

and Protestantism. Mainly thanks to Van Praag's organizational capacity, this endeavor was ultimately extremely successful (see NETHERLANDS, THE, HUMANISM IN). Van Praag also played a crucial role in bringing together humanist people and organizations from all parts of the world, especially in terms of content. He was one of those responsible for founding the INTERNATIONAL HUMANIST AND ETHICAL UNION (IHEU) in 1952. He chaired the IHEU for twenty-three years, from its start until 1975, during which time his main efforts focused upon keeping the IHEU alive, often with great difficulty, and upon extending it. He enthusiastically established contacts with others, for example, the Vatican, and the Marxists in Yugoslavia.

The Foundations of Humanism. Even during the occupation, he started work on his theory of humanism. His *Modern humanisme: Een renaissance?* (Modern Humanism: A Renaissance?) was written in that period, and published in 1947. In this book he argues for a radical renewal of moral life in the Netherlands, in particular among the unchurched. For the practice of humanist moral counseling, he developed a theoretical underpinning and a methodology as early as 1953, which long served as a basis for this work. Van Praag's importance for the theory of humanism has been great. He was responsible for naming the theory of humanist counseling in the Netherlands "humanistics." Humanistics has become a profession or discipline dealing with the basic phenomena of humanism (see NETHERLANDS, THE, HUMANIST EDUCATION IN). Van Praag himself was professor of humanistics at Leiden University from 1964 to 1979. The book *Grondslagen van humanisme; inleiding tot een humanistische levens—en denkwereld* (Foundations of Humanism: Introduction to a World of Humanist Living and Thinking), published in 1978 (published in English by Prometheus Books in 1982), can be considered a worthy conclusion to a lifelong devotion to the organization and theory of humanism. The book states clearly what Van Praag considered the core of humanism, namely, to oppose indifference and moral emptiness and to encourage solidarity and human resilience as fundamentals for a democratic constitutional state. Jaap van Praag died on April 12, 1981.

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BERT GASENBEEK

VAN PRAAG, JAAP (1911–1981), Dutch humanist organizer. Jaap van Praag was born on May 11, 1911, in Amsterdam. He grew up in a secular Jewish and socialist family. Mainly through his mother and by much reading he acquired considerable knowledge of the Bible. He studied Dutch literature, philosophy, and history, and became a teacher in a secondary school. Until World War II he was extremely active in pacifist and socialist associations, concentrating mainly on peace-related issues and nonviolent resistance. In these associations he met many people who were later also to become active in the humanist movement (see HUMANISM). As a Jew, he was obliged to go into hiding during the German occupation of the Netherlands, which he did from 1943. The horrors of the war were essential to forming his later militancy and worldview. He went back to teaching from 1946 to 1954. From 1954 to 1974 he was on the executive board of the provincial government of South Holland.

Organizer. Immediately after the occupation, he was the most important initiator in founding the Humanistisch Verbond (HV, Dutch Humanist Association) in 1946. He was its chairman from 1946 to 1969; through his charisma, strategic insight, and diplomatic approach he succeeded in building up the Verbond. He was widely considered to be the "father," the "architect," and the "master builder" of organized humanism in the Netherlands. He had two motives for founding the Verbond. First and principally, he wanted to create a LIFE STANCE shelter for the large group of churchless people who were seeking meaning in life as religion declined and wanted to make people morally resilient. He also wanted to work for equality for humanists and other churchless people in a society that legally privileged Catholicism