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<i>Basic biographical data</i>	
<b>Name:</b>	Sal Santen
<b>Other names (by-names, pseud. etc.):</b>	Salomon Santen
<b>Date and place of birth:</b>	August 3, 1915, Amsterdam (The Netherlands)
<b>Date and place of death:</b>	July 25, 1998, Amsterdam (The Netherlands)
<b>Nationality:</b>	Dutch
<b>Occupations, careers, etc.:</b>	Stenographer, publicist, writer, revolutionary
<b>Time of activity in Trotskyist movement:</b>	1935 - 1967 (1998)

*Biographical sketch*

*Sal Santen was an outstanding Dutch Trotskyist and a close co-worker of Michel Pablo (Mikhailis Raptis) in the leadership of the Fourth International for some fifteen years. From 1969 he became a writer of novels and (auto-)biographical works. The following biographical sketch is chiefly based on the material listed in the last paragraph of the Selected bibliography section below.*

Sal (Salomon) Santen was born into the working class milieu of Jordaan (Amsterdam, The Netherlands) on August 3, 1915 as the second of three children of Barend Santen (1887-1942), a Jewish shoemaker, and his wife Sientje Santen (b. Menko, 1886-1942). Almost the whole Santen family was wiped out by the Nazis during World War II, thus both parents as well as Santen's younger brother Maurits (1916-1942) were murdered by the Nazis in the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Sobibor, respectively. His sister Saartje (born 1913) died of tuberculosis in 1928.

In 1936 or 1937, Sal Santen married Gijsberta (Bep, for short) Blaauw who died in 1993. She was the stepdaughter of Henk Sneevliet<sup>1</sup>, who was called “Netherlands' first professional revolutionary”<sup>2</sup>. The couple got three children.

After finishing school education at the age of fifteen, Santen gained certificates in English, French,

1) Henk (Henricus) Sneevliet (1883-1942) was a co-founder both of the communist movement in Indonesia (then a Dutch colony) and in the Netherlands as well as a renowned trade union leader (e.g. chief of the *N.A.S.* union). He also was in China as a *Comintern* delegate. In 1927, he left the Dutch *CP*. As chief of the *RSP* and later the *RSAP* he was the best-known Trotskyist in the Netherlands and for several years a member of the Dutch parliament. For several years he held positions in the leading bodies of the Trotskyist *ICL* and at the same time was associated with the *London Bureau* before he broke with Trotskyism. Active in the underground struggle against German occupation, Sneevliet together with seven co-fighters was arrested by the Nazis and executed in the Amersfoort KZ in April 1942. Several biographies have been written about him.

2) See for example Gieben, Sabine: *Stille revolutionair* : Sal Santen 1915-1998, in: *Elsevier*, 54.1998 (31), p.86.

German and shorthand. During most of his adult life, he earned his living primarily as shorthand writer (thus he was occupied with *Vrij Nederland* and *Arbeiderspers*), correspondent and contributor to various newspapers and magazines; at the same time he was an active revolutionary Marxist, thus one could say that he lived a double life for some two or three decades, to a certain degree probably comparable with that of Sherry Mangan, an American writer, poet and publicist and at the same time a central figure of the international Trotskyist movement. After having discontinued his revolutionary political activity in 1967 and following some years of personal and psychological crisis<sup>3</sup>, Sal Santen started a career as author with his first novel, *Jullie is jodenvolk*, the first in a series of some 15 well-received novels most of which being characterized by strong autobiographical references, political and personal reminiscences, and self-analysis or therapy, too. Thus, almost all his books, published between 1969 and 1995<sup>4</sup>, were shaped by the background of either his Jewishness (e.g., *Jullie is jodenvolk*, 1969, *Kinderdief*, 1988, *De B van Bemazzel*, 1989) or his experiences as a Trotskyist militant for some three decades (e.g. *Adiós compañeros*, 1974, or *Dapper zijn omdat het moet*, 1994, the latter reflecting the Algerian liberation struggle). Another book, *Saartje gebakken botje* (1983), was dedicated to his beloved sister. Perhaps one of his finest works was a biography about his father-in-law, which was published in 1974 with title *Sneevliet, rebel*. As a writer, Santen was a member of the Dutch *PEN Centrum* and a leading member of the *Vereniging van Letterkundigen (Writers Association)*.

Before starting his career as a writer, Santen had been a very active, although 'quiet'<sup>5</sup>, political activist and militant of various radical political parties and currents. Thus, after some years of activity in a socialist youth group, the *Arbeiders Jeugd Centrale (AJC, Workers' Youth Centre)* and in the trade-unionist youth movement, he became radicalised during the years of the Great Depression; in 1932 he joined the ranks of the *Onafhankelijke Socialistische Partij (OSP, Independent Socialist Party)*, which as a left socialist splinter group had split from the strong *Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (SDAP, Social Democratic Labour Party)*. When it merged in 1935 with the *Revolutionair Socialistische Partij (RSP, Revolutionary Socialist Party)*<sup>6</sup> led by Henk Sneevliet to form the *Revolutionair Socialistische Arbeiders Partij (RSAP, Revolutionary Socialist Workers' Party)*, Santen joined its ranks. Party leader Henk Sneevliet became something like a father figure to the young Santen who in 1936 became secretary of *RSAP's* youth arm, the *Leninistische Jeugd Garde (Leninist Youth Guard)*. In 1933, Sneevliet's *RSP* had become an affiliate of the Trotskyist *International Communist League (ICL)* and Sneevliet himself a member of *ICL's International Secretariat*. However, in 1935 and 1936 a series of ideological and tactical disputes and tensions between Sneevliet and Trotsky troubled their relations and the *RSAP* alienated more and more from Trotsky's *ICL*, or *Movement for the Fourth International* (as the *ICL* was called from 1936), eventually broke with Trotskyism in the middle of 1937 and became definitively associated with the *London Bureau*<sup>7</sup>.

Sal Santen, after a phase of hesitating, did not side with his father-in-law, Sneevliet, but instead with the Trotskyists<sup>8</sup> and thus in 1939 became a militant of the Dutch *Groep van Bolsjewisten-Leninisten (Group of Bolshevik-Leninists)* and *Bond van Communisten (League of Communists)*, respectively, af-

3) He was treated by psychiatrist C. van Emde Boas who encouraged Santen to write about the deportation and destruction of his family. See for example Ety, Elsbeth: Gentle Trotskyist : Sal Santen (1915-1998), in: *Revolutionary History*, 7.1999 (2), p. 223.

4) As far as we know, none of his books - all were written in Dutch - have been translated into other languages.

5) See for example Gieben, Sabine: Stille revolutionair : Sal Santen 1915-1998, in: *Elsevier*, 54.1998 (31) : p.86; Ety, Elsbeth: Gentle Trotskyist : Sal Santen (1915-1998), in: *Revolutionary History*, 7.1999 (2), pp. 222-223; Nuis, Aad: Een wereldrevolutionair aan de huiselijke haard, in: *Nuis, Aad: Boeken : veertig besprekingen*, Amsterdam, 1978, p. 25-30.

6) Both the Dutch *OSP* and the *RSP* in 1933 had signed together with the German *SAP (Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands, Socialist Workers Party of Germany)* and Trotsky's *ICL* the so-called *Declaration of the Four*. But the *Bloc of Four* which Trotsky hoped to transform into a nucleus of a new International soon broke up and only the *RSP* and its successor, the *RSAP*, joined the international Trotskyist movement, at least for a few years.

7) Officially named *International Bureau for Socialist Unity*, the *London Bureau* was a loose federation (existing from 1932 to 1939) of - as classified by Trotsky - 'centrist' parties opposed both to the *Second* [socialist, reformist] and the *Third* [communist, Stalinist] *Internationals*; however, they equally opposed to the founding of a *Fourth International* as advocated by Trotsky and his supporters.

8) Santen's entire political itinerary from his youth up to his disaffiliation from the Fourth International in the 1960s has been comprehensively accounted within the framework of a Dutch doctoral dissertation written by Ruud Keurentjes: *Sal Santen - van revolutionair tot schrijver*, Nijmegen, Univ., 1981, 250 pp. (particularly pp. 41-125)

filiated with the *Fourth International (FI)* and forced to operate clandestinely as underground fighters in the face of the 1940 fascist German occupation of the Netherlands. When in 1942, as a result of some regroupment processes in the face of brutal fascist repression and persecution, a new Dutch Trotskyist underground movement was formed, the *Comité van Revolutionaire Marxisten (Committee of Revolutionary Marxists)*, Sal Santen from the beginning played a leading rôle in it<sup>9</sup> and edited its illegal paper. After World War II, Santen continued his leading political and organizational activities in the ranks of the *Revolutionair Communistische Partij (RCP, Revolutionary Communist Party)*, the re-named Dutch section of the *Fourth International*<sup>10</sup>. The Greek Trotskyist militant Michel Pablo (Mikhalis Raptis), who during the Second World War had become one of the most influential and integrating leaders of the European sector (*European Secretariat of the FI*) of the international Trotskyist movement, from 1945 became a central figure in Santen's life, too, probably substituting Sneevliet, who had been executed by the Nazis in 1942, as a father figure.

From 1945 to the mid-1960s, Santen functioned not only as a leader and inspirer of the small Dutch section, but at the same time as a leading cadre of the Trotskyist *Fourth International*, participating in various international Trotskyist conferences such for example the first one held after World War II in Paris on March 3-5, 1946, and becoming a member of the *Fourth International's* newly composed *International Executive Committee (IEC)*<sup>11</sup>, the highest body of the movement between two world congresses. When the so-called *Pabloite* split (or, Cannon-Pablo split) in the *Fourth International* occurred in 1953<sup>12</sup>, Santen of course sided with the Pablo leadership representing the Dutch section at the *FI* world congresses. In his capacity as member of the leading bodies of the *FI (International Secretariat of the Fourth International)*, as it was usually called now in order to distinguish it from the *International Committee of the Fourth International*<sup>13</sup>) and as Pablo's special confidant, Santen in 1953 was sent to Latin America for several years. During the long lasting Algerian War, the *FI* from the very beginning strongly supported the anti-colonial liberation struggle of the *Front National de Libération (FNL)* as did many independent, non-communist intellectuals and adherents of the New Left in France

9) For a history of Dutch Trotskyism during World War II see for example Bot, Wim: *Generaals zonder troepen : het Comité van Revolutionaire Marxisten, zomer 1942- mai 1945*, Amsterdam, 1986, 118 pp.

10) For the history of the *RCP* see Lubbersen, R.: *Revolutionair-socialisme in Nederland tussen oorlog en inrede : de Revolutionair Communistische Partij (RCP), Nederlandse Afdeling van de Vierde Internationale van 1945 tot 1952*, Amsterdam, 1983. [Unpubl. ms., not in our possession]

11) The *IEC* as of 1947 was composed of the members of the *International Secretariat* (Michel Pablo as principal secretary, Sam Gordon, Morris Lewit, Sherry Mangan, Pierre Frank, Yvan Craipeau, Ernest Mandel, Jimmy Deane, and V. Sastry) plus Sal Santen, Jock Haston, Eduardo Mauricio, Heinrich Buchbinder, Jacques Grinblat, Paul Parisot, and Le Van.

12) In the wake of the Third World Congress of the *Fourth International* (1951), substantial political debate over perspectives and orientation, combined with an intensifying factional and power struggle shook the leading bodies of the *Fourth International* as well as some of its more important sections, particularly those of the U.S., France and Britain. The controversy and factional struggle resulted in a split of the French section (1952) first, and eventually in a split of the entire International (1953/54) following *SWP (Socialist Workers Party, U.S.)* leader Cannon's famous 'Open letter' (Nov. 1953) aiming at the 'reversionism' of the 'Pabloite' European leadership (chiefly Pablo, Mandel, Frank). Those claiming Trotskyist orthodoxy for themselves (Cannon, Lambert, Healy et al., representing the majority of the American, British and French sections) set up the minority *International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI)* in opposition to the majority *International Secretariat of the Fourth International (ISFI)* dominated by Pablo, Mandel, Frank, and Maitan. Henceforth, both hostile public factions, each of them suffering further splits and a considerable defecting of cadres during the following years, were usually referred to simply as the *International Committee* and the *International Secretariat*, respectively, notwithstanding their official designations. After some years of damaging factional split, on both sides those tendencies which favoured reconciliation and rapprochement became more influential and in view of an almost identical assessment of the Cuban revolution and other essential events, the *ISFI* and the American *SWP* together with some sections of the *ICFI* merged in 1963 (at the so-called Re-unification Congress), creating the *United Secretariat* as the new leading body of the re-unified *FI*. However, some of the parties, groups and tendencies hitherto affiliated with either the *ISFI* or the *ICFI*, did not participate in the fusion process and opposed joining the re-unified *FI*. Thus, a diminished *ICFI* under the leadership of Healy and Lambert continued to exist as a separate organization, and the Posadas faction of the *ISFI* split from it in 1962. Within a couple of years, other tendencies split from either the *ISFI* or the Healyite *ICFI* as for example the adherents of Pablo (who had lost most of his once considerable influence and formed the *International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency* in 1964) and those of James Robertson (who launched the *International Spartacist Tendency* in 1966). All of the mentioned international organizations suffered further splits during the next decades. Some of the organizations resulting from those splits (and, of course, of regroupment processes, too), have been regarding themselves as *the Fourth International* although not being regarded as such by the majority of Trotskyists while other organizations rather have been aiming at re-founding or rebuilding it, or they have been taken their leave from the very conception of a (Trotskyist) *Fourth International* or even have been calling for a *Fifth International* to be created. Some way or another, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were at least some 20 "Trotskyist Fourth Internationals", some of them, of course, consisting of less than a handful of more or less tiny groups, grouplets or sects.

13) See preceding footnote.

and elsewhere. Michel Pablo (Mikhailis Raptis), in the 1950s one of the most influential leaders of the *FI*, Sal Santen and other *FI* militants got deeply involved not only in propagandistic solidarity work, but also in very practical and effective support of the Algerian fighters<sup>14</sup>, most probably even by smuggling counterfeit money and weapons or by assisting in the setting-up of illegal arms factories. In June 1960, Sal Santen and Michel Pablo got caught in Amsterdam and were committed for trial; they had to spend no less than 13 months in pretrial detention, before they eventually were tried before a Dutch criminal court and found guilty of having forged identity documents and of having provided counterfeit money for the *FNL* fighters. Both men were given a fifteen months sentence and – since the judges made allowance for the time served while awaiting trial – were released from prison on September 12, 1961. Their arrest and the trial led to a worldwide protest by supporters and sympathizers of the Fourth International and by renowned writers and intellectuals<sup>15</sup> as for example Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jorge Amado, and Pierre Vidal-Naquet.

Shortly after the reunification congress of the *Fourth International* in 1963, Michel Pablo stated some principal discrepancies with the newly formed *United Secretariat*. In 1964, Pablo, then head of the *African Bureau* of the *FI*, launched a paper (titled *Sous le drapeau du socialisme*) without the approval of the *United Secretariat*; he soon was blamed with factionalism and with having violated democratic centralism. However, the conflict between Pablo and the majority of the *United Secretariat* continued to grow and Pablo, who did not participate in the 1965 world congress of the *FI*, was suspended officially from leadership and, together with a small number of his supporters in various sections, eventually was purged in 1965. The 'Pabloites' soon established their own organization called the *International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency (IRMT)* which strongly advocated 'autogestion' (self-government on all levels) and more and more gave up its allegiance to traditional Trotskyist positions. Together with Pablo, Sal Santen left the *Fourth International*, and after a number of conflicts, but perhaps chiefly for personal and psychological reasons, disaffiliated from Pablo's current, too, no longer actively engaging in revolutionary Marxist politics. Unlike many other long-time militants who anytime left the movement, Santen never repudiated his past but continued to call himself a Trotskyist until his death.

Henceforth he dedicated his life to writing novels<sup>16</sup>.

Sal Santen spent most of his life in his home-town Amsterdam; his home was at Noorderbreedte 165. He spent the last years of his life in the *Beth Shalom Old People's Home*, Amsterdam. Still full of life and just recovering from a hip operation, he unexpectedly died from a heart attack on July 25, 1998, some days before his 83<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### *Selective bibliography*<sup>17</sup>

- ***Selective bibliography: Books/pamphlets (co-)authored by Santen***

Adiós compañeros! : politieke herinneringen. - Amsterdam : Wetenschappelijke Uitg., 1974. - 227 pp. - (Unofficial history)

De B van Bemazzel : roman. - Amsterdam : Uitg. De Bezige Bij, 1989. - 150 pp. - (BBLiterair) [With strong autobiographical reference]

14) See for instance Leggewie, Claus: Kofferträger : das Algerienprojekt der deutschen Linken im Adenauer-Deutschland, Berlin, 1984, 206 pp. (Rotbuch ; 286) and Pattieu, Sylvain: Les camarades des frères : trotskistes et libertaires dans la guerre d'Algérie, Paris, 2002, 292 pp. (Collection Utopie critique).

15) See for example *En défense de Michel Raptis (Pablo) et Sal Santen, emprisonnés en Hollande pour leur soutien à la lutte de libération nationale du peuple algérien : dossier.* - Suresnes [etc.], 1961, 35 pp. and *Der Prozess von Amsterdam : zwei Führer der IV. Internationale wegen aktiver Hilfe für die algerische Revolution vor dem kapitalistischen Klassengericht*, Wien, 1961, 23 pp. (Die Internationale : theoretisches Organ des revolutionären Marxismus ; 1961, Sondernr.)

16) See above, p. 2..

17) TSB item numbers (e.g. <TSB 0716>) refer to Lubitz' *Trotskyist Serials Bibliography*, München [etc.] : Saur, 1993, which is out of print but [available as PDF file](#) within the framework of the *Lubitz' TrotskyanaNet* website. In TSB you can find detailed descriptions of the respective Trotskyist journals, newsletters, bulletins and the like.

- Brand in Mokum. - Amsterdam : De Arbeiderspers, 1977. - 170 pp.
- Brief-fragmenten. - Amsterdam : De Literaire Loodgieters, 1981. - [6] pp. - (Unofficial history) [Only 20 numbered copies printed]
- Dapper zijn omdat het goed is : brieven uit de cel. - Amsterdam : Uitg. De Bezige Bij, 1993. - 204 pp. - (BBLite-rair)
- Deze vijandige wereld : schetsen. - Amsterdam : De Arbeiderspers, 1972. - 87 pp.
- Een geintje : verhalen. - Amsterdam : Arbeiderspers, 1975. - 131 pp. - (Grote ABC ; 252)
- Heden kijkdag : roman. - Amsterdam : Uitg. De Bezige Bij, 1987. - 168 pp. - (BBLiterair) [With strong autobiographical reference]
- Jullie is jodenvolk : herinneringen aan een jeugd. - Amsterdam : De Arbeiderspers, 1969. - 104 pp. [With strong autobiographical reference]
- Jullie is jodenvolk. - 2. dr. - Amsterdam : Querido, 1980. - 111 pp. - (Salamander ; 507) [With strong autobiographical reference]
- Jullie is jodenvolk : herinneringen aan een jeugd. De kortste weg. Saartje gebakken botje. - Amsterdam : Uitg. De Bezige Bij, 1998. - 334 pp. [Collection of 3 novels with strong autobiographical reference, originally publ. separately]
- Kinderdief : roman. - Amsterdam : Uitg. De Bezige Bij, 1988. - 139 pp. - (BBLiterair) [With strong autobiographical reference]
- De kortste weg : verhalen. - Amsterdam : Arbeiderspers, 1979. - 174 pp. - (Grote ABC ; 350)
- De nalatenschap van Henk Sneevliet. - Amsterdam : De Bezige Bij, 1995. - 81 pp.
- Poste restante rood : een politieke trilogie. - Amsterdam : Uitg. De Bezige Bij, 1986. - 423 pp. - (Unofficial history) [With strong autobiographical reference]
- Saartje gebakken botje. - Haarlem : In de Knipscheer, 1983. - 145 pp.
- Schimmenspel : filmdagboek / met een voorw. van Igor Cornelissen. - Amsterdam : Tabula, 1982. - 100 pp.
- Een slecht geweten : verhalen. - Amsterdam : De Bezige Bij, 1990. - 108 pp. - (BBLiterair)
- Sneevliet, rebel. - Amsterdam : De Arbeiderspers, 1971. - 96 pp.
- Stormvogels : roman. - Amsterdam : Arbeiderspers, 1976. - 180 pp. - (Grote ABC ; 282)

- ***Selective bibliography: Books/pamphlets and journals (co-)edited by Santen***

- Coexistencia o guerra : alternativa para la humanidad / textos de E. Kardelj [et al.] Red. de Hongki y S. Santen. - Santiago de Chile : Ed. Socialismo, 1960. - 27 pp.
- Information Bulletin / International Secretariat of the 4th International (Amsterdam ; London) [ISSN 0429-2782] <TSB 0543>
- De Internationale (Amsterdam, 1957-72) <TSB 0732>
- The Internationalist : information bulletin (Nottingham) [ISSN 0444-3314] <TSB 0761>
- De Rode October (Rotterdam, later. Amsterdam) <TSB 1408>
- De Tribune (Amsterdam) <TSB 1716>

- ***Selective bibliography: Books, collections, journals, bulletins to which Santen contributed***

- Bulletin intérieur / Secrétariat International de la IVe Internationale (Paris) <TSB 0542>
- Het collectieve geheugen : over literatuur en geschiedenis / Sal Santen [et al.] Samengesteld door Carly Brockhuis [et al.] - Amsterdam [etc.] : De Balie [etc.], 1990. - 144 pp.
- Fourth International / International Executive Committee of the Fourth International (Paris) [ISSN 0429-2790] <TSB 0535>
- Fourth International (New York, NY, 1940-56) <TSB 0532>
- De Groene (Amsterdam) [ISSN 0017-4483]
- Haagse Post (The Hague)
- De Internationale (Amsterdam, 1957-72) <TSB 0732>
- ISSS-berichten / International Society for Socialist Studies (Amsterdam)
- Maatstaf (Amsterdam) [ISSN 0024-8851]
- Muisstil : voorlezen in het voortgezet onderwijs / met een inl. van Ed Leeflang. Red.: Ed Leeflang [et al.]
- Het Parool (Amsterdam) [ISSN 1389-2975]
- Propria cures (Amsterdam) [ISSN 0033-1414]
- Quatrième Internationale (Paris etc., 1936- ) [ISSN 0771-0569 - ISSN 0765-1740] <TSB 1282>

The struggle to reunify the Fourth International : (1954 - 1963) / National Education Dept., Socialist Workers Party. - 1-4. - New York, NY, 1977-78. - [Various pag.] - (Towards a history of the Fourth International ; [7]) (Education for socialists)  
 La Vie du parti : bulletin intérieur (Paris) <TSB 1787>  
 Volkskrant (Amsterdam)  
 Vrij Nederland (Amsterdam) [ISSN 0165-666X]  
 Workers Liberty (London) [ISSN 0960-8753]

• **Selective bibliography: Books and articles about Santen**

- [Anon.]: [Sal Santen](#). [Biographical sketch, Wikipedia article]  
 [Anon.]: Santen, Salomon, in: *Wie is wie in Nederland*, 1.1984/88 : p.1040. [Also in later eds.] [Biographical sketch]  
 Bekkering, H.: Santen, Sal, in: *Moderne encyclopedie van de wereldliteratuur / onder hoofded. van A.G.H. Bachrach [et al.]*, 8, Weesp [etc.], 1983, pp.265. [Biographical sketch]  
 En défense de Michel Raptis (Pablo) et Sal Santen, emprisonnés en Hollande pour leur soutien à la lutte de libération nationale du peuple algérien : dossier. - Suresnes [etc.] : Les Comités Français et Hollandais de Soutien à Raptis (Pablo) & Santen, 1961. - 35 pp.  
 ETTY, Elsbeth: Gentle Trotskyist : Sal Santen (1915-1998) / Elspeth [sic!] ETTY. Transl. by Colin O'Driscoll, in: *Revolutionary History*, 7.1999 (2), pp. 222-223. [Obituary]  
 ETTY, Elsbeth: Het Amsterdam van Sal Santen : de tocht van 'een bang jodenjongetje', in: *Ons Amsterdam*, 43.1991 (9), pp. 204-207.  
 Galen, John Jansen van: Het verbijsterende bestaan van Sal Santen, in: *Het volle literaire leven : portretten uit de Haagse Post / ed.: Jan C. Brokken*, Amsterdam, 1978, pp. 209-227. [Reprinted from *Haagse Post*, 1974 (Oct. 19)]  
 Gieben, Sabine: Stille revolutionair : Sal Santen 1915-1998, in: *Elsevier*, 54.1998 (31) : p.86. [Obituary]  
 Keurentjes, Ruud: Sal Santen - van revolutionair tot schrijver. - Nijmegen, Katholieke Univ., doktoraalskriptie, 1981. - 250 pp. [Table of contents: p.4 Inleiding -- p.9 De geschiedenis aan den lijve ondervonden, een levensbeschrijving -- p.41 In dienst van de vernederden, Sal Santens politieke geschiedenis -- p.126 't woord bij de daad, over zijn boeken en schrijverschap -- p.163 Bijlage: Interview met Sal Santen -- p.224 Foto's -- p.230 Noten -- p.242 Bronnen -- p.249 Afkortingen]  
 Menting, Marcel: Verslonden door de revolutie : het politieke leven van Sal Santen (1915-1998). - Nijmegen, Radboud Univ., masterscriptie, 2007. - 52 pp. [Table of contents: p.3 Inleiding -- p.8 De trotskistische beweging. Organisatie en politieke cultuur -- p.14 Van sociaal-democraat naar trotskist -- p.25 Oorlogsleed en verzet -- p.34 Dienaar van de Vierde Internationale -- p.48 Slotbeschouwing -- p.50 Geraadpleegde bronnen]  
 Nadi, Selim: [A propos de Sal Santen \(1915-1998\)](#) : trotskiste juif hollandais anticolonialiste [Electronic resource]. [Dated March 4, 2015]  
 Nuis, Aad: Een wereldrevolutionair aan de huiselijke haard, in: *Nuis, Aad: Boeken : veertig besprekingen*, Amsterdam, 1978, p. 25-30. [Reprinted from *Haagse Post*, 1976 (Oct.30)]  
 Der Prozess von Amsterdam : zwei Führer der IV. Internationale wegen aktiver Hilfe für die algerische Revolution vor dem kapitalistischen Klassengericht. - Wien : Modlik, 1961. - 23 pp. (Die Internationale : theoretisches Organ des revolutionären Marxismus ; 1961, Sondernr.)  
 Richardson, Al: [Obituary] in: *Workers' Action* (London), 1999 (7) : p.20.  
 Santen, Sal: Wie niet durft moet geen schrijver worden : een portret van Sal Santen in brieven en gesprekken / Frank van Dijk [ed.], in: *BZZLLETIN / uitg. van de Stichting BZZTOH*, 1981 (86) : pp. 20-35. [Chiefly letters from Sal Santen to Frank van Dijk]

**Note:** More informations about Santen are likely to be found in some of the books, pamphlets, university works and articles listed in the relevant chapter(s) of the *Lubitz' Leon Trotsky Bibliography [ISSN 2190-0183]*, e.g. in chapter [7.5.03](#).

### *Sidelines, notes on archives*

#### — A note about archives.

The papers of Sal Santen are preserved at the famous *IISG* (*Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis*) (*International Institute of Social History, IISH*), Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The *Archief Sal Santen* comprises archivalia covering the period of 1912-2003, the bulk of papers, however, dating from 1932-1998. The collection's scope today is some 5.75 m. The first portion of the archive was deposited at the *IISH* by Santen himself in 1969 with the stipulation that it should not be opened before 2000. In 1994, Santen deposited some further portions at *IISH* archives, and eventually in 2004, Santen's daughter, Ellen, donated another complement; further amendments were added in 2012. The entire collection has been processed, some items which were neither manuscripts nor printed or typed documents, i.e. photographs, sound cassettes, films and posters, were removed and integrated into the respective special collections at *IISH*. An inventory (folder level description) of the *Archief van Sal Santen*, prepared by Marja Musson in 2001 (revised 2004), is available [online](#).

The *Archief van Sal Santen* chiefly consists of some 190 folders containing documents reflecting almost all aspects of Santen's life and activities, i.e. letters, postcards, manuscripts, reports, memoranda, notes etc. recording Santen's activities in the *RCP* 1945-1948, the *International Secretariat* and *International Executive Committee* of the *Fourth International* 1946-1963, etc., for example his considerable letter exchange with Michel Pablo, some 50 folders containing material impounded by the police at Santen's and Pablo's homes in the wake of their arrest in 1960, e.g. bank statements, notebooks, address books, etc. The collection also includes rich material documenting the trial of Santen and Pablo in 1960 (proceedings, protocols of interrogations, final speeches, press clippings, solidarity letters, etc.), manuscripts of articles by Santen, newspaper issues and clippings, internal documents of the *Fourth International*, Santen's letters to his family written when he was in prison (1960/61) and rich material about the Algerian liberation movement and its endorsement by Santen and other *FI* militants. Those portions which were added to the archive in 2004, chiefly consist of personal and family papers such as for example passports, diplomas and similar documents, items recording Santen's psychotherapeutic treatment in 1966-1971 and his death in 1998, and last not least a great number of letters and cards exchanged between members of his family including his parents, brother and sister, and the Sneevliet family.

It goes without saying that some originals or photocopies of letters and memoranda by Santen can be traced in the collections of some prominent Trotskyists whose papers are preserved at renowned public archives like for example *IISH*, *Hoover Institution Archives*, *Tamiment Library*, etc.<sup>18</sup>

#### — A film about Sal Santen.

An impressive and celebrated 75 minutes documentary film (16mm, colour) titled *San Santen, rebel*<sup>19</sup> focusing on the life, activities and disillusionment of this outstanding Dutch revolutionary was screened at the *Nederlands Film Festival 1982* where it was awarded the *Grote Prijs van de Nederlands Film* as best documentary of the year. It was directed by Rudolph van den Berg who was also the distributor. The spoken text sequences, among them interviews with Michel Pablo and Achmed Ben Bella, are in English, French and Dutch, English subtitles are provided. The film was also screened in the San Francisco *Jewish Film Festival* the same year and in TV programmes. The *IISG* preserves a copy of the film (call no.: BG F1/790-792)

Other audiovisual material about Santen to be found within the *IISG* collections includes two 16mm films titled *Sal Santen Diemen* (*IISG* call no.: BG F2/856-857) and *Ellen Santen* (call no.: BG F2/858-59), respectively. An audio cassette titled *Sal Santen, rebel* (Santen interviewed by Rudolph van den

18) For an overview see the *Public Archives : America* and *Public Archives : Europe* chapters within the framework of our *Lubitz' TrotskyanaNet* website.

19) Of course an allusion to Santen's book on his father-in-law, *Sneevliet, rebel* (1971).

Berg, broadcast October 1982) is available under the call no. BG GC6/30, and another audio cassette titled *Een leven lang : Sal Santen, schrijver*, a radio feature by Yvonne Scholten which was broadcast on April 8, 1993 (Radio Hilversum), is preserved under the call no. BG GC7/927.

— **Quotation from obituary.**

We should like to conclude our bio-bibliographical sketch about Sal Santen with a short quotation from a series of obituaries which appeared on the occasion of his death:

"'Brave because it is good' was the life-time motto of Sal Santen, who described himself as someone who in his heart was always a 'scared little Jewish boy'. He had borrowed this motto, which was also the title of one of his books, from the farewell letter of his father-in-law, the resistance hero Henk Sneevliet, written just before his death in front of a German firing squad. Through Sneevliet, Sal Santen, himself coming from the poverty-stricken family of a shoemaker who supported the SDAP<sup>20</sup>, landed in the revolutionary movement during the 1930s. When Santen decided for Trotsky and his Fourth International, their ways parted. [...] He was too soft, too human and too emotional to be a professional revolutionary. His political commitment came from his humanity. Those who knew him or saw his bushy hair and soft brown eyes could see that fanaticism was alien to him. [...] A few years ago, I asked him to draw a balance of his life. 'The most important thing is my family', he answered, 'That as a Jew I could still build a family is very important. And beyond that... I became a writer.'"<sup>21</sup>

*Note: The photograph (on p.1) was taken from the WWW, © Chris van Houts, Amsterdam.*

*Wolfgang and Petra Lubitz, 2006  
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20) The *SDAP* (*Social Democratic Labour Party*) was the predecessor of *Dutch Labour Party*.

21) Eddy, Elsbeth: *Gentle Trotskyist : Sal Santen (1915-1998)*, in: *Revolutionary History*, 7.1999 (2), pp. 222-223.