Utility spots: science policy, knowledge transfer and the politics of proximity

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4. The Geopolitics of European Universities and Advanced Institutes for Humanities, 1955–1975

4.1 Introduction

In Dutch historiography, the early 1960s are usually pinpointed as the beginning of science policy. As Gerard Alberts put it, the era is known as the transition from an active (but non-interventionist) politics of science to a rationalised, interventionist science policy.[414] Previously, I have shown that an interuniversity debate about research planning and coordination was already taking place behind the scenes in the 1950s. In this chapter, I add that we should also pay attention to European geopolitics of academic research in the period that preceded 1963. Whereas the argument above was that policy issues originated in, and led to, concrete places of exchange, I will argue in this chapter that *virtual* utility spots too play an important, structuring role in policy debates. As it turns out, this is of importance not only for the natural sciences but also

414 Alberts, *Jaren van berekening,* 46–48.

for the national organisation of humanities research. Beginning with the European University, I will tie a variety of virtual utility spots together in a spatial and geopolitical narrative to arrive at the peaceful grounds of an advanced study institute in the Dutch dunes.

The exploration of organisation of the humanities will bring into view two aspects of utility in this period: the social nature of academic research and the relation between the natural sciences and the humanities. The argument for the utility of the humanities partly translated into a transition from the centrality of the individual, but 'overburdened' professor to cooperation and exchange between and beyond disciplines in organisational and spatial proposals for humanities research. On the other hand, one encounters pleas to appreciate the 'complementary' utility of the humanities: not in transferring knowledge from science to society, but in transferring values from the past to the present so as to feed reflection on contemporary technological change. Although NIAS was the outcome of these legitimations of the humanities and its main example was Stanford, where an advanced institute on the hillside looked out over the university campus and industrial park, the Dutch institute was situated quite remote from other social and epistemic actors. By sketching the arguments and social-epistemic alliances behind European and Dutch utility spots for academic research, this chapter also contributes to the emerging literature on the historically changing categories of, and relations between, the natural sciences and the humanities.[415]

First, I sketch the contours of an international policy debate in the 1960s about the value of science (4.2), after which I turn successively to specific plans for transnational universities that embodied both cultural and economic value: a European (4.3) and an Atlantic university (4.4), as well as a related Dutch plan for an international institute (4.5). This leads me halfway into the chapter to a more reflective section (4.6) on the geopolitics of utility spots in this period. From there onwards, I turn to the organisation of the humanities in science policy (4.7) and in a particular spot that was genetically related to the previous European and Atlantic plans (4.8). In conclusion (4.9), I tease out how utility spots for humanities and natural sciences are related.

4.2 Cultural and Economic Value of Scientific Research in Europe

In February 1963, Leiden University invited director-general of the Ministry of Education and Sciences Arie Piekaar to give the dies speech. In the old Academy Building on the Rapenburg canal, the high-ranking public official talked about 'the organisation of science policy'. The speech had been written

415 For the contours of this debate, see the contributions to a recent *Isis* Focus section as well as the Forum on the 'Two Cultures Revisited; The Sciences and the Humanities in a Longue Durée Perspective' in the *History of Humanities.* Rens Bod and Julia Kursell, "Introduction: The Humanities and the Sciences," *Isis* 106, no. 2 (2015): 337–340; Fabian Krämer, "Shifting Demarcations: An Introduction," *History of Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2018): 5–14.

'analogous to modern scientific research "as a team"' with one of his senior advisors, philosopher Mr. Johan Nittel.[416] This was only one way in which the speech was in tune with its times. Piekaar and Nittel presented an ambiguous mix of cultural and economic legitimations for the public funding of science. They contrasted a pre-war tradition of cultural pessimism with the post-war optimists of international science policy. Where the pessimist held that 'Western science' had produced a 'broad cultural gap' between the skyrocketing control over nature and the 'wisdom' to use this power for the 'public good', the optimists underlined the technological potential and economic benefits of scientific research.[417] Local newspapers indeed reported that Piekaar's science policy aimed to relieve the cultural crisis. But the main take-away was clearly that the economic value of scientific research had become a central concern. The *Leidsch Dagblad* quoted Piekaar in its headline: 'With sufficient guarantees, more contract research very welcome'.[418] And in his speech, Piekaar admitted that the post-colonial, resource-deficient situation of the Netherlands necessitated the government to draw on its 'human reserves, intellectual potential, its capacity for scientific research'. Brainpower was, just months before the discovery of a large reservoir of natural gas in the northern province of Groningen, the most important resource for the Dutch economy: science was 'the limiting factor for the pursuit of material wealth'.[419]

But this did not mean that the simple mobilisation of university research for industrial purposes would produce economic miracles, as some international military and economic organisations wanted him to believe. Yes, continued Piekaar, society increasingly demanded 'organised science, oriented towards societal applications [and] the solution of problems', but utility was something to be 'awaited, not expected'. Although the 'national or societal value' of the natural sciences existed in the interaction with external parties, through contract research (as described in the previous chapter), the value of the humanities existed precisely in their 'disinterestedness'. Quite visibly, Dutch science policy balanced between two discourses, different interest groups from industry, universities and politics, and various socio-cultural pillars—from Catholic conservatives to social-democrats and economic liberals. Historians of Dutch science policy have described the year 1963, beginning with Piekaar's speech, as a turning point from a 'Continental' cultural doctrine to an 'Atlantic' economic doctrine.[420] The latter was based on the macro-economic belief that technological change (through scientific research) was a main ingredient of the 'residual factor'. Robert Solow had identified this factor on the grounds that explanations based on labour and capital alone failed to account for historical economic growth data.[421] These seemingly opposite conceptions of the utility of scientific research had geopolitical connotations, as we will see

416 A. J. Piekaar, "De organisatie van het wetenschapsbeleid," *Universiteit en Hogeschool* 9, no. 4 (1963): 225–46.

417 Piekaar, 225. American sociologist William F. Ogburn defended this thesis in his book *Social Change with Respect to Culture and Original Nature* (1922)

418 'Directeur-generaal voor de wetenschappen: "Onder voldoende garanties meer contract-research zeer welkom,"' *Leidsch Dagblad,* 4 February 1963; 'Dr. Piekaar: De organisatie van het wetenschapsbeleid', *Nieuwe Leidsche Courant*, 4 February 1963.

419 Piekaar, "De organisatie van het wetenschapsbeleid," 228–29.

420 Brookman, *The Making of a Science Policy*, 332; Alberts, *Jaren van berekening*, 245–47; Van Berkel, *De stem van de wetenschap*, 338–39.

421 Benoît Godin, "The Value of Science: Changing Conceptions of Scientific Productivity, 1869 to circa 1970," *Social Science Information* 48, no. 4 (2009): 569.

below, which were particularly relevant in the 1950s: after the 'loss' of the Dutch colonies in the East Indies, a geographical reorientation of Dutch sciences was required.[422] In this chapter, I will investigate both planned and realised places of organised research and knowledge exchange that demonstrate the co-dependence of these two arguments in all fields of academic research, from the natural sciences to the humanities, in the context of post-war geopolitics.

I will start with a virtual utility spot that lies at the root of these developments: the 'European University'. The first plan for such a spot was originally proposed in 1955 at the negotiations for the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). As plan it existed in various modalities between 1955 and 1961, but it was always envisaged to contribute to European cultural and economic integration. The European University thus was of geopolitical importance from its inception and it never completely escaped political considerations. In this chapter I will demonstrate how the geopolitics of the European University contributed to the nationalisation of science policy in the Netherlands. Additionally, the European University had an indirect effect on the organisation of Dutch humanities research. The eventual establishment of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) in 1970 is usually described as outcome of the Wagenvoort committee, which reported on the organisation of humanities education and research in the Netherlands in 1965. Modelled on American examples at Princeton and Stanford, it has been considered an epitome of the cultural value of 'pure' research conducted by individual scholars on an isolated reserve. In this chapter I will claim instead that the history of NIAS is entangled with European geopolitics, the national organisation of research and also its economic value. International examples from the US indeed shaped the discussions, but this time not to increase the interactions between academic research and society. Instead, examples from Stanford and Princeton were hailed to remove geopolitical, organisational and economic aspects from preceding virtual utility spots.

4.3 The European University, 1955–1961

One concrete, virtual, institute shaped the international debate about useful university research between 1955 and 1961: the European University. In 1955, German representatives coined the idea at the Messina meeting, where the six members of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the UK (as observer) met to discuss further economic and technological integration of Europe. Here, the first steps were taken towards

422 Van Berkel, *De stem van de wetenschap*, 275.

the creation of the EEC and Euratom.[423] The Germans reasoned that a pan-European University with four faculties (law, humanities, medicine and natural science) would complete these plans by establishing also a 'Community of Intelligence'. They expected two beneficial effects of the transnational university. On the one hand, it would function as 'model for innovation' that could break the scientific isolation, disciplinary specialisation and conservatism at national universities, particularly in Germany. Also, it could help overcome the perceived gap between European and North American science. The proposal was much to the surprise of the other member states. But it survived this meeting, as the French did not vehemently oppose, while the Netherlands supported the plan (as long as it would not cost much) and so did Italy, on condition that the university would be located in Florence.[424]

The European University ended up not, as intended, in the EEC treaty but in the Euratom treaty. In the ensuing policy elaboration of this meeting Belgian foreign minister Paul-Henri Spaak put time pressure on the drafting process.[425] Spaak assembled a small group of experts from various national ministries to work out the treaty and one French official rather ad hoc linked the university proposal to a different, French proposal for a research and training institute in nuclear science. This was specifically tied to Euratom and would have to support the 'technical requirements of an industrial sector'. A similar section had existed in the ECSC treaty, which made European support of research and training on the 'old' resources of coal and steel possible. The European University was taken up in article 9(2) of the Euratom Treaty of 1957, as the intention to set up 'an institute of university status'.[426]

Unintentionally, the European University idea thus became tied to the euphoria surrounding the economic potential of nuclear power.[427] A first elaborate plan (the Merdi Report) for the transnational institution made it instrumental to European integration and this new industrial revolution: nuclear physics and adjacent fields would be the main focus of its training programmes, whereas the humanities would be offered only as optional courses. Moreover, research would be oriented primarily to industrial applicability. In this way, the university contributed to the production of theoretical expertise and useful knowledge in the energy field, both of which benefited economic prosperity. It would also offer courses for political officials and diplomats. This first design for the university was quickly shelved, as direct control by the EEC Commission was opposed by the French.

In general, there was a lot of opposition to the plans that the Foreign Ministers had concocted at the EEC and Euratom meetings. Most importantly, criticism was aired by rectors and vice-chancellors of leading universities in Europe, which eventually had impact on the various national government

423 Jean-Marie Palayret, *A University for Europe: Prehistory of the European University Institute in Florence:(1948–1976)* (Italian Presidency of the European Union, 1996); A. Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge: Ideas, Institutions and Policy Entrepreneurship in European Union Higher Education Policy, 1955–2005* (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2005), 25–45.

424 Lars Lehmann, "The Controversy Surrounding the Idea of a European Supranational University," in *The Informal Construction of Europe*, ed. Lennaert van Heumen and Mechthild Roos (London: Routledge, 2019), 75–91.

425 Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge*, 29–32.

426 Treaty Establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), 1957, Art. 9(2).

427 Lehmann, "The Controversy."

positions on this issue. First of all, many of these university representatives feared infringement of their autonomy and academic freedom when international organisations like the EEC and Euratom interfered in the organisation of universities. Many referred to the resolutions of the 1948 Congress of The Hague, where not only the beginnings of the Council of Europe and the EEC were established, but also the promise was made to create a 'federation of European universities' that guaranteed their 'freedom from state or political pressure'—an implicit reference to the situation of science under the Nazi regime. Second, various transnational initiatives in cultural cooperation had sprung from this resolution, like the European Cultural Foundations in Amsterdam and Bruges. The European University, and its economic and political appearance, was an unwelcome rival to these existing institutes.[428] Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, many universities, researchers and governments considered the European University a threat in terms of resources: it could attract the best students and teachers, and divert financial, infrastructural and personnel resources from member countries to a transnational institution.[429]

The academic resistance against international organisation of research and education paradoxically stimulated international cooperation amongst university representatives. This coalition was forged at the conferences of university rectors organised by the Western European Union (WEU). This transnational governmental body brought together France, the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg since 1948, and Italy and West Germany since 1954. Although established primarily as defence alliance, it also aimed to promote cultural exchange. The WEU had to find its niche in the busy post-war European policy realm. To that end, it organised a conference for European university rectors and vice-chancellors in Cambridge in July 1955.[430] Some academics were at first suspicious of discussing university issues through an organisation oriented to military security, and many perceived such events as 'propaganda for European integration'.[431] In practice, it provided university representatives with a forum to cooperate that was supportive of their resistance towards governmental initiatives in science and education policy, like the European University. For example, the Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz (West German Rectors Conference, WRK), which passionately opposed these plans, used the transnational endorsement to strengthen their position in national debates. Most importantly, the German rectors could oppose European initiatives without coming across as nationalists, which was a particularly sensitive issue in war-torn West Germany.

The European Universities Committee of the WEU subsequently put political pressure on Euratom and its university plans. Their main point of criticism was the,

428 Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge*, 36–37.

429 Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge*, 42–43; Lehmann, "The Controversy."

430 Leech, *Report of the Conference of European University Rectors and Vice-Chancellors, Held in Cambridge, 20th–27th July, 1955*.

431 Lehmann, "The Controversy."

in their eyes, problematic institutional background for the European University: no representatives of universities, not even Ministers of Science and Education, had been involved. As alternative, they issued a plea to strengthen existing university infrastructure and to establish highly specialised joint European research centres. Above all, they defended the national and regional systems of higher education and universities. The Italian, Dutch and Belgian governments increasingly expressed these worries about the diversion of resources in international political discussions of the European University.[432] For example, the Dutch Minister of Science and Education, Cals, sided with the academic critics of the European university plans. The increasing activity of international organisations in the field of education and research had worried him, especially because the Minister of Foreign Affairs ended up discussing topics within his portfolio. In particular, he referred to the EEC and Euratom. By 1961 he also included the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).[433] Instead, Cals preferred to use either the Cultural Committee of the Council of Europe or the European Universities committee of the WEU for the organisation of a transnational university.[434] This was also motivated by the Dutch argument that 'truly European' cooperation in higher education was necessary, meaning that the organisation should have a wider geographical scope, at least including the UK.[435] The intensive international attention for scientific research and education raised the concern that efforts would be duplicated if no coordination took place.

Apart from this practical concern, Cals identified a special task for the Ministers of Education, Culture and Science: to defend the *cultural unity* of arts, education and science.[436] This fitted his Catholic outlook on science and society. Wary of establishing science as a foundation for society, he hailed the 'harmonious development of man' as highest value to which technical and scientific sophistication were subservient. An economic focus on applications of science and technology to improve material well-being would 'disrupt' society.[437] To drum up transnational support for this mission, Cals organised an informal conference in The Hague for European Ministers of Education. The meeting in November 1959 concluded with a dinner at the Rijksmuseum, hosted by the Dutch government. The prime minister, psychotechnician Prof. J. E. De Quay, addressed the political representatives in French and welcomed them in a 'typical Dutch home that also could be called a typical European home', referring to the many works by European masters held at the national museum.[438] After this informal conference, the Council of Europe asked Cals to chair a new 'European Committee on Higher Education and Scientific Research', which resulted from the conferences for university rectors organised by WEU in 1955 and 1959.[439]

432 Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge*, 42–43; Palayret, *A University for Europe*, 46.

433 Rijksbegroting 1961 (OKW), Memorie van Toelichting (explanatory memorandum), Parliamentary Papers 1960–1961, 6100 (VI–2), pp.21–27.

434 Palayret, *A University for Europe*, 63.

435 'Nederlandse regering niet voor volwaardige universiteit der Zes,' *Algemeen Handelsbolad*, 23 April 1960.

436 'Europese organisaties werken langs elkaar,' *De Volkskrant*, 30 September 1960.

437 Paul F. van der Steen, *Cals. Koopman in verwachtingen, 1914–1971* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2004), 215–16; 'Minister Cals: betekenis van wetenschap in moderne samenleving is veranderd,' *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 4 May 1957.

438 Ministers from Belgium, Germany, England, France, Italy and Luxemburg participated—so the members of the European Coal and Steel Community plus England. 'Mr. Cals op conferentie: "Betrek ministers van onderwijs bij samenwerking,"' *De Volkskrant*, 13 November 1959; 'Onderwijs in Europees verband,' *De Tijd – de Maasbode*, 13 November 1959.

439 Reinink was still involved as vice-chair. Rijksbegroting 1961 (OKW), Memorie van Toelichting (explanatory memorandum), Parliamentary Papers 1960–1961, 6100 (VI–2), p. 27.

These conferences and the committee united university and government representatives in an international forum, to discuss the organisation of research and education with a broader cultural and geographic scope.

In 1960, the European Committee on Higher Education and Scientific Research convened for the first time in Strasbourg, with the fifteen member-countries of the Council of Europe and Spain.[440] Later meetings would take place in Rome in 1962—which included an audience with the Pope—and in London in 1964. The aim was to discuss common problems in research and education, and ultimately to come to shared research policies in Europe. Above all, it was a political move in the European debate about who had the authority (and expertise) to organise scientific research. This was played out in terms of place. First of all, it mattered *where* university research and education were discussed. The different geographical scope of, for example, Euratom or the WEU intersected with different utility concepts. Second, questions of geographical location as well as centralisation and concentration of resources were essential to these debates. Third, the debate revolved around one concrete, but virtual utility spot, a European University that could stimulate exchange of expertise within Europe, innovate existing universities, produce an intellectual European elite or stimulate the European economy through new applications. The Council of Europe, and the WEU Rectors conference, challenged the economic and political concept of utility that the transnational university implied, and instead emphasized cultural cooperation between, and academic freedom of, existing national universities. In doing so, they claimed authority for university governors, ministers of education, and academic scientists. This triple spatial entanglement is what I would like to call the geopolitics of utility spots.

The European geopolitics of organised research involved Minister Cals in a debate that he had tried to avoid back home. As discussed in chapter 3, policymaker Woltjer had failed to receive his committed attention for a general national science policy. The debate on the European University, and Cals' aversion to Euratom and the EEC, did incite action from the side of the ministry. A small interim committee was formed, with representatives from the ministry and three university representatives.[441] In the same week as the meeting of education ministers in November 1959, Cals convened 'experts' from Dutch universities to discuss the European University proposals. At very short notice, seven professors and TH Delft trustee Holst met with OKW policy officials in Utrecht, a meeting that was chaired by secretary-general, and WEU figurehead, Reinink.[442]

A day before this meeting, the report on the organisation of natural sciences research by the Casimir committee, installed by Cals two years before, appeared. The committee

440 'Europees comité voor hoger onderwijs en onderzoek,' *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 13 June 1960.

441 Respectively secretary-general H. J. Reinink and dr. A. J. Piekaar (1910–1990), and Prof. J. P. Koksma (1904–1964; mathematics, Amsterdam), prof. mr. C. H. E. Polak (1909–1981; Law, Leiden) and A. H. M. Wijffels (1906–1971, trustee of TH Eindhoven).

442 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv. nr. 252, Report of the meeting on fields of study for a European institute of higher education, 14 November 1959. Present were prof. C. J. Gorter (Physics, Leiden), prof. E. W. Hofstee (Sociology, Wageningen), G. J. Holst (Physics, trustee of TH Delft), prof. B. V. A. Röling (1906–1985; Law, Groningen), prof. F. J. T Rutten (1899–1980, Psychology, Nijmegen), prof. H. Smitskamp (1907–1970; History, VU Amsterdam), Prof. H. Wagenvoort (Classics, Utrecht) and prof. M. W. Woerdeman (1892–1990; Anatomy, GU Amsterdam & KNAW).

stressed that many university institutes had a lack of space and they argued against decentralisation, or spread, of natural science research over the country. Instead, they claimed it would be best for the quality of natural science to centralise research activities and merge small institutes into larger ones.[443] Alarming headlines spoke of 'grave shortcomings', a warning against 'fragmentation' and the need of many millions of guilders for new laboratories.[444] Coincidentally, this news was reported on the same page in the newspaper as the informal ministers' conference. As geographical dispersion was already opposed nationally, one would not expect much enthusiasm for international organisation of research that put more stress on the limited personnel and material resources.

At the Utrecht meeting, much discussion stalled on the professors' feeling of being passed over by the Euratom initiative. Classics professor Wagenvoort, also president of ZWO at the time, fumed that the hasty establishment of a European university was the best way to thwart cultural integration. Still, an attempt was made to come to practical recommendations about desired fields of study that a potential European University should focus on. This depended on two desiderata: that they contributed to European integration and that they increased exchange and understanding between '*alpha*' and '*beta*' scientists, that is, humanities scholars and natural scientists. Apart from a suggestion by Prof. Rutten to conduct comparative cultural-psychological studies of the societal effects of European integration, few aired concrete suggestions in this direction. Still, the Dutch professors concluded that three general areas had to be brought to the attention of the European committee: studies of 'juridical, ethnological, psychological, social, political (administrative) and economical' problems of European integration; exact sciences without material needs; and experimental sciences whose material needs surpassed the budget of single countries.[445] The first and the last types of international scientific cooperation had practical and geopolitical goals.

But, after a lofty introduction by Reinink on the particularities of European politics, it was clear that the professors instead preferred to discuss an alternative organisational model for a European University. The first thing that polemologist Röling suggested was a 'European Princeton'. Eventually, the professors agreed that the Council of Europe should establish an international academic centre for post-graduate research, oriented to problems of European integration. Along the lines of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, Reinink wanted to have annual research themes. Everybody agreed (once again) with Holst when he backed the plan as long as it focused on research, not teaching. Only then, it would bring 'something new'.[446]

443 H. B. G. Casimir, ed., *Voorzieningen ten behoeve van de research binnen de faculteiten der wis- en natuurkunde der Nederlandse universiteiten* ('s-Gravenhage: Sdu, 1959); Baneke, "De vette jaren."

444 'Natuurwetenschappen aan universiteiten. Ernstige tekortkomingen in de ontwikkeling,' *De Tijd – de Maasbod*, 13 November 1959.

445 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58, inv.nr. 252, Memorandum of the Dutch members of working group A with respect to the choice for fields of study c.a. for a European institute for higher education, November 1959.

446 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv. nr. 252, Report of the meeting on fields of study for a European institute of higher education, 14 November 1959.

The plan for a European Princeton in the Dutch polder was developed further by the Leiden Senate.[447] They imagined a network of large supranational, 'or European if one likes', institutes of advanced study, preferably proximate to existing universities. The research done at these institutes would focus on European problems, expensive projects and fields in which Europe was trailing—like fundamental research in chemistry and nuclear energy. University senates at Utrecht, Delft and Amsterdam endorsed the plan. The Utrecht senate stressed that 'like in Princeton' human and exact sciences ought to be treated equally, and the Amsterdam senate believed that the concentration of research would be stimulating to young researchers and 'of vital importance to Europe'.[448] Ultimately, attractive institutes of advanced study could also prevent a brain-drain of talented researchers to the US. The virtual European University thus led Dutch professors and policymakers to envision a transnational research institute where a heterogeneous pool of scientists and scholars from all over Europe could mix and mingle, with the ultimate aim of strengthening Europe's culture, science and economy. Although these characteristics also made it to a later European proposal, these plans still leaned mostly on higher education and required a complex governance structure. In Wagenvoort's reading it was a 'typical example of overorganisation', which would prevent sufficient autonomy of the university. Also the planned location in Florence, as claimed by the Italians, was unfortunate: it was difficult to recruit suitable chancellors for such an 'excentric location' (sic).[449]

By April 1960, there was quite suddenly a new plan on the table at Euratom. It resembled the Dutch ideal but had required an American intervention. Etienne Hirsch, former ESCS and current Euratom president, was chairing the international interim committee on the European University quite dispassionately. But this attitude changed after a visit to the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton.[450] President Eisenhower had sent the official invitation and at Princeton Hirsch met with, amongst others, Robert Oppenheimer, who chaired the General Advisory Council of the Atomic Energy Commission. The Americans convinced Hirsch to let go of the link with nuclear science—the US always had an interest in controlling the production and circulation of this (geopolitically sensitive) knowledge—and to focus instead on 'the idea of an innovative university' at which future European Community leaders would train, work and live together on site.[451] The eventual European plan was indeed inspired by the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, and focused on residential two-year postgraduate courses with 'particular relevance to European integration'. This campus-model European University would be a university with six departments (law, economics, social

447 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 252, Senate to Board of Trustees, Leiden University, 12 January 1960.

448 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv. nr. 252, responses from Utrecht University senate and Municipal University of Amsterdam (GUA) senate to the Leiden plan, 1960.

449 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 252, H. Wagenvoort to the interim-committee, 31 March 1960.

450 Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge*, 43–44.

451 For the interests and strategies of the US and European countries in controlling nuclear sciences, see: Krige, *American Hegemony*; Van Dongen and Hoeneveld, *Cold War Science*.

and political science, history, mathematics, theoretical physics) that offered interdisciplinary programs and excluded experimental natural sciences that required material investments.[452] Although this virtual utility spot again raised hopes for a New Europe, it died in vain. International politics swamped the negotiations: in September 1960, French president Charles de Gaulle challenged all supranational collaborations in Europe, preferring intergovernmental actions that did not threaten national sovereignty.

4.4 An Atlantic University, 1959–1964

Simultaneous with the European University initiatives, the NATO Science Committee developed plans for a transnational institute on the European continent, an 'Atlantic University'. Not only the structure and usefulness of this virtual utility spot, but also the geopolitics would mirror the European University: again, a veto by De Gaulle put an end to the speculations, in 1964. The Atlantic University had been the boldest recommendation of a report, published in 1960, on the effectiveness of Western science.[453] Dutch physicist and Philips research director Casimir had introduced the idea in the international discussion group that drew up the report.[454] Casimir alluded to previous discussions about, and universities' resistance to, a transnational university, referring to the plans at Euratom, the EEC and the WEU. Louis Armand, the chairman of the NATO discussion group and former Euratom director, had never propagated the university idea very powerfully at Euratom. But he did repeat some of the arguments, for example that the Atlantic university would stimulate 'cultural and economic unity', but now in the Western world as a whole, by training a new professional elite with thorough understanding of Western culture.[455]

Besides international cohesion, Casimir claimed that an Atlantic university would 'challenge existing universities and shake them out of their complacency'.[456] The group of elite scientists considered this necessary, as they diagnosed that failing European science systems prevented their societies from increasing the (material) standards of living. American institutions served as examples of the 'tremendous influence' universities could have on the development of science, technology and the economy. According to Krige, this was mainly a reference to MIT and its economic impact on the Mile 128 area.[457] This American ideal became explicit in the subsequently founded high-level working group: its chair was Dr. James Killian, the president of MIT between 1948 and 1959, and the group of five (including Casimir and French official Pierre Piganiol) met for the first time at the centenary celebration of MIT in Cambridge.[458]

452 Palayret, *A University for Europe*; Krige, *American Hegemony*, 224–25.

453 *Increasing the Effectiveness of Western Science* (Brussels, Belgium: Fondation universitaire, 1960).

454 Krige, *American Hegemony*, 209–25. Other scientists involved were Isidor I. Rabi and Frederick Seitz (US), Sir John Cockcroft and Solly Zuckerman (UK), André Danjon (France), Paul Bourgeois and Jean Willems (Belgium).

455 Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge*, 40.

456 Quoted in Krige, *American Hegemony*, 211.

457 Krige, 212. Confusingly, Krige also mentions Caltech and Silicon Valley, which are geographically distant, and the Palo Alto region was not yet know by that name in the 1960s.

458 Krige, 213. The other members were Cockcroft, Piero Caldirola (Milan), A. Rucker (Munich) and Pierre Piganiol, a French senior science policy official who reported directly to the prime minister.

The NATO initiative to establish an Atlantic University became widely known as the 'Killian plan'. Government officials were enthusiastic about the idea of a 'European MIT'. The working group envisioned the 'International Institute of Science and Technology' (IIST) to consist of five interdisciplinary faculties and, again imitating the Princeton example, a centre for advanced study.[459] They envisioned large-scale research facilities with close ties to society in ways that were already quite common in different countries: visiting professors from industry, opportunities for external consultancy, sponsored research and summer schools would all cement the relationships between science and industrial society. The IIST imitated an American model of graduate education and research. It had to be everything that the most prominent post-war US universities had become, shaped and supported as they were by the military-industrial complex. And the IIST in its virtual existence was everything the pillaged European universities were arguably not—even though most of the proposed interactions with industry already existed at European universities (see the previous chapter). The IIST had many similarities to the virtual 'European University' and created similar concerns. Universities opposed the plans for an 'Atlantic university' because it could become a dominant rival in terms of reputation and material resources. But others, like Casimir, supported it precisely for this reason. The IIST had to be a source of inspiration for existing universities in Europe—and underdeveloped regions more generally—to become more internationally oriented, interdisciplinarily organised, and societally relevant.

A familiar geographical issue stood central in the international debates about IIST, running from 1961 to 1963: centralisation or dispersion. While the Americans preferred one central, Anglophone campus near Paris, the French promoted the idea of building a decentralised network with existing centres, and the British proposed a compromise of central headquarters and dispersed faculties. The French were also sensitive to the issue of international knowledge transfer: the involvement of the US in the institute would give them access to European research, which they could exploit much faster than anyone in the Old World. Of course, divergent views existed also within national political-epistemic communities: amongst French scientists there was, for example, a faction who had spent time at American institutes and argued for a centralised institute with American involvement.[460] But, again, De Gaulle would not have it.

Correctly, Krige has argued that the specifics of the plan's failure are less interesting than the fact of its perceived potential. As far as the Dutch position on the IIST is concerned, he has referred to the energetic promotion and support for the idea by Casimir. Of course, Casimir was an extremely influential industrial-scientific statesman in the Netherlands,

459 The interdisciplinary faculties mentioned were applied mathematics and theoretical physics; technological processes and systems; materials research; earth sciences; and life sciences. Krige, 214–17.

460 Krige, 219–22.

but it would be too simple to reduce the Dutch standpoint to his views. The main scientific bodies in the Netherlands extensively discussed the IIST as well as the related report on the effectiveness of Western science. At the Ministry of OKW, the announcement of the Atlantic University in the report found little fertile ground, especially because they felt surpassed by NATO and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which both acted without consulting them.[461] OKW was especially frustrated that the Foreign Minister crossed their activities in 'cultural affairs' at several occasions. Piekaar installed biweekly meetings to coordinate international activities—preventing duplication of efforts between EEC, Euratom, NATO, OECD and the Council of Europe—and fight their departmental ground in The Hague. The feeling of neglect remained and even a personal visit by NATO science adviser Prof. William Nierenberg could not resolve this.[462] At ZWO the main issues with the IIST were its 'political' and 'pragmatic' nature; instead such transnational cooperation had to be based on scientific grounds only and pay due to the cultural 'civilisation' aspect of science.[463] Here, Julius defended the plan, speaking from his experience in the NATO Science committee. NATO had moved onto civil territory because the OEEC appeared in retreat and had aimed to keep politics out of the science committee. Also, Julius clarified, effectiveness was to be considered in terms only of scientific output, not of economic profit.

By 1964 it became clear that the IIST would never materialise. According to Krige the failure is to be ascribed to the relative blindness of the American initiators to local conditions at home and abroad. That is, they did not realise enough that the transfer of research and research organisation is not simply about theories, floor plans or methods, but especially about a set of social relations. The relations that characterised the military-industrial-academic complex in the US were of such a particular nature that they were not easily, or even potentially, reproduced elsewhere.[464] For example, European scientists opposing this American model of research organisation—closely tied to industry or to the military—often hailed the principle of academic freedom. But this principle meant different things on the two sides of the Atlantic. Where US institutions had advocated independence from federal intervention before 1940, the role of the federal government became more and more pervasive after the war. But in Europe, state funding of science was much more common, and the use of private funds traditionally more suspect. American and European researchers felt that they lived in different worlds after the war, so that they appreciated particular forms of spatial organisation and societal embedding differently. Thus, it is remarkable that the *institutes for advanced study* model, which hails an ideal of academic freedom, would travel from west to east.

461 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 255, International Affairs, minutes of first meeting, 11 November 1960.

462 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 255, International Affairs, minutes of eighth meeting, 14 April 1961.

463 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv.nr. 8, Minutes of ZWO board meeting, 16 January 1961; NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv.nr. 210, Minutes of ZWO council meeting, 4 February 1961.

464 Krige, *American Hegemony*, 225–27.

4.5 A Dutch European University, 1960–1964

In between the geopolitical waves of European and Atlantic universities, Dutch plans for an institute for advanced study survived. The potential establishment of a 'European Institute for Higher Scientific Study' followed from these geopolitical developments: it was progeny of the European University plans at Euratom, EEC and the Council of Europe, and the likelihood of its existence depended on the status of alternative plans, like NATO's Atlantic University. Piekaar, for example, hoped to mobilise support for a European place of scholarly exchange in the Netherlands by claiming that that utility spot would be 'confronted' with the plans for the IIST.[465] Besides European politics, the Dutch debate about the virtual institute was shaped by American examples, even though the intention was aired multiple times not to 'imitate' them.

The idea for an internationally oriented advanced institute as organisational model was endorsed in 1961 by Minister Cals, after he had visited the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study.[466] 'Inspired' Cals briefed Dutch journalists, who awaited his return at Schiphol airport, about his embryonic plans for a 'superuniversity'.[467] Similar to Princeton, he imagined an international, but European, scientific centre where the most excellent scholars from different fields could devote themselves to their research and study without the worries of teaching and administration. Many Dutch scholars were convinced, he said, of the necessity of such an 'independent' institution, 'unconnected to industrial contracts'—a twist that distinguished this superuniversity from previous plans in Europe, and from existing practices and concerns in the Netherlands (c.f. the para-university institutes of the previous chapter). Earlier that year, the minister had convened a working group to investigate the establishment of a European Institute for Higher Scientific Study in the Netherlands. This group could continue the work of an existing coalition of academics and policymakers that had formed around the preceding European plans. So, even virtual utility spots had real organisational effects.

Before Cals imagined the superuniversity, Leiden scholars had outlined a research institute in response to both the European University debate and the Casimir report. One chemist (Egbert Havinga) and two law professors (Carel Polak and Ivo Samkalden) argued for a permanent research institute that would contribute to international contacts, intensive cooperation and interdisciplinary exchange.[468] Starting with forty researchers, they eventually wanted to form a real 'community' around a small permanent staff and a pool of visiting scholars. The European character of the spot was maintained through a connection with the Council of Europe, which would play a part in the selection of fellows. The envisioned institute housed scholars from both humanities and natural sciences

465 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 656, A. J. Piekaar (OKW) to Board of the KNAW, 22 January 1962.

466 Van der Steen, *Cals. Koopman in verwachtingen, 1914–1971*, 262.

467 'Europees wetenschappelijk centrum in Nederland? Geleerden zouden er in alle rust moeten kunnen werken,' *De Tijd – Maasbode*, 6 November 1961.

468 Egbert Havinga (1909–1988; organic chemistry), Carel Polak (1909–1981; agricultural and administrative law) and Ivo Samkalden (1912–1995; international law, and member of the upper House of Parliament). NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv. nr. 656, E. Havinga, C. H. F. Polak & I. Samkalden to Presidium of University Leiden, 25 October 1960.

and would also require modest facilities for experimental research. The latter was presented in relation to the lack of laboratory facilities, as identified by Casimir in 1958. Havinga claimed that Leiden deserved compensation in its research infrastructure, because it was the only academic town without an interuniversity institute. They assured the readers (mostly academics from other cities and national policymakers) that it was no 'local chauvinism' when they argued that the institute was best located somewhere in the 'triangle' Leiden, The Hague, Delft: this enabled scholars to profit from existing libraries and laboratories in the region. The ministry of OKW, in the person of Piekaar, and the KNAW, through Prof. B. A. van Groningen, stressed however that this had to be discussed as a 'national issue'—although its envisioned location seemed to remain Leiden.[469]

The intention to *avoid* an imitation of American examples was most prominent in the national working group that Piekaar convened in 1961, to follow up on Cals' enthusiasm.[470] Europe was scanned for rival institutes, with attention for their disciplinary and geographical focus: Nordita in Copenhagen focused only on theoretical physics and on Scandinavia, the European University Institute in Florence was politically up in the air, while the Italian initiative for an 'Instituto Internazionale Galileo Galilei' in Pisa closely mirrored the Princeton institute in its attention for theoretical physics and mathematics. The committee identified a need for a place of free study in a calm environment, where knowledge exchange between scholars was possible, but not mandatory: the retreat atmosphere was primary. Group size and building structure would have to respond to both needs: on the one hand to stimulate discussion, especially for natural scientists, and on the other hand to allow isolation, for humanities scholars. Ultimately, the aim was not 'scientific production', as the NATO plan envisioned, but an increase in 'spiritual value'. In the final 'Piekaar report' experimental facilities did not fit in this utility spot. But experimental scientists were welcome to come to reflect on the theoretical foundations of their field and visit laboratories in the vicinity.

Although an American copy was to be avoided, the committee did inform themselves extensively about the well-known institutes at Princeton and at Stanford, where the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences was located. Several booklets, budgets and floor plans were obtained through the post. Especially the Stanford institute aroused the interest of the Dutch committee. The published west coast experiences of Prof. A. D. de Groot were circulated in the group.[471] Amsterdam-based psychologist De Groot explained that the Ford Foundation had helped establish the centre in 1955 as a counterpart of Princeton. The choice for Northern California was motivated by the agreeable climate,

469 E. M. Uhlenbeck, "The Birth of NIAS," in *22 1/2 Years of NIAS*, ed. Wouter R. Hugenholtz (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994), 15–24.

470 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 656, Minutes of the first meeting, 25 February 1961. Members of the working group were A. J. Piekaar (OKW, chair), ir. J. J. M. Aangenendt (director-general of Government Building Department), prof. J. de Boer (1911–2010; Theoretical physics, GU Amsterdam), prof. O. Bottema (1901–1992; Mathematics, Delft), prof. B. A. van Groningen (1894–1987; Classics, Leiden), and, again, prof. C. H. F. Polak (Law, Leiden).

471 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 656, A. D. de Groot, 'Een sabbatical year in Californië. Het Center for Advanced Study in the Behavorial Sciences,' reprint from *Folia Civitatis*, 10 December 1960.

the proximity of two prominent universities (Stanford and Berkeley) and an available plot of land on the hill behind the Stanford campus. In 'efficient and appealing low rises', fifty study cells were situated amidst Californian flower gardens—a description almost identical to that of the Stanford Industrial Park, which was established around the same time and place (see chapter 2, section 7). Perhaps partly in comparison to this embryonic science park, right across campus, the function of the Center for Advanced Study was a topic of debate: from exemplary and productive research institution at one end, to a place of peace for the overburdened professor on the other. In between was the option of a place of exchange, from which new ideas could develop. According to De Groot, the centre had become a hybrid of the last two options, where seminars and interactions were optional, but freedom and concentration were the basis. What De Groot appreciated most, however, was the lack of obligation to participate in anything, including social events: 'there was no rat race, no competition, no hierarchy-one-should-always-be-aware-of'.[472]

The Stanford centre therefore fulfilled an important need in the life of the modern professor. De Groot sketched a worrying picture of the 'overburdened' professor, whose teaching and admin duties, as well as editorships and recruitment, left little time for their original calling: research. Even though the professor's reputation depended on it, research was performed mostly during holidays and weekends. At Stanford, a break from this rat race was possible: a sabbatical year of freedom, isolation and interaction with colleagues. Still, this atmosphere of freedom had been difficult to realise in the first years of its existence, not because of external pressures, but because researchers did not know how to deal with this sudden 'obligationlessness'. A group dynamics emerged that put pressure on fellows to demonstrate the fruitfulness and the productivity of the place: show that it 'was worth all that money'. De Groot recalled the story that only the visiting psychoanalysis scholars really knew what to do: 'they welcomed the fellows who couldn't deal with the freedom (and its group pressure) on their sofa'.[473] Although isolation in the study cells was possible, cooperation and contact were clearly stimulated. 'Rightly so, with the current trend in science', commented De Groot.[474] In the centre there was great disciplinary diversity amongst the fellows, from psychology and economics to botany and philosophy. To facilitate interaction, the annual selection was based roughly on overarching themes and theoretically inclined generalists were more welcome than narrow specialists.

Another, and influential, advocate of the Stanford Center for Advanced Study was Bob Uhlenbeck, professor of Javanese language and culture in Leiden. He more or

472 Ibid.

473 Ibid.

474 Ibid.

less stumbled into Stanford and happened to be connected to several of the committees that discussed the plans for an international institute between 1961 and 1970. In the summer of 1961, Uhlenbeck visited a friendly colleague at the Stanford centre, which, in his own recollection, felt like entering 'a scholar's paradise'.[475] When, upon his return, he was appointed to the Wagenvoort committee on the (national) organisation of the humanities, he was able to revive interest for an Institute for Advanced Study in the Netherlands. It ended up as one of about twenty recommendations in the final report, published in 1965. By then, the virtual structure of the institute had changed significantly: it dropped its European signature and would open its doors no longer to all sciences, but primarily to the (Dutch) humanities and social sciences. This new plan was explicitly based on American institutes. The Stanford centre actually functioned as concrete spatial example for the first designs of the Dutch institute. In the ministry's search for a suitable country estate that would not necessitate the construction of additional buildings, the calculation of the required floorspace was based on the Stanford centre.[476]

According to Uhlenbeck, the difficult geopolitical stumbling block of comparisons with other international plans was removed by limiting its focus to the social sciences and humanities. The relation to the NATO plans had been the central criticism of the envisioned European Centre for Higher Scientific Study from the 'Piekaar Report', which was published in 1962. One vital characteristic of the European University survived: bringing together eminent European scholars from all disciplines. The epistemic aim was the study of the foundations of, and the relations between various disciplines. Even though the Dutch plan and the NATO plan differed on essential points—the first focused on academic freedom rather than industrial connections, and reserved a central place for the humanities and social sciences rather than natural sciences and technology—the KNAW still doubted whether there was sufficient 'international basis' for the institute.[477] In July 1964, this issue came up again, when Piekaar tried to push the institute onto the ministerial agenda. A former student sanatorium, which was located between Amsterdam and Utrecht, became available and had the right size and floor plan. Piekaar hoped to convince the government to use it for the advanced institute precisely *because* the stalled Killian plan at NATO provided a unique window of opportunity.[478] Although this first Dutch attempt to attach the ambition to an actual building failed, it would play out in a similar way in 1969, when a building was finally acquired for what later became known as the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences and Humanities.

475 Uhlenbeck, "The Birth of NIAS," 18.

476 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 656, R. C. Kwantes (OKW) to ir. J. J. M. Aangenendt, 16 May 1961.

477 Uhlenbeck, "The Birth of NIAS," 16–17.

478 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 656, Piekaar to Minister Council, 10 July 1964.

4.6 The Geopolitics of European Utility Spots

Between 1955 and 1970, spatial proposals and concerns popped up whenever the organisation of scientific research, in both naturally and culturally focussed disciplines, was discussed in international fora like EURATOM, EEC, NATO, the Council of Europe and the OECD. Ideas circulated about the spatial distribution of scientific efforts: the intellectual benefits of concentration and centralisation were contrasted with the positive socio-economic effects of dispersion and decentralisation. Often, such ideas were translated into concrete proposals for new institutes outside existing university structures. These imagined places symbolised the desired relations between knowledge production, transfer, and societal use. As such, they were utopias, concrete nowheres.

What kind of utility these virtual spots entailed depended on the politics of the overarching international organisation that proposed them. Each stood for a different world view—both in terms of geographical scope and in terms of value concepts. The aspired value was often understood in economic terms, already in the 1950s, at organisations like EURATOM, EEC and later OECD. But EURATOM also valued contributions to European energy independence, while EEC hoped that a scientific centre would promote social and cultural integration of the new Europe. The Council of Europe, on the other hand, would always defend the principal cultural meaning of science. And NATO could never be detached from their principal concerns for (international) defence. In the discussions surrounding a European University, we have seen how these diverse views on the utility of science translated into different designs for hybrid spots of research and exchange.

In addition, these useful places of knowledge production had geopolitical meanings: EEC spots excluded the UK, OECD places represented an Atlantic form of science, while the Council of Europe included the UK but excluded the US. Ultimately at stake was who could cooperate with whom, what kind of knowledge could circulate through these spots, and from where to where. Especially for fields like nuclear physics, there was as much concern for the inhibition as for the promotion of circulation. Secrecy requirements were omnipresent in the Cold War period and always had a strong geopolitical component. Specific international spots, therefore, could function both as halfway houses and safety vaults, stimulating *and* interdicting knowledge transfer.[479] Or, as Krige notes in the introduction to *How Knowledge Moves*, the creation of a space for the transnational circulation of 'basic' knowledge legitimised 'tighter controls on socially useful products and processes'.[480]

Also after 1964, when the discussion of the European and Atlantic universities ended, transnational utility spots would continue to be proposed in international organisations.

479 Peter Galison, "Removing Knowledge," *Critical Inquiry* 31, no. 1 (2004): 243.

480 John Krige, "Introduction: Writing the Transnational History of Science and Technology," in: *How Knowledge Moves: Writing the Transnational History of Science and Technology* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2019): 1–31 (8).

For example, a 1965 OECD report on the organisation of fundamental research (known as the Maréchal report) recommended the establishment of 'centres of advanced study and research' to enhance the quality of European scholarship, mainly in the natural sciences. And in 1967, the Scientific Education and Research committee of the Council of Europe—the only international committee in which both governments and universities were represented—presented a comparable plan to create 'Centres for Confrontation and Research'. These would promote 'closer scientific cooperation between member countries' for the 'efficient use of scientific potential' of a 'European academic community'.[481] And, between 1967 and 1969, the OECD attempted to establish a 'European Institute of Technology', which would focus on research management. None of this ever materialised.

The reasons for the failure of the centres of advanced study and research at the OECD are instructive.[482] In 1966, ministers of science policy had agreed with the conclusion of the Maréchal report that each country needed a 'sound basis of fundamental research activity … to innovate, to apply, to manage, and even to market … and to select from the reservoir of world research'. The institutional recommendations were considered too timid, as they did not challenge the 'rigidities' of university structures or offer ways to orient fundamental research to, and use it for, socioeconomic objectives.[483] A special committee therefore had to elaborate alternatives, informed by an independent study by Prof. Joseph Ben-David.[484] Central to the committee's diagnosis was the claim that the cultural value of university research dominated both academic and government circles. Universities were not 'flexible' and 'entrepreneurial' enough: their focus on individual autonomy, traditional disciplines and cultural contributions prohibited attempts at geographical concentration, multidisciplinary research, and the efficient use of expensive equipment. The proposed remedy—the establishment of 'centres of excellence' within and between countries—caused a lot of resistance. As mentioned earlier, national governments always suspected that such transnational centres would put a strain on already scarce human and material resources. The epistemic argument that transnational concentration of a certain 'critical mass of brainpower' was required for really creative research could not trump the apparent national drainage of brains and money.[485] Even the watered down versions of these plans, which concerned the creation of European institutes by baptising existing high-quality institutes as European centres, were not warmly welcomed. Dutch scientists, for example, feared that such 'Europeanisation' could lead to unwanted 'institutionalisation of scientific fame'.[486]

In the draft memoranda on fundamental research, the OECD concluded that the establishment of new institutes was therefore not the most important or likely step in Europe.

481 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv. nr. 406, O&W to ZWO & KNAW, 'Raad van Europa; Centres for Confrontation and Research', 2 February 1967.

482 OECD Archive, Committee for Science Policy (CSP) SP(67)20, 'Draft report on the promotion and organisation of fundamental research', 20 December 1967.

483 Benoît Godin, *Measurement and Statistics on Science and Technology: 1920 to the Present* (Routledge, 2004), 298–99.

484 Joseph Ben-David, *Fundamental Research and the Universities: Some Comments on International Differences* (Paris: OECD, 1968).

485 OECD Archive, CSP SP(67)20, 'Draft report on the promotion and organisation of fundamental research, first revision,' February 1968.

486 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv. nr. 406, KNAW to Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen (Ministry of Education and Sciences, O&W), 8 December 1965.

Instead of centres of excellence, an 'integrated European network of research activity' could stimulate exchange between elite institutions. In that way, existing academic institutions—the bearers and custodians of scientific fame and its usefulness—were least threatened. Still, transnational centres were envisioned on the periphery of the academic realm and university structures. Potentially, structural reforms could be attempted 'on a pilot basis … especially in the new universities'. And multidisciplinary centres could also be established, in particular to 'encourage scientific entrepreneurship in support of applied research of significance to industry and national development'.[487] When viewed from a spatial perspective, the international science policy debate transformed between 1955 and 1970 from relatively blunt proposals to establish copies of American institutes or rivals to existing institutions, into the attempt to establish small-scale niches: places of international, interdisciplinary and sectoral exchange that did not directly threaten existing structures. Ultimately, these niches aimed to provide an example for a new and transformed atmosphere, culture and environment of scientific research as a whole.

4.7 'Place and Function' of the Humanities

The Dutch academic elite took a very specific stance in these geopolitical discussions. On the one hand, they were indeed as inflexible as could be expected from the academic establishment. The proposal for Centres of Confrontation, by the Council of Europe, was fundamentally questioned: 'it is a misconception to think that expansion of scientific contacts is necessarily useful.'[488] On the other hand, the representatives of Dutch scientific bodies were keen to defend, in international meetings, the importance of the humanities and social sciences for a harmonious development of European societies. Already in preparatory committees for the first OECD ministerial meetings, Dutch policymakers raised issues with the limited 'Anglo-Saxon concept of science' and minister Cals disliked the economic focus of the meeting: 'Prostitution of science!', he apparently fumed over lunch against OECD Secretary-General Thorvild Kristensen, in an attempt to make him call off the meeting altogether.[489] Although British policymakers considered these concerns 'linguistic obscurities', Dutch policymakers believed their early stance on a broad conception of 'science' had led to two OECD reports on government policy in relation to fundamental research (Maréchal report, 1965) and the social sciences (Massart report, 1966).[490]

The discussion of both reports in the Dutch context demonstrates how also in the humanities and social sciences practical issues of organised research ultimately overlapped with spatial imaginaries of useful knowledge production. The 1965 proposal

487 OECD Archive, CSP SP(67)20, 'Draft report on the promotion and organisation of fundamental research,' 20 December 1967.

488 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv.nr. 406, ZWO to KNAW, 29 March 1967; KNAW to O&W, 3 April 1967.

489 Brookman, *The Making of a Science Policy*, 332; Alexander King, "Scientific Concerns in an Economic Environment: Science in OEEC–OECD," *Technology in Society* 23, no. 3 (2001): 343.

490 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv.nr. 406, Minutes from ZWO council meeting, 20 December 1965.

of Maréchal to establish 'centres of advanced study and research' ignited both concerns. The Ministry for Education and Science (O&W, the successor of OKW) asked the Dutch scientific bodies for comments on the report, which policy officer Joost Nittel summarised in a long list of proposals. The academy (KNAW), research council (ZWO) and the relatively new Academische Raad (academic council, representing the universities, AR) all agreed that the humanities and social sciences required more attention. They emphasized several possible functions of these fields of study: to reflect on the rapid development and effects of science and technology; to create new insight in the increasing 'interdependence' of all knowledge, both pure and applied. Policy was also inevitable because interuniversity organisation and 'planning' were already a reality for fundamental humanities research.[491] The 'weak tone' of the OECD proposal to include social sciences and humanities in the centres of advanced study at a later stage stood in stark contrast to their 'explicit' standpoint on the societal importance of these fields. 'This will not surprise anyone', continued ZWO director Bannier at a council meeting, because instead of the English or French 'science', the Dutch concept 'wetenschap' included them on principle.[492]

The Massart report on the organisation of the social sciences was also a reaction to the overemphasis on the natural sciences at the initial OECD meeting on science policy. Biochemist Lucien Massart of the Belgische Nationale Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (Belgian National Council for Science Policy, NRWB) chaired this committee. Already in 1963, he had observed that the humanities and social sciences lacked 'a true structural organisation … [scholars] are too individualistic and refuse a priori to participate in well-organised teamwork'.[493] The final Massart report distinguished three levels of social scientific research: of a general character oriented at social change, of a specific character oriented to high-level policy problems, and of a practical character oriented to policy execution. It concluded that there was too much emphasis on the last, practical category of research, and too few possibilities to do fundamental research. A conclusion that the director and board chairman of ZWO, Bannier and theologian Bakhuizen van den Brink could easily agree with. But the practical usefulness of social sciences was not ignored:

> Also in the Netherlands, there is a need for the dissemination and application of social scientific knowledge … which can be employed as instrument at the service of societal bodies that make decisions on the short and long term.[494]

No new institutes were suggested as a measure, but the stimulation of cooperation between researchers was deemed essential for the coordination and interdisciplinarity of research—both

491 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv. nr. 406, Carolina MacGillavry (KNAW) to Ministry of OKW, 8 December 1965; Minutes from ZWO council meeting, 20 December 1965.

492 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv. nr. 406, minutes from ZWO Council meeting, 20 December 1965.

493 E. Haas, "Geesteswetenschappelijk onderzoekbeleid," *Forum der Letteren*, 1975, 1–14. NA, OKW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Information document NRWB, 'De betekenis van de geesteswetenschappen' (The meaning of the humanities) by prof. L. Massart, 16 October 1963.

494 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv. nr. 406, Meerum Terwogt to Bakhuizen van den Brink, 22 December 1966.

of which were considered conditions of possibility for utility to emerge. Although quite some 'interdisciplinary research plans' were submitted to the research funder, this was often followed by a 'not very integrated cooperation' in actual practice. Through intra- and interdisciplinary coordination this could be stimulated, also by identifying scientifically and societally important 'complexes' of research.[495]

The European ambitions for new spaces of exchange and niches for cultural changes, as well as the concerns for fundamental and humanities research, coincide in the history of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS). This institute is tied both to the series of virtual utility spots in the Western European context and to the European debate about the organisation of research in the human and social sciences. Before I discuss the establishment and spatiality of the advanced institute, I expand on the discussions about the functioning, organisation and usefulness of the humanities and the social sciences in the Netherlands between 1960 and 1975.

The Wagenvoort Committee, 1960–1965

Many of these issues about the organisation and underappreciation of the humanities were already tabled in May 1960 by the KNAW and ZWO when they asked the Ministry of OKW to establish a committee on humanities research.[496] This deserved attention, they argued, after the organisation of natural, medical and agricultural scientific research had been discussed in respectively the Casimir, Querido and Koningsberger committees. They feared that the rapid growth of the natural sciences would overrun the humanities because this was typically the least 'organised' of research fields. From the request, the preliminary and final reports, and various responses, we can distil several aspects of the functioning, usefulness and organisation of Dutch humanities research, which were tied together in the establishment and legitimation of NIAS.

Around 1960, many Dutch scholars, politicians and policymakers claimed that the humanities were in crisis. The 'place in the organism of science and society' of traditional humanities disciplines, like philosophy, theology, history and linguistics, was no longer well-defined, claimed Minister Cals at the installation of the Wagenvoort committee in 1961.[497] Going further, he wondered whether the humanities were still 'in contact with actual life, which has become so dominated by natural science and technology'.[498] In this view, the humanities participated in a broader cultural debate that infected Western societies at least since the end of the 19th century: the identification of a 'cultural lag' between technological change and spiritual development by pessimistic thinkers like Ferdinand Brunetière, Ludwig Klages, and José Ortéga y Gasset. More recently, C. P. Snow had touched upon the same issue, although he explicitly sided with the natural scientists who he regarded as being more

495 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv. nr. 406, Bakhuizen van den Brink (ZWO) to Minister of OKW, 'Rapport Massart', 23 January 1967.

496 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, KNAW and ZWO to Ministry of OKW, 24 May 1960.

497 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Installation lecture by Cals, 6 July 1961.

498 Ibid.

in tune with the times.[499] In addition, there was the post-war rise of the social sciences, like psychology, economics and sociology, which threatened the academic position of traditional humanities. Wagenvoort qualified these developments, in his reply to Cals, as a momentous shift in the appreciation of the humanities and the natural sciences: where the former had been dominant at Dutch universities around 1900, by 1945 the natural sciences set the tone. In terms of funding, the humanities were well behind the natural sciences: both at international organisations, like UNESCO and OECD, and national ones, like ZWO, they had to make do with small percentages of the budget and attention.[500] The Netherlands was also about to fall behind internationally, because of decreasing student numbers and difficulties of finding new faculty in these fields. Undeniably, Wagenvoort argued, the underappreciation of humanities had effects on the 'spiritual habitus of the people'.[501]

Several prominent humanities scholars, replying to a first memorandum by Wagenvoort in 1962, questioned this state of crisis. Uhlenbeck, for example, stressed that internationally it did not exist. If things were otherwise in the Netherlands, this had probably to do with the limited time professors had available for research due to growing teaching duties: more and more the demand arose to organise education in smaller classes instead of mass lectures.[502] Historian Pieter Geyl warned against exaggerating the repression of the humanities, especially when considered in the Cold War context: only under totalitarian regimes was the freedom of research really restricted, and it would be 'ungrounded depression' to claim anything alike was the case in the Western world.[503] Geyl's remark can be read as a response to Wagenvoort who, in his opening address, cited Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev as saying that the humanities were mere 'artistic recreation'.[504]

Policymaker Woltjer agreed with the criticisms and considered Wagenvoort's image of the humanities too 'defensive'. Instead, these scholars should claim their place in society 'with confidence'.[505] According to Woltjer, the humanities had an important, higher function: 'not utility, but raising consciousness about the higher values in life'. This understanding of the value of humanities research was widespread amongst policymakers and scholars. Also the representatives of the scholarly community that initially requested policy attention for the humanities had been motivated by the importance of 'harmonious development' of the humanities for healthy societal growth: to adjust to the rapid changes caused by science and technology, humanities research could strengthen spiritual, cultural and social values.[506] The policymakers at the Ministry deemed this, ultimately subservient, task vital: bringing 'modern man to self-consciousness' about the place of his technical powers 'in the scheme of higher values'.[507] Practical utility and rational reflection, material and spiritual well-being,

499 Baneke, *Synthetisch denken*, 119–42; Rupp, *Van oude en nieuwe universiteiten*, 193–98.

500 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, L. Brummel (Royal Library) to E. Haas (OKW, secretary of the Wagenvoort committee), 5 March 1962.

501 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Installation lecture by Wagenvoort, 6 July 1961.

502 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, E. M. Uhlenbeck to E. Haas, 13 March 1962.

503 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, reply by P. C. A. Geyl, March 1962.

504 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Installation lecture by Wagenvoort, 6 July 1961.

505 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, H. J. Woltjer to H. Wagenvoort, 9 March 1962.

506 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, KNAW and ZWO to Ministry of OKW, 24 May 1960.

507 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Woltjer to Minister Cals, 26 July 1960. The same phrasing was used by Cals in his installation lecture in 1961.

were connected. This increased the urgency of stimulating the humanities, as exemplified by Cals in 1961: 'the power of the atom bomb was realised before the political effect of the invention was understood.' The responsibility of science had become so immense that it could not be answered by these scientists themselves. The humanities were required to determine the 'place of man' in this modern, 'pragmatic' world.[508]

With 'cultural transfer' [*cultuuroverdracht*] the humanities could help locate the place of humankind. Minister Cals introduced this term at the installation of the Wagenvoort committee and it probably was a product of policy officer Woltjer's pen. Whereas the natural sciences' practical meaning followed from knowledge transfer, from science to society, the humanities had to secure and sustain the transfer of cultural values from the past to the present. As 'guardians of culture', scholars in the humanities could adjust classic values to modern times. However, according to Woltjer, many scholars had failed this societal task because they were absorbed in disciplinary specialisation.[509] He considered two epistemological reforms as possible improvements to the useful cultural transfer of the humanities. First of all, overspecialised Dutch universities should adopt the 'spirit of Oxford', that is, emphasize 'broader development'. This would support more effective cultural transfer to new generations and help 'cultural forms' adapt easier to new (technological) developments. Second of all, the objects of study could be chosen closer to home. The 'displacement' towards study of present man and society, ignited by the rise of the social sciences, challenged the traditional focus on the past.[510] Ultimately, this had consequences for the perception of the usefulness of all human sciences: also historical humanities could be connected better to present issues.

In a way, Woltjer was stirring up the decades-old debate about the tension between societal value and specialisation, which existed in similar but context-specific forms elsewhere in Europe, like the 'two cultures' debate that Snow initiated around that time in the UK.[511] Also Dutch humanities scholars, classicists, philosophers, literary critics, observed a certain 'anti-science' [*anti-beta*] mentality amongst their colleagues. However, the subservient role of the humanities in relation to the societal consequences of the natural sciences was seldom openly challenged in the 1960s. Many of the prominent scholars gathered in the advisory committees even argued that a mentality opposed to the natural sciences was outdated. Uhlenbeck wrote for example about the 'great importance' of collaboration with natural scientists, however difficult that may be.[512] Linguist Stutterheim claimed that the disciplinary differences were even bigger *within* the diverse field of humanities research, at least when one took a broad conception as the Wagenvoort committee did: all research at law, literary, theological, economic, social and 'inter' faculties.[513]

508 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv. nr. 38, Installation lecture by Cals, 6 July 1961.

509 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, Woltjer to Wagenvoort, 9 March 1962.

510 NA, ZWO, 2.25.36 inv.nr. 8, minutes of ZWO board meeting, 4 February 1961.

511 David Edgerton, "CP Snow as Anti-Historian of British Science: Revisiting the Technocratic Moment, 1959–1964," *History of Science* 43, no. 2 (2005): 187–208.

512 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, Uhlenbeck to Haas, 13 March 1962

513 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, C. F. P. Stutterheim to Committee Humanities, 7 March 1962.

Wagenvoort himself claimed that an all too strict distinction between the humanities as 'pure rational reflection' and natural sciences as 'experiment and deduction' had obstructed exploration of the 'boundary region' between the two.[514] Quite some scholars argued that a strict epistemic boundary between the two was disappearing. They observed that problems of the human and natural sciences coalesced more and more, so that they could 'fertilise' each other. ZWO and KNAW cited examples like phonetics, economics and archaeology where natural science methods were used to study typical humanities problems. One cultural anthropologist, Professor G. W. Locher from Leiden, even claimed that the ontological boundary between nature and culture had evaporated: instead, culture was a continuation of nature.[515]

Ultimately, what distinguished the study of nature from the study of culture in the 1960s was collaboration. Its ubiquity in the natural sciences explained its success, whereas the humanities' backwardness was rooted in its fundamental individualism. When cooperation was discussed as remedy for the sorry state of the humanities this was not just about cooperating *with*, but first of all, cooperating *like* the scientists from the natural scientific and medical faculties. The organisation of much scientific research in *teams* around *interdisciplinary* subjects was claimed to be the rationale for the practical success and strong public image of these fields. Cals went as far to say that not the material benefits produced by the natural sciences, but their 'homogeneous culture'—a clear method, shared experimental objectives and intensive cooperation—had strengthened their position in society. Opposed to that were the heterogeneous, fragmented humanities, where individual life principles (or in the Dutch context, the values of one's societal pillar) trumped shared methods or values. Different approaches enriched each other only in a complementary way. The fundamental individualism of many humanities disciplines was considered an 'organisational weakness' that was becoming untenable in modern times.[516] In Wagenvoort's first memorandum, from 1961:

> The scholar [*geleerde*] in his study is a vertebra in the backbone of our science. But at the same time, he is a lone wolf [*eenling*] … who runs the risk of missing important objectives and problems.[517]

According to historian P. J. Bouman this 'problem blindness' contrasted with the 'pioneer mentality' of natural scientists to explore 'border areas'.[518]

The lack of collaboration and contact between scholars from different universities and different specialties was pinpointed as the central problem for the humanities. The need for and functioning of cooperation was different for the 'new' social sciences, both within and between disciplines.

514 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, Woltjer to Wagenvoort, 9 March 1962.

515 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, G. W. Locher to Haas, March 1962.

516 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Installation lecture by Cals, 6 July 1961.

517 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, First memorandum of the Humanities Committee, 20 July 1961.

518 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, P. J. Bouman to Humanities Committee, 5 March 1962; P .J. Bouman, 'In de ban der geschiedenis', reprint from *De Gids* 125, nr.1 (1962): 48–56.

Responses from economics faculties made clear that joint publications, research projects and teaching programmes were more common between law, economics and sociology scholars—even though this kind of social scientific research had not yet claimed its academic terrain.[519] Although some, like Uhlenbeck, reported similar cases of collaboration for the more 'traditional' humanities disciplines, the main demand was to balance effective organisation with the goal of maintaining the 'spiritual freedom' of the scholar.[520] Some disagreed strongly that planning and individualism could be reconciled: for this reason, Prof. Bernard van Groningen had tried to obstruct the request for the Wagenvoort committee at the KNAW.[521] The resistance against collaboration and organisation was a phenomenon that scholars involved in the organisation of academic research, like Uhlenbeck and Bakhuizen van den Brink, observed more generally: 'many professors are fearful of intruders on their terrain' and 'hide themselves'.

The Casimir report on the organisation of the natural sciences had paid much less attention to questions of the social functioning of research and focused instead almost entirely on manpower and material resources. But for the humanities there was obviously less need for instruments, expensive materials or new laboratories. According to Cals, the 'flowering of the spirit' was more important than such material conditions. The epistemic focus on cultural, rational and spiritual objects engrained a disdain of the material world, of practical organisation. When Wagenvoort turned to discuss the material shortcomings for the humanities he apologised that 'it might seem we descend to much lower levels'.[522]

Humanities Research Policy, 1975

By 1975, the disdain for material conditions of research could still be observed in discussions on the organisation of the humanities. And so were comparisons to the natural sciences. A special issue of *Forum der Letteren* discussed 'humanities research policy' [*geesteswetenschappelijk onderzoekbeleid*], a term barely used a decade before. Literary scholar A. Cohen, from Utrecht, quoted industrial-academic physicist Casimir: 'science policy is impossible but necessary.'[523] Several texts in the issue proved this statement also for the humanities—demonstrating that a decade after the Wagenvoort report not much had changed.

The necessity for humanities research policy followed from an observation of policymaker E. Haas in 1975 that the ills identified by Massart in 1965 still applied. Notwithstanding the recommendations of the Wagenvoort committee (of which Haas had been the secretary), an 'organisation structure' for comparison and evaluation of activities in the humanities still did not exist. Also interactions with the natural sciences were not yet at the desired level. The 'gap' between them had to be bridged,

519 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, F. de Jong (RUG) to E. Haas, 5 March 1962. See also Rupp, 1997.

520 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Installation lecture by Cals, 6 July 1961.

521 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Woltjer to Minister Cals, 26 July 1960

522 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, First memorandum of the Humanities Committee, 20 July 1961.

523 Antonie Cohen, "Poging tot concretisering van een wetenschapsbeleid binnen een Faculteit der letteren," *Forum der Letteren*, 1975, 121–33.

especially because the sciences (and society) needed the humanities in order to design more 'meaningful' planning and to employ technology for general use. To that end, Haas posited, the humanities should be more 'extravert, respond to dissatisfaction out there, make clear what one is doing'.[524] A. Cohen demonstrated the necessity and impossibility of policy at the level of his faculty of letters: a 'research climate' was painfully absent, but the faculty research committee was too poor and powerless to improve it.[525] Other reasons for the impossibility of organised research were enduring cultural tropes, amongst scholars, and in society. Samuel Dresden, professor at Leiden and chairman of the literary studies division of the KNAW, observed that many scholars would not accept being called 'scientist' or 'worker', or consider the possibility that their activities could be ordered and organised. Spirit [*geest*] trumped matter, and organisation plunged it into dogma, normalisation and academism. The spatial imagination of 'monastic cells and study rooms' therefore still, often in repressed state, informed the epistemic ideal of most humanities scholars.[526]

Dresden, however, claimed that organisation of the humanities was not just possible, albeit in idiosyncratic ways, but also indispensable: even 'loneliness presumes and demands a form of presence of others'.[527] He envisioned national documentation and coordination of humanities research, to prevent duplication of effort (even though this risk might be low for the humanities), institutional (i.e. regional) specialisation in specific (sub-) fields and inter-institutional contact to coordinate and stimulate research. Together, this call for regional specialisation would not restrict freedom of researchers, but rather enlarge it: experts would spend less time on teaching general subjects and other experts would be close by. Uhlenbeck argued in favour of teamwork as well. He did not accept the argument that individuality followed from the nature of the research object, but rather thought scholars were unaware of the potential benefits of collaboration. In order to realise this potential, he issued a plea for the concentration of humanities research in locations where 'the organisation structures are available for high quality and efficiency'.[528] If the universities did not correspond to this new spatial image, some interuniversity institutes would.

In the context of Dutch university research in the 1960s and 1970s a variety of arguments in favour of the utility of the human sciences was aired. Most of these arguments related implicitly or explicitly to the organisational structure of the natural sciences. The rapidly emerging social sciences held an interesting hybrid position within this discourse, as they were seen to mimic both the collective nature of the natural sciences and the value-ladenness of the humanities. But in terms of utility, the social sciences strongly resembled the humanities, and this was not limited to the Dutch situation. This becomes clear from Thomas Gieryn's study of the US context, in

524 Haas, "Geesteswetenschappelijk onderzoekbeleid."

525 Cohen, "Poging tot concretisering van een wetenschapsbeleid binnen een Faculteit der letteren."

526 Samuel Dresden, "Organisatie van de Geest," *Forum Der Letteren*, 1975, 28–41.

527 Ibid.

528 Uhlenbeck referred to a 1972 RAWB advice. E. M. Uhlenbeck, "Wetenschapsbeleid en geesteswetenschappelijk onderzoek," *Forum der Letteren*, 1975, 15–27.

which the case for public funding of the social sciences, at the National Science Foundation, was made by way of 'complementary utility'[529] This argument changed shape between the 1950s and 1960s. First, social sciences were required 'to keep peace' and 'realise fruits' in relation to newly acquired technological powers or scientific results. From the 1960s onwards, however, the NSF would support both natural and social sciences because all societal problems existed in border areas between them. Interdisciplinarity, rather than reflection, was now the keyword. The utility of the social sciences, and the humanities, was consistently defined not on its own, but in relation to the dominant natural sciences; however, the epistemic relation between the two domains could change shape depending on context.[530] At one epistemic extreme, the human sciences reflected on the established facts of the natural sciences; at the other extreme, they co-produced new hybrid knowledge in response to the complexity of societal issues.

4.8 Places with a Function for Humanities & Social Sciences, 1970–1992

The Wagenvoort report had identified four structural shortcomings in the organisation of the humanities and the social sciences, mainly in contrast to the existing organisation of the natural sciences: lack of interuniversity contact, lack of interdisciplinary collaboration, lack of international outlook and lack of relevance for societal problems. Two concrete spots addressed all these ills. One was established in the 1950s, the Institute for Social Studies (ISS), and the other traced its history to that decade but was established only by 1970, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences and Humanities (NIAS). Where ISS was the outcome of decolonisation and mirrored colonial organisation of research, NIAS was the indirect consequence of European integration and mirrored American examples of organised research. Both were explicitly meant to be meeting places, function as spaces for cooperation, and create societally relevant research in the humanities and social sciences.

As said, the origins of the ISS are tied to the practical context of colonial administration. Until 1950, there existed in the Netherlands two places to study 'Indology', that is, the study of the culture, law, language and natural environment of the Dutch Indies. Graduates were trained to take up positions in the Dutch colonial administration. After Indonesia fought to independence and ended Dutch colonial rule in 1949, so ended the direct utility of these Indology studies. The two departments for Indology, in Leiden and Utrecht, joined hands in the creation in 1954 of one new interuniversity institute, the ISS, based in The Hague, where the development and public

529 Thomas F. Gieryn, *Cultural Boundaries of Science: Credibility on the Line* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 75–87.

530 Ibid.

administration of countries in the 'third world' would be studied with a social scientific and technical approach. Only from 1958 onwards was it also a research institute, following the recommendations of a group of international experts (from France, the US and UNESCO). The first ISS research project was a multidisciplinary study of the social and economic development of the Mediterranean area. As a whole, ISS did not only copy colonial Dutch approaches, but also relied heavily on British examples, from LSE and Cambridge.[531] In the 1960s discussions about the organisation of the humanities, Prof. H. Dooyeweerd (Law, VU Amsterdam) pointed to the interdisciplinary development research at ISS in The Hague as example of collaboration.[532] He especially praised the fact that ISS had 'brought into practice' an interdisciplinary approach to socio-economic problems of development, organised by cooperative teams of social scientists from public administration, urban planning, economy, sociology, sociography and religious studies.

The place and function of ISS in Dutch post-war society are clearly aimed at usefulness, albeit for decolonising, low-income countries. But also an institute as arcane and apparently isolated as NIAS was, I argue, a utility spot—a place where the function of the humanities (and the social sciences) was up for discussion, because it strove to stimulate new relations and interactions beyond the existing academic culture. In the case of the humanities, that meant the creation of contact between scholars from different universities, specialisations and countries. Ultimately such places had to orient these scholars and open their fields to societal problems. Compared to the ISS, the organisation of research at NIAS was less explicit, but its goals were alike. Both spots had to stimulate interactions, coordination and interdisciplinarity in the humanities by bringing scholars from different specialties physically together.

One person knew both types of organised research very well: indologist Bob Uhlenbeck. According to him, neither ISS nor NIAS was an attempt to mirror external developments like the success of the collaborative natural sciences. Rather, they were responses to an internal shift. Previously, humanities and social sciences had been 'geographically organised'—like Indology, for example—but now fields were increasingly specialising along disciplinary lines: historians mainly published for other historians, and the same applied to linguists, sociologists and economists.[533] In this way, humanities scholars perhaps interacted less with scholars at their own universities who shared an empirical focus on a certain area, but at the same time became more involved with theory development and the conceptual and methodological relations to other disciplines. This actually enabled cooperation in larger wholes among diverse specialists, instead of the quaint image of the humanities as obsessed with collecting cultural

531 Rupp, *Van oude en nieuwe universiteiten*, 268–80.

532 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 657, H. Dooyeweerd to E. Haas, 6 March 1962.

533 Uhlenbeck, "Wetenschapsbeleid en geesteswetenschappelijk onderzoek," 20.

historical '*wetenswaardigheden*' (bits of information). ISS also significantly broadened its geographical focus: whereas the previous Indology departments related directly to the (colonial) problems of government in the Dutch Indies, the refurbished ISS generalised its orientation to all developing countries—the, in many cases recently decolonised, Global South. Based on the same belief that specialisation in the humanities could stimulate cooperation, NIAS focused on interdisciplinary exchange in general.

The Wagenvoort report contained a recommendation to establish NIAS, but funding for the acquisition of a building proved an insurmountable obstacle. The government did not warmly welcome any recommendation with financial consequences and Education and Sciences minister Diepenhorst even emphasized that he did not support the plan for an institute for advanced study.[534] The political-epistemic alliance for humanities research in the 1960s was clearly weaker than, or at least different from, that of the natural and technical sciences in the 1950s, discussed above. Where 'finance was not the bottleneck' for Woltjer, and Casimir (arguably successfully) demanded new buildings, the humanities' appeal to cultural transfer of values did not suffice in 1965.

This manifested itself again when the advocates of the Stanford centre appealed to national industries to foot the bill. In 1960, psychologist De Groot ended his report with the rhetorical question whether there were 'Philips, BPM, AKU, Verolme, DAG, KSG or EEC funds available for an analogous initiative'.[535] Linguist Uhlenbeck actually tried to raise funds from large multinationals in the Netherlands in the late 1960s. After another, longer, stay at Stanford in 1965–1966 he revived the idea of the institute in the local 'Gespreksgroep Toekomst Universiteit' (Discussion Group Future University) that had been meeting since 1964 at Leiden University. His enthusiasm plus the contingency of a large villa for sale in wealthy and quiet Wassenaar, proved to be the conditions of possibility for the establishment of an institute for advanced study. Uhlenbeck and chemistry professor Egbert Havinga, who lived around the corner from the villa, shared their 'discovery' with Piekaar. Although the policymaker was still in favour, he could not promise state support and advised the two to turn to industry. Subsequently, Uhlenbeck used his personal network to reach Dutch industry leaders. However, he was met with 'unexpected' refusals from the large multinational companies, like Unilever, Philips and DSM.[536] Where Cals had once stressed the absence of ties to industry as the potential selling-point of the Dutch advanced institute, by the late 1960s scholars and policymakers hoped that industry would do for the humanities what it had done for the natural sciences: invest in research without expecting direct benefits. The fact that they tried shows that they truly believed that the cultural and economic value of

534 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 38, Meeting of the Cabinet, 7 May 1965.

535 NA, OKW-HOW, 2.14.58 inv.nr. 656, A. D. de Groot, 'Een sabbatical year in Californië. Het Center for Advanced Study in the Behavorial Sciences,' reprint from *Folia Civitatis*, 10 December 1960.

536 Uhlenbeck, "The Birth of NIAS," 19–20.

different *wetenschappen* were connected; the fact that they failed, suggests that industry did not share this belief.

Finally, it was the high-ranking public official Piekaar, representing the Ministry of O&W, who did see the value of an organised institute for humanities and social sciences, and removed the financial obstacles towards purchase of the villa in November 1969. One condition set by the Ministry was that it had to be an 'interuniversity' institute. First, Uhlenbeck tried to organise this regionally, as had been the original plan for the 'Dutch European University' (see section 4.3). But the regional academic partners—the polytechnic and economics colleges in Delft and Rotterdam—showed no real interest. Instead, the agricultural university of Wageningen, in the person of sociologist E. W. Hofstee, became the first partner to join. Later that year, the universities of Utrecht, Tilburg, Nijmegen and Amsterdam (VU) as well as the young polytechnics of Twente and Eindhoven and the Rotterdam medical faculty joined the discussions.[537] As *interuniversity* institute, NIAS would function as supplement to, rather than replacement of, academic structures: it would become a place of temporary respite, for overburdened scholars on a sabbatical leave, who would return to the institutes of higher education afterwards.

It was only in early 1971 that Leiden University officially acquired the building, even though NIAS planned to open its door to the first fellows by September that same year. The villa was located in the Rijksdorp neighbourhood of Wassenaar, closer to the sea, beach and dunes than to the city centres of The Hague and Leiden, which nonetheless one could easily reach by bicycle. The newly appointed NIAS deputy director, jurist J. E. Glastra van Loon-Boon, oversaw the building process. In 1992, she recollected that 'our model was Palo Alto', the Stanford centre, 'the place where Prof. Uhlenbeck had been, the place he was still raving about!'[538] This strong relation to the American west coast was further reinforced when, in that first chaotic year, a representative of the Stanford Center happened to pass by Leiden, where she shared 'a lot of useful information' at the temporary NIAS office.[539] Glastra van Loon-Boon made sure to add a large 'common room' in the renovation plan—a meeting place for the fellows—and to furnish their separate studies with 'an individual touch in a variety of colours and materials, so that every fellow could choose a study where they would feel comfortable'. A visit to the newly constructed, modernist skyscrapers of the economics college in Rotterdam had convinced her to avoid 'rooms in a similar office style of grey metal'. Instead of a modernist atmosphere, she opted for a more traditional academic setting with antique furnishings. As example, she took the Salzburg Seminar for American Studies: a rococo palace in Salzburg, Austria, which functioned as Atlantic place of cultural exchange—'an intellectual Marshall Plan'.[540]

537 Ibid.

538 J. E. Glastra van Loon-Boon, "NIAS in Retrospect," in *22 1/2 Years of NIAS*, ed. Wouter R. Hugenholtz (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994), 25–29.

539 P. van Breda-Burgueño, "The Take Off," in *22 1/2 Years of NIAS*, ed. Wouter R. Hugenholtz (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994), 42–43.

540 Glastra van Loon-Boon, "NIAS in Retrospect"; Thomas H. Eliot and Lois J. Eliot, *The Salzburg Seminar: The First Forty Years* (Ipswich Press, 1987).

What kind of place did NIAS become? Its first director, economist Henk Misset (1922–2015), described it in 1975 as a place that countered the ills of specialisation and fragmentation by stimulating interdisciplinary interactions and a societal orientation in humanities research.[541] Misset explicitly addressed the function of NIAS in relation to the wrongs of the current university structure—from administrative and teaching duties to rigid organisation in faculties—that obstructed interdisciplinarity, and thus the solution of societal problems. Interdisciplinarity and societal relevance were almost synonymous in the 1960s and 1970s; fragmentation and disciplinary specialisation, on the other hand, obstructed utility to materialise. Paradoxically, the lack of interdisciplinary research in the humanities rooted in disciplinary immaturity, or the absence of collaborative research altogether. The isolation and inefficient fragmentation of the humanities was characteristic, he argued, for a 'small country with limited scientific potential': the few specialists that existed in each field were spread out over the Netherlands. This made it difficult for them to specialise collectively into 'paradigms in the Kuhnian sense', as the natural sciences had done.[542] Where such paradigms promote collaboration and the circulation of both knowledge and values within a disciplinary community, the fragmented humanities lacked such an interactive scientific environment, which isolated individual scholars. To break this isolation, contact between specialists from any one field, from different humanities and between all disciplines had to be increased. This would also create a nurturing milieu for contributions to the solution of societal problems.

As much as Misset presented NIAS as a progressive place, it was also a materialisation of the previous decade, in which elite scholars could informally convince a high-ranking policy official to push through a new place for disinterested, elite humanities research. According to one employee, the misfit between this image and the democratic 1970s made its low public profile more a trait than a problem—even to the point that 'secrecy enshrouded NIAS's existence' in the Dutch academic world.[543] Ideally, though, NIAS functioned as model for the organisation of all humanities and social sciences research in the Netherlands (and beyond). Scholarly freedom was the main organisational principle, but contact, cooperation and exchange were actively stimulated according to Misset: 'numerous have been the informal meetings between research fellows … colloquia and conferences, also with external participants.' In the first years, thirty to forty scholars were invited, of whom a maximum of fifteen came from abroad. 'For the … local colouring' of the humanities and social sciences, the 'presence of these foreigners is of great importance.'[544] In the first 25 years this international orientation was primarily Atlantic: of the foreign fellows, a third came from Western European

541 Henk Misset, "N.I.A.S. te midden van universiteiten en hogescholen," *Forum der Letteren*, 1975, 68–69.

542 Misset, 66–67.

543 J. J. M. Hooghuis, "Paradise in Perpetual Motion," in *22 1/2 Years of NIAS*, ed. Wouter R. Hugenholtz (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994) 48.

544 Misset, "N.I.A.S. te midden van universiteiten en hogescholen," 69.

universities, and another forty percent from North American institutions. Interestingly, it were informal spaces—such as the attic for late night drinks and the sports grounds—rather than formal meeting rooms that fellows considered central to their stay. The fellows, as well as their families and the NIAS staff, warmly remembered the cultural exchange between scholars of different nationalities: informal intellectual battle afterhours was complemented with folk dance, potluck meals, music, Dutch Sinterklaas celebrations, Christmas dinners and volleyball games.[545]

Apart from international exchange, scholars from various Dutch academic institutes could also strengthen relations via NIAS. More than half of the fellows was Dutch, and ninety percent worked at a university. In addition, there were fellows who taught at high schools or worked in industry and government. So not only was it an interuniversity meeting place for like-minded specialists, NIAS also functioned as international and inter disciplinary space of exchange. Occasionally, it also facilitated ties between academic and extra-academic research—in industry, government or museums. Perhaps in planning more than in actual action, NIAS was a place of cultural exchange.

4.9 Conclusion: Advanced Institutes as Industrial Laboratories

Jan Rupp has interpreted the establishment of NIAS as representative of two shifts. One occurred in science policy, from a concern with the economic value of science to a concern with the societal effects of economic growth and technological progress, characterised by the 1971 OECD Brooks report. The other is the transition from two to three academic cultures—the social sciences acquired a place in between the humanities and the natural sciences.[546] The concurrence of NIAS's establishment with these larger developments does not really pay due to the historical and geopolitical contingencies of its origins. Instead, I have situated NIAS as one of many attempts and proposals for European and Atlantic utility spots in the 1950s and 1960s. Ultimately, spatial imagination alone did not suffice: the availability of a concrete building made all the difference. Its eventual design, mirroring but not imitating American examples, was as much an outcome of contingent events as the materialisation of an epistemic ideal of useful organised research: individualistic but cooperative scholars reflecting on technological change in modern society.

Whether this organisational model automatically reoriented the societal orientation and academic outlook of humanities scholars is difficult to ascertain. According to Misset, it did. Many fellows later reported to him that their stay at NIAS had

545 See Wouter R. Hugenholtz, ed., *22 1/2 Years of NIAS* (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994).

546 Rupp, *Van oude en nieuwe universiteiten,* 173–200.

helped them to explore adjacent fields and that it broadened their perspective to inter- and multidisciplinary research. Misset also supported this claim by citing sociological studies of scientific work in an industrial technical-scientific laboratory. In 1966, American sociologists D. C. Pelz and F. M. Andrews had distinguished, in *Scientists in Organizations*, five elements of a stimulating organisation for research: dedication, trust, limited coordination, lively contact with a wide variety of colleagues, and a rich diversity of research methods. 'Is an extrapolation of these results to an institute for social sciences and humanities warranted?' Not entirely, concluded Misset. Future research might conclude that a humanities scholar might reach the best and most effective results in a long period of isolation. But, he continued, 'as long as such results are not in yet, it is reasonable to assume that the factors that positively influence the effectivity of scientific workers in organisations of the laboratory type also have a positive effect on researchers in the social sciences.'[547] NIAS ticked all the same boxes as the industrial laboratory for commercially useful research.

Of course, NIAS never functioned as one. But the fact that Misset compared the institute for elite individual humanities research with an archetypical ideal of useful research shows that we can understand it as a utility spot. Its history is tied to several European and Atlantic imaginations of useful knowledge production, but aspects related to the promise of nuclear power, European integration, economic impact, graduate education, and interactions between natural and human sciences gradually disappeared from the Dutch plans. NIAS ultimately found a niche in the buzzing realm of international policy and science in the 1960s as a not explicitly European or Atlantic institute for advanced research in the humanities and social sciences. As an interuniversity and international meeting place it was as much a reflection of its times as a model for, and legitimation of, social science and humanities research in the Netherlands. In that sense, NIAS was situated between individual university policies, national science policy and international developments in the organisation of research.

In the 1980s, this became painfully visible when severe budget cuts at the Ministry of Education and Science threatened NIAS's existence: universities started negotiations by proposing to abolish interuniversity institutes. Ultimately, the institute was 'saved' by 'a former fellow in a very high position in the national bureaucracy'—just like it could thank its initial existence to a high-ranking policy officer.[548] One response to this dire situation was a change in the organisational structure; since 1988, multidisciplinary 'nuclei' gather a variety of specialists from different fields around scientifically and societally relevant themes, from 'Approaching Eastern Europe' (in 1988) to 'Urban Change and Urban Policy' (1992). According to one staff member, this changed the 'atmosphere'

547 Misset, "N.I.A.S. te midden van universiteiten en hogescholen," 71–72.

548 Most probably this concerns Roel in 't Veld, NIAS fellow in the academic year '76–'77, and director-general of the Ministry of O&W from 1982 to 1988. H. F. Cohen, "NIAS at Risk," in *22 1/2 Years of NIAS*, ed. Wouter R. Hugenholtz (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994), 49–52.

at NIAS, but not in the way intended. Where before a great thirst existed for social interaction because most work was conducted individually, now the high degree of intensive teamwork reduced the need for informal afterhours gatherings that actually had provided 'the framework for scholarly exchange'.[549] Perhaps this is a good example of 'over-organisation', for which Wagenaar had warned repeatedly thirty years before.

As NIAS moved closer to the example of the industrial research laboratory, to which it had been once compared, its culture changed. But the type of geopolitical considerations that lay at the root of its history still played a role by 1992. Demographer D. J. van de Kaa, NIAS director at that moment, situated the institute again explicitly in a European political realm. It would have to relate to demographic changes, increased competition from developing countries and a 'New Europe' without an Iron Curtain. The advanced institute would have to find a response to the emphasis on 'knowledge infrastructures' and the growing wish 'to "capture" the results of research for economic purposes'.[550] Or, what in EC circles was called *valorisation*.

From the study of European universities and advanced institutes we can draw the following lessons. First of all, virtual utility spots are *productive*: they gather political, industrial and scientific actors together around a plan, a possible place. The spatial imagination of relations between scientific research, education and society can have political traction even when it never materialises. Second, spatial models travel, as stories but also quite literally as floor plans, and always have to adapt to local interests and possibilities; in that way, these models can lose or acquire significant explicit and implicit architectural and symbolical aspects that structure scientific activity in the process. Lastly, the utility of research in humanities and social sciences too can be interpreted in spatial terms and concrete spots, even though they openly claim disinterestedness and a concern for higher values. A mismatch then appears to exist between the concept of complementary utility and the eventual, relatively remote, housing of NIAS in the Wassenaar villa. This prompts the question what would happen if reflection on modern, technological society takes place not remote from, but in the direct proximity of the places that produce this future—such as science parks. In that respect, the move of NIAS to Amsterdam city centre, in 2016, is of interest. From the 'pastoral', and elite, environment of the Wassenaar dunes NIAS relocated to the buzzing city centre of Amsterdam, neighbouring a humanities faculty, colonial heritage and the red light district. The science park at the fringe of the city is still a substantial bicycle trip away. It deserves further study how this new proximity relations altered the nature of NIAS as utility spot for the humanities and the social sciences.

549 Hooghuis, "Paradise in Perpetual Motion."

550 D. J. van de Kaa, "NIAS and the Passage of Time," in *22 1/2 Years of NIAS*, ed. Wouter R. Hugenholtz (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994), 11–14.

In the following chapter, I will reconstruct the circulation of the spatial model of the science park in the Netherlands. This will lead to a sketch of the spatial origins and connotations of valorisation in the European policy realm. The structural aspects of the utility spot concept developed in chapters 2, 3 and 4 will all come to the fore in the last historical reconstruction of the 1970s and 1980s.