

PRESERVING MONUMENTS AT ALL COSTS:

Exploring the role of Non-Profit Organizations in Monument Care

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Abstract— The Netherlands has over 60.000 national monuments (Cultural Heritage Agency, 2021), excluding landscapes and city views. With this many monuments comes the substantial task of maintaining and conserving these buildings and thereby preserving Dutch heritage and cultural identity. Over time, non-profit organizations have taken it upon themselves to care for these monuments, becoming a large though not well-researched actor in the field of monument care. This paper therefore aims to answer the question: “How do non-profit organizations in the Netherlands participate in the field of monument care since the enactment of the 1961 Monuments Act?”. A literature study shows that many governmental changes have affected the role of these non-profit organizations, starting with the origin of the 1961 Monuments Act. Some non-profits are older than Dutch monument law, but only in recent decades have non-profit organizations really gained influence due to the decentralisation of monument care. Seven currently active non-profits were investigated and it was found that non-profits can be classified into three categories: advisory, protective and managing non-profits. Further results showed that non-profit organizations have a primarily positive impact on the field of monument care and that the presence of non-profits have resulted in a new, contemporary monument care system, where the government works together with these private instances in a sustainable, mutually beneficial manner.

Keywords— monuments, non-profit organizations, monument care, Netherlands

1. INTRODUCTION

Monuments are a large part of cultural identity and heritage as a display of artistry, architecture and historical values. Monuments are a window to our past and are a way of connecting multiple generations: we preserve the past in the present for the shaping of the future. It is vital to our cultural identity that these monuments are well taken care of— regardless of who has ownership or is responsible for the monument.

Part of Dutch heritage is their monument stock: the Netherlands has over 63.000 national monuments (Cultural Heritage Agency, 2021), but few are in the hands of the government. A mere 2000 are in possession of the Rijksvastgoedbedrijf (translation: Central Government Real Estate Agency)(Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2022), which means the 61.000 remaining national monuments are in private possession. Private possession encapsulates a large variety of owners—from homeowners to housing corporations to private companies—, but a classification of these private owners appears to be missing. Though exact numbers are unknown, the majority of these private owners are expected to be proprietary homeowners, since 31.500 national monuments are assigned as “housing or housing complexes” typology (Cultural Heritage Agency. 2021) and another

13.700 national monuments are in possession of housing corporations (Koning et al., 2011). However, this far from closes the gap with 15.800 left unassigned, so who owns and is responsible for these monuments?

One possible owner or actor are non-profit organizations specialized in the field of monument care. As the name suggests, these organizations have the explicit goal of monumental care without an earmark for profit. These non-profits who do monumental care of one or more monuments (from here on out referred to as just non-profit) often take the form of a charity or cultural institution, like a museum. This group and its role in Monumental conservation is not well documented, while it presumably owns and is thus responsible for the preservation of a large share of the monumental stock.

Historically, non-profits have been active in the field of monument care for over a hundred years, partaking in monument protection, conservation, restoration, maintenance, managerial activities and more, but they operate within certain constraints. Monument ownership does not come with total control: the Dutch government has enacted policies and laws as a way of protecting monuments and ensuring they are well maintained and managed, including the monuments in private possession. Furthermore, non-profit organizations are also limited by their non-profit status and their influence within the system of monument care. This paper will aim to define the role non-profit organizations play in this Dutch national system of monument care and answer the main question:

“How do non-profit organizations in the Netherlands participate in the field of monument care since the enactment of the 1961 Monuments Act?”

This research aims to deepen the understanding of the role non-profit organizations play in monument care in the Netherlands. It will shine a light on Dutch monuments in general and explore the current (governmental) system and management of the field of monument care. Moreover, the paper will fill a gap in architectural history by expanding on the history of monument care starting around the 1900's and the effects of this history on the present.

Expanding on previous literature on Dutch heritage law from Nelissen & Needham(1996) and Kuipers (2012), the historical interaction and development between non-profits and other actors in the field of monument care will be researched starting from the origin of the first Dutch Monument Act in 1961. This literature study will be summarized in a timeline made up of relevant events and movements in the Dutch history of monument care.

The research will then continue into the topic of non-profit conservation, by the example of seven non-profit organizations: *de Monumentenwacht*, *Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut*, *Nederland Monumentenland*, *het Cuypersgenootschap*, *Stichting Monumentbezit*, *Hendrick de Keyser* and *BOEi*. The non-profit organization's activities and abilities will be delved into and the various non-profits will be categorized in different fields of focus. In the chapter thereafter, the impact of non-profit organizations in monument care will be researched: drawing on the advantages, disadvantages and ethical considerations that have come forward throughout the literature review and case studies.

Finally, a closing chapter will conclude the study and summarize the results as well as answer the main question. Before the paper continues with the historical outline, the following chapter will explain the terminology of the paper and define the concepts.

2. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The topic of this paper intersects with the fields of scholarship in both heritage studies and architectural studies. Many of the definitions in this paper can be linked to definitions frequently used in the field of museology or otherwise heritage-related topics, not unexpectedly since monuments are of interest to many different fields of study.

Starting with the concept of *heritage*. Heritage is an umbrella term that envelopes many principles, topics and definitions. Some see heritage as a simile of identity as it 'contributes to the construction of collective memory, social cohesion and the creation of a sense of belonging to a place and group'(Mairesse, 2023, p.217), whereas others prefer a less anthropo-

centric view: “It is a moveable and immovable, tangible and intangible heritage property, developed or adapted by humans, thus falling within the sphere of culture”(Mairesse, 2023, p221). The latter interpretation can more readily be applied to the monuments referred to in this paper: *an immovable building or building complex that is part of the Dutch cultural heritage and thus holds socio-cultural significance or value*. In addition, this monument should also be included in the *Dutch monument registry*, giving it an official, formal status in the field of monument care.

The field of monument care will include all activities surrounding the management and ownership of a monumental building. The activities can in more popular terms be addressed as conservation. Conservation serves as an overarching term for “a set of cross-disciplinary activities that aim to safeguard and make cultural heritage accessible for present and future generations” (Mairesse, 2023, p.86) and holds several conservation actions such as restoration, collection care, managerial tasks, organizational responsibilities and finally preservation. Preservation “designates the actions and tools used to protect an object from external threats or time-induced changes” (Mairesse, 2023, p.440): an essential part of monumental care.

Non-profit organization(s) or non-profit(s) for short are identified by their goal: “not to earn money, but to pursue an activity or cause of general or collective interest (social, educational, humanitarian, religious, medical, sporting, cultural etc.” (Mairesse, 2023, p387). In practice, non-profit organizations can also be referred to as Non-governmental organizations (NGO’s), only this title specifies their independence from the state or government institutions. Many organizations qualify as non-profit or NGO —unions, museums, churches or housing corporations to name a few—, but not all are included in this paper. When referred to a non-profit, one should consider the following definition:

‘A not-for-profit, private organization, whose primary purpose is the conservation and preservation of (a) Dutch

monumental building(s).’

As explained previously, the role of non-profit organizations in Dutch monument care will be researched. There is a gap in research primarily when it comes to non-profit organizations: research has been done on monuments, the history of (Dutch) monument legislation and monument care in general, but there is virtually no research on the role of the private actor that is non-profits and how it reflects on these aspects. This, however, is a very relevant topic when it comes to architectural history as this paper will show that some non-profits have been active in the field of monument care before even the Dutch government. Additionally, the topic is relevant in a present-day scope, since this paper will explore the effects of the past on current developments and outline the current system of monument care.

3. HERITAGE AND POLICY IN THE NETHERLANDS

This chapter aims to answer the questions: ‘What policy changes have been made since the origin of the 1961 Monuments Act?’ and ‘What effect did these policy changes have on monumental care?’ To understand the historical framework of Dutch monumental legislation, which affects the current policy regarding monuments, the circumstances surrounding the 1961 Monuments Acts will be explored and a timeline will be built (see Attachment A for the timeline and Attachment B for the substantiation).

Monumental care has been made explicit in Dutch legislation only in recent history. The first Dutch Monuments Act was signed in 1961 and was the first formal law regarding monument care, rather than having monuments be an often forgotten sidenote in wider-reaching culture-focused informal legislation (Overheid.nl, 2003). Compared to other European ‘culture countries’, the Netherlands was late on the topic (Kuipers, 2012), much to the offense of those with a heart for monument care. It was due to one of these enthusiasts that this first law

came into being (Hofmans, 2018).

The origin of the 1961 Monuments Act can be traced back to 1873 when the Dutch politician Victor de Stuers wrote a scathing review on the state of (the lack of) heritage or monument management in the Netherlands (Hofmans, 2018). At this time, there was no legislation for monuments and there was little to no monument care; similar to a normal building, the upkeep was the responsibility of the building owner alone and not the national Dutch government. In his piece *de Stuer* comments the government refuses to spend money on heritage and the arts because they only wish to make a profit; that the Netherlands will never again have a flourishing arts industry if they keep their focus set on profits; that the government is not just indifferent to the art, but that this indifference is their principle and directly responsible for monuments falling into decay; that the governance appreciation for the arts is sick and finally that overall love and reverence for our art and history is near death (de Stuers, 1873) (see the excerpts).

De Stuers published ‘*Holland op zijn smalst*’ (translation: *Holland at its narrowest*) in a literary magazine, which caused widespread indignation at the current state of monument

care, leading to immediate governmental action (Hofmans, 2018) and the formation of the ‘*College van rijksadviseurs voor de monumenten van geschiedenis en kunst*’ (translation: college of state advisors for the monuments of history and art) in 1874 whose aim was to advise the government on monument care and necessary policy changes (Nelissen & Needham, 1996, Kuipers, 2012). Barely a year later de Stuers was appointed the head of the (sixth) department van *Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (OK&W) (translation: Arts & Sciences) (Hofmans, 2018, Kuipers, 2012, Rijksoverheid, 2024b) replacing the very department (the fifth) (Rijksoverheid, 2024a) he had criticized so vehemently in his piece. Under de Stuers leadership, the department flourished and many grants and subsidies were allocated to the restoration of monuments (Hofmans, 2018). The sixth department took a much more active role in heritage and monument management—though the government still did not formally hold any responsibility—and in 1903 the first step towards a Monument Act was made (Rijksoverheid, 2024b). Notably, around the start of the twentieth century, monument preservation gained prestige in elite, wealthy social dimensions -possibly inspired by government action and the leadership of de Stuers; during this time the first Dutch

Excerpts from ‘*Holland op zijn smalst*’ by Victor de Stuers, published in ‘*de Gids*’ in 1873:

[...] until then they will continue to give the arts a polite handshake, from time to time an alm, but never shall they trust her with their money, because such a monetary investment would not be considered sound and interest-bearing. (de Stuers, 1873, p.321)

How can one expect our art industry to regain its old splendor, when surrounding us a majority of buildings and objects evidence tastelessness; when our museums are either incomplete or so badly curated that a study becomes impossible; when in a single word the indifference for the arts continues to go hand in hand with ‘*wandalisme*’ {mistreatment*}. (de Stuers, 1873, p.323)

*note on the translation: ‘*Wandalism*’ is a word coined by a columnist— J.A. Alberdingk Thijm— in 1847 to describe ‘not just decay, but also bad management [of monumental buildings]: neglect, unnecessary restoration and renovation, disrupting new construction near a historic site and the sale of old properties’ (Tibbe, 2005, p.76).

The indifference of the government is not just a fact, but a principle. (de Stuers, 1873, p.327)

Save a very small amount of exceptions, our governance’s love and reverence for the arts has nearly fully extinguished. (de Stuers, 1873, p.328)

The arts and the reverence for our history are very sick, though thank god not fully dead. (de Stuers, 1873, p.403)

monument associations were established, like Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut (1911) (Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut, 2024) and Stichting Hendrick de Keyser (1918) (Hendrick de Keyser, n.d.).

In 1903, compelled by a government directive, the Rijkscommissie voor monumentenbeschrijving (translation: state committee for the description of monuments) was appointed (Cuypers & Kalf, 1908, Hofmans, 2018, Rijksoverheid, 2024b). This state committee led by de Stuers started the creation of the Voorloopige lijst der Nederlandsche monumenten van geschiedenis en kunst (translation: Provisional list of Dutch monuments of history and art) (Hofmans, 2018, Rijksoverheid, 2024b):

“The task appointed to this State committee is to compile and publish an illustrated description of all buildings and objects in the Netherlands, build before 1850, that hold value as an expression of art or because of a connected historical memory. Thus a handbook will be created in which one can find extensive information on the presence, the artistic or historical value and the state of the monuments of history and art, and simultaneously a complete and trustworthy source for the Dutch art history.” (quote translated from Voorloopige lijst der Nederlandsche monumenten van geschiedenis en kunst; part 1 of the series) (Cuypers & Kalf, 1908, p.3)

This handbook contained twelve parts—one for each of the Dutch provinces—and its completion took three decades (DBNL, n.d.). In 1918, the ministry overseeing the sixth department changed from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Education, Art and Sciences (OK&W) and the committee in charge of the list changed name to the Rijkscommissie or Rijksbureau voor de monumentenzorg (translation: state committee or bureau for monument care) who continued the list and finally finished it in 1933 (Rijksoverheid, 2024b-d, DBNL, n.d.). Inspired by de Stuers’ active monument management approach and the planned demolition of the beloved Mui-

derslot (Kuipers, 2012), politicians expressed their interest in official government legislation in 1928 (Nelissen & Needham, 1996); this list of monuments would later be used for the first monument act (Kuipers, 2012).

Just after the same ministry overhaul in 1918 and the death of de Stuers in that same year, the Dutch government took the next step in nationalizing and legislating monument care and formed the Rijksdienst voor de monumentenzorg (RDMZ) (translation: State Agency for Monument care) (Rijksoverheid, 2024e). The ministry OK&W (1918-1965) (Rijksoverheid, 2024d) and the RDMZ (1918-2005) (Rijksoverheid, 2024e) continued to exist for a long time with few keynote moments until 1961. The ministry OK&W and RDMZ were however temporarily disbanded under German occupation in WWII. It was during the occupation—a few weeks after the Dutch capitulation and after the bombing and destruction of many monuments—that the Voorloopige lijst der Nederlandsche monumenten van geschiedenis en kunst was awarded the status of an official protected monuments list (Kuipers, 2012). This list was now the official document on which all future legislation and policy regarding monuments would be based.

These events led up to the Temporary Monuments Act in 1950—meant for the explicit purpose of giving the government the power to prevent the destruction of monuments while they drafted the finalized law (Overheid.nl, 2003)—and finally the first official Dutch Monument Act passed in 1961 (Nelissen & Needham, 1996, Kuipers, 2012). As mentioned, the idea for this law was first coined many years ago in 1928, but the law only made it into parliament in 1955 (a draft that interestingly mentioned the non-profit Hendrick de Keyser and Bond Heemschut (erfgoedvereniging Heemschut) in its foreword (Kuipers, 2012)) and was passed years later in 1961 (Nelissen & Needham, 1996). The 1961 Monument Act replaced the informal, temporary systems and the Dutch government was now (formally) responsible for the protection of monuments (Overheid.nl, 2003). The ministry of OK&W now oversaw all matters regarding monument care, like subsidies, restoration and more; a responsibility

the ministry allocated to the RDMZ (Overheid.nl, 2003, Nelissen & Needham, 1996, Rijksoverheid, 2024e), who worked together closely with the State agency for antiquity (ROB) (Overheid.nl, 2003, Rijksoverheid, 2024f). The 1961 Monument Act had centralized monument management and the government was now responsible for the appointing, the description, and the upkeep & restoration of monuments of value to the ‘folk history’ (‘volkskundige waarde’)(Overheid.nl, 2003, Kuipers, 2012).

Some years after the 1961 Monument Act, the centralized character and the narrow definition of ‘folk history’(what may or may not be considered a monument) were reasons to rework the Monument Act(Nelissen & Needham, 1996, Kuipers, 2012). In the 1980’s a subdivision of the RDMZ became responsible for the renewal of the 1961 Monument Act (Rijksoverheid, 2024e) and in 1988 the (Historic Buildings and Ancient) Monument Act was passed (Nelissen & Needham, 1996, Kuipers,

2012).

Before the renewal, the centralization or top-down approach to monument management caused dissatisfaction for municipalities and provinces alike. Provinces and municipalities wanted to take responsibility for their own monuments since they had more intimate knowledge regarding the monument, the reasoning behind permits and eligibility for subsidies(Nelissen & Needham, 1996). While the final responsibility was still with the national government, municipalities and the provinces now held the majority of power and influence. They were obligated by the national government to design a heritage strategy with either a separate or an integrated, structural vision (integrated with other topics like i.e. spatial planning or culture)(Stevenson, 2020). Since some municipalities may now choose to make Heritage or monuments a lower priority, the building owner and concerned parties like non-profit organizations had to fulfill a more active role in the buildings preservation (Stevenson, 2020).

THE DUTCH HISTORY OF NON- PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN MONUMENT CARE

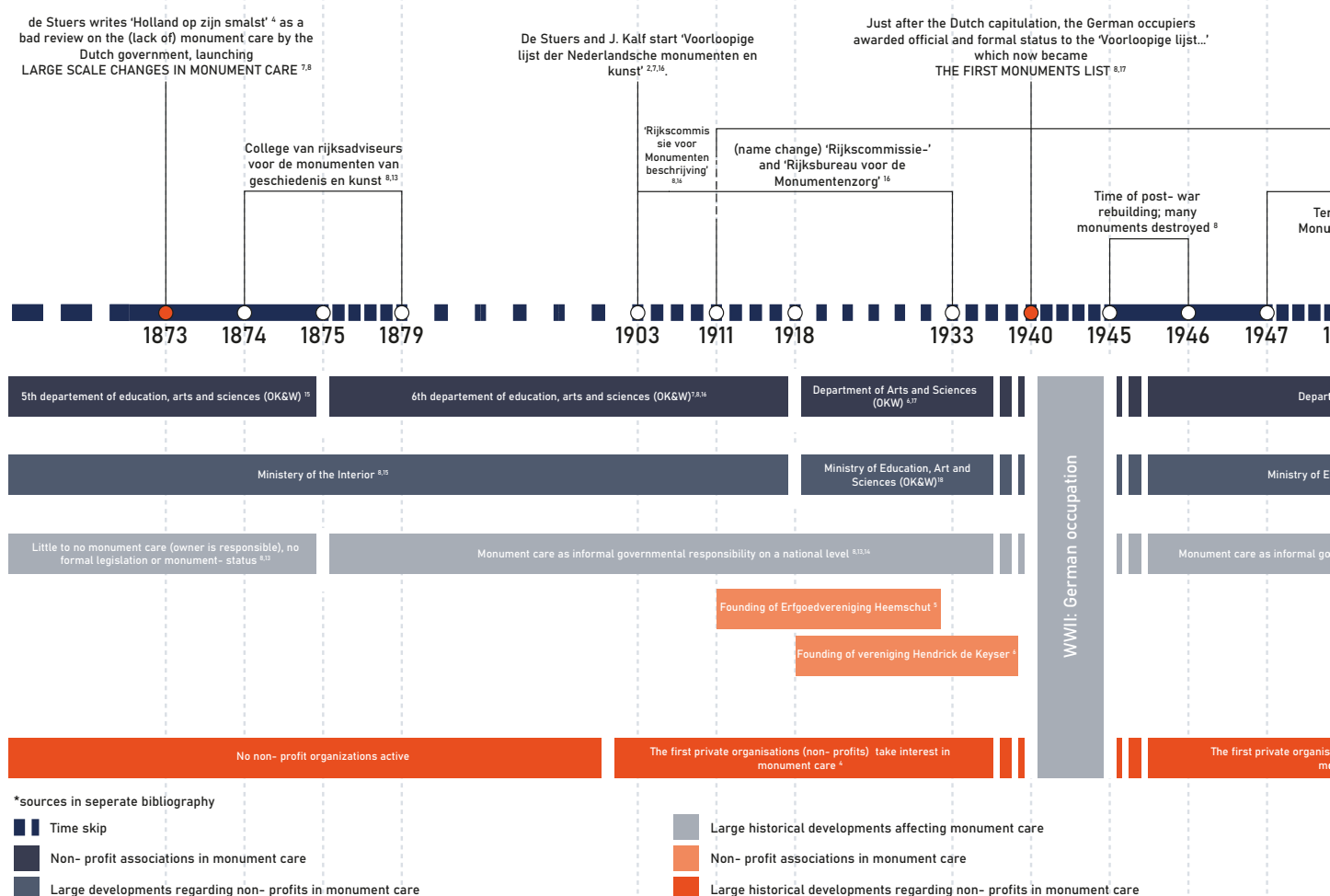
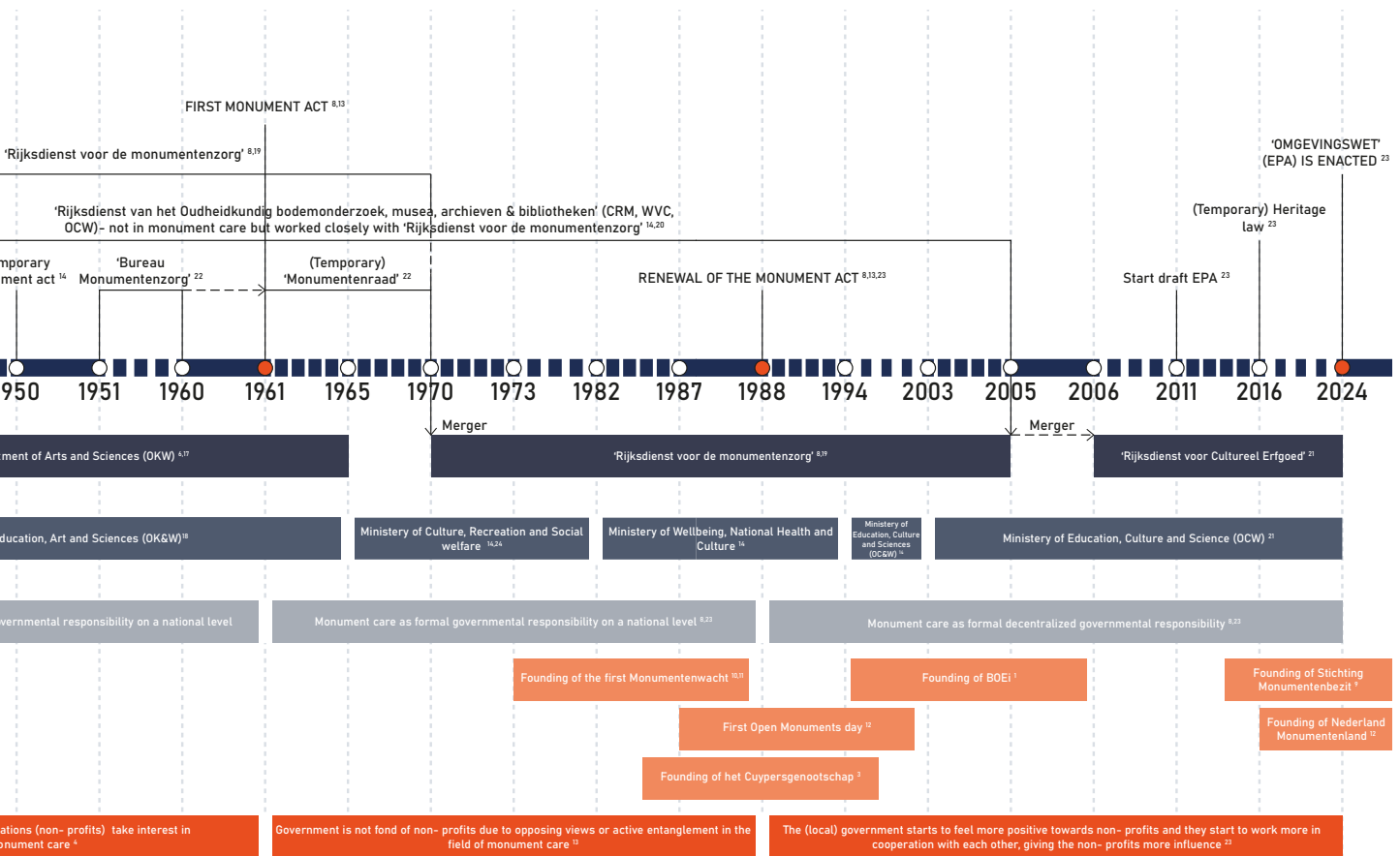


Figure 3.1: the Dutch History of non-profit organizations in monument care— a timeline

Now that provinces and municipalities held more influence over monuments, an interesting movement took place: “the increasing tendency to involve other actors in the field of monument care, such as private monument organizations and the National Restoration Fund (Nationaal Restauratiefonds).” (Nelissen & Needham, 1996, p.392) Associations, foundations and other private initiatives had existed before— with a peak in their existence around the nineteenth century around the time of de Stuers appointment (Kuipers, 2012— more often than not run by the wealthy and depending on their financing and donations, but after the 1988 Monuments act was passed, they became more common as did funds and societies without (monetary) profit as a goal (Nelissen & Needham, 1996). It was around 1988 that non-profit organizations started to gain in influence and power, often to the displeasure of the government, who considered them an opposing party due to their criticism, interference and independence (Nelissen & Needham, 1996).

In 2006, to simplify the governance of monuments, the RDMZ merged with the State agency for antiquity (ROB) (Rijksoverheid, 2024h) and became the Rijksdienst voor Archeologie, Cultuurlandschap en Monumenten (RACM) (translation: State agency for Archeology, Cultural landscape and monuments), which in 2009 changed name to the ‘Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed’ (RCE) (translation: Cultural Heritage Agency) (Rijksoverheid, 2024e). The RCE is still active in monument management today under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Rijksoverheid, 2024g).

From 2011 onwards, the government started the development of the Omgevingswet (translation: The Environment and Planning Act): a law meant to combine and aggregate all (building) laws relating to the built environment (Informatiepunt Leefomgeving. n.d.). The process of making this large overarching piece of legislation was divided into smaller steps,



one of which was the 2016 Erfgoedwet (Heritage law) (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. 2019b.).

The 2016 Heritage Law replaced six pieces of legislation, amongst which the 1988 Monuments Act (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. 2019a). The Heritage Law was transitional, meaning that monument management such as permits, subsidies, master plans, related ordinances as well as archaeology-related management, were temporarily covered under this law as preparation for their absorption in the Omgevingswet (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. 2019a-b, Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. 2020). The Heritage Law also contained matters such as the designation, the altering, the upkeep and the protection of monuments, meaning it had effects on many actors including but not limited to the municipality, monument owners, and charity organizations and non-profits. (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. 2019b.)

At the beginning of this year —2024— the Omgevingswet (translation: Environmental Planning Act or EPA) was enacted, which brings us to the present where monument care and management legislation is covered under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) guided by the Cultural Heritage Agency. While the final responsibility rests with the Dutch government, in the current system, monument care is decentralized and provinces and municipalities are in charge of their own monuments (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. 2019b, Stevenson, 2020). As mentioned previously, the municipalities and provinces were allowed to construct either a separate or an integrated, structural vision according to the 1988 Monument Act, but under the new law, only an integrated vision is allowed (Stevenson, 2020). As a consequence, some municipalities and provinces might once again choose not to prioritize or focus on monuments, which may suffer neglect as a result, while others may enact advantageous policies, resulting in 'Two-speed' Monument Care (Nelissen & Needham, 1996). If more monuments start to degrade, private non-profits might once again— similar to the developments around the 1988 Monument Act— have to take a more ac-

tive role in monument conservation. However, only time can reveal the exact consequences of the EPA and its effect on non-profit organizations in the field of monument care (Stevenson, 2020).

Attachment A shows the full timeline as described in this chapter as does Figure 3.1. Attachment B provides a full list of sources used to create said timeline.

4. DUTCH NON-PROFIT ACTORS AND ACTIVITIES

In this chapter, the activities of non-profit organizations will be researched and categorized. A selection of seven Dutch non-profit organizations will be considered: de Monumentenwacht, Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut, Nederland Monumentenland, het Cuypersgenootschap, Stichting Monumentbezit, Hendrick de Keyser and BOEi. By compiling the different activities of these non-profits, the question 'What do Dutch non-profit organizations do in terms of monumental care?' will be answered.

4.1 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AS ACTORS IN MONUMENT CARE

The last chapter showed that even before the first Heritage law in 1961, non-profits have been active actors in the field of monument care and since the renewal of 1988, in which monument care became decentralized, they only increased in power and influence. The field of monument care is now being played by three main actors: the government, the business sector and private organizations like the non-profits (Nelissen & Needham, 1996).

Legally, there are two types of non-profit; those who function as an association or foundation (*vereniging* or *stichting*) (i.e. Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut) and those who (legally) only resemble a non-profit by being logged as a limited liability company (*Vennootschap*) but are a non-profit by all other standards since they are limited by guarantee, tax incentives and sponsorship (i.e. BOEi) (Pickard, 2009 and Kamer van Koophandel. n.d.). Financially, non-profits rely on (government subsidies),

charity, membership fees, interest gathered over investments and sometimes the inheritance of monuments or monetary gifts (Pickard, 2009). Their reliance on public or corporate funds means they have to promote themselves and assert the importance of monument care. The Dutch government encourages charity by making donations deductible on tax forms as well as making ‘gifts’ tax-free up to a certain extent (Pickard, 2009).

According to Nelissen & Needham (1996), there are over 700 organizations active in monument care. However, this number dates from 1996 and makes no distinction between for-profit or non-profit organizations. The actual number of non-profit organizations active in the field of monument care is hard to pin down—the reason being that registration in the Netherlands is not sorted by profit-goal or organization ‘themes’—though a quote by Nelissen & Needham paints a fitting picture: “There are dozens of provincial and regional organizations active in this field, and very many more active locally. The focus of attention of these latter can vary from the total scope of local heritage to the preservation or restoration of one single object. Often, local people organize themselves into an ad hoc pressure group in order to persuade the municipality to protect a monument.” (Nelissen & Needham, 1996, p.395) Non-profit organizations can be found on all different scale levels and each has their outset and goal.

Nowadays, non-profit organizations hold a lot of influence over monument care in the Netherlands, they “[...]have a significant role to play in promoting, lobbying and providing technical and financial support for architectural heritage conservation activities”(Pickerill, 2009, p.13). Their presence in the field of monument care has created a new ‘system of monument governance’, where non-profits have become part of a government-private cooperation scheme working towards the same end goal; the sustainable conservation of monuments of value to the people (Pickerill, 2009).

4.2 CATEGORIZATION

By comparing the eight different non-profits, it soon became clear that each had a different approach to achieving this common end goal. While each of the non-profits worked in the monument sector, they prioritized different aspects of monument care. Three categories were made to reflect these different outset: the *Advisory*, the *Protective* and the *Managing* non-profit.

Monumentenwacht (1973):

The Monumentenwacht is a national non-profit organization that advises monument owners on matters related to conservation, like restoration, repairs and protective measures. In 1973, the first provincial ‘Monumentenwachten’ were formed and presently each province has its own ‘Monumentenwacht’ (Naldini et al. 2020), though all united in one association, Vereniging Provinciale Monumentenwachten Nederland (VPMN). The Monumentenwacht is recognized by the government as an independent advisor and cooperation on primarily the provincial level is common (Monumentenwacht Nederland. n.d.). The Monumentenwacht also offers advice to monument owners, architects, contractors and specialists (Naldini, 2020) and is a ‘platform where knowledge, experience, expertise and facilities can be exchanged’ (Monumentenwacht Nederland. n.d., webpage) and thus share both ethical and technical knowledge on monument care (Naldini, 2020). This non-profit receives subsidies from the Dutch provinces and uses member fees to cover their costs. Of note: the Monumentenwacht is usually referred to as one organization, but in reality, they are 12 separate non-profit associations (-Monumentenwacht Nederland. n.d.)

In the first category, the advising non-profits, de Monumentenwacht is rather unique in its kind (Pickerill, 2009). While many more actors can provide advise on monument management and related matters, they are either dependent on or part of the national government-like Monumenten.nl, which is part of the Restoration Fund (Monumenten.nl. 2023), or they do not hold non-profit values, like advisory bureaus, architects or contractors.

While some other non-profits sometimes fulfill a small advisory role on the side, the Monumentenwacht has made it not just their priority, but their expertise. Going beyond the technical principles, the Monumentenwacht gives ethical advice as well as explains different ways of managing the monument (Naldini et al., 2020 and Monumentenwacht Nederland, n.d.). Together with the Dutch governments' monumenten.nl, they hold the largest influence as an advisory organ regarding monument care (Monumenten.nl, 2023).

Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut (1911):

Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut is the oldest non-profit discussed in this paper and to the author's knowledge the oldest Dutch non-profit in the field of monuments care as well. Heemschut—meaning to shelter your home environment—was founded as an organization that acted in the interests of monuments, meaning they defend and protect monuments should actions be undertaken not in the best interest of these buildings and the values and history they embody. They promote the importance of monuments and their preservation and enact social and legal activities. The society consists of primarily 13 committees—one for each of the provinces and a separate committee for Amsterdam. (Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut, 2024)

The second category, the protective non-profit, is reflected in non-profit associations like Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut, Nederland Monumentenland and het Cuypersgenootschap. These protective non-profits protect monuments and their interest, by ensuring social support, starting or supporting local initiatives, starting or supporting local actions and if necessary providing legal aid or starting legal proceedings.

This category is very active in the social spheres and acts as a mouthpiece for the public—often placing themselves in opposition to the (local) government. They may also act as a control instrument and make sure that local governments, like municipalities, or sometimes monument owners are held to a high standard.

Nederland Monumentenland (2016):

Nederland monumentenland 'connects monuments to the daily life' and works to promote Monuments to the public. By ensuring social support, they defend monuments interest. This non-profit is best known for its national event: Open Monuments Day. Though not always under this organization's name, Open Monuments Day has been held yearly since 1987 and is a national event wherein all buildings with monumental status are open to the public. Open Monuments Day is hugely popular and visitor numbers range around a million. (Nederland Monumentenland, 2024)

Cuypersgenootschap (1984):

This foundation was founded in 1984 to protect the younger monuments (1850-1970) that other associations often overlooked. They act in the monument's interest by hosting local action groups, starting local initiatives and if necessary using legal instruments to assure monument safety. They have about 300 members and have rallied their members for important causes like for example the conservation of the Van Abbemuseum and the interior of the Beurs van Berlage, two famous buildings in the Netherlands.

The third and final category is the managing non-profit. This category includes non-profits that hold their own real estate portfolio of monuments, like Stichting Monumentenbezit, Hendrick de Keyser and BOEi. These non-profit organizations are responsible for the management of monuments, which includes conservation activities like restoration, preservation and maintenance. While there are smaller non-profit organizations, that manage one or a few monuments, the non-profits researched in this paper have a much larger portfolio as well as a POM-status.

Stichting monumentenbezit (2014)(POM):

Stichting monumentenbezit, is in possession of 29 monuments. They manage these monuments per their 'conservation vision'—created separately for each of their monuments to ensure the best care. Their monuments include over 100 build objects

and they aim to preserve and share these monuments with the public. While they are relatively young, they have worked on some famous monuments like the settlement of Naarden, while also promoting values of diversity, inclusivity and fair practices(Monumentenbezit.nl. 2024).

The POM (Professional Organization for Monuments preservation)-status is a quality mark awarded since 2013 by the national government as a way of professionalizing monument care. The POM-status can be awarded to organizations that possess 20 or more national monuments after they have proven they preserve their monuments up to standards. POM-organizations are more closely monitored by the government, but in exchange, they receive priority when requesting subsidies or funds. As a result, larger and verified non-profits can be stimulated and strengthen their position in the field of monument care. This however does mean there is the possibility that smaller just as worthy non-profit organizations get the short end of the stick. (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2024b) According to Bongers et al. (2021), there are 27 POM-organizations in the Netherlands, from which the absolute majority consist of non-profit organizations, though this list excludes one of the researched non-profits, Stichting Monumentenbezit, which was awarded the POM-status in 2022 (Monumentenbezit.nl. 2024). A reasonable estimate of POM-status holders in 2024 may be no more than 40 POM-organizations.

Hendrick de Keyser (1918)(POM):

Hendrick de Keyser (HdK for short) is one of the earliest Dutch non-profit organizations. They focus on “architecturally and historically valuable monuments, buildings and their interiors” (Hendrick de Keyser. n.d., webpage). They currently have 439 monumental buildings in their possession; as owner they are responsible for the upkeep, restoration and conservation of these buildings. They ensure the buildings remain open to the public by renting them out as dwellings or workspaces, by hosting open days and in some cases even allowing people to hire the buildings for i.e. holidays or

short stays. What makes HdK unique— save from their early founding— is that once a monument becomes part of their collection, it will forever remain part of their collection; no monuments will be sold and will forever be taken care of by HdK. HdK is arguably the largest Dutch non-profit organization in the field of monuments care and many people are familiar with the blue HdK plaque that graces the walls of their monuments.(Hendrick de Keyser. n.d.)

BOEi (1995)(POM):

BOEi (full name: Nationale Maatschappij tot Restaureren & Herbestemmen van Cultureel Erfgoed B.V.) is a non-profit focusing on the restoration and repurposing of industrial, religious and agricultural monuments, like old fabrics, cloisters and farmhouses. They currently have over seventy projects, like the Groote kantoor DSM in Delft, and do work all over the Netherlands. They aim to revitalize monuments and increase their social and functional value(BOEi, 2024).

All- in- all, in present-day non-profit organizations in the Netherlands fulfil a spectrum of roles from advisory, to protective, to managing approaches. In the new contemporary system of monument governance, they now hold enough influence and power to either oppose, support or control governmental conservation strategies, be it at the national, provincial or municipal level (Nelissen & Needham, 1996). With their newly involved influence, also comes a large impact, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

5. THE IMPACT OF NON-PROFITS

Non-profit organizations have over the last century gained significant amounts of influence over monument care in the Netherlands. In the newly involved system, wherein non-profits work the field of monument care on a level similar to that of the government, non-profits come with advantages, disadvantages or ethical considerations. The following chapter will discuss these and answer the question: “What is the effect of non-profit organizations engaging in the field of monument care?”

5.1 ADVANTAGES OF NON-PROFITS IN MONUMENT CARE

Non-profit organizations may influence the Dutch monument governance and protection of historic buildings in a positive way. The next subchapter will expand on this advantageous impact.

For starters, non-profit organizations are a direct reflection of public preferences and a way of expressing their voice (Stevenson, 2020). Non-profits cannot survive without social support and the accompanying monetary support, meaning the public must see their value for them to still exist. Moreover, non-profit organizations are run by members of the public often passionate about monuments and their work; these members can act as a mouthpiece of the broader public. An advantage of non-profit organizations is also their lower threshold and thus more inclusive nature; people may feel more comfortable approaching a non-profit over the (local) government, which is often shielded in bureaucracy. Related to this, non-profit organizations often start, support and encourage monument-related initiatives. Particularly those in the protective category may renew or add vigor to local initiatives and further the social agenda (Pickerill, 2009).

Next, by acting as an interpreter to the public, non-profit organizations can be responsible for putting monument care on the political agenda (Stevenson, 2020). Since the 1988 Monument Act and the 2016 Heritage Law, municipalities can make their own policies for the field of monument care. If the public or non-profits find their policy lacking or—in worst case scenarios—it is missing, they can appeal to their local government and make them review their policy. This means that non-profit organizations also come with the added benefit of offsetting possible ‘two-speed’ monument care and ensuring better policy integration (Nelissen & Needham, 1996 and Pickerill, 2009).

Non-profits may also support local governments, who may lack financial or operational means to care for their monuments. This

includes support in the form of providing local knowledge to enhance their policies (Stevenson, 2020) or technical assistance for conservation activities, especially by non-profits in the advisory category, like the local *Monumentenwacht* (Naldini et al., 2020). In general, the expertise and knowledge of non-profit organizations can be of use to all monument owners or those who exploit them (Nelissen & Needham, 1996).

Organizations can also gain the public trust through their charitable nature and outreach (Pickard, 2009). Take for example the *Monumentenwacht*, which has become a trusted advisor to both the public and the government (Naldini et al., 2020). Their non-profit status and their public trust are instrumental to the financial side of the field of monument care as well: they may encourage private or corporate charity as well as fund initiatives themselves (Pickard, 2009). To clarify:

“Evidence suggests that nationally financed heritage funding initiatives, with clear application and administrative procedures for recipients and the provision of multi-annual funding, act as a catalyst to encourage the flow of private sector finance into architectural heritage conservation projects.” (Pickerill, 2009, p.9)

Finally, non-profit organizations can help make the practice of monument care more sustainable (Pickerill, 2009). Non-profit organizations are typically more stable than the government since elections for national, provincial and municipal governments are held every four years. Take for example *Hendrick de Keyser*—which has existed for over a hundred years (Hendrick de Keyser. n.d.)—and has thus passed through 27 different governments. (Local) governments may change direction or priorities regarding monument care every four years, whereas the goals and approach of a non-profit organization typically stay the same.

5.2 DISADVANTAGES OF NON-PROFITS IN MONUMENT CARE

Plainly, the impact of non-profit organizati-

ons is not merely positive. Some downsides—mainly ethical considerations— are connected to their influence and operations; which will be discussed in this subchapter.

First, non-profit organizations are dependent on governmental and public support. While this can and is listed as a benefit as well, it means that non-profits may be limited in their abilities (Naldini et al., 2020 and Nelissen & Needham, 1996) or feel pressured to show (short-term) results. Many non-profit organizations depend on the government for subsidies and on the public for monetary support— should this for some reason stop— the non-profit will cease to exist. If this were the case, the local governments or monument owners and consequently monuments depending on their services may suffer. Aside from the financial picture, non-profits need active members or workers (sometimes volunteers) to keep running. Becoming dependent on organizations, which often have no safety nets as the government does, may cause problems in the future.

Branching into a related disadvantage is the non-profit involvement and dependency on the market. Some non-profits may gather interest and buy or sell monuments on the open market, meaning they are sensitive to economic conjectures. Investments may lead to loss of funds, which is not merely related to the non-profits' actions but also has ethical considerations for members or donors who trust the organization with their donations with a certain goal in mind. The government is not limited by such ethical and financial guarantees. However, if non-profits keep receiving adequate subsidies this problem may be avoided entirely (Naldini et al., 2020).

More on the topic of guarantees and responsibilities; particularly advisory non-profits seldom hold legal accountability (Pickard, 2009). Should a monument owner get advice regarding monument care, this is often free of accountability, ergo non-profits act as limited liability companies and often include legal clauses that protect them from legal recourse should their advice backfire (Pickard, 2009). While important to the safety and stability of the non-profit, monument owners will feel the brunt of any mistakes.

One more disadvantage of non-profit organizations is their organizational limitation. Non-profits can only care for a certain amount of monuments within a certain physical range. Monuments too far from their home turf (i.e. an old farmhouse in the sparsely populated areas of the Netherlands) could be too bothersome to maintain or may not even show up on their radar at all. Monuments unknown to the larger public may also slip through the net since they can be a drain of financial capital and social benevolence due to unpopularity— a vulnerability of the non-profit due to their reliance on the public. Non-profits are more likely to choose monuments that will bring prestige or more importantly donors as if monument care were a popularity contest.

Ethically, a different consideration is that of the operational and historical organization of these non-profit organizations and its lack of inclusivity and social accessibility. While non-profit organizations have a generally lower threshold compared to the government when it comes to accessibility, an important question must be asked: who is not involved? Historically, many of these non-profit organizations were founded by the wealthy elite and nowadays members or donors are only those with disposable income: less-affluent citizens have less input and may not be able to afford any paid-for services. Additionally, donations in the Netherlands are tax deductible; relatively well-off people can essentially free of charge support their cause and interests, whereas the less affluent pay fewer taxes and thereby do not have this type of freedom.

Finally, the oversight of non-profit organizations should also be considered. Previously-mentioned was the role of non-profits as a control instrument as they may oppose or correct the government, but who keeps an eye on the non-profits? POM organizations are more closely monitored, all non-profits have to prove their non-profit status while filing for taxes and prove the monument's well-being when applying for special subsidies and grants, but they get relatively little feedback as a social, largely immaterial organization. When there are problems in their internal functioning,

there is no outside actor capable of stepping in. During this research it also became clear that there is no large-scale overview: it is unclear how many non-profit organizations are active in the Netherlands and how many monuments they own. One may wonder if this is desirable for organizations with large impact in social and cultural spheres.

Returning to the question at hand: ‘What is the effect of non-profit organizations engaging in the field of monument care?’ On a larger scale: for the last few decades, a new trend has developed wherein monument care has moved away from the government to the private sector (Chapter 3). The government encourages private involvement by awarding subsidies, grants and occasionally an official status (Chapter 4). As a result, various social and physical agendas mingle with local government along with their benefits and possible drawbacks. Most importantly, it seems the dependency on non-profit organizations has led to lower government initiative as well as a way for local governance to cosign their responsibilities on monument care to oblivion by merely exerting their power over the regulatory and financial domain (Pickerill, 2009). However, in most cases, it appears that the contemporary collaboration between non-profit organizations and the government has yielded a positive outcome, wherein each party plays to its strengths and bolsters the others’ lapses in a sustainable manner (Pickerill, 2009).

6. CONCLUSION

“How do non-profit organizations in the Netherlands participate in the field of monument care since the enactment of the 1961 Monuments Act?”

With over 60.000 monuments, the field of monument care in the Netherlands is an expansive one. Monuments are a part of cultural memory and therefore cultural identity and should be protected and preserved for future generations. This paper researched the participation of non-profit organizations in monument care in the Netherlands since the enactment of the 1961 Monuments Act to gain insight into

their role in the larger field of monument care.

Non-profit organizations have been present in this field since before the first Monument Act in 1961, fulfilling a role the government had not yet (formally) accepted. After the government took a more active role, they remained involved akin to a control instrument—opposing or interfering with the government where they deemed necessary. When monument care became decentralized in 1988 with the renewal of the Monuments Act and the majority of the monuments became the responsibility of the municipalities and provinces, the non-profit organizations gained influence and gradually started to work in cooperation with rather than against or alongside the government.

The seven non-profit organizations that have been studied showed activity throughout the field of monument care. Nowadays, non-profits can be categorized according to their approach: the advisory, the protective and the managing non-profit. The advisory non-profit, represented by the Monumentenwacht, offers advice on matters like technical, managerial and ethical principles. The protective non-profit supports and initiates legal and social actions regarding the well-being of monuments and monitors the policies of (local) governments. Lastly, the managing non-profits are the owners of one or more monuments; they are responsible for their conservation and manage, restore, maintain and preserve the monument as necessary.

The effects of the historical as well as social developments regarding non-profits have time and again changed the course of the field of Dutch monument care. Presently, a contemporary system has evolved wherein the government and private organizations collaborate and work towards the same goal, a practice that in the last decades has shown itself to be rather successful as well as sustainable. Non-profit organizations come with an abundance of advantages—still outweighing any possible disadvantages—and have bettered the overall state of monuments as well as the field of monument care in the Netherlands, pouring in large amounts of effort.

They have proven themselves a worthy

example of ‘Preserving monuments at all costs’.

7. REFLECTION

Throughout this research, an extensive literature study has been conducted within the scope of monument care in the Netherlands. Primary sources (i.e. the Dutch government) as well as secondary sources (i.e. historical overviews) have been used to compile a complete picture of the history of the field of Dutch monument care.

While there was much to be found on ‘monument care’, less information was available on Dutch non-profit organizations in this field, which led to the use of broader search terms like ‘private organizations’, ‘private associations’ and ‘non-governmental organizations’. The received results have been applied carefully, but a word of caution seems appropriate.

Moreover, the non-profit organizations that have been investigated, were among the more well-known, larger organizations. The sample size is generally small and further research may be done on smaller non-profit organizations or larger sample groups. A study on the share of monuments in the possession of non-profits and similar actors could also be fruitful, as the Dutch government does not explicitly classify monument ownership.

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This thesis discusses some of the different policies which have taken into effect since the 1961 monuments act. It also highlights the need for more and better monumental care, perhaps with help of private instances.

– Kuipers, M. C. (2012). *Culturele grondslagen van de Monumentenwet*. Bulletin KNOB, 111(1), 10–25. <https://doi.org/10.7480/knob.111.2012.1.98>.

This paper shows a timeline of different governmental laws and policies in the Nether-

lands throughout time, starting with the first ever monuments act enacted in 1961.

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This is the webpage of the Dutch ministry of education, culture and science; the ministry responsible for amongst others heritage and monuments. This website will help me build a timeline and will guide me through various control instruments and subsidies regarding private monumental care.

– Naldini, van de Varst, de Koning, and van de Grijp. 2020. “Quality of restoration of monuments: the role of Monumentenwacht.” Ebook. In *Preventive Conservation*, 71–76. Taylor & Francis Group. <https://books.google.nl/books?hl=nl&lr=&id=0ynvDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA71&dq=dutch+monumental%2Bbuildings+conservation&ots=8-aQHb8xVt&sig=uOppvzCLgJSKW-K68fRJNnId49R0#v=onepage&q=dutch%20monumental%2Bbuildings%20conservation&f=false>.

The Monumentenwacht (translation: Monumentswatch) is one of the Dutch governments control instruments. They keep an overview of all monuments in the Netherlands and help and check private parties in possession of these monuments. This paper explains their function and origin.

– Nelissen, N., Needham, B. (1996) *Changes in Monument Care in The Netherlands, Planning Practice & Research*, 11:4, 391-404, DOI: 10.1080/02697459616780

Similar to Kuipers (2012) this paper gives an outline of Heritage policies in the Netherlands over time. These two papers will be compared and give a full picture.

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This book shows a larger scope and talks about the different ways countries in Europe approach heritage and monumental care. It divides different Dutch non-profit companies in separate categories.

– Pickerill, T. "The Management of Built Heritage: A comparative review of policies and practice in Western Europe, North America and Australia". Pacific Rim Real Estate Society - 15th Annual Conference, 18-21 January 2009, University of Technology Sydney (UTS), New South Wales, Australia doi:10.21427/j1w-wm191

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This paper discussed the 2012 Environment and Planning Act: this law wasn't particularly focussed on monuments but did have effects on the way they were handled. These consequences contributed to the growing problems in monument care and help formulate my problem statement.

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ATTACHMENT A: THE DUTCH HISTORY
OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
IN MONUMENT CARE

THE DUTCH HISTORY OF NON- PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN MONUMENT CARE

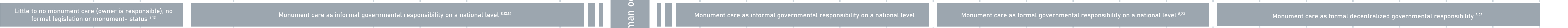
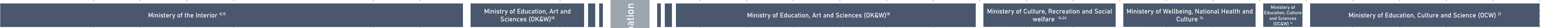
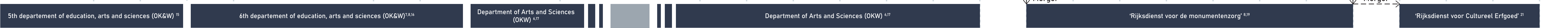
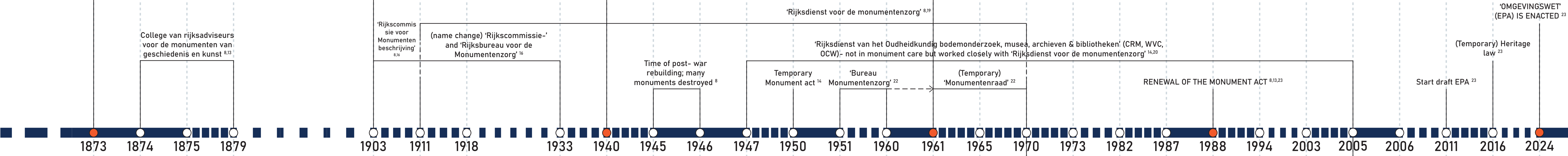
de Stuers writes 'Holland op zijn smalst' ⁴ as a bad review on the (lack of) monument care by the Dutch government, launching LARGE SCALE CHANGES IN MONUMENT CARE ^{7,8}

De Stuers and J. Kalf start 'Voorloopige lijst der Nederlandsche monumenten en kunst' ^{2,7,16}.

Just after the Dutch capitulation, the German occupiers awarded official and formal status to the 'Voorloopige lijst...' which now became THE FIRST MONUMENTS LIST ^{8,17}

FIRST MONUMENT ACT ^{8,13}

'OMGEVINGSWET' (EPA) IS ENACTED ²³



Founding of Erfgoedvereniging Heemschut ⁵

Founding of vereniging Hendrick de Keyser ⁶

Founding of the first Monumentenwacht ^{10,11}

First Open Monuments day ¹²

Founding of BOEi ¹

Founding of het Cuypersgenootschap ³

Founding of Stichting Monumentenbezit ⁹

Founding of Nederland Monumentenland ¹²



*sources in seperate bibliography

- Time skip
- Non-profit associations in monument care
- Large developments regarding non-profits in monument care
- Large historical developments affecting monument care
- Non-profit associations in monument care
- Large historical developments regarding non-profits in monument care

WWII: German occupation

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