

# 'States of War: Experience, Redress, Reflection'

## NIOD Research Agenda 2020-24

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## 1. NIOD'S RESEARCH MISSION STATEMENT

Present-day societies are very much affected by issues of war and mass violence, stemming from defining experiences of the recent past (two world wars, wars of decolonization) and as much from contemporary intra-state conflicts, defined as 'new wars', 'irregular wars', or civil wars, and always creating long-lasting 'states of exception'. A common denominator of these different and often overlapping 'States of War' is that they are producing a global impact.

The NIOD's research traditionally starts from the Dutch experience of war and mass violence since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Presently, the Dutch, as a state and as a society, are even more involved in global conflicts than the leaders and the people at large dare to recognize. The Netherlands has participated and is participating, in multilateral political and military frameworks (United Nations, political and military alliances, as well as 'coalitions of the willing') in multiple and overlapping capacities of as peace-keepers, peace-enforcers, and co-belligerents. Moreover, the Netherlands and present-day Europe as a whole are experiencing the serious effects of conflicts elsewhere through the mobility and interconnectedness of people, be it refugees arriving in Europe or other people on the move. Thus, European states, including the Netherlands, continuously engaged in efforts to control areas and their perceived interests on a worldwide scale. As a consequence, the impact of war and mass violence on societies and individuals is not, and will not be, a thing of the past.

Within this context, however, much of Dutch collective memory still is closely tied to the experience of the Second World War and 'the lessons' connected to this particular past experience of war and mass violence. Within a national context, narratives of suffering and struggling for the 'good causes' of peace, freedom and democracy, and against political oppression, persecution, and genocide, have become crucial aspects of communicated and cultural memory and worked as a driving force for studying the impact of war on society. At the same time, the scholarship in this field requires new considerations of methods and approaches. This becomes clear through the ongoing Dutch debates on the Indonesian War of Independence, requiring scholars to liberate their research from the traditional preoccupations of 'nation and empire'. The NIOD aspires to further develop conceptual and theoretical frameworks for better understanding the cause, occurrence and nature of recent and contemporary wars and mass violence.

Engaging in this endeavor, the Research Department assumes that the study of the Second World War and its aftermath can only be of scholarly relevance if this field is meaningfully integrated into larger interpretative frameworks of international scholarly debates. The aim is to develop connecting analytical approaches of the impact of global conflicts (mass violence and destructive warfare since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, modern genocides), and their backlash (postcolonial migration, refugee politics, and inclusive and exclusive narratives of identity on societies). The Research

Department recognizes the need for moving beyond established Dutch and European perspectives and bring the dynamic exchange/interaction between the global north and south, east and west into the center of our consideration.

The NIOD holds it self-evident that the outlook of such a research strategy should be multi-disciplinary, connecting the study of history and related disciplines to social, cultural and political science approaches. Key issues of governance, legitimacy, security, mass mobilization and identity formation in the context of war and mass violence need to be studied in a global context and within a longer temporal framework. The study of both World Wars still may be dominated by nation-state approaches, even though from a scholarly point of view this perspective is completely obsolete. Evidently, the context of present-day conflict is international and global. At the same time, during the 75 years of existence, NIOD has experienced very directly, and in many different ways, that scholarly insight can only be successfully gained and valorized in close interaction with the concerns of the society in which it actually operates and to which it has to relate. The institute's particularly strong position of authority in society is, of course, a source of professional pride. At the same time, careful consideration remains required about how to intervene in societal debates on a foundation of expertise and insight.

This Research Agenda NIOD formulates the mission and aims of the Research Department. The purpose is to enhance the NIOD's position as an agenda-setting, international player in the field of research, while staying in close touch with Dutch society and its international environment. In general, while building upon a long-standing scholarly and archival expertise, the NIOD aims to link the urgent questions of the present with providing new perspectives to the recent and often discomfiting past. In 2018, this ambition and strategy have been discussed with the international SEP-assessment committee and reconfirmed. Along the lines of the recommendations of the assessment committee and the subsequent advice of the KNAW Portfolio Committee, the staff commits itself to work towards reaching scholarly excellence in its field of work, by means of:

- global cooperation and exchange of people and knowledge in a wide sense;
- bringing together early career and senior researchers;
- organizing of and being prominently present in relevant networks;
- reaching out to address societal concerns in the field.

## 2. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

During a period of transition between 2016 and 2019, the Research Department has founded three programmatic units. These units or core teams ('kernteams') are developing research projects in the fields that define the Research Agenda: 'War & Society', 'Society-driven Research', and 'Genocide Studies'.

A substantial part of the research staff is engaged in three larger externally funded programs contributing to the profile of the NIOD: the Expertise Center for Restitution of Looted Art (ECR), the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI), and the Network War Sources (Netwerk Oorlogs Bronnen/NOB).

The Research Department is the organizational framework that brings together the overlapping research and staffing policies, including strategic planning. The staff of ECR and EHRI are participating in the Research Department as far as their work is tied to shaping and implementing the research program of the NIOD. The status of NOB is pending for the time being and connects on a pragmatic basis to the Research Program.

The NIOD Department of Archive Collection and Services will participate in the Research Agenda in the field of innovative management of collections, data, developing new tools, and (re-) using these for research projects, as well as in open access and web-publishing. NIOD's General Affairs Department will be supporting data import, research communication and valorization by means of media old and new.

As a matter of principle, the institutional environment of the NIOD is quite plural. As an institute of the KNAW, the NIOD is connected to national and international scholarship as well as research and policy bodies, such as the Royal Academy of Arts & Sciences and its institutes (KITLV, Humanities Center, NIAS), NWO (in relation to the KNAW-NWO Portfolio as well as through various NWO and NWA grant programs), and a large number of other national and international institutions (EU-European Commission, Horizon 2020 and New Horizon, European Science Foundation) and many more academic partners (universities and research institutes in The Netherlands and abroad). Moreover, the NIOD has a strongly established and significant outreach in Dutch society and beyond (the research-oriented activities of Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 Mei, Arq Trauma Research, Platform WO 2, the Ministries of Culture & Education and Social Welfare & Sports, various local governments, and several others), which enhances its reputation as a center of expertise and generates the potential for developing projects for commissioned research on topics of societal relevance.

The national and internal, scholarly and public aspects of the NIOD's working scope should not be seen as separated, but on the contrary as mutually reinforcing elements. The guiding principle is that scholarly expertise and insight should determine the policies and the choices to be made; society as a whole and the scholarly environment should and can hold the NIOD research accountable in this respect.

### 3. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH AGENDA

The aims for the upcoming planning period are:

1. Innovative scholarship, to be developed by the three core teams as well as by the infrastructures working in the framework of the NIOD.

2. Being open to the outside world, through productive scholarly partnerships and societal engagement.
3. Promoting institutional coherence, by means of exploring new questions, techniques, and flexible cooperation between the Research Department core teams and NIOD infrastructures, the Collection and Services Department and the General Affairs Department.

The present Research Agenda is part of the general strategy of the NIOD (as given in the *Strategische Agenda 2017-2021*, various position papers following the Assessment Report of 2018 and the KNAW Portfolio Report of 2019). It also connects to the Strategic HRM Plan and the Staff Matrix & Classification for the Research Department, as formulated in 2019-2020. The latter provides the HRM-policy framework that should match planning for staffing to the scholarly ambitions, as explained below in paragraphs 5 and 6.

#### 4. ON THE PATH OF INNOVATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

##### 4.1 Approaches and disciplines

The NIOD Research Department aspires to be an international center of learning, driven by internal and external synergy, working towards new approaches in the study of war and mass violence. It departs from the present characteristics of NIOD's research, originating in the study of the Second World War as a defining period of 20th century history, and always searching for a wider scope, studying 'what has actually happened' not as a purpose in itself, but above all as a source of inspiration for interpreting the impact of war and mass violence on societies of yesterday and today. The connecting approach is defined by:

1. employing a temporal framework of the long 20<sup>th</sup> century (from the heyday of modern imperialism and the build-up to World War I) down to the multifarious 'states of war' in the world of today;
2. a global approach founded upon – but not limited to – the interconnectedness of war and mass violence between Europe, Asia and the rest of the world;
3. the urge to apply historical perspectives and historical depth in studying political, social, and cultural aspects of war and mass violence.

The NIOD has always approached its core themes on a basis of being open to a broad spectrum of disciplines. The specific purpose is to connect its historicizing study of a huge variety of analogue and digital sources with a thematic orientation that integrates knowledge production in many different disciplines. Thus, the humanities can provide on one hand the well-tested approaches of historical scholarship and on the other are rapidly developing methods for digital research, in particular in big digitized data-collections; the arts and cultural sciences offer new ways of representation as well as for a critical understanding. Legal studies are required for understanding procedures for trying perpetrators and accomplices, for

compensation and redress, and at the same time produce an enormous wealth of sources that can provide insight in the character and impact of mass violence in a context of war and conflict. The social and political sciences will offer both the questions and the methods for analyzing the role of political institutions and social formations and the way these are affected by 'states of war'. Evidently, every specific expertise proves to be a welcome and challenging addition, as well as a meaningful interface for cooperation with external partners.

The focus in this programmatic innovation will be on the very diverse experiences and legacies of war and mass violence, in which content and methodology will be closely connected. Answering the question of how the NIOD's vantage points in the broad field of research can be strengthened by defining its focus areas is in the core of this endeavor. The main topics in this research program are connected by the general theme of the immediate and lasting impact of war and mass violence on contemporary societies. Methodologies and approaches are permanently explored to support this purpose.

#### 4.2 Digital Humanities

Since the early 21st century, 'Digital Humanities' are offering new opportunities for the opening up of collections, connecting huge collections of digitized data and applying the connectivity and self-learning potential of advanced programming. The most recent wave of technological innovation, particularly in the fields of optical character recognition (OCR) and electronic calculation power, facilitating methodological innovation on the basis of reliable software. This technological development logically coincides with a virtually unlimited expansion of digital sources in general. New forms of warfare and response to mass violence have created massive volumes of digital sources, in the shape of images, texts and films, produced by warring parties or independent journalists and researchers, but also as records of international tribunals or national courts.

For the NIOD the application of digital humanities is a process of methodological innovation and creative application in the first place, not of invention. In order to pick the fruits of the fields of digital humanities for its own research, the NIOD assumes the following policy positions:

- The NIOD believes that the application of computational analyses and the use of newly built and acquired datasets have the potential to dramatically enhance and enrich the efficacy and scope of historic research. It is imperative that researchers themselves will acquire the skills and experience for applying computational analyses. The NIOD does not believe in a separation between engineering and research skills, it expects the best results from a merger of the two. This principle will require that researchers will be trained in the field, preferably in cooperation with external partners.
- This policy will be shaped by connecting expertise in the field of collections (in particular NIOD's own collection) and research, based on computational techniques and methods. As a matter of fact, the relationship between

professional care for collections and exploring research techniques is changing rapidly, owing to these innovations. Preceding experiences with EHRI, NOB, and several research programs with external partners will be the foundation for continued efforts, connected to digitization of the NIOD archive, and set up in close connection with the C&S Department (for example, the 'Letters Project' funded by the Mondrian Foundation/Ministry of Health and Social Welfare).

- In order to make this all possible, the NIOD will connect to the directly surrounding infrastructures (KNAW, Humanities Center), the larger funding organizations (Clariah, Dariah, Clarin, EU), and the strategic alliances with external partners (C2DH Luxembourg, IMES Osnabrück).
- In this way, the NIOD will contribute to the development of robust mixed-method strategies for working with digitized collections in general and big data collections in particular. This concerns both existing data collections, as well as those generated on a day-to-day basis by means of the new social media. Within the core team for War & Society, new methodological perspectives are explored for developing and testing methods and approaches for utilizing existing and newly created datasets (in particular by means of digital humanities' methods) as well as for re-evaluating and considering established terminology for the sake of analytical clarity and rigor.

#### 4.3 Societal Demand and Engagement

The NIOD has always defined itself as 'an institute of use for society'. This refers to the ambition to actively inform debates in the scholarly community and society at large. NIOD-staff are strongly motivated to engage in discussions concerning a wide range of topics connected to their work, like the legacies of collaboration and resistance, the roots of genocide, compensation for past injustice, the occurrence of racism and antisemitism. At the same time, there is an urge to make the collections and the expertise of the staff publicly available. The challenge is how to make this work really matter for many, while at the same time to keep up scholarly standards and strive towards academic excellence. Moreover, the balance between working on demand and intervening in societal debates requires much attention. For a scientific research institute, the academic agenda is of principal importance and this agenda needs to be connected to international scholarly debates.

The point of departure is that the NIOD is very much aware of the demand for knowledge and insight from society and considers this as an inspiration for proposing innovative research, not as a mechanism for acquiring commissioned projects. As a matter of principle, the NIOD's contributions in the field of Public History are tied to scholarly knowledge production. Therefore, externally funded projects will embody academic approaches, for instance by conceiving these as PhD projects. In this way, the NIOD aspires to contribute to develop and transfer academic skills and topical expertise to new generations.

Working on the basis of this principle, according to the guidelines of the KNAW for executing externally commissioned research, the NIOD will capitalize on its role as a producer of valuable expertise. The portfolio of the NIOD's Society-driven Research core team is pointing at the shared commitment to excellence: recently engaged projects in this field have therefore been conceived as PhD-projects within the NIOD. The NIOD commits itself to developing expertise on the past being curiosity driven: the search for knowledge and expertise precedes judgement. During the planning period, several major commissioned programs with a very high public impact will be executed and concluded, including the program on the Dutch and the Indonesian War of Independence (ODGOI). This will call for an internal evaluation of project management, internal and external communication, and outcome.

## 5. MAJOR THEMES

The general topic of the NIOD research agenda – 'The States of War' – relates to the wide-ranging impact of war and organized mass violence on contemporary societies. It connects the NIOD's initial specialization in the history of the Second World War within a broader temporal context - stretching from the era of modern imperialism and the First World War to the end of empire and the Cold War to the disintegration of the post-World War Two bi-polar world order and the post- 9-11 new wars.

'States of War' is the broadly conceived subject that brings together the study of the interrelated dynamics of institutions in war, of coping with the legacies of organized mass violence, and of reflection on the meaning of such experiences. The immediate and longer-lasting impact of war and mass violence will be studied through three analytical lenses: Experience, Redress, and Reflection. The different layers in the 'States of War' will thus be investigated and uncovered as interconnected phenomena in recent history. This approach should define the cutting-edge research that the NIOD aspires to contribute, as indicated in the sections below.

### 5.1 EXPERIENCE

Narratives of individual or collective experiences are usually shaping the history and memory of war and mass violence. 'Experience' as such is a term that belongs to everyday language but requires close scrutiny and reflection in order to be operationalized fruitfully. Briefly: the study of experience should connect the study of circumstances and events in history on individuals and groups to fundamental reflection on the processes of attributing identities to historical subjects. This calls for critical evaluation of the use of seemingly self-evident categories of, for instance, victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. The use of experience as a category of research should account for the discursive character of that practice. This applies both to those who have produced the sources as to those who are working with the sources for the sake of further interpretation. Only from such a perspective will the study of human endurance and agency be able to produce a deeper understanding of the impact of war and mass violence on lives of individuals and their social and



political communities. The present program focusses on several universal issues as being uprooted, being involved in mass violence and genocidal processes and engaging in fact-finding on these matters for the purpose of prosecution.

### People on the move

One of the defining experiences of war is people being massively uprooted. The theme of 'people on the move' (moved and/or mobilized as refugees, emigrants, evacuees, forced laborers, deportees and prisoners, and soldiers) is formulated by the core team War & Society. In late 2019, the core team has organized an international conference on 'Negotiating Displacement' in order to test questions, methods and approaches for this subject. This event was supported by a national public event to bring scholars in touch with stakeholders and activists in the field. The theme of 'people on the move' will integrate the perspective of war and society studies into the field of migration studies which includes research into refugees and exiles, the legal (or extra-legal) status of people on the move and the connection to international relations and humanitarian law. The aim is to better understand the impact and experience of war and mass violence within the context of forced mobility, including the study of individual and collective reactions, to be distinguished as experiences, emotions, and expectations. This subject is connected to practices of ethnic cleansing and other genocidal processes.

What matters very much as a research objective is to study the own agency of people on the move, striving to find new directions in their individual and collective lives. In terms of research and methodology, this topic is under development as a cooperative project between NIOD, IMES Osnabrück and the Arolsen Archives. Within this project, the challenge is taken up to investigate the existing archival collections in new ways by means of digitization and applying digital humanities' techniques and methods. For the near future, research perspectives will connect mass violence, war, and genocides to crises of climate change, poverty, hunger, and disease.

### Contemporary Genocide

Genocides and massacres are not only a thing of the past, but forms of mass violence that were experienced by people currently alive and living in Europe. The scholarship on mass violence, i.e. modern wars, dictatorships, civil wars, massacres, and genocides, addresses this wide-ranging topic. This dynamic research field has increasingly argued that wars in the (post-) Cold War era were fought not necessarily between states' standing armies, but within societies as civil wars. This has blurred the distinctions between warfare and massacres/genocide, and combatants and civilians. In particular, modern civil wars and genocides figure prominently in the research field and the popular imagination. NIOD is explicitly situating itself in this field and contributing to it by fostering research on these experiences during and after contemporary violent conflicts.

In the past two decades, research on genocide has shifted its perspective from the study of merely perpetrators to perpetration. Whereas the former term refers to the agency of the individuals who have perpetrated forms of mass violence against civilians, the latter concept refers to the process of collective commission of mass violence. Considering the emergence of this new research direction, NIOD's core team Holocaust & Genocide Studies is promoting research on separate themes, as well as on the relationships between these themes. As such, NIOD is the institutional home of the Journal of Perpetrator Research.

#### Investigation, documentation, and universal jurisdiction

Since the investigation and trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, over a dozen countries have used their national laws, judiciaries and courts to investigate, prosecute and judge perpetrators of international crimes. Procedures of national and international criminal law, including the International Criminal Tribunal on former Yugoslavia, have produced enormous bodies of documents concerning mass violence, war-crimes and Crimes against Humanity. Presently, European countries have stepped up sponsorship of official (IIIM in Syria, UNITAD in Iraq, IIMM in Myanmar) and private (Bellingcat etc.) mechanisms and organisations that document and investigate mass violence, while also commencing prosecutions. As a participant of the EU Cost Action "Global Atrocity Justice Constellations", NIOD continues data gathering, interviews and research on broader UJ developments in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and France regarding mass violence in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, Gambia, Liberia, Nigeria.

#### 5.2 REDRESS

The manifold expropriation of civil and human rights constitutes a defining element in genocidal processes, intended to discriminate victim communities, strip them of citizenship and possessions, and prepare them for ethnic cleansing and mass murder. Studying these pathways to genocide, as well as the repertoires developed in their aftermath, should help us to understand the responsibility of states and societies involved, as well as the degree to which they feel they should engage in policies of redress.

#### The Holocaust

The Holocaust remains a cornerstone of historical and social-scientific understandings of modern genocide. It is a unique phenomenon in contemporary history. The Holocaust and its aftermath are also a prism through which we can deepen our understanding of the causes, courses, and consequences of genocide. Not only is it the largest European genocide in scale, intensity, and impact of the violence, it also occurred and left its mark in the very city in which the NIOD is situated. Continued interest in the Holocaust will build on innovative future research, attractive teaching, and public engagement. This will connect to institutional and ideological preparations for- and actual practices of segregation, spoliation,

deportation and mass murder, to the loss of agency of the persecuted, and the role of perpetrators and accomplices.

### Transitional Justice

Transitional Justice is a term that challenges closer definition because it contains analytical as well as normative properties. It can be seen as a set of repertoires of criminal justice, lustration and purging as instruments of actual regime change and restoration (or not) of the legal order in a post-repressive society. In this case, the emphasis is on transition, and the use of legal norms and instruments as an expression thereof. In the other sense, the notion of Justice (or the lack of it) usually contains an element of judgement about how to come to terms with a disruptive past. In this respect, transitional Justice is understood as a toolbox of measures to enable post-repressive states in coping with the many difficult and traumatizing legacies of violent and repressive rule.

The NIOD research has developed a program in which the term the 'Age of Transitional Justice' is coined to describe the socio-cultural evolution that emerged from the global ascent of the human rights discourse. For the upcoming second stage of this project, a number of under-researched areas were identified. Among them: the fact that achieving justice in post-repressive states is not necessarily correlated with achieving reconciliation, because there is neither consensus on the facts, nor on the criteria for a just outcome since justice means different things to different groups. Transitional justice mechanisms have not sufficiently addressed the competing narratives of history that persist in post-repressive societies. A related problem is the enduring culture of repression in societies aspiring to be post-repressive. These and related themes – including the reflection on the impact of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa – make up the ongoing NIOD transitional justice research agenda, uniquely characterized by its historical and historicizing approach to this broad field, which is largely dominated by legal and social studies.

### Civil rights and citizenship

Another aspect of the very general field of transitional justice is the processes of deprivation of human-, property-, and civil rights (as a result of violence), as well as measures of redress and compensation after regime change. Under this theme, we intend to (re-) integrate war- and genocide studies by means of a historicizing approach that seeks a close connection with memory and heritage studies. We do this with the intention to provide more historical depth and context to reconciliation processes often primarily studied from the perspective of the present and from the practitioner's point of view (often directed towards creating a 'toolbox' to overcome the legacy of war, genocide and mass violence).

## Legacies

The legacies of war and mass violence are manifold, as the history of the post-war period following the collapse of Nazi rule in Europe illuminates. The legacy does not remain limited to the transitional procedures in the sphere of punishing and vetting collaborators. The core team Society-driven Research is engaged in several research projects commissioned by local governments and other public institutions. In these cases, the general issue is the question if, in a context of war and genocide, injustice has been done to specific categories of citizens by public bodies, and in which ways their present-day successors should take steps for compensation, redress, and apology. This theme calls for scholarly reflection on social and political reflexes that detecting such facts should only be met by attributing guilt for past and offering compensation as 'recognition'.

More generally, the issue of deprivation of civil rights, the loss and spoliation of property, can be connected to the topic of 'people on the move'. This aspect of the legacy also strongly connects to 'informal' ways of seeking and enforcing redress in the immediate context of regime change: the broad repertoires of shaming, shearing of women, snitching, plundering, dispossessing enemies, and mobs performing summary justice.

## Looted art and heritage

In 2018, the 'Expertise Centrum Restitutie' (ECR) was institutionally integrated within the NIOD, with a twofold task: (1) to do provenance research in the field of art looted during the Nazi-era; (2) to develop, enhance and promote expertise and knowledge in the field of looted art. In 2019, ECR initiated a national pilot project on provenance research in the field of colonial art, a subject that is also in various ways connected to long-standing research themes and expertise within the NIOD.

The evident connection with the present Research Agenda is that the researchers in the ECR will engage in the study of the historical development and context of looting and restitution. Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a stream of publications dealing with this topic has appeared. These were directed to the general public, as well as to scholarly communities, the legal profession and public authorities. Matters of Nazi politics of culture, systematic spoliation of Jewish property, and the peculiarities of the art trading world require specialist knowledge. At the same time, the NIOD Research Agenda aspires to contextualize these matters and provide for historical insight into the processes, as connected to the legacy of war and mass violence in general.

The issue of restitution of looted cultural heritage is proving to be much more constant than initially expected, all the more because of the present debates on the cultural heritage of colonial rule. Moreover, connections are made with claims of individuals and categories of people dispossessed within the context of other conflicts in the recent past of the present. Historical and legal scholarship are dealing with different features of present restitution practices, like fact-finding concerning the provenance of individual works of art. On a more general level, the description,

comparison and application of the relevant legal frameworks are analyzed. It is important to notice that after 50 years or more, it cannot be self-evident that claims for restitution will be adjudged. A PhD trajectory will study the question in which cases, and for what reasons, this in fact did happen. This topic will be studied in the international context of states that have obliged themselves to action in the Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art (1998). Furthermore, the drive for restitution will be studied together with other NIOD researchers from a broader perspective of transitional justice, memory studies, the importance of material culture, colonial history and historiography.

### 5.3 REFLECTION

Reflection on the impact of war and mass violence on societies is a matter that transcends generations, and possibly historical epochs. This is suggested by a whole range of historical examples, in which the past is invoked to provide ever-changing, or curiously constant meaning to the present. Memories are multi-layered and under lever-lasting construction, even over the generations. Memory politics and practices – for instance, materialized in trials, truth-commissions, apologies, monuments, commemorations, or media productions – reflect how people memorize wartime experiences, and at the same time provide meaning to them. After a battle, we very often see a memory battle, as is illuminated by the vehement memory wars in Eastern Europe, or the ongoing debates on the Dutch memory of the Indonesian War of Independence. Discussing the legitimacy of the proclamation of Indonesian Independence on August 17, 1945 is not 'simply' about establishing a historical fact – it is about the clash between remnants of a colonial mindset and a post-colonial outlook. The NIOD Research Department aims at contributing to the historical culture of reflecting on how from present positions meaning is attributed to the past. At the same time, researchers are conscious of the fact that they should feel challenged to reflect upon their own role, given the position of the NIOD as a producer of knowledge and an institution of authority.

#### Politics of memory

The point of departure of this program, 2020, is the year in which the NIOD is involved in the commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War, at the same time being the 75<sup>th</sup> years of the NIOD's own foundation. The institute was founded in the immediate aftermath of the liberation of the Netherlands, as a social-pedagogical experiment in transferring the wartime-experiences to later generations. Since its foundation, the NIOD has played an important role in Dutch society as a producer of knowledge – and also of judgement concerning behavior of individual persons and institutions. In this respect, the institute has been an instrument of the politics of memory displayed by Dutch governments and the civil society at large. Matters have changed in many ways, and in particular, since the NIOD has become an institute of the KNAW, the priority of the NIOD's scholarly mission is safeguarded. Nevertheless, critical reflection on the prominent role of the NIOD as part of the Dutch and international historiography of

war, mass violence and genocide in recent history is of paramount importance. Therefore, such reflection should be an integrating part of the scholarly production of NIOD as a whole and also of researchers going public and presenting their insight.

#### Memory culture

The core team for Society-driven Research intends to prepare a conference on 'forgotten categories and forgotten histories'. The point of departure is the phenomenon that more and more appeals to the past are made to emphasize the social urge to be recognized – either as a victim, as a hero or otherwise. At first sight, this suggests that historians may be driven by the wish to make their work, and historical culture as a whole, more inclusive

#### Ideology

Moreover, reflecting on war, mass violence and genocide implies reflecting on the underlying causes, and not in the least on ideological backgrounds. The NIOD acknowledges the permanent need for studying antisemitism as well as other manifestations of radical nationalistic, ethnocentric, religious and political thought as so many interconnected foundations for mass violence and genocide. In this respect, the E-journal Fascism, edited from the NIOD, will be continued as an instrument for better understanding of Fascism as a transnational historical phenomenon with significant connections to the world of today.

## 6. MAIN INSTRUMENTS

The NIOD will deploy a broad variety of instruments to support the aims and strategy of the Research Agenda. For obvious reasons, the means to develop all of these at the same time are limited, owing to constraints in budget and staff-time. Therefore, a balanced and selective use of these tools is required. For the management of these matters, the function of Secretary to the Research Department provides crucial support. Instruments to be deployed are:

- Fellowship program  
In 2019, the NIOD decided to offer fellowships to external scholars working in a field that is of relevance for the research agenda. The idea is that international and national researchers can spend their sabbatical leave or research grants provided by their own organizations and on that basis join the NIOD for a period of 3-6 months. They fully participate and contribute to the work of the research department and will be part of the expanding scholarly networks. Next to the individual fellowships, the NIOD is preparing a fellowship program together with the NIAS, explicitly aiming at program-development in the sphere of War & Society. Likewise, the NIOD receives external researchers who are part of European programs, specifically the Marie Curie program and EHRI-fellows, as well as those who are participating in the 'scholars at risk' - program.
- External professorships and teaching

In line with the KNAW-policy, senior researchers at NIOD are eligible for part-time positions of professor at universities. The importance of such appointments is evident: they enhance the connection to national networks of research and academic teaching and enable NIOD-Professors to take autonomous responsibility as advisors of PhD students in their own research programs. The academic teaching in which NIOD staff participates also enable 'scouting' of talented students.

- PhD program

The NIOD aspires to be an inspiring environment for PhD students. Some of these students may be employed by the NIOD, others are funded by NWO, universities or external parties. What brings them together is that they are connected to programs and projects of NIOD staff as part of the Research Agenda and that for them the NIOD is an ideal full-time or part-time 'workshop'. Per student, individual trajectories are developed in cooperation with the different universities in order to provide for the adequate training programs, including Research Schools; in this respect, KNAW-facilities are relevant as well. Besides that, the PhD students at NIOD are invited to discuss their work in progress as well as other ongoing research on a basis of equality in NIOD staff seminars. Moreover, the PhD students meet on a regular basis in a seminar of their own, to present their work and discuss methodology, approaches and general issues connected to their position.

- External partnerships

Traditionally, the NIOD is part of important networks of institutes in the field of The Second World War and Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Most of these institutes have followed trajectories compatible with the NIOD and can be considered as excellent partners. At the same time, it will be important for the sake of finding new approaches, new connections to scholarship, and methodological innovation to break out of the 'institutional pedigree'. Therefore, the Research Department is actively exploring the opportunities for engaging in new external productive partnerships, for instance in the field of history of experience and emotions, the application of new methods for exploring digitized mass data collections, and for connecting the holocaust research to contemporary genocides.

- Conferences, workshops

The Research Department believes in organizing meetings of scholars as small and informal 'working conferences' of max. 15-20 participants as an optimum for exchanging points of view and results. These are relatively simple to fund and organize and can be highly intensive and effective. Specific externally-funded programs present opportunities for larger meetings and conferences. Moreover, it has been decided that the core teams alternately organize a programmatic conference each year. The War & Society 2019 conference on 'Negotiating Displacement' was a first in a series. Actual implementation of these objectives

is, of course, depending on the development of the world-wide Covid-19 situation. At the time of the submission of this Research Agenda, researchers are engaging in experiments in virtual workshops and research meetings. In the end, such a new experience may produce a fundamental change in scholarly exchange in general.

- Dissemination, valorization: media old and new, interactivity

The Research Department is very much inspired by the experience of being in the public eye when media are covering activities, exhibitions and publications. NIOD is a partner in the Amsterdam University Debating Center Spui 25. NIOD's Research and Collections are regularly featured in a broad range of national and international news media. At the same time the NIOD is developing publication policies that are set to generate its own voice in the public sphere, in particular by means of the new media: open access, exploring innovative channels for publication, the NIOD-podcast 'Rewind', long-reads and others. This media strategy will be integrated into the new-to-be-developed website.



## 7. STRATEGIC HRM POLICIES

In 2019 and early 2020, the NIOD management has determined a Strategic HRM Plan and Staff Matrix & Classification Plan, both of which are set to fulfill the ambitions of the Research Agenda for the upcoming years. On one hand, the HRM policy departs from the available capacities and means, on the other, it is intended to pinpoint the opportunities and needs to meet these ends. In other words: how will the Research Department have to proceed in taking strategic decisions about upcoming vacancies and division between senior-, post-doc, junior- and PhD-researchers? In 2020, the administrative implementation of HRM-policies determined by the NIOD management will be transferred to the KNAW Humanities Center. This should open up the opportunity for a more specialized handling of staffing matters. The balance between ambitions, means, and capacities will require strategic decisions of the NIOD management in conjunction with the Research Department. The HRM-policy will be directed at realizing the aims of this Research Agenda by means of investing in promoting skills of staff members, creating opportunities and mobility, both internally and externally. An assessment of the staff, as related to the annual evaluation of staff-member functioning, is foreseen to find out how individual capacities contribute to the whole, and which kind of training and staffing policies will be required to meet the purposes.

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