

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL  
DES SCIENCES HISTORIQUES



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES



A M S T E R D A M 2 0 1 0

21st International Congress of the Historical Sciences

Final Report to be presented to the Bureau  
of the International Committee for Historical Sciences  
in Helsinki on 13 May 2011.

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## 1. Introduction

In 2005, during the General Assembly of the *Comité International des Sciences Historiques* (CISH; International Committee of Historical Sciences, ICHS) in Sydney, the honour of organizing the 21st International Congress of the Historical Sciences was awarded to the Royal Netherlands Historical Society (*Koninklijk Nederlandse Historisch Genootschap*, KNHG), which proposed holding the congress in Amsterdam. The basis for this Dutch proposal had been established a long time previously. At the 1995 congress in Montreal, Professor Francois Bedarida – who was the secretary of CISH at the time – made an observation to his Dutch colleague and friend Hans Blom. While the Dutch historians had a long tradition of being consistently well-represented at CISH congresses, they tended to adopt a very reserved role. Perhaps it was time for the Netherlands to play a more active part in the CISH?

Professor Blom took this message to heart and, a short time later, he became chairman of the Royal Netherlands Historical Society, the representative body of CISH in the Netherlands. In his new position, he put forward the idea that the KNHG could take it upon themselves to organize the historians' international congress, held once every five years. This task required considerable time for preparation. Above all it was important to generate sufficient support among the historians who formed part of the Dutch organization and to secure sufficient funds. This time was available, since in 1995 the task of organizing the 2000 congress was given to Oslo, a strong indication that the 2005 congress would in all likelihood be held outside of Western Europe. This turned out to be the case, as Sydney was announced as the host for 2005. If the Netherlands was to stand a chance of taking on the mantle in 2010, it had to ensure that a strong proposal was in place by 2005.

The board of the Royal Netherlands Historical Society decided to accept the challenge of organizing the CISH international congress in the Netherlands. An informal survey revealed that there was indeed sufficient support for this initiative among Dutch historians. The KNHG established a special committee under the chairmanship of Hans Blom, which was charged with the task of preparing a more detailed proposal for the CISH. The highest priority at this stage was to find a solid financial foundation which would allow the proposal to proceed without incurring excessive financial risks. In the five years following the turn of the century, four main developments enabled this foundation to be laid. 1. The University of Amsterdam (UvA) agreed to extend its hospitality to the congress by making its historical buildings in Amsterdam city centre available (including the customary technical and staffing



facilities). 2. The National Library of the Netherlands (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek*, KB) in The Hague made a generous sum of €100,000 available as a guarantee subsidy. 3. A series of academic historical institutes in the Netherlands (mostly research and documentation institutes not directly affiliated with a university but also a number of university history departments; see Appendix 4) also proved willing to provide five modest amounts as guarantee subsidy between 2005 and 2010, generating a further sum in excess of €100,000. 4. It was also as good as certain that the *Harreveldfonds*, a foundation closely associated with the KNHG, would be willing to contribute a substantial sum. Based on these assurances, the committee and the KNHG judged that the foundation for a responsible budget for the organization had indeed been laid. For further details on how the congress was funded, please see Chapter 3.

With a view to the actual organization of the congress within a feasible financial framework, it was also very important that an agreement could be reached with the International Institute of Social History (*Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis*; IISH) in Amsterdam, and in particular its congress office, which had experience of organizing international congresses for historians. Another favourable development was the assurance given by Mayor of Amsterdam that the city's executive would be willing to host a reception for the congress participants in one of the city's buildings of historical interest. In addition, contacts – informal at this early stage – were established with other potential sponsors (from the government and semi-government sector, cultural foundations and the business community). This enabled a proposal to be drawn up for the CISH, which incorporated the above-mentioned factors and which, in line with the existing procedures, deferred to the leadership of the Bureau and Secretariat-General of the CISH as regards the content of the congress. On behalf of the Dutch government, the Dutch consul in Sydney supported the proposal by hosting a reception for the members of the General Assembly and the Bureau of CISH.

In 2003 the KNHG, in its capacity as Dutch national committee of the CISH, hosted the traditional General Assembly that takes place during the five-year interval between congresses (including the international symposium to be organized on such occasions). This too was a step in the preparation of the Dutch proposal for the 2010 congress. On Sunday 3 July 2005, the KNHG presented the actual proposal to the CISH General Assembly in Sydney and on Thursday 7 July 2005, the Assembly decided to accept the proposal. Amsterdam 2010 had become a concrete objective. The prospect of five years of hard work loomed ahead.

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## 2. The organization

After the formal allocation of the organization of the congress to the Netherlands (with KNHG as organizing body and the University of Amsterdam as location), a solid organizational structure needed to be put in place. To prevent interference and confusion in terms of responsibilities and finance, a foundation was established under Dutch law (hereafter referred to as Amsterdam 2010), under the chairmanship of Hans Blom. The four main parties to the foundation were also those with a key role in the preparation phase: the Royal Netherlands Historical Society (KNHG), the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the National Library of the Netherlands (KB) and the International Institute for Social History (IISH). This was reflected in the composition of the board. The board engaged the services of a number of advisors, some of whom were closely involved in the actual organization and some with expertise in particular aspects of the work. In practice, the formal board members and advisors functioned as a single local organizing committee (see Appendix 1).

Primarily through the chairman, the board consistently maintained close contact with CISH, which was responsible for the content of the congress (and which had also set the parameters for the organization). The chairman and board member Pim den Boer regularly attended meetings of the Bureau of the CISH to discuss the progress of the organization. In the five years between Sydney 2005 and Amsterdam 2010, the chairman also maintained very frequent e-mail contact with Jean Claude Robert, the Secretary-General of CISH. This frequent and frank contact also existed between the Secretary-General and Els Hiemstra, the head of the IISH congress bureau, responsible for the day-to-day practical organization of Amsterdam 2010. This intensive contact between Amsterdam 2010 and CISH was crucial to the smooth running of the organization. Chapter 4 contains more details on this aspect. The IISH congress bureau also maintained close contact with the Communication Department of the University of Amsterdam (Elles Baaijens and Kitty Jonker), which was able to draw on its own experience of organizing congresses in the university buildings. This cooperation was also very important to the success of the congress.

A number of tasks that were not central to the practical organization of the congress, but which were nevertheless of great importance, were handed over to separate committees operating under the auspices of the board. In the first instance, this involved setting up a solidarity fund for colleagues who would not be able to participate in the congress without external support. A successful sponsoring campaign was organized for this purpose and, in order to keep the considerable flow of funds clearly



and transparently separate from the general congress budget, an independent foundation called the Solidarity Fund for Historians – Amsterdam 2010 was set up. This Solidarity Fund was a great success: it proved possible to support 90 colleagues using the special subsidies generated, considerably more than ever before at a CISH congress. Please see Chapter 6 for further details.

The board also appointed a special subcommittee for the opening and closing sessions of the congress, since they were to have a distinctive character and in terms of content were more a direct responsibility of Amsterdam 2010. This subcommittee received support from Karen Tessel, first on a voluntary basis and later as assistant to Hans Blom in his role as Cleveringa Professor at the University of Leiden. This meant that the IISH congress bureau could be largely spared the burden of organizing these two special sessions, though they were kept well-informed of developments. Please see Chapter 5 for further details on these sessions.

The social and cultural programme related to the congress started life as a series of separate “secondary activities” in cooperation with various partners in the city of Amsterdam, relatively loosely coordinated by the board. But this aspect took on a whole new dimension due to a special initiative from the University of Amsterdam’s History Department (Jouke Turpijn, also a board member of the KNHG) and the Amsterdam Museum (*Amsterdams Historisch Museum*, AHM; Kees Zandvliet) to establish a Holland History House (HHH) where congress participants could go to socialize at the end of the day and to participate in entertaining cultural activities. When the Netherlands Museum of National History (*Nationaal Historisch Museum*, NHM) joined the initiative, even going so far as to appoint a project organizer (Sander Rutjens), the HHH developed into a fully independent activity (including financially) and provided a context for coordinating other cultural and social events relating to the congress. Of course, the board maintained close contact with this initiative. For more about the HHH, which can be seen as a new element of the congress, see Chapter 7.

The KNHG, which had officially been awarded the task of organizing the congress, naturally maintained close contact with the congress organizers through representatives on the board of Amsterdam 2010 without having to take an active part itself. However, the bureau of the KNHG did carry out a number of important duties for the congress. It hosted the customary meeting of the Bureau of the CISH two years prior to the start of the congress (the 2008 site visit). Traditionally this site visit is combined with a meeting on the historiography of the host country. Under the aegis of the KNHG, the editorial board of its journal, the *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, organized a



conference on the international relevance of Dutch history. Leading historians were asked to demonstrate how Dutch history might be of relevance to an international audience, drawing on eleven key themes from Dutch history. Are there themes within international history, they were asked, that can be illuminated by examining the history of the Netherlands? Thanks to the speakers and delegates from the Netherlands and abroad who participated in the discussions and also acted as referees for the written versions of the contributions, the editorial board was able to put together a fine collection of essays on internationally relevant chapters of Dutch history. These essays were published in a special issue of the journal, which was distributed as a gift to all participants of the 21st International Congress of the Historical Sciences in Amsterdam in 2010.

A member of the local organizing committee, David Barnouw, took on responsibility for publicity in the general media and aimed at a wider audience. He did so partly in cooperation with Holland History House. During the congress, Amsterdam 2010 received a great deal of media coverage in the Netherlands, particularly in newspapers, radio programmes and on websites. Amsterdam evening newspaper *Het Parool* published a daily article by journalist Paul Arnoldussen throughout the congress week. National daily *de Volkskrant* featured considerable coverage on its dedicated history website and sponsored the closing session (see Chapter 5). To our knowledge, there was little coverage in the international media. The most striking examples were two articles by Roger Chartier in *Le Monde* and a programme about the congress by *France Culture*. For a list of traced publications, see Appendix 9.

All told, a great many institutions and committees were involved in organizing the congress and everything that surrounded it. The aim of the board in this process was primarily to ensure that all of these separate units could function effectively on an individual basis but that, where necessary, there was smooth cooperation and that they did not impede or undermine one another. It was a purposeful yet seemingly complex organizational structure. In practice this proved very effective, thanks to a number of elements: an effective division of labour drawn up in constructive consultation; the aptitude with which all of the various separate duties were carried out; and the consistent willingness of all those involved to engage in dialogue and to make modifications where needed. This ensured that organizational incidents and problems were kept to a minimum.



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### 3. Finances

While the content-related activities represented the core and the essence of the congress and therefore formed the focus for the activities of the organizing foundation, it is clear that a healthy overall financial situation was an absolute precondition for launching the entire project and remained a central focus of the board's work. As explained in the introduction to this report, the KNHG decided to submit a proposal in Sydney on the basis of a number of assurances:

- a. the University of Amsterdam's assurance that it would provide the location for the congress, complete with facilities;
- b. a guarantee subsidy of €100,000 from the National Library of the Netherlands (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek*);
- c. the willingness of a large number of academic historical institutes to provide a guarantee subsidy by each making a modest amount available on five separate occasions between 2006 and 2010, thereby leading to the reasonably sure assumption that a further €100,000 would become available;
- d. the almost certain assurance that the *Harreveldfonds* (closely related to the KNHG) would provide a substantial guarantee subsidy.

In addition, there was the hope that further income would be generated by sponsoring and the definite assurance of contributions from the participants in the form of the conference fee. Inevitably, the amount generated from these sources was uncertain.

Once the organization had been allocated to the Netherlands (Amsterdam), these expectations and assumptions were formalized in a budget of over €1.2 million (see Appendix 2). Since experience has shown the importance of anticipating setbacks in any big event and with the example of previous CISH conferences that ended up making a loss, an extremely cautious approach was taken to the budget, incorporating a fairly high amount for "unforeseen costs". The location for the congress, pledged in exchange for services in kind, was entered into the books for an amount of €400,000 on both sides of the budget in order to provide a realistic insight. In general, the expenditure was prioritized according to the tasks to be carried out and the activities to be arranged. For the organization of the congress itself, it was possible to enter into an equitable contract with the IISH at an early stage whereby the IISH congress office took on the organizational duties.



One particularly important issue was the amount to be charged to the participants in fees. This was to be determined by the General Assembly, in consultation with the CISH Bureau. Eventually agreement was reached on an average fee of over €200 for an expected number of around 2,000 participants. To be more exact, the standard rate for early registration was €240, or €120 for students; for late registration these fees were €380 and €190 respectively. The expectations, both for the number of registrations as a whole and for the distribution across the various categories, were not met. The number of registrations was well under the budgeted amount, particularly in the student category. The number of participants also remained considerably lower than the number that had registered before 22 August 2010 (and who had not cancelled). Ultimately over 1300 people attended the congress, some of whom were exempted from payment (members of the CISH Bureau, organizers of sessions, participants supported by the Solidarity Fund). This disappointing number of registrations will be discussed in the summing-up of the report (Chapter 8).

The matter of the fee presents something of a dilemma. On the one hand it is clear that the fee needs to be as low as possible and that this can have a positive effect on the number of participants. One condition set by CISH is that the contribution made by fees should not exceed around one third of the congress budget. On the other hand, limiting the amount to be raised by fees to such a small proportion of the costs puts a very heavy burden on the congress organizers to find external funds. It is doubtful whether this will continue to be possible in countries such as the Netherlands in the long term. One aspect worth noting in this respect is that, while for many participants the amount to be paid in fees is an important issue, in comparison with many other congresses it can be described as low. For participants attending from abroad, the amount that the fee represents as part of their total costs (in addition to travel and accommodation costs) is also relatively low. For the time being, there is no simple answer to this dilemma. It is likely to remain an ongoing point for discussion and deliberation. A key related point is that the status and appeal of the congress among historians is considerable and should remain so.

A comparable dilemma can be seen in the fact that the organizers of the sessions of the congress are exempt from fee payment and the stipulation that CISH Bureau members must be guests of the organization throughout their stay. If we add the cost of the site visit, to which the same condition applies, this creates a considerable item of expenditure and a lack of income. There are clearly good reasons why members of the Bureau, who devote a great deal of time and energy to CISH, should not have to pay these costs themselves. A similar situation applies to the organizers, who also have to arrange their own funding for travel and accommodation. Nevertheless it would make



life far easier for the organization if such costs could be covered in another way, as is the case for the travelling expenses of members of the Bureau. The fee exemption for participants supported by the Solidarity Fund was a clear point of policy for Amsterdam 2010.

In terms of income, the contributions by historical institutes provided an unexpected boost. Along with the contributions by the *Harreveldfonds*, the National Library of the Netherlands and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), “the historical sector in the Netherlands” contributed over €350,000 in guarantee subsidy (see Appendix 4). Together with other sponsors, the amount raised in subsidies and sponsoring even exceeded €400,000. A very positive development concerned the independently established Solidarity Fund (*pro forma* still included in the budget and accounts, both for the same amount), which attracted a major subsidy from the Mellon Foundation, supplemented by contributions from a small number of Dutch foundations. Please see Chapter 6 for further details. This eased the burden on the congress budget to a considerable degree. The contribution from the congress budget mainly took the form of exemption from fee payment. These positive developments were important, since attempts to obtain subsidy or sponsoring from other funds or institutes did not meet with great success. From the corporate sector, the only sponsoring successes were achieved with ING Bank and Dutch national newspaper *de Volkskrant* (see Chapter 5), which contributed specifically to the opening and closing sessions. Only a small number of general cultural funds contributed, for which we owe them a great debt of gratitude. In this regard it should be noted that the *Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds* (Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation) cooperated constructively on an arrangement by which the condition of subsidizing ,accessibility to a wider audience, could be met through the Holland History House (see Chapter 6 and 4).

One factor that certainly influenced the poor fundraising results in the corporate sector was the worldwide financial and economic crisis that struck between 2005 and 2010. In addition to this, experience has shown that, in the Netherlands at least, there is no tradition whatsoever of sponsoring academic congresses in the arts and humanities. Potential sponsors regard contributions to such events as having a minimal effect on their profile among a wider audience. This is also a probable reason for the small number of general cultural funds that opted to subsidize the congress. In view of this, it was particularly disappointing that the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) was the only higher-level academic fund in the Netherlands to provide a considerable subsidy (partly to match the contributions by various historical institutions under its umbrella). The fact that the largest academic and scientific



umbrella organization in the Netherlands – the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) – did not reach a positive decision on subsidy, despite internationalization being one of its policy aims, can only be experienced as a disincentive to hold this type of academic congress in the Netherlands in future. The argument that its priority lies with subsidizing pioneering research does not do justice to the importance of a congress such as that organized by CISH.

The Dutch government also declined to contribute. The argument given by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture was that all of the funds that used to be available for such purposes had now been transferred to organizations in the academic and scientific domain. A request submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation for a contribution to the Solidarity Fund was rejected on policy grounds. The Ministry argued that Dutch resources are only given to aid the poorest of the poor in the country concerned. In the opinion of Amsterdam 2010, such an argument fails to recognize the importance of education and research to poor countries.

The uncertainties and forecasts during the preparation period for the congress led to internal budgetary modifications on a number of occasions, sometimes in several variants (depending on the various numbers of paying participants). This enabled setbacks to be taken into account (without disregarding unexpected positive developments). In other ways, too, consistent efforts were made to maintain the best possible overview and to finance as many parts of the programme as possible using specifically targeted funds (opening and closing sessions, Solidarity Fund and Holland History House; see also the relevant chapters 5, 6 and 7)

At present, it is not possible to provide a definite answer to questions about the final result. Particularly with regard to expenditure, uncertainties persist. A final settlement still has to be reached in some areas and there are still uncertainties about taxation issues (value added tax). But all signs point towards a modest positive balance. That would be a highly satisfactory result, not least for the institutes that made a contribution to the guarantee fund. Once the final results become available, they will be incorporated in this report, thus creating a final version of the final report. For now, the financial results to date have been added in Appendix 3, along with the emphatic proviso that they are not yet complete.



#### **4. The conference**

The organization of the congress – in the narrower sense of the term (i.e. the academic sessions and all of the necessary activities to facilitate them) – was in the hands of the IISH congress office. In this chapter, the organization of the congress is described and critically annotated by and from the perspective of the congress office. The Amsterdam 2010 board has approved this account and supports the recommendations contained therein. The vast majority of these recommendations have also been incorporated in the recommendations stated in the report's final chapter.

##### **Conference location**

The conference took place in buildings of the University of Amsterdam in the city centre. At an early stage, we selected a large number of rooms situated in buildings that were within walking distance of each other. All logistical matters from porters to equipment to student assistants and technical support were organized in close cooperation with the University's conference office. The cooperation was pleasant and efficient, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues from the University conference office for doing such an excellent job.



Once the final programme was announced, we were able to dispense with the use of a number of rooms located in buildings that were further away. But since the distance between some of the locations was still considerable, we produced a detailed map of the area. This was published on the website, included in the printed programme and given to all participants as a separate item on arrival. We also made general city maps available (donated by Accor) and included an Amsterdam City Passport with information and maps in the conference bag.

The central venue for the congress was the Atrium, where the congress desk, cafeteria and book exhibit were also located.

One month before the start of the congress, we sent an e-mail to all participants informing them where, when and how to register and providing them with directions on how to get there. This information, along with links to public transport websites, was also published on the website.

#### Sessions organized by Affiliated International Organizations (AIOs) at other locations

Some sessions organized by the Commission Internationale de Démographie Historique were held at the International Institute of Social History. The sessions run by the International Federation for Research in Women's History were organized at the Aletta Institute and those run by the International Standing Conference for the History of Education took place at the University of Amsterdam's Roeterseiland campus. All three AIOs had many more sessions than the three they were officially allowed under ICHS rules and more than could be accommodated in the limited number of rooms we had available. Accordingly, they looked for other accommodation. These sessions were included in the online programme and the printed programme but as separate items. The downside was that there was very little integration into the main conference. Some of the participants did not attend the central hub of the conference at all, not even to collect their conference packs.

*Recommendation: Keep the activities of all AIOs and Internal Committees (ICs) within the programme and within the boundaries of the main conference.*

#### Number of rooms used

University of Amsterdam, city centre: 19



University of Amsterdam, Roeterseiland: 13 different rooms, a maximum of 6 at one time

IISH: 2

The Aletta Institute: 2

De Bazel building (Amsterdam City Archive): 1

### **Hotel reservations**

Hotel reservations were made via the conference hotel agency RAI Hotel Service. We negotiated a “kick back” arrangement which entitled us to a percentage of their commission. The selection of hotels and blocking of rooms was done in 2006.

Of course, participants were free to make their own arrangements on the internet, through their travel agency or otherwise. Ultimately, about one third of the participants booked their hotel via the conference hotel service.

### **House style**

A special house style was designed for the conference. It was used for all conference materials and communications from an early stage, so once participants arrived at the conference location, they knew they were in the right place because they were greeted by the familiar logo on flags, signs and t-shirts. It was also nice to see our conference logo all over town on the conference bags and badges worn by the participants. The design incorporates familiar elements from the Amsterdam skyline (arranged in a circle to form the modern basis for the logo), with old city maps and engravings as a historical component. Red, the colour of Amsterdam, was also featured. A bicycle was added here and there just for fun.

### **Call for papers**

Calls for papers, and in the case of the AIOs and ICs for sessions and papers, were sent by the ICHS bureau and by the congress office on several occasions and in various ways:





- e-mail to participants in the 2005 conference, participants in the WEHC 2009 and the ESSHC 2008
- e-mails to individual historians at European Universities
- posters sent to universities
- digital flyers sent to ICHS members for further distribution
- flyers distributed at several locations and inserted in conference packs for WEHC 2009 and ESSHC 2010
- announcements on H-net
- announcements sent to various journals
- information about the congress sent to student organizations and the introduction of a special fee for Master's students.

## **Registration**

Registration was a three-step process.

1. Registration of sessions
2. Proposals for papers (+ registration as listener)
  - 2b. Proposals sent to organizers
  - 2c. Proposals accepted/rejected
3. Final registration and payment

The online organization of the congress was based on the system used for the 2010 European Social Science History Conference and the 2009 World Economic History Conference. In this system, all information relating to the conference (participants' names and addresses, abstracts and papers, sessions, rooms, scheduling, payment) is collected in a single database. Once everyone is registered, the same database can then be used to schedule the sessions and publish the online programme. The basis for the printed programme can also be produced from the same source. Since the programme and individual registration and payment information are all in the same database, badges



and receipts/invoices can also be produced from the same source. To secure the database, the information is encrypted. In this case, only the staff of the congress office were able to access this information. Participants were sent a personal login code to check their own registration information, upload their paper, pay the fee and check any e-mails sent to them by the conference office.

For most of the time, the staff of the congress office consisted of only one person. From 15 April 2009, an additional part-time member of staff was brought in to assist.

For the congress office, it was therefore essential that all registration procedures be handled online. This was agreed and a system was developed to register both individuals and sessions. The initial plan was for the organizers of the Major Themes, Specialized Themes, Roundtables etc. selected by the CISH board to register their session and themselves online and for the system to be built up from there. Unfortunately, this plan was not adhered to and we were sent an old-fashioned list of the names of organizers and sessions “because that was how it had always been done”. This not only proved to be quite a setback in terms of efficiency but it also meant that we had invested time and money in producing a piece of software that was not used. It also complicated the subsequent steps in our registration procedure.

The use of some modules (e.g. the registration of the AIO and IC sessions) was seriously delayed because of the CISH board’s and members’ unfamiliarity with a full online conference registration system. The unwillingness of some organizers to answer repeated requests (with detailed information on how things worked and why they had to be done a certain way), to handle the registration and to follow our guidelines did not help matters. Despite these additional difficulties, we eventually managed to register everybody and include them in the programme. Repeated explanations that an individual/session had to be registered or they would not appear in the programme eventually persuaded everyone to register online, using a system that was designed to be as secure and user friendly as possible.

Fortunately we had frequent e-mail contact with the Secretary-General, Jean-Claude Robert who helped out wherever and whenever he could to solve problems and persuade organizers and others to follow the new procedure. We also worked together closely on the scheduling of the programme.

## **Programme**



The programme was in fact made up of two programmes. The main programme, established by the General Assembly in Beijing, and the programme of the AIOs and ICs. Our goal was to better integrate the two, rather than having all of the AIO and IC sessions at the end of the week, and to make sure that all sessions were included in the online and printed programmes. We succeeded in doing so, but we were nonetheless left with the impression that many participants only attended the sessions organized by their own organization, regarding the event as their organization's own conference as opposed to part of a bigger event.

A large number of people submitted paper proposals for the sessions in the main programme. We forwarded these proposals to the organizers, who in some cases ignored or rejected them without further consideration, because they had already decided who would be in their panel. This upset and offended a lot of potentially good and serious participants, who therefore decided not to attend at all, and who will probably think twice before submitting a proposal for a future congress. Quite a few of the intended participants did not bother to register and several reminders had to be sent out to both organizers and participants. Other intended participants decided not to participate, leaving significant gaps in some sessions, which could have been filled by people whose papers had been summarily rejected earlier on.

*Recommendation: Make an open call for papers and give serious consideration to all proposals, giving people other than the "usual suspects" a chance to present a paper at the congress.*

From the point of view of the congress office, it was striking that the themes of the sessions in the main programme were the result of much debate and deliberation (sometimes resulting in topics which appeared to have been foisted on organizers who seemed less committed to them than they could/should have been), while the AIOs and ICs were completely free in their programme and themes. As a result, the programme was too wide-ranging, with little or no coherence. We reserved our largest room for the Major Themes and went to considerable expense to provide simultaneous translation (English to French and vice versa), but the number of actual attendees did not warrant this.

*Recommendation: Redefine the purpose and goal of the conference. What makes this conference THE place to be for historians? Is it just a meeting place or do we want it to be more? What is the difference/are there any real differences between Major Themes, Specialized Themes, Round Tables etc.? Why are the Major Themes considered to be the most important?*



### **Book exhibit**

A book exhibit was organized in the Atrium. It took some time for this event to take off, but in the end we had to turn down latecomers because there was no room for additional exhibitors. Two exhibitors organized special events (book launch/reception).

The exhibitors were:

Amsterdam University Press

Ashgate Publishing Group

Berghahn Books

Bloomsbury Academic

Brill

Cambridge University Press

Dans

The Edward Mellon Press

IISH

KITLV

Leuven University Press

Meertens Institute

NIAS Press

Oxford University Press

Palgrave Macmillan

Routledge /T&F Academic

University Presses of California

Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht

Due to the serious lack of space, the exhibit had to be divided into two sections: upstairs and downstairs. We were slightly concerned about this, but the upstairs balcony was clearly visible from downstairs so the participants had no trouble finding their way to both parts of the exhibit. However, the fact that the congress was structured in three-hour sessions meant it was only during the lunch break that the exhibitors did any real business.

*Recommendation: The exhibit is definitely a nice addition but to make it more worthwhile for the exhibitors it would be good to include official coffee/tea breaks in the programme.*

#### **Facts and figures**

Total attending:	1317	Papers presented	704
Registered on 22/8/2010	1500	Papers accepted	865
No shows	191	No shows	161
Countries 84		Papers from 64 countries	
Number of sessions:	175		

For complete list of countries see Appendix 5.

The complete programme was published on the ICHS website [www.ichs2010.org](http://www.ichs2010.org) and was printed for the participants.



The range of countries represented was impressive. This can be primarily attributed to the work of the Solidarity Fund, which enabled participants from ODA countries to attend the conference.

The total number of attendees was somewhat disappointing. The worldwide economic crisis definitely did not help. The fee was quite an obstacle, especially for participants who attended without presenting a paper and who were therefore unlikely to have their expenses reimbursed by their university.

*Recommendation: For this group and for general history enthusiasts from the organizing country, a one-day fee could help boost attendance. These individuals often scan the programme and are interested in visiting one particular session. Under those circumstances, paying for the whole conference would be disproportionately expensive.*

The number of no-shows and last minute cancellations was alarming, especially as most of them were in the programme with a paper, as an organizer or discussant. Badges were produced for them, bags were ordered and packed, and programmes were printed. The fact that people are not giving any notice whatsoever of their absence presents a major problem for both the congress organization and the session organizers.

## **Rough timetable**

### **2006**

Local organizing committee selected

House style developed

Hotel agency selected and hotels selected and blocked

### **2007**

September: conference website launched

List of themes established by General Assembly

### **2008**



Locations fixed for sessions, congress desk, book exhibit

Locations fixed for opening and closing sessions and two ICHS assemblies

Contact with hotel service maintained

Fee set for book exhibit

Planning of programme under way

E-mail blast

Announcements on H-net and other websites

Online registration and database built

Guidelines and timeline on website

Session registration for AIO and IC online / e-mail call

Preliminary programme (main) online

## **2009**

Posters distributed

Flyers produced

Final registration and payment form available

Hotel information online

Mailshot to publishers about book exhibit

Information about Solidarity Fund online

Planning of programme

Holland History House starts informal programme



## **2010**

Logistics at conference site arranged

Students hired

Catering arrangements made

Extra communication efforts launched

Programme published online

Printed programme produced

Conference material (bags, flags, T-shirts, badges etc.) ordered

Opening and closing sessions organized

Second reception organized

Holland History House informal programme finalized

Conference

Exhaustion!







## 5. The opening and closing sessions of the congress

The opening and closing sessions of the congress traditionally have a character that is distinct from the purely academic sessions. They have a more formal atmosphere and are enriched by a cultural performance. No other activities are held in parallel to these sessions. In organizing these sessions, the local organizing committee has greater freedom than for the congress as a whole, which is more closely under the direction of the CISH and its Bureau. The Amsterdam 2010 board delegated the task of organizing both sessions to a subcommittee consisting of Hans Blom (chairman of Amsterdam 2010), Julienne Straatman and David Barnouw. In the crucial final year, they had the support of Karen Tessel, who initially worked on a voluntary basis and later as a paid assistant to Hans Blom. Her hard work, commitment, conscientiousness and facility for cooperating with other institutes were essential to the success of these sessions.

The board selected “water” as the theme for the opening session. While not particularly original, it is an important theme in world history and one which is certainly justifiable as a rewarding topic in the Dutch context. With water as its theme, the board believed it had an additional argument for asking history graduate Crown Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands to grace the opening session of the congress with his presence, especially since it was being organized under the auspices of the *Royal Netherlands Historical Society*. After all, in his official duties the Prince has taken a particular interest in water management. Unfortunately the date irrevocably set for the opening session of the congress clashed with other commitments in the Prince’s diary. He nonetheless expressed his interest in the event by attending a dinner for specially invited guests among the congress participants, held on the Friday evening of the congress week.

The theme of water was conveyed by asking five prominent historians from five very different parts of the world to give a presentation on an important aspect of the history of water in their part of the world. They included the Spanish president of CISH, José Louis Peset, who combined his contribution with his Presidential Address and also spoke a word of welcome on behalf of CISH; the Secretary-General of CISH, Jean Claude Robert from Canada, who was also bidding farewell after devoting years to his valuable career within CISH; and the chairman of KNHG, Lex Heerma van Voss, who also took the opportunity to welcome the guests on behalf of his organization. They were joined by speakers Bozhong Li from China and Ibrahima Thioub from Senegal. Together, their contributions resulted in a varied academic programme. Prior to these speeches, the President of the Executive Board of the University of Amsterdam had



welcomed the participants to the congress, which was officially opened by the President of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. He also presented the President of CISH with a gift from the Netherlands to the congress participants: a special edition of *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, entitled *The International Relevance of Dutch History*. In hindsight, the number of speakers was a little too high for such a session.

To avoid complex and costly simultaneous translation, the speeches were given in either English or French and use was made of the facilities available in the hall to project either a French or English version of the text on a separate screen, depending on the language being spoken. Another screen was available for visual material to illustrate the various presentations. This translation-based approach relies entirely on the willingness of the speakers to make their texts available in advance and not to deviate from them. These efforts were greatly appreciated by the audience.

For the cultural component of the opening, David Barnouw suggested that Amsterdam 2010 should commission Dutch composer Huub de Vriend (also teacher of composition at The Royal Conservatoire in The Hague) to create a new soundtrack to a 12-minute silent film directed in 1929 by celebrated Dutch avant-garde filmmaker Joris Ivens, and appropriately entitled *Regen* [Rain]. The première of this piece, accompanying a screening of *Regen*, provided a welcome intermezzo between the various speakers. Especially for the occasion, the composer had a new instrument developed by the Kunst Uitschot Team from Leiden: a Rain Machine, partly inspired by the African rain stick. The musicians also entered the spirit of the occasion by donning Wellington boots, oilskins and sou'westers for their performance. Partly as a result of the spectacular visuals, this modern composition met with considerable appreciation among the vast majority of the audience. At the end of the session, the musicians played a number of more traditional classical pieces, including Händel's *Water Music*.

Based on the number of initial registrations, Amsterdam's Music Theatre (*Muziektheater/Stopera*) was chosen as the venue for this opening session and for the welcome reception held afterwards. The great advantage of this choice was that there was plenty of expertise at hand in the theatre to ensure that all aspects of the organization ran smoothly. However, it was also an expensive option. In that respect too, it was disappointing that the turnout for the opening was far less than expected. The original estimates ranged from 1,200 to 1,300. This number was later adjusted to over 900, on the basis of registrations for the congress and the number of special guests. Ultimately, the number of people who actually turned up was only around 650, many of



whom only showed up once the programme was under way. It would appear that a considerable number of congress participants, in spite of their earlier intentions, did not arrive in Amsterdam in time to attend the opening or ultimately opted to do something else that day. Perhaps attendance suffered from competition in the form of the SAIL Amsterdam tall ships event. In retrospect, there was probably no need to opt for such an expensive venue. It is debatable whether anything can be done in future to prevent such a discrepancy between estimated and actual attendance, but it would appear to be worth taking into account a considerable percentage of “no shows” on the day.

Financially, an attempt was made to fund the opening session (the costs of which were included in the budget) entirely from sponsoring. It took considerable effort but this objective was successfully met, partly because the bill from the Music Theatre was lower than expected due the lower-than-estimated number of guests. From an early stage, agreeable contact was established with the sponsoring department of the ING Bank. In the first instance, this resulted in spectacular plans for an opening session in the Rijksmuseum, which at the time was due to be reopened after renovations in the summer of 2010, and with the involvement of the Concertgebouw Orchestra. Both the Rijksmuseum and the Concertgebouw have major sponsoring links with ING Bank. However, these plans turned out not to be realistic. The renovation of the Rijksmuseum was extended by some considerable time. Nevertheless, ING Bank agreed to make a substantial contribution, primarily geared towards the opening session. In addition, the Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation proved willing to subsidize the musical contribution to the session via the Holland History House, which hosted a second screening of *Regen* with its new score during the closing session of the programme. The composer was able to obtain his fee from a subsidy provided by the Netherlands Fund for the Performing Arts (*Fonds voor de Podiumkunsten*).

One unusual but unfortunately failed attempt at cooperation is worth mentioning here. The Heineken Prizes Foundation awards a prize for history every two years, involving a large sum of money. It is an international prize but less well-known than it deserves to be, even among historians. Amsterdam 2010 proposed featuring the winner of the 2010 Heineken Prize for History or a previous prize winner as a speaker at the opening session. The winner is announced at the end of August and the award presented at the start of October. This would have generated major publicity for the prize (and for the company name) and could have been arranged in exchange for a substantial sum in financing for the opening session. However, it did not prove possible to reach a satisfactory agreement with either the company or the foundation.



Traditionally, the closing session begins with a very short public session of the CISH Bureau to ratify the appointment of the new president and the new Bureau. The congress is then closed with a session of a general cultural nature, which interested members of the public are welcome to attend. Amsterdam 2010 was happy to continue this tradition by inviting one of the Netherlands' leading writers, Nelleke Noordervliet, to speak to the congress about the social and cultural importance of history and historical studies. Her contribution, entitled *In Defence of Clio's Honour* was greatly appreciated by the audience. This was followed by another screening of *Regen* accompanied by a live performance of its newly composed score.

Based on experiences from previous congresses, a big turnout was not expected for this closing session. With this in mind, the University of Amsterdam's auditorium was chosen as the location. The turnout did not disappoint. Around 200 people attended, which meant that the auditorium was reasonably full. Only very few of those attending could be described as members of a wider audience, despite cooperation with national daily newspaper *de Volkskrant* which meant that people throughout the country had been informed about the possibility of registering. This paper also sponsored the closing session, considerably lightening the burden on Amsterdam 2010's budget.



## 6. The Solidarity Fund

The organization of the congress also includes creating the possibility (primarily through financing) for historians to attend the congress who would otherwise lack the necessary resources to do so. The board of Amsterdam 2010 decided to make a concerted effort to significantly increase attendance in comparison with previous years among fellow historians who lacked the necessary resources. Board members Pim den Boer, Gees van der Plaat, Henk Wals and Tamara van Kessel took this task upon themselves. They began their work as a subcommittee of Amsterdam 2010 but it soon became clear that it was both necessary and desirable to set up a separate foundation, of which they became the board. The report of this foundation's activities, drawn up with a particular view to the requirements of the main sponsor, is appended to this report. Since that is the case, this chapter will be brief.

Of course, the first and most important task was to secure funding. A substantial contribution from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation laid the foundation for this success. The Solidarity Fund also found Dutch subsidy providers in the shape of the *Professor van Winterfonds* and the *Harreveldfonds*. A modest sum was also raised by making an appeal to Dutch historians and other academics to support the Solidarity Fund on an individual basis. A contribution was made from the congress budget by exempting participants who registered for the conference with support from the Solidarity Fund from payment of fees.

All in all, a total budget of approximately €150,000 was available, enabling 90 participants from 40 countries to receive reimbursement for the costs of their journey and/or accommodation. These were mainly participants from ODA countries, as this allowed the organizers to apply an internationally accepted criterion. In a limited number of exceptional cases (nine people from six different countries) exemptions were given on the basis of very specific personal circumstances. The Solidarity Fund therefore made a major contribution to a substantial increase in the total number of countries represented at the CISH congress: from 71 in Sydney to 87 in Amsterdam, a rise of almost 25%. The increase was highest for Africa (from 9 to 21). From Asia, 21 countries were represented (compared to 17 in Sydney). Europe (with 34 countries), North America (2 countries) and Latin America (9 countries) remained stable. In terms of number of participants, the biggest increase also came from Africa (from 22 to 50), followed by Latin America (from 30 to 46). By contrast, there was a slight decrease in numbers from North America (from 155 to 145) and Asia (from 168 to 145). The big differences in participant numbers from Australia (from 394 to 32) and Europe (from



450 to 876) can, of course, be fully explained by the location of the host city: Amsterdam as opposed to Sydney.

The board of the Solidarity Fund, together with the congress organizers, devoted a great deal of attention to the selection procedure for those who made an appeal to the Solidarity Fund. Their qualifications were carefully checked and preference was given to participants who had a paper accepted. The organizers were also urged to include qualified colleagues from ODA countries in their panels. All of this entailed extensive and complex administration, partly because the Solidarity Funds itself bore responsibility for arranging tickets and hotel accommodation. In particular, Gees van der Plaat took on this task and devoted a great deal of energy to these matters. Participants were required to arrange their own visas through the usual channels, but in many cases Gees van der Plaat wrote the required letter of invitation on behalf of the organization. This was not only true of participants supported by the Solidarity Fund but also for all participants from countries subject to a visa requirement. This brought the number of letters of invitation needed to around 500. At the request of the congress organizers, the Dutch consulates were notified of the CISH congress by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two examples of letters of invitation have been appended to this report (appendix 8).

The board of Amsterdam 2010 is extremely happy with the result of these efforts. It is essential that, in the future, the host country takes up the task of ensuring similar financial resources to make it financially possible for participants from ODA countries to take part in the congress. Of course, the form this takes at local level is ultimately the responsibility of the host country. But in any case, Amsterdam 2010 believes that financial resources to assist historians from ODA countries should function as an essential criterion in assessing future candidates for the role of host country. Another recommendation is that the Bureau of CISH should consider attracting financial resources to ensure more intensive participation by representatives of ODA countries at meetings organized by the Bureau in the five-year periods between the congresses.





## 7. Holland History House

Although they do not form part of the actual congress, a number of social and cultural activities are traditionally organized for the participants during a CISH congress. To this end, the organizers sought contact with a range of organizations, such as museums and international cultural institutes. The response was overwhelmingly positive and preparations began for a range of activities. Initially these were only loosely coordinated by the board of Amsterdam 2010. At an early stage, a proposal by board advisor David Barnouw (also member of the board of *Nederlandse Vereniging Geschiedenis Beeld en Geluid*, the Netherlands Society History Image and Sound) to present a joint programme of historically important films from various national European cultural circles found wide acceptance among Amsterdam's international cultural institutes and their cooperative links. This idea proved feasible and led to a programme of films screened in the evenings during the congress week. On average, these screenings attracted a large audience.

Other activities were given greater cohesion thanks to an idea by Jouke Turpijn of the University of Amsterdam's History Department, who is also a KNHG board member. He drew inspiration from the metaphor of the congress as an Olympic Games for Historians. Just as at the Olympic Games, where the Dutch delegation organizes a Holland Heineken House as a venue for social events and for celebrating sporting endeavours, he felt there should be a Holland History House for the historians' equivalent. This concept could then provide a context for an adjacent programme of encounters and secondary activities coordinated in relation to the congress. This idea was particularly well-received by the Amsterdam Museum (*Amsterdams Historisch Museum*, AHM), located in the heart of Amsterdam close to the congress locations, which was keen to attract large numbers of congress participants to the museum. The museum argued that its courtyard was the perfect place for informal get-togethers and discussions following the afternoon sessions. At a later stage the Netherlands' brand new Museum of National History (*Nationaal Historisch Museum*, NHM) – as yet without its own building – decided to take part in this initiative. The NHM was also able to provide a substantial investment to help make the Holland History House concept a reality, most notably by appointing a project organizer, Sander Rutjens.

The result was a financially and functionally independent HHH, which coordinated the full adjacent programme – including the above-mentioned film programme – as well as organizing its own activities. The HHH developed a series of ideas and above all brought a whole new type of activity to the congress. HHH not only became a





coordinated programme of activities in various places throughout Amsterdam (and one in Haarlem), but also embodied the Amsterdam Museum's concept of a daily meeting place for participants at the end of the congress day. In physical terms, the courtyard of the Amsterdam Museum became the Holland History House. Under the title *The Remains of the Day*, there was also a daily talk show at around 18.00 during which prominent historians entered into discussion with each other, partly based on topics dealt with at the congress. HHH was also open to interested members of the public, by which it aimed to build a bridge between the academic historical function of the congress on the one hand and the importance of history in society on the other hand. While the number of visitors to the HHH among both congress participants and interested members of the general public could have been higher, the board of Amsterdam 2010 regards the HHH as a successful addition to the CISH congresses. We recommend at least considering the possibility of implementing such an idea at future congresses and investigating the possibility of introducing it at an earlier stage in the congress organization so that better content coordination can also be achieved.

It also proved possible to forge a link between the Amsterdam 2010 board's plans for the opening and closing sessions of the CISH academic congress and the HHH to a certain extent, and even to incorporate them. In accordance with tradition, both the opening and closing session should contain a cultural element in addition to academic presentations. These sessions also have a more formal character and the closing session in particular aims to attract a larger audience among non-congress participants. As stated in Chapter 5, a musical performance was given at both sessions in the form of the world première of a newly commissioned composition. However, this entailed relatively high costs. Partly including the musical presentation as an activity within the broader HHH concept, enabled an appeal to the Prince Bernhard Cultural Fund for financial support. Amsterdam 2010 was not able to make such an appeal directly since the rules of the Cultural Fund do not permit support for academic congresses. HHH, which was very much open to interested members of the public, did qualify for such support. This opened the door to a substantial contribution for the musical presentation.

An event with an entirely different background was the reception that the City of Amsterdam offered to the congress participants, delivering on a pledge it had made as far back as 2005. This took place on Wednesday evening, in the middle of the congress week, and attracted a great deal of interest. A location of great architectural interest was chosen: De Bazel Building (currently home to the City archive). This added to the success of the reception. It also formed an appealing link between the official congress programme and the Holland History House. All of the participants received a personal





invitation and the reception was also included in the programme coordinated by the HHH.

The entire HHH programme, both its own activities and the events organized by many other institutions which it coordinated, were compiled in a handy booklet that was handed out to all congress participants. Most of the activities attracted considerable interest and were well appreciated. Only one part of the programme did not go as planned. The reception by the City of Amsterdam had been organized separately and was only added to the programme at a later stage. It therefore escaped the organizers' notice that this coincided with the first of two evenings with special activities which the Rijksmuseum had organized for the congress participants. This resulted in the first evening being poorly attended, on the basis of which the second evening was scaled back while many visitors turned up. This led to a number of unfortunate incidents which could have been prevented with better planning. However, this relatively minor upset was the only blemish on an otherwise highly successful undertaking.

For a more comprehensive report on the HHH, with an account of the various activities, see Appendix 7 of this report.



## 8. Summing up, conclusions and recommendations

### *Summing up and conclusions*

Overall, it is reasonable to conclude that the 21st International Congress of the Historical Sciences was a success. Despite a number of difficulties in the preparation phase, the organization ran smoothly. The atmosphere at the congress was good, particularly in the more informal settings. The special Solidarity Fund resulted in a much wider spread of congress participants than ever before in terms of geographical origin. The adjacent social and cultural programme coordinated by the Holland History House was an appealing new addition to the traditions of the congress.

One disappointment was the number of participants. The number of people who attended was far below the initial estimate of 2,000 paying participants. It is difficult to determine the exact cause of this. It is clear that the global economic and financial crisis had a negative effect on numbers. Academic institutes throughout the world were facing budget problems. But in addition to this, Amsterdam 2010 was apparently not successful enough in reaching colleagues all over the world (including the Netherlands) and generating enthusiasm. The communication through the member organizations was not always effective. Amsterdam 2010 and in particular the CISH Secretariat repeatedly urged the member organizations to bring information about the congress emphatically to the attention of their rank and file. Nevertheless, time and time again it transpired that colleagues in other parts of the world did not know about the congress. Efforts to reach university historians through direct e-mail contact produced just as little in the way of results. Perhaps a targeted campaign of announcements in relevant scientific journals would have made more colleagues aware of the congress. That said, we have to admit that such announcements were placed in the Netherlands and Dutch colleagues were made aware of the congress in all kinds of ways, yet this did not prevent a turnout that was disappointing in the eyes of the board.<sup>1</sup>

On this subject, it is particularly regrettable that so few young historians, both graduates and undergraduates, took part. Perhaps the lower rate for students still presented too high a threshold or that the congress was held in a week that was not

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<sup>1</sup> The number of Dutch participants was 237. This is the highest number of Dutch participants ever (in Sydney there were 20, in Oslo 41; the highest previous Dutch attendance had been 65 in Vienna, 1965). Nevertheless, given the size of the profession in the Netherlands, the congress organizers had expected a larger number of Dutch participants.



particularly convenient for students. In retrospect, it is worth noting that in terms of publicity and raising the profile of the congress among fellow historians, almost nothing was done to target this category of potential participants specifically despite the inclusion of 800 student registrations in the budget. It was only at a very late stage (too late) that a more specific (and cheaper) student offer was made through student organizations in the Netherlands. The response to this offer suggests that we did not make the most of the possibilities in this area. In any case, improvements in this regard would appear to be possible for future congresses. In order to achieve them, more intensive contact with national and international student organizations at an early stage will be necessary.

It is most probable that restrictions on the number of papers accepted also had an effect. In a great many institutes, having a paper accepted is an absolute condition for entitling a member of staff to an expense allowance. Rejection of a proposed paper therefore tended to result in failure to secure definite congress participation. The decision not to accept proposals for papers was not always based on qualitative considerations but partly based on lack of space due to the limited number of presentations during the sessions (and the fact that presentations and papers were linked). This often led to the organizers compiling a programme based on their own criteria. It is worth considering an approach whereby at least digital papers could be assessed solely on their quality and be accepted for publication on a website, regardless of the numbers submitted. The organizer should then have the freedom to give none or only a small number of the accepted authors the opportunity to speak at the final congress session while inviting a limited number of speakers on the basis of digital papers made available in advance to all congress participants to discuss the topic being addressed in the session.

A substantial proportion of the registered participants did not pick up the congress papers from the collection desk. It is not clear whether this means that they did not take part in the congress at all. The congress sessions took place at various locations and it was possible to simply walk into the venue unchecked. It is therefore possible that some congress participants saw no need to report to the desk. It was certainly true that some participants only or primarily came to attend one or a handful of sessions in their own specialism or to attend the satellite conferences hosted by one of the affiliated organizations. Of these satellite conferences, only a few sessions were organized within the framework of the main congress. The rest were held in separate locations, sometimes relatively far removed from the central congress locations. This had the



adverse effect of making the satellite conferences more like separate entities rather than part of a supporting structure.

In the view of the Amsterdam 2010 board, the unavoidable conclusion is that, despite the organizational success of the 21st congress, the CISH is facing a serious problem. There is a danger that the downward trend in the number of participants, which Amsterdam 2010 was not able to halt, will continue unless there is a considerable boost to the appeal of the international congresses and the sense of urgency among historians throughout the world that such events are worth visiting. The format of the congresses should be subject to thorough review and analysis. Does such a congress still have a place in the historical sciences when specialization is the dominant trend and when international contacts (both face-to-face and online) have become a standard feature of the discipline, regardless of the phenomenon of the general congress? In a rapidly changing world, CISH would appear to need a reformulation of its mission and more importantly its way of working. Procedures and elements such as all-encompassing large-scale contact by means of congresses held every five years should be adapted in line with such a reformulated vision in order to continue to operate successfully in the long term.

In this process, the main focus should be on the relationship between generalizing, globalizing and overarching aspects (the unity of the discipline) on the one hand and the strong and evident shift towards specialization in practice. An attempt should be made to acknowledge the apparent appeal of the larger satellite conferences, which are the work of the international affiliated organizations, and to once again bring them closer to the main congress. This might be achieved by explicitly inviting these organizations to set up such conferences within the framework of the main conference and to make more room available to them in the programme. These specialized subcongresses could take place at parallel times on certain days or in time slots when all congress participants are free to attend all sessions.

This should be counterbalanced by an emphasis on overarching themes at other moments during the programme. These too should allow for a varied selection to be held at the same time. But it is equally valid and appealing to have a small number (e.g. two or three) of points in the programme when a single session should be devoted to a theme that is more general and widely regarded as key, preferably featuring a number of prominent speakers. Such sessions need not last long, for example two hours at the most. One option might be to plan further discussion of the presentations in separately programmed workshops (possibly in the evening). This approach would probably allow

the larger themes to stand out more from the other sessions than the Major Themes did on this occasion. It opens up the additional possibility of establishing links with the opening and closing sessions of the congress. One last point on this topic is that the difference between Major Themes, Specialized Themes, Round Tables and Joint Sessions tended to be fairly negligible in practical terms. CISH might consider doing away with such distinctions, which are currently applied rather rigorously, in favour of a more pragmatic approach or a completely new format.<sup>2</sup>

### *Recommendations*

On the basis of the experiences at Amsterdam 2010 alone, it is not possible to make exhaustive and well-balanced proposals. Nor is the final report on the 21st congress the appropriate place for such proposals. Yet on the basis of the above conclusions it is possible to put forward a number of suggestions which might play a part in further discussions. These can be summed up in the following list of points.

- Think deeply about the format of the congress. The present formula would appear to hold insufficient appeal in the long term.
- In doing so, make sure you reconsider the relationship between specialized scientific practice and the unity of the discipline.
- Make greater use of the strengths of a number of the affiliated international organizations in terms of organizing appealing secondary congresses for their members and external parties, and integrate these more readily in the main congress.
- Consider the possibility of planning a small number of sessions spread over the congress week to address general key issues (at times when no other sessions are planned).

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<sup>2</sup> This report is not the place to examine the academic quality of the sessions, if for no other reason than that no serious research into this matter was conducted (e.g. by systematically asking the participants and organizers to give their opinions on this matter). Furthermore, the responsibility for this aspect did not lie primarily with Amsterdam 2010. For this reason, it can only be stated as an aside that a number of board members had the impression that, in addition to an evident number of very high-quality sessions, the quality of a fair number of sessions was too low, with a large number of short, sometimes poorly presented summaries of papers and hardly any time for serious discussion of the proposed theme. This is a complaint that is heard about many larger congresses. We recommend that systematic research is carried out into the academic quality of the sessions at future congresses.



- Consider the possibility of accepting far more papers if the level of quality is sufficient to allow it and use them to compile a large electronic dossier which can form the subject of a session without each paper necessarily having to be a separate topic for discussion. This implies a different role for the organizer.

- Make the provision of good resources for helping participants from ODA countries an essential criterion for candidates that want to organize future congresses. In future, also make financial resources available to ensure that representatives from these countries can participate more intensively in the meetings organized by the CISH Bureau in the five-year period between congresses.

- Discover how the congress can generate greater appeal to young historians (including undergraduates). Involve national and international organizations for history students in this process.

In terms of organizational and logistical resources and partly on the basis of comments made earlier in this report, the following additional points can be made:

- In general, the mainly digital working method is efficient and effective. It is therefore worth retaining. However, it is important to devote particular attention to the issue of how to reach fellow historians in time with adequate factual information by other means, both digital and otherwise.

- Consider whether there are options to encourage the selected organizers and member organizations to stick to agreements and deadlines for digital procedures.

- Investigate the possibility of developing a system whereby papers submitted for the sessions, as long as they are of sufficient quality, can be accepted and published on a website (without this implying that the submitting parties are all entitled to give a presentation based on their paper).

- Simplify the procedure for drawing up subjects, calls for papers and the final version of the programme.

- Consider the possibility of enabling registration for only part of the congress (e.g. one day) as there is a demand for this from within the organizing country and possibly for organizations representing more specialized historians.

- Ensure that the organization provides good information about visa requirements and provides support to applicants where possible.

- Explore whether a more structured social and cultural adjacent programme, as attempted in the Holland History House, will also be possible in future. In this regard, consider the possibility of establishing stronger links with the content of the academic programme.

- Take a pragmatic approach to the financial demands that the CISH puts on the organizing institutes. Since the opportunities for funding a congress such as this and the related problems vary so widely between countries, it is virtually impossible to formulate a recommendation based on our experiences in Amsterdam. However, it is possible to make a number of observations, the scope and applicability of which are hard to determine.

1. From the business community, at least in the Netherlands, virtually no sponsorship can be expected for an academic congress for historians. A variation on this assertion can also apply to more general cultural subsidy bodies. In the Netherlands, funding from central government was also not forthcoming. The support base for this congress, including the financial basis, was found among academic organizations, especially those closely associated with the discipline.

2. It is also clear that, in any case for Amsterdam 2010, the limitations that the CISH puts on the amount of the congress fee serve a clear purpose (keeping the obstacles to participation as low as possible) but they can also form a problem in securing sufficient funding for the conference. This is also true of the costs which, under the current regulations, arise from the – albeit understandable – need to pay in full for the CISH Bureau to stay both during the site visit in 2008 and the full congress week in 2010.



## **Appendix 1**

### **Local Organizing Committee:**



Hans Blom (board chairman), UvA and NIOD

Henk Wals (board secretary), Huygens Institute

Martin Bossenbroek (board treasurer), KB

Elles Baaijens, UvA

David Barnouw, NIOD

Pim den Boer (board member), UvA

Lex Heerma van Voss (board member), KNHG and Utrecht University

Els Hiemstra-Kuperus, IISH

Karin Hofmeester (board member), IISH

Ineke Kellij, IISH

Tamara van Kessel, UvA

Gees van der Plaat, KNHG

Sander Rutjens (HHH), NHM

Julienne Straatman, Strategic Consultancy

Karen Tessel, NIOD

Jouke Turpijn (HHH), UvA

## **Appendix 2**

### **Financial balance ICHS-congress Amsterdam 2010**

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<i>BUDGET 2006 (in €)</i>			<i>REALISATION</i>	<i>2010 (in €)</i>		
	n		n	Foundation Amsterdam 2010	Foundation Solidarity Fund	Total
<b>Receipts</b>						
Fees participants	2070	<b>454,000</b>	1317	<b>264,327</b>		
Contributions guarantee fund						
Dutch scholarly institutions & scholarly foundations		<b>300,000</b>		<b>361,000</b>		
Contribution housing and facilities University of Amsterdam		<b>400,000</b>		<b>400,000</b>		
Sponsoring		<b>50,000</b>		<b>39,900</b>		
			Mellon Foundation		<b>139,290</b>	
			Other sponsors		<b>3,360</b>	
			Private donations 2011		<b>7,885</b>	
Stands publishers		<b>15,000</b>		<b>14,151</b>		
			Interest	<b>7,172</b>	<b>2,034</b>	
<b>Total receipts</b>		<b>1,219,000</b>		<b>1,086,550</b>	<b>152,569</b>	<b>1,239,119</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Congress organization		<b>300,000</b>		<b>300,000</b>		
Housing and facilities		<b>400,000</b>		<b>431,294</b>		
Opening and closing sessions (including receptions)		<b>55,000</b>		<b>51,160</b>		
(Simultaneous) translation		<b>50,000</b>		<b>22,380</b>		
Coffee and tea		<b>50,000</b>		<b>16,111</b>		
Other organisational expenses		<b>74,000</b>		<b>44,672</b>		
Bureau & board CISH		<b>90,000</b>		<b>32,437</b>		
Grants		<b>75,000</b>			<b>147,704</b>	



Contingencies		<b>125,000</b>				
			Administrative expenses	<b>6,545</b>	<b>296</b>	
			Notarial fees & fiscal advice	<b>6,860</b>		
			Restitution to participants guarantee fund	<b>175,091</b>		
			Future solidarity activities		<b>4,569</b>	
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>1,219,000</b>		<b>1,086,550</b>	<b>152,569</b>	<b>1,239,119</b>

Final version  
October 20, 2012  
Martin Bossenbroek  
*treasurer*

### Appendix 3

#### List of supporting institutes

##### *Institutions*

Aletta Institute for Women's History

Amsterdam Historical Museum

Centre for Parliamentary History, Nijmegen

Documentation Centre Dutch Political Parties, Groningen

Faculty of History and arts Erasmus University, Rotterdam

Huygens Institute, The Hague



Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies Radboud University, Nijmegen

Institute of Netherlands History, The Hague

International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam

KITLV Royal Netherlands Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, Leiden

KNAW Royal Netherlands Academy for Arts and Sciences, Amsterdam

KNHG Royal Netherlands Historical Society, The Hague

Koninklijke Bibliotheek National Library of the Netherlands, The Hague

Meertens Institute, Amsterdam

Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Wassenaar

Netherlands Institute for Military History, The Hague

NIOD Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, Amsterdam

Roosevelt Study Center, Middelburg

#### *Sponsors*

Gravin van Bylandt Foundation, The Hague

Harreveld Fonds, Bunnik

ING Bank, Amsterdam

J.E. Jurriaanse Foundation, Rotterdam

Kattendycke/Drucker Foundation, Amsterdam

Mellon Foundation, New York

Professor van Winterfonds, Utrecht

De Volkskrant, Amsterdam

Private donations

## Appendix 4

### Numbers of participants and papers (listed per country)

<b>Countries total:</b>	
Albania	1
Argentina	11
Australia	32
Austria	13
Bangladesh	3
Belgium	30
Botswana	2
Brazil	17
Bulgaria	6

<b>Papers from:</b>	
Albania	1
Argentina	7
Australia	26
Austria	8
Bangladesh	2
Belgium	17
Brazil	14
Bulgaria	1



Burkina Faso	1
Cameroon	5
Canada	31
Chile	3
China	30
Colombia	3
Congo	1
Cyprus	2
Czech Republic	10
Denmark	14
Egypt	1
Estonia	1
Ethiopia	2
Finland	24
France	72
French Polynesia	1
Georgia	3
Germany	75
Ghana	1
Greece	13
Hong Kong	2
Hungary	11
Iceland	1
India	13
Indonesia	2
Iran	1
Iraq	2
Ireland	1
Israel	19
Italy	72
Japan	47
Kazakhstan	2
Kenya	5
Korea, Republic of	7
Latvia	1
Lithuania	1
Luxembourg	4
Madagascar	1

Cameroon	1
Canada	18
Chile	2
China	6
Colombia	1
Cyprus	1
Czech Republic	4
Denmark	6
Ethiopia	1
Finland	13
France	53
French Polynesia	1
Germany	50
Greece	10
Hong Kong	2
Hungary	9
India	7
Indonesia	1
Israel	12
Italy	37
Japan	24
Kazakhstan	1
Kenya	1
Korea, Republic of	4
Luxembourg	1
Madagascar	1



Malawi	1
Malaysia	4
Maldives	1
Mali	1
Mexico	8
Morocco	1
Mozambique	1
Netherlands	237
New Zealand	4
Niger	2
Nigeria	15
Norway	14
Peru	2
Poland	14
Portugal	19
Puerto Rico	1
Qatar	1
Reunion	2
Romania	17
Russian Federation	23
Senegal	2
Serbia and Montenegro	3
Singapore	2
Slovakia	6
Slovenia	6
South Africa	6
Spain	28
Suriname	1
Sweden	39
Switzerland	31
Taiwan	2
Thailand	1
Togo	2
Trinidad & Tobago	2
Tunisia	1
Turkey	15
Ukraine	4

Malaysia	3
Mexico	6
Netherlands	51
New Zealand	3
Niger	1
Nigeria	9
Norway	9
Poland	12
Portugal	18
Puerto Rico	1
Qatar	1
Reunion	1
Romania	16
Russian Federation	11
Senegal	2
Serbia and Montenegro	3
Singapore	2
Slovakia	8
Slovenia	3
South Africa	4
Spain	20
Sweden	15
Switzerland	19
Thailand	1
Togo	1
Tunisia	1
Turkey	2
Ukraine	4



United Kingdom	81
United States	114
Vatican City State	2
Zaire	1
Total attending:	1317
Registered on 22/8/2010	1500
No shows	191
Countries 88	

United Kingdom	54
United States	80
Papers presented	704
Papers accepted	865
No shows	161
Papers from 64 countries	

\* multiple papers per persoon

## Appendix 5

### Report of the Solidarity Fund for Historians – Amsterdam 2010, beneficiary of an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant

29 March 2011

Grant total: 200,000 \$

## BACKGROUND

When the International Committee of Historical Sciences was founded in 1926, its members came from only nineteen countries, all of which were either European or North American. It wasn't until after the Second World War that a greater involvement of historians from other parts of the world began to emerge, with ever more African, Asian and South American countries being represented at the ICHS congresses as well.<sup>3</sup> Since 2000 however, in spite of all efforts, this broad representation has instead been worryingly decreasing.

The Dutch Organizing Committee of the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences was determined to counter this trend. Hence, with the generous support of the



Congress  
participants  
exchanging views  
over lunch

<sup>3</sup> J. H. Coatsworth and Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Toward a Global History of Historical Congresses and the International Committee of Historical Sciences* (New York & Oxford, 2005), 383-388.





**Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** and a number of private donations, the **Solidarity Fund for Historians – Amsterdam 2010** was created: a special fund to ensure that financial obstacles would not deter the attendance of historians from so far under-represented countries.

### **THE SOLIDARITY FUND FOR HISTORIANS – AMSTERDAM 2010**

The Solidarity Fund for Historians – Amsterdam 2010 is registered as a non-profit organisation ('Stichting') at the Chamber of Commerce of Amsterdam (registration number 34300342).

Its board members are Pim den Boer (Chairman), Gees van der Plaat (Secretary), Henk Wals (Treasurer) and Tamara van Kessel.

The strategy chosen by the Board was the result of careful consultation with historians and other academics active in the international field. Although the execution of the plans made took place in collaboration with the Dutch Organizing Committee of the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences, the financial administration and other responsibilities were kept separate from those of the Organizing Committee.

### **GLOBALIZING PARTICIPATION BY OFFERING SUPPORT**

Through an official application procedure posted on the ICHS 2010 congress website ([www.ichs2010.org](http://www.ichs2010.org)) in September 2009, qualified historians coming primarily from the countries included in the OECD List of Recipients of Official Development Assistance (ODA) 2008-2010 were able to apply for support from the Solidarity Fund. This support was given in the form of accommodation and/or an economy class return-flight to Amsterdam and/or a congress registration fee waiver. Priority was given to candidates presenting a paper at the congress.

The application form requested:

- contact details;
- the title of the paper that the applicant was going to present at the congress and the name of session;
- if the applicant was not presenting a paper a maximum of 200 words about their motivation;
- an indication of the support that was needed (travel expenses, accommodation or a



Ibrahim Thioub  
(Senegal) speaking at  
the Congress Dinner,  
Friday 27 August 2010.

registration fee waiver);

- a curriculum vitae; a digital scan or photocopy of their identity card or passport;
- a separately sent letter of recommendation from the session organizer or an academic referee connected to an officially recognized university or belonging to one of the Affiliated Organizations of the ICHS.

Before the deadline on 23 November 2009, the Secretary of the Solidarity Fund for Historical Sciences received a total of 71 requests, of which 11 had to be rejected.

## USING ACADEMIC NETWORKS



In addition to issuing an application procedure for support from the Solidarity Fund, a letter signed by the Chairman of the Solidarity Fund was sent to all congress session organizers. In this letter session organizers were urged - always on the basis of expertise - to also invite speakers coming from ODA-countries. To encourage this move, the organizers were informed about the support that these participants could apply for and the fact that speakers would be given priority in application procedure. In this way the Solidarity Fund could benefit from the session organizer's network of experts in their research field, rendering applications more reliable. The session organizers could in turn be more confident that speakers who might otherwise have had too many difficulties coming to the congress would this time be able to attend.

## **SATELLITE CONFERENCE**

The Solidarity Fund for Historians chose also to engage with an existing international network of historians and other experts working for city/community museums, coordinated by Renée Kistemaker, former conservator of the Amsterdam Historical Museum. This cooperation offered the possibility to involve historians and museum professionals coming from a field not generally represented at the congresses of the ICHS, as well as the chance to invite colleagues coming mainly from the African continent with which a first contact had already been established. To attract these participants to the ICHS 2010, the side-conference City Museums on the Move was organised (23-24 August 2010) with the cooperation of the Amsterdam Historical Museum and the Reinwardt Academy. The questions dealt with at this conference revolved around the function of city and community museums. What is their relation to the city or to the community? How can they best serve as a place for remembrance? Have they been affected by the revision of 19th century classification of museums? And could the city or community museums be instruments of empowerment and emancipation? These themes were approached by comparing between the practices of such museums in The Netherlands, Belgium, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique and South-Africa. Seven experts from African countries spoke at this conference, of which the Solidarity Fund supported six: Rachid Bouzidi from Morocco; George Abungu, Patrick Abungu and Jack Obonyo from Kenya; Solange Macamo from Mozambique; Ciraj Rassool from South Africa. These experts also attended several ICHS congress sessions.

Patrick Abungu (Kenya) presenting the Shimoni Historical Slave Cave at the side-conference *City Museums on The Move*, 24 August 2010.



The overall figures attendance figures of the ICHS 2010 show that more countries were represented at this congress than at the ICHS 2005 in Sydney.

Number of countries represented at the ICHS 2005 and 2010 (per continent)			
Geographical continent	ICHS 2005 in Sydney	ICHS 2010 in Amsterdam	Percentage
Asia	17	22	+ 29,4 %
Africa	9	21	+ 133,33 %
Europe	34	34	-
North America	2	2	-
South America	9	9	-
Total	71	88	+ 23.9 %

The number of participants per country demonstrates that more historians from the African and South American continent came to the ICHS 2010 than to the ICHS 2005. Fewer historians from Asia came to the ICHS 2010 in Amsterdam than to the ICHS

2005 in Sydney. If we subtract the number of Australians that attended the ICHS 2005 (394) and the ICHS 2010 (32) from the total number of participants from the Asian continent, a decrease emerges in the number of Asian historians present (141 in 2010 versus 168 in 2005). This can be explained by the location of the congress in 2005 (Sydney).

Number of participants at the ICHS 2005 and 2010 (per continent)		
Geographical continent	ICHS 2005 in Sydney	ICHS 2010 in Amsterdam
Africa	22	53
Asia	562 (incl. 394 Australians)	175 (incl. 32 Australians)
Europe	450	896
North America	155	145
South America	30	48
Total	1219	1317

The Solidarity Fund for Historians – Amsterdam 2010 has altogether provided support for 90 congress participants in the form of a waiver for the congress registration fee and/or hotel accommodation, lunch/dinner coupons and/or an economy class return flight. Out of these 90 participants, 81 came from ODA-countries.

## AFRICA

40 participants from 17 ODA countries

Botswana 2, Burkina Faso 1, Congo 1, Egypt 1, Ethiopia 2, Ghana 1, Kenya 5, Madagascar 1, Malawi 1, Mali 1, Morocco 1, Mozambique 1, Niger 2, Nigeria 13, Senegal 2, Togo 2, South-Africa 3

#### ASIA

22 participants from 8 ODA countries

Bangladesh 3, China 3, India 10, Indonesia 1, Iran 1, Kazakhstan 1, Maldives 1, Turkey 2

#### EUROPE

4 participants from 3 ODA countries

Albania 1, Serbia 1, Ukraine 2

#### SOUTH AMERICA

15 participants from 6 ODA countries

Argentina 7, Brazil 2, Colombia 2, Mexico 1, Peru 2, Trinidad and Tobago 1

Number of countries represented at the ICHS 2010 in Amsterdam (per continent)		
Geographical continent	Total number of countries	Number of ODA-countries
Asia	22	13
Africa	21	21
Europe	34	3
North America	2	0

South America	9	9
Total	88	46



ICHS Congress  
participants at the Closing  
Ceremony, 28 August

It is the aim of the ICHS congresses to bring together the international community of historians and to stimulate academic exchange in a scientific discipline that was at its origins often driven by nationalism and national identity politics. Thanks to the generous grant of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation the global international character of the 21st conference of the International Committee of Historical Sciences has not only been safeguarded but even considerably increased - despite the recent worldwide economic crisis.

The ICHS participants have benefited from academic discussions that reflect more than ever before the diversity and richness of our global community of historians.

The Board of the Solidarity Fund for Historians – Amsterdam 2010

Pim den Boer (Chairman)

Gees van der Plaat (Secretary)

**COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL  
DES SCIENCES HISTORIQUES**



**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES**

Henk Wals (Treasurer)

Tamara van Kessel (Member)

Amsterdam, 29 March 2011.

## **Appendix 6**

### **Final report on Holland History House**







## Evaluation of the Holland History House

3 January 2011

### Brief description

The University of Amsterdam, the *Amsterdams Historisch Museum* (now known as the Amsterdam Museum) and the Netherlands Museum of National History joined forces to organize a 'Holland History House' to coincide with the week that Amsterdam hosted the 21st International Congress of the Historical Sciences 2010. This Olympian event among historical congresses took place from 22 to 27 August 2010 in various buildings belonging to the University of Amsterdam. The Holland History House became a place where the international congress participants but also Dutch students and history enthusiasts could go for relaxation and entertainment with a historical twist every weekday and weekday evening for the duration of the congress. The Holland History House featured such elements as an evening talk show entitled *The Remains of the Day*, guided tours and live music.

The *The Remains of the Day* talk show, hosted by Hans Goedkoop (television maker for Dutch broadcaster VPRO) and Jouke Turpijn (assistant professor at the University of Amsterdam) provided a fascinating look back on the day's events at the international congress, brought together local and international historians and gave experts a platform to talk about a range of themes. Celebrated international historians, such as Roger Chartier, Jürgen Kocka and Hayden White discussed issues such as Amsterdam, religion, generation gaps and refugee historians.

During an intermezzo, students from the University of Amsterdam screened a series of five-minute films which they had made themselves. Under the name *Holland History Hunters*, they interviewed interesting historians and visitors to the congress, visited various institutes and generally presented a surprising and amusing spin on Amsterdam and the world of history in the Netherlands.

Free guided tours were also organized each evening, starting from the Amsterdam Museum. The entire museum was open to the public and extra activities were organized at various locations. Every evening was rounded off with live music.

The Holland History House also served as a departure point for a further exploration of the city of Amsterdam. Ten organizations in and around Amsterdam organized various activities for the congress participants, tourists, history enthusiasts and history students. During the week a total of 40 activities were organized, including



open evenings at a range of museums, concerts, a historical film festival, lectures, excursions and guided tours.

The Holland History House also contributed to the opening and closing sessions of the ICHS2010 congress, helping to facilitate the official opening at the Amsterdam Music Theatre (*Muziektheater/Stopera*) with a special composition by Huub de Vriend as a soundtrack to the screening of the silent film *Regen* [Rain] by Joris Ivens. The congress came to a close on Saturday, 28 August with a lecture by Nelleke Noordervliet and a second screening of the film with another live performance of its newly composed soundtrack. This session was also open to a wider audience.

The following resources were used as part of the publicity campaign:

1. Programmes. A run of 2,500 was printed and these were distributed among conference participants and students at the University of Amsterdam.
2. Posters and flyers. These were distributed at various locations within the University of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam Museum and 60 cultural institutes in Amsterdam, including libraries, pop venues and bookshops. People were also hired to hand out flyers on several occasions to provide additional promotion for the Holland History House.
3. Advertising in trams. In the week prior to the opening of the Holland History House, a ten-second promotional film was shown in Amsterdam's trams.
4. Discount vouchers. In a number of magazines, including *Het Historisch Nieuwsblad*, *Ons Amsterdam* and *Het Amsterdams Stadsblad*, discount vouchers were issued to people not registered for the conference. These vouchers gave people half-price admission.
5. Video registration. Every evening, the talk show *The Remains of the Day* was recorded on video and broadcast on various websites (i.e. those of Dutch broadcaster VPRO, Amsterdam Museum, the University of Amsterdam and the Netherlands Museum of National History).
6. The staging and setting of the Holland History House. Banners and parasols bearing the logo were positioned around the Amsterdam Museum and in its courtyard to generate extra attention for the activities. Elements reflecting the Holland History House were also placed on and around the stage.



## **Objectives**

1. To create and perpetuate a network for history enthusiasts, international historians and Dutch history students.
2. To bring visitors into contact with aspects of the history of Amsterdam and the Netherlands.
3. To generate enthusiasm among visitors and congress participants for an activity organized by a participating institute and for going on one or more excursions. Result: 20,000 visitors, across the various participating institutes.
4. Giving visitors and congress participants a positive image of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam Museum, the University of Amsterdam, the Dutch approach to popular history, the Netherlands Museum of National History and all participating institutes.

## **Communicative objectives**

1. Cooperation with local media. For The Remains of the Day talk show, the plan was to cooperate with a local radio or TV station. Another possible option was an online news website.
2. Press. Efforts were made to generate enthusiasm among the national and regional media to cover one or more newsworthy activities (particularly those initiated by the Holland History House in the Amsterdam Museum). We also approached educational publications and magazines with a historical slant. Faculties of History throughout the country received a mailshot with information.
3. Website. The website was one of the primary means of communication regarding the activities. Initially its purpose was to provide visitors and congress participants with advance information about the programme and registering for activities and excursions. Subsequently, in the period leading up to the first congress session, activities were added to the site and during the congress it featured relevant information for the various target groups.

## **Evaluation**



**1. To create and perpetuate a network for history enthusiasts, for international historians and for Dutch history students.**

In the course of the week, it certainly proved possible to create a network in which the congress participants, Dutch history students and history enthusiasts could get together. For five days, over 40 activities were organized in various locations. An approximate total of 5,000 visitors took part. Based on the number of visitors to the Holland History House and the feedback from the participating institutes, we can conclude that 80% of all visitors were congress participants, with the remaining 20% being made up of history students and history enthusiasts (at least for those activities that were open to all).

**2. To bring visitors in contact with aspects of the history of Amsterdam and the Netherlands.**

This proved to be a great success. The overall programme of the Holland History House, consisting of activities at the Amsterdam Museum and the ten participating institutes had a great deal to offer on the history of the Netherlands and Amsterdam.

The total number of activities was 40. The participating institutes were:

**1. Amsterdam Museum**

Accommodated the Holland History House, but also organized its own activities, including guided tours and two open evenings at the Willet-Holthuysen Museum.

**2. The Special Collections Department of the University of Amsterdam**

During the week, it organized a summer school in which congress participants, history students and history enthusiasts could take part. Throughout the week, a variety of workshops, lectures and guided tours were held in the Allard Pierson Museum and the Special Collections Department. The Special Collections department was pleased with the turnout throughout the week.



### **3. Rijksmuseum**

Organized two open evenings, primarily intended for the congress participants.

### **4. Vereniging Geschiedenis Beeld en Geluid (Historical Society of Sound and Vision)**

A historical film festival was held in the Doelenzaal during the congress week, featuring historical films from all over Europe. Each evening there were two screenings open to the general public free of charge. The screenings attracted large audiences every evening.

### **5. Dutch Resistance Museum**

Twice during the congress week, the Dutch Resistance Museum organized open evenings with guided tours in Dutch and English. Both evenings attracted large numbers of visitors and prompted very positive responses.

### **6. Jewish Historical Museum Concert in the Portuguese Synagogue**

The Jewish Historical Museum organized a summer concert in the Portuguese Synagogue on Thursday, 26 August. The concert was open to the general public and attracted a large audience.

### **7. Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder (Our Lord in the Attic)**

Prior to the organ recital in the Oude Kerk, the museum organized an open evening with a guided tour of the restoration work being carried out in the building.

### **8. Oude Kerk**

The Oude Kerk organized an organ recital with a short guided tour on Tuesday, 24 August. The concert was open to the general public.



## 9. Teylers Museum

On the final evening of the congress week, the Teylers Museum in Haarlem organized ‘a romantic evening in Haarlem’ with a reception in Haarlem town hall, followed by a guided tour of the Teylers Museum. Although this evening was primarily intended for congress participants, it was also possible for other groups to register. This evening was also well attended.

## 10. Congress activities

1. The opening of the congress The ICHS 2010 congress was officially opened on Sunday, 22 August at the Amsterdam Music Theatre (*Muziektheater/Stopera*) with a range of lectures by renowned historians and a special composition by Huub de Vries as the soundtrack to the film *Regen* by Joris Ivens. The opening event was for invited guests only but it was not limited to congress participants; history students and history enthusiasts were also able to attend.
  
2. The closing session. The closing event of the congress was held on Saturday, 28 August in the Auditorium of the University of Amsterdam with a lecture by Nelleke Noordervliet and a second screening of the film *Regen* accompanied another live performance of its newly composed soundtrack. This event was open to the general public, free of charge.
  
3. **To generate enthusiasm among visitors and congress participants for taking part in an activity organized by a participating institute and for going on one or more excursions. Result: 20,000 visitors, across the various participating institutes.**

In total approximately 5,000 people took part in the activities, including the Holland History House. This figure was lower than anticipated. This shortfall can be accounted for as follows:



1. The lower number of visitors to the congress (1,300 instead of 2,000)
2. Limited publicity: the budget only covered posters at Amsterdam Museum and the University of Amsterdam and a short advertisement in the city's trams. This meant that the activities had a relatively low profile.
3. Press coverage failed to meet expectations. This was probably due to the fact that a specific history programme is only of interest to a small section of the general public. This was probably the reason why the amount of press coverage was disappointing.

Nevertheless, almost all of the institutes that took part were pleased with their attendance figures. Only the Rijksmuseum had to contend with a disappointing turnout due to the fact that their first open evening coincided with the congress reception hosted by the City of Amsterdam.

***4. Giving visitors and congress participants a positive image of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam Museum, the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands Museum of National History, the University of Amsterdam and all participating institutes.***

The reactions from all visitors were very positive. Many positive reactions were received during the Holland History House project, but the congress organizers and all of the participating institutes also stated in their feedback that the visitors were very enthusiastic about the activities. We can therefore conclude that visitors to the Museum of National History, the Amsterdam Museum, public history as a new discipline and the University of Amsterdam were left with a positive impression.

**Communicative objectives**

1. Cooperation with local media.

For The Remains of the Day talk show, the plan was to cooperate with a local radio or TV station. Another possible option was an online news website.

Every evening, a video recording was made of the talk show and for a short film in the Holland History Hunters series. These were then broadcast every day on the websites of the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum, INNl and on Dutch broadcaster VPRO's history website. Unfortunately a more extensive partnership with





*Geschiedenis24* (a 24-hour digital history channel) proved infeasible due to lack of resources.

## 2. Website.

Over a 3-month period, the website [www.hollandhistoryhouse.com](http://www.hollandhistoryhouse.com) attracted 4,156 visitors and generated 10,000 page views. The profile of the website was therefore sufficiently high. Prior to the congress week, two newsletters were sent out to congress participants and people who had signed up for a newsletter.

## 3. Press.

Efforts were made to generate enthusiasm among the national and regional media to cover one or more newsworthy activities (particularly those initiated by the Holland History House in the Amsterdam Museum). We also approached educational publications and magazines with a historical slant. Faculties of History throughout the country received a mailshot containing information.

Ultimately, nine online articles were written, specifically devoted to the Holland History House and the publication *Het Historisch Nieuwsblad* published two announcements about the project. Most of the publicity was generated on the internet, from sources such as VPRO *Geschiedenis* and *De Echo Amsterdam*.

27-07-2010	ANP (the Netherlands largest news agency)	APS: Holland History House, historical meeting place from 23 to 27 August
27-07-2010	Nieuwsbank	Holland History House, historical meeting place from 23 to 27 August
28-07-2010	Geschiedenis.nl	Major historical congress in Amsterdam
28-07-2010	HQ-Nieuws	Holland History House, the meeting place for history lovers
29-07-2010	EZPress	Holland History House, the meeting place for history lovers

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19-08- 2010	De                      Echo Amsterdam Centr.	Holland History House, a home from home for history lovers
27-08- 2010	Historisch Nieuwsblad	Meanwhile, back at the Holland History House
27-08- 2010	University              of Amsterdam	History lovers meet up in Holland History House
28-08- 2010	VPRO Geschiedenis	Remains of the Day, Wednesday 25 August

Other printed and online publications about the congress usually made mention of the Holland History House.

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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
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## Appendix 7

### Sample letters of invitation



Amsterdam, 09-12-2009

Dear Prof. .....,

We are happy to inform you that your participation in the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences (ICHS) has been approved. We invite you to present your paper "From Japonism to Neo-Japonism: Transformation of Cultural Influence as Soft Power" in the panel Cultural Transfers and International Relations.

The 21st ICHS takes place at the Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 22-28 August, 2010. You can find the preliminary programme on our website <http://www.ichs2010.org>

Looking forward to meeting you at the conference.  
Yours sincerely,

mrs. dr. G. N. van der Plaat  
On behalf of the  
Local organizing committee

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL  
DES SCIENCES HISTORIQUES



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES

# Amsterdam 2010

21<sup>st</sup> International Congress of Historical Sciences

Amsterdam, 28-4-2010

Dear .....

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, it is my pleasure to invite you to present your paper “Femininity Used and Contested: Women’s Experiences in National Liberation Guerilla in Western Ukraine in 1940-50s” at the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences. Your paper will be a part of the panel “Rethinking and Contextualizing Sisterhood, Gender, and Politics” organized by the International Federation for Research in Women’s History.

The 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences will be held in Amsterdam in 2010, from 22 - 28 August 2010. The Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA) will host the event. You are welcome to visit the Congress web-site

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OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES

<http://www.ichs2010.org> for conference program and other practical information.

We are also happy to inform you that the Solidarity Fund approved your request for financial support to attend the Congress.

You received a waiver for the congress registration fee. We also reserved a room (standard room, single occupancy, including city tax and breakfast) for you in the Ibis Amsterdam City Stopera hotel, Valkenburgerstraat 68, 1011 LZ Amsterdam City Centre, NETHERLANDS (arrival 24-8-2010, departure 28-8-2010; check in from 14.00, check out until 12.00). Questions about this reservation and the hotel will be answered by the Amsterdam RAI, Hotel & Travel Service, Mrs. Nina van den Brul [n.vandenbrul@rai.nl](mailto:n.vandenbrul@rai.nl)

We also purchased the tickets for your air travel. Your e-tickets and itinerary have been e-mailed to you. All your questions about the air travel and the ticket will be answered by the travel agency: Mrs. Neeltje de Groot, tel+ 31(0) 20 6621504.

Personal data:

Date and place of birth:

Personal number:

Permanent address:

Passport

Authority

Date of issue

Date of expiry

Looking forward to meeting you at the conference.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Dr. G. N. van der Plaat

On behalf of the

Local organizing committee

Stooplaan 9

3311 DL Dordrecht

Tel. 31(0)786311519

[g.v.d.plaat@kpnplanet.nl](mailto:g.v.d.plaat@kpnplanet.nl)



## **Appendix 8**

### **Overview of publicity in general media**

#### **Amsterdam 2010 in the media**

Stad verwelkomt 2000 tophistorici [City welcomes 2000 top historians] (*De Telegraaf*, 13-08-2010)

Paul van der Steen, De kloof tussen de geschiedschrijvers [The chasm between the historiographers] (*Trouw*, 21-08-2010)

[http://www.trouw.nl/cultuur/article3174299.ece/De\\_kloof\\_tussen\\_de\\_geschiedschrijvers\\_.html](http://www.trouw.nl/cultuur/article3174299.ece/De_kloof_tussen_de_geschiedschrijvers_.html)

Wereldcongres voor historici in Amsterdam [World congress for historians in Amsterdam] (Met het Oog op Morgen, 21-08-2010)

<http://nos.nl/audio/179940-wereldcongres-voor-historici-in-amsterdam.html>

<http://weblogs.nos.nl/methetoogopmorgen/2010/08/21/zaterdag-welke-films-draaien-er-in-irak/>



International Congress of Historical Sciences (OVT, 22-08-2010)

<http://geschiedenis.vpro.nl/programmas/3299530/afleveringen/43586334/items/43866163/>

Paul Arnoldussen, Een nieuw geluid voor Joris Ivens' klassieker over regen [A new sound for Joris Ivens' classic about rain] (*Het Parool*, 23-08-2010)

Paul Arnoldussen, Over Deense aardappels, Mussolini en emigratie [About Danish potatoes, Mussolini and emigration] (*Het Parool*, 24-08-2010)

Paul Arnoldussen, Over dochter De Flines en het loon van prostituees [About the De Flines girl and the wages of prostitutes] (*Het Parool*, 25-08-2010)

Paul Arnoldussen, Mussolini en zijn rol in de Fifa [Mussolini and his role in the FIFA] (*Het Parool*, 26-08-2010)

Prins van Oranje bij 21e Internationale congres voor historische wetenschappen [Prince of Orange attends the 21st International Congress of the Historical Sciences] (The Netherlands Government Information Service, 27-08-2010)

[http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/Actueel/Nieuwsberichten/Nieuwsarchief/2010/Augustus/Prins\\_van\\_Oranje\\_bij\\_21e\\_Internationale\\_congres\\_voor\\_historische\\_wetenschappen\\_27\\_augustus\\_2010.html](http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/Actueel/Nieuwsberichten/Nieuwsarchief/2010/Augustus/Prins_van_Oranje_bij_21e_Internationale_congres_voor_historische_wetenschappen_27_augustus_2010.html)

Paul Arnoldussen, Museum ook buurthuis, school en inkomstenbron [Museum is also community centre, school and source of income] (*Het Parool*, 27-08-2010)

Peter Giessen, Wereldvrede als doelstelling werd een mislukking Geschiedenis van eigen continent eerst [World peace as an objective became a failure. History of your own continent comes first] (*de Volkskrant*, 28-08-2010)

[http://www.vkgeschiedenis.nl/historische\\_headlines/artikel/1414179](http://www.vkgeschiedenis.nl/historische_headlines/artikel/1414179)

Paul Arnoldussen, Hoe krijg je die koeien in zo'n bootje? [How do you get those cows on a little boat like that?] (*Het Parool*, 28-08-2010)

Emilie van Outeren, Internationale geschiedenis is uit [International history is out] (*NRC Handelsblad*, 31-08-2010)

Table ronde: Géopolitique des congrès d'histoire [Round table: Geopolitics at the history congress] (La Fabrique de l'Histoire, 02-09-2010)



<http://www.franceculture.com/emission-la-fabrique-de-l-histoire-histoire-des-empires-44-2010-09-02.html>

Roger Chartier, Quand les historiens refont le monde [When historians remake the world] (*Le Monde*, 03-09-2010)

[http://www.lemonde.fr/livres/article/2010/09/02/quand-les-historiens-refont-le-monde\\_1405743\\_3260.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/livres/article/2010/09/02/quand-les-historiens-refont-le-monde_1405743_3260.html)

Histoire du monde et monde de l'histoire [History of the world and the world of history] (*Les Lundis de l'histoire*, 06-09-2010)

<http://www.franceculture.com/emission-les-lundis-de-l-histoire-histoire-du-monde-et-monde-de-l-histoire-2010-09-06.html>

Dossier Historisch Congres Amsterdam 2010 [Amsterdam 2010 Historical Congress Dossier] (*Omroep.nl /Geschiedenis*)

<http://geschiedenis.vpro.nl/dossiers/43868711/>

Dossier ICHS Amsterdam 2010 [ICHS Amsterdam 2010 Dossier] (*Geschiedenis.nl*)

<http://www.geschiedenis.nl/index.php?go=content.dossier&dossierID=278>

<http://historischnieuwsblad.nl>

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/nhm\\_nederland/sets/72157624664042201/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/nhm_nederland/sets/72157624664042201/)

<http://vimeo.com/geschiedenisinnl/videos>

See also <http://www.knhg.nl/2010/cish-wereldcongres-amsterdam-2010-in-de-media/?nieuws=true>, which also contains a film report on the congress made by Henk Wals.

## **Appendix 9**

### **List of abbreviations**

AHM	Amsterdams Historisch Museum (Amsterdam [Historical] Museum)
AIO	Affiliated International Organization (of CISH/ICHS)





BMGN	Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden (= The Low Countries Historical Review)
CISH	Comité International des Sciences Historiques (= ICHS)
ESSHC	European Social Science History Conference
HHH	Holland History House
IC	Internal Committee (of CISH/ICHS)
ICHS	International Committee of Historical Sciences (= CISH)
IISG	Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (= IISH)
IISH	International Institute for Social History (= IISG)
KB	Koninklijke Bibliotheek (National Library of the Netherlands)
KNAW	Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie voor Wetenschappen (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)
KNHG	Koninklijk Nederlands Historisch Genootschap (Royal Netherlands Historical Society)
NHM	Nationaal Historisch Museum (Netherlands Museum of National History)
NIOD	Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogs Documentatie (Netherlands Institute for War Documentation)
NWO	Nederlandse organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research)
ODA countries	Official Development Assistance countries
UvA	Universiteit van Amsterdam (University of Amsterdam)
WEHC	World Economic History Conference