internationaal instituut
voor sociale geschiedenis

On the Waterfront

newsletter of the friends of the IISH 2020 no. 39

Atlantic slavery and Dutch GDP
The impact of a report

The photographs of Norah Smyth

Lecture and interview: World shops in the Netherlands

Introduction

Cover photo: Cover of account book from 1760 of Vossenburg and Waijampibo plantations in Suriname. IISH Coll. ARCH03520, folder 17, http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH03520

In the past half year the IISH has been abuzz with activity. The most striking one was an event that occurred on 26 June in a packed Nettlau Room at the IISH: the presentation of a study on the economic impact of slavery in the Netherlands during the eighteenth century. A team under the aegis of IISH researchers Ulbe Bosma and Pepijn Brandon resolved a longstanding debate on the importance of slavery for the Netherlands. Did slavery sustain the economy or was its importance relative, as Professor Emeritus Piet Emmer continued to insist? The question proved challenging. Gathering a huge quantity of data and performing extensive calculations, the research team determined that slavery accounted for about five percent of the Dutch gross domestic product around 1780. This is comparable to the share of the Rotterdam harbour in the Dutch economy today, so slavery carried substantial weight. The study featured on the front page of the NRC *Handelsblad* and on the Dutch TV programme *Nieuwsuur*.

Following this publicity, the City of Amsterdam asked the IISH to submit a proposal for a study on the role of the city in slavery. Pepijn Brandon's plan for a preliminary study, scheduled for completion in July 2020, was approved by the city and is expected to lead to more expansive research.

Another presentation was similarly encouraging. On 24 May we presented the interviews we conducted with former trade-union leader Lodewijk de Waal. The resulting six hours of video footage are a valuable historical source for research on labour relations in the fourth quarter of the twentieth century.

The Dutch employers' organization VNO NCW agreed to fund a project in which we will interview their former chairpersons and directors. A total of 36 hours of recordings are planned. The employers' project will be launched in January 2020.

We have agreed with the FNV trade union confederation to conduct a research project on the transformation of work in recent decades and its consequences for workplace relations and organized solidarity. The FNV is providing most of the financing for this study, which will be conducted by the young historian Rosa Kösters. If all proceeds according to plan, she will take her PhD degree on this research.

The Dutch slavery history and the recent transformation of labour relations are both topics in which the IISH demonstrates its academic and social involvement.

Henk Wals

About the Friends

Members of the Friends of the IISH pay annual dues of 25, 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 Friends coordinator 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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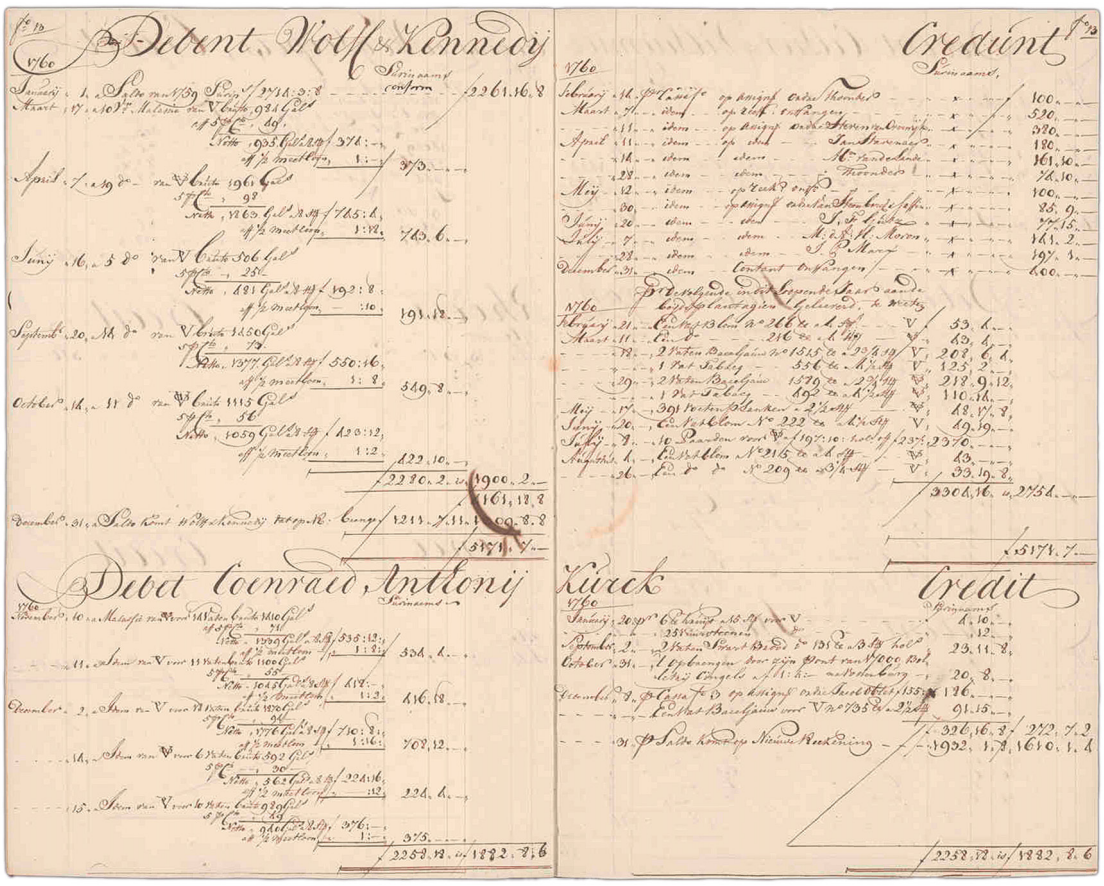
On “The share of Atlantic slave-based activities in the Dutch GDP in the second half of the eighteenth century” and the impact of a report

Four researchers spent five years examining huge stacks of documents to trace the exact share of slave trade in the economy of the Dutch Republic. They concluded that the slave trade and the trade in slave-produced commodities were far more lucrative than previously believed. “Amsterdam was the hub of that colonial trade” (https://www.at5.nl/artikelen/195057/amsterdam-was-spil-in-omvangrijke-nederlandse-slaveneconomie).

The history of slavery is steeped in emotions and controversy. The slave trade was a humanitarian catastrophe and remains a dark chapter in the history of many West-European countries, including the Netherlands (https://maritiemportal.nl/een-zwarte-bladzijde-gewogen-presentatie-van-het-onderzoeksrapport-slavery-26-June-2019-iisg-amsterdam/). This tumultuous history is once again at the centre of historical and social interest. The authors made sure not to tread on thin ice and based the report, published on 26 June 2019, on very careful research about the significance of the Atlantic slave trade for the Dutch economy in the second half of the eighteenth century.

It all started in 2014, when Marcel van der Linden (International Institute of Social History), Karel Davids (Free University), and Henk den Heijer (Leiden University) launched the large, NWO-funded slavery project *Slaves, commodities and logistics. The direct and indirect, the immediate and long-term economic impact of eighteenth-century Dutch Republic transatlantic slave-based activities*. The title immediately revealed the objective. The research was conducted by Tamira Combrink, Gerhard



Page from account book from 1760 of Wayampibo, and Vredesteyn plantations in Suriname and British Guyana. IISG ARCH03520, folder 17, http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH03520

de Kok, Karin Lurvink, and Pepijn Brandon. By examining archival materials in detail, slavery-related economic activities in the Netherlands in the second half of the eighteenth century were meticulously identified.

The four researchers gathered data in many different archives on the quantity and proceeds of different flows of goods, commercial activities, and financial services based on slavery in the Atlantic region. Sources included the NEHA collection of plantation archives from the Vossenburg, Wayampibo, and Vredesteyn plantations in Suriname and British Guyana (https://search.iisg.amsterdam/Record/ARCH03520). This collection has been digitized and is therefore accessible online to all. All these data have yielded various publications, which Pepijn Brandon and Ulbe Bosma described in brief in their report on 26 June.

Understanding the overall economic significance of those proceeds obviously requires total figures on trade, the financial sector, or domestic production. Brandon and Bosma used the computational model devised by Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen to calculate the Gross Domestic Product of Holland during the early modern period. Based on a great many figures, estimates, and other calculations derived from the sources, they methodologically justified their comparison of the figures for each sector of the economy with the available knowledge about the size of the early modern economy. In some cases this required several intermediate steps, which explains the thirty-page annex accounting for all calculations (see Annex in https://www.tseg.nl/articles/10.18352/tseg.1082/).

Coloured engraving of slaves working on an indigo plantation, c. 1850. Collectie Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, NG-2013-22-19

Before publishing their results, the authors presented them to a panel of experts. Because this material is so sensitive, they wanted to ensure that their research would not be dismissed over an error in calculation or interpretation. They also verified the definitions applied. In May 2019, experts from the Netherlands and abroad on the history of slavery and the slave trade met to discuss the draft report. The authors were questioned at length by specialists, such as Cátia Antunes (Leiden University), Sven Beckert (Harvard University), Joseph Inikori (University of Rochester), Silvia Marzagalli (Institut Universitaire de France), Gad Heuman (University of Warwick, executive editor of the journal *Slavery & Abolition*), Kwame Nimako (Universiteit van Amsterdam), and Guillaume Daudin (Université Paris-Dauphine).

Once general agreement was reached about the conclusions, the authors submitted the report as a scholarly article to the editors of *TSEG/Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History*. While Brandon discussed the findings on the NPO television programme *Nieuwsuur* the article was posted online simultaneously at https://www.tseg.nl/articles/10.18352/tseg.1082/. Its abstract reads: "This article presents the first methodologically substantiated calculation of the importance of activities deriving from Atlantic slavery in the Dutch economy in the second half of the eighteenth century. In this period the Dutch Republic was one of the most advanced commercial societies in Europe. This economy relied heavily on importing, processing, and exporting commodities produced by slaves, such as sugar, coffee, and tobacco. In fact, 5.2 percent of the Dutch Gross Domestic Product and 10.36 percent of the GDP in Holland (the wealthiest province in the Netherlands) was obtained through slave labour in 1770. In the period studied, about 19 percent of Dutch trade concerned products cultivated by slaves in the Atlantic region. These high percentages resulted from the leading role of the Netherlands – and especially the province of Holland – in distributing commodities produced by slaves. This chain extended from supplying slave ships in the Netherlands, via the slave trade and the plantations, to transporting tropical products to Europe and processing them in the Netherlands and exporting them to the European hinterlands. The supply chain connected the Netherlands not only with Dutch colonies, such as Suriname, but also with other plantation colonies, such as the French colony Saint-Domingue.

Altogether, the enormous influx of coffee, sugar, and tobacco produced by slave labour accounted for approximately 120,000 human-years of forced labour on plantations in the Atlantic region. By comparison, the active population in the Netherlands did not exceed one million around this time. Growth of this trade opened up Rhine commercial activity with the German hinterlands and supported Holland during the economically depressed second half of the eighteenth century. The shipbuilding and processing industries benefited as well. In this period fully 40 percent of the

From left to right: Ulbe Bosma, Marjolein Moorman, Martine Gosselink, Linda Nooitmeer, Pepijn Brandon and Noraly Beyer, during the presentation of the research report "The share of Atlantic slave-based activities in the Dutch GDP in the second half of the eighteenth century", 26 June 2019

total economic growth of the province of Holland was attributable to slave labour."

With nearly 2,000 downloads to date, the article and the research results have clearly elicited immense interest. In addition to featuring in one of the major news shows on Dutch television, the results were covered in various other radio and television programmes. All national dailies in the Netherlands and Flanders ran reports about the study, often even as headlines.

This interest was also reflected at the presentation of the research results at the IISH on Wednesday 26 June 2019. In addition to historians, the turnout of about 150 included representatives from museums, politics, and education. The guests of honour were Marjolein Moorman, Amsterdam alderwoman of education, Linda Nooitmeer, president of the Nationaal Instituut Nederlands slavernijverleden en erfenis (NiNsee), and Martine Gosselink, head of the Rijksmuseum History Department. Following the introduction by Brandon, they engaged in debate about the significance and scope of the report. Under the structured and pleasant guidance of Noraly Beyer, they concluded that the study has demonstrated that the role of Atlantic slavery in the wealth of the Netherlands can no longer be trivialized. Nooitmeer may have found the message somewhat ambiguous, because the descendants of those who were enslaved have known this for quite a while.

At the same time, the interpretation of the results has been cause for considerable controversy as to: what is a large, and what is a small share. Brandon had already noted emphatically that the share identified of more than five percent of GDP – and certainly the ten percent for Holland – was very substantial in 1770. He quoted from a source from the 1730s "Memorie betreffende de Colonie Suriname", published by J.G. van Dillen, "that no working man (…) was to be found in Amsterdam, who is without some benefit from this Colony" (J.G. van Dillen, "Memorie betreffende de kolonie Suriname", *Economisch-Historisch Jaarboek 24* (1950), 162-167).

Henk den Heijer and Piet Emmer (Leiden University), prominent critics of historians who describe Dutch slavery as a dark chapter, were less impressed. In their response in *De Groene* they indicated that careful study revealed an economic effect hardly any greater than they had previously believed, "but that arguing that Atlantic slavery had underpinned the Dutch economy [was] absurd. Such a statement lacks any scholarly foundation." (https://www.groene.nl/artikel/op-een-klein-kurkje-kan-een-land-niet-drijven)

The main conclusion of the study presented on 26 June is that in 1770, trade in commodities produced by slaves accounted for 10.36 percent of GDP in the most economically important province of Holland and 5.2 percent of the entire economy of the Dutch Republic. The next question is how exceptional or representative the year 1770 was. The researchers reveal that with respect to the value of trade flows in slave-produced commodities, 1770 qualified as representative of a year in the second half of the eighteenth century. They present additional data in their article to substantiate that in several years Atlantic slavery accounted for an even larger share in the Dutch economy as a whole than it did in 1770.

In their study, the authors emphasize that not only products from plantations in Suriname and other Dutch colonies reached the harbours of the Dutch Republic. The products arriving also included sugar and coffee from plantation complexes of other European powers. "Especially the French colony Saint-Domingue, presently Haiti, was an important place of origin", explains Brandon (https://www.groene.nl/artikel/na-de-zweep-de-welvaart). The study also demonstrates that not only the elite in cities such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Middelburg, and Vlissingen earned income from activities based on slavery; urban middle groups of artisans, bakers, and captains benefited as well.

Altogether, about twenty percent of all goods entering and being re-exported through Dutch harbours were obtained through slave labour in the Atlantic region. In total, Brandon and Bosma calculate, 120,000 slaves were forced to work on the plantations for the entire year to produce this flow of goods: a compelling figure. The study makes clear that so much more was involved than purely economic activities and abstract figures and data. *Slaves, Commodities and Logistics* relates the suffering of those who were enslaved on plantations in European colonies to Dutch profit margins, whippings to prosperity. The study demonstrates that, even though not every

Dutch citizen was directly involved in plantation slavery, all inhabitants of the Dutch Republic encountered the effects of Atlantic slavery directly or indirectly.

Brandon emphasizes that they are aware that this project is important for Dutch society. "We wrote it in English but have published the Dutch edition first. This concerns a broad social debate, and as scholars we have a duty to look beyond our own peer group. We wanted to infuse Dutch society with this knowledge." The English edition of the article in TSEG will appear next year in the leading journal *Slavery & Abolition*.

Astrid Verburg

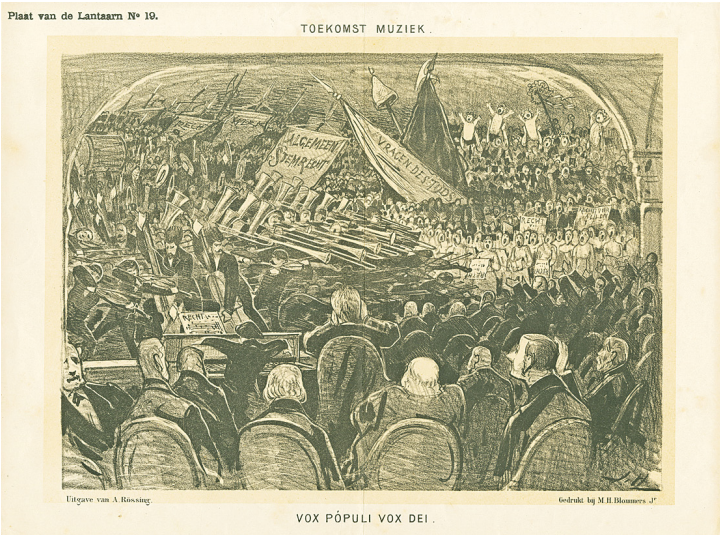
Thirty-Ninth Friends Day, 27 June 2019

Presentation of the acquisitions

Prints by Jan Holswilder

A collection of prints by the artist Jan Holswilder was recently catalogued and digitalized: https://search.iish.amsterdam/Record/coll00587. The thirty-three prints belong to the collection of the former Press Museum, now merged with The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision. The prints were originally produced for the satirical journal *De Lantaarn*.

Starting with the fifth issue of this journal, which launched in 1885, Holswilder produced a full-page lithograph every fourteen days. When these prints were published, the editors wrote: "Henceforth *De Lantaarn* will feature images highlighting the singular nature of individuals and situations, without 'malice or deceit' but also without a cowardly fear or weakness." The drawings by Holswilder for *De Lantaarn* depict a series of well-known contemporaries, such as the author Conrad Busken Huet and the painter Anton Mauve. His satirical prints for the journal were mainly about political issues, such as the desire for universal suffrage and divided opinions in the House of Representatives. The prints are distinctive, compared with the work of contemporaries. In his work, Holswilder reflects no undue courtesy toward politicians.



"Toekomst Muziek" [Still in the future]. Print by Jan Holswilder, 1886. IISG COLL00587.

Contemporary art critics expressed appreciation for the work of Holswilder, even equating it with that of Albert Hahn and the French artist Honoré Daumier. His work did not, however, become anywhere near so widely known among the public. Following some articles in the early twentieth century, Holswilder was rarely mentioned in publications. In 2015 this silence was broken, when the lengthy article by Henk Slechte: "De vergeten spotprenten van Jan Holswilder" appeared in the journal *De Boekenwereld*. The artist is also covered in the recent publication *Tussen politiek en publiek* on political prints published between 1880 and 1919.

Jan Holswilder was born in Leiden in 1850 as one of eleven children and found his first job as an office clerk. He painted, taught drawing, and produced satirical prints but also earned his living as a lithographer at the firm S. Lankhout en Co. He designed advertising materials and imprints for cigar boxes of this company. Contemporaries described him as a jovial, talented man, who was forced to accept many non-creative and unartistic commissions to make ends meet. A letter reveals that Holswilder had to support his entire family.

Works exemplifying his style are: "Zifting van de Tweede Kamer" and "Toekomst Muziek", published in 1885. The latter print depicts the huge demonstration to expand suffrage. On the foreground of this print a rear view appears of the heads of several politicians, on plush upholstery seats. The politicians are watching a procession of musicians and demonstrators making a tremendous racket on their deafening march to show that times are changing. Minister De Savornin Lohman is depicted with his distinctive pointed nose. Seated diagonally in front of him is Prime Minister Heemskerk, covering his ears with his hands to avoid hearing the sound of the future. In the crowd a red flag is discernible, as

well as a Frygian cap, symbolizing the French Revolution. One of the signs carried reads *Recht voor Allen*, the periodical of the social democrats. The music symbolizes a change of tune: at the demonstration, which actually took place on 20 September in The Hague, music had been prohibited by the City Council of The Hague, because the demonstration was on a Sunday.

On his prints Holswilder frequently conveys the surrounding ambience to highlight the message and liven up the scene. They are dynamic, feature frequent movements and vivid strength; theatrical techniques are used to highlight contrasts; the House of Representatives is turned into a stage of actors, the Binnenhof court is transformed into a circus.

That these works have lapsed into oblivion is somewhat understandable. The prints tend to be concealed in journals and concern political themes that may be difficult to fathom for viewers today. In addition, the quality varies, as the art critic Jan Veth wrote in an article about Dutch artists in 1891: "In his inferior work, he completely missed the point. In any case, the selection of his output, as I see before me, is by far the best available in Holland of this graphic art genre." (Harriet Stroomberg)

The small but dramatic archive of Jafar Vakili

The archive of the Iranian serviceman and communist Jafar Vakili is tiny. The nucleus of this archive consists of five original letters, written on thin sheets of paper from an Iranian prison.

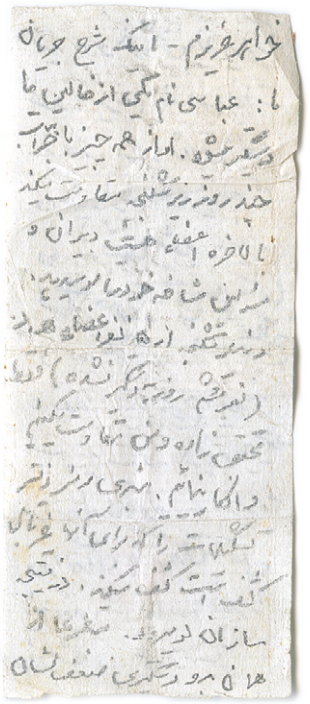
Jafar Vakili was born on 22 January 1923. From 1940 he attended Iranian military academies and advanced to the rank of major. In 1949-1950 he attended various training courses in the military, among others in mountainous areas in France. As a young officer, he acquired a sense of the West. But he embraced the ideology of the East, the Communist U.S.S.R. In the autumn of 1947 Vakili joined the Tudeh Party, the Iranian communist party. Upon returning from France, Vakili was elected to serve as one of the six Tudeh Party leaders. In 1952 Vakili met the woman he later married, and their son was born in February 1954. Meanwhile, the political tide turned in Iran, and Vakili was arrested on 25 August 1954. Like many other communist officers, he was subjected to severe torture before he stood trial. He was sentenced to death and was executed on 8 November 1954.

This event figures within the abrupt change in political relations in Iran. In August 1953 the democratically elected Prime Minister of Iran Mohammad Mosaddegh (1882-1967) was ousted in a coup. The democratically elected government was replaced by the omnipotent Iranian monarch Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, known to us as the shah. This coup, termed by the CIA as Operation Ajax, was instigated by the United States and was unprecedented in peacetime. The shah remained in power, until his regime was overthrown in the Iranian Revolution of 1979, following which Ayatollah Khomeiny came to power.

The coup of 1953 occurred in the context of the Cold War and the struggle for oil. Very much against the will of the Americans and the British, Mosaddegh had nationalized the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1951. The seizure of power by the shah in 1953 had major consequences for leftist Iranians and especially for Tudeh supporters. Overnight, communists became fugitives. In August 1954 Vakili was arrested.

The archive of Vakili (http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH04590) is very compact, consisting mainly of five letters he wrote to his wife Touran Mirhadi (1927-2016) between 26 October and 6 November 1954 on very thin cigarette paper. Other items include transcriptions and English translations of these letters and a few digitalized photographs.

During this ten-day period, his appeal against his sentence was pending, and the convict was allowed to receive visits from his family. Vakili had not informed the authorities that he was married and had a child. His wife visited him in prison, pretending to be his sister. The first letter therefore opens with "My beloved sister". When Vakili realized that his letters were reaching the outside world despite the authorities, he simply addressed the subsequent letters to his wife. He is candid in these letters and mentions torture, betrayal, love for his wife Touran and their new-born son Pirooz, the fate of his comrades, his loyalty to the party, and ultimately his imminent death.



Letter from Jafar Vakili to his wife, written on cigarette paper, 1954. IISG ARCH04590

The sixth and final letter, of which the original was given to Noureddin Kianouri (Hossein), a member of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party, is written on behalf of all officers who were executed and is addressed to the party leadership.

Touran Mirhadi survived her husband by sixty-two years. Her background was exceptional, because her father had studied in Germany from 1909 to 1919 and married the love of his life Greta Dietrich. From 1946 Touran studied educational psychology at the Sorbonne in Paris, among others with Jean Piaget. Upon returning

Jafar Vakili (second from the left) during his trial, 1954. IISG ARCH04590

to Iran, she became a pedagogue and expert on Iranian literature for children and young adult, remaining active even after 1979 in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In 2018 Pirooz Vakili, who has pursued a career in computer science in the United States and is affiliated with Boston University, arranged via IISH researcher Touraj Atabaki to entrust the five original letters his father wrote while on death row in Iran to the IISH.

This story reveals how recent Iranian history is marked by abrupt transitions in 1953 and in 1979, and how these changes determined the fate of many people and families. (Bouwe Hijma)

Portrait Estelle Sylvia Pankhurst, Recovering from hunger strike in East End in the house of Mrs. and Mr. Payne, 28 Ford Road, Bow. IISG Call Number BG A10/719

The photographs of Norah Smyth

In 1961 the Estelle Sylvia Pankhurst Papers marked the arrival of a great many photographs at the IISH (more were received in 1976). Some of those photographs were taken by Norah Smyth (1874-1963), who documented the work of the East London Federation of Suffragettes (ELFS), especially during the First World War. Although they had been catalogued individually, little more had been done with these photographs. This has now changed, peaking with an exhibition in London, and hopefully more to come. From November 2018 until February 2019, a vast series of photographs by Smyth from the IISH collection was highlighted in the exhibition *East End Suffragettes*: *The Photographs of Norah Smyth*, at the Four Corners gallery in East London. This was the first time the photographs returned to the place from where they had been taken over one hundred years earlier, after having travelled all over the world. They went with Sylvia Pankhurst from England to Ethiopia, and, thanks to the efforts of Julius Braunthal in Amsterdam, eventually reached the IISH.

A street in Bow where the ELFS took care of children. Photograph by Norah Smyth, IISG Call number BG A32/669

Norah Smyth was born into a wealthy family. Until she was in her thirties, she lived a quiet, protected life. In the early 1910s she went to London to join the suffragette movement. She became the driver of Emmeline Pankhurst (Sylvia's mother). But the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) of Emmeline and her other daughter Christabel increasingly opposed women's suffrage for the working class.

Smyth sided with Sylvia, by then a close friend of hers. In 1914 she joined Sylvia's East London Federation of Suffragettes (ELFS), which had broken with the WSPU. This federation was far more of a workers collective than that of Emmeline and envisaged radical change of British society: a socialist element was added. The ELFS added red to the suffragette (and WSPU) colours purple, white, and green.

The ELFS organized demonstrations, speeches, and other public events. Community initiatives were started as well, such as a restaurant providing meals at cost-price, childcare centres, and a toy factory. The ELFS was also closely involved with factory strikes. Turbulence was commonplace: the police, or even dissenting audiences, sometimes even harassed the demonstrators. For a brief period, this led the ELFS to train members in self-defence techniques in a true "People's Army".

Within the movement Smyth was the silent force, in contrast to the public manifestation of Sylvia Pankhurst. The photographs by Smyth clearly attest to this silent force.

Smyth, together with Pankhurst, was one of the important women behind the ELFS journal *The Woman's Dreadnought*. She even secretly invested her own inheritance in the project to launch the journal. This was necessary, as advertising space proved difficult to sell for such a politically biased organization (the no-frills layout of the journal may in fact have conveyed its powerful message still more forcefully, as argued in *East End Suffragettes: The Photographs of Norah Smyth*, 53). Smyth became the journal's dedicated photographer.

When Smyth started taking photographs remains unknown, but her style became noticeable soon after her arrival in London. An example is a very intimate photograph of Sylvia recovering after a hunger strike in 1913. During the preceding years, photography had advanced enormously, and by then pictures could be taken outside a studio: daily life could now be captured in photographs taken on the street. Smyth was moreover ideally positioned for this mission. As a photographer, she could go about her business within the community unobstructed. Smyth's work thus yielded unique snapshots of everyday scenes, but not from the perspective of an outsider. The photographs were intimate and by no means idealized.

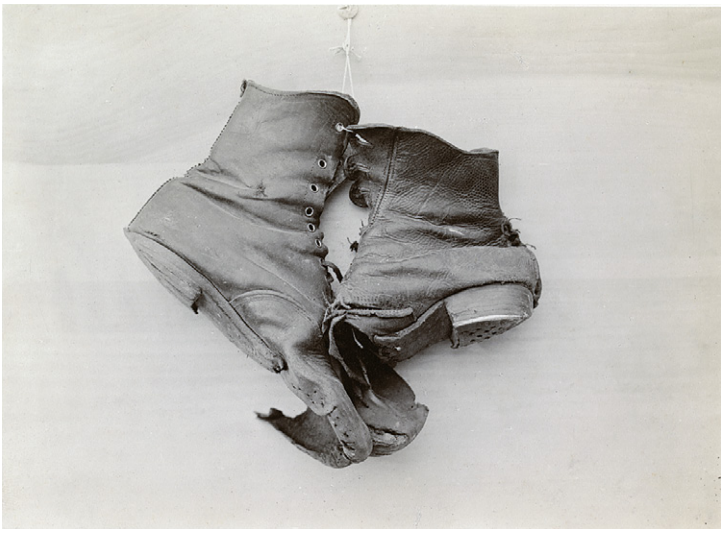
In *The Woman's Dreadnought*, which in 1917 was renamed the revolutionary-socialist *Workers Dreadnought*, the power of Smyth's photography was increasingly explored and thereby exuded greater appeal. For example she used stark contrasts in her photos, such as dark boots against a white background. These featured perfectly in the half-tone newspaper prints. Often these kinds of photographs needed enhancement before publication. Over the years Smyth's photographs figured ever more prominently in *The Woman's Dreadnought* to ensure an appealing front-page layout (*East End Suffragettes,* 51-53).

Smyth was of course not the only photographer in the suffragette movement, but others adhered far more closely to conventional techniques. They worked from their studios (taking portrait photographs) or specialized in capturing major events.

Smyth regarded her photographs as part of her political activities, she did not necessarily consider herself a photographer by occupation. As a consequence, Smyth was never credited for her photographs in *The Woman's Dreadnought*. Some were even resold anonymously to larger periodicals. Did this bother Smyth? Nothing suggests it did. However, one could argue that Smyth never received the recognition she deserved as a photographer.

Smyth's work strengthened the political message of the ELFS. Her work, whether or not she was aware of this, was highly innovative and inspiring. Her photography represents a movement in which women took charge of their own history (*East End Suffragettes*, 39).

In writing this article, I benefited from the exhibition catalogue of the Four Corners gallery *East End Suffragettes: The Photographs of Norah Smyth* (London, 2018), with contributions from Carla Mitchell and Helen Trompeteler.
(Thijs van Leeuwen)



"Boots! We are starting clothes... at our centres". Picture published in *The Woman's Dreadnought* of 3.10.1914. Photograph by Norah Smyth, IISG Call number BG A32/502

First cost-price restaurant in the Women's Hall in Bow. Pankhurst is the third woman at the left table. Photograph by Norah Smyth. IISG Call number BG A32/671

brings back…

Twice a year I travel to Southeast Asia as the IISH curator for the Asian collections to collect materials for the Institute. In May 2019 I journeyed to Thailand (where I always start my travels in the region), Taiwan, and Indonesia. Earlier this year I had made a separate trip to Sri Lanka, which is not covered in this report.

The trip to Indonesia was supposed to be very brief, simply to meet with our new representative for the country, discuss his work for us, and see whether we were on the same wavelength. In addition, his plan was to entrust materials collected from the May 1 rallies in Jakarta to us, mostly banners from Kongres Aliansi Serikat Buruh Indonesia (KASBI, an Indonesian trade union alliance) and the Serikat Buruh Perkebunan Indonesia (Indonesian Plantation Workers Union) from Sumatra. Though short, the trip was certainly eventful. I quote from my travel report:

"I was fully aware of the location, when I decided to book the same hotel as on my last trip, conveniently situated near Sarina mall and the Election Commission's office. In hindsight this may not have been the wisest choice. As we approached the hotel, it was obvious that rallies were already in progress. Like me, the taxi driver was unaware that the Election Commission had decided to announce the election results a day early to avoid mass unrest. So people already gathered at the 21st [of May], and I had to walk the last 50 or 100 meters to the hotel. After checking in, I went out on the street to experience what at the time was still joyous. People shook my hands, asked me where I was from, smiled etc. I seemed I to be the only foreigner, but I did not feel I was in any danger. After spending about an hour among the crowd and having a soto ayam, I returned to my hotel, put a chair in front of the window and enjoyed the view. Everything was fairly quiet until 11 or 12 pm. Neighbourhood imams had negotiated the departure of the protesters, but they were replaced by a generally younger crowd of more feisty partygoers who started to pick fights with the police behind the barricades in front of the EC office. This continued intermittently for about two hours, after which the police finally managed to drive back the protesters, many of them into my street. Teargas and fireworks abounded, and the unflagging energy of the demonstrators suggested that the teargas was not very strong … but I was mistaken. The shooting continued throughout the night, and the fighting moved in the direction of Abang station at the end of my street. The next morning it became clear that six people had been killed. Of course the police was quick to state that these rioters were not locals but were on the payroll of Prawodo, the opposition candidate who had been defeated and immediately contested the results. To support this claim the police had stopped an ambulance from Prawodo's party, in which they found bags of stones and bags of money …

The next morning after breakfast I was supposed to meet xxx at my hotel. At some point he called me to report that he was blocked at Sarina mall. There was a police line and he could not proceed. I looked out my window and saw the police were relaxing, lying in the street, having a kretek or a snack; only the shields still lay in formation. So I told xxx to ignore the police and just walk through. Since he was unable to do that, I had to go pick him up. The moment I left the hotel, the stench of teargas overwhelmed me. Although it had been a few hours since the last canister was fired, the odour lingered … Anyway, I crossed through the police lines to Sarina, found xxx, and, frequently shouting 'permisi, permisi', we waved our way back to the hotel. After talking for an hour or two xxx needed to leave, but on reaching the lobby discovered that the hotel was in lockdown. The exit was barricaded with barbed wire. Security refused to let us leave, until they understood the absurdity of denying a guest permission to leave, when it was completely quiet outside. Still, they refused to allow me out and forced me to stay inside. At some point the police left their posts for no clear reason. Gradually crowds returned to the Thamrin – Wahid Hasyim intersection, and as the night progressed the scenes from the previous night started to repeat, only this time earlier in the evening. Around 2 am the riot police finally appeared on the Thamrin side of my street, firing teargas continuously. Then suddenly from the left a young man was dragged along the street by two apparently plainclothes policemen, who dumped him in front of my window and left him there. The young man was bleeding profusely from a head injury. I was overcome by a sense of panic, wondering what I should do. Should I go down and help him? I knew the hotel staff would never let me go outside, I knew nothing about first aid, and the street was teeming with menacing police officers … At least I could record it. I grabbed my camera, switched on the video mode, but had difficulty focusing. Then I tried to use my mobile phone. That worked, pressed against the window and recording. In my hurry I had forgotten to switch off the light, so I was clearly visible from the street. What followed was unpleasant and depressing. The young man simply bled to death, nobody lifted a finger to help. On the contrary, somebody looked around to make sure the victim could not see him and beat him with a stick; later people turned his body over and removed his wallet. To identify him? Or were they common pickpockets? After a few minutes he suddenly moved his legs, a clear sign he was still alive, and then he tried to sit up but soon fell over. This happened a few times. Still nobody gave a damn. Then somebody threw a white plastic sheet over him. Soon afterwards the sheet was removed and the young man dragged away out of my sight. Had I witnessed a summary execution … Was this the seventh casualty in these two nights of rioting?

After I stopped recording, I went to considerable effort to erase my traces: uploading from my phone to the cloud, downloading to my computer, transmitting it to friends in Holland, then deleting it from my phone and laptop. The next morning we heard we were being evacuated to

Union vests of the Eva Airways Union, Railway Workers Union, and Taiyuan Flight Attendants Union from Taiwan. IISG Collection

another hotel from the same chain, further south on Thamrin. The stench outside was overpowering, and Jakarta streetcleaners were cleaning the street with water, as if nothing had happened. Early in the day broadcasts still reported only six victims (the body count from the first night), but I had seen Number 7 (who I later learned could have been Number 8). I grew still more nervous: was a cover up in progress?

In the afternoon I met xxx and spoke with her about the event the night before. I promised I would send her a copy [of my recording] as soon as I was back in Bangkok the next day. After speaking with her and with Marien, I decided to go public with the file and sent it to two human rights organizations in Jakarta."

The visit to Thailand yielded several new collections, as well as some nice visual materials, including the hand-printed election banners from the Commoners' Party (พรรคสามัญชน = Phrrkh ss̄āmạỵ chn). The Commoners' Party is a new political party in Thailand. Founded in March 2018 by two grassroots activists, its stated objective is to elect poor people to the parliament, not to represent them but to let them speak on their own behalf. The party's symbol is "=". Some of my friends are active in this party and donated old election banners (they did not make it into parliament in the May 2019 elections). Some banners were also recycled into bags. Thai election law requires stating who produced the election posters (which need to be cleared away after the elections, leading many tarpaulins to be re-used by slum dwellers as parts of the roof) and the print run. Examining the bottom of the banners reveals that they were produced in a print run of 150 copies.

As for the collections, we received the (digital) archive of activist Patchanee Kumnak (Thai Labour Campaign / People's Coalition Party, both organizations have ceased activity) and have been promised a collection of interviews with Thai exiles who choose to remain abroad to avoid prosecution under the draconian lèse majesté laws in Thailand. Since the content of some of these interviews is sensitive, and because several exiles have already been abducted and murdered, those who assembled the collection (which arrived very recently) chose to keep it outside Thailand. We have also been promised another small collection with original manuscripts that led to prosecutions in Thailand, although the ongoing negotiations prevent me from elaborating on them.

The visit to Taiwan has a bit of a history. I previously visited this country in 2005 as part of a general effort to see where in Asia the Institute should or could become active. The decision taken at that time was to forego Taiwan (and Korea) and to concentrate on Southeast Asia. Then, almost ten years ago, an American scholar activist from Taiwan visited the IISH for her research and commented on the obvious lack of collections on Taiwan at the Institute. I tried to explain the underlying reasoning; now, ten years later, I decided to follow up and contacted her again to let her know I planned to visit Taiwan. This week-long visit, thanks to diligent work by this scholar activist, was packed with appointments with different organizations on labour, human rights, and environmental issues, ranging from

Poster of the Thai Commoners' Party, which reads: "Number 29 / Being old without fear / Pensions for all / The ideology of the Commoners' Party / Grassroots Democracy / Human Rights / Equitable Justice. IISG Collection

Bag of the Thai Commoners' Party, with the visualization of the three principles: the hands, the equals sign and the balance (of justice). IISG Call number BG P2/555

academics to radical activists, from longstanding organizations to very new ones, from museums to trade unions. In keeping with the tradition in Taiwan of extending a warm welcome to visitors from abroad, I was inundated with materials. I was pleased that pictures I took almost fifteen years ago on my first visit could be shared with organizations that still existed.

One unexpected surprise was the unscheduled meeting with a number of relatively new trade unions who shared an office and were run mostly by young people (EVA Airways Union, Railway Workers Union, Taiyuan Flight Attendants Union). The Taiyuan Flight Attendants Union (an external trade union under the Taoyuan Confederation of Trade Unions (TYCTU)) was holding a plebiscite on whether or not to call a strike (concerning EVA Air cabin staff), with the result expected the very evening of our visit. On strike they went, and the strike lasted for seventeen days (until July 6), as the longest strike in Taiwanese history. Again, they were very eager to share materials, and we received a union vest from every union.

In addition to these acquisitions, we purchased books from local bookshops, book fairs and the like. (Eef Vermeij)

Lecture and interview 27 June 2019

Lecture by Peter van Dam, University of Amsterdam

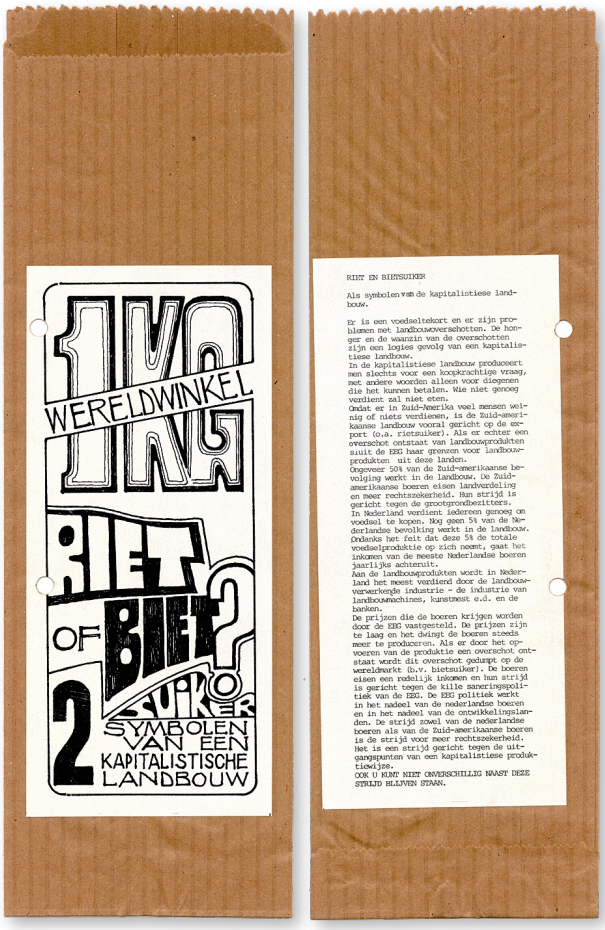
A stroke of luck? Securing a place for the history of fair trade

Not every day do I feel moved by a neat stack of boxes. As I stood in front of the shelves containing the archive of the Landelijke Vereniging van Wereldwinkels [National Federation of World Shops, LVVW] this spring, I felt both relieved and elated. I had discovered this essential material on the history of the fair trade movement in storage six years earlier. After it had nearly been thrown out last year, I was please to find it here, safe and accessible for future research at the International Institute of Social History.

The movement promoting fair trade emerged in the 1960s. Politicians and intellectuals from the Global South challenged the prevailing economic disadvantages for countries producing raw materials, of which market prices were declining in relation to finished products manufactured in industrialized countries in the North. The resulting economic inequality was ethically unacceptable, they argued, not just because trade regulations favouring wealthy nations perpetuated it, but also because economic dependency on raw materials in the Global South was the result of past colonial relations. Decolonization made this situation untenable and provided critics with a concrete argument to advocate change, because the newly independent nations could muster a majority in the United Nations General Assembly. This majority was leveraged to convene the first United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964. This widely publicized conference in Geneva, however, produced very little change. Despite thorough preparations and high expectations, the second conference in 1968 yielded a similarly disappointing outcome. At both occasions, representatives of Northern nations willingly discussed technicalities but declined to commit to structural reforms.

Faced with the unwillingness of their own governments to help bring about more equitable conditions for global trade, some citizens of nations in the North looked into new ways to raise interest in this issue. They concluded that for change to become possible, their own governments would need to be pressured into a more cooperative stance. Informing and mobilizing the public in the North could instigate such change in disposition. In 1968 a group of Dutch activists launched a campaign depicting cane sugar as a tangible example of the prevailing global inequality. Even though cane sugar – produced in the Global South – cost nominally less than the beet sugar from Western Europe on the world market, beet sugar was in fact cheaper in Dutch grocery stores. This was caused on the one hand by the import tariffs levied on cane sugar by the European Economic Community and on the other hand by European subsidies for beet sugar. Cane sugar was thus uniquely suitable for illustrating the inequity: people in the South were not lazy or poor by chance but faced poverty perpetuated by policies designed to benefit wealthy nations. Moreover, the cost of this inequity was passed on to Dutch consumers: in addition to missing out on the benefit of the low prices of cane sugar, beet sugar was being subsidized from the taxes they paid.

Local cane sugar campaign groups formed throughout the Netherlands. They sold cane sugar door to door, organized lectures and ral-



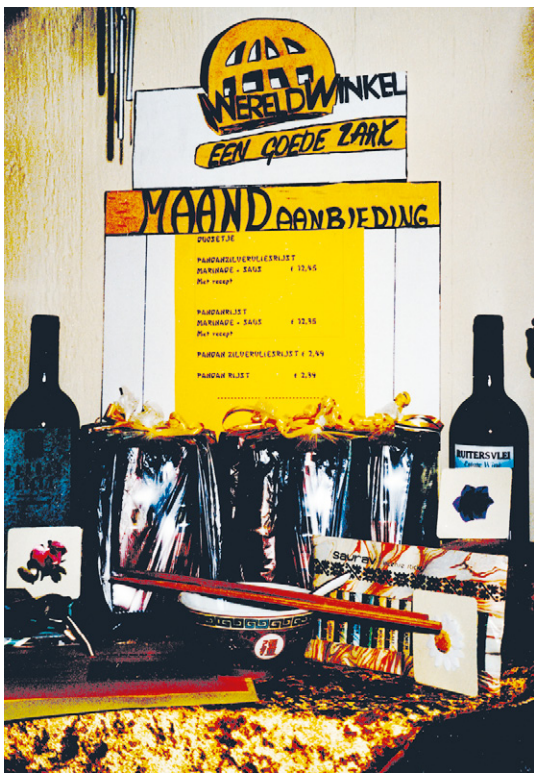
Front and back of a paper bag in which cane sugar was sold in the world shops. Collection IISG ARCH04716: 149

lies, and petitioned churches and councils to procure cane sugar instead of beet sugar. These activities were aimed at raising awareness about the structures of global trade, rather than at prioritizing selling as much sugar as possible on behalf of producers in the global South. The campaign groups connected people concerned with development, peace, international solidarity, and humanitarian action. Their backgrounds varied from moderate churchgoers to radical supporters of liberation movements. Soon, the campaign secretariat also reached out across borders, as the issue at hand was considered to be of interest in European politics. In the following years, the cane sugar campaign was extended to countries including the United Kingdom and West Germany. Despite several smaller coordinated actions, the campaign fell short of impacting European politics. Nonetheless, the resulting networks continued to enable a transnational flow of ideas and action repertoires.

The world shops (*wereldwinkels*) spread on the wings of the cane sugar campaign. Many local groups sought new opportunities for promoting fair trade. The secretariat coordinating the cane sugar campaign pointed them towards an initiative originating in the town of Breukelen. Teacher Johan Derks had started selling products from Southern producers there, calling attention to global inequality. The notion of a shop figured in the sense of a workshop, as the world shops were intended as local platforms for those concerned with a range of issues aimed at promoting a better world. Contrary to their current image as gift shops, many groups in the 1970s focused on campaigning and hosting meetings and often regarded selling products as a means to raise awareness about the issues they addressed. Many world shops did not have a store at their disposal and sold their products at market stalls or temporary stands in churches instead.

The model was quickly adopted across the Netherlands, and an official national umbrella organization was established in 1970. It was facilitated by the ecumenical activist group Sjaloom, which had also been a vocal presence in the cane sugar campaign and in many other campaigns concerning global politics in the late 1960s. Initially operating as a foundation, it was transformed into a more democratic federation in 1972. The resulting LVVW by then comprised 120 member groups. The model became so popular that the main product supplier, the Stichting SOS (now known as Fair Trade Original), could not keep up with demand. The model was also presented to activists in other countries at meetings that followed up on the cane sugar campaign initiative. Soon, the world shop was a European phenomenon.

Serving as local hubs for activism, world shops were pivotal in many notable campaigns in the 1970s. For example, their members were active picketing during the successful boycott of coffee from Angola, which was eventually removed from the shelves of all Dutch supermarkets. Gradually, the focus shifted from campaigning and publicizing the issue of global inequality to selling products to make an immediate difference. Since the



Temporary stand of a world shop. IISG ARCH04716: 240

1980s, professionalization figured prominently on the agendas of international meetings of world shops. Early hopes of achieving structural reforms quickly faded, as new rounds of international negotiations did not bring about significant results. Moreover, producers increasingly appealed to their counterparts in the North to take their products seriously. They pointed out that their livelihood depended on the sales, which became all the more pressing when Latin America was hit by a debt crisis in the early 1980s. As a result, world shop activists felt they needed to operate more professionally, addressing issues such as shop decoration, promotion, and sales techniques.

The same circumstances gave rise to new initiatives to promote fair trade. A new strand of activism emerged around the issue of clothing, leading the Clean Clothes Campaign to be launched. This effort made use of new global communications to establish a worldwide network addressing the injustices in the garment industry. At the same time, the campaigning organization Solidaridad introduced fair trade certification as a new means to promote the issue. Adopting a model applied in the ecological movement, Solidaridad defined a set of criteria for products to meet to be certified as fair trade products. The introduction of Max Havelaar certified coffee enabled such products to be sold outside traditional channels, as supermarkets could stock fair trade-certified coffee from any company that opted to apply for certification. Fair trade certification greatly enhanced the reach and visibility of fair trade, although it pressured the balance between activism and sales by offering fair trade products outside of the activist context of specific shops and stalls.

When Max Havelaar coffee was introduced in 1988, world shops reacted with mixed feelings. Some objected to working with the very supermarkets they had often targeted for unfair trading practices. After heated debates at the national assembly of the LVVW, a sizeable minority prevented their association from joining the board but nonetheless delegated an observer. Others regarded the introduction of fair trade products in regular stores as a milestone for the movement that had promoted these products for two decades. Members of the world shop in the town of Borne commented to a local paper that they welcomed this development, which would allow them to focus on what they regarded as their main task: educating the local public about global trade.

The world shops did not seem impacted by the introduction of certified coffee in the years that followed. Their number in the Netherlands soared to around 400 increasingly professional shops. Gradually, however, they declined and reached a state of crisis in the last ten years for several reasons. Like other local retailers, business became increasingly difficult for these shops. At the same time, world shops relied more on selling products, as subsidies from national and local institutions were discontinued during the 1980s and 90s. While their most popular products, such as coffee and chocolate, were also available in supermarkets, the crafts they had traditionally sold as well went out of fashion. Finally, the continued emphasis on selling products did not appeal to the younger generation of activists, who instead connected to initiatives such as the Clean Clothes Campaign. The volunteers at the base of the movement had aged and were struggling to keep shops running. As a result, the number of shops in the Netherlands has steadily declined over the years. The LVVW is now expected to cease operations in their present form at the end of 2019.

World shops have been pivotal in the history of the fair trade movement, anchoring the issue locally and connecting diverse groups of local activists by offering joint spaces and activities. The shops were a model for similar initiatives across the world and have figured in transnational exchanges throughout their existence. However, an archive is of little interest to many activist groups and civil society organizations beyond their responsibility to account for subsidized projects. When I called on the LVVW in 2013, my expectations were modest, even as I was invited to have a look at the material in their storage room. Finding an archive documenting the fair trade movement to its earliest activities felt like an incredible stroke of luck. Thanks to the

Left: Cover of the national bulletin of world shops, 1974.
IISG ZK 52730

Right: Cover of the magazine for world shop retailers, 2002.
IISG ZK 52730

efforts of former director Huub Jansen, the ASN Foundation, and the IISH staff, the material is now secure and neatly arranged in the stacks.

See also Peter van Dam, *Wereldverbeteraars: een geschiedenis van fair trade* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018) and Peter van Dam, "Moralizing postcolonial consumer society: Fair Trade in the Netherlands, 1964-1997", International Review of Social History, 61:2 (2016), pp. 223-248, available at https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859016000213.

Interview of Huub Jansen by Peter van Dam

The initiative to transfer the archives of the LVVW [National Federation of World Shops] to the IISH was decisively supported by Huub Jansen (1950), who was director of this federation from 1990 until 2015. Following the lecture on the history of the world shops, Peter van Dam interviewed him about his personal involvement.

You came to the world shops as an outsider. When and why did you start working for the LVVW?
I applied to work for the LVVW in 1990. They were looking for someone from outside the movement, someone who had business acumen and understood social activism. I fit the bill, thanks to my experience with social work and my consultancy firm for education and social work.

The course of the movement was hotly debated at the end of the 1980s. What was on the agenda when you became the director?
The LVVW had just lost its funding for youth work, because committed adults were the main drivers at that point. As a result, some of the original employees had to leave. Those remaining pursued three different approaches. All wanted political change, but some wanted to achieve that by organizing, others by raising awareness (primarily among women), and the third group wanted the world shops to be a grassroots movement.
The world shops varied enormously in the scope of their focus, from activism about development cooperation, through highlighting several issues that had been important topics for activists since the 1970s, such as environmental concerns, disarmament, nuclear energy, women's emancipation, etc.

Our understanding of world shops today has changed considerably from the world shops of the 1970s, which served as meeting points for local activists. How have the world shops changed during your time as director of the LVVW?
Before I started, the LVVW had prioritized selling fair trade products in world shops. In addition to dealing with sugar from an educational perspective, the world shops should enable sugar farmers to benefit materially from the sale of their sugar. Selling products would have to be combined with education and political action. Gradually, world shops became more commer-

Interior of a world shop, 1990s. IISG ARCH04716: 240

cially oriented. Twenty years after they opened, world shops were recognized as the best chain of gift shops in the Netherlands.
The focus on sales shifted attention away from education within the shops. Many world shops remained involved in educational programs at schools and associations, although support for political action declined among world shop volunteers. During the 2000s, however, world shops responded to their changing role by becoming the chief initiators of the Fairtrade Towns Campaign in the Netherlands. In many current world shops, the Fairtrade Towns Campaign has promoted awareness of and campaigning for fair trade.

World shops have been very popular since the 1970s. In the 1990s, there were 400 world shops in the Netherlands. Does the rapid decline in number since 2010 surprise you?
Although the decline does not surprise me, its speed does. Retail in the Netherlands has developed remarkably recently. The density of shops has been too high, and the 2008 crisis caused a sharp decline, whilst the internet was taking over a lot of customers. In many villages and cities, retail spaces were vacated. World shops have been affected by this development.

In addition, the world shops split up into two separate associations. The previous government discontinued subsidies for education about development cooperation. As a result, the LVVW had to abandon its projects aimed at educating young people. Without mutual relations among world shops and specialized support, the continuity of small organizations such as world shops becomes tenuous.

Over the years, world shops have been remarkably active reinventing themselves. What future do you envision for them?
The social activism of the world shops and the environmental movement have in my opinion raised interest in corporate social responsibility. Fairtrade products are increasingly available in supermarkets and gift shops.
A meaningful world shop can remain operational only if sales income covers basic expenses for rent, light, transport and the like. Selling a combination of fair-trade products with other socially responsible goods might work, as the so-called WAAR stores have done successfully. To get sustainability and global justice on the agenda, world shops will need to team up with like-minded organizations.