



Annual Report Erasmus Prize *Wikipedia*



Annual Report
Erasmus Prize
2015

Digital Culture
and the Dissemination
of Knowledge



Colophon
Annual Report Erasmus Prize
© 2016

Photography
John Thuring, ANP, Ineke Oostveen

Illustrations
Reynoud Homan

Text
Praemium Erasmianum Foundation

Design
Barbara van Santen

Published by
Praemium Erasmianum Foundation
Jan van Goyenkade 5
1075 HN Amsterdam
T + 31 (0)20 67 52 753
E l.aalbers@erasmusprijs.org
www.erasmusprijs.org

Contents

Preface

6

Citation

8

Laudatio

10

Acceptance Speech Phoebe Ayers

14

Acceptance Speech Lodewijk Gelauff

15

Acceptance Speech Adele Vrana

16

Activities

19

Research Prizes 2015

20

Origin and Aim of the
Praemium Erasmianum Foundation

27

Board

28

Preface

‘Digital culture and the dissemination of knowledge’ was the theme of the 2015 Erasmus Prize, and Wikipedia proved to be an ideal and timely winner. In the words of the advisory committee: “Wikipedia has promoted the dissemination of knowledge through a comprehensive and universally accessible encyclopaedia. Wikipedia also plays an important role in countries where neutrality and open information are not taken for granted.” The prize specifically recognizes Wikipedia as a community - a shared project that involves tens of thousands of volunteers around the world who help shape this initiative.

This annual report contains an account of the Erasmus Prize award ceremony held on 25 November 2015. The prize was accepted by Phoebe Ayers, Adele Vrana and Lodewijk Gelauff, as representatives of the Wikipedia Community. Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia, was in attendance, as were dozens of Wikipedians from around the Netherlands and Europe.

His Majesty the King presented the Erasmus Prize at a festive ceremony held at the Royal Palace in Amsterdam, in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix and His Royal Highness Prince Constantijn. We are grateful to the Royal Family for their hospitality.

The theme of the Erasmus Prize was reflected in a range of activities, from an exhibition on the history of encyclopaedia to an academic conference on the future of Wikipedia. These activities could not have taken place without the enthusiastic support of our partners, among them the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Kennisland, University of Amsterdam, Paradiso, UvA Special Collections, NPO Doc, De Groene Amsterdammer and the Erasmus Festival Brabant. Wikimedia Nederland and the Wikimedia Foundation were also extremely helpful.

In addition to the Erasmus Prize, the Foundation in 2015 awarded its yearly Research Prizes to five young doctoral students. Our host on that occasion was the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, to whom we express our gratitude. You can read a short account of the Research Prizes in this annual report.

Finally, the Erasmus Prize 2015 was the final award celebrated under the directorship of Max Sparreboom, a position he had held since 1999. For those 16 years he has steered the Foundation with tremendous dedication and expertise and a keen eye for detail. We thank him warmly.

Martijn Sanders, *chairman*
Shanti van Dam, *director*



Citation

Article 2 of the Constitution of the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation reads as follows:

Within the context of the cultural traditions of Europe in general and the ideas of Erasmus in particular, the aim of the Foundation is to enhance the position of the humanities, social sciences and the arts. The emphasis lies on tolerance, cultural diversity and non-dogmatic, critical thinking. The Foundation tries to achieve this aim by awarding prizes and by other means. A cash prize is awarded under the name of the 'Erasmus Prize'.

In accordance with this article, the Board of the Foundation has decided to award the Erasmus Prize 2015 to the Wikipedia Community.

Wikipedia is built on the efforts, the intrinsic motivation and drive of thousands of volunteers, making up the Wikipedia community.

The Prize is being awarded to Wikipedia for the following reasons:

- Wikipedia has given a fabulous impulse to the use of digital media for science and culture.
- Wikipedia is built on the efforts, the intrinsic motivation and drive of thousands of volunteers, making up the Wikipedia community. Collectively, they have created a new, non-hierarchical, collaborative system for the collection and global distribution of knowledge.
- Wikipedia projects such as Wikipedia Zero have contributed to make information freely available for people who until recently did not have access, or limited access, to these sources of knowledge.
- Finally, Wikipedia has stimulated critical discourse and drawn new attention to fundamental questions of finding the truth and to the need to critically examine one's sources.



Erasmus Prize Award Ceremony on 25 November, Royal Palace Amsterdam. Photo ANP



Erasmus Prize Award Ceremony, Royal Palace Amsterdam. Photo ANP

Laudatio

Your Majesties, Royal Highnesses, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the industrial revolution, no scientific innovation has had such a profound impact on our lives as digital technology. The Internet has changed human relations and cultures. Zeroes and ones have become the underlying grid of our existence and have transformed our ways of thinking and getting things done. Networked communication - the exchange of information through nodes and switches - has become the essential characteristic of our times. It has turned economic and political landscapes upside-down, making the Whole Wide World one.

With global connectivity and interdependence being 'the new normal', we can now speak of a truly Digital Culture, which continues to evolve rapidly. But whom may we credit with creating it? It's hard to put a finger on individuals since networked collaboration and exchange have been its essential elements over the last two decades.

The Board of the Erasmus Prize Foundation wanted to honor a visionary thinker or a pioneering institution that recognized the democratic and cultural potential of digital media at an early stage, and has used it effectively to contribute to the advancement of science and culture.

We have concluded that Wikipedia is such an organization. Born to the successful marriage of a creative vision shared by many and solid, collaborative implementation to make it real and lasting, Wikipedia offers an entirely new model for global knowledge production and dissemination – with openness, transparency, and non-commercially. Wikipedia is now the only not-for-profit among the top ten most-visited Internet domains in the world.

So, exceptionally, we have decided to award the Erasmus Prize not to one person, but to the community of Wikipedians, who - as a non-hierarchical global forum - embody the values and ideals of democratic knowledge production. Practically, they also function as a network of dedicated individuals, who keep the People's Encyclopedia alive and further develop it through their

infinite anonymous and unpaid contributions. It is only thanks to their idealism, perseverance, independent spirit and commitment to the common good that the body of knowledge embedded in Wikipedia keeps growing, improving and spreading throughout the world.

Without a doubt, Wikipedia has had a huge impact on society and has outgrown most people's wildest fantasies. Today, most school children in the world cannot imagine learning without Wikipedia. And many of them may contribute to it when they grow up.

Wikipedia has shaken the world of knowledge by giving a new meaning to the idea of a comprehensive encyclopedia, accessible to all. Everywhere, but especially in countries where open access to reliable information is not a matter of course, Wikipedia plays an important role in public education.

Wikipedia works as a self-governing community with explicit principles. It has developed new critical instruments to ensure that sources can be traced - and that there is arbitration in the case of conflicts. With its open character, Wikipedia nurtures the awareness that sources of information are not neutral. They have to be weighed. By making visible who has contributed to the subjects and what changes have been made over the course of time, Wikipedia strives for optimal transparency.

The attention to text and original sources, and the separation between facts and interpretation, are cornerstones of the Wikipedia concept and key values in an open information society. Our name-giver Erasmus has always emphasized the importance of going back ad fontes: to the sources; and of enabling knowledge to flow. Erasmus probably would have loved Wikipedia.

Wikipedia is the world's most popular reference work. But it is not just an encyclopedia; it is a phenomenon: it's a forum for dialogue; a source of dispute around opinions and facts, accuracy and advocacy; it is a collaborative tool; a delicate instrument for truth-making that, rather than hide the complexity of knowledge-production, emphasizes it. So Wikipedia is not only a work of

reference, but also a site of contestation, where meaning is always under construction.

Since 2001, tens of thousands of editors have contributed to Wikipedia. Distinctly global in its aspirations, Wikipedia operates in more than 250 languages. Sensitive subjects are treated differently in different cultural and linguistic areas. Wikipedia has opened up new avenues for active learning and teaching, unsettling old notions of authority and coming up with new concepts for dealing with claims to authority. It is a 'gesamt kunstwerk', an all-embracing information art work, continuously evolving and very much alive.

While formally a Foundation, Wikipedia should first be regarded as a Community, a joint enterprise shaped by tens of thousands of volunteers, working as editors, authors or project collaborators. These are the 'Wikipedians' and they form the heart and soul of the entire project. Whenever the Board of the Wikipedia Foundation make a decision, the Wikipedian Community is carefully watching them... Openness, independence and democratic decision-making are the core values. And although many have tried, a favorable lemma in Wikipedia cannot be bought.

Ladies and gentlemen, Jimmy Wales is co-founder of Wikipedia. He is the man who, some 15 years back, had a vision of a world-wide, freely accessible encyclopedia as a collaborative project. We owe him great respect and admiration for what he has achieved. He travels the world as an ambassador of Wikipedia and we are delighted that he is here with us today.

We have agreed with him that, today, we will honor not one person, but the entire Wikipedia community. So we have decided to entrust the token of the Prize to three representatives of the community. They each embody a specific project within Wikipedia. Together, they symbolize three key aspects of Wikipedia: its significance for the dissemination of knowledge; the global emancipatory character of Wikipedia; and the importance of Wikipedia for the arts, culture and cultural heritage.

Let me introduce them briefly.

Phoebe Ayers has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Wikimedia Foundation. She is a science and engineering reference librarian at MIT. Since 2003, she has been editor and organizer of many projects in the field of libraries, education, dissemination of knowledge, open access and wikis.

The second person is Lodewijk Gelauff. Working in The Netherlands as a Wikipedia volunteer he has initiated the successful Wiki Loves Monuments project, by now the largest photography contest of the world, producing photos of monumental buildings across the world.

The third is Adele Vrana. Based at Wikimedia headquarters in San Francisco, Adele leads the mobile partnerships for the Wikimedia Foundation and Wikipedia Zero, a project through which mobile operators will waive data-fees for Wikipedia so, ultimately, all will be able to access knowledge on their cell phones, regardless of whether or not they can afford mobile-data charges.

The token of the prize this year consists of three colourful tubes, and was designed by Bruno Ninaber and Reynoud Homan. Each tube is a kind of baton that can be passed on, like in a relay-race, to those who come after us. Engraved on the batons is a quote from one of Erasmus's letters: 'All, according to their own style and ability, should try to make a useful contribution to the education of all'. Together they read Honos Praemium Virtutis: (Honour is Virtue's Reward), which has been our Foundation's motto since 1958. It seems to us that it applies perfectly to the spirit and ideals of the Wikipedia Community.

Phoebe, Adele and Lodewijk: we would like to present the prize to you three as representatives of the entire Wikipedia community.





The token of the Erasmus Prize 2015 consists of three tubes, designed by Bruno Ninaber van Eyben and Reynoud Homan.

Acceptance Speech Phoebe Ayers

MIT Libraries

Your Majesties, your Royal Highnesses, distinguished members of the Erasmus Prize Foundation, ladies and gentlemen, and fellow Wikimedians: thank you for this award, on behalf of the tens of thousands of people around the globe who contribute to Wikipedia. It is a great honor and privilege for us to be here in such distinguished company and in this beautiful building, and it is a great honor for our project to join the extraordinary company of past prize winners.

And in thinking about that past, I'd like to begin with a little history.

Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus, 28 October 1466 – 12 July 1536, known as Erasmus of Rotterdam, or simply Erasmus, was a Dutch Renaissance humanist, Catholic priest, social critic, teacher, and theologian.

That is the first sentence of the Wikipedia article in English about Erasmus. The article goes on for 30 more pages to describe his life, work and legacy. It is illustrated by paintings and reproductions of manuscripts; there are footnotes and scholarly sources, and an extensive bibliography. And remarkably, you can also learn about Erasmus in 73 other languages, ranging from Indonesian to Italian, Arabic to Norwegian, Swahili to Dutch, and even Latin.

But none of these things are the most astonishing part about this encyclopedia article. The most astonishing part is that it was begun almost exactly fourteen years ago, on 29 November 2001, by one anonymous person. This person visited what was at the time a nearly-unknown website, wrote one sentence about "Erasmus of Rotterdam", and then clicked "save" for the world to see. And then, over the course of the next fourteen years, over 1,700 different people would contribute to the article to make it what it is today. Some of the changes they made were small -- formatting, making a sentence easier to read. Some changes were big: adding new paragraphs, researching sources, taking pictures of commemorative sculptures. These editors used the wiki technology to collaborate on writing the article, but they probably did not know each other's real names, professions, or countries. But nonetheless Wikipedia's

editors formed a community and built an encyclopedia. They developed structures and guidelines, they argued over what should be in it, and they shared in one great passion: to make the encyclopedia as good as it possibly could be, and to build a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge.

What the story of this article also tells us is that, in addition to being the most accessed reference work in the world, Wikipedia is also a deeply scholarly work. Many libraries, archives and museums have understood this and have developed innovative programs that share their scholarly expertise and unique collections with Wikipedia. These institutions recognize that Wikipedia's editors don't just use their own knowledge to write articles; they are also skilled researchers.

But to be a good researcher, you must have access to research. Open access to scholarly research is crucial because so many Wikipedia editors and readers around the globe don't have access to great libraries. I want to live in a world where my neighbor and I can both look at the same Wikipedia article, and both get access to the sources cited in it, even though I work for one of the world's great universities and she does not. And, I want the Wikipedia editors who write that article - the editors in Bangladesh, in Argentina, in Amsterdam - to also have access to that research.

Libraries, museums and Wikipedia have a lot in common. We are all committed to preserving our cultural heritage and knowledge and sharing it widely. And for Wikipedia, this means sharing with the world.

When I look at a Wikipedia article, whether it is long or short, I don't just see a useful summary of some topic of interest. I see the people behind it, our global community of passionate, quirky, scholarly people who believe that free information for everyone is worth working for. This is the community that we are accepting this award on behalf of, and the community that we are proud to be a part of. Thank you.

Acceptance Speech Lodewijk Gelauff

Wiki Loves Monuments

Almost fifteen years ago, a crazy idea was born. Bringing people from all over the world together to create an encyclopedia that anyone can read, edit or re-use at will, and all that without compensation. It seemed impossible. And yet, it worked.

For those who find it hard to grasp the sheer magnitude of that much collected knowledge, printing the English Wikipedia alone, without any images, would allow you to fill 110 meters of bookshelves in your library.

All of this is the work of tens of thousands of volunteers who have dedicated their time and effort to this amazing project. Of course, the days when you could get up in the morning and start an article about “Africa” or “ollekebolleke” are behind us. For many years now, many Wikipedians have been working from lists of “wanted articles” in a specific field. I myself like to help completing the set of articles for all members of the Dutch parliament in the past 200 years – as a start. We Wikipedians love lists.

In 2008, a group of Dutch Wikipedia editors used one of these lists to write about windmills. It seems we have over a thousand of them still standing in the whole country, and the mission of these mill-lovers was to write an article with a photo of every single one of them. And they did.

And as things go in Wikipedia, one project inspired another and a new list emerged. The next goal? Collecting photos of all the national heritage buildings in the Netherlands. As it turns out, the Netherlands has about 60,000 national monuments. To even have a chance of completing this new task within a reasonable time, the group needed new ideas. Fortunately, enthusiasm is contagious.

More people began to take an interest and a photo competition to get more photos was born: Wiki Loves Monuments. Again, enthusiasm proved contagious. Just a few years later, we were organising the competition in more than 50 countries. Since 2011, Wiki Loves Monuments is recognised as the world’s largest photography competition.

To accomplish that, we had to work the specifics and challenges each country presents with the necessary local dedication, love and expertise. For example, did you know

that Germany has an estimated 750.000 monuments? That India on the other hand only protects a few thousand? That in some countries, publishing your own photos of national cultural heritage may require permission from the architect or a government?

The core concepts of Wiki Loves Monuments remained the same: ask people to contribute to Wikipedia in a fun way, while discovering more about heritage in your direct environment. Thanks to the work of hundreds of volunteers across the world, Wiki Loves Monuments collected well over a million free images.

Collaboration through diversity of interests is a strength of Wikipedia – but at the same time a big challenge. I stand before you as the stereotypical average Wikipedian: a white male from Western Europe in his twenties, with a college degree. If you have met Wikipedians - and if you haven’t, I would encourage you to meet some later today - you will see that this of course is a simplification.

Nonetheless, the fact that our community is skewed, is the main challenge of Wikipedia today. Why don’t we have an article about the Congolese city of Baraka, which has more than 100,000 inhabitants, about ‘coconut soup’ or about ‘picking up’, a technique in knitting? By the way: I secretly hope that some of you will quickly fill those gaps – but maybe don’t pull out your phones right now.

It is obvious that to fulfill our mission, to bring together the sum of all knowledge, we need a more diverse community. With so much information still to add, we need the help of more people - in the hope and expectation that they can contribute knowledge that we can’t. We should make newcomers feel welcome, embrace their enthusiasm to contribute more, and make them want to become a Wikipedian.

Acceptance Speech Adele Vrana

Wikipedia Zero

Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. That is the vision of the Wikimedia Foundation.

It is important that we say “share in” - because our movement depends on the generosity of people around the world to help reach this vision. Wikipedia editors, including the wonderful people in this room, have shared their free time to write and improve hundreds of thousands of articles. They help make Wikipedia the most comprehensive resource of the world’s knowledge, one with over 35 million articles across 291 languages.

However, we know that we still have far to go before we can reach every single person on the planet with free access to knowledge.

A few years ago, we started to think about how we could bring Wikipedia to more people around the world, in particular in non-Western regions. At the time, we knew that new users would not be accessing the internet and, therefore, Wikipedia from their desktop computers. It was just a matter of time to see new internet users coming online for the first time solely using their mobile phones.

Going mobile, however, was not enough to guarantee that people in emerging countries would be able to afford the expensive data charges to access Wikipedia. We quickly realized that if our intention was to enable the participation of new voices on Wikipedia, we also needed to remove the barrier of cost. This is how Wikipedia Zero came to life. From 2012, we have partnered with 72 mobile carriers in 64 countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America to provide free access to Wikipedia. Together, we have been able to bring Wikipedia to over 600 million people.

It is an honor to have the accomplishments of Wikipedia Zero and the Wikimedia movement celebrated here today. We are proud that students from a township in South Africa decided to write a letter to all their mobile operators asking them to join our program and provide free access to Wikipedia; that we received a “thank you email” from a Wikipedia editor in Ghana saying that

Wikipedia Zero will allow more Ghanaians to edit Wikipedia; and that some of our partners in Asia decided to support our communities and their outreach efforts, not because we asked them to but because they were impressed with our talented and passionate volunteer editors.

Imagine a world in which every single person freely share in the sum of all knowledge. We know we’re not there yet, but it is this vision that unifies us. This is what drives us forward.

On behalf of our movement, the Wikimedia Foundation and the Wikipedia Zero program, thank you for sharing this honor with us. It only encourages us to share more with the world. After all, Wikipedia is not finished; it’s barely just begun.



Members of the Royal Family with the laureates. Photo ANP



Adele Vrana while delivering her acceptance speech. Photo ANP



Lodewijk Gelauff while delivering his acceptance speech. Photo ANP



Phoebe Ayers while delivering her acceptance speech. Photo ANP

Activities 2015

International Academic Conference 'Reading Wikipedia'

23 November, KNAW, Amsterdam

Researchers, authors, activists and policy makers addressed topical issues around Wikipedia. Keynote speech *The uniqueness of Wikipedia* as a platform by José van Dijck, president KNAW (Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences).

Wikipedia and the Quest for Universal Knowledge

On the historical, cultural and philosophical aspects of Wikipedia. With Charles van den Heuvel, Jos de Mul, Sabine Niederer and Erinç Salor. Moderated by Frank van Vree.

Wikipedia as a Memory Institution.

The limits of the open model

On the role of knowledge institutions, freedom of information, public media and copyright. With Phoebe Ayers, Christophe Depreter, Dimitar Dimitrov, Andres Guadamuz, Lucie Guibault, Bregtje van der Haak, Julia Reda and Heijo Ruijsenaars. Moderated by Paul Keller.

The Research Affordances of Wikipedia

On how Wikipedia itself can be a new source for academic research. With Fabian Flöck, Mark Graham, Brent Hecht, Ellen Rutten and Tommaso Venturini. Moderated by Richard Rogers.

Jointly organized by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, University of Amsterdam and Kennisland.

Paradiso Lecture by Jimmy Wales

25 November, Paradiso, Amsterdam

Lecture by Jimmy Wales, co-founder of Wikipedia, on 'Wikipedia and Governance'. The lecture was followed by a debate with the audience, moderated by Ruben Maes.

Award Ceremony Erasmus Prize 2015

25 November, Royal Palace Amsterdam

Private viewing historical encyclopaedias

25 - 27 November, UvA Special Collections, Amsterdam

On the occasion of the Erasmus Prize for Wikipedia, the University of Amsterdam displayed highlights of its collection of historical encyclopaedias. Curators of Special Collections shared their personal explanation of the most important encyclopaedias in history, it was a unique chance to have a close look at these beautifully illustrated works.

Wikimedia Conference

28 November, Meeting Plaza, Utrecht

Conference for Wikipedians and others interested. Keynote lecture by Marietje Schaake about Europe and copyright. Organised by Wikimedia Netherlands.

NPO Doc

From 23 November

The digital documentary channel NPO Doc broadcasted a series of documentaries about freedom of information on the internet. Different ethical problems were addressed during four consecutive Mondays in the documentaries *Wiki's Waarheid*, *Google en het wereldbrein*, *RiP-A Remix Manifesto* and *The Pirate Bay Away From Keyboard*.

De Groene Amsterdammer

In the week of the Erasmus Prize, the weekly magazine De Groene Amsterdammer published articles on Wikipedia and the encyclopaedia of the future.

ERASMUS FESTIVAL BRABANT

The Erasmus Festival Brabant organized a festival on the occasion of the Erasmus Prize 2015 to Wikipedia Activities were organized in various cities in the Dutch province Brabant, such as debates for students, an educational programme, lectures, and a film programme. www.erasmusfestival.nl

Research Prizes 2015

Since 1988, the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation awards annual Research Prizes. Five prizes of € 3,000 each are awarded to young academic researchers in the humanities and social sciences, who have written a PhD dissertation of outstanding quality at a university in the Netherlands.

Important criteria for the award are the broad, case transcending treatment of the subject and the wider relevance of the book for other disciplines. This year's selection committee was formed by Naomi Ellemers, Maria Grever, Rick Lawson, Paul Schnabel and Max Sparreboom.

The chairman of the Foundation, Martijn Sanders, presented the Research Prizes on Monday 11 May 2015 at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in Amsterdam.

The winning dissertations of 2015 are:

[Daniëlla A. Dam-de Jong](#)

International Law and Governance of Natural Resources in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations.

[Tim Houwen](#)

Reclaiming Power for the People. Populism in Democracy.

[Josse G. Klijnsma](#)

Contract Law as Fairness. A Rawlsian Perspective on the Position of SMEs in European contract law.

[Felix Schirrmann](#)

The Good, the Bad, and the Brain: Theory and History of the Neuroscience of Morality.

[Lisette Wijnia](#)

Motivation and Achievement in Problem-Based Learning: The Role of Interest, Tutors, and Self-Directed Study.



Standing (f.l.t.r.)
Felix Schirmann,
Daniëlla Dam-de Jong,
Lisette Wijnia,
Martijn Sanders,
Josse Klijsma and Tim Houwen.
Photo Ineke Oostveen

Daniëlla A. Dam-de Jong

International Law and Governance of Natural Resources in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations

Supervisors Prof.dr. N.J. Schrijver
Prof.dr. L.J. van den Herik
Nomination University of Leiden
Faculty of Law

Biography

Daniëlla Dam-de Jong (Utrecht, 1978) is a university lecturer at the Department of Public International Law and the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies at Leiden University. She obtained her PhD from Leiden University for her thesis entitled *International Law and Governance of Natural Resources in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations*. A book of the same name will be published in June 2015 by Cambridge University Press. Daniëlla studied Law at the VU University Amsterdam, specializing in International and European Law. In addition, she also studied French language and culture at the University of Lausanne and at the VU University Amsterdam. She previously worked as an intern at the Dutch Advisory Council on International Affairs (AIV); as a policy officer in the field of international law and security at Campus The Hague; and as a research assistant and PhD candidate at the department of public international law. Daniëlla's areas of expertise include issues related to sustainable development as well as peace and security. She looks at the role of international law in ending armed conflict and the reconstruction of states after armed conflict, focusing in particular on the jurisdiction and practice of the UN Security Council and the socio-economic aspects of reconstruction.

Report of the Selection Committee

Many armed conflicts, for example in Angola and Congo, are funded with revenue from natural resources such as diamonds, gold, wood and oil. Two main questions arise: How can we prevent those resources from being deployed for warfare? And how can we improve the management of those resources in a way that helps solve armed conflict? This thesis investigates how international law can play a more effective role in that process. Daniëlla Dam does this in a systematic and original manner. The analysis offered in this thesis is based on solid foundations. The book is highly relevant to both scholarship and practice, an achievement for which the author deserves high praise.

Tim Houwen

Reclaiming Power for the People; Populism in Democracy

Supervisors Prof.dr. E. van der Zweerde
Prof.dr. P.J.M. van Tongeren

Nomination Radboud University Nijmegen
Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and
Religious Studies

Biography

Tim Houwen (Sevenum, 1982) studied Political Science at Radboud University Nijmegen and at the University of Agder in Norway, and Philosophy at Radboud University Nijmegen. After his studies he worked as a PhD candidate at the Department of Practical Philosophy at Radboud University Nijmegen. For his doctoral research he spent some months at the Sussex European Institute of the University of Sussex in Brighton. In 2013 he obtained his PhD for a political-philosophical study into populism and the tense relationship between populism and modern representative democracy. Tim Houwen currently works as a study adviser for Philosophy and a lecturer in Practical Philosophy at Radboud University Nijmegen.

Report of the Selection Committee

It is impossible to imagine present-day politics without the phenomenon of populism. This thesis offers a political-philosophical analysis of the phenomenon. Approaching the subject from a broader context, namely the populist movements in Europe and the rest of the world, the research investigates how populism is linked to representative democracy. Tim Houwen argues that there are two sides to populism. On the one hand, populist politicians and their arguments are seen as a major threat, while on the other people embrace the word 'populist' as a badge of pride. The thesis qualifies those extremes, putting them in historical perspective, and succeeds admirably in that endeavour.

Josse G. Klijnsma
*Contract Law as Fairness;
A Rawlsian Perspective on the Position of SMEs
in European contract law*

Supervisor	Prof.dr. M.W. Hesselink
Co-supervisor	Dr. C. Mak
Nomination	University of Amsterdam Faculty of Law

Biography

Josse Klijnsma (Amsterdam, 1986) studied Law and Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). After completing both of his Bachelor degrees, he joined an exchange programme with NYU School of Law. In 2010 he completed a Master in European Private Law, and in 2012 he completed his Master in Philosophy - both cum laude - at the University of Amsterdam. From 2011 to 2014 he was a research assistant at the Centre for the Study of European Contract Law at the University of Amsterdam. During this period he spent half a year as a Visiting Researcher at Harvard Law School. His doctoral research focused on the position of small and medium-sized enterprises in European contract law from the perspective of philosopher John Rawls. Klijnsma uses the political philosophy of Rawls, Justice as Fairness, to normatively assess the rules of European contract law. In June 2014 he defended his doctoral thesis cum laude at the UvA. Since September 2014 he has worked as a lawyer for De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek in Amsterdam.

Report of the Selection Committee

Contract law protects consumers in all sorts of ways, because they find themselves in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis the counterparty. A company can no longer refer to the “small print” in an agreement, even though a customer may have signed it. Consumer protection does not apply to natural persons, however. How fair is that if one considers that many companies are very small and differ very little from consumers? Drawing on the well-known theories of American philosopher John Rawls, the author reviews this distinction, which also exists in European contract law. Josse Klijnsma has devised a model to regulate the position of small and medium-sized enterprises in a fair way. A refreshing book that brings together private law and the philosophy of law – and that is an uncommon combination. The book is written in a concise, lucid style, and that is – in the opinion of the committee – notable for a legal thesis.

Felix Schirmann

The Good, the Bad, and the Brain: Theory and History of the Neuroscience of Morality

Supervisor Prof.dr. G.C.G. Dehue
Co-supervisor Dr. S. Schleim
Nomination Groningen University
Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences

Biography

Felix Schirmann (Berlin, 1984) studied Psychology at the Freie Universität in Berlin and at the University of Vienna. During his studies he focused on the theory and history of psychology and became fascinated with the philosophical aspects of the discipline. Prompted by a keen interest in the brain, he worked in a research group that examined the development of children's brains. In 2010 he started his doctoral research at the University of Groningen, in which he explored the following questions: when, why, where, how, in which contexts, and with which consequences has morality in the brain been examined? His thesis analyses the possibilities, limitations and effects of the neuroscience of morality in the past and present. Felix Schirmann obtained his PhD in 2014 and is currently working as an author and scientific journalist in Berlin.

Report of the Selection Committee

The research that underpinned this thesis has a remarkable focus: a neurobiological study of morality and immorality. Do people who commit crimes possess an aptitude for crime that can be detected in their brain and in their DNA? And can such bodily features even predict criminality? The topical and pressing nature of this subject is huge – just think of the role that these issues play in criminal cases. The remarkable thing about this thesis is its combination of neurobiological research and historical, philosophical, sociological and academic/theoretical aspects. Differences in historical periods and contemporary cultures can lend concepts other meanings. Think of the question of free will, which is not only empirical but also philosophical and judicial in nature. Erasmus and Luther disagreed on the issue. Felix Schirmann has a good eye for those culturally and historically determined differences and can express his observations in an excellent style. His thesis will therefore appeal to a wide readership.

Lisette Wijnia

Motivation and Achievement in Problem-Based Learning: The Role of Interest, Tutors, and Self-Directed Study

Supervisor	Prof.dr. H.G. Schmidt
Co-supervisors	Dr. S.M.M. Loyens Prof.dr. E. Derous
Nomination	Erasmus University Rotterdam Faculty of Social Sciences

Biography

Lisette Wijnia (Zwolle, 1984) studied Education and Developmental Psychology at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. In December 2007 she received her Master's degree (cum laude) for her thesis on motivation in problem-based learning (PBL). In 2008 she was awarded the Unilever Research Prize for her thesis. In May 2009 Lisette started her PhD research into tutor assessments and study motivation in problem-based learning, at the Institute of Psychology at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. This resulted in the thesis *Motivation and achievement in problem-based learning: The role of interest, tutors, and self-directed study*, which she defended in November 2014 (cum laude). Lisette currently works as a part-time university lecturer at the Institute of Psychology at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, and also as a part-time postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Human Resource Studies at Tilburg University. In her postdoctoral research she is examining the relationship between team learning among teachers in vocational education, and the implementation of vocational education and learning outcomes.

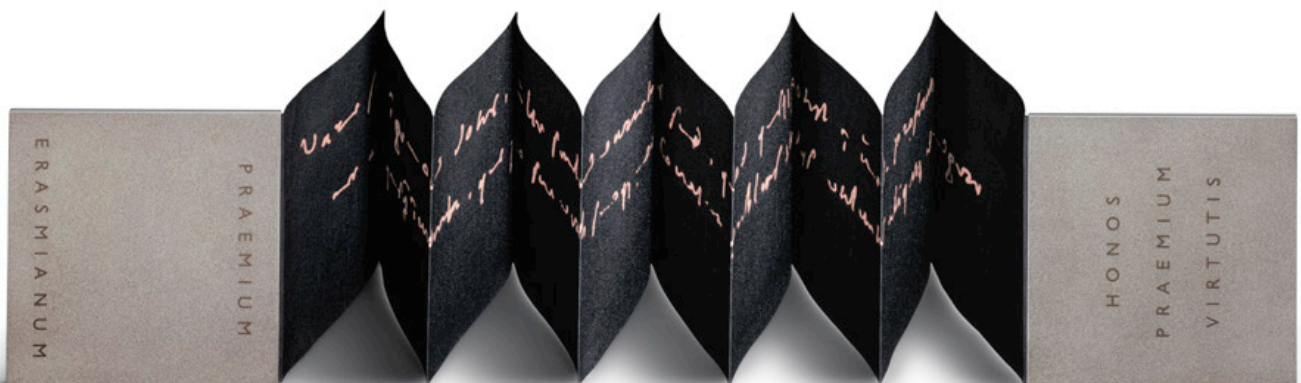
Report of the Selection Committee

The doctoral research by Lisette Wijnia aims to create a clearer picture of the role of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in promoting the autonomous motivation of students and the resulting educational achievements. This answer is in the affirmative, but with a number of cautionary remarks. Genuinely self-directed study turns out to be a complex skill that requires more support and training than is now usually offered. It will not succeed very well without a teacher. The international significance of Problem-Based Learning has increased sharply owing to the rising use of ICT and social media. This study is of great importance both for science and for teaching practice in general, and also very interesting to read.

Origin and Aim of the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation

On 23 June 1958, His Royal Highness Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands founded the Praemium Erasmianum. The aim of the organisation, as described in article 2 of its constitution, is to enhance the position of the humanities, the social sciences and the arts and to promote appreciation of these fields within society, within the context of the cultural traditions of Europe in general and the ideas of Erasmus in particular. The emphasis is on tolerance, cultural multiformity and undogmatic critical thinking.

The Erasmus Prize consists of €150,000 and adornments. The Board is composed of leading members of the Dutch cultural, scholarly and business communities.



The adornments are designed by Bruno Ninaber van Eyben. The adornments consist of a harmonica folded ribbon with a titanium plate at both ends. In closed form it is a booklet; when opened a ribbon with a text in Erasmus' handwriting. This text, taken from a letter to Jean de Carondelet (Basel 5 January 1523), is characteristic of Erasmus' thinking:

Diverse are the gifts of men of genius and many are the different kinds of ages. let each one reveal the scope of his competence and let no one be envious of another who in keeping with his own ability and style tries to make a useful contribution to the education of all.

Erasmus to Jean de Carondelet
Basel 5 January 1523

Board 2015

[His Majesty the King](#)

Patron

[Martijn Sanders](#)

Chair

Former director Het Concertgebouw

[Margot Dijkgraaf](#)

Vice-chair

Literary critic

[Tom de Swaan](#)

Treasurer

Chairman of the board Van Lanschot Bankiers

[Désanne van Brederode](#)

Philosopher, publicist

[Maxim Drenth](#)

Philosopher of law, publicist

[Naomi Ellemers](#)

*Professor of Social Psychology of Organisations,
Utrecht University*

[Maria Grever](#)

*Professor of Theory and Methodology of History,
Director Center for Historical Culture,
Erasmus University Rotterdam*

[Bregtje van der Haak](#)

Documentary filmmaker, journalist

[Bas ter Haar Romeny](#)

*Professor Old Testament and Eastern Christian Traditions,
VU University Amsterdam*

[Fouad Laroui](#)

*Professor of French and Arabic literature, University of
Amsterdam, publicist*

[Rick Lawson](#)

*Dean, Professor of European Law, Faculty of Law,
Leiden University*

[Jet de Ranitz](#)

President Executive Board, Hogeschool Inholland

[Axel Rüger](#)

Director Van Gogh Museum

[Henk Scholten](#)

Director Lucent Danstheater / Dr Anton Philipszaal

[Xandra Schutte](#)

Editor in Chief De Groene Amsterdammer

[Ed Spanjaard](#)

Conductor

[Frank van Vree](#)

*Dean Faculty of the Humanities, Professor of Media Studies,
University of Amsterdam*

[Jan Snoek](#)

Observer on behalf of His Majesty the King

[Max Sparreboom](#)

Director (until 1 January 2016)

[Shanti van Dam](#)

Director (from 1 November 2015)

[Lucia Aalbers](#)

Executive Secretary

[Barbara van Santen](#)

Secretary

