk Ribot. The wall poem was a present by the NFA to NIAS at the occasion of NIAS's 40th anniversary in 2011 and painted on the west wall of the Conference Building by Henk Ribot. Photo: Dindy van Maanen

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