

internationaal instituut  
voor sociale geschiedenis



# On the Waterfront

newsletter of the friends of the IISH 2017 no. 34

**Utopia  
and  
Euthanasia**

**Mexican  
Peasants  
and Politics**

**Trade Union  
History  
and IISH**

# Introduction

**Cover photo: Letter of peasants to the government of Tlaxcala, 1936, signed with fingerprints. From the PNR-PRM-PRI collection, 1930-1960**

Since the previous issue of *On the Waterfront*, we are pleased to report some very good news.

First, the KNAW has granted 2.6 million euros, payable over 8 years, toward the project proposal 'Investing in collections.' This funding is intended to provide much-needed support for the Collections Department, following the serious interventions in 2013. Additionally, several staff members will be retiring in a few years. Thanks to this grant, we can now recruit new people, who may be trained by the old timers. This will also smooth the sharp transition to collecting digital materials.

The second major grant is from the FNV. In a covenant reached between the IISH and the FNV in late March, the FNV has allocated over 2 million euros toward performing an inventory of the paper archives presently distributed throughout different offices, when they are entrusted to the IISH. A selection will be digitized. This success is thanks in part to the plan meticulously drafted by Jack Hofman and Frank de Jong and will be covered in more detail in the lectures section of this issue.

In December 2016 we learned that the IISH was to receive a huge grant in conjunction with Leiden University toward research on early modern diversity in the Dutch global empire. Ulbe Bosma and Matthias van Rossum are involved in the project for the IISH.

The final grant I will mention concerns 450,000 euros from Metamorfoze toward digitizing the CNT/FAI archive. This bodes very well for one of our most important non-Dutch archives.

All these projects will revitalize and bring new faces into the Institute. Excellent news!

Also wonderful: on 25 January 2017 Rombert Stapel took his PhD cum laude in Leiden for his PhD thesis *The Late Fifteenth-Century Utrecht Chronicle of the Teutonic Order: Manuscripts, Sources, and Authorship*. Congratulations! At the IISH Rombert

performs complex duties, such as *spatial humanities* and databases for various historical data.

Congratulations are also due to Margreet Schrevel, who will be leaving the IISH after having worked here for 41 years. We are delighted that she is concluding her career with the feature article in *On the Waterfront*. Margreet, a great big thank you!

Huub Sanders

## *About the Friends*

*Members of the Friends of the IISH pay annual dues of 100 or 500 euros or join with a lifetime donation of 1,500 euros or more. In return, members are invited to semi-annual sessions featuring presentations of IISH acquisitions and guest speakers. These guest speakers deliver lectures on their field of research, which need not be related to the IISH collection. The presentation and lecture are followed by a reception. The board may consult the Friends about allocation of the revenues from the dues and delivers an annual financial report in conjunction with the IISH administration.*

*As a token of appreciation for their great contribution to the Friends, Jaap Kloosterman and Jan Lucassen were appointed as honorary members in 2014.*

*The IISH was founded by master collector N.W. Posthumus (1880-1960) in the 1930s. For the past two decades, two of the institutions established by this 'history entrepreneur' have operated from the same premises: the Netherlands Economic History Archive founded in 1914 and the International Institute of Social History, which is now more than 80 years old. Both institutes continue to collect, although the 'subsidiary' IISH has grown considerably larger than its 'parent' NEHA. Additional information about the Institute may be found in Jaap Kloosterman and Jan Lucassen, *Rebels with a Cause: Five Centuries of Social History Collected by the IISH* (Amsterdam 2010). For all information concerning the Friends, see <http://socialhistory.org/en/friends>*

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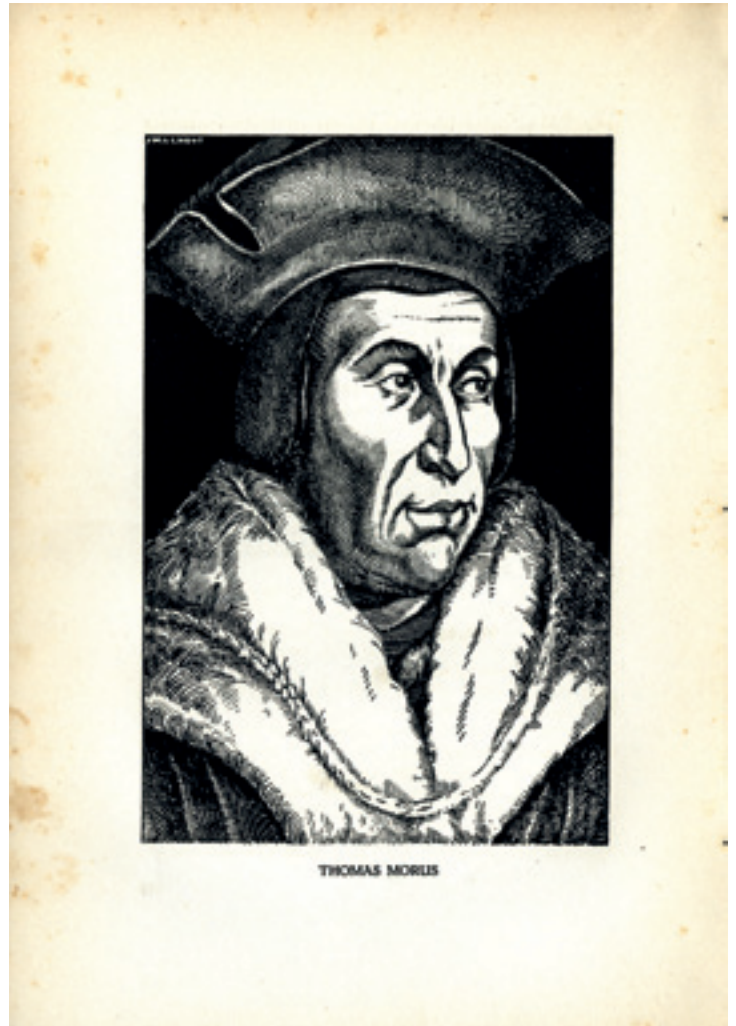
# Resident status for Utopia

Whether House of Representatives Member Pia Dijkstra examined Utopian novels in drafting her proposal about ‘completed life’ is unknown. In any case, the idea surfaces in *Utopia* (1516) by Thomas More. His description of an imaginary society on an undiscovered island was widely acclaimed throughout Europe, especially during the Enlightenment. Such a Utopian novel may be read as a manifestation of social critique, a projection of political and religious ideals, or simply as a wild story. Reading the original texts reveals a surprising abundance of topics that align perfectly with the twenty-first century. These authors, who lived in periods of persecution and religious turmoil, took on euthanasia and refugee issues. In 1623 one Utopist proposed that migrants be granted asylum only after a two-month trial period. Nearly everywhere women were little more than doormats for men and were considered useful only for cooking and bearing children, who were subsequently taken from them and raised by the authorities. In 1708 a Dutch Utopist portrayed a more female-friendly society on the island of *Krinke Kesmes*, where men and women had equal opportunities. All problems here came from the mosquito carrying the widely feared contagious disease *knepkko*.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the heyday of Thomas More-style geographic Utopias, vast areas still awaited discovery: many Utopias were situated in Terra Australis Incognita. The storyline is virtually always the same. The main character, often a captain, is on a vessel bound for the East Indies. In the Pacific Ocean Europeans were shipwrecked and landed on an island, where they enquired about the local society. Fortunately, the island dwellers were conversant in a European language, which they had learned in a well-stocked library.

## Migrants

*Krinke Kesmes* was one of those islands. The author, Hendrik Smeeks of Zwolle, had presumably journeyed to the Orient himself as a ship physician. In *Beschrijvinghe van het magtig Koninkrijk Krinke Kesmes*, the main character is a Spaniard. He assigns the dangerous reconnaissance of the surroundings to his personal slave Piet (Pedro). Regrettably, the colour of Piet’s skin is not mentioned. The men are told that a few centuries ago a European boat had been stranded on this island. All foreigners, except those from Holland, were placed in a large camp. Riots ensued, and the neighbours complained about the nuisance. The migrants were transferred to a remote area along the coast. When their numbers soared, and they were on the verge of flooding the inland areas, military troops were dispatched to beat 8 to 10 thousand men to death. Centuries later, descendants of this population group were living in poverty and spoke an odd gibberish. Because of these unfortunate experiences with foreigners, the inhabitants



of *Krinke Kesmes* were prohibited from travelling abroad, subject to punishment by death.

An entirely different situation is described on the Pacific island of *Ajao*, conceived by Bernard de Fontenelle at the end of the 17th century. Here, castaways are accommodated at the Hotel des Étrangers and told: ‘Foreigners, our entire people empathizes with you. We have no means of sending you back to your own country. If we provide you with materials to patch up your decrepit boats, you might be tempted to venture back out to sea. We do not want the loss of so many lives to weigh on our conscience. You are welcome to stay here as long as you like. We will feed and shelter you, just as we shelter our own citizens and provide all comforts and conveniences.’

## Sustainable

*Christianopolis* (1619) is a Utopia of German design. The moat surrounding the city serves both as a defence structure and as a breeding pond for fish ‘to be useful in peacetime as well.’ The homes have double windows, and the inhabitants wear the same clothes year round. In the winter they

Portrait of Thomas More by Eli Smalhout, Ca. 1936

simply wear an additional wool layer. Most attire is basic and unisex. 'Nobody here is familiar with the Paris fashion designers.' Utopians never try to set themselves apart through glamour or opulence. Nor is any money in circulation. The only bank is a food bank, from which each person withdraws his or her due. Everything produced is for personal consumption, not for the market. Healthy men work the land five or six hours a day, while the women spin and weave. Inhabitants with disabilities also participate: the blind card wool, the lame use their sight to serve as watchful guards, and people with limited sense are in great demand (More: 'Utopians take great pleasure in fools'). The participation society glorified today seems to have already existed here. Life is relaxed, Utopians greatly value leisure time and enjoyment. Knowledge is the most precious spiritual commodity, health the most important physical one. With this in mind, More arranges speed-dating sessions, where men and women strip nude under the aegis of a coach. That way, any 'appetite' is immediately visible, as sex is one of the greatest joys in life.

### Demographic policy

Sex is also crucial in demographic policy. Introducing bigamy on *Ajao* serves a twofold purpose. First, two wives can share household chores, so that they are less grumpy and able to indulge fully in lovemaking at night. Second, more children will be born, which in turn benefits growth of the native population. This is necessary to offset the unbridled reproductive zeal manifested by the foreign slaves living in this city.

On the island of the *Sevarambes* women from the lower social classes consort with multiple men at once, because women are scarce. Remarkably, ob-

serves their creator Denis Vairasse d'Alais (1675), this does not give rise to as many pregnancies as do the monogamous amorous liaisons among the higher classes. In other words, not as much scum enters the world as the figures might suggest. Europeans washing ashore here, after being rigorously inspected for any traces of the Naples disease [syphilis], are all assigned a Sevarambian concubine. Clearly, there is no fear of integration.

### Euthanasia

The authors of these Utopian novels shamelessly copied all kinds of sections and ideas from one another, especially of course from founding father More. One of his ideas was not emulated at all: his case for euthanasia. Five centuries later, this argument is once again relevant: 'If somebody fall incurably ill, the Utopians try all possible ways to make his life as comfortable as possible. Once the pain becomes unbearable, however, and no hope of recovery remains, priests and officials come to explain to the patient that he is finished with life, is a burden to himself and others, and might do well to opt for death. Those receptive to this course may refuse food and drink or take opium to die painlessly. There is no coercion. Those who do not choose to end their lives on their own remain entitled to just as much care and attention.'

Having priests and officials at one's deathbed will seem Utopian to some and dystopian to others. However, these old texts are very relevant nowadays. Since it was established, the IISH has collected utopias. In the genealogy of social movements, they were among the first ideas for creating a new, ideal society.

Margreet Schrevel

# Thirty-fourth Friends' Day, 26 January 2017

## Presentation of the Acquisitions

**Sermaye Hareketi, book used by Kivilcimli in prison. He kept his notes in an opening in the binding. From the Kivilcimli papers, supplement 2016.**

### Prison books of Hikmet Kivilcimli

In the 20th century Turkey experienced three military coups. After the 1971 coup, Hikmet Kivilcimli fled the country. His papers followed soon afterwards and reached the IISH in 1992. Last year the IISH received several of his personal books as well, including some he had with him in prison.

Kivilcimli (1902-1971) was a prominent Turkish communist, a theoretician and writer whose work continues to elicit great interest. He maintained a love-hate relationship with the Turkish



Communist Party (TKP) and never actually served on its party executive. As a critical left-wing publicist, he often clashed with the authorities and repeatedly ended up in prison, spending over 22 years of his life there.

The accrual received in 2016 comprises 35 classical works on Marxism, many by Marx, as well as some by Engels, Trotsky, and Lenin. Pertaining to his personal library, they are filled with notes. Kivilcimlı, who grew up before the alphabet reform, took his notes in small Arabic script.

Two of the books he had with him in prison are very special: *Sermaye hareketi* (Capital movement) and *T.C. İzmir ticaret ve sanayi odası* (Izmir Chamber of Trade and Industry). They are intrinsically interesting to modern researchers because of the wealth of socioeconomic data and for that reason were probably considered innocuous and inconspicuous in prison. In both volumes the binding was carved out to serve as a hiding place for his personal notes. This enabled Kivilcimlı to continue working on projects such as a history of the TKP.



The books arrived at the IISH directly from Turkey, where they had been preserved since his escape. After the 1971 coup, Kivilcimlı sensed imminent disaster, as a warrant was issued for his arrest. At the time he was staying with Fuat and Latife Fegan. One evening they found two large bags of his papers, and Kivilcimlı had disappeared. He asked them to preserve the bags carefully.

Kivilcimlı had fled to Cyprus. His papers also include items he used during his escape, such as a receipt for the purchase of a small boat and several maps of Cyprus. The distances marked on the maps indicate that he was considering the best route for continuing his journey. In the end, Syria was the most promising option, and he flew from there to Sofia. When Bulgaria denied him entry, he found shelter in Yugoslavia under Tito. He travelled from there to destinations including Berlin and Paris. There is also a note of Jean-Paul Sartre's Paris address. Kivilcimlı was already ill when he left and died in Belgrade six months after his escape.

After Kivilcimlı fled, Latife Fegan preserved his papers, smuggling them to Cyprus in instalments with all kinds of sweets. The papers ultimately reached Sweden, together with Fuat and Latife in



1974. Fegan arranged the materials there, keeping in mind the biography he intended to write. The books come with notes, maps, and photographs that Fegan used in examining and arranging the papers. Fegan's classification is reflected in the inventory of the papers by the IISH. (EdR)

### Anne de Koe, first a preacher, then a social reformer

Some time ago the IISH received an archive crate marked: 'De Koe.' Closer examination revealed that this concerned Anne de Koe, ordinarily listed as A. de Koe. Although De Koe is not widely known, a listing is dedicated to him in the BWSA, the *Biografisch Woordenboek van het Socialisme en de Arbeidersbeweging in Nederland*. The personal papers span 0.12 m. (<http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCHO4398>).

Anne de Koe was born in Lemmer, Friesland, in 1866. He was an adherent of Tolstoy, a preacher in places such as Den Helder, and an antimilita-

**Map of Cyprus, purchased by Kivilcimlı in preparation for his escape in March 1971. Distances added in handwriting. From the Kivilcimlı papers, inventory number 39.**

**Personal library of Kivilcimlı. From the Kivilcimlı papers, supplement 2016.**



**Portrait of A. de Koe, IISG BG A7/654**

Design of a 'remembrance offered to A.de Koe by the members of 'Ontwikkelingsclub Ons Huis 1916 - 1926'. De Koe Inv nr.3

Special Issue of De Brandaris offered to De Koe 1929. De Koe Inv. 7



rist. He read theology at Leiden University, where as a volunteer at the Leidse Volkshuis, he was introduced by Emilie Knappert to the Toynbee work, named after the British historian and social reformer Arnold Joseph Toynbee (1852-1883).

In 1901 he officially quit as a preacher and moved with his family to the settlement of the Internationale Broederschap [international brotherhood] in Blaricum. The next year, in 1902, the family moved to Walden, the settlement of Frederik van Eeden. De Koe became an administrator there but soon had a falling out with Van Eeden. In 1903 the family left Walden and settled in nearby Bussum, where De Koe served on the town council for the SDAP.

De Koe forged ahead and in 1908 found a new position, where he was able to apply his talents in pursuit of his ideals. He was appointed director of Ons Huis, which had recently opened a branch in Rotterdam. Ons Huis operated from premises on Gouvernestraat, which later expanded to include the cinema 't Venster and the theatre De Lantaren.

The first Ons Huis opened in Amsterdam's Jordaan quarter in 1892. As a school for the masses, it was dedicated to the Toynbee work of Emilie Knappert and Helena Mercier. Individual efforts and close teamwork served to cultivate understanding between different orders and classes. Known as *volkshuizen* [houses of the people], they were politically unaffiliated and welcomed all ideologies and movements.

De Koe was impressive as a director and became an authority on houses of the people, popular education, and community building. At the IISH Friends gathering in January 2016 Christianne Smit told those present about her book *De Volksverheffers. Sociaal hervormers in Nederland en*

*de wereld 1870-1914* (Hilversum, 2015). In her book she examines the different branches of Ons Huis and the Toynbee work in detail and repeatedly mentions De Koe.

In Rotterdam De Koe represented the SDAP on the city council as well. His distinctive character, however, made him unwilling to compromise in most cases. In 1929 he was exhausted and retired early. He and his wife settled in Lochem, from where they took frequent trips to Friesland in the summer and winter. In 1935 De Koe was designated an honorary member of the Ons Huis association in Rotterdam.

This modest archive relates mainly to Ons Huis, especially to the Ontwikkelingsclub. At the farewell gathering for 'friend and leader' De Koe in 1929, he was presented with a special issue of *De Brandaris*, the Ontwikkelingsclub periodical. This issue featured contributions from all those 'who empathized and worked with him in the o.c.' This Ontwikkelingsclub was formed in the fall of 1916. Lectures were organized on topics such as literature and architecture, excursions were arranged, for example to count birds in the woods and dunes of The Hague, as well as to take part in the German-Dutch-Luxembourgish holiday school in Brühl. This special issue of *De Brandaris* includes accounts of sailing trips across the Zuiderzee, led by De Koe (himself Frisian) and of camping trips, which De Koe also attended, sleeping in his 'one-man tent of green Zeppelin cloth.' The courses highlighted the importance of being self-sufficient and covered e.g. nature studies, manual crafts, and drama.

The archive comprises a great many photographs, taken e.g. in Rotterdam and in Friesland. There is also a very special drawing in red, green, and gold, which the members presented to De

Koe in recognition of the tenth anniversary celebration of the Ons Huis Ontwikkelingsclub held on 9 October 1926. The record does not reflect who did this drawing. (BHi)

### Psychoanalysis – socialism: Viktor Tausk (1879-1919) – Martha Frisch (1881-1957)

In 2016 a grandson of Martha Tausk-Frisch told us he would like to entrust the personal papers of his grandparents to the IISH. This was twelve years after a granddaughter had already presented the IISH with a substantial accrual to the personal papers, which after Martha's death had been transferred to the IISH by the son of this Austrian socialist. A report on this 2005 accrual appears in *On the Waterfront* Issue 10, pp. 7-8, strongly emphasizing Martha Tausk. This is perfectly understandable, as Martha Tausk was a prominent Austrian social democrat, as well as an early advocate of women's rights. In 1918 in Graz she became the first and only woman delegate in the Provisorische Landes-Versammlung, later the Styrian Landtag, in which she had served from 1919 to 1927. She also served on the board of the Allgemeine Arbeiter-Krankenkasse in Graz. Later she worked with Friedrich Adler (1879-1960) in Zürich for the Sozialistische Arbeiter Internationale (SAI) until 1934. Back in Austria from 1935 to 1939, being politically active became increasingly difficult. In 1939 she emigrated to the Netherlands, where her son Marius had been working for a while. She made it through the Second World War without serious difficulties. After the war she helped Austrians in the Netherlands. Austrians had to prove that they had been on the right side and had not slipped in together with Seyss-Inquart's criminals.

This accrual is unusual in the abundance of material from her early years, much of it personal, also concerning her marriage to Viktor Tausk. They were married in 1900 and officially divorced in 1908. The couple had two sons: Marius was born in 1902 and Hugo in 1904. The family history provides an unusual glimpse of Belle Époque Austria-Hungary. Among the remarkable details: both Viktor and Martha originated from Jewish families. Viktor was of Slovak extraction, whereas Martha was Viennese, although her family was of Galician and Czech origin.

Martha's parents had her baptized Catholic, but she later converted to Evangelical Lutheran. Upon marrying Martha, Viktor did likewise. Although Viktor read law in Vienna, he completed his education from Sarajevo, where the young couple had settled after Mostar. Viktor supported Slavic nationalism and became proficient in Serbo-Croatian. Following their divorce, they returned to Vienna. Around the end of the marriage, Viktor sought a new destiny. In 1907 he was in Berlin, hoping to hone his skills as a journalist. Then in 1909 he embarked on a new course of study in Vienna: Medicine. He soon became fascinated with the rising psychoanalysis and was among Freud's devoted students. After completing his studies in 1913, he was hired at the psychiatric clinic of the University



of Vienna. In 1915 he was incorporated into the Austro-Hungarian army. As such, he interacted extensively with servicemen suffering from war neuroses. In some cases they deserted, in others they refused to serve. He applied his skills in law and psychiatry alike to defend some desperate cases before the court martial. Viktor Tausk started to write about these topics. His greatest substantive contribution to psychoanalysis, however, is his article "Über die Entstehung des "Beeinflussungsapparates" in der Schizophrenie," in which he describes a type of schizophrenia where the patient is certain that he is being controlled by devices emitting secret waves. This idea reverberated extensively in various circles, especially in science fiction. After the war he became intensely involved in Freud's circle. Like all psychoanalysts, he was to undergo analysis himself by a senior fellow professional. In his case that most certainly would have been Freud, who refused and referred him to Helene Deutsch, at the very moment that he was treating her himself. Reports about Tausk's relationship with Lou Salomé did not make Freud any more inclined to accommodate his student. He forced Deutsch

**Proof of registration University of Vienna 1908**  
Inv.nr. 273

**Mourning card Viktor Tausk 1919**  
Inv.nr. 276



Call for a Public Meeting, 1 November 1942. Inv. nr. 40

to suspend her analysis of Tausk. This intrigue of suspicions and emotions ultimately led Tausk to commit suicide. He was not alone: 17 people in Freud's circle took their own lives. The case of Victor Tausk is a cause célèbre in the history of early psychoanalysis and has been written about extensively. *The Freud Encyclopedia: Theory, Therapy, and Culture* reports that everything Tausk left behind was destroyed, as decreed in his final will and testament. But this does not appear to hold true for his correspondence with his wife Martha. Wonderful primary material about this fascinating history is now in Amsterdam. (HSA)

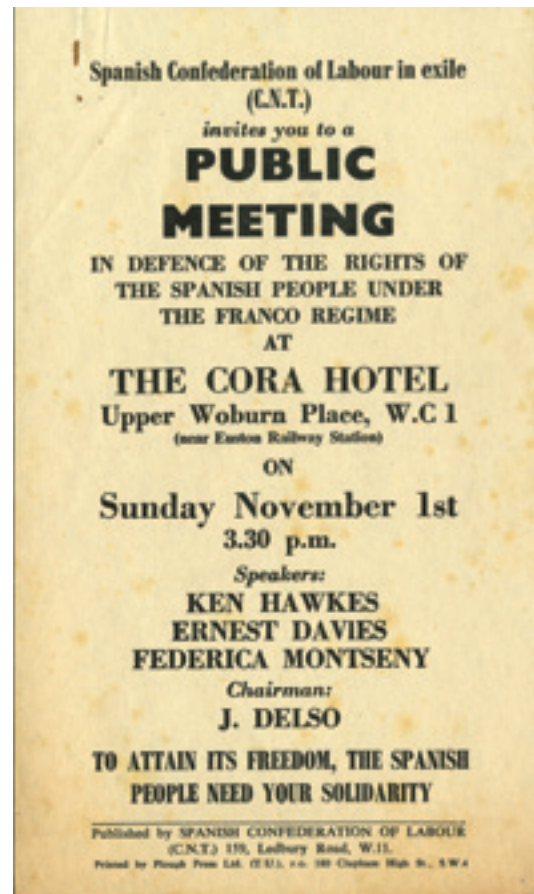
### Joaquin Delso de Miguel, a Spanish militant who ended up in England

In the autumn of 2016 two large crates containing archive materials from England were delivered to the IISH. These were the papers of Joaquin Delso de Miguel, a Spaniard who spent over half his life in England. The IISH received the papers from Delso's son Adrian. See: <http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCO4479>.

Delso was a Spanish militant who was part of the FAI executive. The Federación Anarquista Ibérica (Iberian Anarchist Federation) is a Spanish organization of anarchocommunists and anarcho-syndicalists active within the CNT, the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo. As the Spanish Civil War neared its end, with Franco emerging as the victor, leftists and Republicans fled to avoid languishing in the prisons of the general's regime.

Delso de Miguel was born in Soria, a town in the homonymous province in the north of Spain, in October 1913. He died in Poole on the south coast of England, in January 1987. In 1934 he became the secretary of the FIJL, the Fédération Ibérique des Jeunesses Libertaines. During the Spanish Civil War he was active within the FAI and the FIJL, including serving on the FIJL Regional Committee in Catalonia. The secretary of this Regional Committee was his lifelong friend Fidel Miró (1910-1998). Throughout the Civil War, Delso also wrote for various periodicals issued by the movement. From March 1939 Delso was involved in the National Committee of the Movimiento Libertario Español (MLE) based in Valencia.

Identity paper CNT. Inv. nr. 3



At the end of the Civil War Delso fled to safety and ended up in England. By April 1939 he attended meetings in London, with e.g. Mariano Rodríguez Vázquez (1909-1939) in an effort to unite the many groups claiming to represent the MLE/CNT outside Spain. In London Delso teamed up with other Spaniards. Between 1946 and 1948 they ran the periodical *Reconstrucción*, of which at least 12 issues were published. In 1960 Delso was among the British representatives at a CNT reunion congress in Limoges, France. He had by then married his English wife Cynthia Mildred (1917-2011).

The archive contains correspondence and all kind of texts: typescripts, stencils, reports of meetings, etc. Delso corresponded mainly with his fellow combatants, who had fled Spain, as he had. He was regularly in touch with Fidel Miró, who had settled in Mexico. In January 1985 Miró wrote Delso from Barcelona, addressing him as his 'Querido e inolvidable amigo' (Cherished and unforgettable friend). This typed, four-page letter is packed with information. At the end, Miró asks whether Delso ever visits Spain. After all, his sister still lives there. Miró does not expect to travel to England. The two probably did not meet again. Delso passed away two years later, in 1987. Several letters remain from Elisa Delso de Miguel, who sent them to her brother in England from Barberà del Vallès near Barcelona from 1982 to 1987. There are also documents from the CNT de España en el exilio, about the Intercontinental Secretariat of the CNT, and about the British chapter of the CNT.

A great many archival documents are from



the Civil War period (i.e. from 1936 through March 1939). The provisional conclusion is that this is original FAI archive material. Twenty-two crates of FAI archive materials are known to have reached London on 3 May 1939. Most crates ended up with Arthur Lehning, who had gone to London as the representative of the IISH in 1939. However, three crates were held by Spanish exiles. Documents were taken from these crates, presumably also by Delso. Over 75 years later, the FAI documents from Delso's estate were reunited with the FAI archive. In December 2016 news arrived that the CNT and FAI archives would be digitized as part of the Metamorfoze project. The FAI documents held by Delso, most of them bearing FAI stamps, may be digitized as well, once they have been arranged. The archive received from Delso spans 0.5 metres; about half consists of Delso's personal papers and the other half of FAI documents. (BHi)

**Construction workers, painters and wood workers. The archive of the Christian Wood and Construction Union (HBB-CNV).**

The archive of the Christelijke Bouw- en Houtbond (HBB-CNV, Christian Wood and Construction Union) is a classical trade union archive. The IISH already held part of this archive, but 75 metres were added to it in 2016, neatly arranged in over 600 boxes listed in an excel sheet. All relevant topics are addressed: internal disputes and merges, strikes and actions, CLAs, minutes, and membership lists.

The HBB-CNV was formed in the early 20th century from several small Christian trade unions: the unions for carpenters, construction workers, and painters. The exact start date is difficult to pinpoint. The Bouwbond [construction trade union] celebrated its fortieth anniversary in 1948. Following the merge with the wood workers' trade union in 1955, the origin was dated in 1900, when the trade union for carpenters was established. As result, the trade union celebrated its centenary in 2000.

Few materials remain from the early years. The best source is the commemorative album from 1933, as several old documents are copied there. The largest group of documents is from the late 1930s. The archive also contains many documents from the chapters, including some older minutes from meetings, such as a book of minutes from the Harlingen chapter (1908). The IISH collections also hold copies of the periodical for Carpenters and Woodworkers *De Opbouw* since its launch in 1906.

A wealth of important materials remain from 1939-1942, at least from the



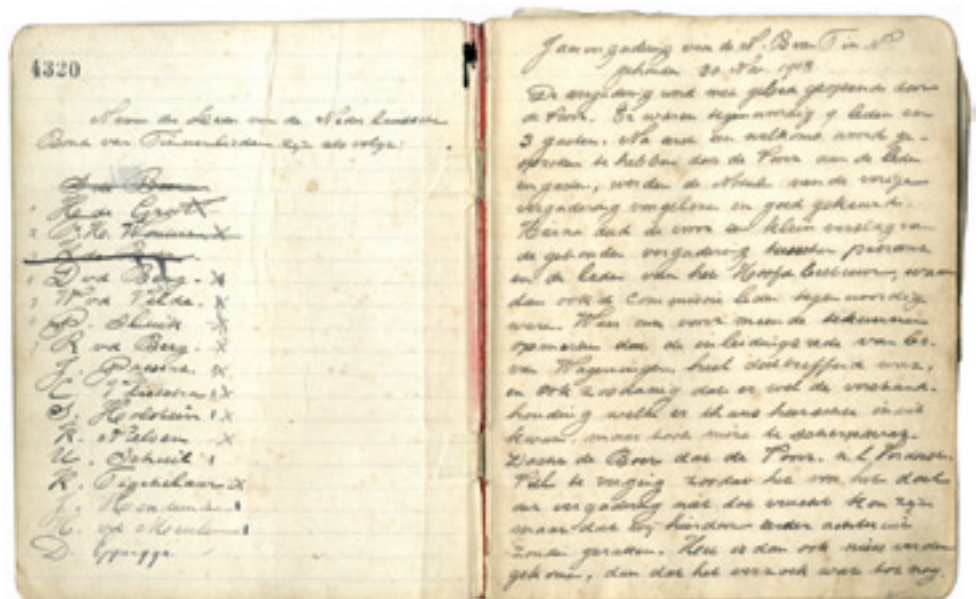
Bouwbond. They conveys the run-up to the war, as well as how the union gradually came to be controlled by the forces of occupation. Since the Christian unions refused to cooperate with the forces of occupation, the CNV trade union confederation was abrogated in July 1941. The executives of the Christian Bouwbond resigned as well and urged the members to cancel their membership. Many of these appeals and discussions are reflected in the archive, as are the lists of members who left the union. In many cases this decision was difficult, because the trade union also offered unemployment insurance. Especially in this industry, where work was seasonal, fewer cancelled their membership than in the other CNV unions.

Immediately after the war, talks started about merging the construction with the carpenters' union, as reflected in many discussion files and reports. The tasks and work sites were closely related, and they belonged to the same international confederations and were too small to accomplish much on their own. From 1954 the talks intensified, and the new NCB trade union was formed in 1955.

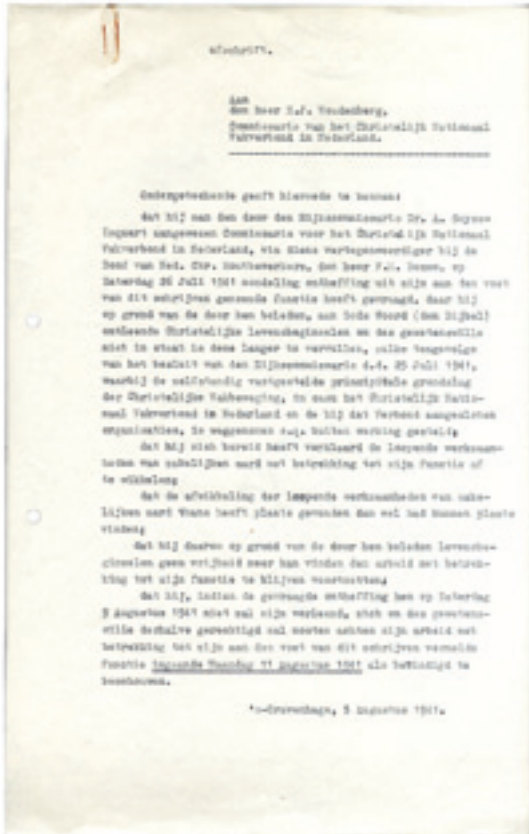
In the 1950s the Netherlands experienced unprecedented economic growth, even resulting in a labour shortage. At the same time, the gov-

**Postcard 'Spain today', published by the National Confederation of Labour of Spain in Exile, Liaison Committee in Great Britain. Inv.nr. 40**

**Harlingen chapter book of minutes, 1908. From the archive of the Christian Wood and Construction Union, accrual 2016.**



**Letter to the forces of occupation, 1941. From the archive of the Christian Wood and Construction Union, accrual 2016.**



ernment rigidly controlled wage policy. Wages hardly increased, and purchasing power did not grow at all. Trade unions in the construction industry therefore staged actions, demanding a 5 % wage increase, a shorter working week, and more vacation days. Employers were willing to accommodate these demands and intended to pass on the higher costs to their clients. Since the government prohibited the latter, employers rejected the agreement as well.

Although the HBB-CNV was not inclined to call a strike, it had to join the others and supported the major construction industry strike of March 1960. The records reflect the course of the strike day by day, including reports to members, ultimatums, and newspaper clippings. After the strikes had dragged on more than two weeks, the demands were met.

The merge in 1955 was not the end of the process. The archive also reflects extensive discussion about closer partnerships with the NVV, which did not materialize in the end. Still, the merges within the CNV continued. The first merge of carpenters and construction workers resulted in the CNV Bedrijvenbond (Christian National Confederation of Industries) in 2009. (EdR)

**Bahir Dar Textile Factory: Staff archive**

The capital of Amhara Province is in Northwest Ethiopia. In 1961 a textile factory opened there, thanks to the war compensation that Ethiopia received from Italy. When the factory opened, 360 men and 203 women worked there. By the late 1960s, the factory employed 1,900. Peak employment was 3,000. Nowadays 1,300 people earn

their living there.

The factory was an important battleground during the run-up to the revolution in the 1970s, including internal opposition to the moderate central leadership of the trade union. The staff was regionally diverse: the workers from Shewa, Eritrea, and Tigray were mainly skilled labour. Local Amharans were more likely to do unskilled work.

Working conditions at the factory were by no means exemplary. Inspection by the ILO revealed that child labour was used. Labour unrest was rampant in the 1960s and 70s. A warehouse was even set on fire. A report from USAid about the factory in the 1990s describes the firm as lossmaking and ailing between 1993 and 1996 (see: [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pnabz738.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnabz738.pdf)). According to recent reports, the factory is once again turning a profit. Clearly, the factory has been and remains very important in this city. Detailed analysis of workers and labour relations here would make a wonderful case study for modern social history of developing Africa. This site is excellent for highly focused research on the first wave of industrialization in an African nation.

Our Africa specialists discovered the factory almost by chance. Andreas Admasie and Bahir Dar University had been discussing other matters. The university consulted us about setting up an Africa Studies Centre. Then the factory and the archive surfaced in the discussion. This turn proved very fortunate. Stefano Bellucci has been on the lookout for staff archives for some time. And here was an excellent specimen that was moreover in good condition.

A project team was assembled comprising one member of the factory staff and three from the university. The University assigned a project supervisor. In the factory two more – and sometimes even three – people from the archive were involved. Marien van der Heijden trained them,

**Ethical factory instructions**





and Andreas visited the project once a month.

This support from the university was indispensable in carrying out the project. The factory manager was also essential. As an academic, he looked forward to teaming up with the university, and, given that the factory was to be taken over by the state, he believed it was a matter of public interest as well.

Over the course of the project, Ethiopian politics came into play. The factory was to be privatized, and the local party fund submitted the winning bid, despite the amount being 25 % lower than the runner up from a private operator. This suddenly explained the party flags that the IISH had noticed hanging in the factory a few weeks before. For 13 months, starting in March 2015, the archive was scanned day after day, one page at a time. The result was a digital staff archive from an Ethiopian textile factory: 315,000 scanned pages, totalling 4,221 staff records (in TIF, pdf available) and comprising 568 GBs. (HSA)

### The PNR-PRM-PRI collection, 1930-1960

The course of obtaining this material directly violated Mexican regulations in the 1960s. Amazingly, the PRI state party, which by 1967 had already been in power for 37 years, granted me access to the PRI archive in the state of Tlaxcala, because the local PRI president, also a historian, was interested in my work about farmers' movements during the Mexican Revolution between 1910 and 1940. I was authorized to work in the archive of the trade union for industrial workers (the infamous CTM) as well and was given the key to the archive of the CNC, the PRI-affiliated official national trade union for farmers. Established at the order of President Lázaro Cárdenas, this CNC was required to absorb all individual farmers' unions. In some cases this led to serious clashes, including considerable coercion. All their archives had to be placed in the CNC one as well. I

received a key and was allowed to go about my work unsupervised, although all this was against official regulations. I could have copies made of anything I wanted, which my assistant (a Mexican coed student) did day after day. The archive was in deplorable condition; the warehouse had no lighting or furniture, and chickens were running around everywhere.

I obtained much original material (i.e. not copies) from the personal papers of the politician Ruben Carrizosa, who had served in the Congress and the Senate and was president of the PRI and the CNC in the state where I was working. By 1967, already seriously ill, he invited me to his home to select the items I wanted in his courtyard. I found dozens of packages filled with correspondence, as many politicians took the archive sections relating to their activities home with them. While this procedure was of course unauthorized, it was commonplace. I later told the director of the state archive that they should try to acquire this material from Carrizosa, who was terminally ill. Since my advice went unheeded, the collection has now been lost, except for the items I selected.

The material is important, because over the past twenty years several publications have revealed that between 1934 and 1940 President Cárdenas became a hero among farmers and workers thanks to social legislation and land reform. He is also credited, however, with merging the many existing trade unions of workers and farmers – through coercion if necessary – in two confederations to be controlled by the state via the party. In the late 1930s in the most important district of the large landowners, Carrizosa was responsible for organizing the farmers to demand land and served as the mediator between the authorities and the landowners. Mexican land reform was a maze of political intrigues, and Car-

**Andreas Admasie in the archives**



**Message to the peasants regarding a nature reserve, 1938. From the PNR-PRM-PRI collection, 1930-1960**

Propaganda poster for Felipe Mazarrasa, about 1950. From the PNR-PRM-PRI collection, 1930-1960



rizosa was pivotal. Some of the material in my collection has already been used in publications about this process in the state of Tlaxcala, where large landownership and also the textile industry abounded. I published my work on this topic outside Mexico, because I did not want to cause problems for those involved (now deceased). After all, several of the former landowners still retained substantial holdings and later served as governor of the state.

What does this collection contain? Correspondence from the state party there (the PNR-PRM-PRI), from its trade union for industrial workers, and from the trade union for all farmers and agricultural workers (1937-1954). These documents instruct farmers to obey the president by joining the State party farmers' union. Other items include official circulars for meetings and elections, membership lists for different communities, and the like. There is also a wealth of material about industrial conflicts, as the CTM generally resorted to hostile means to take over the opposing unions. Agrarian conflicts erupted not only between landowners and farmers but also between farmers and small family businesses, as they wanted this land as well.

Binder 5 is very interesting. It contains the copies from a delegate (later a senator), who is requested to help assemble the farmers in the state trade union to prevent them from voting for candidates from the opposition in the 1940 and 1946 elections. He was one of my most im-

portant sources.

Binder 6 contains the personal papers of Carrizosa and reveals the extent of his *camarilla* (personal cronies), and contacts with large landowners, who want *quid pro quo*: they will surrender some land but want to retain a lot, which happens and greatly angers the agricultural workers, who are viewed by the village farmers as unwanted competitors. This situation gave rise to a great many conflicts, which the landlords cunningly instrumentalized.

There are also some interesting complaints from 1930 to 1950 by *ejidatarios*, small farmers who had already been given land as part of the land reform in the 1920s, and are demanding more land. They believed that the land held by small farmers had to be expropriated as well. While the land reform had already been completed, the farmers also wanted the legally protected remnants of large landholdings and of small family businesses. (Raymond Buve)

### Egyptian communists in exile and Henri Curiel

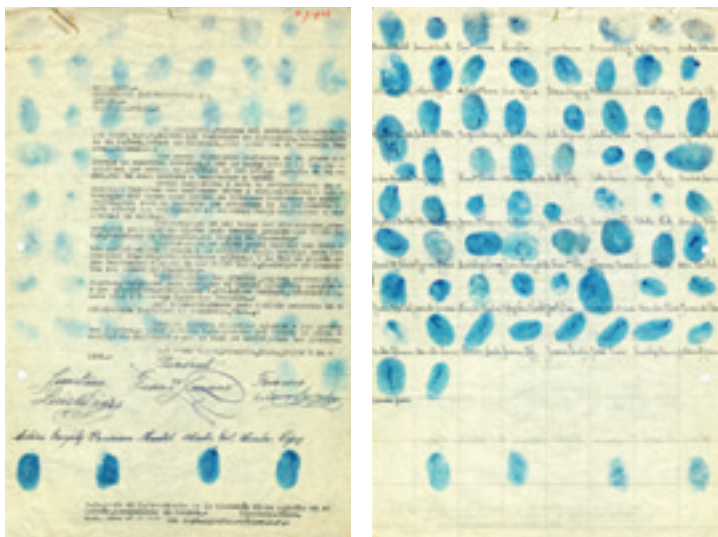
In 1992 the IISH obtained the collection of Egyptian Communists in Exile. In 2016 and 2017 the IISH received modest accruals. See: <http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH01722>. On this and other Egyptian collections also see *On the Waterfront* 23 (2012), 10-11.

The communist movement in Egypt was founded in 1922 and was revived after the Second World War, when the Egyptian Movement for National Liberation, led by Henri Curiel, merged with some other groups. In 1948 and during the years that followed, many of their leaders, who were often of Jewish extraction, were arrested and expelled from the country. Egyptian communists were active in the demise of the Egyptian monarchy in 1952 and at first supported the new regime under Gamal Abdel Nasser.

In these different times, activists of Jewish extraction were involved in Egyptian politics. The most notable among them was Henri Curiel, born in Cairo in 1914 to a Jewish family, originating from Spain and Italy.

Once Egypt was controlled by Nasser, Egyptian communists were no longer significant forces. Curiel shifted his efforts to the Algerian cause and supported the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN). Later, Curiel co-founded Solidarité, a solidarity group with the anti-colonial resistance

Letter of peasants to the government of Tlaxcala, 1936, signed with fingerprints. From the PNR-PRM-PRI collection, 1930-1960



movements in the Third World. The IISH holds the archive of this group as well. See: <http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH01986>.

Curiel was assassinated in Paris on 4 May 1978. He was buried in the cemetery Père Lachaise. Various conspiracy theories circulated following his death. The IISH holds a copy of the Canal Plus documentary *Qui a assassiné Henri Curiel?* The accrual received in 2016 from Roger Esmiol includes documents about the investigation into the assassination of Curiel and possible obstruction by the French secret service. The investigation revealed only that Abu Nidal's Palestinian group might have been responsible for the assassination. Documents from the Préfecture de Police and the solicitor for Curiel's heirs offer a different impression: a far-right European network, revolving around the former Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (the OAS) and causing death and destruction in France and Algeria in 1961-1962. A world rife with obscure pseudonyms but also specifically a meeting believed to have taken place in Lérida, Catalonia in March 1978 to plan the assassination of Curiel. The Delta Commando, an old OAS cell, claimed responsibility for the murder. In 2015 the memoirs were published of the former French mercenary and militant nationalist René Resciniti de Sais (1951-2012), who murdered the left-wing activist Pierre Goldman (Lyon, 1944) in 1979 and may have fired the shots that killed Curiel as well. The solicitor William Bourdon then tried to reopen the case, as requested by the family.

The IISH received the second accrual from Joyce Blau, a French expert on Kurdish language and culture, who worked closely with Curiel. Also born in Cairo, she was personally involved in the movements mentioned above, such as Solidarité. This accrual comprises 10 video tapes, e.g. of the *Journée commémorative Henri Curiel* on 30 May 1998, as well as a thick file documenting political oppression in Egypt in the 1950s and early 60s. Some letters to the Algerian President



Henri Curiel

Ahmed Ben Bella are especially remarkable.

In a letter dated 21 June 1962 Henri Curiel, Joyce Blau, 'and exile' Didar Fawzi, and others address Ben Bella. Thanking him for intervening with Egyptian President Nasser in favour of Egyptian communists incarcerated for supporting the FLN, they urgently appeal to Ben Bella again. In Egypt so many of the original combatants remain, who fought against the British, against King Farouk, and presumably against Nasser too, and are surely being held under horrific conditions. They are far from their families in prisons in the middle of the desert. Some have languished there for 14 years. Could he intervene once more? Enclosed with the letter are some lists of male and female inmates, indicating their levels of higher education. There is also a letter dated 22 November 1962 from the solicitor Michèle Beauvillard, urging Ben Bella more vehemently to try harder to help the inmates. Whether Ben Bella complied with their request is unclear. At any rate, the correspondence, lists of names, and other documents enrich our knowledge about repression in Egypt under Colonel Nasser. (BHi)

## Lectures

### Trade union history and the IISH: Reviving an old friendship

**The Friends of the IISH gathering on 26 January 2017 was dedicated to research and collecting initiatives about the illustrious history of the trade union movement.**

IISH General Director Henk Wals opened the event. He noted that both the trade union movement and history scholarship need new historiography about trade unions, especially on the period since 1980. Historiography entails historical analyses, as well as stories addressing different target groups, written as articles, books, newspaper columns, web pages, course modules, videos,

podcasts, etc. The need for new historiography in the trade union movement relates to analysis of recent history, which yields useful new insights about changes in society and the position and methods of the movement in its quest for renewal. Second, historical awareness among members and executives is conducive to inspiration and a sense of common identity. Historical scholarship is dedicated mainly to three objectives: 1. filling a gap in Dutch trade union historiography since 1980; 2. placing the role of trade unions more prominently on the agenda in research on work

and labour relations; 3. making the research worthwhile for society and social partners. Henk presented a pyramid depicting the activities: at the base are 'archiving and digitization.' Next are a few 'oral history projects.' Step three is to devise tools for digital analysis. All this may be used to conduct research and will culminate in a series of finished products. Henk spoke about the oral history project, which would start with an interview with Wim Kok.

Below are the contributions to this successful afternoon from Frank de Jong, Matthias van Rossum, Karin Hofmeester, and Eric de Ruijter. All their activities figure in the overall context described and clearly convey vibrant research and collection development. The plethora of activity in this field is a joy to behold!

## Trade union archives

### Lecture by Frank de Jong

Spanning over 6 linear kilometres, of which 4.5 kilometres of Dutch materials, trade union archives are well represented in the IISH collections. Large sections of these archives have yet to be disclosed, however, including nearly 2.5 kilometres of FNV and 500 metres of CNV materials, which still need to be arranged, packaged, and inventoried. Since the mid-1990s paper archives have slowly but surely been disappearing from sight and are making way for digital-borne archives. To safeguard against overlooking the transfer of digital archives, which do not block our path the way paper archives do, the Collection Development Department launched the Digital Archives Acquisition project in 2016. Our visits to the CNV and FNV reveal that substantial digital archives have been formed, but that considerable paper remains in the archive areas as well. The CNV still has over 200 metres of paper archives, primarily from the *Bedrijvenbond*, as well as a substantial accrual from the *Hout- en*

*Bouwbond* that has been entrusted to the IISH [see elsewhere in this issue]. The FNV is in the midst of clustering and the upcoming relocation to a new head office in Utrecht. Five locations are being emptied, and at least 700 metres of archives are worth adding to the IISH collection in due course. Lately a lot of work has been done with FNV staff to identify the different sub-collections of *ABVAKABO*, *Bondgenoten*, *Bouw*, *KIEM*, and the *Vakcentrale*, along with the corresponding costs of arranging and performing inventories of these collections. On Friday 17 March the IISH and FNV signed a covenant regarding the vast archive of the federation. In the covenant the FNV aims to ensure that the entire paper archive is made accessible. The most important archive documents will be digitized and posted on the IISH website. In addition, agreements have been reached concerning incoming digital-borne archives.

## Exploring History: the trade union movement

### Lecture by Matthias van Rossum

The trade union movement faces major challenges. Not only in the Netherlands, but virtually all over the world, trade unions have had to cope with rapid and major political and economic changes over the past forty years, ranging from globalization, a weakened welfare state, unemployment, to changing production and other technologies and more flexible labour relations. All over the world, trade unions have struggled to hold their own amid all these changes.

At various points, these challenges have given rise to explicit reflection about the role and strategy of the trade union movement. In addition to internal debate, major changes in procedure, course, and organization have resulted. In the FNV, for example, strategy questions were highlighted in the report in 1987, the merge of FNV *Bondgenoten* in 1998, the *ABVAKABO* FNV executive elections in 2010, and the merge of the FNV trade unions in 2014. This reorientation took place in a changing political landscape amid major shifts in world perceptions of citizens and public awareness of trade union work. The ideological frameworks that were dominant until the 1980s made way for more individualist approaches in the 1990s. Starting in the late 90s the neo-liberalism of that decade was harshly criticized, while issues were presented in new contexts, often focused on direct (social-economic) problems experienced at the workplace or in daily life. In trade union work in this period old and new methods were compared, sometimes under the influence of international examples, such as the *organizing* method introduced in the second half of the decade after 2000.

This recent history of the Dutch trade union movement has yet to be examined extensively, despite the opportunities that this period offers

Director Henk Wals introduces the afternoon. Photo Jacques van Gerwen



to raise awareness about the challenges facing trade unions and the answers they have formulated. The objective of the project *Historische Verkenningen Vakbeweging* is to conduct a preliminary study on the recent history of the (Dutch) trade union movement. It is part of the alliance between the FNV and the IISH to promote research on the historical rise of the trade union movement in the Netherlands. The purpose is to explore the historical development of the practice, constituents, and position of the trade union movement in recent decades (circa 1980-2015), based on trade union archives that have not yet been examined. The central project question is how trade unions in recent decades have formulated answers to new challenges relating to globalization, precarization, and changing employership.

## New projects relating to an old treasure

### Lecture by Karin Hofmeester

The archive of the Algemene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerders Bond (ANDB, General Dutch Diamond Workers Union) is being digitized thanks to financing from the Metamorfoze project. This vast (72 metres) and richly diverse archive comprises documents on the trade union as an organization as well as about the lives of individual members. Digitizing the archive enables us to display our old treasure to a large audience, as well as to embark on new research.

The ANDB was founded in 1894 following a massive strike in the diamond industry and was an immensely successful trade union for several reasons. The organization succeeded in forging unity among the diamond workers, despite enormous internal differences between occupations and the prestige and income associated with them. The trade union was a tightly run ship, with a professional and paid executive deploying actions dedicated to resolving conflicting interests as much as possible. Dues were collected effectively, ensuring that the trade union had a full strike fund to stage successful actions. The ANDB became the first trade union in Europe to introduce the eight-hour workday (1911) and a week of vacation (1910). The high dues enabled the ANDB to pay benefits in the event of strikes, lockouts, sickness, and childbirth. In addition, binding wage agreements were reached with employers, and the closed shop system was introduced. Finally, the trade union was known for addressing art, culture, and general development. This is visualized in part in the lovely trade union building designed by Berlage. November 2019 will mark the 125th anniversary since the ANDB was established. In recognition of this event, we are working on several plans, including a very nice web presentation based on all membership cards entered of both the ANDB and the Algemene Diamantbewerdersbond België (ADB). This will be a joint project with our affiliate institution AMSAB. Project financing will come from the Mondriaan fund. This web presentation will offer the generally interested public the opportunity to search



for family members who worked in the diamond industry or to check whether diamond workers lived on their street. Fifteen life stories will be highlighted and illustrated with photographs and archive documents. Researchers will be interested to learn the share of female members, the share of Jewish ones, the occupations in which they worked, whether they were socially and/or geographically mobile, where they lived (whether or not it was near a polishing plant), whether they moved often, as well as: how often they went on strike, and whether they received benefits. The data entered are linked with other data sets whenever possible, such as the Historical Sample of the Netherlands (HSN), the Amsterdam population register, and the Digital Jewish Monument.

In addition to the web presentation, plans are under development for exhibitions, a book, discussions, and debates.

## Digitizing audio collections

### Lecture by Eric de Ruijter

A cassette player from the 1970s now almost seems like an antique, after 40 years. While cassette tapes can often still be played, their quality is rapidly deteriorating. Audio and video technology are advancing very quickly, and carriers and formats follow one another in rapid succession. This presents a serious problem for a historical collection such as that of the IISH, because all these variations end up in the collection at some point. In addition to the audio cassettes, there are mini cassettes, audio tapes, LPs, and CDs. Aside from the erosion, we almost need an arsenal of players available to ensure access for researchers.

Digitization is an important solution for the IISH, on the one hand to preserve this collection in the long run, on the other hand to facilitate use by researchers nowadays. We are especially pleased that we have digitized over 1,500 audio and video items (especially audio cassettes) in the past year

**Front row speakers**  
Karin Hofmeester,  
Matthias van Rossum and  
Frank de Jong  
(right to left).  
Photo Jacques van Gerwen

**Eric de Ruijter** talks about digital audio. Photo Jacques van Gerwen

with a donation from the Friends. This is thanks to Mrs Liesbeth Laman-Meijer, who in her final will and testament left us a substantial amount. Presently, ca. 5 % of the total audio-visual collection has been digitized.

In the project vulnerable, important, and unique collections have been selected over the past year. Most were cassette tapes containing oral history or interviews. The audio cassettes have been digitized on each side at high resolutions (.wav), and a user copy (.mp3) was made and the carrier photographed. Next, the files were stored in the digital repository and the collection descriptions enhanced. Finally, the description in the catalogue with the mp3s was made available, if permitted under the copyright.

See e.g.: <https://search.socialhistory.org/Record/COLL00164>

At the end, question arose as to what was to be done with the actual tapes, now that the content had been stored. We have decided not to discard the carriers yet but to store them efficiently, so that they may be retrieved if necessary.

This marks the end of the project, although options for use by researchers remain limited. They still have to be played from start to finish to check whether they are usable. We need tran-



scriptions at least to enable searches or recognize concepts. The automatic transcription is making huge progress, especially if we are able to offer comparable vocabularies (from other sources) as well. The IISH is keeping up with advances here but will not be developing anything on its own. Ultimately this resource will need to be included in the IISH infrastructure to enable better oral history research, for example on changes in modern trade union history.



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