

Dancing in an insane world.

Roosje, 1914-1939

Rosa Regina Glaser, Roosje, was born in 1914 in the Dutch city of Nijmegen. Immediately after the Great War (1914-1918) the Glaser family lived in Kleef (Germany), where her father worked for a Dutch company "*Margarine A.G.*". While living here Roosje is introduced to dance for the first time. A passion is born!

The Glaser family, now including brother John Samuel, returns to the Netherlands. The rise of National Socialism played an important role in this decision to move. In the thirties Roosje has a relationship with Wim Vermeulen, a pilot. When they live together without being married, Roosje's contact with her parents is limited. When Wim dies in a plane crash in 1936, Roosje feels completely forlorn and depressed. Leo Crielaars, a dance teacher from Den Bosch, offers her new perspectives. She marries him in 1937 and starts as a teacher at his dance school. The marriage fails just before the Netherlands are invaded by Germany on 10 May 1940.

ASSIGNMENT 1

Roosje experiences anti-Semitism early in life in Germany. Other children are not allowed to play with her because: "my mummy says you are Jewish". She is jeered at with: "*Jöd, Jöd, stinkt in de böt*". One night she has difficulty sleeping. She feels excluded and makes up her mind: If nobody wants me, I do not want anybody, except myself. I will no longer care about anything or anyone.

Assignment:

Explain which term describes what is happening to Roosje best:

- discrimination
- bullying
- teasing
- calling names
- exclusion

ASSIGNMENT 2

Soon after marrying Leo Crielaars, Roosje again feels she is being excluded. Marinus, Leo's brother, is a fanatical member of the NSB (*Nationaal Socialist Movement*) and later Leo gets involved as well. Who are the members of this group and what are their ideas?

Assignment:

- Use sources 1 and 2 to find out who the NSB supporters were.
- Then use the same sources to research the ideas and views of the NSB.
- Also ask yourself whether the examples in source 1 are representative for what the NSB members thought of the Jews.

SOURCE 1

Page 25

Leo came to get me, and we agreed to start looking for our own place, somewhere near the dance school. But, as Marinus continued to plague me, things only got worse. When I calmly asked him one day why he hated me so much he said: "You can go to church a hundred times, but you're a Jew and always will be. I'm a National Socialist, and you'll see: All Jew are destined for hell and we're going to help them get there. Just you wait, my time will come." (...)

Page 29/30

(...) and his brother cursed me constantly. "Because you are part of the Jewish question", he bellowed. And when I bit back, insisting I wasn't a question but a person, that I was Rosie, it was like a red rag to a bull.

Page 30

Leo joined his brother at every opportunity. They listened to Hitler's speeches on the radio. They talked about how intelligent he was, about his plans for the future. The old world with its corrupt ways would be overturned. The world of unemployment and poverty would disappear. A new order would be established, free of spineless democracy, free of corrupt Jews who conspired against hardworking citizens and labourers. Cars for everyone, Volkswagens! Who wouldn't want a Volkswagen?

Paul Glaser, Dancing with the Enemy, Amsterdam/New York 2010, 2016.

SOURCE 2

(left bottom language button)

Bekijk de video hier: https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationaal-Socialistische_Beweging.

ASSIGNMENT 3

The NSB is one of the political parties in pre-war Dutch politics. When you compare and contrast all the parties that participated in the 1935 elections for the Provincial States (provincial government) you can find out more about the support for the NSB before the war.

Assignment:

Use source 3 to work out how large the support for the NSB was in 1935. Choose from the following options and explain your answer:

- very large
- moderately large
- moderately small
- very small

Explain whether source 4 supports your choice.

SOURCE 3

The largest parties after the elections for the government of the Provinces (Provinciale Staten PS)

*RKSP=Catholic; SDAP= socialist; ARP= Protestant; CHU= Protestant; NSB= National Socialist; Vrijheidsbond=liberal; CPN= communist; SGP=Protestant; CDU= Protestant.

<http://www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl/Na1918/Verkiezingsuitslagen.aspx?VerkeizingsTypeId=1>

Party *	Number of votes	Percentage	Number of seats
	PS-1935	PS-1935	PS-1935
RKSP	1,030,206	27.77%	175
SDAP	782,451	21.09%	126
ARP	421,174	11.35%	75
CHU	343,766	9.27%	61
NSB	294,596	7.94%	44
Vrijheidsbond	226,935	6.12%	33
VDB	156,206	4.21%	28
CPN	127,603	3.44%	12
SGP	93,961	2.53%	10
CDU	67,258	1.81%	10

SOURCE 4

"The Jewish issue does not exist"; says Jewish magazine.

With the title "Queen Wilhelmina and the Jews", the prominent Jewish magazine in Poland "Nasz Przegląd", publishes a very appreciative article on the occasion of the forty-year-jubilee of the reign of Queen Wilhelmina.

This jubilee may be a good occasion, writes the magazine, to consider the "Jewish issue", in the Netherlands. Actually, there is no issue in the low lands on the North Sea. In this country the Jews have exactly the same rights as any other Dutch person. Not only do the Jews not have the slightest reason to complain about their position, they can participate in important social work, parliamentary work and even in military institutions. There is no Anti-Semitism in the Netherlands. It is impossible to see a difference in the treatment of Jews and non-Jews. It is therefore no wonder that Jews take part in all the festivities with pleasure. Is the Netherlands compared to the situation of the Jews in other neighbouring countries not a paradise? Would there not be joy in their hearts when the children are taught at school to make no distinction in religion and race and learn to advance solidarity with all citizens?

Utrechts Volksblad, 12 September 1938.

The arrival of the Germans

The German invasion.

Three weeks before the German invasion of the Netherlands (10 May 1940), Roosje resigns from her teaching job in Leo Crielaars' dance school. She no longer wishes to work there because she knows what Leo and Marinus think of Jews.

The occupation changes The Netherlands drastically. The pre-occupation government has gone and a new regime lead by "Rijkscommissaris" Seyss Inquart, has taken over. Political parties are dissolved, disband themselves or continue underground. The NSB is the only party allowed to remain. Trade Unions are prohibited or 'Nazified'. The Germans censor the press. Artists, doctors, dancers etc. can only practise their professions if they join German controlled institutions such as the "Kulturkammer". Citizens, such as the Jews, are hunted down, isolated and imprisoned.

At first the changes are implemented gradually; sometimes openly, often almost invisibly. For some time, the Dutch population in general do not seem bothered too much.

Paul Glaser writes that the Dutch mood was one of acceptance and obedience. There was also some admiration and a feeling of wishing to be part of the Third Reich. Is that image correct?

ASSIGNMENT 4

In pairs

It is difficult to get a complete picture of how the mood among the Dutch population developed over the period after May 1940, however, the sources 5 and 6 give a view of daily life during the war.

Assignment:

Compare and contrast sources 5 and 6 and decide what **does** and what **does not** change in daily life during the war.

- Use two columns **continued** and **discontinued** and list as many examples as you can of both, under the correct heading. Also add in which source you found the example.
- Are sources 5 and 6 suitable to learn about daily life in the Netherlands during the Second World War? Explain why or why not.

SOURCE 5

The people and the German occupation, August 1940.

The German occupation does not want to stand out. Apart from the supervision by civilian German commissioners, the Netherlands is self-governing, and although the former government has disappeared, the ministries are continuing their work as before. No Dutch person has any reason to consider the German occupation and the German rule as oppressive.

The German government is very aware that it has to take Dutchmen for who they are, observes Dr. Böttinger at the end of his contemplation; the Dutchman has to be seen as part of a large Nether-German race, which became distant from the Reich due to historic developments and so came to lead a separate life. A separate life that became estranged from European problems because of large colonial possessions and connections with Anglo-Saxon capitalism.

The war with England has raised this matter again, also for the Netherlands. The solution for this will conquer the resentment and false hope from which many can still not free themselves.

Het Volk, newspaper for the labour party, 24 August 1940

SOURCE 6

Fragments from a National Socialist propaganda film about daily life.

- *Celebration of Sinterklaas (December 5), an annual, traditional celebration.*
- *The celebration of a golden wedding in the province of Brabant.*
- *Practice with gas generators that serve to replace gasoline and thus keep the cars running.*
- *An electric car has been developed for children.*
- *During the war, when night fell, among other things houses had to be darkened. This led to problems but also solutions.*
- *The Polygoon news was the official news under German supervision that was shown in cinemas. Here the problems, solutions and benefits of the Curfew set by the Germans are shown. For example, it promoted socializing.*

Bekijk de video hier: <https://vimeo.com/311506852>

ASSIGNMENT 5

For all Dutch people the new situation involves having to make choices. For some professions those are often hard choices, for example for mayors. After 1945 the term 'mayor in war time' is often used.

Assignment:

- Study source 7 and explain what kind of behaviour is meant here.
- Think of or look for two examples of this kind of behaviour in the present. Explain why you feel your examples of this behaviour are good.

SOURCE 7

Mayor in war time.

Making the best of a very difficult job.

When the Netherlands capitulate on 15 May 1940, the Dutch Queen and her complete cabinet have already fled to London. Dutch government is now in the hands of Reich's commissioner Seyss Inquart. The executive of the Home Office is the highest Dutch civil servant, the secretary general mr. K.J. Freriks. Freriks thinks that the occupation will not last very long and so his main policy is making sure the pre-war mayors are remaining in office. He is convinced this will offer the best protection to the population. Apart from that, he hopes that in this way he will be able to keep out the hated NSB. His greatest fear is for the NSB to assume power, which needs to be avoided at all cost. As Freriks says himself, "it is a matter of making the best of a difficult job"

himself. It is a matter of making the best of a difficult job.

The mayors are optimistic about the positive role they can play during the first months of the occupation. They try to gain the Germans' confidence by maintaining the peace and asking their population for restraint and calm. This way they hope to prevent repercussions against their citizens. A few of the mayors choose a different strategy and do publicly resist the Germans during these first few months. They are fired and replaced by NSB mayors.

"Nazification"

Give and take between citizens and occupier.

In due course, Freriks and his mayors' optimism becomes an illusion. German politics are becoming more radical and violent and Freriks cannot avoid that many of his mayors and civil servants are replaced by NSB members. The remaining mayors are forced to collaborate with the introduction of the New Order. They have to give and take between the demands of the occupier and the interest of their population. They are facing political and moral dilemmas more and more often; the choice between remaining or resigning and being replaced by the NSB mayor.

Adaptation of the text *Andere tijden* "Burgemeester in oorlogstijd"

Measures against the Jewish people

Measures against the Jewish population.

The German occupation force pays special attention to the Jewish population. A range of rules and regulations increasingly limits the freedom of living for the Jews. For example: in October 1940 the German regime demands that Dutch civil servants sign an Aryan declaration. In it they have to declare that they are of Aryan race. This is a very important moment in the persecution of Dutch Jews. A never ending number of measures force them to become more and more isolated. A very important rule in this development is the introduction, 29 April 1942, of a yellow Star of David to be worn by every Jew. The circumstances in which the Jews have to live in the Netherlands change radically between 1940 and 1942. How does the Jewish population cope with these attacks on their human rights and how does Roosje experience this period?

ASSIGNMENT 6

According to Roosje many Dutch people have developed anti-Semitic convictions because of the German occupation. "I wasn't afraid for myself, but it was going to be a particularly hard time for my parents" (page 37). How do the Dutch Jews experience the first months of the German occupation?

Assignment:

- Study sources 8, 9 and 10 and describe what each of the sources tells you about the response of the Jewish population during the first months after May 1940.

SOURCE 8

The subject of this article is the suicides that took place in May 1940, when the Germans invaded the Netherlands.

"The impact of the German invasion is not fully understood without more knowledge of the suicides in May 1940. The suicides of that month deepen the historical understanding of the panic caused by the German invasion and the motives tell a lot about how people experienced it."

Layout table:

Suicides in	Total	of which in May
1936	767	56
1937	749	74
1938	833	89
1939	745	64
1940	1046	388
1941	661	50
1942	901	71
1943	855	84
1944	653	66
1945	1011	116
1946	852	85

SOURCE 9

The first months of the occupation as experienced by the Jewish population.

A change for the worst; already then, the first days of May, no Jew will have doubted this, even though he was just at the start of a series of events which we, the survivors, can only oversee now. (...)

The new situation demanded adaptation from the Dutch population as a whole and from the Jewish people in the population in particular. And so they adapted. Nothing happened. No pogroms. Not even inequality. The dead were buried, there was grief there was mourning; there certainly were difficulties and problems in relation to the disappearance of family members and friends, whose possessions were brought to relative safety, as far as possible. There were widows, orphans, abandoned spouses, abandoned children, at least more than usual. Arrangements were made to organise all this as well as possible. And they went back to work. In cities and villages, the Germans in plain sight. They wore all kinds of uniforms, even police ones. Gradually, they got used to seeing them, somewhat. Now that the feared pogroms did not take place they felt able to breathe again.

Presser, Ondergang. De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse Jodendom, (Demise. The persecution and extermination of Dutch Jewry), 1940-1945, I, 's-Gravenhage, 1977, 10, 15, 16.

SOURCE 10

Jannie de Hond-Brander's war experience, 1940

The Second World War affected Jannie and her family. Her whole family was murdered in the concentration camps: her husband, parents, brothers and sisters, her grandparents. She was sent to Auschwitz, in block 10, where doctors performed experiments on the women that made them sterile. Of the 250 women who survived these experiments, only a few had a baby later. One of them was Jannie de Hond.

Summary

Jannie de Hond tells about the first year and a half since the German invasion.

We didn't realize in May 1940 that something serious was going to happen. We were afraid of the fights but not otherwise. You didn't think about fleeing.

The first months it was all quite normal. The first thing we noticed was that we had to report to get a Jewish stamp. And we just went without protest.

In 1941 we actually started to notice that something was going to change for us because then the first bans started, for example: "Forbidden to Jews".

Bekijk de video hier: <https://vimeo.com/311506895>

ASSIGNMENT 7

According to Mrs de Hond-Brander (source 10) the anti-Jewish measures are not that noticeable until 1941.

However, even before that time anti-Jewish measures were taken. You can read this in sources 11, 12 and 13.

Assignment:

- Draw a timeline from May 1940 to May 1945. Put in: the first anti-Jewish measures, the introduction of the Star of David, the Aryan declaration and the first and the last transport from Westerbork.
- Study the anti-Jewish measures up to April 1942 again (source 11): which measure was the most important, according to you, if you want to explain the extermination of Dutch Jews: the coming about of the Aryan Declaration or the introduction of the Star of David? Or do you think that other measures from the list are more important? Explain why.

SOURCE 11

Outline of restrictions taken against the Jewish population in the Netherlands between 1940 and 1945.

Bekijk de video hier: <https://www.tracesofwar.com/articles/2659/Anti-Jewish-measures-in-the-Netherlands-since-1940.htm>

SOURCE 12

The Aryan Declaration, 6 October 1940.

The undersigned,

Profession:.....

Date of birth.....in.....

Address.....

Declares that to his/her best knowledge, neither he/she nor his/her spouse/fiancé(e) nor his/her parents or grandparents belonged to the Jewish community at any time.*

The undersigned is aware that he/she will be dismissed immediately, should this declaration be incorrect.

....., 1940

(signature)

*Remove when civil servant is neither married nor engaged

SOURCE 13

The underground press resisting the anti-Jewish restrictions.

Gradually the Jewish people in our population are banished from normal life. It is alarming to see what has been achieved in just over a year. The Nazi thugs are doing their sinister and dishonourable work with clockwork regularity. It all started with the dismissal of Jews working for the government and then they were prohibited to visit cinemas, bars, holiday parks, swimming pools, bath houses and seaside resorts. Following that, Jewish employees were dismissed from companies which were declared Aryan. Numerous small businessmen were pushed out of their companies. Many of them in Amsterdam and Rotterdam are now without any means of support. So far 41 greengrocers and 43 grocer shops are taken from their Jewish owners in Amsterdam. Soon other shops will follow. Small businesses and their owners are destitute and hungry.

The latest measure concerns the hunt for Jewish children in state-run primary and secondary schools. In Amsterdam alone, 8000 children will be driven from their schools. It has been announced that these children will be receiving separate education from Jewish teachers which their parents have to pay for.

We are living under the Nazi regime which means we have gone back to the most barbarian of eras. The Jews are hunted like animals, just because they are Jews and just because of the Nazi rage. The Dutch population looks on with disdain and hatred. How long will it take to come up with counter measures? Especially the working class should take care of the persecuted and hunted Jews.(...)

Solidarity: publication of the joint underground groups and aid organisations, 15 September 1941.

ASSIGNMENT 8

According to Paul Glaser, the Dutch population hardly reacts to the anti-Jewish measures. In general, they accept German domination and the measures of the regime.

Assignment:

- Does source 14 support Paul Glaser's conclusion? Explain.
- Now explain whether source 14 is from a pro- or an anti-German newspaper.
- Now explain whether you think source 14 is a reliable source when you want to find out about the reaction of

- Now explain whether you think source 14 is a reliable source when you want to find out about the reaction of the non-Jewish population to the anti-Jewish measures. If not, explain why that changes the explanation you wrote for the first assignment.

SOURCE 14

Response to the introduction of the Star of David.

After the introduction of the Star of David, there were Dutch people who made sure they were exceptionally friendly to the Jewish people who were now clearly distinguishable by their Star of David. During the first days, wayward Dutch boys and girls wore a Star of David. This was not tolerated and some of these foolish youths were punished by making them abide, for a period of time, to the restrictions that applied to the Jewish people. It meant they could not work in public office or visit bars, cinemas, parks etc. Should they repeat their behaviour, the punishment would be more severe. They would be sent to one of the punishment camps. There they have ways and means to change their reckless minds.

Various other, to the occupier disloyal, behaviour was spotted. There are Dutch gentlemen who feel it is necessary to take their hat off for someone wearing the Star of David. Young Dutch girls provocatively parade the streets with Jewish boys. Dutch boys walk arm in arm with Jewish girls. It has been known to happen that Dutch people ostentatiously offer their seat to a Jewish person in trams and trains and other means of public transport. At some Dutch gatherings, Jews are welcomed with open arms.

Gooi- en Eemlander, (newspaper) 20 May 1942

ASSIGNMENT 9

As a Jewish woman, Roosje too is affected by the German measures. How does Roosje respond to the changing circumstances during the first years of the occupation (up to April 1942)?

Two statements:

1. Roosje is not affected by the changing circumstances.
2. Roosje has a different response to the changing circumstances than the other Dutch Jews.

Assignment:

- Explain by using sources 15, 16 and 17 whether you agree or disagree with statement I.
- Explain by using sources 15, 16 and 17 and your answer to assignment 6, whether you agree or disagree with statement II.

SOURCE 15





Source 15

SOURCE 16



Source 16

SOURCE 17

Polygoon News 1942. Roosje shows a new dance.

Bekijk de video hier: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNkqDYatTJo>

ASSIGNMENT 10

Final assignment

The title for this theme is: 'Dancing in an insane world'.

- What do you think is meant by this title.
- Then choose three of the sources (1 to 17) that, according to you, best convey this meaning and explain your answer.

REVIEW YOUR FIRST CHOICE

In the introduction lesson you chose a point of view on the question: Are you going to oppose the rules when you disagree with them, even if that behaviour can get you into serious trouble?

- Has your point of view changed or not? Explain why you have or have not changed your mind.